

THE WINTER HAVEN SUN



SUNNY DAY:
Bee-utiful day in the park at Honeybee Festival. See Page 17.

An Edition of the Sun

WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 16, 2016

TAKE ONE, IT'S FREE!

Ceremony salutes World War II vets

By **CATHY PALMER**
CORRESPONDENT

It was all spit and polish, shiny with a twist. It was 11 a.m. on the 11th day, the 11th month — it was Veterans' Day in Bartow and there were dozens of those who served, from the seniors of World War II to those just home from

the War on Terror, gathered at the Civic Center to be saluted by those who care and appreciate their service.

There were those who endured enemy fire and those who supported them in a myriad of ways, those who were wounded and those who help[ed] heal them. It was a day of remembrance and a day

HOMER ALLEM MAY BE LAST POLK PEARL HARBOR SOLDIER, PAGE 14.

of honor.

Bartow celebrated its "Hometown Heroes" with a luncheon celebration just to say "thank you for your service."

Supported by the city of

Bartow, area businesses and the Bartow Chamber of Commerce, the luncheon brought together men and women who served in all five of the nation's armed forces: the Army, Air Force, Navy, Marines and Coast Guard. All were represented and their members stood proud when each branch of the U.S.

military was saluted with their anthems and proudly displayed.

Guests of especial honor were five World War II veterans: Joe Nichols, who served in the Navy in the South Pacific, Doyle Lewis, a former paratrooper who served in the European

VETS | 33



PHOTO BY KATHY LEIGH BERKOWITZ

Seven-year-old Carley Ritchey pulls her tractor in style. Hundreds of people attended the Florida Flywheelers show in Fort Meade over the weekend. For more on this, see Pages 21-22.

Flywheeling Junior

Trump victory not so surprising

Area voters felt Clinton was poorer choice to lead country

By **JEFF ROSLOW**
JROSLOW@HEARTLAND
NEWSPAPERS.COM

Going into the Nov. 8 election it seemed, according to most polls, that Hillary Clinton would end the night becoming the 45th president of the United States. But slowly, as the evening moved on, it appeared the predictions

overstated her odds of winning. That conclusion wasn't so much the feeling among area Donald Trump supporters.

"People underestimated Donald Trump," said long-time Republican Party member J.C. Martin. "Look at Congress and his appeal in the Rust Belt."

TRUMP | 31

Two area races being recounted

By **CATHY PALMER**
CORRESPONDENT

Since early Monday morning employees of the Polk County Supervisor of Elections Office have been recounting the votes for one School Board race and a race for the Soil and Water Conservation District Seat 3.

However by Tuesday's deadline for this newspaper those totals were not completed.

In the school board race for the District 4 seat two newcomers were running for the seat as incumbent Dick Mullanx decided to not run for re-election. In a battle that bounced back and forth over who was in the lead Sara Beth Reynolds won the race with 50.11 percent of the vote (115,894 votes) to Becky Troutman's 49.89 percent (115,372).

RECOUNTED | 31

Santa firming up his appearances

By **STEVE STEINER**
SSTEINER@SCMGINC.COM

This year Santa will be taking a break.

But breathe deep and relax. He is still going to be bringing presents, and yes, he'll be eating cookies and drinking milk.

The break he will be taking is personal. He shaves his beard the day after Christmas. It is, he said, his present to himself. Then he and the missus head for warmer climes for a mini-vacation — he said it is usually no more than

a day — before it is back to readying for the next Christmas. Although he and Mrs. Claus will still take their mini-vacation, Santa is not going to shave his beard. He did not say whether he might color it in an effort to disguise the fact he is who

he is, but he definitely is not going to shave it this year.

Oh, and one other thing, he is going to get a haircut.

This was one of many questions Santa

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COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Wednesday, Nov. 16
Community Forum. To help overcome barriers to senior mobility. It will focus on how volunteer transportation services can help seniors, persons 65 and older, meet basic needs and stay connected to their community. Coleman Bush Building, 1104 Martin L. King Jr. Ave., Lakeland. 863-534-6486 or CherieEdwards@polk-county.net.

FPRA meeting, 7:30 a.m., \$15, \$20 for guests. Joe Hice, senior vice president & chief marketing manager for Enterprise Florida, Inc., speaks. 132 S. Kentucky Ave., Lakeland. RSVP for the November meeting is Thursday, Nov. 10. info@fprapolk.org to reserve a seat.

Facial rejuvenation, 10 a.m., free. Watson Clinic Bella Vista Building, 1st Floor Lobby, 1755 N. Florida Ave. in Lakeland. RSVP: 863-904-6218.

Florida Sen. Denise Grimsley office hours to assist constituents' concerns and to gather public input on legislative issues. 9-10 a.m., Mulberry Public Library, 1st Floor, Civic Center, 905 NE 5th St.; 10:30-11:30 a.m., Bartow Public Library, 2150 S. Broadway Ave.; 1:15-2:15 p.m., Fort Meade Community Center, 10 SW 3rd Street, Fort Meade; 3-4 p.m., Latt Maxcy Memorial Library, 15 N. Magnolia Ave.

Water Color Cards Painting Class, noon. Grove House Visitor Center, 20160 U.S. Highway 27, Lake Wales. 863-679-4110

Thursday, Nov. 17
State Road 60 over CSX Railroad Public Hearing, 6 p.m., public hearing at 7 p.m. Opportunity to express views about the location, conceptual design, and social, economic, and environmental effects of constructing a new

WELCOME TO YOUR COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Want to see your event on this page? Call us at 863-533-4183 or email news@heartlandnewspapers.com.

S.R. 60 overpass. Polk State Corporate College (Room 1120), 310 Technology Drive, Bartow. 863-519-2990

Wine Chocolate and Cheese, 5:30-8:30 p.m. Cheese tasting with art and walk downtown Winter Haven streets browsing through shops that individually feature a unique wine and chocolate/cheese pairing. 401 Ave B NW, Winter Haven, 863-295-9422

Friday, Nov. 18

Magic on Main, 6-9 p.m. Blessing of the city of Bartow and a performance of seasonal music by Spessard Holland Elementary School Chorus. Lights on the trees lining the streets of downtown Bartow. After the lighting ceremony, Santa will be on hand in the Cookie Jar Bakeshop to visit with the children, and the Polk County History Center will kick off their annual decorated wreath display. Downtown Bartow.

Opening Night of the Festival of Wreaths, 6-8 p.m. The striking wreaths that fill the halls of the History Center are decorated and donated by local businesses, individuals and organizations. The wreaths will be on display through Dec. 10. Cast bid in the 2016 silent auction with proceeds benefiting the History Center. Santa will light the outdoor tree on the north lawn of the History Center at 7 p.m. Polk County History Center, 100 E. Main St., Bartow. www.polkhistory-center.org or 863-534-4386

Art + Food, 6:30-9:30 p.m. \$10 members; \$15 nonmembers. Sample fare from local restaurants and cast your vote for the winner of the third Art+Food Challenge. Polk Museum of Art, 800 E. Palmetto St., Lakeland, 863-688-7743

Creative Yoga w/ Michelle Pugh, noon-1 p.m. \$5 members; \$10 non-members. Polk Museum of Art, 800 E. Palmetto St., Lakeland, 863-688-7743

'Quit Smoking Now - No ifs, ands or butts!' 3-5 p.m., free. Boardroom, 1730 Lakeland Hills Blvd. in Lakeland. 863-802-6220.

Saturday Nov. 19

Walk of Honor. Event to honor veterans. City Hall Veterans' Memorial Park, 209 Ave. F, NW, Winter Haven

Uptown Yard Sale & Flea Market, 8 a.m.-1 p.m. Downtown Bartow. 863-646-0644 or 863-519-0508.

Awards Ceremony: Learning to be Me: K-2nd Grade Elementary Students Exhibition, 11 a.m. - 1 p.m. Polk Museum of Art, 800 E. Palmetto St., Lakeland, 863-688-7743

Architectural Tour, 11 a.m., free. Polk County History Center, 100 E. Main St., Bartow. www.polkhistory-center.org or 863-534-4386

Big Gospel Singing in celebration of Elder Rod Bostic Jr.

Featuring New Experiencers Singers. Many choirs and solos coming together for this celebration, 5 p.m. Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church, Seminole Trail, Bartow. 863-510-3531, 863-559-4694

Miss Florida Citrus, noon. Meet the beautiful representative of the Citrus Industry. Questions and photos welcome. Grove House Visitor Center, 20160 U.S. Highway 27, Lake Wales. 863-679-4110

Lake Alfred Historical Museum, 11 a.m.-2 p.m., free. View Lake Alfred memorabilia and artifacts from the early 1900s. 210 N Seminole Ave., Lake Alfred. 863-287-3093 or 863-224-2792

Mensa, 6 p.m. Square 1 Burgers, 4715 S. Florida Ave., Lakeland. 863-967-7680

"The Wanted Band," 9 p.m.-1 a.m. Free with drinks and food available for purchase. Idle Zone Bar & Grill, 615 7th St. SW, Winter Haven. 863-582-6349

Tuesday, Nov. 22

Polk County School Board meeting, 9 a.m. School Board Auditorium, 1915 S. Floral Ave., Bartow.

Wednesday, Nov. 23

Turkey Thumb Print Art, noon. Make a turkey with your thumb to remind you to be thankful during the holiday season. Grove House Visitor Center, 20160 U.S. Highway 27, Lake Wales. 863-679-4110

Professional Development Academy: 7 Paths to Success, 7:30 a.m., \$29 for Chamber members. Contemporary Leadership with J. Lenora Bressler. Polk State College Corporate College, 310 Technology Drive, Bartow. 863-533-7125

Flag dedication



PHOTO BY JEFF ROSLOW

Camping World had a ceremony for the flag they debuted on Saturday. The flag is 40 feet by 80 feet. The Winter Haven ROTC cadets raised the flag.

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PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the City of Bartow is accepting applications for the following voluntary advisory board(s):

- ❖ Code Enforcement Board
- ❖ Historic Architectural Review Board
- ❖ Community Redevelopment Agency
- ❖ Planning and Zoning Commission

To obtain an application or board description contact the City Clerk's Office at (863) 534-0100 ext. 1256 or visit the City Clerk section on the City's website: www.cityofbartow.net

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Winter Haven Sun

Published by SCMG

Phone: 863-533-4183 Fax: 863-533-0402
Advertising: 863-533-4183

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Northern Connector to be county's top priority

Commissioners believe issue to be top to Legislature this year

By CATHY PALMER
CORRESPONDENT

Polk County is in a quandary again, over the Central Polk Parkway — this time with Florida's Turnpike Enterprise — over the scheduling of the mammoth project and where it leaves the county's number one priority project, the Bartow Northern Connector.

The county commission learned that the turnpike has made an offer to resurrect the Central Polk Parkway, if the county agrees to talks about sharing the anticipated toll shortfall, according to County Manager

Jim Freeman.

Freeman said the state toll road entity said they would pursue the Parkway project segment that links the existing Polk Parkway with U.S. 17, but they wanted assurances that Polk County would "provide local support."

Freeman said the "local support" was not defined. He also said that even though the county has suggested that the northernmost segments were the most critical due to increasing traffic in the northeast county, the state toll road department was adamant that it would not deviate from its original plans to build from south

to north.

Freeman also said there were two primary issues to be resolved, one of which was the scheduling of the northeastern portions of the multi-billion-dollar highway and the other was the fate of the long-proposed and shovel-ready Bartow Northern Connector.

"They want the board and the county to reassess keeping the Northern Connector as the county's number one priority," the county manager explained.

The county already has some \$15 million set aside to pay for building the Northern Connector, but it needs another \$15 to pay

for the entire project that runs from U.S. 17 southwest of Bartow Municipal Airport to State Road 60 just east of the Peace River.

Freeman also cautioned the board that the Turnpike only has 30 percent plans completed for any portion of the Central Parkway, where the Connector is ready to build as soon as enough money is available.

Commissioner George Lindsey asked Freeman at the county commission meeting if the Connector was scaled back to a two-lane road instead of four lanes, would the \$15 million pay for it?

"It would reduce the cost significantly, but we'd

still have to build some bridges four lanes because you don't want to have to come back and build new bridges in a few years," he said.

"The only thing that makes sense," said Lindsey, "Is to build the Northern Connector and the segments of the Central Parkway up near the interstate. They need to work from east to west."

The board decided to proceed with talks with the Turnpike Enterprise, but also look more closely at building the scaled-down version of the connector road. It also decided to put the Connector at the top of its legislative priority list for

discussion when the board goes to Tallahassee to lobby for Polk issues later this winter.

In other business at the agenda review session on Oct. 28, the board agreed to give both Freeman and County Attorney Michael Craig the same raises that other county workers receive. That will put an extra 3.5 percent of their pay in their pockets starting Jan. 1.

Freeman presently draws a \$192,272 annual salary and Craig is paid \$175,100 each year. Both top county employees received almost straight As in their evaluations by the board last month.

New water plant OK'd by commissioners

By CATHY PALMER
CORRESPONDENT

The Polk County Commission shot down some residents' complaints and paved the way to build a new north-county water plant and also moved money around to pay \$4 million in health insurance claims.

The county board OK'd by a 4-1 vote a

zoning change to allow the construction of a new water treatment plant off Tom Constantine Road in Timberidge, despite claims from area residents that it would devalue their property and create an eyesore.

About 200 residents of the area had signed a petition asking the county to dump plans for the 12-acre water project that

would include a well, pumps and a storage tank that will be 28 feet tall and 100 feet wide.

Commissioner Melony Bell sided with the residents, saying the utility department hadn't done its "due diligence" and that "I wouldn't want this across the street from me."

Other board members however maintained the utility department staff was

preparing for anticipated growth in that area.

About 10 residents spoke out against the project, claiming their property would be devalued, there was a lack of adequate buffering and a potential risk.

Resident Richard Behers said he was concerned about a chlorine spill that could spread fatal gases into nearby homes and

schools. Another said the property should stay agricultural.

Utilities Director Marjorie Gill explained chlorine gas was not used in water treatment, so there was no danger of escaping gases, and this plant would replace three other facilities. She added there was natural buffering and the plans called for a fence, additional trees

and shrubbery to mask the facility. Construction is expected to start in about two years.

Earlier on Tuesday, County Manager Jim Freeman told the county board he was going to have to take about \$4 million from the county's health insurance reserve accounts to meet existing obligations due to a higher number of claims than anticipated.

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VIEWPOINT

Healthcare tax vote shows Polk's character

Eight of the nine states which had measures on the Nov. 8 ballot to allow either unrestricted sale of marijuana or authorizing sales for "medical use" voted to approve those changes.

Florida was one of them, with 71 percent of the voters supporting a broadly-worded "medical use" amendment to the Constitution. We believe it will be only a few years before Florida joins the recreational use movement.

That prediction comes under the heading of life as it is, not life as it should be.

More than 63 percent of Polk County voters supported Amendment 2.

Drawing less attention — but saying a great deal about the character of Polk Countians — is that more than 69 percent of Polk's voters cast ballots to extend for 25 years Polk's indigent healthcare tax.

Given how little attention the tax drew in the

Our Viewpoint

months before the election, we are doubly proud that nearly seven in 10 voters favored keeping the half-cent local option sales tax that provides an array of medical services.

Those services are primarily for patients who make too much money to qualify for Medicaid, but not enough to afford market-priced health insurance.

The healthcare tax, adopted in 2004, currently serves 42,867 Polk County citizens.

A Citizens Healthcare Oversight Committee monitors the plan, which provides, in the words of the Polk Healthcare Plan web site, care from "primary and specialty care physicians, urgent care centers, and five area hospitals."

As we noted in our editorial supporting renewal of

the tax, Polk's resolve to care for low income citizens dates back to the founding of the county hospital (later renamed Polk General Hospital) in 1926.

With closing of the under-utilized PGH in 1995, indigent healthcare focus changed to public clinics. The plan as it has evolved in Polk has no annual deductibles, no claim forms, and a low co-payment at time of care.

It is a simple, cost-effective approach to medical care.

We had occasion to discuss this plan with a healthcare professional from Plant City a few days ago. She was amazed to learn that Polk County voters choose to tax themselves to provide this level of care for low income citizens.

It should be a matter of special pride for all Polk Countians that we go this extra mile in caring for our citizens.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Being thankful

A person can understand the pros and cons of serving as an elected official within the privacy of their heart, mind, and spirit. A person can also discover the strength and courage to pursue their passion for service within themselves. I love to serve and have enjoyed the pros and learned from the challenges of the cons. I have shared my desire to tackle trends, issues, the needs of educational and vocational institutions, quality of life and health-care concerns. Gathering and maintaining a productive campaign team to assist a candidate for elected office with preparation and execution in addressing these concerns is vital. My

campaign team was phenomenal and I want to thank them collectively for their time, support, talents, skills and assistance over a tremendously productive year. To my many incredible supporters: Democrats, Republicans, no-party affiliations and independents; I personally and respectfully thank you very much and openly share my appreciation from my heart to yours for your votes and words of encouragement. The strength and courage to pursue the good for the community. To the community, we will meet again in the near future — smile.

SHANDALE TERRELL, Ed.D
Lakeland

Reflections on the election from you-know-where

It is a common reaction after every presidential election for the public to express relief that it's finally over.

Even when the candidates show themselves to be more or less honest and honorable people and comport themselves more or less as ladies and gentlemen, the endless blather of TV commercials leaves all of us a little bleary-eyed.

But the 2016 presidential campaign was truly the Election from Hell, a stronger word than I customarily use in public discourse. It was the worst of the worst.

In the 54 years since I turned 21 (the legal voting age in 1962) I do not believe I have failed to vote in a single election, be it city, county, state, or federal.

On maybe two or three occasions, I have literally held my nose as I marked the ballot for what I considered to be the least awful candidate, but I nonetheless cast my vote. This was one of those years.

And this is a rare occasion when I am not sharing with anyone for whom I cast my ballot. I find no reason to be proud of voting for either of the two major candidates, or even casting a token vote for a minor party candidate.

The notion of a secret ballot assumes greater importance for me this year.



S.L. Frisbie

S.L. Frisbie can be contacted at sfrisbie@hedartlandnewspapers.com

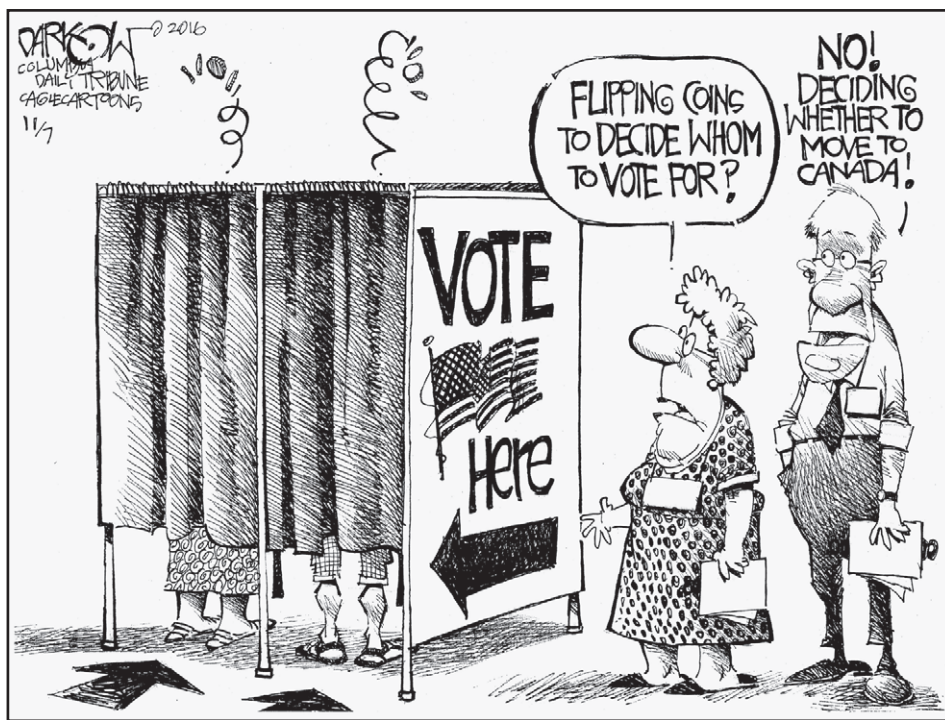
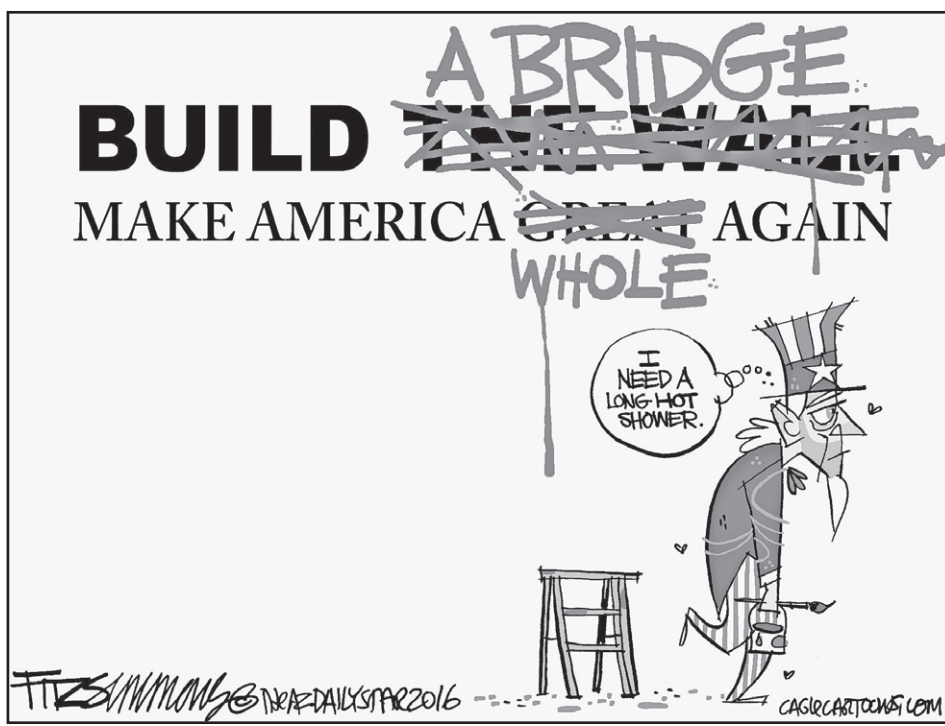
I suspect I am not alone in this lack of pride in my vote. My defense is that it wasn't my fault.

On the opening days of both party conventions, party leaders were lamenting that their party was about to nominate the only candidate who couldn't beat the opposing party's candidate. Strange though it sounds, they were both very nearly right.

Joe Biden could have easily beaten Trump. Marco Rubio could have easily beaten Clinton. And those are just the first two possibilities who come to mind.

The three major networks reached a new high in left wing bias this year.

For all the talk that whoever won Florida would win the election — as long as the polls favored Clinton — when Florida finally came out in the Republican column,



the event was treated by the pundits as surprising but not a game-changer.

The media is not as bad as Trump says, and Trump is not as bad as the media says, but there is truth on both sides.

One of my favorite politicians is fond of saying that the voters are never wrong. And he is correct. By definition, when the voters have spoken, the democratic process has worked.

For better or for worse, Donald Trump will become president of the United States

— all 50 of them, and all their citizens — in two months and four days.

For better or for worse, the media pundits will still be saying things Trump doesn't like.

Unless both Trump and the press decide to start acting more professionally with each other and with the public, it will be the start of a long four years.

(S. L. Frisbie is retired. His college degree is in government. Nothing he studied prepared him for this election.)

We welcome your letters

Letters are welcome on virtually any subject, but we do have some rules. Please keep them to less than 250 words. Letters will be edited to length as well as grammar and spelling. All letters must be signed with full name — not initials. An address and telephone number must be included. The phone number and address are not for publication, but must be provided. The Letters to the Editor section is designed as a public forum for community discourse and the opinions and statements made in letters are solely those of the individual writers. Readers can send letters and column submissions to letters@polkcountymodem.com or mail them to 190 S. Florida Ave., Bartow, FL 33830.

Vignettes from Winter Haven's History ...

The Village is platted and F. A. K. Harris comes to town

The railroad brought development to central Florida and Polk County. Travel guides and brochures from the 1870s and 1880s describe the area as a "cattle region" and "in many respects one of the most desirable portions of Florida." The printed materials describe clear lakes, beautiful streams, first-rate pine and very productive clay subsoil.

In May of 1883, J. Blount and W. T. Whitlege (Bartow Realtors and merchants) developed a town plan based on a grid system of blocks and tiers ... a pattern that still exists. The plan was divided into commercial, residential and farmland area. At the center a central park, oriented north-south ran two blocks bracketing the South Florida Railroad property.

Blount and Whitlege sold the first portion of their holdings to early settler Fredrick Amasa Knowles (F.A.K.) Harris who arrived in the area during



F. A. K. HARRIS

1884. Families such as Eycleshimer, Jackson and Sykes were in the area but not residing within the newly platted village. P.D. Eycleshimer was among the first to purchase land within the village as yet unnamed.

Harris came to the area from Vermont after a tragic stay in Nebraska where his wife, Adele, was



Bob Gernert Beneath the Chinaberry Tree

Bob Gernert is a student of Winter Haven history and founded the Museum of Winter Haven History.

injured in a tornado. The Harris' (including 1-year-old son Bert) built both the first commercial and residential structure within the limits of the newly platted village. The family opened a mercantile business on the first floor and lived upstairs. The railroad was under construction at the time and Mrs. Harris sometimes cooked for the workers. For a short time, the railroad workers referred to the new settlement as "Harris Corner." The Harris store was located at the corner of Fifth Street and Central Avenue N.W. facing east toward Central Park.

Mr. Harris was known as the "Father of Winter Haven" for having built the first building in the "town proper" or within the village limits. He served as one of the early town councilman and for a time was the Postmaster. Harris descendants still live in the Winter Haven area.

There will be a special program "Important Winter Haven Dates and Events" presented Saturday, Nov. 19, at

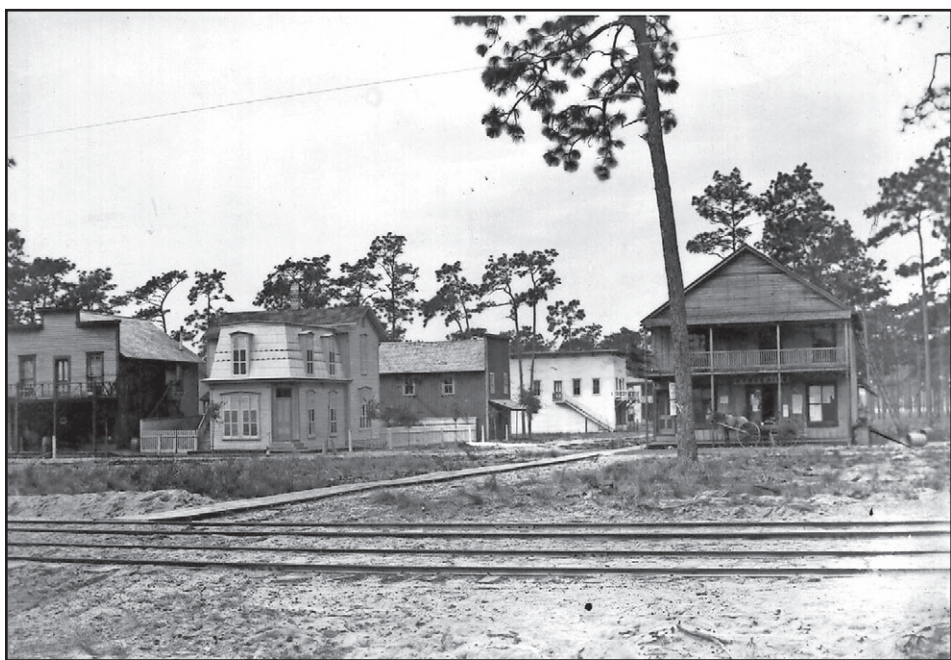


PHOTO PROVIDED

Winter Haven's first commercial and residential structure, the F.A.K. Harris Mercantile is the frame building at far right. The mansard-style roof structure in the middle is the Blount and Whitlege land office. It stood where the downtown Bank of America is located today. This photograph, taken circa 1890 is the oldest known Winter Haven photo.

10 a.m.

You can experience more information on our city's past at the Museum of Winter Haven History located in the pink Woman's Club building on Pope Avenue at Lake Howard Drive. It is free and open to the public Saturdays from 9 a.m.-noon.

Bob Gernert is a student of Winter Haven history and founded the Museum of Winter Haven History at the historic Women's Civic League building on Lake Howard. If you have questions or information to share please email bobgernert@gmail.com or telephone 863-206-6855.

Morning after: Wishing for inclusive presidency

The presidential race decided this week highlighted the turbulence in American society. Half the country thinks America is still great; the other half sees it differently.

One candidate was optimistic, emphasizing the economic improvement over the past eight years and planning to build on it. The other candidate tapped into the anger and despair in rural America and built a platform stoking those fears and promising change.

It was a battle of two Americas — an inclusive, tolerant country that welcomes diversity and sees a positive future when we all work together versus a nation where the economic recovery had not benefited the working class and where unity and tolerance took a backseat to blame and demand for drastic action.

Of course, there were many other factors involved in the election, but there are already many pundits and political experts opining on what happened and why.

The race was ugly, nasty, personal and largely devoid of fact or policy. The primary strategy on both sides was to make the opponent less palatable. It worked, as both had extremely high unfavorable numbers.

The battle lines were drawn. Supporters of both candidates dug in. Emotions ran high. Family members argued. Social



Paula Dockery Political Ponderings

Paula Dockery can be contacted at pdockery@floridavoices.com

media became a hateful and sometimes scary outlet for expression. People were unfriended on Facebook and blocked on Twitter.

This race, like none I have ever witnessed, had a devastating effect on relationships. It went on too long and most voters were eager for it to end.

Many people — like me — worried about what would happen after the results had been tallied. Polls and pundits consistently indicated the likelihood that Hillary Clinton would become the 45th president.

Donald Trump hinted that he might challenge the results if he didn't win and that a concession speech might not be forthcoming. Many of his supporters echoed his charge that the system was rigged and threatened to revolt. Despite all indications to the contrary, his supporters

insisted he would win. It turns out they were right.

It was clear that on the morning after the election, half of the country would be anxious, worried and disappointed — maybe even despondent. When we thought that half would be Trump and his supporters, we urged them to accept the results and work to unify the nation.

As I write this — the morning after the election — I'm still in shock and personally disappointed in the outcome. For those who were firmly in the Hillary camp, I understand your feeling of loss, uncertainty, and even fear. It will take time to overcome what seems incomprehensible. It hits hard — harder than maybe it should. Because we didn't see it coming, we need time to absorb it and a little space to grieve.

Yes, Donald Trump said some very hurtful and rancorous things. It's difficult to accept someone as president who vilified the current president, who led chants of "lock her up" against his opponent who sought to be the first woman president and who incited anger against the very news media that gave him billions of dollars in free coverage and bestowed legitimacy to his improbable rise.

But when we called on Trump and his supporters to accept the outcome of the

election when we thought he would come up short, we did so because we believe that's how democracy should work.

Well, the voters have spoken. Donald Trump has achieved the required number of electoral votes and will be our next president. In her concession speech the morning after, Clinton was gracious and reiterated her belief that we, as a country, are stronger together.

Trump's bombastic rhetoric was extraordinarily offensive. We can't pretend it didn't happen but in the spirit of unity, we should heed the words in Mark 11:25, "And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive them, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins."

We cannot be hypocrites. We wanted Trump and his supporters to accept a Clinton presidency when that seemed inevitable. Now we need to do the same for President-elect Trump.

To all the Trump supporters, I offer congratulations on your election victory. It's my hope that his presidency will be inclusive and successful, for the sake of all Americans.

Paula Dockery is a syndicated columnist who served in the Florida Legislature for 16 years as a Republican from Lakeland. She can be reached at PBDockery@gmail.com.

How to be a better driver

In 2016 alone, the Polk County Sheriff's Office has documented 75 traffic fatalities; putting us on track to exceed last year's statistics. Impairment, distractions, and excessive speed being the biggest factors contributing to the many traffic crashes around the county. To those of us in law enforcement, distracted driving has always been an issue, and one that is difficult to enforce.



Polk County Sheriff

Distracted driving includes talking on a cell phone, reaching across your seat, turning to look at someone in your backseat, putting on makeup, fiddling with the radio, eating, and recently, looking for Pokémon. It's an ongoing problem and a

serious one at that. Yes, life is busy, and we all have a lot on our plates, and on our minds. But if there's one message we could convey to drivers everywhere, it's this: when you are driving, the only thing you should be focused on, is driving. It's that simple.

We know in the spur of a moment, you do care about such things as drinks falling inside your car, ruining your carpet or upholstery. But is that more important than ruining a life? Ruining an entire family's life? I say, no mess is worth it. No phone conversation or text message is worth it.

So, what's our advice for being a better driver? Take one minute to think about

how nervous you were that day when you were about 16 years old, taking your driving test, hoping you would pass so you could get your license. You should be just as nervous getting behind the wheel today as you were back then. You should take every trip just as seriously as that driver's test. After all, you are operating a lethal weapon. Everything you do behind the wheel affects other people. The minute you put your car into drive, you are risking your life, and the lives of others. That's exactly how serious you should be about it.

And it's our job to eliminate distractions, so fight the urge to pick up your phone while you are driving by putting your cellphone away in your purse or glove compartment, or silencing it so you cannot hear if anyone calls or sends a text

message. This one little action could save a life.

Other ways to stay safe on the road are to wear your seat belt, don't drink and drive, slow down, and don't run red lights. If you are trying to make it through the traffic light before it turns red, you are putting everyone at risk. This behavior could lead to head-on and side impact crashes — both of which are very dangerous, so always look both ways before driving through an intersection.

If we all took the time to be patient, be aware, pay attention, and make driving a vehicle the most important thing we are doing at that moment, there would be less crashes and less fatalities.

Remember, it's your choice — drive safely.

Cremation is not an accepted Judaic practice

By **STEVE STEINER**

SSTEINER@SCMGINC.COM

Doron Kornbluth opened his presentation on the topic of cremation and Judaism paraphrasing a comment former President Bill Clinton made regarding the Kaddish, the prayer Jews recite during the period of mourning, as well as upon other occasions. In his talk, Clinton remarked upon the fact that the word death never appears. Kornbluth said that is for a reason.

"In our tradition we focus on life," he said.

It is traditional Jewish custom to bury the dead. However, things have changed, radically in the modern world, he said. He challenged his audience who attended the Nov. 13 presentation at the newly-dedicated Chabad Jewish Center, 2270 Griffin Road, Lakeland. (He made an earlier presentation at 1 p.m., at Temple Emmanuel, also in Lakeland.)

"What percentage of Jewish people are being cremated today?" he asked. Twenty-five to 30 years ago, that percentage was 2-3 percent. Overall, in the U.S., approximately 50 percent of non-Jews are choosing cremation. "Jews are not that far behind. In N.Y. Jewish burial homes, 25 percent are choosing cremation."

He then asked why and asked his audience for their input, which ranged from the cost of cremation vs. burial; mobility; what does it matter; limited land availability and in related topic, environmental concerns. Were any of these reasons valid, he challenged. With that he tackled and dismantled each argument, starting

with environmental concerns.

Environmentalists, as a whole, are not against burial, just certain practices, primarily metal coffins and embalming. Jewish burial rites, said Kornbluth, are the role model for environmentally sound practices. Traditionally, a Jew is to be buried in a shroud. If a coffin is used, it is to be wood, with holes drilled into it.

Another argument regarded mobility, that families nowadays are often scattered. He pointed out to two famous burials: That of the forefathers/mothers of Judaism: Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebecca and Jacob (Israel) and Rachel; and the burial of Moses, by God.

"That is an incredible idea. God chose burial," said Kornbluth, who segued into the argument that many who are planning their funeral arrangements, which is why is it important to visit a gravesite. "Burial and grave visitation are two separate activities."

Some people, he acknowledged, have issues about the idea of the body decomposing. However, cremation is not a quiet process. On average it takes approximately 90 minutes to cremate a body. In that time muscles expand and contract, the brain literally explodes and other noises emanate. Jewish burial is the natural way.

With that, Rabbi Moshe Lazaros announced the Chabad was in the process of establishing a Jewish cemetery in Polk County, working in concert with Gentry-Morrison Funeral Homes, which has purchased land for a new memorial garden. Lazaros mentioned



PHOTO BY STEVE STEINER

Doron Kornbluth (right) who was raised in Montreal, Canada and now lives in Israel, hosts a session on the topic of Judaism and its position regarding cremation.

that Jews living in Polk County who are not affiliated with a synagogue will have a place to be buried, and that the cost will not be burdensome.

That brought up another point, cost, which Kornbluth addressed. The only argument that makes sense regarding cremation, he said, is cost. But it is not valid.

"Some things in life are worth extra," he said. "Burial is a mitzvah." It is a commandment. It is required in Jewish law. "Cremation is not our religion."

He would continue, pointing out that burials and cemeteries are a necessity. The living, he said, need to be connected to the dead.

He raised another fact unbeknown by almost all present. He said if one took a map that noted the nations of the world that were monotheist vs. polytheistic, then laid atop a map of nations where burial is the prevalent matter vs. cremation, that the maps were almost identical to one another.

He asked if anyone knew of any Jewish monasteries, to which there are not any. That is because Judaism, unlike Christianity and other

concluded.

"Jewish burial and mourning are not for the mourners but for the soul of the deceased," Kornbluth said. "The soul is connected to its body and it knows what is happening to the body. The soul wants to be buried. Cremation is painful to the soul."

What is the kaddish?

The Kaddish is a deeply meaningful prayer that expresses and reflects the values of the Jewish people. The Kaddish is in essence a prayer of praise for God. It was written in Aramaic, the common language in Talmudic times, to ensure that everyone understood what was being said.

The title "Kaddish" is translated as "holy," and its recitation brings holiness to God's name and to all those who respond "Amen" while it

is being recited.

Kaddish is for the living. The Mourner's Kaddish does not mention death, nor make any reference to the deceased. It is directed, instead, at the living. It affirms God's justice and speaks of the value of life. It states that God is the Creator of the world and that He rules it. Kaddish also states that there will be an Era of Moshiach, when all illness and suffering will cease, and requests that this time be ushered in during our lifetime.

Further, it praises God's name and describes His glory, and petitions God to give His people "abundant peace, grace, kindness, compassion, long life, ample sustenance and deliverance, to those who occupy themselves with the Torah, and to all of Israel."

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NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING BEFORE THE CITY OF BARTOW CITY COMMISSION

Notice is hereby given that the City Commission of the City of Bartow will hold a public hearing at a Regular City Commission meeting on November 21, 2016 at 6:00 p.m. in the City Commission Chambers of Bartow City Hall located at 450 N. Wilson Avenue to consider the following resolution(s):

Resolution No. 16-3937-R – a resolution amending the Fiscal Year 2015-2016 Annual Budget of the City of Bartow.

The proposed resolution(s) are available in the office of the City Clerk in the City Hall complex. Interested parties may examine them there or appear at the meeting and be heard with respect to the proposed resolution(s). Please be advised that if you desire to appeal from any decisions made as a result of the above hearing or meeting, you will need a record of the proceedings and in some cases, a verbatim record is required. You must make your own arrangements to produce this record. (Florida Statute 286.0105)

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and F.S. 286.26, persons with disabilities needing special accommodations to participate in this proceeding should contact the City Clerk's Office no later than five (5) days prior to this proceeding at telephone number 863-534-0100 for assistance; if hearing impaired call 1-800-955-8771 or voice impaired call 1-800-955-8770 (VOICE) for assistance.

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WINTER HAVEN NEWS

Troop celebrates its 214th Eagle Scout *Latest one encourages scouts to fly like eagles*

By **KATHY LEIGH BERKOWITZ**
CORRESPONDENT

Ask TJ Wyatt (actually Thomas James Thornal Wyatt) what ignites him about serving others, he says it's not about being appreciated or even thanked, it's more about making their lives better.

And that is why he is now the 214th Eagle Scout celebrated by Winter Haven Boy Scout Troop 123. The troop, which is 90 years old, has made its aim to encourage its scouts to fly like the eagle. The award itself is more than merit badges, and in fact, merit badge work only counts for about one fourth of the credit toward the Eagle. The rest is based on the practice of Scout principles, the judgment of people who know the scout well, and their leadership ability.

TJ attends Beymer Memorial United Methodist Church in Winter Haven and is the son of Allen and Jan Wyatt. He noticed that the church had one yard which was not as green as the others.

"The largest challenge is first being able to identify the problem in your community, and then, of course, is organizing the solution yourself," he said.

"The church, I decided, was the perfect opportunity."

"It takes a certain level of commitment to your community, to your family and to your faith," he said, noting "It takes an ultimate

commitment to those around you, the boys in the troop."

According to the Rev. Rob Harding of Beymer, "We had a chance to expand some of our green space that our preschoolers use, that our church uses, and in the midst of that, he did come to us to say that he would like to help with a project that would irrigate that area for us as we expanded that area."

Eagle Scout projects as such are not a small thing by any means. Once a scout decides to go for Eagle, he notifies the Scout master, and then scopes the community for a possible project. Projects must be approved. Some are for community enrichment, and others for non-profits, and though a Scout can raise funds necessary for the project through rummage sales, car washes and so forth, the project itself is not a fundraiser.

A notebook is kept of the entire plan, from start to finish. A Scout details the cost and materials needed for all stages of the project and is solely responsible for getting the board's approval when needed and rallying the help of his fellow scouts and other volunteers.

Receipts are kept in the back of the Eagle folder, as well as a running record of any donations given to the project, along with the source who donated them and the nature of it thereof.



PHOTO BY KATHY LEIGH BERKOWITZ

Troop 123 Scout Master Tim Longstreet, Assistant Scout Master Hunter Curry, and Eagle candidate TJ Wyatt look over the program before the ceremony begins.

When it comes time to execute the project, after properly notifying the recipient, scouts learn communication skills necessary to fulfill the challenge, and many learn the hard way it is good to give everyone involved a heads up as to what the Eagle candidate may need from them.

After the project is finished and the notebook is turned in, the Eagle candidate goes before a review board to share his experience. Then his notebook is sent to national office of the Boy Scouts of America. Once approved, the candidate receives notification.

TJ's mother, Jan, said before the ceremony that the most important thing parents can do for their kids as they go for the Eagle is to "be behind them 100 percent."

She was both smiling and weeping tears of joy as she watched TJ receive his award.

Jon Eichholtz, assistant scout master, joined Bud Costello, also assistant, with Timothy Longstreet, head scout master, and Jeanette Eichholtz, awards and membership chairman, respectively, spoke highly of TJ, noting that the board had reviewed his qualifications and found him to "demonstrate the ability of leadership" worthy of the Eagle award.

Dan Hostetler, assistant scout master for the troop, looked at TJ and remarked according to the program, "You are someone to be relied upon."

Surrounded by family, friends and Boy Scouts, TJ celebrated with Troop 123 at the Scout House across from Beymer. A reception dinner followed with cake, and he smiled as his friends took numerous selfies of them with him.

It is worthy to note that according to scout records, only one out of every 100 scouts will achieve the Eagle status. Thirty scouts drop out in the first year of scouts, but they always speak well of the program as they become adults. Twelve out of every 100 scouts will have not been previously exposed to church, and six out of every 100 scouts become pastors. Over half of them serve in the military. "At least 25 percent of the Eagles will say they value their Eagle more than their college degree," noted Hostetler.



TJ WYATT

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Miracle on 34 th Street	Thurs. Dec. 1
The Bronx Wanderers	Thurs. Jan. 12
The Florida Orchestra	Thurs. Jan. 19
So Good for the Soul: Motown	Sat. Jan. 28
Pam Tillis & Lorrie Morgan	Wed. Feb. 8
A Night to Remember	Thurs. March 2
Point of Grace	Thurs. March 9
Women of Ireland	Thurs. March 23
Human Nature	Sat. April 1



MIRACLE ON 34TH STREET

FLORIDA HOSPITAL TRENDING NOW SERIES

Artrageous	Sat. Jan. 21
Beginnings: A Chicago Tribute	Sat. Feb. 11
Beauty and the Beast	Sat. Feb. 25
The Hillbenders	Thurs. April 6
Adam Trent: The Futurist	Tues. April 11



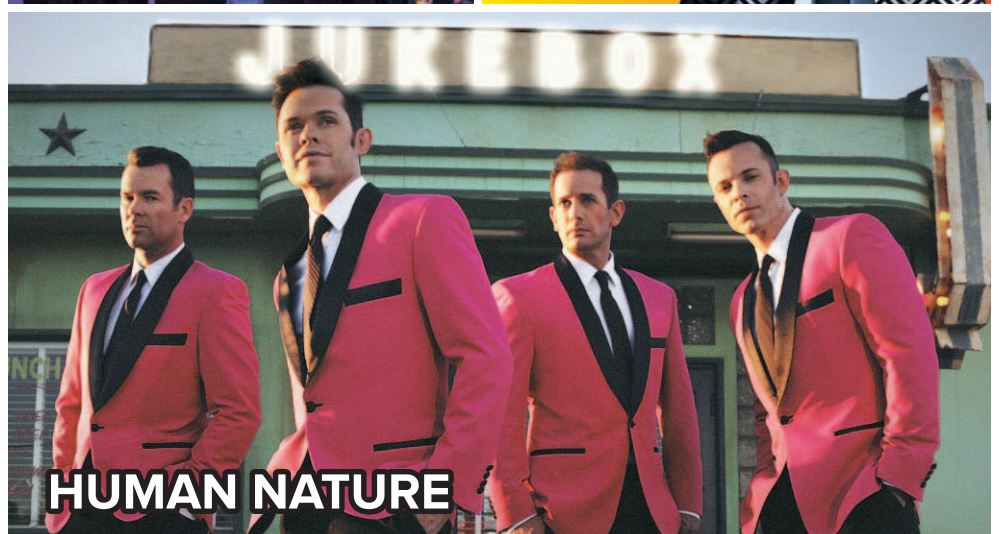
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MATINEE SERIES

Flying Horse Big Band	Tues. Jan. 10
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You'll Never Walk Alone	Tues. Jan. 24
Murder on the Nile	Tues. Jan. 31
The Martin and Lewis Tribute Show	Tues. Feb. 7
What's New, Pussycat?	Tues. Feb. 14
Shake, Rattle and Laugh	Tues. Feb. 21
Pauly and the Goodfellas	Tues. Feb. 28
Neil Zirconia	Tues. March 7
Bravo Amici	Tues. March 21



HUMAN NATURE

JAZZ SERIES

Eddie Metz Trio	Weds. Jan. 18
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CanAmGer Band	Weds. March 8



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PGTV wins first place

The National Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors called Polk County TV the winners of the 31st Annual Government Programming Awards at their national conference last month.

The awards honor excellence in broadcast, cable, multimedia and electronic programming produced by local government agencies.

Polk County Government Television won first place in the Promotional Video Campaign category for its entry "Every Life Counts: Pedestrian Safety Campaign." The series of 30-second public service announcements produced by PGTV consisted of four television commercials and one campaign teaser commercial. The series brings awareness to the serious issue of pedestrian and cyclist safety. The successful series was distributed throughout the state of Florida through efforts of Florida Department of Transportation.

In recent years, PGTV has won GPA awards for producing programs for Tourism and Sports Marketing's show, Sports Central.

This year NATOA received more than 850 entries in 67 categories submitted by local governments across the country. Entries in the categories cover a

variety of programming including, among others, community events, documentary, public affairs and public service, interview/talk show, performing arts, sports, election coverage and children's issues.

"Our GPA winners demonstrate unparalleled creativity and commitment to keeping communities informed, entertained and connected," commented NATOA President Jodie Miller. "We congratulate these winners for actively supporting community programming's role in building strong, engaged communities."

Crickette Parade winners

The awards given for the 74th Annual Crickette Club Parade were:

- Best Professional: Polk County Sheriff
- Best Non-Professional: Still Squealing 4H
- Most Original: Jim Crawford
- Best Decorated Car/Truck: Kelley Buick
- Best School Unit: Bartow Middle FFA
- Best Church Unit: First United Methodist
- Best Marching Unit: Bartow High School Band

Property tax bills sent out

The 2016 Property Tax Notices were sent to all of Polk County's property owners, tax collector Joe G. Tedder reported.

"Property owners should be receiving their bills in the mail over the next few days," said Tedder.

Each year, Tedder and his staff announce the mailing of tax bills to property owners, knowing that up to 1 percent of the bills each year will come back as "not deliverable" due to incorrect addresses.

Tedder reminds taxpayers their taxes are due, whether they receive a tax bill or not, citing Florida law which clearly places the burden of responsibility for payment of taxes on the property owner.

The only exception to this are those property owners who have opted to pay by an installment plan. For them, a November bill will not be sent; instead, they will be notified of third quarter installment payments due Dec. 1.

Included in the mailing, the tax office also provides an informational insert to help answer taxpayer questions. The insert includes a listing of taxing and levying authorities whose taxes and/or assessments may appear on the tax bill, and their phone numbers.

Property owners can also go to www.PolkTaxes.com or the Tax Collector's payment portal, www.ClickOrStick.com, where they can access and then print out a copy of their

tax bill(s).

If paying: BY MAIL: Use the return envelope and make sure to mail the lower part of your notice form(s) to the Tax Collector's Office for validating when paying taxes.

ON-LINE: Go to www.PolkTaxes.com or www.ClickOrStck.com and follow the online payment directions.

IN PERSON: Payments are accepted at the Tax Collector's Bartow Main Office, located at 430 E. Main St.; Lake Wales Service Center at 658 State Road 60 W.; and the North Ridge Service Center, at 2000 Deer Creek Commerce Lane in Davenport. In Lakeland, payments may be made at the Lakeland Service Center on 916 N. Massachusetts Ave.

For customer convenience, tax payments may also be placed in a DROP BOX provided inside the American Legion Tag Agency, located at 300 Avenue M, N.W. in Winter Haven.

Christmas Bricktacular returns

On nine nights this December, Legoland Florida Resort celebrates the season with festive activities and entertainment when Christmas Bricktacular returns to the place #BuiltForKids.

The annual holiday party invites kids to enjoy yuletide fun with a Lego twist throughout

the popular theme park, with several new activities joining this year's lineup.

Beginning Saturday, Dec. 17 Christmas Bricktacular provides lots of hands-on experiences where kids can enjoy the holiday festivities.

From a sparkling fireworks show over Lake Eloise to meet-and-greet opportunities with Lego Santa and Lego Toy Soldier.

From a holiday-themed scavenger hunt through the streets of Miniland USA to dazzling photo backdrops including a giant Christmas tree and a life-size Santa Claus, both made out of thousands of ordinary Lego and Duplo bricks.

Adding to the merriment are several brand-new entertainment offerings this year: A live, holiday-themed stage show starring the Lego Friends

Storytime with Mrs. Claus

Live performances of classic Christmas music by the Lego Brickettes

Other returning activities include :Lego builds with Master Model Builders and a station where — through Saturday, Dec. 24 — kids can write and send a letter to Santa at the North Pole.

Magic on Main on Friday

It's going to be

Christmas-like in downtown Bartow on Friday as this month's Friday Fest's Magic on Main takes place.

Starting at 6 p.m. the street party will feature live music by Hwy. 37 South, food and drink from vendors on the street as well as from the downtown restaurants, children's activities, and an open car cruise-in as usual, but there is also Magic on Main.

It will include a blessing of the city and a performance of seasonal music by Spessard Holland Elementary School Chorus. The highlight will be the turning on of the thousands of lights on the trees lining the streets of downtown Bartow. After the lighting ceremony, Santa will be on hand in the Cookie Jar Bakeshop to visit with the children, and the Polk County History Center will kick off its annual decorated wreath display.

Yard sale and flea market Saturday

Bartow's monthly Uptown Yard Sale & Flea Market is scheduled Saturday, Nov. 19, along the 300 block of East Main Street in downtown Bartow. It's from 8 a.m.-1 p.m. and setbegins at 7 a.m. Vendors will be charged a \$10 fee, and no preregistration is necessary. For information call 863-646-0644 or 863-519-0508.

In the middle of a busy month

Hello again! November is a busy month for us at the Bartow Library as we pack in more things to do before the Thanksgiving weekend. Just to remind you, we will close early on Wednesday, Nov. 23 and be closed for the weekend from Thursday, Nov. 24 through Saturday, Nov. 26. We'll reopen Monday, Nov. 28 to our regular hours.

We're hosting the AARP Smart Driver course on Thursday, Nov. 17 from 9:30 a.m.-3:30 a.m. This is a defensive driving



Paul Wartenberg

Bartow Public Library

Paul Wartenberg is the reference librarian at the Bartow Public Library.

class for people 50 years or older. Please make sure to arrive early. The class is \$15 for AARP members and \$20 for non-members, so do bring your membership card for proof. As it's a

day-long class please bring something for your lunch.

Our library art gallery continues to host the annual Cornucopia display of local artists, promoted by the Bartow Art Guild

and lasting until Dec. 1. The Guild has decided on the winning art pieces we have in the gallery, so stop by and see what won.

We know that the schools will close for the Thanksgiving week, so for families looking for something fun we will host a Petting Zoo/Horse and Pony ride event — offered by Bartow's own Pretty Pony Parties — outside the library at 10 a.m. Tuesday, Nov. 22.

Our Family Book discussion group will

meet at 3:30 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 17 to talk about The Wild Wild West by Geronimo Stinton and partake in activities related to the book.

Just a reminder to our Adult Book discussion group that we're reading The Storied Life of AJ Fikry by Gabrielle Zevin for discussion at 3 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 7. There are some copies here at the library you can purchase for \$3.

We will have our friend Bentley showing up on Saturday, Nov.

19 for Paws to Read. It starts at 10 a.m. Come say hello and receive a friendly lick and a bookmark. Spend a few minutes reading aloud to Bentley and receive a free book.

We still have ongoing Chair Yoga exercise classes every Tuesday and Friday from 9:30-10:30 a.m. We also have the ongoing Adult Coloring program at 11 a.m. Tuesday, and you can bring your own lunch as you relax while coloring sheets.

OBITUARIES

Robert H. Davenport

Robert H. Davenport, 69, of Frostproof, Fla., passed away Saturday, Nov. 12, 2016, at his residence.

Marion Nelson Funeral Home handling arrangements.

Words of Comfort

Every ending is a new beginning.
- Anonymous



Thank God we have a new beginning in heaven.
- Michael Dunn-Rankin

Words of Comfort

They whom we love and lose are no longer where they were before.



They are now wherever we are.

- St. John Chrysostom

WINTER HAVEN NEWS

Family pizza offered at MJ's Pizza and Wings

By **JAMES COULTER**
CORRESPONDENT

MJ's Pizza and Wings has been serving authentic New York-style pizza and Italian food in Lakeland for the past four years. Now the family-owned pizzeria is also serving the same quality food in Winter Haven.

When MJ's Pizza first opened in 2012, not only did it draw in customers within Lakeland, but also in Winter Haven — so much so that the owner, MJ Fadiabed, decided to serve his Winter Haven customers directly by opening a second location within the city.

After finding a convenient location in the former Pizzano's Pizza store front, the new location was set up two months ago, and has

since received a more than decent turnout and reception from the local community.

Of course, how can the pizzeria be anything but popular when it offers New York-style pizza and cuisine down here in Florida? With all its food prepared from fresh ingredients, the pizzeria offers fresh flavor that you can only find up north.

One customer on Yelp decided to try the place in Lakeland with his family after reading several other positive reviews, and also because he was a fan of thin-crust New York-style pizza.

Despite a bit of a wait that evening, his family received their meal of two pizzas, garlic knots, and grilled chicken salad, and they managed to enjoy it.

"The pizza was great and portions were large," he wrote. "Chicken salad was also great. Nice little place, friendly staff and good prices. We will be back."

Fadiabed knows how to make his food good like up in New York, having grown up there as a native. He had since decided to bring his cuisine down to Florida, where he opened his first location in Lakeland in 2012.

Aside from their pizza, the eatery also serves wings, subs, and sandwiches along with a diverse menu of Italian and Mediterranean food, including gyros (chicken and beef), hummus, babaganoush, and falafels.

Of course, what makes the eatery most popular is their thin-crust pizza, with everything from their dough, their sauce, and even their cheese prepared from the freshest ingredients.

"When you taste our pizza, it is not like any other pizza," Fadiabed said.

Anyone wanting to enjoy such authentic NY-style pizza can have two one-topping slices and a drink for \$5 or two two-topping slices for \$6.

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While the food may draw customers in, the hospitable service keeps them coming back for more.

"They can come to expect delicious food," Fadiabed said. "It is a family owned business, so when they come in, they feel at home. We



PHOTOS BY JAMES COULTER

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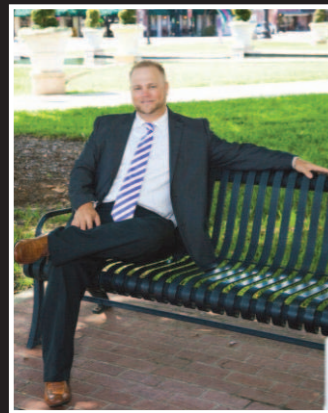
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★Traffic Technician II (0989) PG-107 \$29,478.45-\$45,691.60 Position closes: 11/17/2016
★Assistant County Engineer (997) PG-109 \$16.23-\$25.15/hr Position closes: 11/27/2016
★Emergency Medical Technician (0825) PG-201 \$22,720.68-\$30,672.92 (shift differential not included) Position closes: 12/2/2016
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These are full Time positions and based in Polk County. We offer a strong benefit package, gas reimbursement, 401k plan, great work environment, and competitive pay.

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Our Culture & Philosophies

- Positive energy and attitude is a must
- Goal oriented and focused
- Open-door
- Ambitious
- Creative & innovative
- Supportive
- Obsessed with meeting our customer's needs
- Strong track record of promoting from within
- Use your personality and uniqueness!
- Work hard but enjoy your work and your success!
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WINTER HAVEN NEWS

Veterans Walk of Honor Saturday at City Hall

By **CASSIE JACOBY**
CORRESPONDENT

Veterans and supporters are invited to join a Walk of Honor at 9 a.m. on Saturday, Nov. 19 at the Winter Haven City Hall Veterans' Memorial Park, 209 Ave. F, NW.

"We're honoring veterans and all fallen heroes for the community and veterans from all over Polk County," says Robert Moffa, American Ideals Foundation founder. "All are welcome to bring a flag and join us for the short walk followed by a flag raising ceremony."

"We installed a special plaque that Polk County Sheriff Grady Judd had made and we're getting requests for plaques from all over the country," said Moffa. Plaques and monuments are attached to the memorial monuments for all fallen heroes including women in service, police and fire departments and special divisions of the five branches of service.

"Speakers are welcome and we invite businesses to participate to show their support to our veterans," said Moffa, who also created the design for the Lake Alfred Veterans Memorial Park. Other notable memorials include the first

National Memorial outside Washington, D.C. and the National Farmers Memorial in Bonner Springs, Kan.

Moffa is an internationally recognized composer and pianist known for his descriptive and programmatic music who was recognized by President Kennedy for spreading "American Ideals" around the world through his music. Other awards include the Florida State of the Arts Certificate of Recognition from the Florida Secretary of State for Moffa's efforts to uphold the ideals of freedom. His musical compositions pertaining to people, described as "musical portraits," were recognized by the 99th Congress of the United States in the 1980s.

The Tampa-based, non-profit Foundation was established in 1982 to bring more cultural events into communities throughout the nation by holding honor presentations and ceremonies for veterans. No salaries are paid to staff or board members.

Call 813-416-8456 or visit www.foundationofamericanidealsinc.org for more information and to purchase memorial plaques.

Christmas in Toyland to light up the night

Brenda Eggert Brader
bbrader@tampabay.rr.com

"For anyone who thinks Christmas is too commercial, they should come with their family on Dec. 10 to the Lake Wales Kiwanis Christmas Parade," encourages Kiwanis Past President/Attorney Cynthia Rignanese.

The parade theme is "Christmas in Toyland." Kiwanis President Larry Tonjes credits this year's theme, "to the creativity of one man who has done so much for our community, Barney Moore."

"There is so much history to our parade," Rignanese said. "In the mid-1960s, the Lake Wales Downtown Merchants Association asked Lake Walean, Bob Faneuf, to take over the Christmas Parade. At this time, the 10 a.m. parade was on the second Saturday in December. Even in those early days, Santa has always ridden on a fire truck."

The history records of the club show that the early 1970s brought the Lake Wales Publix opening on State Road 60, and the parade route changed. Floats would line up behind Publix and proceed throughout downtown Lake Wales. This lasted

three to four years, and then the parade started by lining up at Polk Avenue Elementary. Somewhere around this time, the Chamber of Commerce became the head organizer of the parade.

The 1998 parade started at 10:30 a.m. Around 1999, the parade became a night-time event for one or two years.

The new millennium, in 2001, brought the parade back to 10:30 a.m. for one year. From 2002 and including this year, it is back to a night-time parade.

In other history, Ruth Gillman helped head up the parade in the 1950s. She remembers the Downtown Merchants Association being in charge for many of the early years of the parade. By the 1970s, it was a Chamber of Commerce project. Finally, due to large Kiwanis membership participation, the Lake Wales Kiwanis Club took over control of this city-wide event."

Records from 1996 show

the Kiwanis Parade had 59 entries. This year, organizers expect 50 entries will be lit and decorated to entertain residents and visitors of Lake Wales. This year's parade is scheduled for 3 p.m. lineup for the 6 p.m. parade. The public is invited to participate with a float or entry under the theme "Christmas in Toyland," or to view the parade along Central Avenue. Applications for entries are \$20. Entry deadline is Dec. 5. Applications are online on the Lake Wales Chamber of Commerce Website by clicking on Dec. 10 on the calendar.

Students perform Operation Christmas Child

In preparation for the huge Packing Party held this month, Candlelight Student Leaders from the Candlelight Christian Academy in Lake Wales form the Operation Christmas Child and went on a shopping trip for gifts and out for pizza.

Pastor Ann Gramlich from the school says the goal for school is 200 boxes of Christmas gifts to distribute. Note the excited students.

Stuff a Bag book sale continues

From 9 a.m. to noon on Nov. 19 The Friends of the Library will continue its "Stuff a Bag" Book Sale at the Lake Alfred Library at 245 N. Seminole Ave. Kate's jewelry class is held from 10-11:30 a.m. Saturday and Family movie is noon to 2 p.m. to see "Free Birds."

Other events are 4:30-5 p.m. Nov. 21 is crafts; 3-5 p.m. Nov. 22, Lego Mania and 10-11 a.m. Nov. 23 story time. Adult coloring hour enchants artists from noon to 1 p.m. Nov. 23.

Submit any news from anywhere

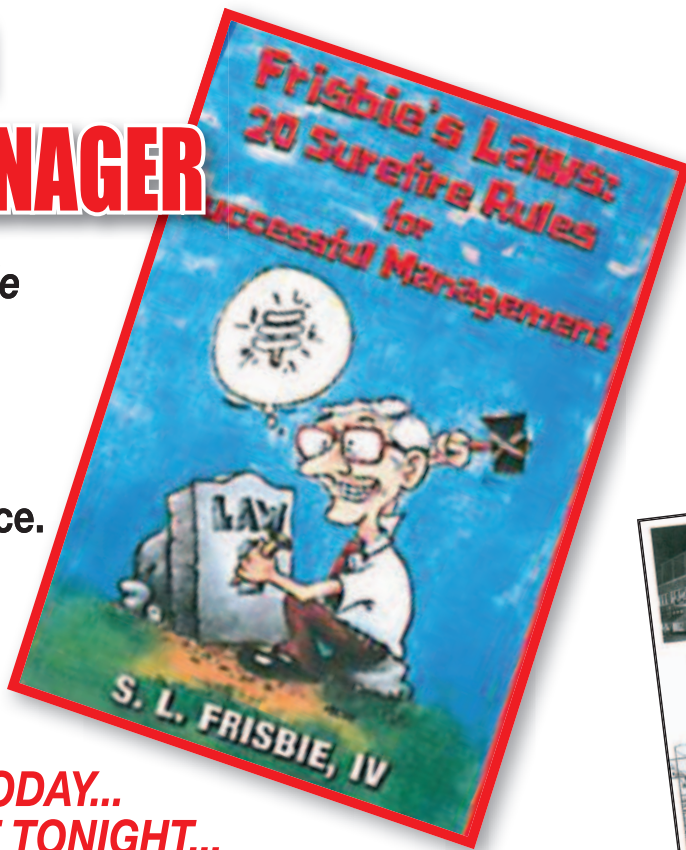
The Polk County News and Democrat and the Winter Haven Sun want to print all those happy family occasions that make sharing them with the community part of that pleasure. And don't forget photographs.

Just send me the what, why, when and where and who in an outline or a list form with a contact phone number and I do all the rest. So share your news and photographs by sending all information to Brenda Eggert Brader at bbrader@tampabay.rr.com.

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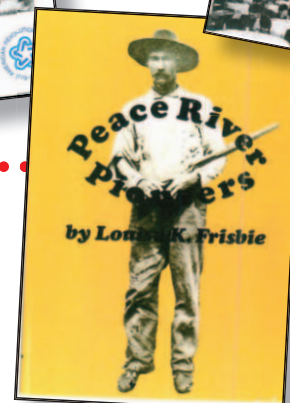
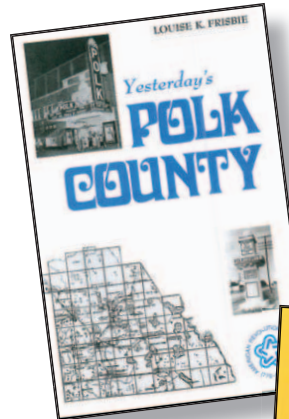
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LAKE WALES NEWS

The final survivor
Allem may be last living Pearl Harbor soldier in Polk County

By **CHARLES A. BAKER III**
CORRESPONDENT

Homer Allem said he may be the only Pearl Harbor survivor left in the area who is still active. Sixteen years ago, 22 World War II-surviving neighbors lived near Allem in Saddlebag Lake Resort east of Lake Wales. The group started meeting monthly in 2000, and at the end of each snowbird season, they led parades through their retirement community. Allem was one of four Pearl Harbor survivors living there when the veterans started meeting monthly.

Nearly two decades later, Allem, 94, said he is the only Pearl Harbor survivor left at the resort. Around 10 World War II veterans who live nearby still meet when they can.

Things were different when Allem enlisted as an 18-year-old buck private combat infantryman on April 18, 1940. Not seeing a future as a milkman helper, Allem joined the U.S. Army early and was given the choice to be stationed in Hawaii or the Philippines. Allem chose Hawaii and three months later he arrived on the island for basic training. Allem said on Dec. 7, 1941, he remembers seeing a Japanese pilot flying just 10 feet over the barracks.

"I waved, I thought it was one of ours at first," Allem said. "That was my first experience with the Japanese. They didn't miss many ships but if they came back and hit the ammunition and fuel on the other side of the island we would still be fighting them. We got licked but we didn't lose it all."

From Hawaii, Allem and his fellow infantrymen traveled to Australia for amphibious training. Allem made four amphibious landings on New Guinea which the Japanese invaded in 1942. The first three were under fire and on the fourth landing, Allem helped liberate the second largest island on the planet.

He had been promoted to the rank of staff sergeant in the 27th Infantry



PHOTO BY CHARLES A. BAKER III

Homer Allem was 19 years old when he was stationed at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, on Dec. 7, 1941.

Division by that point in the war and led three squads of seven mortar men. On the last landing only one American died, a member of Allem's platoon who drowned during the assault. Allem said upon reaching the main airfield, the place was empty and he climbed into one of the Japanese planes.

"I wish somebody had a camera," Allem said. Allem was honorably discharged before allies won the war after being diagnosed with malaria. He was transferred briefly into the U.S. Air Force and sent to school to learn how to be an aircraft mechanic. With malaria he could not continue to serve.

"There were times when I'd be in the hospital two or three days with the chills," Allem said. "I couldn't give blood to my mother when she was sick. I never recovered from malaria."

After being discharged Allem and his mother saw FDR in Gettysburg, Penn. "She passed out when she saw him," Allem said. "I walked my first Veteran's Day Parade after that in 1946 but I don't walk them anymore."

Allem got his degree in mechanical engineering, got married, had two children and he lived his life. Together Allem and his wife traveled to Hawaii a number of times for reunions. Allem said as

time passed, less would show up and they stopped going. When his wife passed away in March 2013, Allem looked at his discharge papers while planning for the funeral and realized he was eligible for some awards. His family began to inquire what happened and learned Allem's military records were destroyed in a St. Louis fire. Sixty-seven years after being honorably discharged, Allem received his awards.

In July 2013, Allem's family, the American Legion, the Veterans of Foreign Wars and his veteran friends gathered for a ceremony at the Saddlebag Lake Resort clubhouse.

"I wasn't the only one who cried that day," Allem said.

A couple of years ago there was a Purple Heart ceremony in Lakeland and there were only two Pearl Harbor survivors who showed.

Allem reportedly will be honored during a veteran's luncheon Dec. 7 hosted by the Lakeland Flying Tigers. Allem will also be honored by American Legion Post 8 in Winter Haven sometime before Christmas with a virtual honor flight to Washington, D.C., something only special veterans have an opportunity to do once in a lifetime.

Homer Allem will be 95 on April 11.

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LAKE WALES NEWS

Guthrie's opens store in Winter Haven

By **JAMES COULTER**
CORRESPONDENT

Look out, Winter Haven. There's a new place to find finger-lickin' good chicken, and it offers only the freshest and finest.

Guthrie's, The Original Golden Fried Chicken Fingers, recently opened a new location in Winter Haven.

True to its name, this new eatery provides freshly-made golden fried chicken fingers, made from the freshest, most high-quality white meat.

Guthrie's starts with Grade A premium chicken and saturates it with their original homemade marinade, saturating it until the meats is juicy and tender enough to coat with in-house prepared flour and fried to golden perfection.

What customers receive is freshly-made chicken fingers made from meat that is never frozen like other fried chicken eateries, and fried and cooked to hot, piping, juicy perfection.

The only thing that could make such a meal better is a side of freshly-cut crinkle cut fries, homemade cole slaw made from fresh cabbage, and served with homemade special sauce that's never pre-packaged.

Whether you want a snack box with chicken fingers and French fries, or a meal with fingers, fries, cole slaw, and Texas toast, you will have fresh-made chicken alongside other fresh-made items that will keep you coming back for seconds.

"Guthrie's is delicious," said owner Wendy Ciotti. "You get hooked on it, you get cravings for it, it is a very simple concept and that is what makes it easy to keep

everything hot, fresh, and delicious."

Started in 1965 with its humble origins in Haleyville, Ala., Guthrie's is a nationwide family-owned franchise that was the first to offer golden fried chicken fingers.

Since then, Guthrie's has opened 24 different restaurants in Alabama, Georgia, Kentucky, Tennessee, Ohio and Florida. Its newest location will be one of four within Florida, with this new location being the first within the heart of the peninsula.

Ciotti and her partner Becky Hennessey loved and respected the franchise and wanted to bring one to Polk County as to share the wonders of its hot, piping, and plump chicken fingers to the Winter Haven community.

Guthrie's will be the second QSR store that Ciotti and her husband own and operate in the county, with their other eatery being a Little Caesar's in Lake Wales.

As for her partner, Hennessey and her husband have plenty of experience in Mississippi with the advent side of small businesses, which she plans on utilizing to help promote their new location.

The new eatery will occupy the former Krystal's Burger location along Cypress Gardens Boulevard right across the street from Checker's.

Of the many amenities of this new location will be a window side bar that will provide single customers an opportunity to enjoy their meal along with a view of the city.

"We have a bar over there, so when you are by yourself, you can eat and look out the window and enjoy your lunch away from the office,"

Hennessey said.

Hennessey has fond memories of Winter Haven as a child visiting the former Cypress Gardens. As an avid theme park lover, she loves the tourism created through Legoland Florida, which she hopes to utilize to market the new eatery.

When Guthrie's opens, customers can expect not only hot fresh chicken, but also hospitable and expedient customer service that will have them coming back for more.

As a family-owned franchise, this new eatery does not simply wish to treat its customers like a number, but rather as another human being with needs that they're willing to fulfill.

Part of this service is pulled off by providing its employees, most of which are high school students looking for experience, with training in workplace ethics, allowing them to provide their customers with the best service possible.

Even the owners and managers themselves do not consider themselves above doing dirty work like cleaning the restrooms, because it allows them to get to know their employees and customers on their level.

"We are about pleasing and serving people and being proud of what I do," he said. "We hope to be very busy and to make everyone happy and joyous and come back for more, because once you taste it, it is love at first bite. They will want it and keep coming back for more."

They have high expectations of catering to local events at churches and schools, and to provide good food and service to will reach out to the community.

LORIN BICE

branch manager,
financial advisor



'Tis the season. The question you might ask is, "The season for what?"

Late November is the season in America for giving thanks (go read Abraham Lincoln's Thanksgiving Proclamations of 1863 and 1864. They will inspire and humble you, and give you a little historical perspective when you read today's headlines. You can find them on our Allen & Company website.)

One reason we can be thankful in 2016 is, if for no other reason, the season for presidential campaign ads and debates is over for four years...well, at least for three.

By now you know the election results, but I'm writing to you the week before the election so I still can speculate upon the results. I'll give you my predication and you can know instantly the quality of my prognostication skills. And you know, don't you, how I caution against investing on a short-term basis? If you're not sure, I'll remind you that I call that speculating, not investing.

Well, here's my speculation regarding the national elections: I think the Democratic candidate takes the White House; the Republicans keep the Senate by one or two seats, and the House of Representatives by about 35 to forty seats. This, mind you, isn't what I hope does or doesn't happen; it's just what I am guessing by reading the tealeaves. And if it turns out I'm right (a rare occurrence, according to my children), it indicates we are in for another four years of gridlock, bickering and partisan-fueled investigations in Washington. The stock markets will likely respond with a resounding "Meh".

If I'm completely wrong and the election results flip-flop from my prediction, I think we are in for four years of gridlock, bickering and partisan-fueled investigations in Washington, and the stock markets will likely respond with a resounding "Meh".

One of the things the investment markets do care about is how governments here and in Europe will handle mounting debt. Any of us that manage a household budget know there are only two choices: spend less, and/or bring in more.

I think you will agree, simply on the face of the daily experience, that our Federal Government spending less is not likely in the foreseeable future. As to raising revenue, the debate in Washington will continue: will federal revenues rise with higher tax rates at the risk of stifling growth, or will they rise with reduced tax rates meant to encourage growth which may or may not offset the loss from lower rates? If you give me a day or two, I could provide separate convincing mathematical arguments 'proving' both cases; most people wouldn't be swayed either way. Unfortunately, these issues have become emotional ones in our public discourse and there is no longer room for logical discussion and debate; hence: gridlock.

So this season, please do give thanks, for your life, your family, your daily bread, the great land in which we live, ... and for gridlock ... else those obstreperous ninnies inside the beltway come up with some other great plan to lead us all towards perdition.

We'll talk soon...

read more of

LORIN BICE'S BLOG

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LAKE WALES NEWS

Make It Magical plans are under way

But the community's help is needed

By **KATHY LEIGH BERKOWITZ**
CORRESPONDENT

Want to see lots of pretty lights, hear beautiful Christmas music and share in holiday cheer for the whole family? Mark your calendar for the Dec. 9 evening Make It Magical holiday event in Historic Downtown Lake Wales.

The theme this year is Christmas Around the World, and downtown merchants have been asked to decorate their windows with Christmas traditions from different countries.

"The object is to get as many merchants as possible to decorate vacant buildings as well as businesses," said Jean Donaldson, Lake Wales Arts Council coordinator for the event.

But things are a little different this year. The event, which features music, shopping at night, children's activities and vendors has

grown in size from its early days just a few years ago.

One major donor of the event passed away, and another key person was not able to help this year due to other commitments, she noted.

So the Lake Wales Arts Council partnered with Main Street Lake Wales to make sure Make It Magical happens in keeping with tradition.

"This year, the Arts Council is partnering with Main Street because the event is more for Main Street and their businesses downtown," she said.

"We want to support the community."

Donaldson said Make It Magical has been "one of the best events" to draw people to downtown Lake Wales.

"We needed all the help we could get volunteer wise," she added.

Each business will do their own decorating and will offer their

own little treat, she said. Area schools were invited also to decorate a tree downtown.

The Lake Wales Care Center will be lending their Christmas trees for the evening, then taking them back to their thrift store to continue selling them for the holidays.

The Lake Wales Little Theatre will be going into empty spaces in the Arcade on the Stuart side and setting up a production of The Christmas Carol.

Both Petals & Bows as well as the Lake Wales Care Center and Citizen's Bank & Trust are holding booths with kids activities.

Donaldson said businesses were told that even if they were not going to be open, to please "light up" for the event. Many businesses, however, will be open, as they see the benefit in doing so.

For those interested in donating time or materials, call the Arts

Council during daytime hours at 863-676-8426. There is a need for permanent outdoor lighting for the event so there are no black holes downtown, she notes.

So what is so special about downtowns?

"I grew up with old downtowns," she said. "I grew up in Buffalo and we used to go downtown all the time. There was no fear. As I got into high school, they built more malls. I like that old downtown atmosphere," she said.

Where she comes from, all the department stores have been there more than 100 years, they feature breakfast with Santa and things like that.

"It is a more personal family feeling to me," she said. "That is what we are trying to bring back to Lake Wales at Christmas."

The event is run on a limited budget, she added, so donations are welcome.

"It is a nice event for people to come and go with no cover charge," she said.

Meanwhile, Larry Bossarte is in charge of lighting and buildings.

"Main Street is cooperating with the Lake Wales Arts Council to put it on ... It is a combined effort between the two this year."

Bossarte said what he enjoys most is bringing everybody together downtown to help "coordinate a great event that has probably been the most successful downtown event yet."

Trying to bridge the gap, Bossarte, who also serves on Main Street's board, said, "We didn't want to see it go away. They approached the Chamber to take it over; the Chamber declined but did give additional funding. Main Street is where it really belongs because that is who it involves the most."

He said the event brings a new clientele

downtown every year.

"It is just a great event. I have really enjoyed being able to work with the Arts Council a little closer."

Sandra Wolfe of Citizen's Bank, joined by a few others, is overseeing decorating. She

Wolf said she enjoys the awareness of downtown and the crowd Make It Magical has drawn.

"It seems like every year, it has gotten bigger," she said.

"It is amazing the draw that the Lake Wales downtown has for its larger events," she added.

She has been deciding where to decorate the arcade, coming up with a list to make their decorations happen.

Jim Smith has a huge 25 foot tree for the market square that is being provided, she said.

"I think it's great that the Main Street is now involved, because that is what Main Street is."

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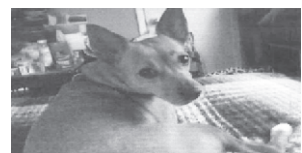
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BARTOW NEWS

Bee-utiful day in the park *Honey Bee Festival packs downtown for day*

By **CATHY PALMER**
CORRESPONDENT

Those bees had nothing on downtown Bartow on Saturday. The city's core was aswarm with people as they basked not only in the glorious weather, but in the sweetness of the Honeybee Festival and Craft Fair.

From Jackson to Broadway, and a block north and south, Main Street was shoulder to shoulder with people eyeing not only the sweet offerings of the Ridge Beekeepers Association members' booths, but the specialized and varied crafts created by local artisans.

Crafts from hand-crafted jewelry and clothing to home-made cakes and jams, and everything home-made in between could be found in the myriad of booths that lined Main and side streets too.

It was the second year the bee-keepers joined

forces with Main Street Bartow in presenting the joint craft and honey fest. "Its a good marriage," said Main Street representative Mary Jordan. "We highlight one of Polk County's crops and let our crafts people have a chance to show and sell their handiwork."

Adding to the festival depth and to cover an even wider audience, the event on Saturday also coincided with the monthly Antiques Fair that comes to town the second Saturday of each month. There were dozens of booths showing off everything from old mirrors to mid-century doo-dads, to fine china and early plastics. It was a cornucopia of stuff — something for everyone.

And the icing on this cake was the car show that lured car enthusiasts from all over to show off their prizes, from Model Ts to T-birds, the motor-ing community was



PHOTOS BY AL & CATHY PALMER

Square dancer Margot Stevens of Lake Wales created the most unusual chapeau Saturday as she rested in the sunshine during a break at the Honeybee and Craft Festival in downtown Bartow.

well represented.

Not to be left out, the children were also seen to ... there was a bounce house for them to let off steam in and arts and crafts tables to unloose their creative sides. They were sponsored

by the Arts Ensemble of Polk County. There were even artists who painted while you watched.

Square dancers livened up the Central and Main intersection with their docey-do-ing and shoppers and lookers



Caleb Foley, 6, of Bartow, gets his face spiffed up by face paint artist Megan Klins of Fun Faces at Saturday's Honeybee and Craft Festival in downtown Bartow.

had to circle around to the beat to avoid being drawn into the alle-mands left or right.

Kicking off at 9 a.m.,

the festival lasted until 4 p.m. when the last of the go-ers and show-ers all agreed it had been a bee-utiful day.



Ashlyn Deeringer shows 9-year-old Kayla Shuff and her 7-year-old sister Lindsey some honey wares at the Deeringer Honey of Winter Haven's booth at Saturday's Honeybee and Craft Festival in downtown Bartow.



Kayla Ward and Janet Tate of the Alturas Women's Club showed off their sweet sides on Saturday as they offered their baked goods for sale at the Honeybee and Crafts Festival in Bartow.



Artist Sam Butler showed his skill with a brush on Saturday as he created a work of art while the Honeybee and Crafts Festival hummed all round him. Butler is a member of the Arts Ensemble, one of the sponsors of the downtown event.



Budding artists Regan and Irelynn Hohnstreiter of Lakeland and Kaleb and Zabiah Battle of Winter Haven joined Anissa Hohnstreiter, also of Lakeland and Andrea Santoyo of Winter Haven at the Arts Ensemble's children's art tent at Saturday's Honeybee and Crafts Festival in downtown Bartow.

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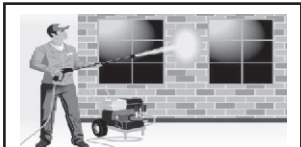
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LAKE WALES NEWS

Three friends get a chance to fly

Circle of Friends students become roommates

By **KATHY LEIGH BERKOWITZ**
CORRESPONDENT

They are not alone, they have each other.

Last week, three Circle of Friends students moved into their first home without a "house mom" to oversee their daily lives.

It is a dream they have long had, these three: Lynette Brown, Melissa Biggs, and Tina Jackson.

According to Mertice Kelly, founder of the Circle of Friends, a ministry dedicated to children and adults with developmental challenges, this was her goal in the early days of the Circle when she wrote down her vision statement.

"The main thing was to help them reach their potential," she said.

For some, she admits, that potential is simply looking at a computer screen all day and interacting that way. But most of her students, she says, are capable of doing many things for themselves.

Surrounded by freshly painted walls, the three roommates look at each other and admit they are happy to have found a new home.

They have each suffered heartache in a multitude of ways, though one would not know it by their smiles.

Lynette's mother died in a car wreck after she was hit by a drunk driver.

"I had to stay and watch her," she said, as



PHOTO BY KATHY LEIGH BERKOWITZ

Through the Circle of Friends, these three women, Lynette Brown, Melissa Biggs, and Tina Jackson, are rooming together and helping each other through life.

her mother went from the hospital, home, then back to the hospital, to the nursing home, and then back to the hospital, and soon passed away. Her mother's memory serves as an inspiration to her, she said. "Mom always said you can be, you can do — anything you want to do," she noted. I started Circle in 2004.

Melissa's stepfather died, and the Circle helped her ... she was a caregiver for her mother by herself. Mom would not let hospice come in, she died of breast cancer.

"Somehow we ended up with two beautiful young ladies living in the home with us," said Kelly. The ultimate goal was that they would be able to live in their own home without supervision from a house mom. "I won't always be here," Kelly said.

Melissa is 47, Tina is 38.

They all look very young for their age, Kelly said.

Tina was friends with them, and when she found out that they were getting ready to spread their wings and fly, she wanted to fly with them, Kelly said.

"I have lived with my mom for 34 years, and I just wanted something different, to live independent without Mommy," Jackson said.

"And that is a natural, God given thing," Kelly adds.

Brown says of the community that has helped the Circle that "Some people don't have a mother, some people do, and when somebody don't have a mother, you have other people around you ... and other mothers out there love you and care about you if you feel bad on Mother's Day."

FLY | 19

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FLY

FROM PAGE 18

Brown said she wants to get married, have children, and learn how to drive.

The home is part of a larger purpose of the Circle, to help students who have the potential to live on their own, independently.

"The main thing was to help them find their way in the world, help them reach their potential. These young ladies showed signs of being able to be mature, if they live in a safe place, and

I consider this a safe place," Kelly said. But the local community is sometimes difficult to convince, she noted, when it comes to people with special challenges, and landlords oft would turn them away, saying they did not want to be liable if something happened to the girls.

Kelly said however, one company stepped up to the plate: Legacy Leasing, specifically, Cole Vogel, found a house for them that would put the girls close to their work at the Circle, their involvement at Church, and other friends in the area.

The home, located

across from First Baptist Church, is an older home, painted pristine white and trimmed in black. It is spacious and each girl has her own bedroom, including a living room and dining room, a fully equipped kitchen, area for laundry, two bathrooms and lots of closet space. And it has a fenced in back yard.

The girls are delighted with their space, they say. "Sometimes it gets a little scary," Brown said of being on their own, "But welcome to the grown-up world."

The three have specific chores they do. Brown is learning to cook and the

other girls want to do this also.

Jackson added, "It is good to be able to do something other than count on Mom."

Biggs sweetly smiles and said she likes living with her friends.

"I know we have fights, but we also get along," she said, as all three grin.

"These young ladies are going to touch other people's lives," Kelly says.

"If the community could overcome their fear of allowing them to be part of the community," Kelly noted, things would be even better.

To that end, she said, the church has

helped greatly.

"The girls are making friends over there at First Baptist," she said.

Saturday night is date night, Biggs said, and she and her boyfriend meet and go to the mall for dinner and a movie.

Brown also has a boyfriend, Robby, who spends a lot of time with her.

The idea, Kelly said, is that they each have "a life."

Each wants to find love, do things, go to parties.

Meanwhile, the girls could use a few things for their home. Though Biggs inherited some really nice pieces of furniture from

her mother, and they have beds and couches and chairs, they could use some pretty curtains. And Brown said she has never been able to go and actually shop for and pick out her own bedroom cover set. Kelly said they are going to have an open house later this year, which will be announced and might be a grand opportunity for anyone who would like to give them a housewarming gift.

The three friends seem like they are off to a good start in their new life.

"We are always going to stay friends forever," said Brown, looking at her roommates.

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BARTOW NEWS

Community helps Super Cooper

By JAMES COULTER
CORRESPONDENT

Chas Kincaid may be a big time Strawberry Festival-performing country music star, but her heart will always remain within her small hometown of Lake Wales and its community.

So when she learned that a local 10-year-old boy was in dire need of medical treatment, she could not decline performing live in concert for his fundraiser benefit.

"After reading his story, I could not say no to that," she said.

One month of planning and traveling was required for her to return to her hometown and perform, but it was all worth it to help raise money for a vital cause.

More so than being able to sing back in her hometown was being able to see the community organize to put together the benefit.

She loved being able to see local residents come together and offer bounce houses, face painting, barbecue dinners, and other activities to help raise money and awareness.

Perhaps the pinnacle of her appearance was being able to allow the young man himself, Cooper Hicks, perform his favorite song alongside her.

"It is precious and it is awful that he is going through that, but (I love) the fact that he has a smile on his face is full of joy, and I love it," Kincaid said. "I hope they raise all the money they need and not a cent less."

Kincaid joined many other local businesses and individuals to help raise money for a local boy in need of medical assistance during a fundraising benefit last Saturday.

The benefit was for 10-year-old Cooper Hicks, a Bartow-native who has been suffering from various medical conditions from an early age, and who was recently diagnosed with dysautonomia, an auto-immune disease that affects the body's ability to regulate body temperature, especially for internal organs.

His condition has led to him developing food intolerance that required him to receive several treatments including a feeding tube



Barbecue dinners of ribs, cole slaw and baked beans were sold and served during last Saturday's fundraising benefit.

installed in his stomach.

His latest treatment will include a visit to Miami Transplant at Jackson Memorial to receive around the clock administration of TPN/Lipid ports, which, if successful, will mean he will not require a transplant.

The biggest expense for the family will not be the treatment itself, but rather the parking and lodging. Last time, his family spent \$2,800 for the hospital stay, which included parking.

To help cover his expenses, his family organized a fundraiser benefit with several businesses and other locals last Saturday at the Bartow Civic Center, which included a barbecue dinner, raffle, and other activities such as face painting, bounce houses, and a concert.

This small town benefit received huge support from businesses in and out of the county, including Center State Painting, Bartow Jewelry and Pawn Shop, John's Drive-In, Mike's Fine Food in Bartow, Apple Lounge in Winter Haven, Strawberry Patch of Fort Meade, and even the House of Blues out of Orlando.

Brian Danforth, co-owner of Twisted Ties, was present as a vendor selling shirts, hats, and other merchandise with proceeds going towards the benefit, and also donated a fishing charter trip as a prize for the raffle.

When he and his business was reached out to by Cooper's family,

Danforth was more than obliged to provide whatever support he could to help Cooper in his time of need, and being able to do so with the support of the local community.

"He is a good kid who is in need, and his family is in need," he said.

"They reached out to us and we did not hesitate, we jumped right on this and did as much as we could to help and benefit him."

Also offering her support was Caidance Gonzalez, an eighth grader from Union Academy who has been friends with Cooper for five years.

As part of a school project, she created and sold bracelets to neighbors in order to raise money and awareness for her close friend.

"He is a nice kid," she said. "I am hoping he gets well as soon as he can. It would be nice to help him."

Helping her with her efforts was her teacher, Michelle Jenkins of



PHOTOS BY JAMES COULTER

Cooper Hicks, 10, plays one of the many games provided at last Saturday's fundraiser to help fund his medical expenses.

Center State Painting, who not only helped Caidance with her community service project, but also to help her friend Amanda in her time of need.

"Amanda is one of my friends, and we are doing everything we can to help her out and make her a little less stressed with what she has to pay," she said.

Overall, the fundraiser itself received a decent turnout, and while it did not raise the funds originally anticipated, it managed to raise a decent amount of money to help, Cooper's mother, Amanda, said.

As of Sunday, Cooper

and his family have left for Miami, where they will stay for two days before leaving with the transplant team to the IT program.

Cooper and his family are more than thankful for the support they received over the weekend, and if anything, they wish to spread awareness about the importance of organ donation, something which her son may require.

"It could be a loved one that you know, it could save your life," she said. "While we are dealing with heartache, it can help save somebody else's life."



Cooper Hicks and his parents were able to raise money to help pay for their travel and lodging expenses for an upcoming medical treatment of his in Miami.



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BARTOW NEWS

There was something for everybody

Flywheelers Show draws in the crowd in Fort Meade

By **JAMES COULTER**
CORRESPONDENT

Pine logs are piled by the dozen underneath the shade of a rustic sawmill. One by one, each log is stripped of their bark by workers in denim overalls.

Once the last log is stripped bare, a worker signals to another aboard a steam engine, which lets out a blare from its whistle along with several puffs of smoke.

The engine revs up, turning a leather belt that in turn rotates a 45-inch sawblade within the mill.

One by one, the logs are straddled upon an apparatus and passed through the spinning blade, cutting them into individual wooden planks that are then placed opposite the log pile.

As the blade turns and the logs pass through, from them spurt sawdust within a small pile that quickly grows into a mountain.

Since 1920, this sawmill has been slicing wooden logs into planks, only now it's used as a historical demonstration of how wooden planks were crafted in the old days.

The historic sawmill was one of many attractions present at the 21st Annual Florida Flywheelers Antique Engine Fall Fuel Off in Fort Meade.

Richard Haas has been overseeing the sawmill demonstration for the past eight years. The biggest challenge during that has been recruiting volunteers to help out with the demonstration.

Otherwise, the main challenge, as with every year, has been with overall maintenance, ensuring that everything, including the saw blade, is well maintained.

Every day, Haas and his crew have to sharpen the blade before the show. Often they sharpen it twice by lunchtime.

Overall, the effort is

worth it, as the demonstration provides an educational experience for tourists accustomed to modern technology to see how things were once done.

"You are seeing how things were done around the turn of the century," he said. "Now everything is push button. Even in the sawmill business, they throw the logs on the mill and the machine does it all."

For the past eight years, Haas has loved the overall family environment of the event, which was once safe enough to allow his granddaughter to walk about unattended.

November proves to be the slowest time of the year, with their events earlier in January and February seeing longer lines for the food stands, he said.

"November is always a slow time," he said. "We have a third or half of what we have."

This event is one of

many when the Florida Flywheelers Park in Fort Meade is open to the public. From Wednesday to Saturday, attendees were able to see the sawmill along with other buildings such as a church, general store, and gas station within the park's replica historic village.

True to its name, the festival also provided a showcase of tractors and other engines and antique vehicles, many of which competed in tractor pulls while others were showcased during the tractor parade.

Aside from these vehicles, the festival also provided a swap meet where artisans and other attendees could sell and trade a variety of items ranging from hubcaps and signs to sculptures and clothing.

One Wauchula couple, Adriana and Victor Rodriguez, have been attending the event for the past six years selling their artwork crafted

from recycled material.

Their sculptures, created from recycled tires and treated wood, range from animals such as birds and bears to cartoon characters such as Pikachu and the Minions.

Victor is the artistic mastermind behind most of their creations, while Adriana does most of the selling. Most of what they create are commissioned by customers.

For the past six years, the event has provided them a consistent venue to sell their craft, with plenty of repeat customers as well as other fun activities such as camping.

"I don't have to worry, they have all the facilities we need out here," Adriana said.

Another local artisan, Carla Gerstner, uses this opportunity to sell makeshift bags and quilts from her small business, Carla's Baggage and More.

Most of her

merchandise consists of bags crafted from animal feed bags, as well as other small items including pet toys and quilts.

For the past three years, the swap meet has provided her with steady business, with plenty of friendly customers and acquaintances.

"I don't have any complaints," she said. "I love the people. They are very friendly and relaxing."

Overall, this year's festivities have proven successful with a much better turnout thanks to much better weather, said Show Manager Kevin Sanders.

With such a fantastic event this year, he hopes to see future events grow and prosper, especially because of the overall family-friendly atmosphere.

"The weather is a lot better than last year, so we saw a better turnout," he said. "There is something here for everyone... (and) they are growing every year."



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BARTOW NEWS

Wide variety of people meet at Flywheelers

Folks come from everywhere to weekend antique fair

By **KATHY LEIGH BERKOWITZ**
CORRESPONDENT

The Flywheelers Park was full of life last weekend as the annual antique fair was there. Thousands of vendors drew thousands of people, who paid to visit the park and spend the day browsing the displays and shopping.

And there was country style biscuits and gravy for a small price at one barn.

Florida Flywheelers Antique Engine Club features several events throughout the year, drawing people from all over the country to see their engines and displays, visit, have something to eat, and take away a bit of God and country. American flags are proudly displayed across the park, and during the weekend antique fair, almost everything is for sale and most of the times, prices can be negotiated.

At almost 240 acres large, the park features a tractor pull track, club and member buildings

which show off collections and many large engines. Total membership is well over 1,500. Three shows per year are featured, and one goal of the Flywheelers is to "educate its members and the general public of the historical, technical, and social contributions and impact of these items of the past," according to its website at floridaflywheelers.org.

Check out that engine

Standing by a "Snow" Engine, Fred Helmke, who has been with the Flywheelers since they bought the property in 200, says he helped rebuild the Snow engine. "That fall we came out here, and that engine was laying here in the grass, in pieces and parts," he says. The engine, fully assembled, takes up an entire large barn now.

A mechanical engineer, he was asked to volunteer his services to help reassemble the engine.

He said yes. "And I have been here ever since."

Having retired from a career that involved working for Standard Metal, he admits of the project, "the whole thing was a challenge." At this, he takes a break to watch the crowd as they watch the engine and its big wheel go around.

Reassembly took about three years, he says. The engine is from the F.S. Snow Steam and Pump Company in Buffalo, N.Y. The flywheel is 12 feet in diameter and weighs 12 tons. The engine runs on natural gas.

"It pumped natural gas into the pipeline system to a pumping station in Buffalo," he says, noting there were six engines like this one together, in series of twos. This one was a low pressured engine, and there were others that were high pressure engines.

The crowd watches as another Flywheeler gives the go ahead, and the whole room comes alive with steam, and motion



PHOTO BY KATHY LEIGH BERKOWITZ

Roger McKeon, a first time visitor to the Flywheelers park, noted that it was "very nice" and said he wonders if the younger generation will keep the park alive when the older generation passes away.

from the pistons, and the 26,000 pound wheel that helps operate it.

Helmke says that maintenance on the engines was sort of tandem, as they ran 24-7. So they would shut off a pair, and work all the engines in a

circle in like manner, and the process literally took all year.

The fascination with Flywheelers has grown over the years.

Most of the engines at Flywheelers are upright, but this one is horizontal.

"These are the pistons that you see here on the end, 36 inch, it fires on both ends of the pistons. They are all water cooled, there is a chamber with igniters, instead of spark plugs," he adds.

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Quilt, very old, Sun Bonnet Baby, perfect condition, never used! Regular bed size, \$350, 863-471-1904.

Slot Machine w/Coins \$250.; Homer Simpson Bowling Game w/pins, ball \$50. collector **863-551-1707** Appt Needed (WH)

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MUSICAL 6090

Accordion, Titano tube chamber, rare, antique, \$400 OBO, 863-381-4410.

BARTOW NEWS

Reception positive for Lennys Grill & Subs

By STEVE STEINER

SSTEINER@SCMGINC.COM

Finally, the wait is over; actually, it was over a tad bit earlier than last week, when Lennys Grill & Subs held a soft opening. However, a ribbon cutting on Wednesday, Nov. 9, coupled several days later on Saturday, Nov. 12 with a remote broadcast by radio station Country 97 (WPCV-97.5).

Regardless what day, whether the soft opening or the subsequent celebratory week, response to the opening of the newest restaurant in Bartow has been nothing short of outstanding. This was particularly evident last Saturday.

Despite having to “compete” with Main Street Bartow’s annual Honeybee Festival, it was a non-stop flow of traffic to Lennys Grill & Subs. At one point the line to order stretched from the register

practically to the store entrance.

“We’ve got people coming in from all over,” said owner Jim Harmer. A good many of them, since first opening, have been from the Polk County Sheriff’s Office; former compatriots of Harmer’s who retired from the PCSO, in part, due to medical issues he was experiencing.

In fact, it was those medical issues — he was diagnosed with a brain tumor — that led him to Lennys Grill & Subs. Going in for treatment in Tampa, he and his wife, Karen, stopped in at a Lennys. The two of them were overwhelmed with the quality of food and service. Eventually, it led him to purchase the Bartow franchise.

At first, Harmer believed he could remain in law enforcement and run Lennys on a part-time basis, but he quickly realized this would have to be a full-time

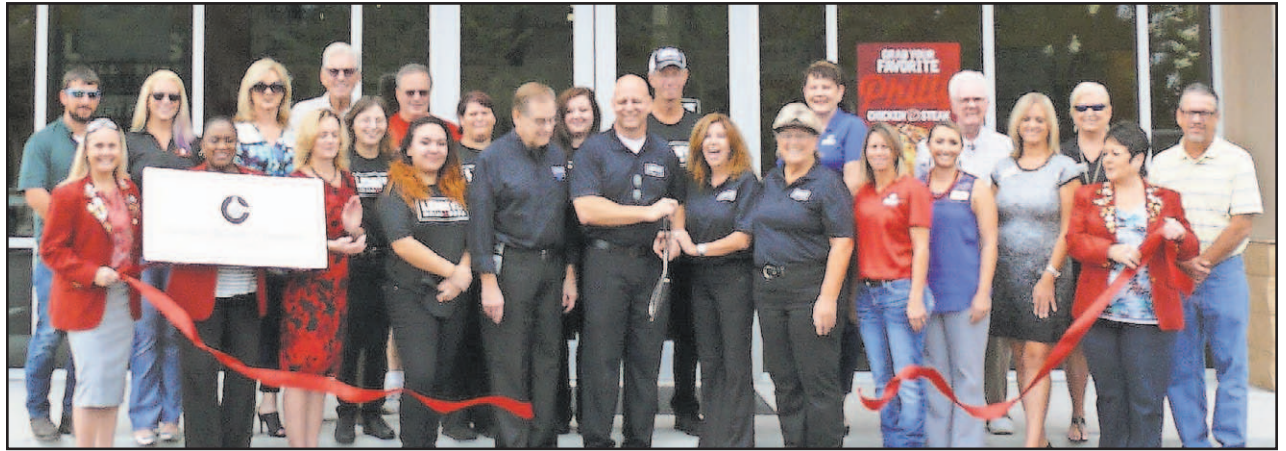


PHOTO PROVIDED

The ribbon cutting for Lennys Grill & Subs on Nov. 9.

effort. The fact that he had exhausted vacation time and personal leave played a role in going full-time with the restaurant.

Even the broadcast team with Country 97, on-air personality Jeni Taylor and sales/marketing representative Gail Borden, were enthusiastic.

“It’s wonderful having a Lennys in Bartow,” said Taylor as she awaited,

along with Harmer to do their next on-air spot.

Inside the restaurant, Mark King and his wife, Carolyn, were waiting for their order to be brought. They were going to share a Philly cheesesteak. This was their first visit and was the result of a family member.

“Our daughter called and told us about this,” said Mark, long since retired

as a pharmacist with the Lakeland VA. Carolyn quickly added their daughter was the oldest of their four children.

While Harmer was being interviewed, his wife Karen and their daughter, AnnMarie, a ninth grade student at Bartow IB stood in the hot sun, waving signs inviting people to come in and dine. A short while later they were glad

to once more be in the shade.

“You can tell the difference in temperature,” said Karen Harmer.

As for her part, their daughter said she was glad to be on hand.

“I’m just helping out wherever I can,” AnnMarie said. Her mother quickly added that some of AnnMarie’s friends would probably be dropping by.

Spath Jewelers food drive underway

By STEVE STEINER

SSTEINER@SCMGINC.COM

Although Spath Jewelers’ annual holiday food drive started later this year compared to previous years, it already is on track to exceed last year’s contributions.

“We’ve already given away a table of food, to Redeemer Lutheran Church,” said Gene Spath. Joining other businesses and agencies, Spath said that at least 80 people will receive two bags of groceries.

“The next recipient will be the Polk County Health Department and we’ll also be donating to the Church Service Center.”

He smiled as he said

this, but it was soon replaced by a troubled look as he recounted an incident that took place at Redeemer Lutheran Church.

“A guy was living out of his car and asked if we had any pots and pans,” he said. It was obvious, judging from the look on Spath’s face, that he was pained by the memory. “Nobody in this country should suffer from hunger.”

This year’s food drive began Nov. 7 and ends Nov. 26. As an incentive, Spath Jewelers has been doing various promotions, such as giving away free pairs of earrings the first week of the food drive. People who contribute (as well as those who don’t) are

given “diamond points” that will go toward six grand prizes valued up to \$5,000.

The top prize is a ring with a 1 ¼ carat white sapphire in a princess cut with 35 purple diamonds in a halo around the sapphire.

“We’ve had hundreds of people so far,” said Sara Cooper, who has been with Spath Jewelers approximately four years. “People get 200 points just walking through the door.”

In addition to making a food contribution, people can earn diamond points making purchases, making a deposit on layaways, as well as if Spath buys their gold, sterling and platinum jewelry.



PHOTO BY STEVE STEINER

Sara Cooper holds aloft a clipboard with signatures as she displays two of the top six prizes that will be given away during Spath Jewelers annual food drive.

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BARTOW NEWS

New life for former country club?

By **STEVE STEINER**
SSTEINER@SCMGINC.COM

It was a rare occasion, and perhaps rare is too weak a word, but it will have to suffice. At the Nov. 7 regular meeting of the city commission, something occurred. Gerald Cochran paid the commissioners a true compliment.

He thanked commissioners for voting down the healthcare insurance proposal Vice Mayor James F. Clements had sought. Had commissioners voted otherwise, the city of Bartow would have had to pay for their healthcare coverage, something that commissioners now pay for out of their own pockets if they have decided to take up the option of having it.

"Finally they've done the right thing," said Cochran. However, if commissioners were going to celebrate being complimented by Cochran, it would have been short-lived. Cochran then launched into one of his familiar diatribes. He complained anew over the fact he has to pay a fee twice on a property that years ago was split when a road was built.

He also took commissioners to task over the use of the word fee, stating that although it is called a fee "it is a tax to me. If it wasn't for the homestead (exemption) I'd be in trouble with my budget."

Following reports from the city manager and city attorney, commissioners voted to approve Ordinances 2016-16 and 2016-17, which both involved the site of the former Peace River Country Club.

Now owned by William F. Wise Jr., who purchased the property earlier this year at an auction, commissioners approved in a 5-0 roll call vote to change the zone from recreation and open space to commercial for Ordinance 2016-16, and from PR (public recreation) to PD (planned development). He would like to restore the country club as an events facility.

According to Planning Director Robert Wieggers, Wise is looking into restoring the former country club building. But if it does not seem feasible, Wise wants the option to build several



PHOTO BY STEVE STEINER

Levononia Wynn, who has retired from The Front Porch, is presented a Certificate of Appreciation plaque by Vice Mayor James F. Clements for her years of service and dedication to the city and her West Bartow community.

multi-family residences. The buildings would be limited to 12 units per acre for an area of 3-3 1/2 acres total, which would mean a maximum of 34-40 units.

It was later added by Jim Urick of Kissimmee-based Hanson, Walter & Associates that it may be possible to both rehabilitate the former country club building as well as go forward with building the multi-family residences. (Hanson, Walter & Associates, Inc. provides civil engineering and land surveying services to many private commercial, residential and industrial developers, in addition to local and state governments for roadway, drainage and utility infrastructure design & permitting projects. It has worked on more than 4,800 projects throughout Central Florida.)

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BARTOW NEWS

Here's to your health



PHOTOS BY STEVE STEINER

Bartow Regional Medical Center CEO Phil Minden engages in conversation with Susan Sartain, now with Cornerstone Hospice. The medical center hosted the November Fun Thursday event.

This month's Fun Thursday took place Nov. 10 and was hosted by Bartow Regional Medical Center

Right: Jennifer Hall (right), whose term is coming to an end as this year's president of The Greater Bartow Chamber of Commerce, laughs over a comment Barbara Adamson has just finished saying. They were among many attending the chamber's monthly Fun Thursday event. This one was held at Bartow Regional Medical Center.



(From left) Rhonda Harvey and Windy Grier engage in conversation at the Fun Thursday event held at Bartow Regional Medical Center, where the two are employed. They were present to sign people up for blood pressure screenings.





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BARTOW NEWS

Students hoping to help deputy

Bartow's FFA Club raising money for deputy hit by car

By **CHARLES A. BAKER III**
CORRESPONDENT

The Bartow High School FFA is hoping to raise \$10,000 for Polk County Deputy Adam Pennell, 25, who was reportedly struck by a drunk driver who fled the scene while working in the median on State Road 60 near Lake Wales Saturday, Oct. 29. Pennell required surgery for several broken bones and a crushed pelvis. He could be in recovery for up to a year.

The woman he stopped to help, 33-year-old Jessica Enchautegui-Otero of Tampa, died at the scene.

Bartow High agriculture teacher Ashley White said that when she told her FFA officers about the hit and run, they stepped up to the plate to plan a fundraiser for the Pennell family. White is married to PCSO deputy Ryan White.

"Adam is a hard working, great guy to work with," Deputy

White said. "Any help anyone can give is greatly appreciated. He sure has a long road ahead of him to recovery."

The White family and the Bartow High School FFA are organizing a spaghetti fundraiser for the Pennell family. A \$10 donation includes spaghetti, roll and dessert. Delivery is available for orders of at least 10 meals. White said she can take orders up until Nov. 22. She is requesting people email her at ashley.white@polk-fl.net or call 863-698-3816 to arrange payments.

White said a single check will be written to the Pennell family once all the funds are collected. Pickup is between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. Nov. 29 at the Bartow High School Agriculture Department building.

In the early hours of Saturday, Oct. 29, Pennell reportedly saw Enchautegui-Otero in the median of State Road 60, he stopped his

patrol car, activated the lights, and got out to see why the 33-year-old was walking in the median in the middle of the night. According to the sheriff's office, Pennell learned Enchautegui-Otero had driven off the road, struck a tree and had walked out onto S.R. 60 to flag somebody down for help. Pennell reportedly called dispatch for EMS.

Judd said Pennell was unconscious when medics arrived and later was in so much pain communication was impossible. Shortly after the accident Judd raised the reward for information leading to an arrest from \$3,000 to \$10,000.

On Thursday, Nov. 3, traffic homicide detectives reportedly received an anonymous tip by Heartland Crime Stoppers about the possible whereabouts of the suspect truck. Detectives arrested Charles "Charlie" Lewis of 2853 Mar Lisa Cove Road near Camp Mack

in Lake Wales. Lewis reportedly told detectives he was at a party that night and that he had been drinking.

"Never underestimate the power of the community," said Sheriff Grady Judd. "Thanks to an anonymous tip, we were able to solve this case and help bring some closure to these two families whose lives were forever changed by the reckless actions of Charlie Lewis."

Lewis was charged with leaving the scene of a traffic crash causing bodily injury and leaving the scene of a traffic crash causing death. Both are first degree felonies. If impairment is proven, further charges will be added.

Pennell was hired

as a deputy sheriff in December 2013. According to PCSO his wife, Christin, was hired as a PCSO clerical assistant in 2011, put herself through the law enforcement academy, and became a deputy sheriff herself in May 2014. She and Adam were married in March 2016.

"Our motto for our (Bartow High School) FFA chapter has been Living to Serve and that's exactly what my officer team and FFA members wanted to do through this event," fundraiser organizer White said. "They are excited about it and have reached out to the community for donations and organizing this event. We are excited to help the Pennell family."



ADAM PENNELL

All checks can be made payable to BHS FFA Alumni.

"I thank all of the community members and businesses that have shown an outpouring of support through donations of materials to have this fundraiser," White said.

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Flea market dealer delight, boxes of new & gently used items. Kitchen, electronics, golf & artificial greenery, \$125 for all, 863-465-7657.

GE Self Cleaning Oven GE Over Counter Microwave 1 year old \$400. OBO 908-507-0849 (Winter Haven)

GE Washer, GE Gas Dryer 1 year old \$400. OBO 908-507-0849 (Winter Haven)

Generator; Full Size Bed w/ headboard; Rattan Dining room set w/shelves; Men Levi Size 36 x 32, **863-528-2879** Lake Wales
Glasses (4) wildlife, no. Ameri. moose, bald eagle, Amer. bison & humpback whale, never used, all for \$10, 863-273-7625.

Handmade Ceiling Tiffany Lamp w/Blue/Yellow/Red Asking \$75. 863-537-7799 (Bartow)

Juice Extractor, BIG MOUTH, Hamilton Beach, exc. cond., like new, \$30, 863-243-9288

King size 8' headboard, rails, boxspring, \$100, 863-452-2690.

Ladder, 10' Louisville 10' step ladder, \$60.00 - 612-839-9661

Ladder, little giant ladder, can extend to 12 ft., hardly used, \$75.00 - 863-655-1496

Paper Shredder - \$10.00, 863-314-9337

Large patio rug, good cond., green/browns, \$50, 309-699-6335.

Men's Belair quartz watch, never worn or adjusted, in original box, \$60, 863-471-0313.

Motorcycle jacket, leather w/liner, lke new, \$75, 734-718-2888.

New ceramic clown, 22" tall, dressed in outfit, \$20, 863-655-1404.

New Elec Adj Full Size Bed w/Vibrator/wave feature Mattress \$400. 301-991-4711 or 863-438-9071 (Haines City)

Phone case for Samsung Galaxy S4, hard plastic, blue/gray, from Verizon store, \$10, 863-273-7625.

Pocket Watch w/stand, Franklin Mint, The Timber Wolf, beautiful detail, chain/case incl., \$140, 863-273-7625.

Power Sprayer, like new, \$25.00 - 863-314-9337

Queen headboard, solid wood, \$50, 863-617-2058.

Queen Size Quilttop Bed Spread w/two matching shams in Red, (Collections) like new \$25. 863-537-7799

RV Awning Drop Shade. Custom made, brown, 19'L x8'H, 50' HD tie down strap w/steel anchors, exc. cond., \$150 firm, 860-919-1777. Sebring.

RV Fan, Endless Breeze by Fantastic Fan. 3 speed, 12 volt. exc. cond., \$30, 860-919-1777 (Sebring).

Webber grill, large, good cond., \$30, 309-699-6335.

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POLICE BEAT

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

Authorities: Deputies fatally shoot man who shot mother

LAKELAND (AP) — Sheriff's deputies fatally shot a 53-year-old man after he shot his mother in both legs and pointed a gun at them during a domestic disturbance investigation in Florida, authorities said.

Marjorie Pacuicrk, 75, had called 911 after son John Pacuicrk argued with her before locking himself in his room at home in

Lakeland around 6 p.m. Thursday, Polk County Sheriff Grady Judd said in a news release.

The dispatcher told the woman to walk outside the house and wait for deputies. When they arrived, she told them her son had gotten angry when she asked him to help her push her car into the backyard. He tried and the car wouldn't

move. According to Judd, John Pacuicrk went into his room and his mother told him through the door that she wanted him to leave.

Deputies Lee Smith, 23, and Bernardo Del Valle, 28, went inside the home to talk to John Pacuicrk. While inside, Judd said the deputies heard gunshots and ran out front where they saw

the man and his brother, Theodore Pacuicrk, 51, rolling around on the ground. They ordered John Pacuicrk to drop the gun, but he jumped up and pointed it at the deputies, Judd said.

Both deputies returned fire and John Pacuicrk was struck several times, Judd said. Deputies performed CPR, but he died at the scene.

The mother made it to a car in the front yard. Judd said she was taken to a hospital in stable condition.

Theodore Pacuicrk told investigators his brother had gone out the back door, jumped a fence and was walking toward the front yard with a gun in each hand, Judd said. He said his brother was saying, "I'm going to kill her,"

so he put him in a bear hug, but the brother was still able to fire multiple shots, striking their mother. At that point, he said he wrestled his brother to the ground.

Judd said the deputies have been placed on administrative leave pending an investigation.

The race of those involved in the incident wasn't listed on reports.

Crime prevention campaign has kicked off

Winter Haven Police Department

The Winter Haven Police Department kicked off a Crime Prevention campaign that started Nov. 10, to bring awareness of preventing car burglaries by locking doors and keeping the passenger compartment clear.

"Get Caught Preventing Crime" is a way for citizens to earn a \$25 VISA gift card just for being mindful of locking vehicle doors and keeping valuables locked away. (A similar campaign in 2014 garnered a 17 percent reduction in vehicle burglaries over the same six-week period from the previous year. The Department did not conduct the campaign in 2015.)

According to Chief Charlie Bird, the holiday season is fast approaching and if thinking just locking a vehicle is enough to keep valuables safe, think again. Leaving valuables in plain sight tempts criminals to break the window if the door is locked. Locking is one line of defense, but securing valuables

is another. In fact, through the month of October and first week of November, there have been 32 incidents of vehicle burglaries — 13 of those unlocked and 19 locked with the windows smashed. Of the 32 incidents, 28 had items inside of the vehicle that were visible from the outside.

"Locking a car is no longer a deterrent," said Bird, "It takes just a matter of seconds for someone to smash the window and grab what is in reach."

Running through Dec. 24, five citizens per week will be randomly selected for a \$25 VISA gift card. Lists of license plates will be gathered throughout each week from parking lots at shopping plazas and restaurants throughout the City of Winter Haven. Selections will be made each Friday through Dec. 23.

Members of the Winter Haven Police Department will be targeting parking lots throughout the city checking for vehicles that are locked and also

looking to be sure the passenger compartment is free of clutter. The vehicles chosen for the random selections will know by a Blue Card left on the windshield that has a sticker with a phone number to call. To be eligible, all the owner needs to do is call the phone number listed, leave the tag number of the vehicle and a call back number.

The lists garnered throughout the week will contain the license plate and make/model of the vehicle. The tags will be checked to make sure the vehicle owner does not have a warrant or a criminal history, which is a disqualifier for the reward. Five people will be selected at random and contacted by phone in order to arrange for a pickup of the gift card. The money obtained for the program will come from forfeiture funds. Forfeiture funds are proceeds obtained by seized property or cash that was used to support the commission of a felonious act. In other words, the criminals are funding this program.

"Our citizens are the first line of defense against crime," Bird said. "We are there to work with them and hopefully the \$25 incentive will further motivate drivers to be crime prevention minded."

Vehicle tag numbers chosen will be placed into a database that will then randomly select five people per week for the six-week program. A total of \$750 will be utilized for the program.

Lake Wales PD Nov. 9

Drug arrest
Lake Wales Police conducted a traffic stop on a silver Dodge Ram driven by Lonnie Wade. With the use of K9 Rhaegar detected the presence of narcotics. A search of the vehicle was conducted and LWPD discovered methamphetamine, paraphernalia and other drug related items. Wade was arrested and transported to Polk County Jail.

Nov. 11 Possession of meth

LWPD conducted a lawful traffic stop at and

made contact with the driver, James Wilson. Hampton conducted an exterior sniff with K-9 Badge. Badge gave a positive alert for the presence of narcotics. Hampton search the truck and located 1g of Meth as well as drug paraphernalia. Wilson was placed under arrest and later transported to the Polk County Jail.

Battery (domestic violence)

Officers responded to a complaint of a black male in the streets yelling for people to wake up as well as banging on a neighbor's door. When officers arrived they made contact with Javon Cole. Cole said his brother, Jamar Cole, battered him. Javon had a busted left eyebrow and scrapes on his right shoulder. Javon said he was arguing with his brother about a girl and his brother attacked him.

Officers then made contact with Jamar Cole. Jamar said he and his brother were arguing about a girl and that Javon attacked him. Jamar had a bite mark on

his chest. There were no independent witnesses to the battery so both Jamar and Javon were placed under arrest. Javon was taken to LWMC to be medically treated. Both Jamar and Javon were later transported to the Polk County Jail.

Nov. 12 Criminal mischief

LWPD responded to the Seminole Hotel in reference to a past occurred criminal mischief. Upon arrival, LWPD met with the complainant who stated sometime last night an unknown person had discharged a fire extinguisher taken from the third floor of the hotel. There were no witnesses and the complainant did not know who was responsible for the incident.

Open container

LWPD was patrolling and came into contact with Morrie Wells. Wells was in possession of an alcoholic beverage, police reported. LWPD completed an affidavit issuing a court date for open container.



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Home & Garden



PHOTOS BY CATHY PALMER

Beverly Newcomer of Lake Wales chats with Roosevelt Academy agriculture students Felipe Garcia and Alex Soule at last week's plant sale at the Grove House on U.S. 27 in Lake Wales. Roosevelt students sold plants on Wednesday and Saturday to help pay for the school's ongoing agricultural program.

For sale



Felipe Garcia and Alex Soule take stock of their plant inventory at last week's plant sale at the Grove House on U.S. Highway 27 in Lake Wales. Proceeds from the annual plant sale helps Roosevelt Academy's Roosevelt Farms pay for the agricultural program at the Lake Wales school.

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Home & Garden



Audrey Davis, a member of the Fort Meade Garden Club, won the November Yard of the Month. She lives at 219 NE 1st St.

Top yards

PHOTOS PROVIDED

Right: Congratulations to Tom and Mary Pepka on their beautifully maintained landscape. They are the winners of the Yard of the Month in Lake Wales. Tom and Mary are fairly new to Lake Wales having purchased their home located at 1042 Old Cutler Rd in the Oakwood Golf Community in 2013. The land inhibits many varieties of foliage including but not limited to; Oleander, Croton, Elephant Ear, Crape Myrtle, Red Sisters, Indian Hawthorne, Jane Plants, Palms and more. In the photo, from left is Drew Farrer, LWAR 1YR Director; Tom Pepka, owner; and Mary Pepka, owner and Heidi Gravel, LWAR president.



Rotary Foundation Month recognized

By **CATHY PALMER**
CORRESPONDENT

Bartow Rotarians on Nov. 1 were recognized by the Polk County Commission as the county governing board proclaimed November Rotary Foundation Month.

Bartow Club President Tommy Griffin and President Elect Jim Martin accepted the proclamation for all the county's clubs from County Commissioner Melony Bell who lauded Rotary Clubs for their service to the community.

She said that through Rotary Club efforts, polio, the disease that devastated children for hundreds of years, had virtually been eradicated and

Rotary Clubs were playing a part in helping with that effort by providing vaccines to children the world over.

"Within a few years polio will be gone, in part thanks to Rotary Clubs," she said.

Bell also said Rotary Clubs provided Polk middle school students with eye exams and glasses and saw that third graders throughout the county received dictionaries.

Bell also said the Bartow Rotary Club #6890 had been founded in 1924 and was one of 11 Rotary Clubs in Polk County.

The day before that proclamation, the Bartow City Commission also issued a proclamation recognizing Rotary Foundation Month. At



PHOTO BY JEFF ROSLOW

Bartow Mayor Trish Pfeiffer, right, shows the Bartow Rotary Club the proclamation the city commission issued last week proclaiming November as Rotary Month for its anniversary.

Wednesday's Rotary meeting Bartow Mayor Trish Pfeiffer delivered the proclamation a second time before members of the club.

The Bartow Club has two major fund raising

efforts each year, the Toast to the Arts which was held last week and the annual Wild Game Dinner which is scheduled in March.

The Bartow Club also provides scholarships



PHOTO PROVIDED

Polk County Commissioner Melony Bell, right, hands a proclamation to Bartow Rotarians, from left, President J.C. Martin and Tommy Harper on Tuesday, Nov. 1 as the county declared November as Rotary Foundation Month. Celebrating 100 years of Service Above Self, Rotarians J.C., Ernie Cooper, Patty Clark and Griffin, for Rotary Clubs in Polk County and district.

to Bartow High School students each year.

Jeff Roslow contributed to this story.

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Battle of Bowlegs is ready to go, tickets on sale

By **CHARLES A. BAKER III**
CORRESPONDENT

It's not a far drive, doesn't cost much, and unless you are an infant or a pet who doesn't like loud noises, there's a good chance you will enjoy checking out the Battle of Bowlegs Creek.

The annual event was originally scheduled in April but got rescheduled for Nov. 18-20 at the Fort Meade Outdoor Recreation Area just east of town on U.S. 98 near the Peace River bridge.

According to overall event commander Col. Dwight Dovel there will be a Civil War and a Seminole War. Seminole battles will take place between 10 a.m. and noon all weekend. Civil War camps will be located at the back of the property and the Civil War battle takes place at 2:30 p.m. all weekend.

This year Dovel said

there will also be a Civil War naval landing and skirmish on the river at noon all weekend.

A free shuttle service lets visitors move from the parking lot to various camps without having to walk much but be prepared to stand most of the day. Food and drink vendors are spread out and there is ample shade although the November weather has been perfect of late.

There will be a Seminole Village and a logged fort near the vendors.

For those men who pretend to be romantic, can take his better half to the Period Ball Saturday evening at the covered pavilion. Music will be provided by #7 Pounds of Bacon.

On the property is ample room to camp, either by tent, camper or RV. Firewood, ice and water are available for

campers.

When not living as a colonel, overall event commander Dwight Dovel is an amateur archaeologist from Fort Pierce who recently, with help from two others, dug up around 1500 Civil War-era artifacts on land in the Fort Meade area.

Other organizers of the Battle of Bowlegs Creek are Colonel Chuck Munson of the 4th Brigade and Confederate Colonel Keith Van Leuven of the 7th Florida. Hawkwood Kenny will portray a Seminole Indian chief.

Admission is \$10 per vehicle. For information, contact Priscilla Perry at 863-285-8253 or by email at fortmeadechamber@gmail.com. The Battle of Bowlegs Creek is sponsored by the Fort Meade Chamber of Commerce and the Fort Meade Historical Society and Museum.



PHOTO BY CATHY PALMER

Annual Sale

Books and games galore were spread out for picking favorites at a sale hosted by the Floral Lakes senior community in Bartow on Friday, Nov. 11 and Saturday, Nov. 12 . Proceeds from the annual yard sale go to provide scholarships for Bartow High School students and to help fund activities for the community.

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RECOUNTED

FROM PAGE 1

The difference was 522 votes. In the Soil and Water District race, Brian Dockery earned 50.16 percent (105,113 votes) to William DeHart's 49.84 percent (104,449). Neither race were candidates in political parties. Florida law forces a recount in any election in which the difference is half a percentage point or less.

For the final results of this race, consult our web sites (www.polkcountymodemocrat.com or www.winterhavensun.com) to see the final results.

PJ. Leiva, the community services director for the Supervisor of Elections, said the count may take longer than they anticipated because the number of people who voted in Polk County during a presidential race has grown tremendously.

"We had more ballots than we've ever had," she said Monday. "The turnout percentage was not larger (than in 2012) but there has been so much growth in Polk County that the numbers are larger."

Aside from those two races, the election is over, at least for two more years.

It was a long-drawn-out campaign season, but for one group of county workers it was what it's all about.

The Supervisor of Elections and her crew of worker bees pulled it off here without a hitch. Supervisor Lori Edwards says it went like clockwork because the new, bigger location in Auburndale was designed for her office's needs and was "about as perfect as we could get it."

Edwards said there were a few minor glitches, like people hitting doors that opened the other way, but other than that, "it was great."

Edwards said her election

staff of about 1,700 people handled some 288,576 ballots from all 167 precincts. That represents about 71 percent of the county's total 407,647 registered electors.

There also were some 92,645 voters who opted to cast their ballots early, Edwards added.

"We did extend the early voting period for this election," Edwards explained, "which gave more people the opportunity to use that option instead of waiting for the Tuesday election to vote."

She added early voting nearly doubled from the 2012 race.

Edwards relocated her operations from its long-time downtown Bartow operation to the new location near the Auburndale Speedway in May and had three months to get settled in and ready for the primary election in August.

"In a way, the primary was a trial run for us," she explained.

"We have twice the space

as we had before and the drive-through was the best thing," she said. Trucks or vehicles carrying both voting equipment and marked ballots could circle the building, taking their time at the unloading dock to make room for the next one in line, she explained. "Plus we have the room to use fork lifts now which we didn't have in the old location."

Edwards explained the election in Polk County required some 14 tons of ballots that had to be shipped out to each precinct and returned and kept under lock and key until they can be legally disposed of.

"Another other good thing," the long-time supervisor said, "is that the new location is just about a half mile from the geographic center of the county, so nobody had that far to travel from the precincts."

The new operations center is at 70 Florida Citrus Blvd., Winter Haven.

Edwards said most elections

people are "planners by nature" and "meticulous about flow and patterns" so when she and her staff were designing the interior of their new building, they knew what needed to be where to facilitate the ease of operations when election returns were deciding such important issues.

She also said the new facility allowed her to install more efficient security systems.

"We have everything under camera now," she said. "So we can look at what's going on where and adjust as we have to. It also makes our storage of our equipment and materials easier to secure."

"All told," she added, "The \$2 million it took to move the operations center out here was well spent. It's more convenient and accessible to both the public and staff when we need it to be. It all worked out very well. We are all very happy the way everything worked."

TRUMP

FROM PAGE 1

Trump's candidacy not only carried him to victory, but also Republicans maintained a lead in both the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives and there are now 31 Republican governors in the 50 states.

Trump's victory march last week saw the candidate sweeping through "toss-up" states the media felt would go toward Clinton — and that included Florida, Ohio, Michigan and Wisconsin. All those states went red. In Florida, Clinton had a 55 percent chance of winning but that didn't come to be. Trump won 49.1 percent of the vote to Clinton's 47.8, turning some blue Florida counties red. That didn't surprise Martin as he said the voices of the disenfranchised weren't heard.

"A precinct clerk in Lakeland said she never felt like voting until this year," Martin, who was a precinct clerk in Lakeland, said. "I didn't ask her who she voted for, but I knew ... I knew who she was voting for."

Martin said according to his party's tracking in Florida it appeared Trump was going to win Florida before the general election started.

But to some it was not what they thought was going to happen.

"I voted for Trump but I didn't think he was going to win," Carl Kolling of Winter Haven said. He said he thought Trump's plan for the local economy was better than Clinton's and he also felt the appointment of a Supreme Court justice drove his vote.

His thoughts on election night were that after Ohio went to Trump, "I thought it was possible there would be an upset."

By 1 a.m. with Trump at 244 electoral votes and Clinton at 204, Holling, the owner of Little Studio Interiors in Winter Haven, felt the upset was going to happen. He also said a problem the Democratic Party had in this election was who it



AP PHOTO

An image of President-elect Donald Trump appears on a television screen on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange, Nov. 9.

nominated to run.

"I would've voted the other way if the alternative was better," Holling said. "These two were the two most disliked candidates, and I felt she was just not as capable. It's not that I particularly disliked her, I just didn't think she was capable."

With registration in Polk County favoring Democrats (149,993-146,558) the push for change that was evident in the previous two elections carried on. Usually voting Republican in Polk, this year Trump won 54.86 percent of the vote (157,418) to Clinton's 40.92 percent (117,422). In 2012 Mitt Romney, the Republican, won 52.7 percent (131,577) to President Obama's 45.6 percent (114,622).

Still the outcome throughout Florida surprised those leaning toward the Democratic Party.

"It was devastating. I thought Hillary had it," Jose Cruz said when he started watching the news on election night. "But you never know. I think a lot of things hurt her."

He said he knew he was going to vote for Clinton for weeks before the election though Americans were not

offered a "good choice" with either candidate.

"I thought she was the more experienced one. I also think there were points going against her because she is a woman, but I also thought what hurt her was the emails," he said.

He said while her flaws were many, Trump's were worse, ranging from his bigoted language to doing business in Cuba when it was illegal, not releasing his income taxes to being taped for being offensive to women. He was also fearful of banning people from the country because of their religion. Many others, he said, feel the same way.

"I got a glimpse of the popular vote," he said noting Clinton topped Trump by at least a point in that. But this election signals there is still a change that is necessary, voters felt.

"This is just the beginning," he said. "With the radical change everyone says we need means so much in this society."

Asked if he fears a racist feeling would come from this election, Cruz said, "I've lived with racism all my life. I think we should not fight back but we should not submit to it like back in the day. (Trump

brought it back here and I think it's up to him (to stop it)."

Some people feel, however, those sentiments didn't matter too much. Voting for Clinton would be bad for the country in every aspect because she isn't trustworthy.

In fact, despite the recorded message from the television show where he spoke down about women, one independent voter wasn't bothered by it as much as Clinton's so-called secrecy and what was revealed from Wikileaks founder Julian Assange.

"Guys talk like that all the time," said Laura Whitt-Slocumb, who works at Higgenbotham Auctioneers. "Girls talk like that."

She said she didn't like Trump's candidacy at first but as the campaign wore on, she found herself less and less inclined to vote for Clinton.

"As everything came out I couldn't vote for her," she said. "She's a liar. He overcame everything, the democratic process, the media and the base (Republicans)."

She and Martin Higgenbotham, both were not surprised by Trump's victory. As auctioneers who travel the country they felt feedback they got from voters indicated

Trump had more of a chance than people were hearing.

"We travel all over and I've never ran into a Hillary supporter," she said.

Higgenbotham echoed that.

"I've been in touch with people all over the country and I didn't really run into any Hillary supporters," he said.

Higgenbotham pointed out how important a change is for voters.

"Check out these numbers, Clinton got 94 percent of the vote in D.C.," he said. "Who are those people? That tells the story. The alligators are in the swamp."

Higgenbotham said Trump's victory (he got 290 electoral votes to Clinton's 228) was likely.

"I followed it just like anybody else," he said. "Two days before the election I got a good feeling. I heard about the professor's opinion that Trump was going to win and I said to my wife that it may happen."

He feels there will be a turnaround in how politics is done in the country, but it will take time just like most things do.

"It could take 20 years to turn it around," he said. "But someone like Trump is not afraid."

But ultimately what was billed to be a historical election with the possible election of the first woman or stepping so far from the inside with Trump running, the feeling of happiness that it is over and surprise with the outcome remained with some.

"I was surprised that the election took such a dramatic turn as fast as it did," said Bartow resident William Blake. "I didn't really know whether Trump would win or not, but was surprised at how it happened. I am just glad it's over."

Edward Alexander, a Bartow military veteran added: "This was so mean throughout. It was a nasty campaign and I'm glad its all over with and we can get back to normal. I don't know how Trump is going to do, but I suspect he'll be OK."

Cathy Palmer contributed to this report.



PHOTO BY STEVE STEINER

Santa Claus was in Bartow recently, lining up appearances when he agreed to a question and answer session. One of the things revealed was that preparing for Christmas is a year-round project, so much so that although he and his wife take a mini-vacation — usually no more than one or two days — the elves refuse to do likewise, even though Santa encourages them.

SANTA

FROM PAGE 1

responded to in a recent one-on-one interview when he was in Bartow finalizing the personal appearances he will be making when in the region.

Q: You say you shave your beard the day after Christmas, but you won't be doing that this year. Regardless, how long does it take to grow your beard?

Santa: The average growth is half an inch per month. A lot of it depends upon diet and exercise. If you're healthy, your beard will reflect your health, usually.

Q: Speaking of health, what do you do during the year?

Santa: I'm conscious about my health and I want to reflect that. It's also why I don't smoke a pipe anymore. In fact, the trend for Santas across the country is a lot of them are working more toward a healthy look.

Q: But what about all those milk and cookies?

Santa: Christmas Eve is my "cheat" day. It's the one day I indulge. Now, when I visit each home, I might eat an entire cookie and drink all the milk. Some homes I might only take a bite of cookie and drink some of the milk. However, I always appreciate it when they leave a carrot or two for the reindeer.

Q: Earlier you mentioned the other Santas. How does that work, especially when a kid sees a group of Santas at one time?

Santa: Of course, children realize that not every person they see dressed as Santa is me. However, they don't know whether I might be among the other Santas.

It is up to the children to determine whether they actually saw me among my representatives.

Q: A number of households don't have chimneys and children wonder how you get into their homes. Might you care to reveal your "secret" on that? Or is this like asking a magician to show how he does it?

Santa: It's no big secret. I have a magic key for households that don't have a chimney. Now, for those homes that do have chimneys, especially those in which the fireplace is lit, that will remain a secret how I navigate those.

Q: How do you do it, get presents delivered all in one day?

Santa: Time is relative. When you are doing something you love, time moves quite fast. That's how I'm able to get all presents delivered.

Q: What is your favorite Christmas movie, and why?

Santa: Without question, "The Santa Clause." For one thing, it answers a lot of questions about the North Pole. It also is very accurate. You see, I'm the latest Santa. Of course, Hollywood does take creative license, so no, I did not become Santa because the prior Santa fell off the roof of my house. However, the magic was passed on to me.

Q: So how long have you been Santa, and how long will you be Santa?

Santa: I've been Santa for about 17 years and I will remain as Santa for what will be about 200 years. That's the average amount of time.

Q: A major question that always arise is, what qualifies as naughty or nice?

Santa: On the advice of my attorney, I must decline to answer that question. (Editor's

note: This was said in jest. Santa did add that most children are good throughout most of the year, but even kids who are not start behaving the closer it gets to Christmas.)

Q: Which do you get more nowadays, letters or emails?

Santa: Well, it's become necessary to create a new department to handle the emails and other social media, but at this time the overwhelming requests are still handwritten. We have an entire department just devoted to the letters.

If children want to, they can email me at: bartowsanta@gmail.com. I also have a Facebook page: bartowsantaclaus.

Q: Do you and Mrs. Claus exchange gifts, and if so, what is hers?

Santa: Well, I do know Mrs. Claus would like it if I took up ballroom dance lessons with her.

Q: And will you?

Santa: On the advice of my attorney ... (Editor's note: Santa began laughing and it took him several minutes before he stopped "Ho! Ho! Ho!" long enough to resume the interview.)

Q: So what's your itinerary for Bartow?

Santa: The definite dates I have shored up will be this Friday, from 7-9 p.m., Nov. 18, for Magic on Main. Then, on Dec. 8, I will be at Boswell and Dunlap. The day after that I will be at the annual Bartow Christmas Parade.

I am also making arrangements to appear at The Cookie Jar and Spath Jewelers, but still need to firm up those dates.

I will also be at The Doggie Bag in Lakeland for people who want pictures of their pets with Santa. I will be there from 4:30-6:30 p.m., on Nov. 19 and Dec. 3.

S.R. 60 over CSX Railroad public hearing scheduled

The Florida Department of Transportation, District One, has planned a public hearing for the Project Development and Environment study of a new overpass to carry State Road 60 over the CSX Railroad crossing about 11 miles east of Bartow and four miles west of Lake Wales. The study limits are S.R. 60 from 3,900 feet west of the CSX crossing to 2,700 feet east of the crossing, a distance of 1.25 miles.

An open house begins at 6 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 17, at Polk State Corporate College (Room 1120), 310 Technology Drive, Bartow. People can see the proposed conceptual plans on aerial photographs, ask questions and provide comments to FDOT representatives. The hearing starts at 7 p.m.

It will offer people the opportunity to express their views about the location, conceptual design, and social, economic, and environmental effects of constructing a new S.R. 60 overpass. The hearing moderator will offer introductory remarks followed by a video

describing the proposed overpass project. An intermission will follow when people can register to make oral comments, which will be received following the intermission. Written comments also will be accepted.

Draft study reports and conceptual design plans are available for public review from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday through Nov. 30 (except Nov. 24-25), at Polk State Corporate College, 310 Technology Drive.

... U.S. 27, south of US 17/92, crews will close the outside northbound lane from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. while they build a right turn lane, gravity wall and sidewalk.

... U.S. 17 at East Wabash Street in Bartow watch for workers close to the road as crews jack and bore beneath U.S. 17. Watch for local road closures that may also occur in the area.

... U.S. 17/92 from Lake Alfred Road to Davis Avenue watch for intermittent single-lane closures on U.S. 17/92 while crews build the bridge during the day. Improvements include

construction of the Lake Alfred Trail pedestrian bridge connecting the Chain of Lakes Trail with the Lake Alfred-Polk City Connector Trail, lighting, drainage improvements and signing and pavement markings.

... U.S. 17/92 at Ernie Caldwell Boulevard in Davenport drivers should use caution and watch for workers and equipment close to the road. This project includes adding turn lanes and shoulders on U.S. 17/92 at the extension of Ernie Caldwell Boulevard, approximately two miles south of County Road 54 (Ronald Reagan Parkway).

... State Road 540 — Cypress Gardens Boulevard — from Legoland to Helena Road watch for trucks entering and leaving the eastbound roadway shoulder from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m., while crews repair concrete ditch pavement.

... State Road 60 near Boy Scout Road east of Lake Wales watch for trucks entering and leaving the road while crews install a new gas line for Florida Southeast Connection.



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LAKE WALK IN WATER ACCESS HOME ON 1 ACRE this beautiful home has much to offer; attached 2 car garage, plus a 30 x 50 detached garage, very well maintained, REDUCED TO **\$195,000**



4 BEDROOM 2 BATH HOME ON LARGE LOT AND FENCED BACK YARD. This one won't last long so don't wait, call today for more information. Listed at bargain price of **\$64,900**

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3 bedroom 2 bath in the city limits of Lake Wales, near the lake and YMCA. It has a 1 car garage, home has an open floor plan, **\$45,600**

GREAT BUY for this 3 br. Home, located near highway 27. It has a detached workshop with ac and electric. This home is priced right to sell quick, call today for an appointment. **\$64,900**

COMMERCIAL PROPERTY ON HIGHWAY Located on busy US highway 27 just south of Lake Wales, this is a great investment opportunity; includes a 3 Br. 2 Ba. home, plus an apartment, a large 4 stall metal building; great rental income; **\$199,900**

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3 BED 3 BATH ON 3.5 ACRES, this home has over 3,700 sq. ft. living area, huge spacious rooms, **\$144,900**

"THINKING OF SELLING, CALL US TODAY"

VETS

FROM PAGE 1

Theater of Operations, David Graves, who was also with the Army in Europe, George Haynes, also a sailor aboard the USS New York and lastly, J.J. Corbett, who was a "smoke jumper" in the Army.

Also a special guest was the keynote speaker, Army Maj. Keith Miller, executive officer to the Director of Intelligence at the Special Operations Command, who presented a briefing on major initiatives addressed by the unconventional warfare center based at Mc Dill Air Force Base in Tampa.

Miller told the audience America faces a lot of challenges, but he cited five primary ones:

Jihadist organizations like Al Quida and ISIS; the Iranian threat network because Iran is moving closer to nuclear capability; Russian aggression which Miller said is a growing problem in the Balkan states as well as Russia's presence in Syria; Chinese expansion, which, according to the special operations expert, has even resulted in a plea for U.S. assistance from former enemy Vietnam and lastly, Miller said, a major threat lies in the ongoing belligerence and nuclear capability of North Korea under the Kim dictatorship.

Miller also said the special operations command plays a role in ongoing anti-criminal operations on a worldwide scale. He explained the military worked closely with agencies like the DEA, the FBI, the Border Patrol and other agencies to identify avenues and methods being used to import drugs and arms into the U.S. and our allied countries.

All told, according to Miller, the Special Operations Command's worldwide forces are "the tip of the spear, always ready to strike at the heart of the enemy,



PHOTOS BY AL AND CATHY PALMER

Bartow Air Force veterans William Blake and Edward Alexander salute as colors are presented at Friday's 'Hometown Heroes' luncheon at the Bartow Civic Center.



Ret. Army Lt. Col. Stephen Davis talks all things Army with Special Operations Command executive officer Maj. Keith Miller at Friday's 'Hometown Heroes' luncheon. Miller was the keynote speaker for the event honoring the community's veterans.

where ever it is."

Joining Miller at Friday's head table were master of ceremonies S.L. Frisbie, a retired Army National Guard colonel, former Army Col. Steven Davis, who commented on the remembrance of those taken prisoner of war and the missing in action; former Army Chief Master Sgt. Harvey

Lester who delivered the invocation and benediction and former Army Sgt. W. Lloyd Harris, who referenced the symbolism of the Purple Heart and its history.

The honor guard from Summerlin Academy presented the colors and Pam Renew provided patriotic music. Taps was played by Robert Blauvet.

In addition to the Bartow chamber and the city of Bartow, sponsors this year included ACT Environmental and Infrastructure, PalletOne Inc., American Legion Post #3, BayCare Bartow Regional Medical Center, Mosaic, Tom Edwards Chrysler Dodge Jeep Ram, Rep. Ben Albritton, ASHLAND, Bartow



Retired Bartow Army World War II veteran J.J. Corbett enjoys a moment at Friday's 'Hometown Heroes' luncheon honoring those who have served in the nation's military services.



Ret. Army National Guard Col. S.L. Frisbie of Bartow talks with 'Hometown Heroes' luncheon keynote speaker, Army Maj. Keith Miller of the Special Operations Command at Mc Dill Air Force Base in Tampa. The Friday luncheon was held at the Bartow Civic Center and was sponsored by the city of Bartow and the Bartow Chamber of Commerce.

Community Healthcare Foundation, Inc., Citizens Bank and Trust, D-TECH Business Solutions, Evolve Contracting, Dr. and Mrs. Thomas Mc Micken, Spath Jewelers, Stingray Chevrolet

Bartow, Mike and Susan DeNeve, Kimley-Horn and Associates, Mid-Florida Credit Union, Spherion Staffing Services, Tindale Oliver and the American Legion Auxiliary.

Lilly Lake Golf Resort, Frostproof



Doublewide manufactured mobile home sitting on a small retention pond. Has 2 bedrooms, 2 full bathrooms, inside laundry, furnished dining room, living room, master bedroom and guest rooms, appliances, golf cart, garage and single car carport. **\$126,000**

523 Village Blvd

3/2 DWMH w/multi vehicle RV port, private in-ground pool, screen enclosed, storage room w/loft & dumb waiter, granite kitchen counters, tray ceilings, verticle blinds, solar power +more. Gated community, custom home. **\$212,000**



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Oversized lot in Lilly Lake, an active adult 55+ community in Frostproof, Central Florida, that has a 3 bedroom 2 bath home with family style sitting porch enclosed with glass windows, a 12 x 12 screen enclosed porch and a 12x24' storage shed/workshop. **\$145,000**

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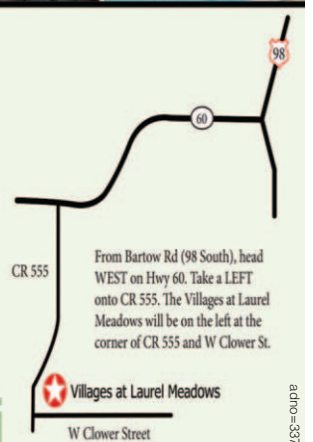


The Villages at Laurel Meadows offers affordable luxury townhome living, with world-class amenities and services for our residents. Our newly constructed town homes are centrally located in Bartow and are convenient to South Lakeland, Winter Haven and Brandon.

Each townhome offers 2 Bedrooms and 2.5 Bathrooms with spacious layouts, a screened lanai, full sized washer & dryer and upgraded kitchen appliances. You can choose from two floor plan options which are perfect for a variety of living arrangements.

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From Bartow Rd (98 South), head WEST on Hwy 60. Take a LEFT onto CR 555. The Villages at Laurel Meadows will be on the left at the corner of CR 555 and W Clover St.

Villages at Laurel Meadows
W Clover Street

HEALTH and WELLNESS



Hundreds attend annual gala

By JEFF ROSLOW

JROSLOW@HEARTLAND
NEWSPAPERS.COM

A 9-week-old yellow labrador puppy was sold at auction for \$5,100 last Thursday.

“Because it is for a good cause,” Michael Arrington said at the The 27th Annual Winter Haven Hospital Foundation’s Annual Gala. “And, this makes two girls very happy, my wife and daughter.”

The cause he spoke about is the Foundation’s plan to use money it raises from this year’s gala for a heart catheterization lab for the Winter Haven Hospital Bostick Heart Center.

And on the other condition, Arrington certainly made his daughter happy, as her joy showed when he won the auction.

“Now I have two labs,” Emily Arrington said, explaining she already has a 2 ½ year old chocolate lab at home.

The amount of money raised during the Gala was not available.

The direction of the

hospital is exciting and people who drive around town have likely noticed the construction going on, said President Steve Nierman.

“State Farm has visibly supported us with a \$1-a-year lease for a medical arts building,” he said at the Gala. “And now a heart catheterization lab.”

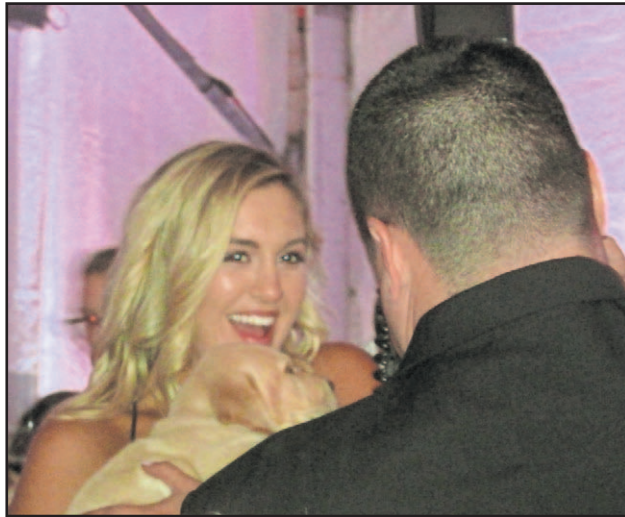
He said the work of the foundation shows about it’s all about the town.

“The Foundation is a reflection of the support of this community,” he said, citing medical centers throughout town.

“We’re improving the health of the community,” he said.

Right: Lenore Verrill points out to something at the auction table to her husband, Peter, Thursday night at the Winter Haven Hospital Annual Gala.

PHOTOS BY JEFF ROSLOW



Emily Arrington was all smiles as she walked away from Thursday’s Winter Haven Hospital Annual Gala with a yellow Labrador at the auction. Bidding was intense enough to raise \$5,100 on this 9-week-old who will join a chocolate Labrador she already



Auctioneer David Scholm works the crowd Thursday night at the Winter Haven Hospital Foundation’s annual Gala. It was at the Winter Haven Municipal Airport.

Being fit adds to your wallet

By LAUREEN ALBRECHT
CORRESPONDENT

Reams of research indicate that when it comes to saving money on medical bills, the buck adds up for those who are fit and active.

The chain reaction from being physically active has broad implications of total well-being — cognitively, physically, and now your wallet.

“If you want to slow the effects of mental decline and the costs that are associated with dependence, look to aerobic exercise,” said Emily Perez, SLP — director of rehab for Spring Lake Rehabilitation Center — a facility that specializes in the active and aging population.

Science continues to link exercise with improved cognitive functioning and intellectual

capacity.

One such study published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences by neuroscientist Art Kramer at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign reveals the growth of brain cells via exercise.

Kramer took 120 very sedentary people and randomly divided them into two groups. They received brain MRI scans and memory tests before and after the year-long study.

Their ages ranged between 60 and 80. One group was given aerobic exercise consisting of walking three times a week and progressing towards 70 percent of their maximum heart rate with increases in speed and distance throughout the course of a year. The others in the control group were

given toning, stretching and light strengthening exercise.

Kramer’s research conclusively showed the aerobic-walking group had an increase in a part of the brain that processes new memories.

Without the ability to form new memories, learning how to use a different TV remote, operating gadgets in a new car, or finding locations to a new restaurant would be challenging.

Research shows that it’s less challenging for the physically fit. What’s more, studies prove physically active seniors have less costs associated with health care.

According to scientific evidence:

Just one dollar investment in physical activity translates to \$3.20 in medical costs savings, according to

a collaborative report from World Health Organization and Centers for Disease Control.

Seniors who exercise 90 minutes a week saved an average of \$2,200 per year in medical costs, said Health Partners Research Foundation.

For hip fractured seniors, one dollar spent on physical activity programs leads to a \$4.50 gain, says a report from the CDC.

A year-long study of 618 older adults with diabetes who participated in a group-exercise program had an average of \$1,633 lower total on healthcare costs as compared to older adults who did not exercise.

Normal weight seniors’ medical costs were approximately \$1,548 dollars lower than minimally obese seniors.

The study, found in the American Journal of Preventive Medicine, indicates daily walking also predicted lower costs for hospitalizations and diagnostic testing.

As we age, our health naturally declines and our functional independence wanes. But for the fittest seniors, research reveals a better scenario. A study of 1,861 people born in 1920 and 1921, showed that those who were more physically active had more ability to perform daily tasks and less likely to become dependent on the care of others.

Even for those who are frail and dependent, their prime fitness levels led to lowered costs. One study followed 19 older folks residing in skilled nursing facilities and tested their function, independence and physical

ability. Those who scored 14 percent higher in physical ability had a \$7 per day reduction in medical costs.

With rising health care costs, many people are looking for solutions that will benefit their pocket book. Turns out, the biggest solvent could be physical activity.

“If you believe that you can benefit, talk with your doctor before starting any health regimen,” said Perez. “Ask if physical therapy is a good place to start learning a safe exercise routine.”

Spring Lake Rehabilitation Center offers comprehensive rehabilitative outpatient and inpatient services for short or long term at 1540 6th Street N.W., Winter Haven-Florida. For information, call 863-294-3055.

HEALTH and WELLNESS

Polk County pleased with sales tax vote

The indigent health care sales surtax was approved by voters once again. The vote was favored by 69 percent of voting residents in Polk.

Over 25 educational presentations were given to various groups all over the county and thousands of infographics were distributed. No group was too big or small to educate about the mechanics of the tax.

"As administrators of the half cent sales tax,

the Indigent Health Care program deeply appreciates the support of individuals, communities, organizations, and groups that invited our program in to share how and what the tax revenue does for county residents. Polk has a history of caring for its medically poor residents and because of the support for the tax that will continue. We look forward to continuing our service to Polk County residents," Program Director Joy

Johnson said. Supporters voted to extend the tax for 25 years, "Because so many voters turned out in support of the indigent health care half cent sales tax, qualifying program participants will continue receiving health care services well beyond 2019, without any changes forced by the discontinuation of funding." Said Deputy County Manager, Lee Ann Thomas. If you want to know

more about the county's health care safety net, Indigent Healthcare, please contact the Indigent Healthcare program at 863-534-3311 to schedule a presentation or to get information. The Indigent HealthCare Program administers the half cent sales tax fund and coordinates care for the medically poor. Residents, tourists, and those in need of the services all contribute to the indigent health care tax.



PHOTO PROVIDED

Open House

Thursday more than 150 members of our community attended the Open House celebration for our the Physical Therapy & Sports Medicine location in south Lakeland. Each had a guided tour of this impressive facility and its inventory of the most advanced physical therapy technologies, and were given an opportunity to mingle with our expert orthopaedic surgeons, sports medicine specialists, physical therapists, athletic trainers and others.

Need help in gaining weight this holiday

To help Florida families across the state enjoy a happy and healthy holiday season, the Florida Department of Health is partnering with North Carolina State University to offer the Maintain, Don't Gain! Holiday Challenge for the third year in a row. This free seven-week challenge runs from Nov. 14 through Dec. 31 and provides

participants with tips, tricks and ideas to help maintain their weight throughout the holiday season. "The Maintain, Don't Gain! Holiday Challenge is a way to encourage individuals to make healthy choices this holiday season," said Dr. Joy Jackson, director of the Florida Department of Health in Polk County. "The free,

motivating emails, daily challenges, and healthy recipes are a great way to encourage individuals to maintain their weight during the holidays." Many Americans gain between one and five pounds each holiday season. Last year, more than 1,600 Floridians participated in the Maintain, Don't Gain! Holiday

Challenge, the second most participants of all 50 states, and received helpful advice on enjoying the holidays in a more healthy way. Participants in last year's challenge experienced beneficial results. Sixty-seven percent reported they maintained their weight, 18 percent lost three to five pounds and 98 percent said they

will continue to use the strategies learned during the challenge. The 2016 Holiday Challenge includes: Seven weekly newsletters delivered to your inbox; Tips to host a healthier Thanksgiving, manage holiday stress and survive a holiday party; Weekly challenges,

winners and prizes; Support through social media; Healthy holiday recipes; Motivation and support from other participants. For information and to register for the 2016 Maintain, Don't Gain! Holiday Challenge, please visit the Healthiest Weight Florida website.



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Working together.

That's the key to better healthcare for you and your family.

We Promise to be your partner for a lifetime of wellness.

Because we're passionate about delivering on this Promise, Lakeland Regional Health and Mayo Clinic are now joining forces.

Two exceptional teams, sharing knowledge and expertise, focused on you. For you, this means **peace of mind. Right here at home.**

Lakeland Regional Health is now a proud member of the Mayo Clinic Care Network.

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HEALTH and WELLNESS

Clinical trial of inactive Zika virus vaccine in humans is launched

By **DANIEL CHANG**
MIAMI HERALD

With Florida health officials reporting more mosquito-borne Zika infections in Miami-Dade, including one new case confirmed Monday, scientists with the Walter Reed Army Institute of Research launched the first of five early-stage clinical trials that they hope will lead to the development of a vaccine against the virus.

A Zika vaccine is still two to three years away from public availability, according to scientists, but most vaccines have traditionally taken a decade or longer to develop. The shorter time frame is due in part to lessons learned from prior infectious disease outbreaks.

Kayvon Modjarrad, a physician researcher and associate director for emerging infectious disease threats at the

Walter Reed institute, or WRAIR, said scientists developed the trial vaccine, called Zika purified inactivated virus, or ZPIV, using the same technology they used to create a Japanese encephalitis vaccine licensed in 2009.

"It's based on a technology that has been around for a long time," he said.

There are currently three Zika vaccine candidates undergoing human clinical trials, but ZPIV is the only one that uses a weakened or dead virus to provoke an immune system defense.

The other two candidates are DNA vaccines that also elicit immune system response by using genetically engineered DNA that stimulate cells. They are being tested separately in clinical trials by the National Institutes of Allergy and Infectious Diseases and by Inovio

Pharmaceuticals - though no DNA vaccine has ever been licensed for human use.

After preclinical studies in early July showed that two doses of ZPIV, administered four weeks apart, provoked a protective immune response to Zika in rhesus monkeys, the vaccine candidate advanced to human trials.

Currently, there are five different clinical trials scheduled using ZPIV, Modjarrad said, including one by St. Louis University researchers to determine the optimal dose of vaccine to be used in larger studies.

Other ZPIV studies will evaluate the safety and effectiveness of administering the vaccine candidate in a shortened time period, and its ability to prevent Zika in people who have been naturally exposed to Zika or dengue. A

fifth trial will examine the effectiveness of using the DNA and ZPIV vaccine candidates together.

For the ZPIV human clinical trial launched Monday, WRAIR scientists will recruit 75 healthy adult volunteers who have never been infected with any of a related group of viruses, including yellow fever, dengue, West Nile,

Japanese encephalitis and Zika.

Because military personnel are deployed on short notice to places where infectious diseases are endemic — and because Army scientists want to understand how a Zika vaccine would react when used with other vaccines — the ZPIV clinical trial launched Monday will include groups that are

also being vaccinated against Japanese encephalitis and yellow fever.

Modjarrad said a Zika vaccine using ZPIV may be ready for commercial use in two to three years, echoing a time frame cited by Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Director Tom Frieden during a speech in Miami in October.

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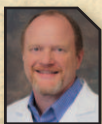


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POLK COUNTY SPORTS

Tropics come back to win opening night

By **CHARLES A. BAKER III**
CORRESPONDENT

The Florida Tropics Soccer Club won its inaugural professional indoor soccer game in dramatic fashion, winning 6-5 Friday night at The Lakeland Center against the San Diego Sockers.

The Major Arena Soccer League's newest expansion team franchise scored five fourth period goals. With 31 seconds left in the match, Brazilian forward Ricardo De Queiroz Diegues scored the game-winning goal with a bicycle kick.

Down 4-1 midway through the third period, Diegues scored the second goal of the match to begin the comeback. Venezuelan defender Victor Rojas scored the first-ever Tropics franchise goal and again in the fourth period to get the score to 4-3.

Professional indoor soccer has not been this close since the Tampa Bay Rowdies played in Lakeland in 1984. Tickets range from \$15 to \$50 and parking is an additional \$10. For soccer fans young and old, it's worth the drive to Lakeland to watch this team play. The cheap seats are close enough to see everything. The more expensive seats are right along the boards and provide the opportunity to see the action up close

and personal.

According to the Florida Tropics SC, the Major Arena Soccer League is the highest level of professional indoor soccer in North America.

There are seven players from Brazil and one each from Poland, Canada, Jamaica, Venezuela. The remaining nine players are American with three from central Florida.

Expect to see players getting tackled and penalty boxes similar to professional hockey. There is lots of scoring. Yellow cards come out for the simple fouls. Referees called blue cards for reckless tackling, kicking and a major hold Friday night. Teams go down a player when a blue card is called.

Local soccer youth soccer team board members representing teams and school staff wanting to recognize students for excellence have the opportunity to arrange for special treatment on the field in between periods and for singing the national anthem.

The Florida Tropics SC beat a San Diego Sockers team that has won seven championship titles over the past nine years and 14 championships since the 1980s in their inaugural victory.

The crowd of 2,048 got quiet when the home team



PHOTO BY CHARLES A. BAKER III

Venezuelan defender Victor Rojas, second from left, scored the first-ever Tropics franchise goal Friday night in Lakeland.

went down 4-1 midway through the third period. Diegues and Anthony Arico scored back to back goals at the start of the fourth period to get the locals to within one. Jamaican forward Jowayne Laidley tied the score at four with around nine minutes left in the match.

Then defender Raphael Nascimento got called for a reckless tackle with around six minutes left and the Sockers scored a go-ahead power play goal.

The Tropics pulled their goalie with three minutes left in the game. Defender Victor Rojas tied the score at five a minute after the power play goal and Diegues helped make the game memorable with a game-ending bicycle kick with just seconds left.

The Tropics hit the road

for three straight games next, first at division rival Baltimore Blast, then Harrisburg Heat (Nov. 25) and then Syracuse Silver Knights (Nov. 26). The next home game is against the Blast on Dec. 3.

The Blast feature a Brazilian who has scored five goals in his first two games.

Tickets are available online at www.fltropics.com. All 20 games this season are streamed live on the MASL YouTube channel. There are links to the live feed on the Tropics website.

Tailgating begins around 5:30 p.m. Indoor soccer games are played in four 15-minute quarters instead of 45-minute halves and

there are six players on the field instead of 11. The field is similar to a professional hockey rink minus some Plexiglas.

Additional photographs taken at the inaugural Florida Tropics SC match can be seen at <http://www.florida-tropics.charliethird.com/>



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Fortress Fitness

It was a small turnout in Fort Blount Park for the monthly Fortress Fitness in Bartow. Some of that could be the crowd downtown for the Honey Bee and Craft Fair that was also downtown. To the left, Kim Little jumps in the air doing an exercise called a "burpee," which was one of several exercises that made up a routine. She was one of only six people who participated in the November Fortress Fitness workout. The next Fortress Fitness is scheduled at 9 a.m. Saturday, Dec. 10 in Fort Blount Park. Tammi Green will lead it with a dance fit/zumba workout.

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SCHOOL NEWS

Polk State to honor Dewdney as distinguished alumna

Business owner and community activist Twanna Dewdney will receive Polk State College's Distinguished Alumnus Award at fall commencement on Dec. 14.

"I don't care how much a person says they don't need recognition for the things they do, it feels good to be honored and recognized," Dewdney said. "By choosing me, it helps our communities to understand the positive impact that one person can have on a city. It's also encouraging to receive this award as I strive to create and implement successful projects year after year. I am blessed and grateful."

That she will be honored as a Polk State alumna is all the sweeter for how impossible college once seemed for her, Dewdney said.

A native of Winter Haven, Dewdney graduated from Winter Haven High School and received an athletic scholarship to attend what was then Polk Community College. She enrolled, but soon found herself veering off course.

"I think I was angry," Dewdney said in an



Christine Roslow

Our Schools

Christine can be contacted at croslow@heartlandnewspapers.com.

interview with Polk State in 2014. "I had a family that cared and provided for me, but I made that choice to act out and get into trouble."

A search for Dewdney's name on the Polk County Sheriff's Office web site returns a disorderly conduct arrest in 2001, but she says there is a lot more in her past, including drug trafficking and assault.

Before she could graduate with her Associate in Arts degree, Dewdney dropped out of college. She went to work at a department store, then bounced from job to job, but with no college education and a criminal record, her opportunities were limited.

Then, in the early 1990s, a temporary job as a receptionist at a trucking company became a

permanent position, and it came with a schedule that allowed her to complete cosmetology courses at Ridge Technical College.

In 1994, Dewdney, who'd been doing hair in her mother's kitchen as a way of making extra money, graduated from Ridge as a licensed cosmetologist. Ten years later, she opened her own salon in Florence Villa. She named it Salon Ashanti, after her daughter.

Since the day she opened her business, however, Dewdney has used it for much more than just hair and nails. In the 1980s, Dewdney's cousin went to California for treatment for AIDS. Members of her family didn't understand the disease, and they were afraid to be near him. Her cousin died alone.

Dewdney has never forgotten how lonely her cousin must have felt, which is why, in his honor, she uses her salon as a site for HIV/AIDS testing. Dewdney administers about a dozen tests a month.

"My salon is a place of refuge, where people can come for help, or when they need someone to talk to," Dewdney said. "I thought all I was going to do here was hair, but I'm doing so much more."

From her salon, Dewdney also conducts her Project Park Bench, which collects blankets and clothing to be donated to The Mission of Winter Haven and distributed to the homeless. The 2016 Project Park Bench is currently underway. Donations may be dropped off to Salon Ashanti at 128 Palmetto Ave. NW in Winter Haven.

Throughout the year, Dewdney also gives out free condoms and collects school supplies for needy children and hygiene items for female inmates.

A few years ago, Dewdney returned to Polk State to complete

her Associate in Arts degree as well as her Bachelor of Applied Science in Supervision and Management. She is the first graduate of Polk State's baccalaureate degrees to receive the Distinguished Alumnus award.

During her remarks at the fall commencement, Dewdney said she will encourage the graduates to live purposely and with confidence in their own potential.

"Once you believe in yourself, eliminate doubts, associate yourself with positive people and push past your fears, you can achieve more than you ever dreamed or imagined," she said.

Polk State's fall commencement ceremony will take place at 6:30 p.m. on Dec. 14 at The Lakeland Center, 701 W. Lime St.

Tag Art for sale

Tag Art — license designs made by county fifth graders — is now for sale. This year, Joe Tedder's folks at The Tax Collector's Office for Polk County have made ordering student tags even

easier. It launched a new web page and sales portal where all 7,000 student designs will soon be available for sale, including these award-winning designs.

Earlier this year, 76 schools' fifth grade classes participated in this contest, instructed by their art classroom teachers to create their unique designs over an eight-week period. In October, 152 students' tag art designs, representing the top two tags from each school were selected to become the 2016 Kids Tag Art Exhibition, a mobile collage of license tag art which will travel around the county over the coming months.

These fifth grade art students will also have the experience of what it feels like to be a celebrated artist when their Kids Tag Art winning designs go up for sale to the public on its new web page, www.PolkTaxes.com/KTAOnline.aspx. The price of a tag is \$15, with key fobs on sale for \$5, and a combination pack for \$17.50. All net proceeds go back to each school for classroom art supplies.

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