



MAGIC ON MAIN:
Christmas gets a kickoff
See Page 17.

An Edition of the Sun

WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 23, 2016

TAKE ONE, IT'S FREE!

Commissioners reject water law

Annual increases behind 3-2 vote

By **MARY HURST**
CORRESPONDENT

City staff will have to go back to the drawing board on an ordinance affecting water, wastewater and reuse water for a third time.

The ordinance set rates for

same-day and after hours turn-on service, water reuse rates and other provisions.

The City Commission voted 3-2 not to approve the ordinance because it had an automatic 2.5 percent increase annually. The majority wanted that provision taken out.

The city's water rates already have a 2.5 percent automatic increase every October.

Commissioner Pete Chichetto said he's complained for five years about the automatic increases.

Commissioner William Twyford raised the issue of

money being transferred from the city's water utility enterprise fund to the pension plan annually.

"You are blatantly taking money from the water fund and giving it to the pension fund's unfunded liability," he said. "You are paying for the

pension. That's why your water bills are going up and up."

Commissioner Nat Birdsong said there have been several budget years since 2008 where the city had to take funds from the water enterprise fund and

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Re-living history



CHARLES A. BAKER III

Federal troop re-enactors unfurl the American flag as they hit the field of battle over the weekend in Fort Meade. For more on this story, see page 27. See more photos at www.polkcountymag.com

Voices vary on medical marijuana

By **CATHY PALMER**
CORRESPONDENT

Medical marijuana becomes the law of the state in January and some local voices have varied ideas about it.

From the outspoken opponent Polk County Sheriff Grady Judd, to soon-to-take-office State Attorney Brian Haas with a stop over with a local criminal attorney David Carmichael, the opinions all agreed on one salient point: It is the law, or will be come Jan. 3.

Amendment 2 made it so. The amendment to Florida's state Constitution says it will be OK for people to use medical marijuana

to combat "debilitating" diseases, some of which are itemized, but the rest opens a door that those polled weren't sure where it goes.

The controversial amendment which failed some two years ago, won a commanding victory this go around, with about 2/3 of the state voting yes.

According to the full text of the amendment, "debilitating diseases" are identified like cancer, epilepsy, glaucoma, HIV, AIDS, PTSD, Lou Gehrig's disease, Crohn's disease, Parkinson's, multiple sclerosis or other diseases identified as comparable by a prescribing physician.

MARIJUANA | 32

Lewis' discovery was historic

The story of L.B. Brown was accidental, now in the Smithsonian

By **JEFF ROSLOW**
JROSLOW@SCMGINC.COM

It was by accident that Clifton Lewis discovered buried history in Bartow and brought it back to life.

"L.B. Brown was not on the radar when we decided to save the (L.B. Brown) house," Lewis said. Lewis and his wife moved to Bartow from the Washington, D.C., area in 1989. Living in the area, he wanted to improve the look and feel for it.

"(Brown's) daughter Louvenia was living there by herself.

She was a local educator and everyone knew her. She was a well-known educator at Union Academy. She died the year before I came here and we set out to preserve Ms. Thomas' house."

He said everyone knew about her as she frequently would sit on the front porch and talk to the children walking by, telling them to be safe and to stay in school.

Lewis said the house looked so interesting back then with its unique trim and while it was empty when he moved here, it

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COMMUNITY CALENDAR

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. Program provides skills for business, organization, and personal growth and improvement through a variety of educational and training opportunities. Collaboration between Bartow Chamber of Commerce and Polk State College. Polk State College Corporate College, 310 Technology Drive, Bartow. 863-533-7125

Friday, Nov 25

Movies on the Lawn, "A Christmas Story," 5:30 p.m., free. Corner of North Wilson Avenue and East Main Street, Bartow. 863-519-0508

Saturday, Nov. 26

City of Winter Haven Tree Lighting Ceremony, 6:30 p.m. Central Park, 401 Ave B NW, Winter Haven.

A Taste of the Grove House, noon. Gourmet samples of Grove Store specialty items. Grove House Visitor Center, 20160 U.S. Highway 27, Lake Wales. 863-679-4110

Sunday, Nov. 27

Anointed Gospel Music, 10:30 a.m. and 7 p.m. Fellowship Church, 1795 U.S. 17 S., Fort Meade

Free Breakfast, 8:30-10 a.m. Pancake and/or waffle,

WELCOME TO YOUR COMMUNITY CALENDAR

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

scrambled eggs, orange juice, coffee, and sausage breakfast. Trinity United Methodist Church, 2551 Havendale Blvd, Winter Haven 863-298-9779

Monday, Nov. 28

Lake Wales Branch NAACP, Unit 5109, election. 3 p.m.-7 p.m. "B" Street Center, 230 "B" Street, Lake Wales. 863-595-6291

Villa Toastmasters Club 4487, 6:15 - 7:30 p.m., hosts meetings the 2nd and 4th Monday of the month, Winter Haven Fire Station, Annex Building, 301 Avenue 'G' SW, Winter Haven. Members develop communication and leadership skills. Open to the public. 863-207-0986.

Tuesday, Nov. 29

Health Insurance signup helps, 6 p.m. Certified Assistants will be on-site to share information, answer questions, and to schedule free appointments for application assistance. Refreshments will be served. Open Enrollment continues through Jan. 31. Lake Wales Care Center's Community Room, 140 E. Park Ave.. Make appointments at 863-678-2734

Wednesday, Nov. 30

DIY Seasonal Wreath, noon. Learn how to take familiar craft items and transform them to create a festive seasonal wreath. Grove House Visitor Center, 20160 U.S. Highway 27, Lake Wales. 863-679-4110

Shoulder Pain: Get Rid of It Now! 6 p.m., free. Orthopaedic surgeon and sports medicine specialist Dr. Douglas Shenkman will discuss the latest options used to remedy shoulder pain, including the most advanced surgical treatments such as minimally invasive and computer-assisted procedures. Watson Clinic Main, 1st Floor Library, 1600 Lakeland Hills Blvd. in Lakeland. RSVP: 863-680-7042.

Thursday, Dec. 1

Lakeland Christmas Parade, 7 p.m. in Downtown Lakeland. Junior League of Greater Lakeland presents, "Miracle on Main Street ..." Questions email christmasparade@jlgf.org or visit jlgf.org

Rock Star Leadership Training, part 3, 8 a.m. In part 3 of this 4 part series, Margarita will aim right between the eyes by uncovering that daily actions are what will bring us lasting, transformational and sustainable change. Winter Haven Chamber of Commerce, 2nd Floor Auditorium, 401 Avenue B, NW, Winter Haven.

SCORE workshop, 11:30 a.m.-2 p.m., free, reservations required by calling 863 284-5607 or email: info@centralflscore.org. Webster University, 1479 Town Center Drive, Lakeland.

Label Tour dedicated in Lake Wales

By **CASSIE JACOBY**
CORRESPONDENT

A group of 30 attended the Citrus Label Tour of Polk County dedication of the Lake Wales Citrus Label Tour on Thursday at the Lake Wales Library.

"Our labels are the first two-sided signs featuring labels from Waverly Growers," said Tina Peak, librarian. "In addition to the Waverly Growers sign the Lake Wales Library Association Friends of the Library donated funding for three historic citrus crate label banners that will hang from the Library's decorative light posts."

"On behalf of the city of Lake Wales, I express our gratitude to the David and Carol Crews for their generosity," said Robin Gibson, Lake Wales city commissioner. "We all know the library is one of the city's real gems and we're in the process of



PHOTO BY CASSIE JACOBY

The Lake Wales Library dedicated the Citrus Label Tour on Nov. 17.

giving it the recognition it deserves."

"The tour is a new way to experience Central Florida's rich citrus history," said Myrtice Young, Polk County historic preservation manager, who led the ceremony along with Glenda Morgan, Friends president, and other dignitaries.

"This unique driving experience explores

part of the historic marketing portion of citrus through the artistic labels that once adorned the old wooden crates used to ship the fresh fruit off to northern markets in the early 1900s. Enlarged reproductions of these vintage labels will be found on various buildings and sites throughout the county."

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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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Developing in NE Polk under discussion

County, school board discuss concurrency

By **CATHY PALMER**
CORRESPONDENT

Polk County commissioners will be asking the county school board to take another look at how it applies concurrency issues, particularly in the northeast county where most of the development seems to be occurring.

The biggest issue, the board was told Friday by its chief planner Tom Deardorff, is schools that are already at capacity and new developments are proposed that would further overcrowd those schools.

The county levies a fee on development to offset the cost of

impacts to existing infrastructure like water and sewer service, roads and schools. Those impact fees may only be spent in those areas where the development occurs to alleviate any impacts the new development may create on those major services.

The newest Polk County school, Citrus Ridge Academy, in northeast Polk, was built with impact fees and opened this year to serve kindergarten through eighth grade students, however, that doesn't alleviate the overcrowding at Ridge Community High School in Davenport or nearby Haines City High School. Commissioners

were told that if the Polk school board would revamp its present policies so northeast Polk high school students could attend Auburndale High School, which is below capacity, it would help alleviate future concurrency issues. Deardorff said if student slots were not available in a given school area, the board could not approve a proposed development that would negatively impact existing schools.

According to Deardorff, northeast Polk elementary schools are almost at capacity at 99 percent; middle schools were at 104 percent or over

capacity including the new school, and the high schools were at 106 percent, including both Ridge Community and Haines City High.

Deardorff said if Auburndale High School was open to students north of Interstate 4, it would alleviate potential issues, at least for the immediate future.

County Manager Jim Freeman said he was arranging to meet with School Superintendent Jacqueline Byrd to discuss the issue, even though it was in the board's purview to interpret concurrency language to allow Auburndale High to serve students from the northeast county

area. He also said he would suggest a joint commission/school board meeting to clarify impact issue policies.

"Who decides if Auburndale High School is OK?" asked Commissioner George Lindsey.

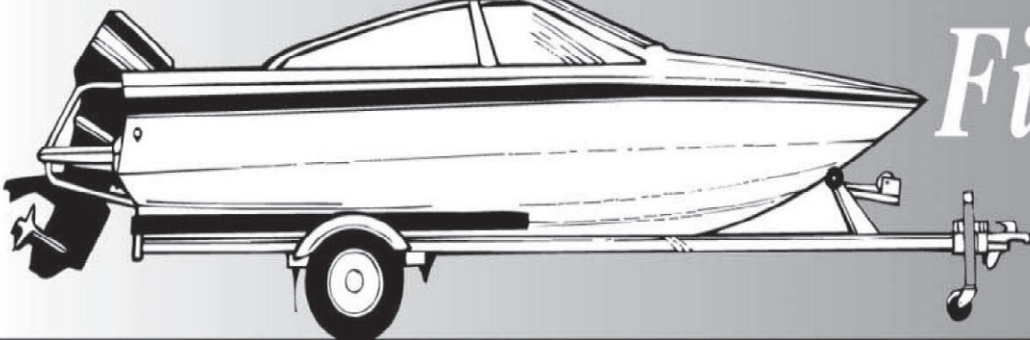
"It depends on the school board's interpretation," Deardorff replied, adding it was an accepted practice for boundaries like lakes or interstate highways to be used when determining school zones.

The board learned the school board has already begun the rezoning process by hiring a consulting firm to examine the system to see where changes

could be made to even out school attendance.

"There are 28,000 vacant seats in the county's schools," said Commission Chairman John Hall. "So that tells me the school district has capacity if it redistricts."

Deardorff told the commission it could expect impact fees to generate about \$14.5 million this year. The cost of constructing the newest Polk School was about \$40 million. The Polk school board maintains it has a construction needs backlog of more than \$445 million, and maintenance issues that will eat up a majority of its capital outlay budget.



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VIEWPOINT

Paper ballots can save the day

There's an old anecdote about computer infallibility that goes something like this:

Passengers aboard an international flight are getting settled into their seats when a voice comes on over the PA system.

"Good evening, ladies and gentleman, this is your captain speaking.

"Actually, this is a recording of your captain's voice. He is not on the flight deck, nor is anyone else.

"You have the exciting privilege of being aboard the first airline flight that will be entirely controlled, from take-off to landing, by a computer. This represents the ultimate in modernization of flight.

"So sit back, and prepare to become a part of this historic occasion.

"And while some of you may be a little nervous about a flight controlled entirely by computer, you have nothing to be worried about, because nothing can go wrong ... nothing can go wrong ... nothing can go wrong ..."

There was a day when all election ballots were

Our Viewpoint

counted by hand, one X at a time.

The introduction of voting machines changed the methodology to one in which voters flipped switches, and their votes were ... hopefully ... registered by the machines. A minor mechanical failure could, and occasionally did, cause a machine to malfunction.

Further technological advances made it possible to vote by touching a computer screen or in some other fashion. These new technologies had one thing in common: there was no paper trail to provide a route to verification, or to correction if there was a failure of technology.

There were no paper ballots.

Florida now requires paper ballots, typically counted by high speed scanners. And in an acknowledgment that, as in that humorous saga of the self-flying airplane, things can indeed go wrong, Florida law further requires a recount if the margin of victory in a

race is less than one-half of 1 percent. These recounts typically are conducted by feeding the ballots through the counting machines again.

Florida law further requires a manual recount if the recount margin is less than one-fourth of one percent.

This law required first a machine recount and then a hand recount of the Polk County school board race between Sara Beth Reynolds and Becky Troutman.

The two recounts confirmed Reynolds' victory, and in fact expanded her margin of victory from 522 to 559 votes among the more than 231,000 votes cast.

The recounts provide reassurance to the public that Reynolds won the election fair and square, and underscore the fact that even today's state-of-the-art vote counting equipment is subject to error, albeit usually a small error.

The existence of good ol' paper ballots made it possible to ensure that the victory went to the candidate who got the most votes.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

A God-given window of opportunity

Many Christians prayed fervently about this election. God has given us a window of opportunity. Many who feel they have lost will actually have won with the future appointment of a Supreme Court that honors inalienable, God-given rights.

The results of this election could have been different if we were a democracy. Our founders referred to democracy as a "mob-ocracy." They gave us a

Republic with a constitution and electoral votes.

Many were pleased that Mr. Trump had a phone conversation with Israel's Benjamin Netanyahu and invited him to the inauguration. See: America to Trump: You're Hired!

<https://www.fracction.org/updatearticle/20161109/america-trump>

In Mrs. Clinton's concession speech,

ULLOM | 5



Unless you are a turkey ...

A few weeks ago, I had the dubious honor of being the first roastee for a roast by Main Street Bartow Inc.

Post-roast reaction from friends has generally come under two headings:

- I'm really sorry I missed it. I heard it was a lot of fun.
- I was there, and your son was by far the best roaster.

As for those who missed it, I can only encourage you to attend next year.

And for those who said Loyal's roast was the best, I have to agree, in large part because everything he said was true.

By far his best line was that his father has a reputation for telling his same stories over and over again.

A couple of minutes later, he said his father was known, especially by his children, for telling his same stories over and over again.

And in another couple of minutes, he said his father was known for repeating his stories many times.

The audience loved it, as did I.

Perhaps I come by it honestly. Though not as notorious for it as I am, my own



S.L. Frisbie

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

Dad, who died nearly 12 years ago, had a favorite column, which he published each year at Thanksgiving.

Dad wrote more than 5,000 columns — some from the European Theater of Operations during and after the Battle of the Bulge — and I regret that I did not read all of them.

But of the ones I did read, this one was by far the best. Just as he repeated it every year, I republish it each year at Thanksgiving.

It is all the more special to me because it was written at a time of crisis in his family in the early 1960s. Among other things, his father was dying a slow, painful death from throat cancer,

brought on by his lifelong love for cigars.

His inspirational Thanksgiving message is timeless, and I enjoy rereading it each year at this time.

Many times in my life I have taken solace in its message. Please enjoy it with me.

Unless you are a turkey you have much to be thankful for at this Thanksgiving season.

If you are reading these lines, you have eyes to see with, and an education to read with.

If you are having these lines read to you, you have ears to hear with and a mind to think with.

The past year may have been a sad one for you. There may be deep troubles on the horizon ahead. Still, there should be much room in your heart for thankfulness.

If you lost a loved one in the past year, you know that they are now past pain and sorrow ... and that God has so arranged the Universe that your own grief at the loss is less as the days roll by.

If dark death sits at your door waiting for a critical illness to take its toll in your household, you do have the loved one with you for yet awhile.

Money matters may be causing you concern.

If you could afford to buy this newspaper, or if you know you will be able to feed your family today and tomorrow and the next day, there are millions of people in this world who will find it hard to believe anyone could have such good fortune.

It's possible for the time being you are in such pain that it is a monstrous effort for you to move around.

If you are able to rise from your bed or chair and walk, there are people in hospitals throughout this land who would gladly exchange half the years they have left to do as much.

Please believe me, I would not for one moment belittle your troubles, whatever they may be. I know that your troubles weigh heavily because they are yours, and you must live with them, hour by hour, and day by day.

FRISBIE | 5

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@polkcountydemocrat.com or mail them to 190 S. Florida Ave., Bartow, FL 33830.

Whitledge or Winter Haven? ... The village is named

The land where Winter Haven exists today was owned earlier by an English company known as the Florida Land and Colonization Company. The home office was in London. Writing in her book *The History of Winter Haven*, Josephine Burr noted that “the company owned large portions of area land as late as 1882 but that Sydney O. Chase of the Chase and Sanborn Coffee Company owned a big portion up to 1884 and possibly later.”

Both F.A.K. Harris and Peter D. Eycleshimer arrived in the as yet unnamed village of Winter Haven in 1884. In fact Eycleshimer arrived alone before Harris. Second in line to purchase land within the plat, he then returned home to Tomhannock, Rensselaer County New York for his family. While Harris has the distinction of purchasing the first land in the newly platted village, Eycleshimer and his wife are credited with naming the community.

While Eycleshimer was home getting his family, the Realtors Blount and Whitledge contacted him asking his thoughts on naming the village “Whitledge.” In the meantime Mr. Whitledge expressed his reluctance to put his own name on the town and asked Mrs. Eycleshimer if she could suggest a better one. In discussions with her husband they considered the possible future of this area of many lakes. They thought the town should suggest the reason for its existence — not only as a railroad stop and post office — but its potential as a winter resort. The



Bob Gernert Beneath the Chinaberry Tree

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

Eycleshimers tested a number of descriptors with the word “winter” finally settling on Winter Haven. Mr. Eycleshimer wrote Whitledge that he saw two options:

If the town was to be a business center with post office and shipping facilities, then Whitledge seemed a good choice.

But if the long-term goal was a beautiful winter resort, then Winter Haven would be a better name.

According to the late Richard H. DeMott Sr., on May 6, 1885, all streets, avenues and alleys were dedicated as though Winter Haven was a small city — in spite of the fact that very few existed except on paper.

Descendants of the Eycleshimers live in Winter Haven today.

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. Free and open to the public. From now through the holidays the museum is available to groups by appointment 863-206-6855. The museum will reopen Saturdays in the new year.



ANNA AND PETER EYLESHIMER

Holiday shopping safety tips 2016

Holiday shopping is in full swing and we want everyone to be safe during every outing and through every purchase.

Begin by not advertising your shopping plans or posting your current purchases on social media. And never let your cell phone be a distraction while you are out and about.

When you arrive at a store, park in well-lit, well-traveled areas and keep valuables out of sight. While shopping, avoid overloading yourself with packages. It is important to have clear visibility and freedom of motion to avoid mishaps and not appear vulnerable. When storing your purchases in the vehicle, keep them out of sight.

If you'll be shopping online, shop only at trusted web sites. Make sure the web site is secure by looking for the



Polk County Sheriff

icon of a locked padlock which typically appears in the status bar at the bottom of your web browser or next to the URL in the address bar. You will also want to avoid using public computers and Wi-Fi hotspots when purchasing your holiday gifts.

And don't forget about those packages being delivered. Unattended packages can become a target for porch pirates. Remember, the number of reported theft cases increases during the holidays. In 2015 there were 39 reported incidents of package theft reported to the PCSO — 22 of those incidents occurred in December. So far during 2016, there have been 33 reported package thefts.

Deputies are asking residents to help stop Porch Pirates before they have the

chance to steal your packages. Here are a few tips:

Track your packages. If you order something online, be sure you jot down the tracking number for your order. You can even sign up for text or email alert notifications for when the package is delayed or delivery times change. And if you can't be home when the package is schedule to arrive, reschedule the delivery, or ask a neighbor to pick up the package from your porch for you.

Have your package shipped to your office instead of your house. Check with your employer first, but it provides a location in which someone will ensure the package is received and not left on your doorstep waiting on your arrival home.

Request the package be signed for before delivery. While it may cost a little more, it ensures that you take the package directly from the delivery person

and your valuables are not dropped at the door.

Put package deliveries on hold. If you'll be out of town, you'll want to ensure no packages or mail is left waiting in plain view to advertise you're not home. This only invites thieves to your door.

Be sure to insure. Adding insurance to packages helps to cover the cost of loss in the event the package is stolen or damaged.

Whether you shop online or in the store, monitor your credit card, debit card, and checking account statements on a regular basis to ensure there are no fraudulent charges. If you do notice irregular charges, report them to law enforcement immediately.

Hopefully, incorporating these choices into your holiday shopping game plan will result in a safe and happy holiday shopping season.

ULLOM

FROM PAGE 4

she used the phrase, “freedom of worship,” not “freedom of religion.” To promote homosexuality, it is essential to substitute our First Amendment freedom of religion (all the time, everywhere) for freedom of worship (a very short time in church.) They have a touch of the latter even in China

and Russia. America was built on the foundation of freedom of religion.

At this time in America, we have questions that need answers. We have many churches and pastors. Many are doing a great job! But why is pornography so prevalent in America? Why are there so many broken homes? Why is homosexuality being accepted by many of our young people?

With this window of opportunity, we need Christ's answers to these very important questions. “We don't get

involved with politics” is a destructive response in failing to answer the lies that our culture is teaching. May we use this opportunity to saturate our lives with Christ and His word 24/7/365. We need zeal and knowledge.

May we identify every inconsistency in our lives. Are we using entertainment to justify putting immorality in our minds? Do we belong to a political party that is clearly pushing an anti-faith, anti-family agenda? Because of some hypocrites, can we justify not

supporting the only major party that clearly has a pro-faith, pro-family, pro-life platform?

Our culture is pushing booze, pot, illicit sex, and many other destructive lies. Jesus is the only one who can give us real meaning and purpose in life.

God has given us a little more time. May we use every precious moment wisely.

Jesus said, “I am coming soon!”
VIRGIL ULLOM, DDS
Babson Park

FRISBIE

FROM PAGE 4

It is only human for each of us to feel that our burdens are heaviest. But perhaps you can join me in this thought:

As I catalogue my own difficulties and look about me, I don't find anyone with whom I would wish to exchange miseries.

My own are familiar to me, and manageable, and I am grateful that I am alive in God's world, where there is cause for thanksgiving in every

sunbeam and every raindrop, where every new dawn brings promise of hope and faith for a brighter tomorrow.

May God's love for His children awake an echoing love in all our hearts.

(S. L. Frisbie is retired. Seven years ago, in his own Thanksgiving column, he said he was thankful for the opportunity to continue writing a column, and for friends who say they enjoy reading it. And he closed, “I hope I have the grace to quit writing it before you quit enjoying it.” He still does.)

WINTER HAVEN NEWS

Contract with interim Stavres OK'd

Commissioners split over idea of contract over agreement

By **MARY HURST**
CORRESPONDENT

The City Commission last week approved an employment contract with Interim City Manager T. Michael Stavres with a \$130,000 annual salary.

Stavres was appointed interim city manager after the commission voted 3-2 to terminate

then City Manager, Deric Feacher on Sept. 13.

The only thing commissioners did not approve, in a 3-2 vote, was a 180-day notice in the event of a newly hired City Manager chose to terminate Stavres.

Commissioners Pete Chichetto said he was concerned that the six-months' notice may scare away potential city

manager candidates. "I've never seen an interim have a contract," he said. "Only a compensation agreement."

Mayor Brad Dantzler supported the six-month severance provision saying no one in city government had the institutional knowledge that Stavres did.

"Who is going to run our city over the next

four months if he walked out tomorrow?" Dantzler asked. "This is crazy not to entice him to stay."

Should Stavres be terminated after the new city manager takes over, Stavres would receive 20 weeks severance pay, provided he would not be fired for cause. Then, he would receive nothing.

The contract also

requires the city to pay him a \$5,000 annual car allowance, provide him with a cell phone, travel expenses, and paying costs related to maintaining his professional licenses and professional organizations. He will also get an additional five personal days off, in addition to what he receives now as assistant city manager.

He will also continue to receive all benefits as other city employees including accrued vacation and sick time.

Stavres has stipulated he would like to return to his job as assistant city manager when the new city manager is selected, probably after the first of 2017.

The agreement is retroactive to Oct. 1.

Toy Drive underway

Drive seeks to make foster

children's Christmas happier

By **JEFF ROSLOW**
JROSLOW@SCMGINC.COM

Operating a law office that deals with children's issues, Elizabeth P. Davis is heading up a toy drive that seeks to provide at least 100 children a better Christmas with the help of Guardian Ad Litem.

In cases where the DCF is involved and those in foster care are involved, Davis' law firm has been involved.

"She just came in one day and she said we're going to do this," said Gabrielle Whelply, a legal assistant at the Winter Haven-based law firm.

The toy drive started at the beginning of the month and will last until Dec. 16. There will be drop-off locations at Davis' law office, 114 Bates Ave., Winter Haven; the Law Office of Amanda Salcido, 206 Easton Drive, Lakeland; and Guardian Ad Litem Program, 205 E. Main St., Bartow.

Also, any business that

wants to join in to collect toys can contact Davis' law firm at 863-875-6817.

"If a business wants one, contact us. We have done most of the footwork," Whelply said, adding that when Dec. 16 comes around Guardian Ad Litem will pick up the presents, wrap and distribute them.

"They can call me at the office and we can buy them a box," she said.

In fact, according to Davis' law firm's Facebook page, three Winter Haven businesses have set up drop boxes: the Chamber of Commerce, Groover's Co. Inc. and Belk.

Guardian Ad Litem serves 1,700 people from newborn to 18 years old in this district which also covers Highlands and Hardee counties. That doesn't include those from within this district who are living outside it as that's where the best foster home could be found.

For a suggestion of

gifts there is a list on the Davis' law firm's Facebook page, and Whelply suggested, "Whatever they feel is appropriate for that age group. Anything anyone wants to buy is OK."

Toy drive boxes will also be set up at the Vintage Market on Dec. 3.

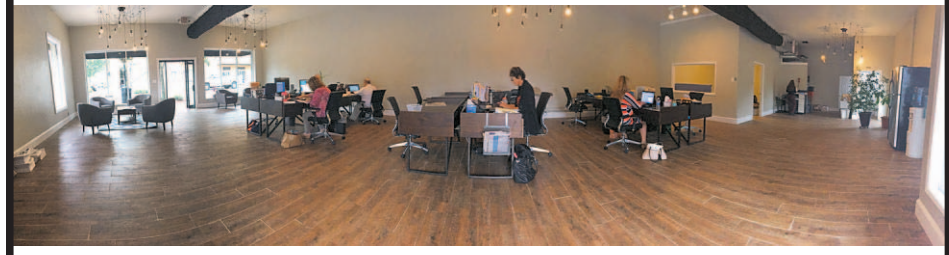
Whelply said they got off to a bit of a late start, but there are a few weeks to collect toys for the children. Making their Christmas a little happier is paramount, she said.

"These are kids in foster care because they were in a bad environment, whatever the case may be. Our main goal is to collect."

She added: "These kids get bounced around and if things don't work, the process starts all over again. They are already going through emotional times and then they get bounced around. Our main focus to give as many as we can something happy this year."

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THE POLK COUNTY NEWS AND DEMOCRAT THE WINTER HAVEN SUN
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WINTER HAVEN NEWS

Girls Inc. holds gala

By **KATHY LEIGH BERKOWITZ**
CORRESPONDENT

Business and community partners stepped out for a good time and to support a good cause, as the Girls Inc. Angels Among Us fundraiser was held last Thursday night at Arabella's Italian Ristorante in Winter Haven.

As local businessman Bill Bostick noted, "I like to help any way I can."

Girls Inc Executive Director Peggy Threlkel said the organization serves more than 230 annually. Girls are usually referred by word of mouth, kindergarten through middle school, to the organization which sports a multi-faceted program approach.

Threlkel said girls are taught skills to be economically independent, including managing money and investing, how to resist peer pressure, how to build leadership skills and be involved in community projects, how to measure the scope of media on their lives and how to look at their lives realistically, how to develop enthusiasm for science, technology, engineering and math, how to prevent pregnancy and the importance of being athletically active.

"I enjoy the difference we make in the girls' lives," she said. "Being an education based program, we help them in so many different ways, academically as well as socially. And so that is really neat to see them, when they get so excited about their success."

Founded in Winter Haven in 1948, the club used to be predominantly aimed toward African American children, but has since become diverse.

"Each program has its own component for that age group," she said. Mickey Wright is the program director.



Mike Stimac and his board member wife Rene Pobjecky, not photographed, bid \$1,550 for a private party of eight at Arabellas Ristorante.

After school programs are the main activity. Girls Inc is a United Way partner agency. They receive funding through the allocation pool through the education focus area, a grant from Publix Supermarket Charities, then fundraisers, grants and contributions.

There is a program service fee of \$25 per week, and that is the maximum per family. But there is a sliding scale fee. She says a lot of parents talk about their daycare is \$100 a week, and they do not get as much.

Twanna Dudney, present at the event, attended the Girls Inc. as a child.

She is on the board of directors now.

The best way people can help girls today, she says, is to be a role model. She just won the Girls Inc "She Knows Where She is Going" award.

"It's an opportunity to give back to a program that sowed into my life," she said.

She says she enjoyed the sewing, and planting, the gardening portion, and "just hanging out with other kids coming in from other parts of town."

Graduating in 1986, she had attended Winter Haven High School and went on to graduate Polk State

College as a double alum.

She will be their distinguished alumni this December, she said.

When she was a girl, she said the organization was called the Girls Club and was held in Florence Villa.

Attracting young women to higher forms of excellency, she said requires good role models. "And good role models attract young ladies."

"My mom was my role model, she was a hard worker," she added.

"When I attended Girls Club, it was all black kids. I like the diversity of the program now," she said.

The history of Girls Inc. of Winter Haven is as follows, according to their web site at girlsincwinterhaven.org.

They were founded in 1948 by local community activist Virginia Snively. By the mid-60s, a Girls Club was founded in Wahneta. In 1970, The LaVilla Girls Club opened. The Havendale facility and center was opened in 1973. A fire destroyed that building and the center reopened seven years later as the Snively-Thompson Center.

By the mid 1980s, both the Wahneta and LaVilla Girls Club services were consolidated into

the Snively-Thompson Center. Then in 1990, The Community Girls Club of Winter Haven changed its name to Girls Incorporated of Winter Haven.

Their web site also shows a national connection through National Girls Inc. Girls Inc. is a national nonprofit "dedicated to inspiring all girls to be strong, smart and bold." Targeting high risk areas, programs help prepare girls to lead successful lives.

The Girls Inc. web site

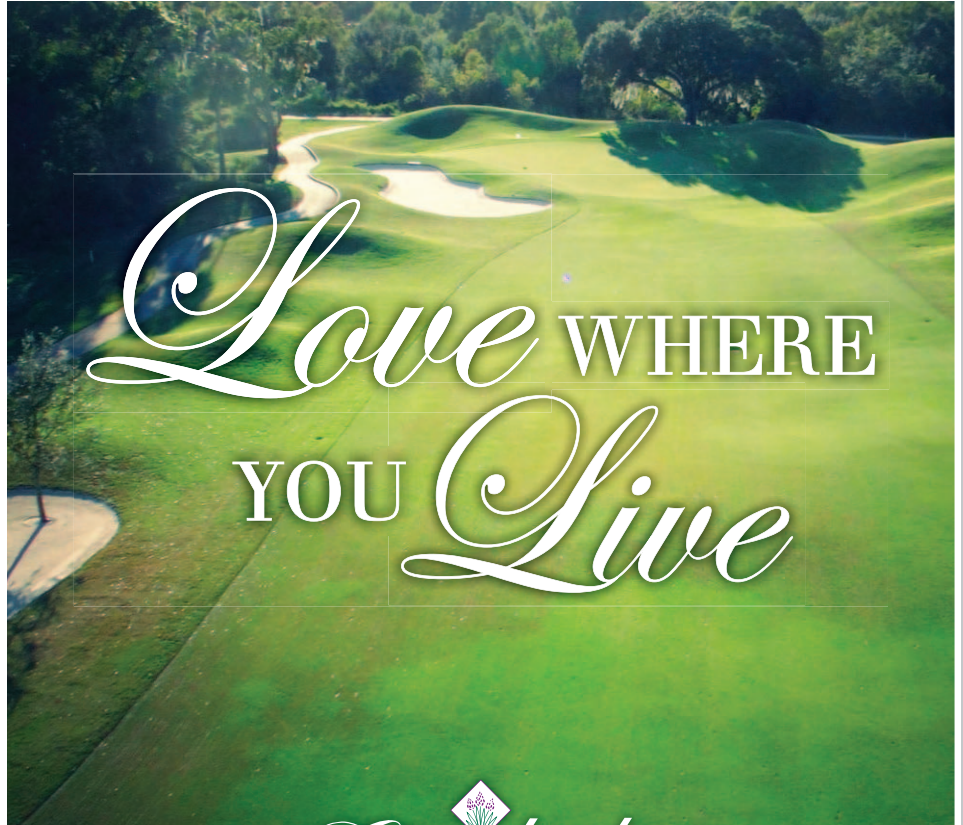


PHOTOS BY CHARLES A. BAKER III

Girls Incorporated of Winter Haven board president Christine Samuel enjoys the live auction.

notes that the movement "started in New England during the Industrial Revolution as a response to the needs of a new working class: young women who had migrated from rural communities in search of newly available job opportunities in textile mills and factories."

There is a National Headquarters in New York City and a National Resource Center in Indianapolis, Indiana. Girls Inc. programs are "offered through a network of more than 1,000 sites in more than 300 cities in the United States and Canada."



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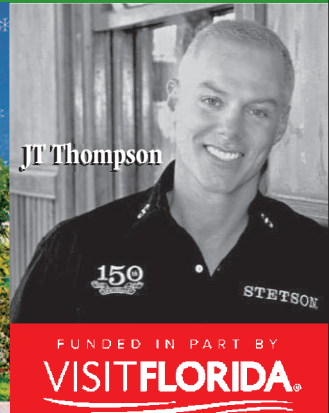
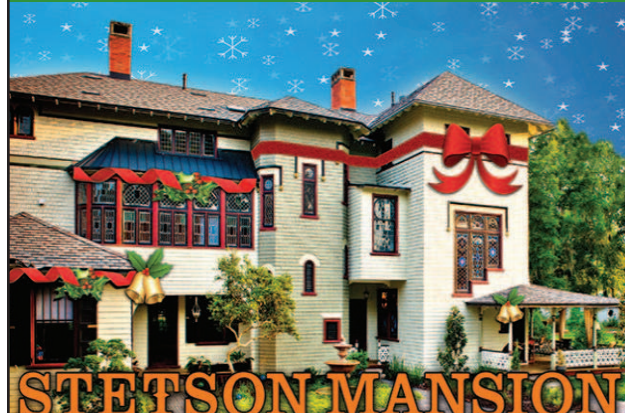
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WINTER HAVEN NEWS

Winter Haven salutes veterans at City Hall

By **CASSIE JACOBY**
CORRESPONDENT

A Walk of Honor saluted veterans Saturday in Winter Haven. Organized by the American Ideals Foundation Inc. that donated the Veterans' Memorial Park to Winter Haven, the short walk

with children helping carry a large American flag was followed by speeches and awards presented to special guests. Mary Campbell Sheets, 92, was honored as one of the first USO Ladies from the 1940s along with Augusto Castillo, a former prisoner of

war who was held in North Vietnam with U.S. Sen. John McCain, and Korean War Marine veteran Jim Moore. The Veterans Memorial Park features plaques and monuments

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. The Tampa-based,

non-profit Foundation was established in 1962 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.foundationof-americanidealsinc.org for more information or to purchase memorial plaques.



Mary Campbell Sheets, 92, was honored Saturday as one of the first USO Ladies from the 1940s during a Walk of Honor Nov. 19 in Winter Haven.



Veterans were saluted at a Walk of Honor Saturday in Winter Haven.

PHOTOS BY CASSIE JACOBY

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OBITUARIES

Mollie A. Cooper



MOLLIE A. COOPER

Mollie A. Cooper, 91, of Lake Wales, Fla., passed away Friday, Nov. 11, 2016, at Life Care Center of Altamonte Springs, Fla.

The was born on Sept. 12, 1925, in Lake Wales, Fla., to the late James J. and Susan (Mann) Albritton. She was a retired elementary school teacher and was teacher of the year at Janie Howard Wilson. Mollie was Pioneer of the Year in 2004, she was a member of the

First Baptist Church where she played the piano.

Survivors include her daughter, Kathi Noreika (Jeff) of Newnan, Georgia; son, Timothy W. Cooper (Wasana) of Apopka; 5 grandchildren, 2 great-grandchildren.

She was preceded in death by her husband, J.W. (Bill) Cooper in 1991; brothers, James O. and G. Edwin Albritton; sister, Erma Chelette.

Visitation is 5-7 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 15, 2016, at the Marion Nelson Funeral Home and funeral service is 2 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 16, 2016, at the First Baptist Church of Lake Wales with Dr. Scott Markley officiating. Interment will be held at the Lake Wales Cemetery.

Condolences may be sent to the family at www.marionnelsonfuneralhome.com.

Marylee M. Conley

Marylee M. Conley, 103, passed away Saturday, Nov. 5, 2016, in Trenton, Fla. Funeral services were held on Wednesday, Nov. 9, 2016, at Whidden-McLean Funeral Home in Bartow.

Thanksgiving holiday closings

The following places are closed for the holiday:

All Polk County government offices will be closed Thursday and Friday which includes the Neil A. Combee Administration Building, The Polk County Courthouse, the Supervisor of Elections, Tax Collector, Property Appraiser and the administrative office of the Polk County Sheriff's Office.

Polk County Clerk's office closed Thursday and Friday. Customers can access online services such as traffic ticket payments and record searches 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

The Polk County Public schools and district are closed all week.

The Lake Wales Charter School District and schools are closed all week.

The city of Lake Wales and library are closed on Thursday and Friday.

The city of Bartow is closed on Thursday and Friday.

For garbage collection, Thursday's collection is Wednesday. Friday's collection schedule will remain the same.

The city of Fort Meade is closed Thursday and Friday.

Frostproof City Hall is closed Thursday and Friday.

For those on garbage pickup from Republic Service in unincorporated areas, Thursday Nov. 24 garbage, recycle, yard waste and bulk will be collected on Friday, Nov. 25. Friday Nov. 25 garbage, recycle, yard waste and bulk will be collected Saturday, Nov. 26.

In Fort Meade, Thursday, Nov. 24 garbage will be collected on Friday, Nov. 25. Friday, Nov. 25 garbage will be collected Saturday, Nov. 26.

In Lake Wales, Thursday, Nov. 24 garbage, recycle, yard waste and bulk will be collected on Friday, Nov. 25. Friday, Nov. 25 garbage, recycle, yard waste and bulk will be collected Saturday, Nov. 26.

In Davenport, there will be no change in pickup schedule.

In Frostproof, Friday, Nov. 25, garbage, recycle, yard waste, and bulk will be collected Saturday, Nov. 26.

In Winter Haven, Thursday, Nov. 24 recycle will be collected on Friday, Nov. 25.

Business offices for the Polk County News & Democrat, Winter Haven Sun and Haven magazine is closed on Thursday and Friday.

All public libraries will be closed Thursday and Friday. The Bartow, Lake Wales, Frostproof and Haines City libraries will be closed Saturday.

The Post Office will be closed Thursday and there will be no mail delivered. Mail will be delivered on Friday.

Banks are closed on Thursday but some may be closed Friday. Call your local branch to confirm.

A Christmas Story to be shown on the lawn

On the day after Thanksgiving, after your day of Christmas shopping and eating leftover turkey, gather the kids and head downtown to the movies. The classic Christmas film, "A Christmas Story," will be the feature at Main Street Bartow, Inc.'s "Movies on the Lawn" on Friday, Nov. 25, at dark on the northwest corner of Wilson Avenue and Main Street.

It's the 1940s, Christmas is approaching, and 9-year old Ralphie wants only one thing: a Red Ryder Range 200 Shot BB gun. Will he get what he wants? Will he shoot his eye out?

The event is free and suitable for the entire family. Those attending are encouraged to bring chairs or blankets. Concessions will be available for purchase.

For further information call the Main Street Bartow office at 863-519-0508.

The Bartow Fire Department's Toy Drive has begun

The Bartow Fire Department will be delivering Christmas toys to area families in the area on Christmas Eve. The distribution will start at 9 a.m.

The local community has been generous with the fire department's efforts in the past and it is again asking for your help. It is accepting donations of toys for children of ages 1 through 12. All monetary donations be made through gift cards from our local merchants. Donations can be dropped off at the Fire Station at 110 E. Church St. during our business hours of 7 a.m.-5 p.m.

Achievement Academy names officers, board of director member

During Achievement Academy's November board meeting, the following officers were installed by Past President Michael Peebles with Southern Homes Sam Houghton, Houghton Penn., President of the Board; Chandra Frederick, Polk County BOCC, First Vice President; Brad Johnson, City of Lakeland, Second Vice President Mike Brossart, City of Lakeland, Treasurer; Mark Miller, Holland & Knight, Secretary. New board

members Luke Markham, a Lakeland attorney practicing in the area of residential and commercial real estate, and Karli Hughes, Parent Board representative, were installed.

The Achievement Academy serves children from birth through age five with various developmental delays and disabilities. The Achievement Academy offers two programs, each provided at no cost to the child or family.

Tennis anyone?

Did you know that there is tennis for men and women year-round at the courts behind the Bartow Civic Center?

The men play at 8 a.m. Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.

All levels of play are welcome. Just show up and they will fit you in.

The women play at 8:30 p.m. Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays.

All levels of play are welcome. In addition, there are several Bartow teams that play in the Polk County Women's League. Call Lucia Gillett at 863-533-3240 for information.

When Pigs Fly South BBQ Challenge

When Pigs Fly South BBQ Challenge returns to the SUN 'n FUN Expo Campus as it is planned 10 a.m.-5 p.m. on Dec. 3.

The annual fundraiser brings more barbecue, beer, and music to the expo campus this year. The day will include show cars and motorcycles, a live DJ, kids activities, local vendors, and more. New this year, When Pigs Fly South brings Lakeland Art Crawl, the "Pig Skins" sports bar, Fly-buy yard sale, and the Runaway BBQ competition to the event.

Guests will receive free admission to the event, with a \$5 parking fee. The proceeds support the Aerospace Center for Excellence year-round educational programs.

The SUN 'n FUN Expo Campus is at 4175 Medulla Road, Lakeland. For information, visit flsnf.org

Rodeo returning in January

Get ready for some non-stop, high-kickin' action as the Lakeland Pro Rodeo Classic returns to the Lakeland Center on Jan. 20-21.

Rodeo fans are who are gearing up for another "rip roarin" weekend of rodeo action as

PRCA cowboys and cowgirls from across the nation compete in the eight traditional rodeo events highlighted by crowd favorite bull-riding competition earning them points needed to qualify for the National Rodeo Finals in Las Vegas.

This year's rodeo entertainment will feature 11-time, "Specialty Act of the Year" John Payne, the One Armed Bandit. Payne has been entertaining fans since 1987 and travels the United States performing in front of millions of fans every year. This year's Rodeo Clown will be none other than Lecile Harris, Pro Rodeos four-time "Clown of Year."

Harris performs more than 150 a year including many of the biggest rodeos in the world.

Tickets are on sale for \$53 and \$31. Friday night features two free children tickets ages 2-10 with each paid adult. Saturday night Children's ticket are available for \$7 for ages 2-10 (not valid on Gold Buckle seating). Service charges will apply and are available by calling The Lakeland Center Box Office 863-834-8111, 24/7 line 888-397-0100, and online at www.thelakelandcenter.com. All dates, acts, and ticket prices are subject to change without notice.

The show begins at 8 p.m.

Engelbert Humperdinck returns to The Lakeland Center

Music legend Engelbert Humperdinck is making The Lakeland Center a stop on his 50th Anniversary Tour produced by Get Off the Bus Concerts at 7:30 p.m. Jan. 18. The concert is in support of Best Buddies. www.bestbuddiesflorida.org.

In a career spanning almost 50 years, Engelbert has generated sales in excess of 140 million records, including 64 gold albums and 35 platinum, four Grammy nominations, a Golden Globe, and stars on the Hollywood Walk of Fame, Las Vegas Walk of Fame, and Leicester Walk of Fame.

He has performed for the Queen four times, several presidents and many heads of state. He has recorded everything from the most romantic ballads to movie theme songs, disco, rock, and even gospel.

Tickets are on sale for \$150, \$95, \$85, \$65, \$55. Service charges apply and are available by calling The Lakeland Center Box Office 863-834-8111, 24/7 line 888-397-0100, and online at www.thelakelandcenter.com. All dates, acts, and ticket prices are subject to change without notice.

Southern Homes becomes PMOA strategic partner

Polk County builder Southern Homes has joined the Polk Museum of Art's Strategic Partnership program to provide free admission to the museum on Sundays through next November.

Becoming a partner was a natural next step for Southern Homes, which has donated to the museum for several years, said Southern Homes Marketing Manager Ashley Link.

"At Southern Homes, giving back to the community we call home is very important us," Link said. "We believe that to have a vibrant community, there must be good schools, good hospitals, and good cultural activities; that includes an art museum."

Executive Director Claire Orogas says the partnership is vital to the museum's long-term success because it shows that the community understands the value the museum provides in terms of social, educational and economic benefits to the community.

"Partnerships such as this make the museum accessible to people from throughout Central Florida, including those in our community who otherwise couldn't afford to visit a museum," Orogas said.

As a hometown builder, Southern Homes operates under the philosophy that it is important to continually strive to make Polk County a better place to live. Through this museum partnership, Southern Homes is able to give back to their customers, and all community members, by ensuring they have free access to the museum.

"We are excited to help increase access to the museum so that children and adults gain more exposure to art of all varieties," Link said. "We have such a tremendous cultural asset in our local Polk Museum of Art, and we hope that, as a result of this partnership, even more people will have the opportunity to experience it."

The museum unveiled its Strategic Partnership program in 2013 and saw attendance increase 12 percent the first year. Since then, the program has made it possible to offer free admission every day the museum is open.

The Polk Museum of Art is at 800 E. Palmetto St. in Lakeland. It is open Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Sundays 1-5 p.m.

WINTER HAVEN NEWS

It's going to look a lot like Christmas

Winter Haven plans tree lighting on Saturday

By **CASSIE JACOBY**
CORRESPONDENT

Catch the holiday spirit at the lighting of Winter Haven's Christmas tree at 6:30 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 26 in Central Park. More than 250 are expected to attend the annual tradition for families to kick off the holiday season. "Hunter Smith

performs holiday music at 7 p.m., we're serving free hot chocolate and candy canes, and we have a special surprise guest to help light the tree," says Anita Strang, Main Street Winter Haven executive director, who produces the event with the city of Winter Haven. "Since the tree is located inside the fountain in Central Park, our Aquatics

Department team does a great job putting it up every year," said Arin Vaughan, Winter Haven's special events and marketing coordinator. Other local Christmas tree lightings, parades and celebrations include: Junior League of Greater Lakeland Christmas Parade 7 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 1; Lake Alfred Christmas Parade and

Tree Lighting Ceremony at 6:30 p.m. on Dec. 3; Havendale Christmas Parade at 7 p.m. on Dec. 3; Christmas at the Ramon from 2 to 3:30 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 3 in Frostproof; Polk City Christmas Parade from noon to 4 p.m. on Dec. 3; Fort Meade Christmas Festival and Parade at 6 p.m. on Dec. 3; Haines City's

Glitter, Glisten & Snow at 6 p.m. on Dec. 3; Winter Haven Chain of Lakes Boat Parade at 4 p.m. on December 3; Carols in the Park in Winter Haven's Central Park from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Dec. 3 and 4; Downtown Bartow Christmas Parade at 6 p.m. on Dec. 9; Christmas Notes at Homeland Heritage Park from 5 to 8 p.m.

on Dec. 10; Lake Wales Christmas in Toyland Parade from 6 to 8 p.m. on Dec. 10; Davenport Winterfest from 5 to 9 p.m. on Dec. 10; Mulberry Christmas Village and Parade from 6 to 10 p.m. on Dec. 10; and Florida Flywheelers Christmas in the Village from 6 to 9 p.m. Dec. 9 and 10; Dec 16 and 17 in Ft. Meade.

Theatre Winter Haven looking for veterans

Director plans series of veteran-related projects to write

By **CHARLES A. BAKER III**
CORRESPONDENT

Theatre Winter Haven staff are seeking veterans from Polk and Highlands counties willing to be interviewed about experience in the military for an upcoming project. Specifically they are not just looking for combat veterans but all veterans from every age group. The interview process has already started. Staff are requesting face-to-face interviews but they can also be conducted by phone or email. What is learned from the interviews will be used to write a script. Veterans willing to take the extra step will be invited to share their experience on stage with active audience participation encouraged afterwards. Hundreds of similar shows have been taking place across the country with success. WEDU public television staff put together a documentary called Veterans — The Telling Project around a year ago

documenting a model 2015 veteran performance in Tampa. Theatre Winter Haven producing director Dan Chesnicka said he is hoping to put together a local veterans project good enough to remain ongoing and then take the project to Highlands County and beyond. "Our master plan is to make the Veterans Theatre Project part of the fabric of our theater, with something happening or in progress all the time," Chesnicka said. "Of course this is dependent upon how successful our first effort is." The first performance is tentatively scheduled for May. Interested veterans are encouraged to type "The Telling Project" using an Internet search engine and watch the short documentary to get a feel for what this project may end up like. Theatre Winter Haven staff is seeking those who survived World War II, Korea, Vietnam, the Gulf War, Iraq, Afghanistan and everywhere in

between. Family members affected by military life are also being sought for interviews. If military experience meant something to you as a veteran, spouse, parent or now grown child, and you want to share that experience, initiate contact with the theater staff, Chesnicka said. Chesnicka said he and his staff came up with this idea around a year ago and started applying for grants. Recently they were awarded two, one a community grant from Walmart SuperCenters and the other from the George W. Jenkins Fund within the GiveWell Community Foundation. The content of the interviews will drive what appears in the final project. At the end, the house lights will come on and audience members will be invited to ask questions. "The gap between the veterans in our community and those who did not serve and audience participation will all be critical success factors," Chesnicka said.

Interviews will continue after Thanksgiving until staff feels there is enough material to start writing the script. If you are a member of the American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars or any other veteran groups, or if you just know an interesting

veteran, you can help by referring veterans to the project. Chesnicka said he also needs help from a Highlands County venue representative once they are ready to expand. Highlands County participants are invited to perform in Winter Haven for the first

performance. If you are interested, call Dan Chesnicka at 863-294-7469 at extension 106 or development director Sara Beth Reynolds at extension 105. They can be emailed at TWHDirector@aol.com and TWHdevelopment@aol.com respectively.

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EMPLOYMENT

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 - Goal oriented and focused
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**PROFESSIONAL
2010**

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LAKE WALES NEWS

Bok Tower Gardens Holiday Home Tour opens this week

By CASSIE JACOBY
CORRESPONDENT

Bromeliads decorate Christmas trees, poinsettia "balls" defy gravity and succulents create living wreaths. Santa's green thumb turns Christmas at Bok Tower Gardens into a winter wonderland without the snow opening Friday, Nov. 25.

The annual celebration is packed with all kinds of festivities, live music on the 205-foot Singing Tower carillon and the holiday home tour at Pinewood Estate through Jan. 8 at the National Historic Landmark near Lake Wales.

The 20-room, 1932 Mediterranean-style mansion is all decked out for the annual holiday home tour with this year's design theme, "Home for the Holidays!" It is 1940s post war and Pinewood Estate owner C. Austin Buck has invited his whole family to celebrate the holidays in Florida and the safe return of his son from the war.

"This is the second year we've written a story the designers use as inspiration to design the rooms so the house flows," said Stephanie Eckstein, Pinewood Estate manager. "As opposed to being a showcase for designers, it's actually a showcase of Pinewood and the people who lived in it."

Members of The Amaryllis Club decorated the main floor of the estate and the entry gates. Three additional community room

HOLIDAY | 15

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LAKE WALES NEWS

Little public at public hearing

One person shows for S.R. 60 development

By **KATHY LEIGH BERKOWITZ**
CORRESPONDENT

The badges showed, but the public did not, at a final public hearing held regarding the State Road 60 railroad overpass Project Development and Environment Study, Thursday evening.

The event at Polk State College Corporate College campus in Bartow, and only one person from the general public showed. The study, according to FDOT officials, is about a proposed new overpass to carry S.R. 60 over the CSX Railroad crossing located 11 miles east of Bartow and four miles west of Lake Wales in Polk County.

The one person who did show at this final hearing was Jim Venrick, local land owner who owns a large parcel on north 60. He said the project would be a good thing because trains do hold up traffic, and people knock his fence down to go to the bathroom because they get tired of waiting. The property has been in his family since 1868.

The study is being done in partnership with Polk County and the Polk Transportation Planning Organization. According to an aerial map made available at the hearing, the project limits cover S.R. 60 from 3,900 feet west of the

CSX crossing to 2,700 feet east of the crossing.

Robin Stublen, FDOT spokesperson, said the proposed overpass is listed as a "cost affordable" project in Polk TPO's long range transportation plan, "Momentum 2040."

Project manager for the proposal is Roxann Lake, and those in the public with questions or comments are asked to email her at roxann.lake@dot.state.fl.us by Wednesday, Nov. 30.

There were no public comments offered at the hearing Thursday night.

The idea behind the project is to help improve safety on S.R. 60 by making a way for vehicle traffic to pass over the railroad, instead of having to wait on trains, or stop at the tracks for company safety reasons before passing over. The overpass would allow traffic to continue to flow. There is a no-build option, however, in that case, the FDOT states that safety will not be improved.

State Road 60 is noted as a designated hurricane evacuation route.

According to the study, thus far, in 2015, traffic east of Rifle Range Road averaged about 23,000 vehicles each day. By 2040, those volumes are estimated to grow to more than 40,000 vehicles a day, the FDOT says.

And there is another possibility for further expansion of S.R. 60 from a four lane to a six lane highway, however, that is not within the scope of this project, according to Patrick Bateman, moderator of Thursday's hearing.

Train traffic has increased, also, FDOT notes, due to the construction of the CSX Intermodal Logistics Center, "and will continue to do so."

Included in the project are three pairs of bridges to raise S.R. 60 over the Peace Creek Drainage Canal, a driveway and gas line, and the CSX railroad.

State Road 60 will consist of four 12-foot lanes, two in each direction. Retaining walls will be built on an embankment encompassing the travel lanes approaching the bridges over the railroad, according to the FDOT.

A 23-and-a-half foot median with 10 foot paved shoulders and a barrier wall will separate the lanes.

Additionally, ten foot paved outside shoulders will include seven-foot buffered bicycle lanes, and additional pavement will be added to allow a future widening of S.R. 60 to six lanes, according to a pamphlet given to those who attended the hearing.

And since the Polk

County Comprehensive Plan identifies S.R. 60 in the study area as a "Future Sidewalk Priorities roadway," sidewalks are also included, said Bateman.

Ken Muzyk of Faller Davis & Associates, project consultants for the FDOT, notes there are a few businesses affected by the project, and those will see frontage roads in front of their property so they can still access S.R. 60. Those frontage roads will be two-way, two lane roads in the northwest, southwest, and northeast quadrants of S.R. 60 and the CSX Railroad.

He notes the response from those on S.R. 60 has been good.

"Older families and entities have cooperated" as they understand, he said.

There are no community facilities nor any historic or archaeological sites that have been or

will be affected by the upgrade.

Power lines will need to be relocated, and this affects Duke Energy, Peterson Industries, International Paper, C & J and a power substation.

Evaluation factors presented at the hearing included right of way impacts, natural, environmental and physical effects, estimated cost in 2016 dollars.

Thirteen parcels of land are effected by the project. Right of way acquisition will need to take place, as well, which will be about 8.95 acres.

No businesses or residences will need to be relocated.

Impact to the environment is a relative low risk, according to the study.

The total cost of the project, if approved, will be about \$60.8 million. Breakdown of that is as follows: \$3,460,000 for design;

\$1.3 million for Right of Way acquisition; \$36,216,222 in road-way construction; bridge construction at \$13,180,656; utilities and railroad - \$630,000; wetland mitigation \$61,950; construction engineering and inspection \$5,927,625.

After the public hearing, FDOT now will put together its final review of the study and then submit a proposal to the FDOT District One secretary for approval, according to information distributed Thursday night.

If approved, then funding is there for design to continue this year. Additionally, there are funds to begin acquiring right of way parcels. However, construction of the S.R. 60 separation is not at this time funded in the preliminary five year work program, which runs from 2018-2022.

HOLIDAY

FROM PAGE 14

design partners include Citizen's Bank (Mr. Buck's Bedroom), Nettle Creek

(Lucy's Bedroom) and the Lake Wales Museum (one of the guest bedrooms).

Admission is \$20 for adults; \$9 for children ages 5-12. Members are \$7 for adults; \$6 for children ages 5-12. All prices

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LAKE WALES NEWS

Raising dollars to park

Fundraiser to fix parking lot was fun and games

By **KATHY LEIGH BERKOWITZ**
CORRESPONDENT

This may well become an annual tradition. On Saturday, the Lake Wales YMCA held a holiday and craft fair Flea Market.

According to Carlotta Anderson, who is the Senior Activities Coordinator at the YMCA, the event is an effort to raise money to repair the parking lot at the Y.

"Our mission is to get our parking lot in shape," she said.

Carlotta noted there are a variety of activities for seniors at the Y, including Body Recal, Silver Sneakers, Water Aerobics and even Tai Chi, which takes place under the trees at Lake Wailes near the pier.

Average classes run about 20 members, she said. "It connects you to nature," she added.

In addition to helping with the classes, YMCA folks put the word out about the Flea Market on Facebook and through the Chamber of



Arianna Ambrocio, volunteer with the Coconut Connection, a company that makes scented soaps and other scented gifts, poses with the day's table of very nice smelling goodies. The soaps smell almost good enough to eat: especially the pumpkin scented soap.

Commerce. "And announcements tacked to a pole," she said.

Saturday, the event ran from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., and drew quite a crowd. All kinds of vendors were on hand. Some were from the YMCA, and others were private vendors who brought in their own booths and rented booths. The YMCA sponsored booths donated all of their profits to the cause, while booth rentals from

private vendors were for the same.

And there was everything from tie-died T-shirts, to scented novelty soaps, hand crafted items, boxes of household goods and even a six-foot Christmas tree that was a steal at only \$5.

April and Garrett Dempsey brought their children to the event. Seven-year-old Megan Heter, daughter of Clark Heter, the YMCA director, joined 8-year-old Mollie,



PHOTOS BY KATHY LEIGH BERKOWITZ

Now that is a lemonade stand. Megan Heter joins Mollie, Corbin and Hannah Dempsey at a lemonade stand. Proceeds go to a field trip for the Cornerstone Homeschool Connection.

10-year-old Corbin, and 12-year-old Hannah Dempsey at an old fashioned lemonade stand they built to raise money for the Cornerstone Homeschool Connection's field trip.

Donald and Sheila Sargent brought their

booth, which was the product of how they spent their free time. Sheila started making girls' headwear, and bows.

"I like working with my hands. I started doing it for my granddaughters," she said, waving one

hand to a pile of novelty hairbows. Her husband does corn hole games as well.

For information on how to donate to the parking lot project or participate in other YMCA events, call 863-676-9441.

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Magic on Main



PHOTO BY CHARLES A. BAKER III

Nicholas Obermeyer Jr., 1 of Bartow, gets a good look at the Holiday Street Lighting Ceremony Friday night in Bartow. Additional photographs from Magic on Main are available at <http://www.magic-on-main.charliethird.com/>



PHOTO BY CHARLES A. BAKER III

Above: Students from Spessard Holland Elementary School and others prepare to sing Christmas carols in downtown Bartow Friday night.



PHOTO BY CHARLES A. BAKER III

Right: Friday Fest, normally held on the third Friday of the month in Bartow was Magic on Main to ring in the Christmas spirit last week.



PHOTO BY CHARLES A. BAKER III

Left: Frostproof Middle-Senior High School Chorus sang during opening night of the History Center's sixth annual Festival of Wreaths Friday night in Bartow.



PHOTO BY CHARLES A. BAKER III

Traditional and unusual wreaths fill the History Center's halls and rotunda area where the chorus sang opening night of the Festival of Wreaths. Decorated and donated by Bartow leaders, visit polkhistorycenter.org to place a bid in a silent auction with benefits benefiting the History Center. The auction ends at 5 p.m. Dec. 10.



PHOTO BY STEVE STEINER

Downtown Bartow was jam packed with people awaiting the annual lighting of the trees ceremony.



PHOTO BY STEVE STEINER

Santa pats his tummy after sampling some of the pastries at The Cookie Jar. He was in Bartow for Magic on Main, the Friday Fest event for November.



PHOTO BY STEVE STEINER

Members of Highway 37 South perform at Magic on Main, the November Friday Fest event.



PHOTO BY STEVE STEINER

"And have you been a good boy this year?" asks Santa minutes before he will flip the switch on the annual tree lighting ceremony at Magic on Main, the November Friday Fest event.

LAKE WALES NEWS

Miss Florida Citrus acts like a peach

Current queen makes stop in Lake Wales statewide tour

By **JAMES COULTER**
CORRESPONDENT

Miss Florida Citrus Stephanie Capon made a visit to Florida's Natural Grove House Visitor Center in Lake Wales Saturday.

Her stop at Lake Wales was one of many that she has been making during her statewide tour of Florida, having previously stopped at Vero Beach, Orlando, Okeechobee, and Winter Haven.

As Miss Florida Citrus, it is her duty as a marketing tool for the industry to visit various growers, expos, and conferences within the industry as to act as its ambassador.

Prior to this tour, the Miami native had not fully explored Central Florida, so this allowed her the opportunity to visit places she had not been to before such as various rural groves and ranches.

This marked the first time that the Miami

native had visited Lake Wales. She was most pleased by the little city, with locals recommending that she visit landmarks like Spook Hill and Bok Tower Gardens.

"Florida Natural is wonderful, and I had such a great experience working with them at the different expos," Capon said. "The entire Florida citrus industry is a family and they have taken care of me."

A Miami native, Capon graduated from the University of Florida in 2014, and is currently working to obtain her master's degree with a scholarship she won as Miss Florida Citrus.

As someone who loves to dance, she currently works as a full-time dance teacher at a private school at Boca Raton.

She used her dance skills to wow the judges in the Miss Florida Citrus Pageant earlier this

March, helping her to obtain the title.

The pageant is held every March, which includes a private interview with the judges along with a public competition featuring formal wear, swimsuit wear, and a talent show.

"The girl who best represents the Florida citrus industry gets to take the crown and spend the year traveling the state and visiting the growers and volunteering for this industry," Capon said.

Winning the title has proven to be a huge honor for her, as it has provided her with an opportunity to serve as an ambassador to an important industry within her home state.

"As an ambassador, you have to make sure that you are always putting your best foot forward and representing the industry the best possible way that you can, because you are not only representing

yourself ... (but) an industry of people for whom this is their livelihood," she said. "So you can't afford to give them a bad name."

The next few months will see her concluding her time as Miss Florida Citrus, with her spending more time in Winter Haven to help prepare for the next pageant.

When she finally relinquishes her crown and title, she will conclude her eligibility for Miss Florida, as she will be over the age limit of 24.

Aside from obtaining her master's degree, she also plans on volunteering with the Miss Florida program, being a supportive role within future pageants.

"I will no longer be able to compete ... but I hope to remain involved with the program and maybe volunteer for future pageants and become a supportive role," she said.



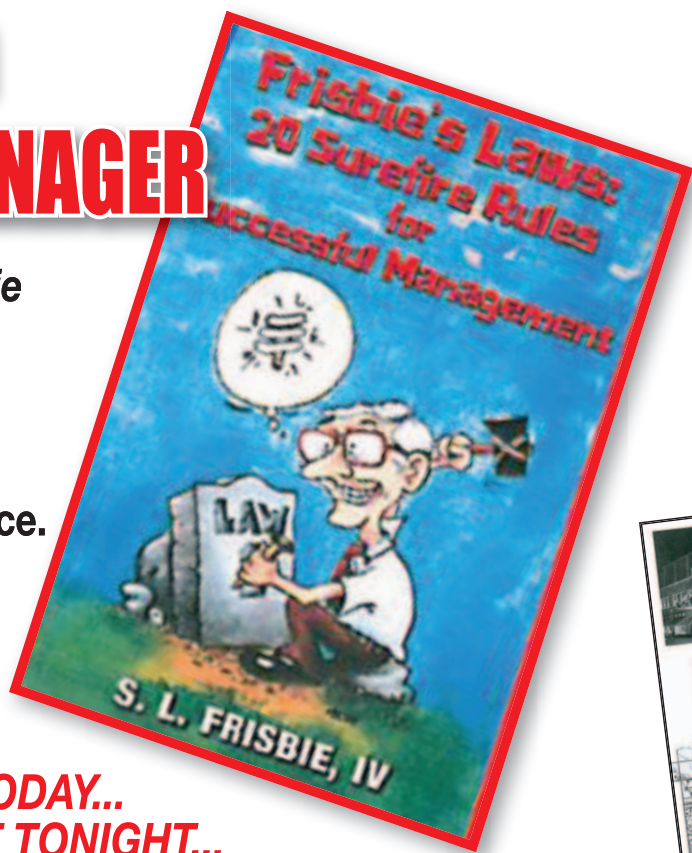
PHOTO BY JAMES COULTER

Miss Florida Citrus Stephanie Capon made stops at some landmarks in Lake Wales on her first visit to the city on Saturday.

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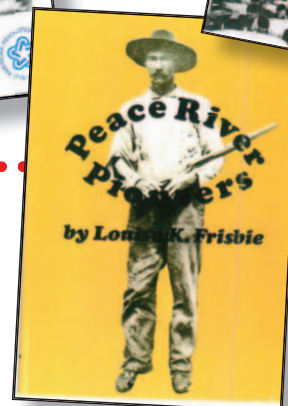
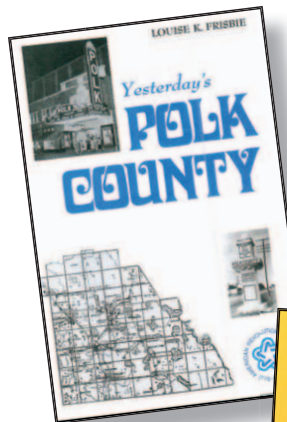
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LAKE WALES NEWS

Runway to get much-needed renovations

By **JAMES COULTER**
CORRESPONDENT

Airplanes will be able to fly and take off more safely from the Lake Wales Municipal Airport now that its runway is expected to undergo much needed renovations through an agreement approved by the city last week.

Lake Wales City Commissioners last week approved a resolution executing an agreement among the city airport, the Florida Department of Transportation and the Federal Aviation Administration that will better bring the airport's infrastructure up to safety standards.

Specifically, the agreement will see to the rehabilitation of Taxiway Alpha and the relocation and extension of Taxiway Bravo.

The agreement was created through a recent meeting among city staff and representatives of FDOT and the FAA, who suggested that the taxiways be updated before any other infrastructure

is updated, explained Teresa Allen, Assistant Public Support Services Director.

City Commissioners voted unanimously to approve the agreement through a roll call vote.

City Commissioner Pete Perez used the resolution to prompt discussion concerning whether or not it is appropriate for city commissioners to attend city meetings of its various boards and committees such as that of the airport authority.

He asked whether it was against protocol for a commissioner like himself to attend any of these meetings, since he was curious about the details of resolutions such as this.

"Sometimes I have no clue what we are voting on until I understand at a greater degree what is going on," he said.

City Manager Kenneth Fields did confirm that such attendance by commissioners was indeed against protocol, and that if he wanted more information on such a resolution, that he

could always defer the vote and request more information.

Furthermore, if someone like Commissioner Perez wanted more information, they could always address a staff member directly before or after their meeting, Fields said.

City Commissioners that evening also approved the following items:

Police And Firefighter Retirement Benefits. Two amendments that will create supplemental retirement benefits to both the police and firefighter pension plans were approved during their first reading.

These retirement benefits would be funded through excess premium tax revenues, which the city will pay for through state monies they receive, said Sandra D. Davis, Human Resources Director.

Under these new benefits, nearly 30 firefighters will receive \$24 each per year, while 46 police officers will receive \$130 each per year.

Both amendments received unanimous approval through roll call vote.

BB&T Government Finance Lease Agreement. A lease agreement was approved with BB&T Government Finance for the replacement of emergency generators for the city's police department.

The agreement would allow for the 60-month financing of the emergency backup generators while classifying existing generators as surplus property.

The current generators, which provide backup

emergency power to the data center, were manufactured in the 1970s. While their replacement is necessary, it has been delayed for the past four years, said James Slaton, Public/Support Services Director.

"It is operational, but it is becoming more than a challenge to get them repaired," Slaton said.

The agreement also authorized a budget amendment for an un-budgeted item of \$12,936.

Longleaf Business Park Name Change. Longleaf Business Park had its name changed to Lake

Wales Commerce & Technology Park through the unanimous approval of a resolution.

The name change was suggested by a private investor whom has been purchasing remaining undeveloped lots within the park, and whom had suggested the name change for the sake of marketing.

As of Tuesday morning, the sales on those parcels had been closed with the city receiving \$967,000 in exchange. Currently, the city has retained two parcels, which may be utilized for future projects.

Calling all artists

Can apply for Citizens Bank & Trust Lake Wales Arts Council Festival

By **CASSIE JACOBY**
CORRESPONDENT

Artists are invited to apply to be accepted in the Citizens Bank & Trust 46th annual Lake Wales Arts Festival scheduled from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday, Feb. 18, and Sunday, Feb. 19, on the shores of Lake Wales.

Presented by the Lake Wales Arts Council, the festival showcases up to 100 artists competing for more than \$30,000 in awards along with live entertainment, food trucks and the Student Art Show.

"We're excited to announce our judges, Richard Colvin and Elder Jones," said Elizabeth Ingley McWhorter, 2017 Festival chair. "We have simplified our process for artists to apply to be included in the Festival through the free one-stop universal application system online."

Visit <https://www.zapplication.org/> to apply.

Back by popular demand, the Art-B-Que welcome and kick-off party for the artists is from 6 to 9 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 17, with live entertainment, cash bar and barbecue dinner. Tickets for the dinner are \$10 each for adults and \$5 for children younger than 10.

Also returning, the Junior League of Greater Winter Haven is hosting the Children's Tent featuring art, crafts and entertainment.

The categories of art include clay; drawing, graphics and digital; jewelry; mixed media and fiber; oil and acrylic; watercolor and pastel; photography; and sculpture, wood and glass. The variety of media, subject matter and style will offer price points for every level of collector.

Visit www.lakewalesartscouncil.org and www.facebook.com/lakewalesartscouncil or call 863-676-8426 for information.

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BARTOW NEWS

Boom, check out the bargains

By **STEVE STEINER**
SSTEINER@HEARTLAND
NEWSPAPERS.COM

(Editor's note: only first names are used.)

At times there hardly was a place to park at the Bartow Armory this past weekend for those attending the gun show.

At the entrance into the main room one of the first vendors, Tom, a private dealer, said he was doing very well.

"What I sell mostly are gun cases," he said as he pointed to several. A former deputy sheriff in northern Illinois before he retired and moved to Lakeland, he attributed his avocation due in part to his former law enforcement career. "I've been collecting guns about 50 years."

When asked to point out his favorite gun among those he was selling, he took a moment before pointing out a particular firearm, one with a long barrel.

"It's a Colt King Cobra," he said as he pointed. It was selling for \$2,500 and explained the high price. "It hasn't been made in a long time."

He smiled when asked whether he believed he would get what he was asking for that particular

piece, or for anything else he was offering.

"Everyone likes to bargain a little bit," he said. "That's part of the fun of a gun show."

Like others, he said he participates in gun shows about twice a month, on average. With that he was approached.

"Hey, partner, how you doing?" he said in greeting.

A few tables down Sonya busied herself embroidering bibs made of camouflage material. Dodds said she had been going to gun shows between seven to eight years.

"I started out doing craft shows," Sonya said. However, that quickly paled. For one thing, most craft shoes are outside and sometimes not the best of weather and temperature conditions. At least with gun shows she's inside where it's climate controlled. A number of people who buy her goods are parents and grandparents who buy for their children and grandchildren.

At another table a woman was promoting membership in the NRA. She said that many people don't realize that out of the estimated 100,000 gun owners,



The sign outside the Bartow Armory spells out in clear, concise detail what is not permitted at the gun show. The gun show was held the weekend of Nov. 19-20 at the Bartow Municipal Airport and Industrial Park.

approximately only 5,000 are members of the NRA.

"For every member, 19 are not," she said as she pointed to the different membership levels, from as low as \$30 for a one-year membership and up to \$1,500 for a lifetime membership. However, if people signed up at the gun show they could enjoy steep discounts, such as \$500 off the lifetime membership. A special level termed "Distinguished" was for senior citizens 65 and older, and normally costs \$750, but would only cost \$500.



PHOTOS BY STEVE STEINER

A person does not have to be a permanent resident of Florida to obtain a Conceal Carry permit according to the sign posted to the entrance of the Bartow Armory, where a gun show was held Nov. 19-20.

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BARTOW NEWS

Church Service Center celebrates 50 years

By **JEFF ROSLOW**

JROSLOW@SCMGINC.COM

In 1966, three Bartow churches collaborated to try to solve a problem many cities have in helping those in need, and the Church Service Center was born. On Friday, Nov. 18, the Center on East Summerlin Street celebrated its 50th year of doing that in Bartow and the surrounding area.

"The First Presbyterian, First United Methodist and First Baptist churches saw a need for the community and the people," Director Rusty Music said at the celebration. "They saw a duplication of services."

From that, the CSC was formed and now there are about 25 churches on board, many area businesses

and organizations, and services have ballooned into what it is today.

"We have grown to helping up to 30,000 clients a year to help in town to our fullest," he said.

And the Church Service Center has been through a lot. In 2009 its home burned down in a fire and everything was lost. The community came together to help resurrect it and found its new home on Summerlin. And with the launch of a thrift store, which has proven successful, it is better able to fund services to the people.

"The Bartow Health Care Foundation got together with philanthropists and community leaders and they covered the cost of this building," Music said. "And with the help of the thrift store it has helped us with our



PHOTO BY JEFF ROSLOW

Church Service Director Rusty Music speaks at the 50th Anniversary celebration of the CSC on Friday, Nov. 18.

financial program and we are now a full-fledged service agency."

Among the services it offers is providing emergency needs, food, clothing, meals and gasoline, along with household items and help with utilities, rent and transportation, health care

and prescriptions. They will do income taxes for people at no cost up to a certain income limit, offer financial classes to help those get out of the hole and stay out of the hole, and it has a free lunch giveaways every day.

During the ceremony, Music thanked the community and the people for allowing the Church Service Center to provide for the needs of local people at which one attendee, M.P. Patrick, who volunteers his time and effort to fix bicycles for children, replied, "Thank you, Rusty."

At the ceremony, Music gathered the attendees outside to dedicate the flagpole that was recently put in front of the CSC. And he dedicated Miss Carolyn, a newly planted tree outside the building. The tree was planted in the memory of Carolyn

Hinton during Arbor Day earlier this year.

Hinton passed away on Sept. 2, 2015, at 89 years old. She was active in the Bartow Garden Club, Lioness Club, Bartow Tennis Club and American Cancer Society, and she served as chaplain of the Bartow Regional Medical Center. Perhaps the one item she drove most was the Church Service Center.

"She dedicated a majority of her life (to the Church Service Center)," Music said. "She put in a lot of sweat and tears. The tree is called Miss Carolyn and we say hi to her every day we come in. We love her and the Hinton family."

One question asked from the audience was about the sacrifice people at the CSC make everyday.

"One of the struggles

we have is learning to say no," Music said. "It's hard to see someone crying because they are in a crisis mode and need help now. That's a struggle."

However, he added, he is able to keep those "no" answers at a minimum because of the community's help.

"This is your service center, this is your agency for Bartow," he said.



A tree in Carolyn Hinton's name was planted outside the Church Service Center.

Cracker Story Telling Festival in December

By **KATHY LEIGH BERKOWITZ**
CORRESPONDENT

Mark your calendar, this time, the date is set in stone. Dec. 1-3 will be the days when the Homeland Heritage Park will be full of students from all over Polk County to hear the super tale tellers appearing at this year's Cracker Story Telling Festival.

Delayed earlier this fall by Hurricane Mathew, the festival will feature a dozen story tellers, some familiar to the fest and some new, according to organizers.

This year, some 1,500 students of all ages and

grades, will descend on the Homeland history-centric park to hear tales from a variety of cultures from Native American stories to tales of the weird and offbeat from other countries.

Thursday and Friday the activities are restricted to the school students, but on Saturday the festival is open to the public. Admission is \$4 for students and \$6 for adults.

"It's well worth it, because our story tellers are so great," said Terrie Sullivan, one of the organizers.

If one ties of listening

to the age-old stories, one can visit crafters' booths or vendors' stalls on Saturday, Sullivan said. "There will be homemade leather goods, homemade honey as well as holiday items, just to name a few things."

On Saturday, the story telling will end about noon so festival goers can make their way to the ever-popular Whip Cracking Contest that will entice local lash experts with prizes awarded in various age categories.

Story-telling is part of the schools' language arts curriculum,

according to Sullivan, and is encouraged as an art form. The students

taking part in the festival are from third grade to high school seniors.

For information, contact Sullivan at 863-647-4716.



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BARTOW NEWS

Garage seeing about 175 cars a day

Number seeking parking about what they expected, staff said

By **KATHY LEIGH BERKOWITZ**
CORRESPONDENT

They aren't exactly packin' 'em in at the new county garage, but they are slowly building up the usage of the county's \$8 million parking facility in downtown Bartow.

Built to hold 679 vehicles, it's only averaging about 175 per day right now, say county officials.

"In general it's doing about what we expected," said Assistant County Manager Bill Beasley. "We still have more than 185 surface spaces that are free, so

it's going to take time to build up the use."

Opened in August, the garage cost the county \$8 million to build but, the county opted to allow free parking for about a month after opening for the public to become acclimatized to it.

The garage is sandwiched between the Polk County Courthouse on Church Street and the County Administration Center a block north on Boulevard Street. Entry to the garage is from Boulevard Street.

"While there are plenty of open spots in the

garage, people are still crowding the surface lots," Beasley also said. "But we expected to see that and know that will change as time goes on."

Meanwhile, according to David Peach, who is the county's facilities manager, there are more than 100 employees or users who have purchased monthly passes.

"We have about 108 right now," Peach said last week. A monthly pass costs \$45. Parking fees by the hour range from the minimum of \$2 for up to two hours, to a maximum of \$6.50 per day.

"Right now we are

doing what we had hoped," Peach explained. "We are making expenses. That covers the cost of the staff that takes the tickets and provides security. That's about what we expected."

Both Peach and Beasley said they expect use of the garage to escalate as the weather changes. "When it gets colder or the weather gets nasty, the use will go up. People will want to park their car where it is warmer and dry."

Peach said the average stay in the garage is from 30 minutes to an hour and a half, for

which the fee is \$2. Payment is either with cash or credit card.

To make things better for garage users, the county also erected a covered walkway from the garage to the courthouse.

"That helps when it's raining," both men said.

"We didn't expect the garage to be swamped," said Beasley. "But people are getting comfortable with what's expected and how it operates. We're happy with how it's working right now and know it will grow over time."

The garage is monitored by security

cameras and foot patrols, according to Beasley.

"We have cameras on the transaction booths and security is provided by staff that makes regular patrols throughout," he said.

There are signs directing visitors to the garage from Mill and Boulevard streets, but Peach said additional signs are being planned for Broadway to direct motorists to the garage entrance.

The garage hours are from 7 a.m. until 6 p.m. After 6, there is no fee to use the garage. Weekends also are free.

Alliance helps families for Thanksgiving

More than 100 area families will have a happier Thanksgiving this year due to the action of 12 churches led by the Deacons and Stewards Alliance.

Families came in one by one on Saturday at the Carver Recreation Center where they were given a large turkey, cake mix, green beans, cranberry sauce, stuffing and corn

bread. The churches involved supplied the family names to the Deacons and Stewards Alliance, and Bartow Walmart mostly supplied the families with

Thanksgiving supplies.

The churches that participated included Burkett Chapple Primitive Baptist, Church of the Kingdom of God, Faith, Spirit and Truth

with Divine Power, First Providence Missionary Baptist, Macedonia Missionary Baptist, Mount Olive Freewill Baptist, New Mount Zion AME, Praise Temple

Deliverance Center, St. James AME, St. John Missionary Baptist and Triumph The Church & Kingdom of God in Christ.

— Jeff Roslow

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BARTOW NEWS

Champion Homes hosts grand opening

By **STEVE STEINER**

SSTEINER@SCMGINC.COM

According to Lonna Bassett, until recently, whenever anyone stopped to tour the models of Champion Homes, located within the Bartow Municipal Airport and Industrial Park, then wanted to purchase could not do so on-site. To be more specific, anyone other than a community or park owner who wanted to buy a manufactured home could not.

“They would be referred to either a “street retailer” or to the community in which the home would be situated,” said Bassett. This, she added, was excluding those who own private property and want to place a manufactured or modular home on their lot. Bassett is a zone manager for Homes of Merit, a division of Champion Homes, as is Titan Homes, which now makes it



Lonna Bassett, zone manager for Homes of Merit, a division of Champion Homes, points out a feature in a model home.

possible to purchase a home on-site.

In fact, at a grand opening held over this past weekend that finishes today, Wednesday, Nov. 23, a total of eight homes were sold, with several more pending this week, according to a Titan

Homes representative.

Anyone who purchased (or who may purchase by today's end) was guaranteed a price lock for six months with a signed contract and \$1,000 deposit; plus there was a free Badcock furniture package on all homes sold



PHOTOS BY STEVE STEINER

Lonna Bassett (left) talks to Kimberly Tilley as Tilley's daughter, Chase, looks on.

during the grand opening. In addition, according to a flier, those visiting could register to win a free \$1,000 gift certificate from Badcock Furniture.

Among the first to take advantage of the grand opening sale and tour the various models included Herman and Kimberly Tilley, along with daughter Chase Harrison, 12, who attends Bartow Middle School. The couple owns a five-acre property in Alturas.

As they toured several of the houses they were duly impressed.

“The rooms are pretty good size,” said Kimberly Tilley. One of the features she and her husband found attractive in one of the models was the size of a bathroom. It included a separate tub and shower (which Bassett said is an “Amazon” shower, as well as a separate “water closet.” Off the bathroom was a huge walk-in closet. The house also featured what is being termed by Champion Homes as the “Ultimate Kitchen Two (a trademarked brand).

The Tilleys came away very impressed. Because

they had to take their daughter to a soccer match, they could not stay. However, they said they would be back later in the day.

Being able to do sales in the Bartow facility is part of a long term strategy for Champion Homes, said general manager Charles Stricklin. There currently are three manufacturing facilities in Lake City.

“Our goal is to grow distribution to the point where we have to open a manufacturing plant here,” said Stricklin, “and we’re close to that part.”



Lonna Bassett shows one of the features of Champion Homes' "Ultimate Kitchen Two" was the pot-filler faucet located above the stove. A feature like this, she said, removes any need to take a pot off the stove and refill with water, if necessary.

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BARTOW NEWS

Professor: Seminole War had great impact on Polk County

By **JAMES COULTER**
CORRESPONDENT

Polk County residents would not be living where they are today were it not for the land gained during the Third Seminole War, a well-published historian explained during a presentation last week.

During the Bartow Historical Center's final Lunch n' Learn presentation of the year last Tuesday, historian Dr. Joel Kinesch presented a lecture on the Third Seminole War and its impact on Polk County.

The war, which occurred between 1855 and 1858, was the third and final of three conflicts waged by the U.S. military against the native Seminoles, with this last war ultimately helping to drive out the native population.

The greatest impact of the war was the freeing up of frontier land for settlers, whom would help to develop the land into what is now Polk and Hillsborough counties.

Prior to the war, the land remained relatively unknown and unsettled with very few pioneers residing on the land, and even with the Seminoles having very little knowledge of it, Kinesch said.

During the first two Seminole Wars, many officers were disparaging of the territory, and would promptly resign, refusing to face off against the alligators and swampland.

After the war, the land had since been cleared out, allowing for pioneers to settle the land, with more being able to do so following the draining of swampland.

However, the land came with the steep and bloody price of the native Seminole population, with many losing their lives during the war and the remainder either being shipped to Oklahoma or being driven southward.

The tensions from the native population had been exasperated many years prior due to the severing of trade between the natives and Spanish, the encroaching exploration of the land, and the previous two wars.

Kinesch received his Ph.D. in History from



PHOTO BY JAMES COULTER

Dr. Joe Kinesch, left, held a presentation on the Third Seminole War at the Polk Historical Center on the behest of Lois Murphy, right, Museum Assistant at Polk County History Center.

Florida State University, his masters from Florida and Atlantic University, and bachelors in history and economics from Western Commission University.

His bibliography includes publishing eight books, 200 articles, and 32 book reviews, mostly on military history. He is currently working on researching World War I and the asymmetrical warfare involved with it.

Kinesch conducted extensive research for his work on the Third Seminole War, which included traveling more than 5,000 miles to verify many of his facts.

His research at museums allowed him to discover a variety of material concerning the Seminoles that not even those museums themselves knew that they had, he said.

One of the greatest aspects of his research was being able to learn more about General George Meade, a Union general after whom the city of Fort Meade was named.

His proudest moment was uncovering a letter written to Gen. Meade from then Gen. Ulysses S. Grant, imploring him to maintain his command as general under him.

"Here are two of the most important generals on the Union side of the war," he said. "It's amazing what it does to hold a document signed from a future president among

the great generals of the war to another great general."

Following his presentation, he received many questions from the audience. Perhaps the most interesting was what his thoughts were on President Andrew Jackson, whom he had previously written a paper on, and whether he thought Jackson was good or bad.

Kinesch admitted he felt Jackson was an amazing man who was a mixed bag of an individual.

On one hand, Jackson owned many slaves and was responsible for the mistreatment of Native Americans; on the other hand, he was an efficient leader who was able to handle coalitions of different groups, with no one doing better than Eisenhower.

"He was an amazing man," Kinesch said. "The man was a product of his time. I don't know of another white person at that time who would have done the same thing as him."

As for his presentation, he enjoyed the turnout, which he considered great, especially for the lunchtime hour.

He loved being able to host the presentation at the museum, as he much enjoyed the overall historic atmosphere of the building, and felt it was most ideal for such a presentation.

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BARTOW NEWS

Welcome to Thanksgiving week

Hello again. Bartow Library will close for the Thanksgiving weekend from Thursday, Nov. 24 through Saturday, Nov. 26. We will reopen Monday, Nov. 28 to normal hours.

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 hope that our Adult Book discussion group is enjoying *The Storied Life of AJ Fikry* by Gabrielle Zevin and that you'll be



Paul Wartenberg

Bartow Public Library

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

here at the library to discuss it at 3 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 7. There are some copies

here at the library you can purchase for \$3.

We still have ongoing Chair Yoga exercise classes every Tuesday and Friday mornings from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m. We also have the ongoing Adult Coloring program on Tuesday from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., and you can bring your own lunch as you relax while coloring sheets.

We will offer Week Four of our Computer Basics class on Monday, Nov. 28 with "Introduction to Word" covering how to create typewritten documents from 3-5 p.m. Seating is limited so please call or

ask at the Information desk about this.

We will have special computer classes during the first two weeks in December: "Introduction to Tablets" class on Monday, Dec. 5 from 3-5 p.m. and "Intro to 3D Printing" on Monday Dec 12 from 3-5 p.m.

Our address is 2150 S. Broadway Ave. in Bartow. You can call Bartow Library at 863-534-0131 if you have any questions about our events.

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

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BARTOW NEWS

Busy month for Bartow Art Guild



PHOTOS PROVIDED

Jenny Heidtman accepts a check in the amount of \$1,000 from David Harrell. The check was presented to Heidtman by the Bartow Art Guild and will go toward the Orpheum Theatre and Academy of Performing Arts.

By STEVE STEINER

SSTEINER@SCMGINC.COM

It has been an active November for the Bartow Art Guild. In addition to its annual Cornucopia art competition and

exhibit, the Bartow Art Guild has been making donations promoting the arts. Most recently it has made donations in the amount of \$1,000 each to the Bartow Rotary Club and the Orpheum Theatre.



David Harrell, President of the Bartow Art Guild, presents a check from the Guild for \$1,000 to the Rotary Club President J. C. Martin, to assist with their public art project.

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BARTOW NEWS

History in our backyard

Northerners, Southerners, Indians re-enact Battle of Bowlegs

By **CHARLES A. BAKER III**
CORRESPONDENT

Hundreds of history buffs, students, actors and residents of Polk and Highlands counties converged on the Fort Meade Outdoor Recreation Area for the Battle of Bowlegs Creek Heritage Festival over the weekend.

Federal Cmdr. Chuck Munson of Umatilla said this was the fifth time that the Civil War re-enactment has taken place in Fort Meade and that eight union companies from across Florida volunteered to entertain and educate those in attendance.

Confederate Cmdr. James Permane and Seminole Indian Chief Hawkwood Kenny organized the other volunteers. Several of the volunteer actors said this event is small in comparison to other Civil War re-enactments in Florida.

Representatives from the Fort Meade Chamber

of Commerce and the Historical Society of Fort Meade are hoping to expand on what is known as a small event.

"This is history in our back yard," said Historical Society of Fort Meade secretary and former chamber director Priscilla Perry. "This teaches us about our roots, where we came from, actual things that happened."

For the past couple of years, Fort Meade leaders have been trying to get an equestrian vendor to develop the Fort Meade Outdoor Recreation Area into a high end attraction that would feature an expanded museum. Currently Fort Meade does not have a museum that is secure enough to exhibit the Civil War artifacts found in the area.

Dwight Dovel, an amateur archaeologist from Fort Pierce, has been excavating around Fort Meade on and off

for the past 25 years. In that time his team has dug up more than 1,500 artifacts believed to be left behind from the Battle of Bowlegs Creek and the associated encampments. Until the current land is developed, there is nowhere local to exhibit them all.

"They are rare and historical artifacts and we do not want to take the chance that they will be stolen," Dovel said. "They will be on permanent display at the new park they are going to build in the next three or four years. Right now there is a small display in city manager's office and at the library. We are trying to get some artifacts in other public places."

Dovel said he is willing to put on an annual exhibit at Fort Meade Historical Museum. The date for the next exhibit has yet to be announced but last year it was held in May.

Perry has been coordinating the artifact

project for the historical society. She and a current chamber representative said that there is no news to report in reference to further development from the interested equestrian vendor.

In the meantime, Dovel said he is still excavating the area when health permits.

The somewhat annual Battle of Bowlegs Creek Heritage Festival showcased some new changes this year. In years past, the battle was fought inside the park itself. This year the fighting took place in an open field adjacent to the park allowing for better views from spectators who could move with the battle.

Hawkeye Kenny said that in the morning his Seminole Indian volunteers attacked newly erected Tillis House, pretend-killing its inhabitants and ambushing the Federal troops who responded from a fabricated Fort Meade



CHARLES A. BAKER III

Talya Wickham, 5, and Lynn Nolen, both of Sebring, watch the Battle of Bowlegs Creek Heritage Festival over the weekend.

fort also erected new this year. Later, Hawkeye and Duckfeather James playfully taunted Confederate re-enactors marching to the Civil War starting points and spoke of American thirst for war with spectators.

A naval invasion was supposed to take place around noon but there was a logistical problem that could not be worked out according to Chuck Munson.

As always, the Confederates win and the Federal Troops retreat. A Turkey Shoot using Civil War era weapons was scheduled immediately following the re-enactment. A period ball was held each night and there were period church services Sunday morning.

Additional pictures can be seen at <http://www.bowlegs-creek.charliethird.com/>

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District to pursue community school concept

Principal of one in Orange County makes presentation

By **JEFF ROSLOW**
 JROSLOW@SCMGINC.COM

Members of the Polk County School District will pursue what it can do to place a community school in the district as officials seemed to think it would help the students, the teachers and the district.

Brought together by Franklin "Ed" Shoemaker, a mental health counselor and past candidate for the School Board, several representatives from the school district heard from Jenny Gibson-Linkh who has been the principal of Evans Community School in Pine Hills for five years. She said in a short time after she started at Evans the concept of a community school had taken hold there and the school improved by two letter grades and the graduation rate increased by about 20 percent.

"It's built on relationships," she said. "And it goes deep with the relationships."

A community school is an extended service school. It provides students with academy and offers health and mental health services and enrichment activities at the school. They are open year around and for extended hours and is open on Saturdays. Community schools also partner with communities and parents to be involved with planning and programs.

When Gibson-Linkh took over as principal there the school had eight failing grades in a row. Now it is a C, she said.

She said that is necessary for it to be successful and while Evans is a high school this is a usable system in any level of schooling.

So successful was her presentation Friday at the Jim Miles Professional Development Center, school district employees present tentatively set up another meeting to see if what it can do to pursue this to help lower middle class and lower students. Though no date has been set all agreed that they would try to meet before the Christmas holiday. Among those present was Superintendent Jacqueline Byrd, Deputy Superintendent John Small, School Board Member Hazel Sellers and outgoing School Board Member Hunt Berryman as well as few other people

"We've got a bunch of places this could work," Small said. "We can look at elementary or middle schools."

Specifically pointed out were areas in Winter Haven and areas in Lakeland that serve lower income areas where this would apply as it has in Orlando.

Byrd also seemed interested in pursuing the matter as it helps students and teachers in a number of ways. Small pointed out in one community school in Hillsborough County that he encountered there was a problem keeping a staff there but now, he said, he understands there is a waiting list of teachers who want to teach there.

The Evans school, which has hours of 5 a.m. to 10 p.m. is not only schooling but serves other functions, such as it takes care of children for education, health and meals.

On campus is the Wellness Cottage. It provides primary medical, dental and behavioral service to the Pine Hills community. It is provided by TrueHealth, Children's Home Society of Florida, the University of Central Florida and other partners.

The school in Orlando came together in 2009 when the Children's Home Society of Florida joined the dean of the college of health and Public Affairs, the dean of the College of Education and Director of Community Partnerships from the University of Central Florida. The next year an agreement was signed to pursue a community school. Two years later, TrueHealth, a federally qualified health center joined. After a lot of searching for a health care provider to be a partner, Gibson-Linkh said she chose this one because it seemed they kept in touch better with its clients than others would.

What came from this the students at the school started to feel there were people out there who cared about their education, cared about them and their health and nutrition and the attitude at the school turned around, Gibson-Linkh said.

Running down some statistics to show the success, Gibson-Linkh pointed out graduation rates went from 64 percent in 2010-11 to 83 percent in 2014-15. Students getting industry certification increased from 18 in 2010 to 414 in 2015. Enrollment in AVID and IB programs increased from 393 in 2010 to 711 in 2015, an increase of 45 percent. School disciplinary incidents dropped from



PHOTO BY JEFF ROSLOW

Jenny Gibson-Linkh, the principal of Evans Community School in Orange County, talks Friday, Nov. 18, to school district employees about what the community school has accomplished to help students.

1,450 in 2012-13 to 690 last year. She said three students earned full scholarships to the University of Florida and one to the Naval Academy and another to West Point.

Gibson-Linkh said trying this concept seemed like a logical thing to try.

"Evans was a failing school for eight years. It was also a physically involved school ... there were a lot of fights and they were heinous and it was volatile," she said. "But you can't just dump money and run. There needs to be steady money and it needs responsible spending."

The setup isn't hard, but what is hard, she said, is getting the community involved and keeping it involved.

"You need the school board to be involved,

the foundation to be involved. If you have a Job Board get it involved, counseling services and volunteers," Gibson-Linkh said. "For volunteers get as many as you can. They will teach the ninth graders to be mentors and then they can teach (those behind them) to be mentors."

She added, "No one wants a school to fail ... the school board, the superintendent, the community. You have to

look at the school and you have to take action. What does work. If you don't get the buy in you will not be successful. Everyone has to be open minded."

Gibson-Linkh said the district must get the community involved whether it be welding companies, mechanic companies, early childhood, culinary arts.

"If you get those certificates you can get quality employees to them. You can get that voting power to get the things you want," she said.

Gibson-Linkh she was pleased to make the presentation because not only does she want to show others how to reach students who may never be reached in another way but also to ward other districts from running into mistakes they've made in setting up a community school.

"I want to tell one story that has left a stain on my heart for the rest of my life," she said in concluding her appearance.

One student she called "one of the sweetest young ladies" she's ever

known, was being raised by her grandmother who was slowly reaching the end of her days. The girl, Gibson-Linkh said, was pregnant and one day conveyed she was not feeling well. They went to the cottage.

"She told me Ms. Gibson-Linkh my baby doesn't have a heartbeat. I have a dead baby in my belly. If we'd not gotten her help we would have not saved her."

She said there have been many times where students lives have been saved that may not have been had the school's health care cottage was not present.

"One student came to me and said his heart was racing and I asked what was the matter," she said.

The student told her he had a heart condition but he had not taken his medication for about a week. She took him to the cottage and saved his life.

"That's is the kind of things we do over and over again," she said. "And the kids know we are there for them."



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POLK COUNTY PEOPLE

PR Society welcomes 3 new members

The Dick Pope/ Polk County chapter of the Florida Public Relations Association welcomed three new members at its monthly professional development meetings in September and October.

Dave Walter, communications specialist at



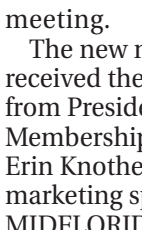
DAVE WALTER

Give Well Community Foundation, and Rebecca Paul, marketing and brand manager at Peace River Center, were welcomed into the FPRA chapter during its September meeting.



REBECCA PAUL

Jackie Jenkins, communications coordinator at Sun 'n' Fun, was welcomed into the chapter during its October



JACKIE JENKINS

meeting. The new members received their FPRA pins from President Elect/ Membership Chair Erin Knothe, who is a marketing specialist at MIDFLORIDA Credit Union.

The Dick Pope/ Polk County Chapter of FPRA provides professional development, accreditation and certification, leadership opportunities, recognition, networking, and funding of educational and professional development programs for members. For information on the state organization, visit fpra.org.

Brenda Eggert Brader
bbrader@tampabay.rr.com

Warner University plays host to Chamber After Hours

The Lake Wales Chamber of Commerce Business After Hours was held Oct. 25 at the Warner University welcoming incoming president Dr. David A. Hoag.

Among those attending the celebration were officials Kevin Kieft, president/CEO of Lake Wales Chamber of Commerce and Economic Development Council, David A. Hoag, incoming president of Warner, David Fisher, chairman of the Lake Wales Chamber of Commerce and Doris Gukich, vice president for advancement of Warner.

A reception at the university included Chamber members and guests.

Pay library fines with food items for the local food pantry

The Lake Wales Public Library's annual holiday "Food for Fines" has begun and continues through Dec. 31. This is how it works ... overdue materials may be returned with at least five nonperishable food items or outstanding fines owed may be "paid" with donations to the Lake Wales Care Center's Food pantry. Lost or damaged materials are not included in this program.

This is an ever popular program that benefits the local food pantry and library patrons at the same time. Be sure to take advantage of

this program if you owe library fines.

Crafts for the holidays are a feature at the Lake Alfred Library

Patrons of the Lake Alfred Library, 195 E. Pomelo St., are encouraged to participate in the programs offered during the week. The afternoon craft program is 4:30-5 p.m. on Nov. 28; the Lego Mania will be held 3-5 p.m. Nov. 29 and the story time is from 10-11 a.m. Nov. 30.

Adults getting into the relaxation of the coloring book craft sweeping across the nation, can share the craft with others at the library noon to 1 p.m. on Wednesday, Nov. 30. Give yourself a break from the holidays with a cup of tea and a coloring book.

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.

We would like anything from births, graduations, engagements and weddings, to community honors, business people news and work honors, retirements including briefs on club-related or area events and announcements of fundraisers, classes and programs with and for people.

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.

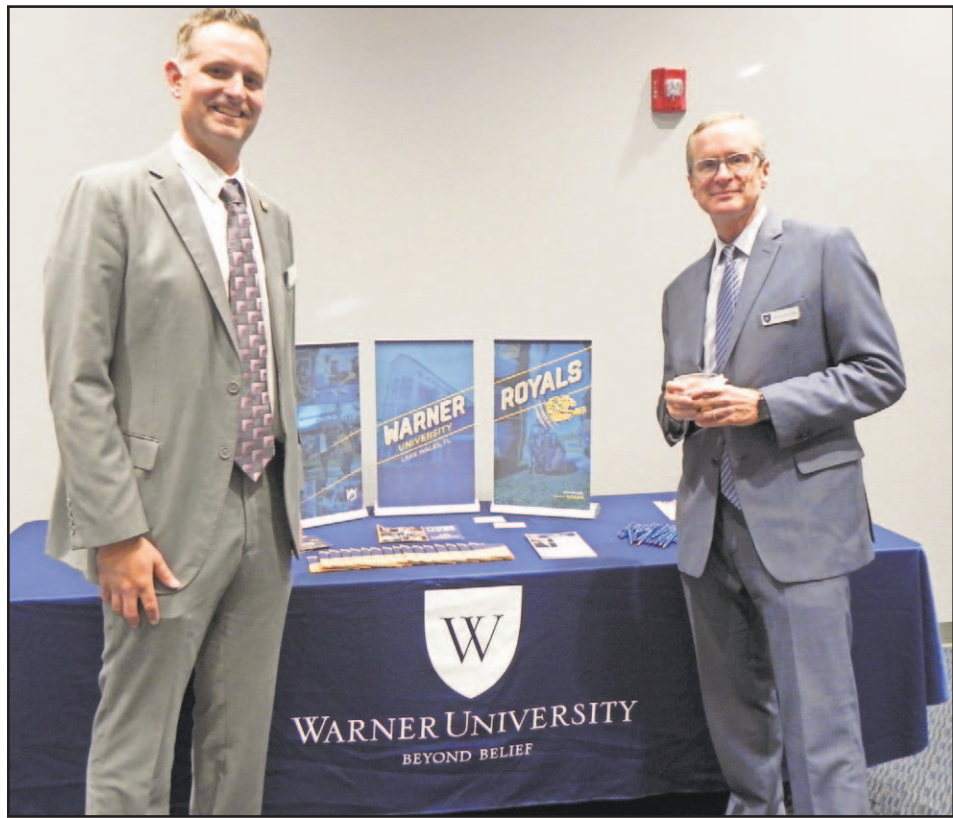


PHOTO PROVIDED

Kevin Kieft, president/CEO of Lake Wales Chamber of Commerce and EDC, chats with Dr. David A. Hoag, incoming president of Warner University.

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BROWN

FROM PAGE 1

was falling to a great state of disrepair. It became a place for the homeless to stay, as well as place where illegal activity was frequent. There was talk about tearing it down.

In looking for those who knew something about the house, Lewis met Robert Brown, L.B. Brown's son who lived in New York, and told him about the chickens, ducks and guinea pigs they raised.

"During the course of time he said when his dad built the house, I stopped in my tracks," Lewis said. "He just threw it out there ... daddy's house."

From there Lewis contacted local historians Canter Brown and Mike Denham and they did some research and found "the significance of L.B. Brown."

"When I mentioned this to Robert, he said, yeah, but nobody ever asked me about it."

Lewis said, "In all honesty it was really exciting for me when I found out it was built by a black man, a former slave. All things started adding up and I wanted to jump for joy. I was committed to saving it."

Robert had many financial documents and the family's Bible. Lewis realized the historic significance of Brown and how a freed slave reached the pinnacle of the American dream when everything was against him. Brown passed away in 1941.

Now as 20 years have passed since the significance of this house was discovered, Brown's legacy will live maybe longer

than the house and museum. Parts of it are commemorated in the Smithsonian Institute's National Museum of African American History and Culture in Washington, D.C. It is one of three exhibits in the museum from Florida, said Deborah Mack, associate director for community and constituent services.

"This is an important story for not just Bartow and Florida," Mack said when she visited the house two years ago. "You can find many stories throughout the nation (about builders and developers)."

And, while the historic significance of the house is represented in the museum, it has been gaining notice in the area of the special history in Polk County.

"Look at what he was able to do despite the physical challenges of a freed slave," said David P. Scott, a master educator for the University of South Florida's Gus A Stavros Center. "He was able to prosper through devoted efforts and attention to detail, willingness to face the challenges of being an entrepreneur and do different things. He was not just a carpenter, but he was a developer and he started truck farming in the Lakeland area and he was active in his community."

Scott discovered Brown's and Lewis' efforts to make it known in an interview he heard on WUSF radio. Through that interview, he has made it a lesson for Polk County public school teachers, which his center does.

"I wanted to find out more about this situation and see if

there is potential to use this for professional development training for kindergarten through 12th-grade teachers in Polk County," he said.

While looking into it, Scott found Lewis to almost be like a little boy in his first sandbox. The excitement about Brown's legacy had to be spread. There are now two sessions yearly with teachers in Polk to have them learn about Brown, and then to teach it to their students.

"He is very focused on making the L.B. Brown House a positive influence in the community to bring to light the great contributions ordinary people have made in the history of Polk County. We need to bring those contributions to light so that upcoming generations can learn from the experiences like L.B. Brown."

Lewis' attitude has been that way with others who have experienced him and the house he found, and subsequent realization that he was the primary home financier of east Bartow.

"Clif loves history," said Chuck Warren, who is a member of the Neighborhood Improvement Committee which has the No. 1 job of preserving the Brown House and Museum. "This is a huge time for it and him to put this together, and now with it is in the Smithsonian it is really snowballing into something."

After discovering what was behind this structure, Lewis embarked on doing whatever could be done to preserve it. When he first looked into it, the structure was a hazard at best.

"It was not maintained. The



PHOTOS PROVIDED

Clifton Lewis has visited the African-American Museum a number of times since it opened.

maintenance that should have taken place didn't," said David Brewer who appraised the house pro bono when Lewis approached him about what he could do to get ownership of the structure and land in the early 1990s.

"It was literally one candle away from being gone," Brewer said. "One homeless person lighting a candle for warmth or some kid going in there to smoke crack ... one strike of a match and it wouldn't be there."

But, Brewer added because of the way Brown built the house it was in good shape.

"It was in remarkable shape. Right after the city acquired and the CRA did, they went out with a surveying tool to determine if it was out of alignment. It was like a quarter of an inch. That was absolutely remarkable."

Brown built the house in 1892. It was built on concrete slabs on cypress piers and the house was not directly on the ground.

"Apparently Mr. Brown cut cypress logs and cut them into piers, short and standing them end to end. They were compact in the ground and he put the house down on top of the piers. They are around the exterior and probably around the middle. The settlement of those in 100 years was just minute," Brewer said.

Lewis' concern to preserve and remember local history with this has branched off as Warren is currently working on a book about L.B. Brown.

"My concern on the board is we are getting older and I don't want the story of L.B. Brown to go away," he said. "My writing is geared toward students. I want to tell the story of L.B. Brown and how he ended up in Bartow, and what it was like living in Bartow at that time, what his legacy was and what he left behind."

Warren said the first 50 years of the 20th Century was "horrific for black people."

"Polk County had one of the largest numbers of lynchings

in the state," Warren said.

"Sometimes for reasons like looking at a white woman wrong. There was always an effort to keep blacks in their place. But he had wonderful skills dealing with people because he had to purchase stuff from white people in order to what he did and become a success. He had to humble and negotiate just to survive."

But the reality of knowing what Brown was truly like is little, Warren said.

"We only have basically what is in his ledgers and his business dealings. We haven't found much more than that."

Lewis has run into similar problems in getting more information about Brown, but what has truly impressed Lewis is how the community jumped on board to fix the house. A lot of volunteer work went into it from inside and outside of Bartow and for that Lewis always expresses his gratitude.

"As soon as everyone saw what we had, everyone jumped for joy," Lewis said. "Adam Putnam, George Harris, George Laurent made significant phone calls and it snowballed from there. Bo Raulerson started pushing it when he was on the city commission."

And while the house looks as good as new, now the maintenance will never stop. Last week before an NIC Board of Directors meeting, Lewis was inspecting the back porch before the meeting started and noticed the wood had moved a bit to side. He said that has to be repaired.

"We're still restoring the house," Lewis said, adding at the first Brown Festival (held in February every year since 2000) attendees were not allowed in the house. This year's festival is scheduled Feb. 10-12.

And, while Lewis quickly shares the credit for saving the house, many realize this bit of history is due to him.

"Clif deserves the accolade for everything about the house ... he really deserves all the accolades," Brewer said.



Making a joyful noise

St. Paul's Episcopal Church presents 'Advent Lessons & Carols'

By **CASSIE JACOBY**
CORRESPONDENT

A candle-lit service filled with biblical readings, traditional music and hymns of praise heralds the beginning of the advent season at 5 p.m. on Sunday, Nov. 27 at St. Paul's Episcopal Church. All faiths are invited to the 26th annual "Advent Lessons & Carols" at 656 Ave. L, NW in Winter Haven. The free service is followed by a reception with light food in the Parish Hall. "It's a glorious beginning of the Advent season and a

wonderful celebration of our faith, our hope, our reflection on the birth of Christ and our anticipation of him coming back as the King of Kings," said Rev. Paul Head, who serves as the emcee, reads the gospel, sings bass in the choir and celebrates his fifth year as pastor.

"It's so amazing to see people who mark their calendars a year in advance to come to this event," Head adds. "It inspires our readers and choir members who've been working for months to prepare this music. Come early because it packs

very quickly."

The program begins with choir member Marianne Beck performing on viola. A series of advent readings and prophecies of the coming of Christ are followed by traditional anthems and hymns.

"It's an awe-inspiring service of peace, hope and joy, following scripture from the story of Adam to the Annunciation and the Magnificat of Mary," said Dr. J. David Hart, appointed as St. Paul's organist and choirmaster on Nov. 1, 2015.

Hart, a Fellow in the

American Guild of Organists, has produced 14 CDs and DVDs, and received critical acclaim for performing more than 700 professional concerts and recital tours of Britain, Europe and Australia.

"The distinguished sound of the choir and soloists prepare your heart for the wonder of Christmas," said Hart, about the group of professionals and volunteers he leads.

Traditional music includes "Magnificat" by Ralph Vaughan Williams; "Coventry Carol;" "The Lord at First Did Adam

Make;" and other selections. Sopranos Kimberly Milton and Katrina Phillips perform the duet, "Laudamus Te," from the "The Gloria." The audience is encouraged to join in singing hymns of praise.

First presented in 1880 in England, "A Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols" was introduced in 1918 in King's College Chapel at Cambridge.

Visit www.saintpaulswinterhaven.com and http://www.jdavidhart.com/St_Pauls_Music.html or call 863-294-8888 for information.

WATER

FROM PAGE 1

put it in the general fund to balance the budget.

"If we did not fund the general fund, we would have had to lay off many police, fire fighters and EMTs," Birdsong said. "It's not just

funding pensions."

Several city residents spoke to the commission complaining generally about rate hikes. Others complained about water quality, saying in the Osprey Heights subdivision, the water quality was very poor.

Interim City Manager T. Michael Stavres told the residents their water would be

checked the following day.

Cal Bowen, city finance director, reminded commissioners that they had approved \$25 million in capital improvement projects over the next five years that cannot be funded without those rate increases.

"There's no way we can do it without those rate increases," Bowen said.

He said the stormwater system must be upgraded and sewer and water infrastructure in general including expanding the city's water reuse system.

"This is important to the financial integrity of that system," he said. "Without that, the system will deteriorate over time."

In related action, the commission approved a \$400,000

grant from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection to do a storm water infrastructure study which will include topographic mapping of the city, identifying flood-prone areas.

Chastain Skillman is the engineers for the project. Sanford Map Co. will do the mapping. Work is expected to begin this winter.

MARIJUANA

FROM PAGE 1

This amendment apparently broadens the medical pot use bill that passed in 2014 that allows the use of "Charlotte's Web" strains of marijuana that are high in cannabidiol, or CBD, but low in tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), the compound that produces a high. It also rigorously contained the licensing of nurseries allowed to grow the medicinal pot.

New regulations are being formulated by the state Department of Health, but none of those queried recently knew what shape those would take.

"We don't know what the Department of Health is going to come up with," said Haas. "We'll just have to wait and see."

"Initially, I believe people thought that this would be a gateway to stronger and bigger drugs," said Carmichael. "But I've traveled to other states where marijuana, even for recreational use, is legal and they say there has been no spike in use."

He did say however that some of those other states did have pot shops "on almost every block."

"I can see this

becoming one of those well-intentioned laws that some people will elect to abuse. This is supposed to help people, but there will always be those who will take advantage of something like this."

Judd maintains he hasn't changed his opinion about marijuana use, whether legal or not.

"I think it still leads to harder drugs in the long run," he said. "But the people have spoken and we will do what we have to do to enforce the law. Whatever that law is, we'll enforce it properly."

Judd also says the amendment will lead to "more marijuana shops than McDonald's or Taco Bell." He also said it will contribute to land use issues and a "hold lot of regulatory issues" like proximity to churches, schools or similar establishments.

Judd has long said that marijuana use also leads to additional criminal activity. He explained saying that there were 2,600 inmates in the Polk County Jail, of which 260 were there for misdemeanor marijuana charges. "Of those, 249 had another 1,300 charges as well. Only one was a first-time offender with no other charges. He went into a diversion program so we hope to redirect him."

The veteran lawman

also said he expects to see regulatory arrests escalate.

"We've already tried to give those warnings, but the people said this is what they want, so we're going to act accordingly."

He added he felt law enforcement agencies were "stuck in the middle of this issue" but swore his agency would "do the best we can without complaint."

Judd's comments were echoed by State Attorney-elect Haas.

"We don't make the laws, we just have to enforce them," he said. "We'll do the best job we can to deal with whatever comes down."

Haas did object to using the constitutional amendment method of legitimizing medical marijuana usage.

"I think it is always better to act legislatively," he explained. "That way there are clearer definitions and once they are done, we will follow that law."

"I think there are going to be implementation issues that wind up coming before the courts," he added. "And it's going to take time once the courts get involved to get decisions made. If it had been done legislatively, we would have a clearer understanding on how to enforce it."

Orlando attorney and medical marijuana

proponent John Morgan failed to return messages to comment for this report. It was learned however, that in addition

to the \$4 million of his own money invested in the 2014 legalization campaign, he donated another \$2.5 million

to get the amendment passed. The Democratic Party also contributed some \$200,000 to get the amendment approved.



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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.

PCSO investigating inmate death

Polk County Sheriff's Office detectives are investigating the death of a Polk County Jail inmate who was found unresponsive in an isolation cell at approximately 12:40 a.m., Saturday, Nov. 19.

Brandon Lee Levan, 23, of Frostproof was jailed on charges of simple assault/threat to do violence, unarmed burglary of occupied dwelling, and impersonating a law enforcement officer. He was arrested in September 2016. At the time of his arrest, Levan was Baker Acted and was subsequently housed by himself in SMED Unit under a suicide watch.

While conducting routine rounds, detention deputies observed Levan lying, face up, in his cell and appeared to be sleeping. On a second round, within 12 minutes of the previous check, a detention deputy attempted to verbally wake Levan but was unsuccessful. Detention deputies then entered the cell and found Levan

physically unresponsive and CPR was immediately started. An AED was utilized and a shock was not advised. Detention deputies continued CPR until EMS arrived on scene and took over. Polk County Emergency Services arrived and continued to render aid. Levan was pronounced deceased by EMS at approximately 1:19 a.m.

There was no apparent trauma.

An autopsy will be conducted to determine the cause and manner of death. This is an ongoing death investigation. It is standard PCSO policy for four separate mandated, independent investigations to be conducted when an inmate dies.

The PCSO Administrative Investigations Section is conducting an internal review. The PCSO Bureau of Criminal Investigations is conducting the death investigation. The Polk County Medical Examiner will conduct the autopsy to determine the manner and cause of death.

The State Attorney of the 10th Judicial Circuit will review the administrative and criminal investigation, as well as the autopsy information, and conduct their own separate investigation.

Lake Wales Police Nov. 17 Retail theft

Lajonda Loydd was arrested for stealing two packs of Tide Pods detergent. Lake Wales Police saw an employee chasing Loydd on foot. Loydd admitted to taking items to sell because she needed money. Loydd was later transported to the Polk County Jail.

Counterfeit bill passed

Lake Wales PD was at the Burger King drive-through when advised an unidentified female passed a counterfeit \$50 bill. LWPDP met with the store manager who provided the \$50 bill.

Grand theft

The victim came to LWPDP and reported a subject sold her a trailer

for \$1,000. The suspect was supposed to give the victim the title after the purchase. The victim did have a signed bill of sale. The victim found out the trailer did not even belong to the suspect to sell. This is an ongoing investigation.

Hit and run

LWPDP responded to the area of I Street S and Polk Avenue W., in reference to a hit and run crash. Upon arrival, LWPDP spoke with the complainant who informed him she was traveling southbound on I St. S in the outside lane when a brown SUV began to enter her lane of travel, sideswiping the left side of her vehicle damaging her driver's side mirror. Victim could not provide any information other than the driver was a white male.

Nov. 15 Possession of meth

LWPDP responded to Lake Wales Medical Center in reference to a patient who was in

possession of a clear bag containing a white crystal like substance. Upon arrival, LWPDP completed a field test on the white crystal substance, which showed positive results for methamphetamine. At that time Rachel Smith was arrested for possession of Methamphetamine. Smith was admitted to LWMC. LWPDP completed the affidavit and sent it to Polk County Jail. Smith was turned over at that time.

Nov. 14 Sex offender loiter in 300 feet of children

At approximately 6 a.m., Lake Wales Police responded to a call about a male later identified as Christopher Couch, 36, of 3924 Scenic Highway, Lake Wales, prowling behind a residence. LWPDP had been notified by the resident, who happened



COUCH

to be a member of the Polk County Sheriff's Office. The resident had been seated in the PCSO patrol car, which was in the driveway, when noticing Couch walking from the backyard of the residence.

At that point the resident (in uniform) exited the car and held Couch at gunpoint. After escorting him to his car in order to retrieve his identification, Couch said he had been in the backyard in order to urinate. When questioned by LWPDP why he chose to urinate in the backyard rather than in the orange grove where his car was parked, Couch said it was because it was darker and private. He repeatedly said his only intention was to urinate.

Couch also mentioned he currently is a registered sex offender. When asked why he was far away from his residence, located on the opposite side of town, he said he does not sleep well and likes to drive around town.

AREA ARRESTS

Oct. 9, 2016

Jose Luis Martinez-Galvan, 29, 2880 Reynolds Rd, Bartow, Dom viol-battery touch or strike

Shavella Labrina Hampton, 28, 318 Pearl St, Lake Wales, Battery touch or strike, viol pretrial release condition x3, Robbery-sudden snatching w/o F/arm/weapon

Timothy Victor Lonsberry, 49, 430 Scenic Hwy N #5, Lake Wales, Poss of drug paraphernal, poss of methamphetamine

German De Jesus Lopez Lopez, 21, 414 Lakeside Dr, Lake Wales, No valid drivers lic.

Russell Wilson, 22, 812 Tower Point Cir, Lake Wales, No valid drivers lic

Oct. 10, 2016

Al Gene Marsh, 52, 2881 Dudley Dr, Bartow, Viol Inj for

protection against domestic V Dalvin Anthony Scarvers, 18, 810 Oaklawn Dr S, Bartow, Possession of cannabis

Angelica Ritrece Hampton, 27, 145 Northside Dr E, Lake Wales, Battery touch or strike, robbery-sudden snatching w/o F/arm/weapon

Lawrence Lee Jones, 25, 35 Seminole Ave W, Lake Wales, Knowing drive w susp/revoked license

Tremaine Michele Parker, 24, 114 Northside Dr E #A, Lake Wales, Dom viol-battery touch or strike

Shashaw Nee Lee Bowermaster, 31, 370 Caloosa Ct, Lake Wales, Battery touch or strike x2, battery on person 65 YOA or older

Adrian Decosey, 28, 411 Tower Point Cir, Lake Wales, Dom

viol-battery touch or strike Deborah Linne, 59, 1632 Sils Rd, Lake Wales, Petit theft 1st offense

Jason Sides, 32, 7342 Hastings Rd, Lake Wales, Trespass-Fail leave prop upon owner order

Oct. 11, 2016

Brian Joseph Morris, 26, 665 Grace Ct, Bartow, Dom viol-battery touch or strike Monroe Alderman Jr, 35, 808 Tartan Loop, Lake Wales, Sexual battery by >=18/vict >=18

Michael Alexander Davis, 31, 315 Osceola Ave E, Lake Wales, Knowingly drive w susp/revoked lic 1st off

Casey Joel Beatty, 28, 2507 Stumpknocker Dr, Lake Wales, Viol of probation/community control-adult

Graham West, 26, 49 Lake Kissimmee MHP, Lake Wales, Grand theft (\$300<\$5,000)

Oct. 12, 2016

Dominic Lee Napoli, 22, 485 Oak Ave S, Bartow, Poss of suspended drivers license Jessica Morales, 22, 1495 Thousand Roses Dr N, Lake Wales, Failure to appear

Ryan Scott Fricks, 22, 1831 Old Bartow Rd, Lake Wales, Attempted burglary dwelling, viol of probation/community control-adult x3, burglary-unoccupied structure unarmed, attempted burglary conveyance x5

Karen Hay, 54, 708 Center St, Lake Wales, Poss of methamphetamine, poss of drug paraphernal, resist officer w/o viol x2 Loucinda Ramirez, 44, 1421

Steve Ln #19, Lake Wales, Dom viol-battery touch or strike

Natalie Ramjit, 18, 210 Masterpiece Rd, Lake Wales, Poss/use narcotic paraphernalia, cannabis possess not more than 20 grams

Vishwanauth Ramjit Junior, 21, 210 Masterpiece Rd, Lake Wales, Cannabis possess not more than 20 grams, poss/use narcotic paraphernalia

Ricky Ratton, 36, 3347 Omec St, Lake Wales, Agg battery person uses a deadly weapon, Grand Theft from dwelling >\$100, unarmed burglary-unoccupied dwelling, dealing in stolen property

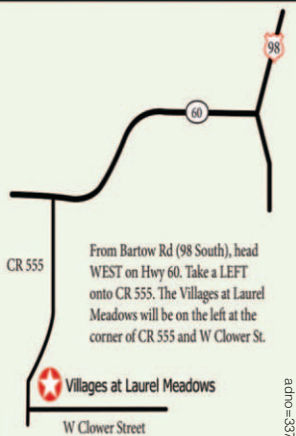
Amy Frances Wiggins, 44, 2571 Sam Keen Rd, Lake Wales, Knowingly drive w susp/revoked lic 1st off, warrant arrest other jurisdiction



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Valances (4), 2 mauve w/scalloped hem; 2 multi-colored w/straight hem, lined, each set about 30"L, exc. cond., \$50 for all. 860-919-3922 (Sebring).

Various Military items - includes WWI discharge s/Woodrow Wilson, \$400.00 863-446-1137

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PCSO may move booking facility out of Bartow

By **CATHY PALMER** CORRESPONDENT

Polk County Commissioners got a huge refund from Polk Sheriff Grady Judd and Judd said he wants to use some of it to move his booking facility out of town.

County commissioners received a notification through County Manager Jim Freeman at Tuesday's board session that Judd was returning some \$5.6 million with the caveat that he wanted to use some of that refund to relocate the county's main jail booking facilities.

The main intake facility is now housed in downtown Bartow tucked in between the county offices and the courthouse on Broadway Avenue. That building is 55 years old and has been renovated several times over the years.

Judd reportedly said he wants to move the booking offices, where those arrested are processed into the

county jail system or bailed out, somewhere "away from neighborhoods and businesses."

Judd says his office has kept its operating costs down which resulted in the savings in his Department's budget which the county allocates for his department's use.

Judd says he wants to use about \$3 million for the new facility and the rest could be used to pay for the construction of a new fire station in Mulberry.

According to reports, county officials have been looking at locations in east Bartow near the Central County Jail, near the Sheriff's Animal Control facility near the county landfill near the Polk Parkway and even replacing the existing building with one more suitable. The present building has been converted from what was once the Sheriff's main office building and jail.

"A new facility is necessary in order to provide a safe working conditions for our detention members

as well as provide a safe environment for families to wait for their loved ones to be released from custody," Judd wrote to the board.

"It is hugely overcrowded," he added, saying 100 employees were cramped into 10,000 square feet of space.

Freeman said there are some concerns about renovating the existing facility claiming it may still be too small.

Judd already has about \$7 million in the bank to build a new Central Jail, but officials are still looking at possibilities for that building.

Judd's department processes as many as 50,000 arrestees each year and the sheriff said he wants to find a way to separate families waiting from those being admitted or registering as sex offenders.

Commissioner George Lindsey said a new Bartow booking jail has been in Judd's sights for years, but he didn't know he wanted to move it elsewhere.

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HEALTH and WELLNESS



5 most common types of cancer in women

By HALLIE LEVINE

PREVENTION MAGAZINE

Every year, almost 850,000 American women hear the terrifying words, “You have cancer.” But all is not doom and gloom. While many people certainly get sick thanks to faulty genes and perhaps bad luck, research indicates that a whopping two-thirds of cancer deaths in the United States are preventable. Translation: There’s a lot that you can control — provided you know what you’re up against. We talked to some of the country’s leading cancer experts to learn which types of cancer you ought to be most concerned about and how to protect yourself. Here, the top 5 cancers most likely to afflict women in the U.S.

— No. 5: Colon cancer

Number of estimated new cases among women in 2016: 47,560.

You may be surprised to learn that colon cancer is an equal opportunity offender, as the same number of women and men develop it each year, according to the American Cancer Society. “The good news is that it’s almost entirely preventable,” says David Greenwald, MD, director of clinical gastroenterology and endoscopy at the Mount Sinai School of Medicine.

Protect yourself by getting screened regularly. The current gold standard is a colonoscopy, starting at age 50 and

repeated every 10 years. During the test — which entails inserting a thin, flexible tube into the rectum — your doctor will get a good look at anything that might be amiss. A colonoscopy not only diagnoses colon cancer, it also allows your doctor to detect and remove polyps before they could become cancerous,” says Greenwald.

Other screening options include a fecal occult blood test, where your doctor checks your poop for blood that could indicate cancer, or a DNA stool test known as Cologuard, which looks for potentially cancerous gene changes. The downside of both, says Greenwald, is they can have false positives, which means you’d need to undergo a colonoscopy anyway.

— No. 4: Thyroid cancer

Number of estimated new cases among women in 2016: 49,350

The chances of being diagnosed with thyroid cancer have more than doubled in the last 20 years, according to the American Cancer Society. But there’s no need to panic. “We don’t think the numbers themselves are actually increasing, but rather we’re picking up more incidental cases when we do MRIs or CT scans for other reasons, such as to investigate recurrent migraines or neck pain,” says Edmund Pribitkin, MD, MBA, a thyroid cancer specialist at Thomas

Jefferson University in Philadelphia. More proof, even though incidence rates have skyrocketed, the death rates for this cancer have remained stable.

Protect yourself by: Not rushing into overtreatment. If your doctor detects a small nodule, the new thinking is to monitor it and not rush into surgery, says Pribitkin. And if you do end up needing surgery, getting just half of your thyroid removed (instead of the whole gland) may be an option. In that case, you might not even need to take thyroid replacement hormone, says Pribitkin. If your doctor pressures you to get your whole thyroid out — stat — despite having a nodule under 1 centimeter, get a second opinion. The operation does have risks (including damaging your vocal cords) and requires you to take thyroid hormone for the rest of your life.

— No. 3: Endometrial cancer

Number of estimated new cases among women in 2016: 60,050

This type of cancer, also called uterine cancer, predominantly affects postmenopausal women (the average age of onset is 60). Alas, at this time there aren’t any good screening tests to find this cancer early, says Cynthia Thomson, PhD, RD, director of the Cancer Prevention and Control program at the University of Arizona Cancer Center.

Protect yourself by staying at a healthy weight. Endometrial cancer is twice as common in overweight women, and more than three times as common in obese women, according to the American Cancer Society. Fat cells secrete estrogen, which in turn can trigger cancerous changes, explains Thomson. If you’re premenopausal and using birth control, consider taking the pill, even for a few years. Just 5 years of use reduces endometrial cancer risk by 25 percent, according to a 2015 UK study published in the journal *Lancet Oncology*.

— No. 2: Lung cancer

Number of estimated new cases among women in 2016: 106,470

Lung cancer cases among women have risen a jaw-dropping 98 percent over the last four decades, according to the American Lung Association. Even more shocking, more than half of the cases in women are among never smokers (read one woman’s story here). Why, is still a mystery; theories include women’s lungs being more susceptible to secondhand smoke and estrogen possibly fueling cancerous cells, says Therese Bevers, MD, a cancer prevention specialist at MD Anderson Cancer Center in Houston.

How to protect yourself, don’t smoke, and stay away from secondhand smoke, which can increase your risk of

developing cancer by up to 30 percent. If you’re a former smoker or have had a lot of exposure to secondhand smoke, ask your doctor if you should take one regular strength 325 mg aspirin daily; studies have shown that it might be protective, says Bevers.

No. 1: Breast cancer

Number of estimated new cases among women in 2016: 246,660

Technically, it’s not the No. 1 type of cancer in women, as that title goes to skin cancer. But the American Cancer Society doesn’t include non-melanoma skin cancers in its rankings, since they’re rarely life-threatening. (In case you were wondering, about 8,500 people in the U.S. are diagnosed with any type of skin cancer every single day; an estimated 144,860 new cases of potentially deadly melanoma are predicted to crop up in men and women combined this year.)

Back to breast cancer, which 1 in 8 women will develop in her lifetime. The good news is that, after rising for more than two decades, the number of women diagnosed with breast cancer began decreasing in 2000 and dropped by about 7 percent from 2002 to 2003, possibly thanks to fewer women using hormone therapy for menopause symptoms. (Since then, incidence rates have been mostly stable.) What’s more, breast cancer that’s caught in



PHOTO PROVIDED BY FOTOALIA

When it comes to a cancer diagnosis and care, there’s a lot that you can control, if you know what you’re up against.

the earliest stages now has a 5-year survival rate of nearly 100 percent.

How to protect yourself: Regular mammograms are crucial; ask your doctor when you should start getting them. The American Cancer Society recommends having this test annually beginning at age 45. Meanwhile, take a close look at your lifestyle habits. “Being sedentary, overweight, and consuming a high fat diet — particularly foods high in animal fat — all increase the risk of breast cancer,” says Jame Abraham, MD, director of the breast oncology program at Cleveland Clinic Cancer Center. Go easy on the booze, too: Regular alcohol consumption has been clearly linked with breast cancer, and research shows that the more you drink, the greater your risk

Diabetes drives up risk of heart attack and stroke

In recent years, the American Heart Association has identified diabetes as one of the seven major, and controllable, risk factors for cardiovascular disease. Adults with diabetes are about 50 percent more likely to die of the effects of a heart attack than adults without diabetes, according to a study of 700,000 people over ten years by the University of Leeds.

“We’ve made significant advances in the treatment of heart disease over the past two

decades,” said Dr. Carolyn D. Pass, Internal Medicine physician with Lake Wales Medical Center.

“In general, your chances of surviving a heart attack or stroke today are far greater than ever before. But for those with diabetes, the improvements in survival rates are less than half that of the general population.”



DR. CAROLYN D. PASS

Diabetes by itself is now regarded by many clinicians as the strongest risk factor for heart disease. But if you’re diabetic, it’s not enough to just control your blood sugar levels. The blood vessels in patients with diabetes are more susceptible to other well-established risk factors, including smoking, obesity, high cholesterol and high blood pressure — and more than 90 percent of patients with diabetes have one or more of these additional risk factors.

The good news is, the guidelines to prevent heart disease and diabetes are very similar.

Keep your blood glucose in healthy range — fasting blood sugar should be consistently under 100. Possibly more importantly are your A1C levels are a measure of your blood glucose levels over the previous three months.

Get at least 30 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic exercise, at least five days per week.

Eat a balanced diet of whole, unprocessed

foods — focusing on a variety of high quality fruits and vegetables.

Keep blood pressure below 130/80 or 140/90 — especially if you have diabetes.

Keep cholesterol and triglycerides in normal range, with a focus on ‘bad cholesterol.’ LDL should be no higher than 100 mg/dl in adults with diabetes.

Keep your weight and BMI in normal range. Body Mass Index should be no higher than 25.

If you smoke, STOP. “There are plenty of

physical and clinical factors that we can’t control, but type II diabetes just isn’t one of them,” Pass said. “The best way to prevent or delay death from heart disease is simply to prevent diabetes itself. Get with your doctor, get a plan and stick to it. You may add an additional 20 or even 30 years to your life.”

Lake Wales Medical Center offers free Diabetes Education classes the fourth Wednesday of each month from 1-3 p.m. To register, call 863-678-2288.

HEALTH and WELLNESS

Submissions for Healthy Weight Community Champions being taken

The Florida Department of Health is accepting submissions for the fourth annual Healthy Weight Community Champion Recognition Program. Last year, 80 cities and counties were recognized by the department for efforts to increase physical activity and improve nutrition as part of the Healthiest Weight Florida Initiative.

"Florida's county and municipal governments play an important role in decreasing the prevalence of unhealthy weight in their jurisdictions," said Dr. Joy Jackson, director of the Florida Department of Health in Polk County. "Local governments can implement a variety of policies that have been shown to increase physical activity levels and improve nutrition."

Local governments and municipalities are invited to submit a best practice policy that could be implemented to promote physical activity and improve nutrition in their jurisdictions. By incorporating best practices within a jurisdiction, local governments can create environments where the healthy choice is the easy choice. The Healthy Weight Community Champion Recognition Program recognizes these best practices.

Examples of criteria for the recognition include:

Maintaining a system of parks

Incentivizing fruit and vegetable options in under served neighborhoods that are considered food deserts

Ensuring personal safety in areas where people can increase physical activity.

All of Florida's 413

active municipalities (cities, towns and villages) and 67 counties are eligible to submit best practices. Submissions will be accepted through Dec. 2. The best practices will be posted and communities will be recognized on Jan. 13.

For information about the Healthy Weight Community Champion Recognition Program, please download the Guidance and Resource document by clicking here.

For information on how to apply, please visit <http://www.healthiestweightflorida.com/recognition.html>.

Huston named chief nursing officer

Jennifer Huston, RN, MSN, has been named Chief Nursing Officer at Lake Wales Medical Center. Huston comes to Lake Wales from Indiana, where she served as vice president of nursing at a 74-bed hospital.

During her career, she has worked at not-for-profit and for-profit hospitals and health-care systems, serving in roles that have included staff nurse, orthopedic coordinator, and surgical services director.

"Jennifer has a plethora of experience that makes her ideally suited to fill this critical role at our hospital," said Rebecca Brewer, CEO of Lake Wales Medical Center. "Her comprehensive knowledge of healthcare operations, nursing administration, patient care delivery systems and mentoring make her ideally suited for helping us take our

level of patient care to even higher levels. She understands that we are focused on providing excellent care for our patients, and providing that care in a way that makes our patients and their families feel like they're a member of our family."

Huston holds a Master of Science in Nursing from the University of Southern Indiana, and has yellow belt certification in Lean Six Sigma. In 2006, she received the Distinguished Alumni Award from Ivy Tech State College, from which she earned her AS in Nursing in 1995.

Poinciana Medical Center tops in safety

Poinciana Medical Center, part of HCA's North Florida Division, recently earned a 'B' in The Leapfrog Hospital Safety Grade, a nationwide initiative recognizing hospitals' commitment to patient safety.

Developed under the guidance of an expert panel, the Leapfrog Hospital Safety Grade uses 30 measures of publicly available hospital safety data to assign A, B, C, D and F grades to more than 2,600 U.S. hospitals twice per year. It is calculated by top patient safety experts, peer-reviewed, fully transparent and free to the public.

"Patient safety and well-being is our top priority, and this grade from The Leapfrog Group reinforces that commitment," said Joanna Conley, CEO of Poinciana Medical Center. "We look forward to continually improving our service to the community."

To see Poinciana Medical Center's full

grade, and to access consumer-friendly patient tips for staying safe in the hospital, visit www.hospital-safetygrade.org or follow The Leapfrog Hospital Safety Grade on Twitter or Facebook. Consumers can also download the free Leapfrog Hospital Safety Grade mobile app for Apple and Android devices.

Poinciana Medical Center is a 76-bed acute care hospital serving the communities in Osceola and Polk counties. It provides a range of inpatient and outpatient services, including emergency care, diagnostic imaging, surgery, diagnostic cardiac catheterization, laboratory, pharmacy and support services. The campus also houses a freestanding 42,000-square-foot medical office building for physicians and other healthcare providers.

Health insurance market info session scheduled

Anyone interested in signing-up for health coverage on the Health

Insurance Marketplace — but you find the information overwhelming or confusing — Lake Wales Medical Center is ready to help.

The hospital will have Certified Assisters on-site at Lake Wales Care Center's Community Room, 140 E. Park Ave., at 6 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 29 to share information, answer questions, and to schedule free appointments for application assistance.

Open Enrollment runs through Jan. 31. This marks the federal government's fourth annual campaign to extend healthcare coverage to more Americans, specifically to those who otherwise wouldn't have access to services or who would face a financial crisis due to medical bills.

"We have helped hundreds of individuals enroll on the Marketplace since it first launched four years ago," said Rebecca Brewer, CEO of Lake Wales Medical Center. "It's very gratifying to help individuals enroll knowing they will be able to access

healthcare when they need it. It's a relief for so many people."

Lake Wales Medical Center is offering free one-on-one assistance throughout the Open Enrollment period at the hospital. Residents can schedule appointments by calling 863-678-2734, or can book an appointment online at www.GetCoveredAmerica.org/connector. Certified assisters will help with plan comparisons, determining any tax credits or discounts, and filling-out applications.

Have a Heart Gala set

The Third Annual Have a Heart Gala is scheduled Feb. 11. It benefits the Parkview Community Outreach Free Medical Clinic.

There will be food, music, dancing, entertainment, drinks and silent auctions. Contributions will help improve the health of the town by helping the uninsured and needy obtain medical services. For information, contact Mai Phuong Degnan via email at: MaimikeD@aol.com



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SCHOOL NEWS

Dennison student wins local spelling bee

Miranda Krolin, a sixth grader at Dennison Middle School in Winter Haven, placed first in the annual Knights of Columbus Youth Spelling Bee on Saturday, Nov. 12 in the Winter Haven Public Library.

The contest was sponsored by Knights of Columbus Council 7091 of Cypress Gardens and chaired by knight Billy Bob Morris.

Krolin won the contest in competition with six other students from Winter Haven public schools. Two fifth grade students from Winter Haven's Brigham Academy — Kara Nielsen and Javonni Thomas — finished second and third, respectively. In addition to ribbons, the top three finishers received gift certificates donated by McDonald's Restaurant and Dairy Queen.

By winning the local contest, Krolin earned a berth in a district spell off. The time and date has not been determined. If she wins on the district level, she'll advance to the regional round where berths in the state K of C Youth Spelling Bee will be decided.

Knights who assisted Morris were Jim Sharak, moderator; Ed Sheehan, head judge; Grand Knight George Marhefka and Chris Eirich, both assistant judges; and Ken Nelson and Scott Sharak, both registration.

"We congratulate Miranda on winning the local spell off and wish her well as she advances to the district and possibly higher rounds of competition," Morris said. "We also thank Miranda and all of the other contestants, as well as their parents and teachers, for their help in making this another successful K of C Youth Spelling Bee."



Christine Roslow

Our Schools

Christine can be contacted at roslow@heartlandnewspapers.com.

Participation in the K of C Youth Spelling Bee was free for boys and girls enrolled in private and public schools, as well as those who are home schooled.

Elf on the Shelf themed dinner with Santa

Get a visit with Santa and help the Bartow High School athletic teams.

From 5:30-8 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 5, Santa will be at the high school cafeteria that will not only include a visit with Santa but a dinner choice of spaghetti or chicken with macaroni and cheese. There will be games, crafts and prize drawings.

Tickets are \$10 in advance and \$12 at the door. From the ticket sales \$5 is used for the price of the dinner.

Vocabulary parade

Polk Avenue Elementary holds a Vocabulary Parade. From A to Z, students, faculty, and staff considered the entire dictionary as possible wardrobe choices thanks to the fabulous picture book *Miss Alaineus: A Vocabulary Disaster* by Debra Frasier. In the book, the main character, Sage, redeems herself after a hilarious vocabulary snafu with an award-winning costume in her school's vocabulary parade.

Polk Avenue's Award-Winning Vocabulary Costumes:

Best Adjective: Affluent

Marlei Strickland

Most Artistic Representation: Celebrate Jose Negron
Best Use of a Box: Taxi Willie Jones
Most Creative Clothing: Time Emillie Geier

Costume That Most Requires a Dictionary: Proboscis Julio Acevedo

Grossest Costume: Emojie Carter Jones

Most Interesting Vocabulary Word: Swashbuckler Emily Sims

Largest Costume: Aircraft Justin Ogle

Best Literary Costume: Conjunction Robert Bowlin

Best Mathematical Costume: Increase Jesus Juarez-Resendiz

Best Costume with Moving Parts: Solar System Arturo Barcenaz

Best Noun: Snow Alexandra Ortiz

Best Multiple Meaning Word: Jailbird Olivia Paez

Most Radiant Costume: X-ray Brian Waller (Tancredi)

Most Creative Use of Recycled Materials: Vending Machine Je'Niyah Furman

Best Scientific Word: Pollinate Cadence Curchy

Tastiest Word: Cupcake Isabella Lopez Solivan

Best Compound Word: Watchdog Omar Torres

Best Adjective: Affluent

Best Noun: Snow Alexandra Ortiz

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PHOTO PROVIDED

Grand Knight George Marhefka of Knights of Columbus Council 7091 with, from left, Miranda Krolin of Dennison Middle School, Kara Nielsen of Brigham Academy and Javonni Thomas, also of Brigham Academy, the top three finishers in the K of C Youth Spelling Bee.

in business, technology or health professions at the end of the summer 2016 semester. More than 1,900 graduates earned DU degrees during the 2015 - 2016 academic year, with nearly 900 participating in Commencement festivities on May 1, in Grand Rapids, Mich.

Founded in 1866, Davenport is a private, non-profit university serving more than 8,000 students at campuses across Michigan and on-line. With tuition among the lowest of all private universities in the state, Davenport provides high academic quality, small class sizes, conveniently

located campuses, faculty with real-world experience and more than 80 dynamic undergraduate and graduate programs addressing in-demand careers in business, technology, health professions and urban education. More information is available at www.davenport.edu.

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As good as eating at home

By **JAMES COULTER**
CORRESPONDENT

Every morning, before she opens Market Place Cafe in Lake Wales, owner Mary Stokes receives several phone calls from customers inquiring about that day's specials.

As a downtown restaurant, Stokes caters to the local downtown businesses, feeding breakfast and lunch to local store owners, bankers, doctors, dentists, and even teachers.

"They don't always want to have cafeteria food, so we deliver to them," Stokes said.

Sometimes customers drop by for their meals, while others order theirs for delivery, which is provided to up to four orders within city limits.

Regardless of how customers order their meal, whether its sit-in, takeout, or delivery, they are sure to enjoy made-from-scratch home cooking made from fresh ingredients.

Market Place Cafe offers a diverse breakfast and lunch menu of soups, salads, and sandwiches, along

with comfort food favorites such as meatloaf, smoked chicken, and pulled pork, the latter two of which are smoked in house.

Their most popular market-quality sandwiches are their turkey Florentine and pressed Cubans, which are normally served with chips, but can also come with pasta or potato salad, French fries, onion rings, or tater tots.

Their menu often fluctuates with the seasons, with the hotter summer months offering light items such as salads and the colder winter months providing hot soups and other entrees to help warm up snowbirds.

Every day offers a different special ranging from comfort food such as chicken and dumplings or shepherd's pie, or more creative items such as pulled pork egg rolls.

Want a juicy burger? Then you'll have to drop in on Friday, which is the only day they serve hamburgers, most of which have half-pound patties. Some burgers include the Crazy Burger topped with Bacon

Mac and Cheese on Texas Toast.

Aside from half-pound patties, their other portions are rather generous, ensuring that customers have their money's worth of taste and flavor.

"I am very particular about the food and presentation," Stokes said. "I am particular with how it looks and the consistency. When we are serving to another, they can expect quality food."

As with most good restaurants, most of their meals are prepared from fresh ingredients, with everything homemade, almost as if the owner were to prepare her food at home.

While Stokes makes her homemade soup, her manager, in turn, prepares their desserts, with each one preparing their food the way they would naturally.

"If I am here, I am going to prepare the food the way that I would want it at home," Stokes said.

Market Place Cafe has existed as is downtown for the past two years. The location itself has



remained solid 10 years in finance. She was not the type of person to stay-at-home, and she always loved the cook. So she took the initiative to start her own eatery.

Wanting to start with something small scale, she started Central Avenue Dog House, which she ran for two years before moving to the current location, which she later changed to Market Place Cafe two years ago.

Aside from breakfast and lunch, the cafe also provides delivery within city limits for up to four orders at a time, and it also provides catering and specialty cakes.

Since then, her business has experienced immense growth, which she attributes all to her loyal customers, all of whom she loves.

"I am just amazed at the business that we had," she said. "I have some of the



PHOTO BY JAMES COULTER

Mary Stokes, right, and her dedicated staff ensure that customers receive their meals prepared exactly how they want it.

der. Even if they can't find something on the menu, as long as the cafe has the ingredients, they can provide you with anything you crave.

The cafe goes that far when it comes to pleasing their customers. If customers want to try something new, they can receive free samples to see whether

something for everybody made with tender loving care that is guaranteed to keep them coming back as regulars.

Market Place Café is located at 20 N. Market St. in Lake Wales. For information, visit their Facebook page, or call 863-676-8510.



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BayCare Health Events

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Women's Hospital Classes

All classes at Winter Haven Women's Hospital are held in Classroom A, 101 Ave. O S.E., Winter Haven. Registration is required: (855) 314-8352

Prepared Childbirth (Express)

Helps expectant mothers become active participants in childbirth. Covers breathing, coping, comfort, medications and postpartum adjustment.
Saturday, December 3, 9am-5pm
 Cost: \$40

Infant and Child CPR

Learn to perform lifesaving CPR and choking rescue methods on infants and children based on American Heart Association guidelines.
Tuesday, December 6, 5:30-7pm
 Cost: \$15

Happiest Baby

Based on Dr. Harvey Karp's Happiest Baby on the Block™ program, learn baby's calming reflex and how to quickly soothe fussiness.
Tuesday, December 6, 7:15-8:15pm
 Cost: \$20

Breastfeeding Class

Covers breastfeeding basics, skin-to-skin contact, tips for returning to work and when to call a health care provider/lactation consultant.
Thursday, December 8, 6-8:30pm
 Cost: \$15

Birth Center Tour

Visiting our birth suites, mom-baby unit and other key areas will familiarize you with our facility and help you prepare to give birth.
Tuesday, December 13, 5:30-7pm
 Cost: Free

Grandparenting Class

This class includes a discussion of the changes in hospital care over the past few decades, and the latest recommendations in newborn and infant care.
Wednesday, December 14, 5:30-7:30pm
 Cost: \$10

Weight Management

Weight Management Surgery Information

Take the first step to weight management surgery and attend an information session at one of our convenient locations. Meet a surgeon and learn more about your options. Registration is required: (855) 314-8350
Tuesday, December 13, 6-7pm
 Bartow Regional Medical Center
 Cafeteria
 Cost: Free



Support Groups (No cost to attend)

Aphasia Support Group

A support group for people with aphasia and their caregivers. Registration is not required.
Thursday, December 1, 4-5pm
 Winter Haven Hospital
 Education Classroom

Heart-to-Heart Cardiac Support Group

Support group for patients with various cardiac conditions.
Thursday, December 8, 10-11am
 Bartow Regional Medical Center
 Classrooms 1 & 2
 Registration is not required.
Tuesday, December 13, 3-4pm
 Winter Haven Hospital
 Wellness Center Conference Room
 Registration is required: (863) 280-6066

Stroke Support Group

For stroke survivors, family members and caregivers. Topics are determined by the needs of the group. Registration is not required.
Friday, December 9, 12:30-2pm
 Winter Haven Hospital
 Private Dining Room, Basement Bistro

Orthopedic Classes

Total Joint Replacement

Increase your knowledge of total joint replacement, prepare for surgery and get familiar with the recovery process.
Tuesdays, December 6, 13, 20, 27, 1-2pm
 Bartow Regional Medical Center
 Classroom 1
 Registration is required: (863) 519-1665
Tuesdays, December 6 and 20, 12:30-2pm
 Winter Haven Hospital
 Wellness Center Conference Room
 Registration is required: (863) 297-1808
 Cost: Free

Caregivers Support Group

A safe place for sharing caregiving and self-care tips, discussing the challenges of caring for a loved one and finding emotional support. Registration is not required.
Friday, December 9, 1:30-2:30pm
 Winter Haven Hospital
 Wellness Center Conference Room

Diabetes Support Group

This support group is open to anyone seeking diabetes information. Registration is not required.
Thursday, December 15, 10-11am
 Bartow Regional Medical Center
 Classroom 1

Mental Health Peer Recovery Program

Provides education, support and socialization for participants diagnosed with mental health issues, moving them toward recovery. Registration is not required.
Mondays, 11am-3pm
 Lion's Park Clubhouse
 820 Ave. L S.W., Winter Haven
Wednesdays, 12:30-4:30pm
 Winter Haven Hospital Center for Behavioral Health
 1201 First St. S.

Cancer Support (No cost to attend)

Woman-to-Woman Cancer Support Group

Information, support and coping strategies for women who have or have survived cancer. Registration is not required.
Monday, December 12, 6-7pm
 Winter Haven Hospital
 Wellness Center Conference Room

Look Good Feel Better

This free program from the American Cancer Society is designed for women dealing with hair loss and skin changes from chemotherapy and radiation. Registration is required: (800) 227-2345
Tuesday, December 13, 10am-12pm
 Winter Haven Hospital
 Education Classroom F

Man-to-Man Cancer Support Group

Offering information for men who have cancer or have survived it. Registration is not required.
Tuesday, December 20, 1:30-2:30pm
 Winter Haven Hospital
 Quality Improvement Conference Room

To register for a class or for a physician referral: (855) 314-8352



Bartow Regional Medical Center: 2200 Osprey Blvd., Bartow | **Winter Haven Hospital:** 200 Ave. F N.E., Winter Haven
Winter Haven Women's Hospital: 101 Ave. O S.E., Winter Haven