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THE ARCADIAN



The Lemon Bay Manta Rays had too many weapons, as they pulled away to an 81-55 victory over the Bulldogs.

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HONORING VETERANS
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Program for disabled veterans kicks off with Adam Putnam. **PG 5**



STUDENTS OF THE MONTH
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Looking for a 'forever' home
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SOCIAL MEDIA

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DeSoto Memorial closes baby unit, board looks to hybrid plan

By **CRAIG GARRETT**
ARCADIAN EDITOR

In a 4-1 vote, the DeSoto Memorial Hospital board of directors on Thursday closed the hospital's maternity unit.

The vote allows DMH administrators to form plans with a Port Charlotte-based hospital,

giving expectant DeSoto County mothers some choices. But that could take 90 days. And a current services contract with another provider ends Jan. 31, leaving expectant mothers with few options.

The board's decision Thursday ends hometown maternity care in DeSoto County. Hospital

administrators had warned that deep losses in maternity care place the entire system at risk. Others had argued that ending those services deprives women of an important resource. DeSoto Memorial last year logged about 280 deliveries, down from 600 just a few years ago, hospital administrators report.

In Thursday's vote, DMH board member Bartley Arrington was absent and Dr. Gregory Arov's distance vote by phone failed to materialize; Ernest Hewett sided against the majority. What happens to DeSoto Memorial's medical staff assigned to the unit

PLAN | 7



SUN PHOTO BY TOM O'NEILL

Aerial view of the FPL Wildflower Solar Energy Center in Arcadia. The site covers 721 acres and will produce 74.5 megawatts of electricity.

DeSoto gets 3rd FPL solar plant as state boom begins

By **ANDREA PRAEGITZER**
STAFF WRITER

DeSoto County is home to what was once the largest solar power plant in the United States built by Florida Power & Light Company — where dozens of sheep eat grass to keep it from shading the panels.

And now, this year, DeSoto has more FPL solar power plants than any other county in Florida.

The third and latest site, called Wildflower Solar Energy Center, began pumping clean, renewable energy into the grid Dec. 31 and is expected to be commissioned next month.

Despite all that, and somewhat surprising given the weather, Florida isn't in the top five for solar capacity right now, according to various, and varying, sources.

But that could soon change.

"The Sunshine State has been a late bloomer in terms of solar development, but we're finally starting to see signs of that turning around," said Solar Energy Industries Association Vice President of State Affairs Sean Gallagher.

Over the next five years, the SEIA expects Florida to see a whopping 593-percent growth rate through

AVG MONTHLY ENERGY BILLS (SELECT STATES, 2016)

Florida	\$123.37
Maine	\$86.48
Ohio	\$111.15
North Carolina	\$121.44
Texas	\$127.10
Georgia	\$130.87
Arizona	\$125.19
Colorado	\$83.85
Nevada	\$105.48
California	\$95.20
Alaska	\$119.84
Hawaii	\$128.73
Nation	\$112.59

Source: U.S. Energy Information Administration

SOLAR | 15

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Starting fresh, not letting yesterday control today

Happy New Year! It's 2018, now what? Well, let's not get caught up with new year's resolutions or anything of that nature. Life teaches that most of us do not keep our resolutions longer than two weeks.



Pastor Jerry Alexander

And that's if we're lucky. Now, don't get me wrong, I believe in being goal-oriented — goals are an important part of life. It gives us some direction to move in, something to work hard for. Goals are a driving force that move all us at different speeds. Being goal-driven helps establish the standard of living a person may desire. However, reaching life's goals is not always easy ... but a new year gives us a

fresh start. The big question is what do I need to do to have a fresh start? How do I perform in this fresh-start movement? Does it mean I am starting *all over*? What do I have to give up? How much will it cost me? Listen, a fresh start is really a different perspective, the way one may view

different challenges. How do you see life? Forest Grump's analogy of life has some truth to it: "Life is like a box chocolates. You never know what you are going to get." Think about it — we each get 365 fresh starts this year. What we must do to make the best of a fresh start is to not allow our yesterdays to control our todays. Yesterday's success or failure is now history. No matter how bad we may want to go back, we can't. We must shake off the dust and start fresh in the morning. Learn from yesterday but don't allow it to control you. I try to view my fresh starts with gladness and hope. Each day is what we make it. And just because someone else choses to see their fresh start in a dark light does

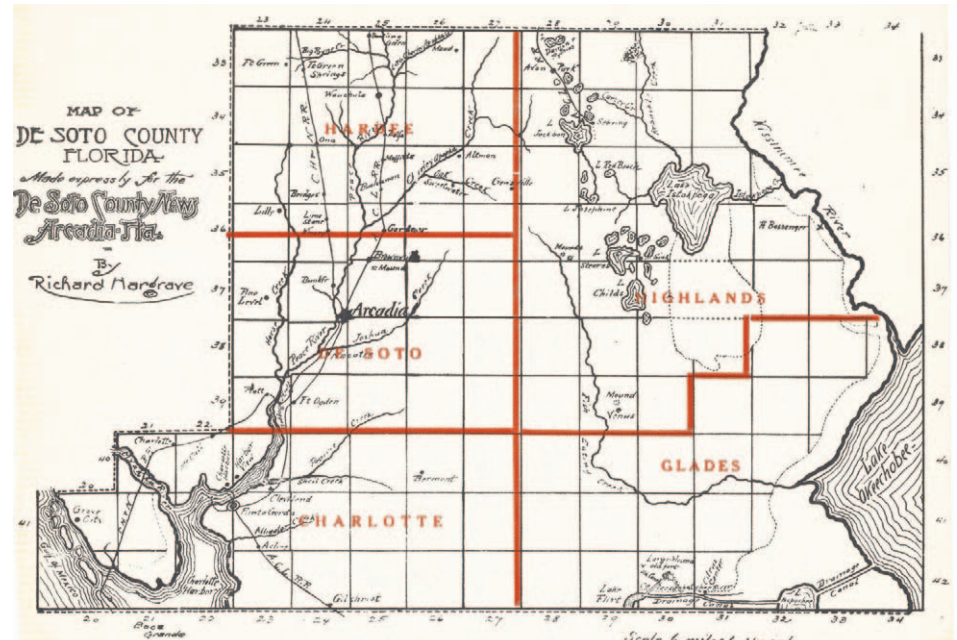
not mean you should join them! Don't allow their issues to become your issues. Your fresh start is for *your* daily goals. Don't allow anyone to sidetrack you. I put this into practice: "Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those which are before [me]." Philippians 3:13. Here's my message: Let yesterday take care of yesterday. We can't change it. And when you don't succeed one particular day in 2018, don't worry about it — remember you have a fresh start today! *Jerry Alexander is pastor of Elizabeth Missionary Baptist Church and an Arcadia city councilman.*

War Revenue Act of 1917, 'play it safe by calling on the income tax man'

By **CAROL MAHLER**
ARCADIAN CORRESPONDENT

With the passage of the Tax Cut and Jobs Act of 2017, many people may consult professional tax-preparers to understand the changes in the income tax. One hundred years ago, however, the federal government provided such assistance and encouraged taxpayers to consult their experts following the passage of the War Revenue Act of 1917. The Jan. 17, 1918, issue of the Punta Gorda Herald reported that James M.

Cathcart, collector of Internal Revenue for Florida, announced that 13 officers were sent from Jacksonville and will soon be "on the job in the county assigned to them, to meet the people and help them make out their income tax returns." From Jan. 14 to Jan. 25 (1918), the officer for DeSoto County was scheduled to be available in the courthouse in Arcadia "where he may be found every day of the dates named." Such an arrangement was convenient for city residents, but a hardship for those who lived in the other



COURTESY OF THE DESOTO COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

TAX | 3 DeSoto County was much larger in 1917.



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DMH changes have been agonizing but will benefit all concerned

Everyone associated with DeSoto Memorial Hospital has agonized over whether or not to continue to deliver babies. The decisions regarding whether or not to deliver babies at the hospital began in the early 2000s and not this year.

In the early 2000s Arcadia had two beloved physicians who both operated private practices. At that time, approximately 600 babies per year were delivered at DMH. The number of babies being born to residents of DeSoto County began to drop, payment for services provided were reduced and the cost of professional liability insurance began to rise. Both physicians approached the hospital to request financial assistance to maintain their practices. Eventually, both physicians closed their private practices and became employed with larger health-care organizations.

As everyone will remember, Hurricane



Vince Sica

Charley ripped through Arcadia in 2004 and the hospital sustained significant damage. As a result of hard work and legislative influence, DMH was able to procure a mortgage loan from the United States Department of Agriculture. When discussing what to build with the loan proceeds, the USDA made it very clear that the amount of the loan would be dependent upon what was to be built. The hospital board was confronted with the following dilemma: build a new maternity unit and lose a portion of the

\$20 million opportunity or build a new 32-bed medical/surgical unit, ER and surgical suites and focus on internal medicine, orthopedics, urology, vascular surgery and increasing general surgery patients.

In April 2005, the hospital board approved the construction of the 32-bed medical/surgical unit, ER and surgical suites. The renovation of the OB department became a DMH Foundation project. Try as they may, the efforts of the DMH Foundation to raise the funds for the OB department renovations fell short. Unfortunately, the local economic environment since 2007 has not been conducive to philanthropy.

In late 2017, Manatee County Rural Health informed the community that they were discontinuing OB services in DeSoto County. In other words, MCRH would no longer employ OB physicians to provide care to expectant mothers residing in

DeSoto County. MCRH's decision forced the hospital board to evaluate several options: stop providing OB services completely, employee physicians and the requisite staff to maintain OB services in the community and incur substantial financial losses, or enter into a relationship that would provide the community with comprehensive women services and deliveries would occur in Charlotte County.

After much deliberation the hospital board approved moving forward with the relationship with Bayfront Health Port Charlotte. This decision is a win-win decision for the community as a whole and for the expectant mothers who reside in DeSoto County.

We understand that change is hard. But in this case change will benefit all concerned.

Vince Sica is chief executive officer for DeSoto Memorial Hospital.

COMMUNITY NEWS BRIEFS

Peace River Audubon field trip: Celery Fields

The field trip destination for Jan. 20 is the Celery Fields, a Sarasota County park. Once an actual celery farm, Celery Fields contains 360 acres restored as a wetland. To facilitate wildlife viewing, there are extensive trails and two boardwalks, each leading to a gazebo.

If you come, besides binoculars, bring a sunhat and sunscreen. Dress for the weather and wear comfortable walking shoes. Birding will end in the late morning, and we will picnic at the visitor center area.

Carpoolers meet at 7 a.m. at our "north" meeting place, the parking lot of the Walmart on Kings Highway just north of exit 170 on I-75. The trip is free and all welcomed. 941-624-4182, www.

peacriveraudubon.org.

FHP captain started in Arcadia

The Florida Highway Patrol Director Col. Gene S. Spaulding appointed Capt. William Harris as the new Troop Commander for Troop J. Harris oversees commercial vehicle enforcement operations for Florida's southern region encompassing 32

counties within Troops D, E, F, G, K and L. (DeSoto County is in Troop F). Harris is a 17-year veteran of law enforcement with the Florida Highway Patrol, and has most recently served as the District Commander within Troop J Office of Commercial Vehicle Enforcement. He graduated from the 99th recruit class and was first assigned to the Arcadia district as a trooper.

TAX

FROM PAGE 2

cities—such as Punta Gorda, Sebring and Wauchula—in old DeSoto County. That huge county was divided into the present-day counties of Charlotte, DeSoto, Glades, Hardee and Highlands in 1921.

Cathcart encouraged Floridians: "There's hardly a business man, merchant or professional man who won't have to make return of income. Farmers, as a class, will have to pay the tax. The safe thing to do is for every person who had a total income of \$1,000 or \$2,000, as the case may be, and who is not sure about what deductions the law allows him, to play it safe by calling on the income tax man."

The first tax on personal income was established in the Revenue Act of 1861 as a way to fund the U.S. Civil War; however, the tax was repealed in 1872, according to "Historical Highlights of the IRS" (<https://www.irs.gov/newsroom/historical-highlights-of-the-irs>).

Twenty-three years later, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that the "flat rate" federal income tax—enacted in 1894—was unconstitutional because it was a direct tax not allocated according to each state's population.

Passed by Congress in 1909 and finally ratified in 1913, the 16th Amendment allowed the federal government to tax individual incomes. Efforts at tax reform failed until the U.S. entered World War I, and subsequent mobilization required funding.

On Oct. 3, 1917, Congress passed the War Revenue Act, and the full text is available online at <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=hvd.hnn325;view=1up;seq=1>.

The Act featured "an excess profits tax." According to a steep rate schedule, business owners had to pay tax on any profits above a "reasonable rate of return"—determined to be 8 percent. President Woodrow Wilson and his congressional allies considered the tax as a form of business regulation, according to the Tax History Project (<http://www.taxhistory.org>). The "excess profits tax" also applied to individuals who paid taxes at 8 percent on any income above \$6,000.

The deduction for charitable

contributions was first established in the Act. Lawmakers felt that most people donated to charities from their surplus income, and since this act taxed that surplus, lawmakers feared that people would not support worthwhile organizations without a deduction.

The income tax rate also was increased: a 2 percent tax was levied on incomes more than \$1,000 (\$2,000 for married couples) and graduated surtaxes soared as much as 63 percent. The corporate income tax gained an additional tax of 4 percent.

In contrast, the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act signed into law on Dec. 22, 2017, is designed to stimulate the economy, according to the Tax Foundation (www.taxfoundation.org), established in 1937, as "the nation's leading independent tax policy research organization." The tax rate for corporations was reduced from 35 percent to 21 percent, and the corporate alternative minimum tax was repealed.

For individuals, rates were reduced—the highest lowered from 39 percent to 37 percent—for the seven income brackets. The standard deduction and the child tax credit were increased. The century-old charitable contribution deduction was retained as was the deduction for mortgage

interest and for the first \$10,000 paid of local and state taxes. Other deductions were eliminated, and the individual mandate penalty for health insurance was repealed.

The Tax Foundation estimates the loss

of \$1.47 trillion in federal revenues over the next 10 years under the Act of 2017. In contrast, the Tax History Project records income taxes collected under the Act of 1917 at 58 percent of the federal budget compared to 16 percent in 1916.



DESOTO MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

900 N. Robert Ave. • Arcadia, FL 34266
863-494-3535 • www.dmh.org

As of January 31, 2018,
DeSoto Memorial Hospital will no longer be delivering babies at the hospital.
If you are currently expecting, please consult your physician to have a plan in place for the birth of your new loved one.

DeSoto Memorial Hospital and Bayfront Port Charlotte are entering into a joint venture to provide comprehensive women's health services in DeSoto County.
Bayfront Port Charlotte will deliver the babies, where there is a Level II NICU if needed.
Please have a plan in place.

HAPPY NEW YEAR!
COMMUNITY CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP
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Next month's concert - February 11th

OUR VIEW

Florida positions
itself to be king
of solar energy

OUR POSITION: Florida is poised to take its rightful place among the top solar-producing states in the nation and FPL is at the forefront of that progress.

Solar power has been a tough sell — even in Florida, the Sunshine State. But, FPL is turning skeptics into reformers and investing big bucks into moving away from coal and gas and to a resource that is available for free — almost every day of the week.

“The Sunshine State has been a late bloomer in terms of solar development, but we’re finally starting to see signs of that turning around,” Solar Energy Industries Association Vice President of State Affairs Sean Gallagher said in a story on today’s front page.

Over the next five years, the SEIA expects Florida to see a whopping 593-percent growth rate through new solar capacity installations.

And, around 2020, FPL expects the energy produced by solar power to eclipse that from gas and coal combined.

The energy giant gives a lot of the credit for the progress to a solid 73 percent of Florida voters passing Amendment 4 in 2016 — an amendment designed to reduce economic barriers to install renewable energy. Tax exemptions outlined in the amendment begin this year, and last 20 years.

Exempted will be rooftop solar and other renewable energy devices installed on businesses and commercial entities.

And, solar systems will be precluded from increasing commercial property values when assessed for property tax purposes — a change from the increases in property taxes that were associated with the addition of solar power systems.

And, not only is solar energy progressing in Florida, but its biggest move is right on our doorstep — in DeSoto County.

DeSoto is home to one of the first solar plants in the state after FPL built the Next Generation Solar Energy Center in 2009. The Citrus Solar Energy Center was added in 2016 and, just this month, the largest solar plant yet, Wildflower Solar Energy Center, went online near Arcadia.

FPL is all in on the solar bandwagon, telling the *Sun* that solar centers are the fastest and most economical way to bring more power to Floridians.

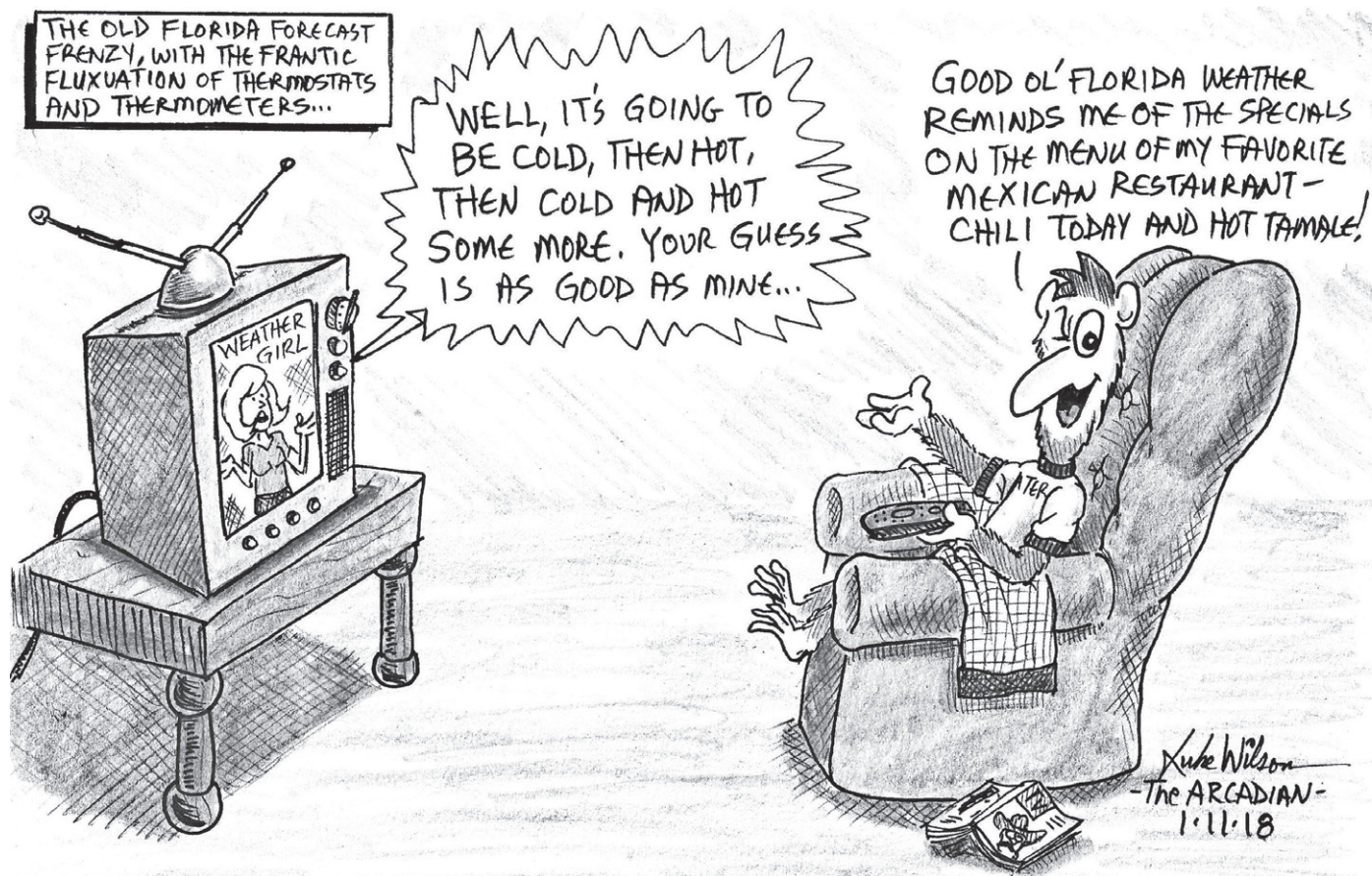
And, by all appearances, the momentum is building to make Florida one of the top producers of solar energy in the U.S.

Sen. Bill Nelson has filed a bill in the U.S. Senate to fuel even more solar production in Florida. The senator, noting the state’s solar ranking of 12th in the U.S. “needs to change,” is a fan of solar power. His bill would make it easier for banks to invest in renewable energy companies by letting them own up to a 20 percent share of the company, according to today’s story.

By allowing more investment, there is hope it will become less burdensome for homeowners to obtain loans to put solar panels on their roofs — which right now require a large upfront cost that scares off many homeowners.

We see a sunny future, pardon the pun, for solar power in Florida. And, when technology produces storage units that

OUR VIEW | 5



LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Mosaic's version
of "science" stinks

Dear Editor:

Mosaic certainly likes to throw the word "science" around. Studies, however, can be biased and data skewed to suit a for-profit industry. This is especially notable in a state where phosphate industry money has helped put politicians in office. "Climate change" is not allowed to be spoken in Rick Scott's DEP, though legitimate scientists worldwide have produced

the evidence. In Florida scientists with the integrity to speak out against the phosphate industry have been fired or muted.

Mosaic's lead "ecologist" said that they take everything out and put it all back. No they don't. The layers of clay and rock are gone, replaced by sand tailings, permanently changing the hydrology, impossible to restore. "Overburden" description leaves out the ancient oaks and pine forest, rare and endangered plants and habitats, complex varieties of soils, seasonal wetlands

and streams, and the microbes, insects, and amphibians at the base of food webs that are too sensitive to recover on reclaimed land, yet are necessary to support rare and endangered wildlife that Mosaic claims will return. With habitat gone, nowhere to feed or breed it has nowhere to go, and those individuals are gone, yet Mosaic claims it "helps" wildlife.

The (Jan. 4/*Arcadian*) article says science has found few harmful effects

LETTER | 5

GRITS & PIECES

Life is for the living, don't let it sneak by

Ah, the arrival of a new year — all fresh and clean and unspoiled, just waiting to be your very best one of all.

But there's a catch, friends. It's to make it be just that.

The old saying that "If you always do what you always did, you'll always get what you always got" is pretty much true. So that means the ball is in your court as far as making 2018 a better year than 2017 was.

And guess what? There's lots of ways to make that happen that are free.

How long has it been since you wrote a letter or postcard instead of an e-mail or text? How long since you called a relative you haven't seen in years?

When is the last time you asked somebody how they felt about certain issues? Everybody likes to be asked their opinion, just like you do,



Luke Wilson

troubador55@embarqmail.com

you know. And when is the last time you listened with your heart (instead of just your ears) to what somebody had to say?

How long has it been since you admitted you were wrong about something, or let somebody else get the last word in? Or when did you last let someone else have a little control?

When was the last time you called on your imagination for something as simple as playing "peekaboo" with a little one? Have you taken a child

outside to look for shapes in the clouds or star constellations lately? Or showed a young person how to skip a rock across water? What about a game of hopscotch? Or something really fun and different, like covering your hand with Elmer's Glue and then peeling it off after it dries?

Have you held a door for someone lately? Or maybe saw a busy neighbor and walked over to lend them a hand? Have you ever taken time to pick up a piece of litter while you're walking across a parking lot ... and dispose of it?

Think back to the last time you told somebody to keep the change. Or said "Good morning" to a complete stranger and gave them your smile. And when was the last time you walked through a cemetery, taking time to visit family and

GRITS & PIECES | 5

LETTER SUBMISSION POLICY

Letters are welcome on virtually any subject, but we do have some rules. Please keep them to less than 250 words. Letters must be received no later than noon on Tuesday. 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; they are not for publication, but must be provided so we may verify authorship if necessary. Due to the number of letters received, we reserve the right to run only one letter per person per month. The Letters to the Editor section is intended as a public forum for community discourse and the opinions and statements made in letters are solely those of the individual writers. *The Arcadian* takes no responsibility for the content of these letters. Please send or bring correspondence to the *Arcadian*, 108 S. Polk Ave., Arcadia FL 34266, or fax to 863-494-3533. Readers with access to the internet may e-mail Letters to the Editor to cgarrett@sun-herald.com or arcadian.editor@gmail.com.

DeSoto welcomes Operation Outdoor Freedom

BY CRAIG GARRETT
ARCADIAN EDITOR

How fitting that a wild turkey gobbled in the distance. Commissioner of Agriculture Adam Putnam, a detachment of state forestry, wildlife and agriculture administrators and staff were in an isolated parcel of the Peace River State Forest Friday to kick off a program for disabled veterans. Operation Outdoor Freedom connects these men and women to outdoor adventures such as deep-sea fishing and weekend camping to help them heal or re-connect.

Peace River State Forest is to provide them guided game hunts for turkey, wild hogs and deer. The program, on a former game preserve purchased by the state in 2014, will also provide kayaking and other water sports, a bunkhouse and camp amenities for gatherings and a quiet place to relax.

The centerpiece of Friday's half-day event in western DeSoto County was dedication of a fire pit and marker to honor Henry Katter, a World War II veteran. The fire pit signifies the extreme cold Katter and other soldiers in his tank unit endured in combat in that long-ago war.

"Our goal," Putnam said in opening remarks on an unusually cool January morning, "is to make Florida the most friendly military and veteran state in the country ... to honor the men and women who have put it all on the line."

Peace River State Forest is the second location for an Operation Outdoor Freedom camp. The other is Camp Prairie in Lake Wales. The idea is to offer wounded veterans outdoor activities at no cost.

Designated state and agricultural lands in Florida are also used for recreation and rehabilitation. There are about 1.5 million veterans in a



A special plaque was added to commemorate Henry Katter's WWII service to his country.

state of nearly 21 million residents. The Florida Forest Service, within the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, has invited hundreds of veterans to Operation Outdoor Freedom experiences, Putnam said. The eligibility requirements are that veterans must have a service-connected disability rating of 30 percent or greater from the United States Department of Veteran Affairs, or be a Purple Heart recipient.

Florida acquired 5,000 acres for the Peace River State Forest from the Mosaic fertilizer company. The land, which remains partly a working cattle ranch and hay-producing venture, had been a privately owned exotic game preserve until Hurricane Charley shifted its direction in 2004. Florida in taking ownership of the land renovated a caretaker's lodge and added a 20-bed bunkhouse that is buried deep within the isolated property.

The ribbon-cutting included an honor guard with the Florida Forest Service, remarks and a project overview from forestry administrators, a tour and small luncheon for the guests and sponsors that included Home Depot, The Florida Cattlemen's Association and others.



PHOTOS BY CRAIG GARRETT

Jim Handley (left) with the Florida Cattlemen's Association accepts a sponsor appreciation plaque from Adam Putnam.



Those with the Home Depot Foundation on hand for Friday's ceremony.

Putnam, a gubernatorial candidate, in dedicating Operation Outdoor Freedom in DeSoto County kidded that

doing so was "living proof that common sense in government is still alive in pockets."



Mr. Katter's family was in attendance.



A 20-person bunkhouse allows visitors a comfortable stay at Camp Peace River.



Formal dedication of the fire pit honoring Henry Katter.

GRITS & PIECES

FROM PAGE 4

friends there?

How long since you went back through your old photographs to be reminded of times and people you miss? Or held something precious

in your hands that belonged to your parents or grandparents, just to feel close to them again?

How long has it been since you sat by a river or creek, and just watched it go by? You know, life is like that river or creek, in that it just keeps moving past us. The years come and go and often we don't realize just how many have gotten away from us before we

see that each year is a chance to better ourselves and make a difference in the lives of those we love.

It is said that if we just sit and watch life go by, it certainly will. Today is a good day as any to get busy and be a part of your own life.

Life's not a spectator sport, so let's get out there and play fair. And have fun!

OUR VIEW

FROM PAGE 4

can hold power produced by the sun for nights and the few days the sun does not shine in our state, that would open the floodgates to investing in renewable energy.

LETTER

FROM PAGE 4

from phosphate mining. That is not true. Beyond the environmental harm radiation has long been shown by the genuine scientific community to be

harmful in any amount. Mosaic brings radioactive material to the surface, concentrates it during extraction whereby it is then more available through airborne dust to inhale. Clay settling areas are concentrated radiation sources also. Gypsum stacks, with their concentrations of radon and cancer causing and dangerous chemicals

are located near low income neighborhoods, exposing residents who have not been scientifically monitored in extensive epidemiological studies. The glyphosate they spray near mine neighbors is considered a carcinogen in California and elsewhere.

Mosaic may use "best available practices" but that does not mean that the

industry is not permanently damaging the watersheds of Florida, once quality agricultural land and wildlife habitat, and that it isn't endangering the health of citizens. Mosaic's version of "science" stinks.

Sarah Hollenhorst
Arcadia

Arcadia's COMMUNITY CALENDAR

NOTE: All phone numbers are in Area Code 863 unless stated otherwise. To add, remove or change any listing in the Community Calendar, email arcadian.editor@gmail.com or call 494-0300. Listings are free for nonprofit and noncommercial organizations.

TODAY

- DeSoto Arts and Humanities Council's Annual Art Show will be held at Martin Gallery, 207 E Magnolia Street, Arcadia. Intake is Sat., Jan. 6, from 10 a.m.-noon. Reception is Thurs., Jan. 11 from 5 to 7 p.m. This is an open show with no categories, primarily for our members and those interested in showing with DeSoto Arts. Each artist may submit 3 entries. Free for members, \$15 for non-members. Cash awards for First, Second and Third place, plus People's Choice award. Ribbons for Honorable Mention and Award of Merit. Visit www.desotoartscouncil.org for details.
- Grandparents Raising Grandchildren and other Relations Raising Relations meets monthly on the second Thursday from 9-11 a.m. at the Friendship Center, 219 W. Oak St.
- The DeSoto County Veterans Council meets the second Thursday of every month at 6 p.m. at the Elks Lodge. For details, call Ron Jones at 941-806-7108.
- TEAM Arcadia meets on the second Thursday of the month at 4:30 p.m. at Mary Margaret's Tea & Biscuit, 10 S. Polk Avenue. The purpose of TEAM Arcadia is to unite community organizations and coordinate community improvement efforts.
- DeSoto County Historical Society meets at noon every second Thursday monthly at the Family Service Center annex, 310 W. Whidden St., Arcadia. Lunch is available for \$6 at 11:30 a.m.
- Arcadia-DeSoto County Habitat for Humanity meets at 6 p.m. second Thursday monthly at the SunTrust Bldg., second floor, 10 S. Desoto Ave. Call 494-4118 or email desotohabitat@embarqmail.com for more information.
- Free blood pressure screenings administered by DeSoto Memorial Home Health at the Friendship Center, 219 W. Oak St., every second and fourth Thursday from 10:30-11:30 a.m.
- The All Faiths Food Bank distributes free food 9 a.m. to noon every Thursday at Trinity United Methodist Church, 304 W. Oak St.
- Kiwanis meets at 6 p.m. Thursday at Beef O'Bradys.

- Friendship Center, 219 W. Oak St., daily coffee and conversation 9-10 a.m. Crafts or games in the Activity Room from 10-11 a.m. Lunch available with a 48-hr. advance notice; call 494-5965.
- The All Faiths Food Bank distributes free food 6-10 a.m. Monday through Friday at the Center for the Needy, 161 S. Orange St.
- DeSoto County Library story time is at 3 p.m. at 125 N. Hillsborough Ave., Arcadia. Call 993-4851 for more information.
- Faith Mission provides free lunches for anyone in need, 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. 1109 S.E. 9th St., Arcadia. Donations gratefully accepted.
- Alcoholics Anonymous Second Tradition meets at 7 p.m. at St. Edmund's Episcopal Church, 327 W. Hickory St.

FRIDAY

- DeSoto County will hold a ribbon cutting at the new fire station on Jan. 12 at 11:30 a.m.
- The Photography Group of DeSoto Arts and Humanities Council meets the second Friday of each month 3:30-5 p.m. at the DeSoto Public Library. Free and open to the public. For more information email jamie.pipher@gmail.com.
- Peace River Civil War Round Table meets at 1:30 p.m. second Fridays monthly at the Emerald Pointe clubhouse, 25188 E. Marion Ave., Punta Gorda. Lunch available. For more information, call 941-575-4269 or 941-639-0782.
- The All Faiths Food Bank distributes free food 6-10 a.m. Monday through Friday at the Center for the Needy, 161 S. Orange St.
- Arcadia Quilt Club meets from 9-11:30 a.m. Fridays at the Palace Dance Hall, 1627 N.E. Floridian Circle, Arcadia.
- Friendship Center, 219 W. Oak St. daily coffee and conversation 9-10 a.m. Low impact exercises from 9:30-10 a.m. On your own in the activity room from 10-11 a.m. Lunch available with a 48-hour advance notice. Call 494-5965.
- iPads and eBooks - Instruction and assistance with questions about using your digital devices at 3 p.m. every Friday at the DeSoto Public Library.
- Walk & Talk: gentle exercise and conversation at 8 a.m. every Friday at the DeSoto Public Library.
- Alcoholics Anonymous Hispanic meets at 7 p.m. at 426 N. Brevard Ave., next to El Charro Rest.
- Alcoholics Anonymous Second Tradition meets at 8 p.m. at Grace Lutheran Church, 900 W. Oak St.
- Alcoholics Anonymous Arcadia/Nocatee Group meets at 7 p.m. at Nocatee Methodist Church, 4502 S.W. Welles Ave.
- Square Dancing classes are held at the Palace Square Dance Hall, 1627 N.E. Floridian Circle, from 7-9 p.m. every Friday. Robert at 813-601-1834 or Mary at 941-380-5336 494-2749 for information.
- Faith Mission provides free lunches for anyone in need, 11

a.m. to 12:30 p.m. 1109 S.E. 9th St., Arcadia. Donations gratefully accepted.

SATURDAY

- Saturday Night Lights Arcadia is hosting the second annual drive-in for kids on Jan. 13, in downtown Arcadia. The free featured film is CARS 3.
- The DeSoto County NAACP plans events to honor Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. A breakfast will be held at 9 a.m. Jan. 13 at the House of God Keith Dominion, 200 S. Alabama Ave. Tickets are \$7 each.
- Women in Fellowship Ministry meets every second Saturday of the month at 10 a.m. at Greater Mt. Zion AME Church, 256 S. Orange Ave. Be uplifted, motivated and inspired by God. Free and open to the public. Light brunch is served.
- Circus at the Turner Agri-Civic Center, Jan. 13 at 3 p.m. and 6 p.m. Free tickets for children.
- The John Morgan Ingraham House museum, 120 W. Whidden St., is open from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. on the second Saturday of the month.
- DeSoto County Historical Society Research Library is open in the Ingraham Seed House, 120 W. Whidden Street, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on the second and fourth Saturdays of the month, and by appointment.
- Friends of Arcadia Airport will host its 3rd Saturday All You Can Eat Pancake Breakfast next Saturday at the Arcadia Municipal Airport in Hangar A-5. We hope to see you there.
- DeSoto County Library children's movies are offered at 10:30 a.m. at 125 N. Hillsborough Ave. every Saturday. Children must be accompanied by an adult. Call 993-4851 for more information.

SUNDAY

- Community Resource Center at the Friendship Center, 219 W. Oak St, open Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Information available on local, out-of-town, and state agencies and programs serving the needs of DeSoto County residents. Stop by and check out the large array of brochures for residents of all age groups.
- Alcoholics Anonymous Serenity Group meets at Grace Lutheran Church, 900 W. Oak St. (State Road 70) at 8 p.m. Sunday.
- Hispanic Alcoholics Anonymous meets at 7 p.m. Sunday at 426 Brevard Ave. next to El Charro Restaurant.

MONDAY

- The Annual DeSoto County Branch NAACP Unity Parade honoring Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. will be held on Jan. 15. It is free for anyone — individual, organization or business — to participate. Line-up is at 10 a.m. at the DeSoto County Courthouse. Floats, walkers, bikers are all welcome. The parade concludes at Louis Anderson Park on MLK St. Contact Linda Howell at 244-1768 for lineup and parade information. Anyone wishing to set up booths at Louis Anderson Park is requested to donate \$25 before Jan. 15; call Howell or DeSoto NAACP President Rev. Samuel Morgan at 993-0939.
- Community Resource Center at the Friendship Center, 219 W. Oak St, open Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Information available on local, out-of-town, and state agencies and programs serving the needs of DeSoto County residents. Stop by and check out the large array of brochures for residents of all age groups.
- Alcoholics Anonymous Serenity Group meets at Grace Lutheran Church, 900 W. Oak St. (State Road 70) at 8 p.m. Sunday.
- Hispanic Alcoholics Anonymous meets at 7 p.m. Sunday at 426 Brevard Ave. next to El Charro Restaurant.
- The All Faiths Food Bank distributes free food 6-10 a.m. Monday through Friday at the Center for the Needy, 161 S. Orange St.
- All Faiths Food Bank and Sarasota County School District distribute free meals every Monday and Wednesday through August), 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. at Trinity United Methodist Church, 304 W. Oak St. Call 494-2543 for details.
- Women of Worship "WOW" Women's ministry meets at 6:15 p.m. Monday at Freedom Fellowship Christian Ministries, 1528 N.E. Turner Ave. All are welcome.
- Friendship Center, 219 W. Oak St., daily coffee and conversation 9-10 a.m. Movie of the Week or games in the Activity Room 9:30-11 a.m. Lunch available with a 48-hr. advance notice; call 494-5965.
- Alcoholics Anonymous Second Tradition meets at St. Edmund's Episcopal Church, 327 W. Hickory St. at 8 p.m. Monday at 327 W. Hickory St.
- Alcoholics Anonymous Brown Baggers Group meets at noon Monday at Trinity United Methodist Church, 304 W. Oak St.
- Al-anon is a mutual support program for people who are living with, or have lived with, someone whose drinking created problems for themselves or others. The group meets at 7:30 p.m. every Monday at Fort Ogden Methodist Church, 6923 S.W. River St. in Fort Ogden. For information call 1-888-425-2666 or visit www.nfldistrict13al-anon.org.

TUESDAY

- The public is invited to the Charlotte Sierra Club's monthly meeting, always on the third Tuesday of each month (except during the summer). Meeting location is the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship Bldg., 1532 Forrest Nelson Blvd., Port Charlotte. For more information, call Allain Hale at 941-423-2713.
- The Republican Party of DeSoto County Executive Committee meets the third Tuesday of the month at Magnolia's Seafood and Grill. The meeting starts at 6:30 p.m. and takes place in the restaurant's rear seating area. For more information call Ted at 990-2888.
- Arcadia City Council meets at 6 p.m. at the Margaret Way Building, 23 N. Polk Ave., Arcadia.
- The Vietnam Brotherhood/Echo Company meets at 7 p.m. the first and third Tuesdays at Post 60, 2846 S.W. Highway 17 in Arcadia. For more information call Tim Martin at 990-0185.
- DeSoto Public Library has a monthly Library Book Club at 3 p.m. Group book discussion open to everyone.
- DeSoto Memorial Hospital offers free blood pressure screenings from 3 to 4 p.m. in the DeSoto Memorial Hospital McSwain Room. Call 494-8432 for details.
- The AA District 5 committee business meeting is held at 8 p.m. on the third Tuesday of every month at St. Nathaniel's Episcopal Church, 4200 S. Biscayne Dr., North Port. Visit <http://aadistrict5.org> for details.
- Tuesday Night Quilters meet twice monthly at the Turner Civic/Ag Center from 5:30-7 p.m. For more info call 494-4652.
- The Peace River Woodcarvers meet at 8 a.m. at Trinity United Methodist Church in Arcadia. For information, call Dale Weese at 941-740-4790.
- The All Faiths Food Bank distributes free food 6-10 a.m. Monday through Friday at the Center for the Needy, 161 S. Orange St.
- The Faith Mission holds a conversational English class from 10 a.m.-11 a.m. A coloring club is available for kids during the class.
- Rotary Club of Arcadia meets at noon every Tuesday in the McSwain Room at DeSoto Memorial Hospital.
- The All Faiths Food Bank distributes free food 9 a.m. to noon every Tuesday at Trinity United Methodist Church, 304 W. Oak St.
- Freedom Fellowship Christian Ministries Support Group meets at 7 p.m. Tuesday at 1528 N.E. Turner Ave.
- Friendship Center, 219 W. Oak St., daily coffee and conversation 9-10 a.m. Group games 10-11 a.m. Lunch available with a 48-hr. advance notice; call 494-5965.
- Every Tuesday night, line dance class at the Palace Dance Hall (17N). Beginners welcome. \$3 donation. For more info, call Jennie Martin at 494-2749.
- Weight Watchers meets every Tuesday at 6 p.m. at Calvary Baptist Church, 1509 E. Oak St. For details visit www.weight-watchers.com and "find a meeting" or call 800-651-6000.
- DeSoto County Library holds Lego time at 3 p.m. Tuesdays at 125 N. Hillsborough Ave., Arcadia. Call 993-4851 for more information.
- Alcoholics Anonymous Second Tradition meets at 8 p.m. at St. Edmund's Episcopal Church, 327 W. Hickory St.
- AA Hispanic Group meets at 8 p.m. at La Clinica, 1901 10th Ave.
- Suncoast Community Blood Bank is open from noon to 6 p.m. today at 710 N. Brevard Ave. (U.S. 17 North), Arcadia. For more information, call 993-9366.

WEDNESDAY

- Hour of Power Prayer time is held at noon at Freedom Fellowship Christian Ministries, 1528 N.E. Turner Ave.
- The Arcadia Writers Group meets from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. the first and third Wednesday of each month at Arcadia Village in the Cantina Clubhouse, in the small dining room. For more information, call Sarah Hollenhorst at 244-1663.
- The First Marine Division Association meets at 11:30 a.m. on the third Wednesday at Family Table Restaurant, 14132 Tamiami Trail, North Port. Call Carl Jones, 941-493-1408 for more information.
- DeSoto County Traffic Safety Team meets at 1:30 p.m. third Wednesdays monthly at the DeSoto County Commissioners room, 201 E. Oak St., Arcadia.
- Hearing Loss Association demonstrates amplified listening devices from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. third Wednesdays monthly at Charlotte County Cultural Center, 2280 Aaron St., Port Charlotte. For more information about HLA meetings, call 941-624-2947.
- The All Faiths Food Bank distributes free food 6-10 a.m. Monday through Friday at the Center for the Needy, 161 S. Orange St.
- The All Faiths Food Bank distributes free meals every Wednesday 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. at Trinity United Methodist Church, 304 W. Oak St.
- Friendship Center, 219 W. Oak St. Low impact exercises from 9:30-10 a.m. Let's Talk Food - share recipes, coupons, tips, research,

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Pioneer Day and BBQ: You're invited

PROVIDED BY DESOTO COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The 14th annual Pioneer Day and Barbecue will celebrate our local history, and the DeSoto County Historical Society invites everyone to help them showcase our heritage!

The festival will be held on March 17 under the historic and shady oaks at DeSoto Veterans Memorial Park on State Road 70 just west of Arcadia.

The Historical Society is an all-volunteer, not-for-profit organization that receives no government funding, so the festival depends on sponsors. Please consider becoming a sponsor at various levels ranging from \$100 to \$5,000.

Jeff Griffis, who serves on the society's board of directors, said, "It's a good organization to donate to because it

supports the preservation of our local history. There are no administrative fees or anything. The money strictly goes to the preservation of our history."

This year's Pioneer Day will be a centennial commemoration of Carlstrom and Dorr Fields—two aviation training camps established during World War I. If you have a business, club, family, farm or other group rooted in DeSoto County, please sign up to present your history at an informational booth at Pioneer Day.

The society also seeks those who demonstrate old-fashioned skills or crafts—such as weaving palm-frond hats or making cow whips. Vendors of vintage, period or reproduction items, as well as traditional Florida foods, are also needed.

More details are at www.historicdesoto.org.



PHOTO PROVIDED

The 14th annual Pioneer Day and Barbecue held by the DeSoto County Historical Society is March 17.

historicdesoto.org, or contact Norma Banas, the society's president, at

863-558-1166, sanctuaryofarcadia@gmail.com.

CALENDAR

FROM PAGE 6

dietary from 10-11 a.m. Lunch available with a 48-hr. advance notice; call 494-5965.

- Hour of Power Prayer time is held at noon at Freedom Fellowship Christian Ministries, 1528 N.E. Turner Ave.
- AA "Brown Bagger" meetings are offered every Wednesday at noon at Trinity United Methodist Church, 304 W. Oak St.
- "Art for Kids" is at 3 p.m. every Wednesday in the DeSoto County Library's children's wing. This free program, sponsored by the DeSoto County Arts and Humanities Council, is for elementary school-aged children.

THURSDAY

- The Peace River Soil and Water Conservation District will hold a

joint meeting with Hardee Soil and Water Conservation District on Jan. 18, 9 a.m. - 9:30 a.m. in the boardroom at 316 North 7th Ave., Suite 101, Wauchula. For more information, call 773-9644.

• Million Dollar Hole-in-One Golf Shootout, Jan. 18-20, to benefit South Florida State College athletics. Call 453-3132 or email foundation@southflorida.edu.

• Are you a mother of a child with special needs? Would you like to connect with other mothers going through similar situations? Join us the third Thursday of every month at 6 p.m. for a time to connect and fellowship at Pine Creek Chapel, 1267 S.W. Pine Chapel Dr. in Arcadia. For more information, call or text Heather at 444-0817

• The All Faiths Food Bank will distribute free food to those in need on the third Thursday of each month, from 9 a.m. to noon, at the 7th Day Adventist Church, 2865 SE Ami Drive.

• The regular meeting of the Arcadian Housing Authority Board of Commissioners is held at 12:15 p.m. on the third Thursday of every month at the Arcadia Housing Authority, 7 Booker T

Washington Road. Call 494-4343 for details.

• The DeSoto Amateur Radio Club meets at 7 p.m. on the third Thursday of every month at the DeSoto County Emergency Operations Center, 2200 Roan St., Arcadia. Anyone interested may attend. Talk in for the meetings is at 147.180+ DARC repeater.

• Family Safety Alliance for DeSoto, Manatee and Sarasota counties, sponsored by Department of Children and Families, meets at 4 p.m. third Thursdays monthly at Lakewood Ranch Northern Trust Bank's community room, 6320 Venture Drive, Lakewood Ranch. For information, call Kerri Gibson at 941-316-6129.

• DeSoto County Historical Society Research Library is open in the Ingraham Seed House, 120 W. Whidden Street: 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Thursdays (except for the second Thursday of the month), and second and fourth Saturdays, and by appointment.

• The John Morgan Ingraham House museum, 120 W. Whidden

St., is open from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Thursdays, except the second Thursday, and second and fourth Saturdays.

- The All Faiths Food Bank distributes free food 9 a.m. to noon every Thursday at Trinity United Methodist Church, 304 W. Oak St.
- Kiwanis meets at 6 p.m. Thursday at Beef O'Bradys.
- Friendship Center, 219 W. Oak St., daily coffee and conversation 9-10 a.m. Crafts or games in the Activity Room from 10-11 a.m. Lunch available with a 48-hr. advance notice; call 494-5965.
- The All Faiths Food Bank distributes free food 6-10 a.m. Monday through Friday at the Center for the Needy, 161 S. Orange St.
- DeSoto County Library story time is at 3 p.m. at 125 N. Hillsborough Ave., Arcadia. Call 993-4851 for more information.
- Faith Mission provides free lunches for anyone in need, 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. 1109 S.E. 9th St., Arcadia. Donations gratefully accepted.

PLAN

FROM PAGE 1

is not clear. A hospital staffer following the vote, however, said the unit's medical team anticipated the closing and expects job losses, she said.

While the board's vote ended one service, it opened negotiations for a back-up plan. Bayfront Health's chief executive, Tim Cerullo, at Thursday's DMH board meeting disclosed a hybrid plan of pre-/post-natal services in DeSoto County, with pregnant women giving birth in Port Charlotte where Bayfront Health is based. Cerullo said a services agreement is possible within 90 days.

DeSoto Memorial loses its longtime pact with MCR Health Services on Jan.

31. MCR Health provides services to DeSoto Memorial that include OB/GYN and delivery doctors. MCR Health is leaving because it too loses money on maternity services. DeSoto Memorial medical teams after Jan. 31 will stabilize emergency deliveries and evacuate the mothers elsewhere. Expecting mothers in the Bayfront Health program would deliver in Port Charlotte when/if a services arrangement is reached, Sica said.

The DMH board's decision wasn't without fireworks. Hewett in his remarks before the vote, for example, noted that DeSoto Memorial administrators in pulling the plug risked lawsuits from delayed births and that eliminating such resources "appears to be discriminatory." DMH board attorney Eugene "Bucky" Waldron addressed those and other Hewett assertions as a "cheap trick to put on this [board]."

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ANNOUNCEMENT

South Florida State College Nursing Program Accreditation

The South Florida State College Nursing Program is seeking continuing accreditation from the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN) for its Associate of Science Degree in Nursing (ADN) program.

The SFSC Nursing Department will host the ACEN visitation team as the final part of the accreditation process. You are invited to meet the ACEN visitation team and share your comments about the SFSC Associate of Science Degree in Nursing program at a meeting scheduled for:

Wednesday, Jan. 31, 3-4 p.m.
Dr. Norman L. Stephens Jr.
Health and Science Education Center
Room 138/150
SFSC Highlands Campus
600 West College Drive, Avon Park

Written comments are also welcome and should be directly submitted to:

Dr. Marsal Stoll,
Chief Executive Officer
Accreditation Commission for
Education in Nursing (ACEN)
3343 Peachtree Road NE, Suite 850
Atlanta, GA 30326
or email: mstoll@acenursing.org

Written comments should arrive by Wednesday, Jan. 25.



863-453-6661 southflorida.edu

Congratulations to DeSoto's students of the month

DeSoto Middle School students of the month are recognized for their accomplishments at early-bird chamber of commerce gatherings. Taylor Adcock is the school's student of the month for grade 8. She is flanked by her mother, Lori Adcock (left), and DeSoto Middle School principal Christina M. Britton. Other middle schoolers chosen for the honor include Alyssa Ballard (grade 6) and Mayeli Sanchez (grade 7).



PHOTOS PROVIDED

DeSoto County High Schoolers recognized as students of the month include Sherman Young (left) and Justin Holt. Other classmates named for the honor include (not pictured) Elizabeth Perez and Dajera McMillion.



Arcadia Rotary Club updates, looking ahead this year

By JANE MARTIN
ARCADIA ROTARY CLUB

The Arcadia Rotary Club had a very successful last quarter of 2017. Members accomplished the following:
Dictionaries were distributed to all third-graders in DeSoto County schools, as well as to the Heritage Baptist Academy and Community Assembly School children. Families of Juan Bosco also received a Spanish/ English dictionary for their households. Thank you, Donnie Knoche, for chairing this service

project; Gabriel Quave for pickup and storage; and Judy Kirkpatrick for organizing distribution.
The club also did bell ringing during the month of December for the Salvation Army! Thank you, mayor and Rotarian Judy Strickland Wertz, for chairing this service project.
Terry and Nancy Moe chaired the service project/fun event of canoeing the Peace River to raise funds to assist with Hurricane Irma recovery. These funds are available upon

UPDATES | 11

Welcoming DeSoto Memorial's first 2018 baby

PHOTO PROVIDED



DeSoto Memorial Hospital is excited to announce the 2018 New Year's baby. Landon White was born on Jan. 2 at 6:24 a.m., weighing 7 lbs., 11oz. His proud parents are Ashley Cobb and Eddie White of Hardee County. Also pictured is the "new big brother," Atlas White. The new arrival and family were presented a baby bag full of newborn gifts.

DeSoto Church Directory

... And Make Your Choice from our Church Directory



First Church of the Nazarene
A LIGHTHOUSE IN OUR COMMUNITY FOR 85 YEARS
132 W Gibson Street
Arcadia FL 34266
863-244-8320
Sunday Worship 10:45 am
Sunday School 9:30 am
The VOICE of God will never contradict the WORD of God

See your Church in this spot for **only \$10.00 weekly**
Contact Tami **494-5201** for more information

Community Gospel Sing
January 26th - 7:00 PM
Mt. Ephraim Baptist Church
2865 SW County Rd. 661 Arcadia
To register to sing call 863-990-8458

See Your Church in this spot For Only **\$10.00 a week!**
Call Tami at **494-5201** for more details.

Grace Lutheran Church, LCMS
1004 W. Oak Street
Rev. Anthony Arias
Pastor
Adult Sunday School 11:00 AM
Sunday Worship 11:00 AM
All Welcome!

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
209 West Hickory Street
494-4434
Rev. Bill Teng
Mission:
"Take Jesus with you wherever you go"
Worship:
11:00am Traditional Worship
Casual, Family Oriented
Sunday School 9:45 a.m.

Fort Ogden United Methodist Church
6923 SW River St.
863.494.3881
Sunday Worship 10:00AM
Nursery & Children's Church Provided
Monday AA & AL Anon 7:30PM
Wednesday Bible Studay 11AM-6PM

See your Church in this spot for **only \$10.00 weekly**
Contact Tami **494-5201** for more information

Kings Way Baptist Church
Where the Book and the Blood are Believed and Taught.
6200 N.E. Cubitis Ave.
(941) 915-1961
Sunday School - 10:00 am
Sunday Morning - 11:00am
KJV 1611
Rev. 20:15 - And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

See your Church in this spot for **only \$10.00 weekly**
Contact Tami **494-5201** for more information

Mt. Ephraim Baptist Church
"THE CHURCH IN THE ORANGE GROVE"
SUN. SCHOOL 9:45AM
WORSHIP 11:00AM
EVENING 6:00PM
WEDNESDAY 6:30PM
2865 SW CR 661
ARCADIA, FL 34266
863-993-5568

North Hillsborough Baptist Church
(253 N. Hillsborough Ave.)
Pastor Ellis Cross
863-494-3455
Worship 11:00 AM
Evening Worship 6:00pm
Wednesday 6:30pm
Thursday Youth Group 6pm

Oak Hill Baptist Church
Arcadia, Florida
5104 NW Oak Hill Ave.
863-494-6224
Pastor Dr. Howell Upchurch
Sunday School 9:30 am
Sunday Worship 10:45 am and 6:00 pm
Wednesday 6:30 pm for Prayer Group, Youth & Children

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10am Sunday School
11am Traditional Service
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www.pinelevelumc.com

St. Edmund's Episcopal Church
327 W. Hickory St.
(70 W at Manatee)
863-494-0485
www.EpiscopalArcadiaFL.com
HOLY EUCHARIST Sunday 8 & 10 am
Misa en espanol Dom 6pm

Trinity United Methodist Church
"To know Christ and to make Him known"
304 W. Oak Street • 494-2543
Sunday Morning Worship Starting at 9:30 am
Sunday School 10:45 am
Sun. 4:30 p.m. UMYF
Wed. 6:30 pm Bible Study
Nursery Available
Pastor Louie Mabrey
View Service at: trinityarcadia.com

May the Lord fill your heart with love.

Enterprise rental in Arcadia, brighter economy cited

By TED CARTER

ARCADIAN BUSINESS CORRESPONDENT

Arcadia's nearly decade-long wait for a rental car company to return to town has ended with Enterprise Rent-A-Car setting up shop at the DeSoto Auto Mall on State Road 70.

It's a homecoming of sorts for Enterprise. The national rental car company left Arcadia in the middle of the last decade after opening a rental service here in 1997. Hertz Rental Car Co. stepped in to fill the void with a rental location at the Ford dealership. Hertz departed by the end of the decade, however.

Enterprise's arrival reflects confidence in DeSoto County's economy, said Michael Taber, the county's economic and tourism development specialist.

"Our retail market is very strong," Taber said, citing the recent arrival of Publix followed by Papa John's Pizza and Duncan Donuts and sustained interest



from other retailers, manufacturers and warehouse distribution outfits.

Enterprise mulled a return for quite some time before sealing a deal for space inside the showroom at DeSoto Auto Mall, according to Jon Ellsworth, Enterprise's operations manager for Southwest Florida.

"Through a series of talks over the past few years, it was determined that a partnership was desirable and feasible for both Enterprise and Desoto Auto Mall," Ellsworth said in an email.

Enterprise decided the timing was right and opened at the Auto Mall on Dec. 11, he noted. "This opening reinforces our commitment to meeting growing demand for convenient car rental and mobility options, both locally and internationally."

Customers who leave their vehicles at

DeSoto Auto Mall for service, including body-shop repairs, provide Enterprise a steady source of customers. Enterprise will also offer its free home pick-up service to customers.

Fleet size will be based on customer demand and reservations, Ellsworth said.

Taber said the economic development office did not participate in the effort to bring Enterprise back to Arcadia.

Rental car companies, not wanting to tip off competitors, keep their plans for moving into a location private, said Taber, who previously worked for Hertz. "That is generally sensitive," he said of rental car companies and their talks with landlords on new locations.

DeSotoians in need of rental cars have been going to Charlotte County. "That is a pain," Taber noted. "It's nice to have a car-rental market" here.

Another plus is that the county will retain the 1.5-cent sales tax on the

rentals instead of the money going into Charlotte County's coffers, he said.

Taber said he also expects the Enterprise operation will be a big help for visitors and will add to DeSoto County's appeal as a tourism destination. "If they come in in a motorhome, they can get a rental car and tool around the county to restaurants and other businesses," he said.

It will also help business travelers, many of whom come to the county to plan construction and manufacturing projects, he added.

"Maybe, they'll take a car out and spend a little more money than they normally would."

Debbie Wertz, executive director for the DeSoto Chamber of Commerce, said Enterprise will be an important addition to the county's mix of businesses, as well as a welcome amenity. "For a small town it is definitely a convenience," Wertz said.

"It's great to have options."

UPDATES

FROM PAGE 10

application for people in need due to the hurricane. Contact Jane Martin at 863-990-7112 for this assistance.

New member Joshua Schueneman sponsored by Nadia Daughtrey was welcomed to the club.

New Paul Harris recipient Terry Presson was pinned by his sponsor, Dr. Mike Krzyzkowski. Congratulations for this award that represents \$1,000 given to the Rotary International Foundation. An anonymous fellow Rotarian donated it in

Terry's name. Great gift!

Next quarter the club plans to read a story called "Josh The Otter" to kindergarteners in our district. The book explains through a mother why babies and young children need to learn to float before they swim. It is a cute story but is promoted by Rotary, as well as emergency responders in Southwest Florida to save young lives.

Fifth Tuesday, Jan. 30 at 5:30 p.m.: joint dinner meeting with Interact students and Rotary International Exchange students at the airport. Rotary donated \$2,000 to Friends of the Airport for their bathroom project and will be given a tour of the facility built for pilots camping at the

airport.

Also kicked off this month is an essay contest for fifth-graders on the Rotary Four Way Test and a speech contest for eighth-graders entitled "Saying No to Drugs." Details will be distributed at the schools.

The club is also manning gates at the DeSoto County Fair in February and sponsoring their annual April Fool's 5K event on March 24.

Check with a Rotarian about getting involved in a club that truly serves our community, plus has great fellowship and fun.

Rotary meets at noon on Tuesdays at DeSoto Memorial Hospital in the McSwain room.



PHOTO PROVIDED

Jane Martin with children at the Juan Bosco housing development in Arcadia.

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Manta Rays have too many weapons over Bulldogs

By **DAVE BREMER**

ARCADIAN SPORT CORRESPONDENT

Using an inside game in the first half and an outside game in the second half, the Lemon Bay Manta Rays had too many weapons, as they pulled away to an 81-55 victory over the Bulldogs.

The Bulldogs hung tough with the Manta Rays in the first half, leading most of the first quarter and closing the gap to three late in the second quarter.

But it was the inside game Lemon Bay used any time the squad needed to score, with junior Hayden Wolf and senior Tyler Caron posting up inside for two points ... or a trip to the foul line. Arnold Mele kept the Bulldogs in the game during the first half, hitting three timely 3-pointers when needed. The Manta Rays scored the last nine points in the first quarter to pull ahead by four, however, and the last three points in the second quarter to take a six-point lead into the half.

The Manta Rays broke away big in the second half, scoring 23 points in each quarter. Senior Guard Luke Morrill, scoreless in the first half,



ARCADIAN PHOTOS BY DAVE BREMER

Elijah Arthur has arms up trying to put full-court pressure on the inbound pass.

scored 14 points in the second half, while senior teammate Keegan Wyamnn hit three 3-pointers.

Although the Bulldogs were quick in transition getting back on defense, Lemon Bay went on a 20-3 run to start the half, hitting both from the outside and inside. The Bulldogs seemed to tire some in the second half, not blocking out as well, giving the Manta Rays some easy put-back offensive rebounds.

BULLDOGS | 13



Junior Nate Maybell jumps center to start the varsity game against Lemon Bay. The Bulldogs kept it close for a half before the Manta Rays pulled ahead for the victory.

JV leans on 3-pointers, strategy backfires

By **DAVE BREMER**

ARCADIAN SPORTS CORRESPONDENT

The JV Bulldogs quickly fell behind the Lemon Bay Manta Rays last Friday, and the squad seemed content to attempt to shoot 3-pointers to get back into the game.

The strategy, however, did not work, as Lemon Bay pounded the ball inside and crushed the Bulldogs, 67-25.

Ty Wesley scored the only two points for the Bulldogs in the first quarter, while the Rays contributed 13. The Bulldogs started in a 2-3 zone but switched to a man-defense after Lemon Bay jumped to a 9-0 start.

"We tried to mix up our defense to utilize our quickness," coach Joe Davis said. "But tonight we didn't get the weak side help and gave up too many easy baskets."

In the Bulldogs defense, they didn't get

JV | 13



ARCADIAN PHOTO BY DAVE BREMER

Jashawn Rosario shoots a free throw against Lemon Bay.

JANUARY IS NATIONAL RADON ACTION MONTH
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Three Things You Can Do During National Radon Action Month:

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- **PLAN COMMUNITY AWARENESS ACTIVITIES.** Use the EPA's National Radon Action Month Event Planning Kit as a guide. Write a letter to the editor of your local paper or work with local officials to get a radon proclamation for your community.

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JV

FROM PAGE 12

any practice time in over the holidays due to gym conditions.

“They took all the ceiling sound panels out during the break, leaving the floor covered in insulation powder and pieces,” Davis noted. “We tried, but you couldn’t get any traction on the floor and we couldn’t afford to get anyone injured.”

Nothing changed for the Bulldogs in the second quarter, scoring just three points to Lemon Bay’s 15. Trailing 28-5 at the half, Davis reminded his team how they had shut down Lake Wales in the second half before the break, overcoming a nine-point deficit for an 11-point win.

“But,” Davis reminded the team, “we must get the ball inside, not settle for the 3-pointer, and get the weak side help on defense.”

The Bulldogs did score 13 points in the third quarter, with Creshawn Prince scoring seven of his team high 10 points. Unfortunately for the Bulldogs, Lemon Bay scored 27 points, leading the way for a fourth quarter running clock and an easy victory for the Manta Rays.

“We took way too many threes tonight,” Davis said. “Then we’d put our head down taking time getting back on defense and they’d get a fast-break basket.

“You have to trust and believe that if we do what we’re supposed to do, we will be successful. We’ve done it before, we can do it again.”



ARCADIAN PHOTOS BY DAVE BREMER

Creshawn Prince gets a rare look inside for a basket against Lemon Bay. The JV Bulldogs had a tough night scoring, losing 67-25.



Lemon Bay got inside after inside shot against the JV Bulldogs, giving the Manta Rays an easy victory.



The Bulldogs could not contain the Manta Rays in Friday game action.



Arms get tangled as Jashawn Rosario goes up to shoot a basket for the JV Bulldogs. Lemon Bay coasted to a 67-25 victory.



Coach Joe Davis calls a quick timeout to slow down Lemon Bay’s run against his Bulldogs. There was no stopping Lemon Bay, however.

BULLDOGS

FROM PAGE 12

Leading by 20 points to start the fourth quarter, both teams subbed freely. DeSoto put on a full-court press to try to make a run, but gave up too many easy baskets in the process, leaving Lemon Bay with an 81-55 victory.

First year coach Darrel Nicklow knows he’s got some work to do to get the basketball program where he wants it. “We’ve got talent, quickness, some height,” he said, “but we still make a lot of mistakes because most of these kids didn’t touch a basketball much before middle school. I hope to get some camps and clinics going at the elementary level to start building the program.”

As for as the ball game, Nicklow told the team to believe in itself and look ahead to the next game and what they need to do to get better.



ARCADIAN PHOTOS BY DAVE BREMER

Arnold Mele puts up one of his 3-pointers in the first half, keeping the Bulldogs in the game. The Manta Rays pulled ahead big in the second half for an 81-55 victory.



Varsity Coach Darrel Nicklow goes over a full-court defense to get one last chance at overcoming Lemon Bay.

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NOTICE OF INTENT TO USE UNIFORM METHOD OF COLLECTING NON-AD VALOREM ASSESSMENTS

The City of Arcadia, Florida (the “City”) hereby provides notice, pursuant to section 197.3632(3)(a), Florida Statutes, of its intent to use the uniform method of collecting non-ad valorem special assessments to be levied within the incorporated area of the City, for the cost of providing fire services; stormwater improvements and maintenance services; and roadway improvements and maintenance services commencing for the Fiscal Year beginning on October 1, 2018 and continuing until discontinued by the City. The City will consider the adoption of a resolution electing to use the uniform method of collecting such assessments authorized by section 197.3632, Florida Statutes, at a public hearing to be held at 6:00 p.m. on January 16, 2018 at the Council Chambers, 23 N. Polk Avenue, Arcadia, Florida. Such resolution will state the need for the levy and will contain a legal description of the boundaries of the real property subject to the levy. Copies of the proposed form of resolution, which contains the legal description of the real property subject to the levy, are on file at the Clerk’s office, City Hall, 23 N. Polk Avenue, Arcadia, Florida. All interested persons are invited to attend.

In the event any person decides to appeal any decision by the City with respect to any matter relating to the consideration of the resolution at the above-referenced public hearing, a record of the proceeding may be needed and in such an event, such person may need to ensure that a verbatim record of the public hearing is made, which record includes the testimony and evidence on which the appeal is to be based. In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, persons needing a special accommodation or an interpreter to participate in this proceeding should contact the City Clerk at (863) 494-4114 at least a week prior to the date of the hearing.

DATED this 1st day of December, 2017.

By Order of:

Perry Delaney, City Clerk
CITY OF ARCADIA, FLORIDA

3138 OTHER NOTICES

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SOLAR

FROM PAGE 1

new solar capacity installations. "This would push Florida into the number two seat in the nation for utility-scale solar by 2022," Gallagher said.

"In 2017, we helped a new law get on the books (Amendment 4) that will reduce the tax barriers for people and businesses that want to go solar."

Covering nearly half the state, FPL is expanding its use of solar, which could out-pace coal and oil combined as a percentage of the company's energy mix by 2020.

And by 2023, FPL expects solar power will amount to about 4 percent of its portfolio — up from less than 1 percent last year.

At least so far, solar centers are the fastest and most economical way to bring more solar to more Floridians, according to FPL. "For every dollar invested, 2.5 times as much universal solar can be built compared to private rooftop installations."

Between 2009 and 2010, FPL brought on three solar centers — with 11 more planned between 2016 and this year — including one at the country's first solar-powered town of Babcock Ranch in Charlotte County.

FPL's projections over the next five years show natural gas will probably continue to be its predominate energy source — amounting to about 70 percent of the mix — followed by nuclear at over 20 percent.

When the sun goes down and the solar plant is not generating power at Babcock, for example, the community will pull electricity off the grid from the closest FPL natural gas power plant.

"In many parts of the nation, solar energy is now the cheapest electricity source, but we believe the best grid is a diverse grid and we continue to advocate for policies that will allow solar to compete on level footing with other electricity sources across the U.S.," said Gallagher.

FEDERAL LEGISLATION

"Florida is the nation's sunshine state but ranks 12th when it comes to solar production," said United States Senator Bill Nelson (D-Florida) in a press release. "That needs to change."

Nelson filed a bill in December aimed at boosting investment in renewable energy sources including solar. His bill would encourage banks to invest more in renewable energy by letting them own up to 20 percent of a company that is solely engaged in producing or storing renewable energy.

FPL declined to comment on the proposed legislation.

But information from the 2016 Annual Report from NEXtera Energy, of which FPL is a subsidiary, indicated competition could negatively affect the company.

"Any changes in Florida law or regulation which introduce competition in the Florida retail electricity market, such as government incentives that facilitate the installation of solar generation facilities on residential or other rooftops at below cost or that are otherwise subsidized by non-participants,

or would permit third party sales of electricity, could have a material adverse effect on FPL's business, financial condition, results of operations and prospects," the annual report states. According to Nelson's office, under current law banks are barred from owning more than 5 percent of a non-financial company including producers of renewable energy.

Nearly 40 percent of homeowners have given serious thought to adding solar panels to their own roofs, a Pew Research Center study from 2016 found.

"One of the greatest barriers currently preventing homeowners from installing solar panels on their own rooftops is the initial, upfront cost," Nelson's release said.

Right now, FPL customers can connect solar panels to the electric grid and then buy and sell their electricity to FPL. Customers interconnect their systems through net-metering, which involved about 5,280 mostly residential customers through December of 2016, according to information from FPL.

"When you generate electricity from your solar array for your home or business, it reduces the amount of energy you purchase from FPL," according to the company. "It also lowers your monthly electricity bills."

But despite the demand, few banks offer financing to homeowners seeking to add solar panels to their own roofs because they either don't know how to underwrite such a loan, or they are afraid of penalties if they get it wrong, according to Nelson's office.

By allowing banks to invest more money, than these renewable energy companies could more easily expand and create more jobs, according to Nelson's office.

And the jobs in solar are growing — at least across the country — where cumulatively more people worked in solar power last year than in coal and natural gas combined, according to a report from the U.S. Department of Energy.

With more than half a million people working in renewable energy, fewer than 15,000 work in Florida, according to Nelson's release.

By helping to make financing more readily available, Nelson's legislation is aimed at making it easier for people to install solar on roofs and reduce their annual energy costs.

Recent press releases from FPL said its typical residential customer bills are about 25 percent lower than national averages and are also the lowest in Florida among other reporting utilities.

Meanwhile, across Florida for all utilities, the average monthly electricity bill in 2016 was \$123.37, which was more than the national average of \$112.59, according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration.

STATE LEGISLATION

A bill filed in the Florida House of Representatives last week is aimed at showing whether solar power could be relied upon after widespread power outages — like what challenged dozens of counties including Charlotte and Sarasota following Hurricane Irma in September.

The bill, HB 1133, from State Rep. Holly Raschein (R-Key Largo)

AMENDMENT 4 IN EFFECT

In June, Florida Gov. Rick Scott signed Senate Bill 90 into law, which extends a property tax exemption for renewable energy installations, including solar, wind, and geothermal, on commercial and residential properties.

The legislation implements the Amendment 4 ballot initiative passed by Florida voters in the August, 2016 statewide primary, which carried 73 percent voter approval.

Scott's signature followed unanimous approval of SB 90 in both chambers of the Florida legislature. The legislation went into effect July 1, 2017.

Ultimately, 80 percent of the assessed value of a renewable energy source device, which is considered tangible personal property and is installed on real property on or after Jan. 1, 2018, will be exempt from ad valorem taxation.

The tax incentives begin this year and extend for 20 years.

Source: USNewswire/Advanced Energy Economy

HOW UNIVERSAL SOLAR WORKS

- Sunlight hits solar panels
- Energy from the sun is converted into direct current (DC) electricity
- DC flows into power inverters, where it is converted into alternating current (AC)
- Zero-emissions electricity travels through transformers and voltage is boosted to the electric grid for delivery to homes and businesses

— Source: Florida Power & Light

would establish a pilot program in the Florida Keys to install onsite solar generation and energy storage at critical facilities that would offer electricity to them when grids fail.

"As we've recently experienced first-hand with Hurricane Irma, there's nothing more crucial in the wake of a disaster than power. Onsite solar energy storage systems are a forward-thinking solution to improving the security of energy supply at critical local facilities," said Raschein in a press release. "Given that Florida is the Sunshine State, it only makes sense to tap into this resource when planning for stronger communities that are more resilient in recovering from a disaster."

The pilot program would measure the benefits and effectiveness of solar generation at facilities like emergency shelters, hospitals and airports, along with police and fire departments. "Solar and energy storage can immediately offset these facilities' power needs, provide backup energy during a grid outage, and store energy isolated from the utility's electrical system for emergencies," according to the SEIA, which supports the legislation. "They also eliminate the need for backup diesel generators."

If it's successful, than lawmakers could decide whether to implement it on a larger scale, according to the SEIA.

ENVIRONMENT

"People don't always think about a power company working hand-in-hand with an environmental organization," said FPL Spokesperson Lisa Paul. But that's what is happening at Wildflower in DeSoto County and other FPL solar centers.

For example, Audubon Florida and FPL said they are partnering to make large solar farms like Wildflower in DeSoto, into bird and pollinator-friendly places for insects like bees and butterflies.

"Pollinators are facing loss of habitat and threats like climate

change," said Audubon Florida Interim Executive Director Julie Wraithmell. "Solar is a logical choice for Florida."

Fossil fuels include coal, natural gas and oil, which are energy sources.

Climate change is created predominantly by burning fossil fuels — which add heat-trapping gases to Earth's atmosphere. Changes include sea level rise, ice mass loss, shifts in flower/plant blooming and extreme weather events, according to the National Aeronautics and Space Administration.

Burning natural gas for energy results in less emissions of air pollutants and carbon dioxide — compared to burning coal or oil to produce an equal amount of energy, according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration.

And, natural gas, according to FPL, is a "clean domestic fuel source that is abundantly available in the United States."

FPL recently announced it is shuttering three coal-fired power plants, as a third natural gas pipeline coming into Florida will help it meet customers' needs.

"Advances in technology have made cleaner, more fuel-efficient power generation from natural gas and solar more cost effective," an FPL press release said. "FPL balances emissions reduction, solar development and keeping energy affordable."

And finally, not much change is expected in the roughly 23-percent energy source of nuclear power FPL plans to use between 2016 and 2023, according to the company's 10 year Power Plant Site Plan.

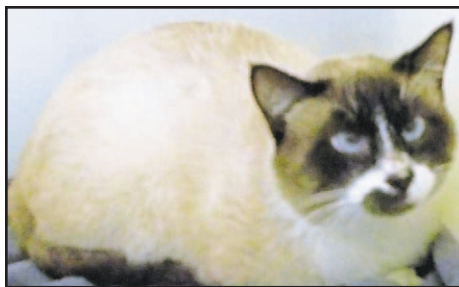
"Nuclear power provides a safe, clean and reliable source of electricity," according to FPL. "Over half of Florida's electricity is generated by burning natural gas. While this has benefits (e.g. natural gas prices are currently low), without fuel diversity, heavy reliance on one fuel source presents a risk to our customers should prices rise in the coming years."

Email: Apraegitzer@sun-herald.com

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Pets of the week

DeSoto County Animals Services is at 2048 N.E. McKay St. It is open Tuesday through Friday, 12:30 p.m.-6 p.m. 863-993-4855



Cy is a 3-year-old Siamese/ragdoll mix. He has beautiful blue eyes and a sweet disposition.



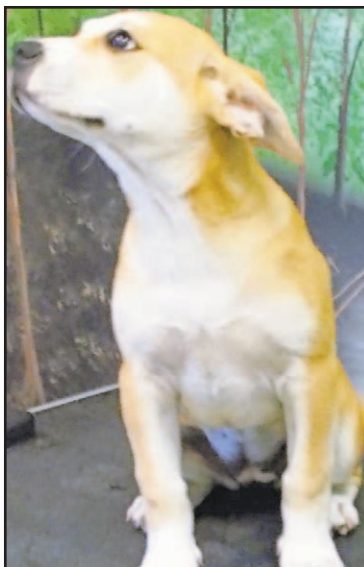
Cass is a 2-year-old tabby. She likes nothing better than being held and petted.



Trixie is a 1-year-old Shetland collie mix. She walks well on a leash and is eager to please.



Speedy is a 1-year-old Chihuahua/Whippet mix. He is a happy dog, but has a calm demeanor.



Wiggles a 3-month-old cur mix. She is full of energy and will need some training.



PHOTOS PROVIDED

Sasha is a 3-year-old Husky. Picked up as a stray, she is playful and loves attention.

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Vermont poised to enact legal pot

The Vermont Senate gave final approval to a bill that would allow the recreational use of marijuana. *See page 2*



AP PHOTO

Catastrophe in California

Death toll hits 15 in California mudslides; 24 missing

By **MARCIO JOSE SANCHEZ** and **AMANDA LEE MYERS**
ASSOCIATED PRESS

MONTECITO, Calif. — Anxious family members awaited word on loved ones Wednesday as rescue crews searched for two dozen people missing after mudslides in Southern California destroyed an estimated 100 houses, swept away cars and left at least 15 victims dead. “It’s just waiting and not knowing, and the more I haven’t heard from them — we have to find them,” said Kelly Weimer, whose elderly parents’ home was wrecked by the torrent of mud, trees and boulders that flowed down a fire-scarred mountain and slammed into this coastal town in Santa Barbara County early Tuesday. The drenching storm that triggered the disaster had cleared out, giving way to sunny skies, as searchers worked carefully in a landscape strewn with hazards. “We’ve gotten multiple reports of rescuers falling through manholes that were covered with mud, swimming

pools that were covered up with mud,” said Anthony Buzzerio, a Los Angeles County fire battalion chief. “The mud is acting like a candy shell on ice cream. It’s crusty on top but soft underneath, so we’re having to be very careful.” Fifteen people were confirmed dead and two dozen people remained missing, said Amber Anderson, a Santa Barbara County spokeswoman. “We have no idea where they’re at. We think somewhere in the debris field,” she said. Buzzerio led a team of 14 firefighters and six dogs in the debris field, which was spread over 30 square miles. They used long-handled tools to search the muck. By lunchtime, they hadn’t found anybody, dead or alive. Twenty people remained hospitalized, four in critical condition. The deluge destroyed 100 houses and damaged 300 others, Santa Barbara County authorities said. Eight commercial properties were destroyed and 20 damaged. Weimer’s parents, Jim and Alice Mitchell, didn’t heed a voluntary

A damaged home is shown in Montecito, California, on Wednesday. Dozens of homes were swept away or heavily damaged and several people were killed Tuesday as downpours sent mud and boulders roaring down hills stripped of vegetation by a gigantic wildfire that raged in Southern California last month.

evacuation warning and had decided to stay home Monday to celebrate her father’s 89th birthday. She hoped to find them in a shelter or hospital. “They’re an adorable couple, and they were in love with their house. That’s their forever home,” Weimer said. People in Montecito, a wealthy enclave of about 9,000 people northwest of Los Angeles that is home to such celebrities as Oprah Winfrey, Rob Lowe and Ellen DeGeneres, had counted itself lucky last month after the biggest wildfire in California history spared the town. But it was the fire that led to the mudslide, by burning away vegetation. “We totally thought we were out of the woods,” said Jennifer Markham, whose home escaped damage in both disasters. “I was frozen yesterday morning thinking, ‘This is a million times worse than that fire ever was.’” Another storm-related death was reported in Northern California, where a man was killed when his car was apparently struck by falling rocks in a landslide Tuesday evening in Napa County.

Immigration agents descend on 7-Eleven stores in 17 states

By **ELLIOT SPAGAT** and **NOMAAN MERCHANT**
ASSOCIATED PRESS

LOS ANGELES — Seven immigration agents filed into a 7-Eleven store before dawn Wednesday, waited for people to go through the checkout line and told arriving customers and a driver delivering beer to wait outside. A federal inspection was underway, they said. Within 20 minutes, they verified that the cashier had a valid green card and served notice on the owner to produce hiring records in three days that deal with employees’ immigration status. The well-rehearsed scene, executed with quiet efficiency in Los Angeles’ Koreatown, played out at about 100 7-Eleven stores in 17 states and the District of Columbia, a rolling operation that officials called the largest immigration action against an employer under Donald Trump’s presidency. The employment audits and interviews with store workers could lead to criminal charges or fines. And they appeared to open a new front in Trump’s expansion of immigration enforcement, which has already brought a 40 percent increase in deportation arrests and pledges to spend billions of dollars on a border wall with Mexico. A top official at U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement said the audits were

7-ELEVEN | 5



AP PHOTO

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents serve an employment audit notice at a 7-Eleven convenience store on Wednesday in Los Angeles.

Trump says it ‘seems unlikely’ he’ll give Mueller interview

By **MARY CLARE JALONICK**
ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump said Wednesday that it “seems unlikely” that he’d give an interview in special counsel Robert Mueller’s investigation into potential coordination between Russia and the Trump campaign. Trump said “we’ll see what happens” when asked if he’d

provide an interview to Mueller’s team. “When they have no collusion and nobody’s found any collusion at any level, it seems unlikely that you’d even have an interview,” Trump said during a joint news conference with the prime minister of Norway. The special counsel’s team of investigators has expressed interest in speaking with Trump, but no details have been worked

out. Trump’s lawyers have previously stated their determination to cooperate with requests in the probe, which has already resulted in charges against four of Trump’s campaign advisers. Trump called the investigation a “phony cloud” over his administration. “It has hurt our government,” he said. “It was a Democrat hoax.” Trump’s words differed from

what he said at a news conference in June, shortly after fired FBI Director James Comey had told Congress that Trump asked him for a pledge of loyalty. Trump denied that, and said he’d be “100 percent” willing to tell his version of events under oath. He said he’d be “glad to” speak to Mueller about it. The comments come after Trump had already lashed out at the investigations on Twitter

Wednesday morning, urging Republicans to take control of the inquiries and repeating his claim that they are on a “witch hunt.” “There was no collusion, everybody including the Dems knows there was no collusion, & yet on and on it goes,” he tweeted. “Russia & the world is laughing at the stupidity they are

TRUMP | 5

Mysterious series of fast radio bursts may have been twisted by extreme environment

By **AMINA KHAN**
LOS ANGELES TIMES

Astronomers watching a fast-radio burst flashing from more than 3 billion light-years away say that its source lies in an extreme environment with a powerful magnetic field — perhaps a supermassive black hole, or the remains of a supernova. The findings about the phenomenon known as FRB 121102, described in the journal *Nature* and at the American Astronomical Society meeting outside Washington, hint that this mysterious source of powerful radio waves whose origin has puzzled scientists for years may finally be revealing its secrets. Since their discovery in 2007 from older archived data, fast-radio bursts have confounded astronomers. These bursts last only milliseconds, shorter than the blink of an eye, but in that tiny moment they are incredibly bright, a sign that whatever caused them was very powerful. “It’s some sort of extreme

physics that causes this emission and so the goal is to understand that,” study coauthor Betsey Adams of ASTRON, the Netherlands Institute for Radio Astronomy, said at a briefing Wednesday. The problem is that these bursts each only happen once — leading scientists to suspect that these were cataclysmic, death-throe explosions. So even if a telescope is lucky enough to catch one in the act of going off, there no way to go back to the same source for more detailed measurements. FRB 121102, sitting about 3 billion light-years away in a dwarf galaxy, was different. Since its discovery in 2012 it has repeatedly sent out flashes of radio waves, allowing researchers to train their telescopes on it to learn more about its origins. “We know of thirty sources of fast radio bursts, and this is the only one we’ve ever seen that repeats,” senior author Jason Hessels, an astrophysicist at the University of Amsterdam and ASTRON, said in an interview. Having now observed more

than 100 flashes from this single source over the last few years, researchers haven’t picked up a pattern to the bursts yet — aside from the fact that they often seemed to be clustered in time, instead of evenly spaced apart. Because of the extremely short, repeated bursts, the source was thought to be a kind of neutron star: either a pulsar (which spins very fast) or a magnetar (which spins but also has an extra strong magnetic field). Because it seems to sit in a star-forming region of its host galaxy, the scientists think FRB 121102 is linked to stellar birth or death. For this paper, the scientists wanted to figure out more about the environment around this source. Using data from the Arecibo Observatory in Puerto Rico and the Green Bank Telescope in West Virginia, the scientists looked at the polarization of the light: how much it’s been distorted in specific ways. They found that radio waves have been twisted by a magnetic field — an extremely powerful one, judging from the degree of

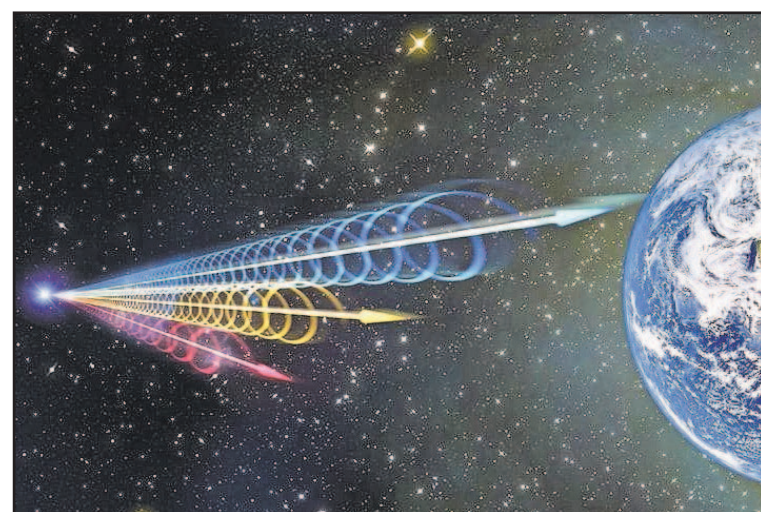


PHOTO PROVIDED

Artist impression of a fast radio burst reaching Earth.

contortion. “We’ve seen this effect in other fast radio burst sources before, but in this case the effect is 500 times larger than what we’ve seen at other sources,” Hessels said. “That was quite surprising.” These kinds of polarization effects, he added, can be seen around powerful phenomena such as the supermassive black holes at the center of galaxies.

That makes some sense for FRB 121102, since the ionized gas, or plasma, around the black hole could be responsible for the magnetic field that’s twisting the neutron star’s signal. The researchers think these repeated fast radio bursts are coming from a pulsar that happens to be sitting near a growing

BURSTS | 5

NATION

Vermont poised to enact legal pot through Legislature

By WILSON RING ASSOCIATED PRESS

MONTPELIER, Vt. — The Vermont Senate on Wednesday gave final approval to a bill that would allow the recreational use of marijuana...

By voice vote, the Senate agreed to the proposal that would make it legal for adults to possess and grow small amounts of marijuana...

"Today the Vermont Senate moved Vermont one step closer to a rational approach to marijuana," Senate President Pro Tem Tim

Ashe, a Democrat and Progressive, said in a statement. "Tens of thousands of Vermonters will no longer feel like they're committing a crime for their private, responsible use of marijuana."

Senators who voted against the bill didn't ask for a roll call. It takes effect July 1.

"I think this is a very exciting criminal justice reform for Vermont. There have been terrible harms that have happened in the name of marijuana prohibition that have disproportionately affected poor people and people of color for far too long," said Laura Subin, director of the Vermont Coalition to Regulate Marijuana.

Once the bill takes effect, Vermont will become the ninth state in the country, along with the District of Columbia, to approve the recreational use of marijuana and the only area where the law wasn't



AP PHOTO

State Sen. Dick Sears, D-Bennington, speaks on the marijuana legalization bill on Wednesday moments before it passed the Senate on a voice vote at the Statehouse in Montpelier, Vermont.

created by the vote of residents. Vermont does not allow referendum votes.

Justin Strekal, political director for the National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws, said Vermont and the District of Columbia are the only jurisdictions without a tax and regulation structure as part of their

marijuana legalization laws.

The legalization laws in Maine and Massachusetts call for tax and regulation structures, but they have not yet been set up, although personal marijuana use and possession are legal in those states.

The Vermont bill would allow adults 21 and older

to possess of up to 1 ounce of marijuana and have two mature marijuana plants or four immature plants.

Last spring, the Legislature passed a similar bill, but Scott vetoed it because the Republican thought it didn't do enough to protect children from marijuana and enhance highway safety.

Democratic state Sen. Richard Sears, who has been working for marijuana legalization for years, said the bill passed Wednesday was an important first step.

"A lot of work has taken place, but we're still not there yet," Sears said. "I don't think we're there until we see a tax and regulated system."

He said it would be OK if Vermont went for a year or so without a tax system.

A commission formed by Scott last summer to study the issue is scheduled to release a report in December with suggestions on how the system could be set up.

Not everyone was happy with the bill's passage. Aubrey Adams traveled to Vermont from Pueblo, Colorado, to tell lawmakers she believes legalization in her state has had unintended consequences.

"I'm here as a living witness ... to let you know the legalization of marijuana means promotion, it's not a solution to prohibition," she said. "Vermont has already decriminalized so it's a false narrative that the lobbyists and the marijuana promoters are giving Vermont and the Legislature."

NATIONAL NEWS BRIEFS

Woman testifies about couple's Michigan body parts business

DETROIT (AP) — The ex-wife of a Michigan man who is charged with selling infected body parts for research says the couple lied about the diseased parts because they didn't want to lose business.

Elizabeth Rathburn testified Wednesday on the third day of trial for Arthur Rathburn. He's charged with covering up the fact that the body parts had tested positive for hepatitis B and HIV. They were used for medical training.

There were no reports of illness. Elizabeth Rathburn, who pleaded guilty to fraud, told jurors

that Arthur Rathburn assured her that he could make viruses inactive through embalming.

Stephen Gore, owner of Arizona-based Biological Resource Center, says Arthur Rathburn ordered cheaper infected body parts from him so he could make more money.

Arthur Rathburn's lawyer says the case should have been treated as a contract dispute, not a crime.

The Rathburns split up after they were charged.

Police: Michigan man lived a month with girlfriend's corpse

MONROE, Mich. (AP) — Authorities say a Michigan man lived with

his girlfriend's corpse for about a month before officers found it while performing a welfare check.

The Monroe News reported Wednesday that 49-year-old David M. Hall, of Monroe, was arraigned last week on a charge of concealing the death of an individual.

Authorities say 56-year-old Kandace Simmons appears to have died in early December. Officers found her body in an apartment bedroom after the landlord asked police to check on the couple.

Monroe police Lt. J.D. Wall told the newspaper that Hall didn't give a clear explanation as to why he didn't report the death.

Autopsy results are pending, but Wall says

there were no obvious signs of trauma to Simmons' body. Hall's attorney declined to comment Wednesday.

Some turkeys survived the holidays, but not their road trip

WINSTON-SALEM, N.C. (AP) — A tractor-trailer hauling hundreds of live turkeys overturned and caught fire Wednesday after troopers say the trucker fell asleep at the wheel.

The North Carolina Highway Patrol told local media outlets that the tractor-trailer went off the road before dawn in Guilford County.

The patrol said 39-year-old Devin Edward Long,

who was treated for minor injuries at a Greensboro hospital, was charged with careless and reckless driving.

According to the patrol, some of the turkeys were killed. Others survived and were herded by a group of workers into another truck.

USA Volleyball coach Rick Butler banned for life for abuse

CHICAGO (AP) — The governing body of USA Volleyball has banned coach Rick Butler for life.

The decision announced Wednesday follows reports by the Chicago Sun-Times which laid out sexual abuse allegations against Butler. The Aurora,

Illinois-based club he built, Sports Performance Volleyball, boasts four Olympic medalists and nearly 100 national championships.

In announcing Butler's ban, Colorado-based USA Volleyball referred to "allegations of misconduct and abuse against Mr. Butler from a number of individuals, including several former players."

USA Volleyball board chairman Lori Okimura said the organization is committed to ridding the sport of coaches and others who "engage in hurtful actions against athletes and young people."

Butler's attorney did not immediately respond to messages seeking comment.

TODAY / TONIGHT FRIDAY SATURDAY SUNDAY MONDAY TUESDAY

Weather forecast grid for today through Tuesday, including high/low temperatures and chance of rain percentages.

GULF WATER TEMPERATURE

59°

Map of Florida showing weather conditions for various cities like Clearwater, Tampa, Orlando, and Miami.

FLORIDA CITIES

Table with columns for City, Today, and Fri. weather conditions and temperatures for various Florida locations.

TIDES

Table showing tide times (High/Low) for locations like Punta Gorda, Englewood, Boca Grande, and Venice.

MARINE

Table with columns for Wind, Speed, Seas, Bay/Inland direction, and chop for various marine locations.

SUN AND MOON

Table showing sunrise/set times for the Sun and Moon for Jan 16, 24, 31, and Feb 7.

SOLAR TABLE

Table showing solar radiation levels (Minor/Major) for various locations.

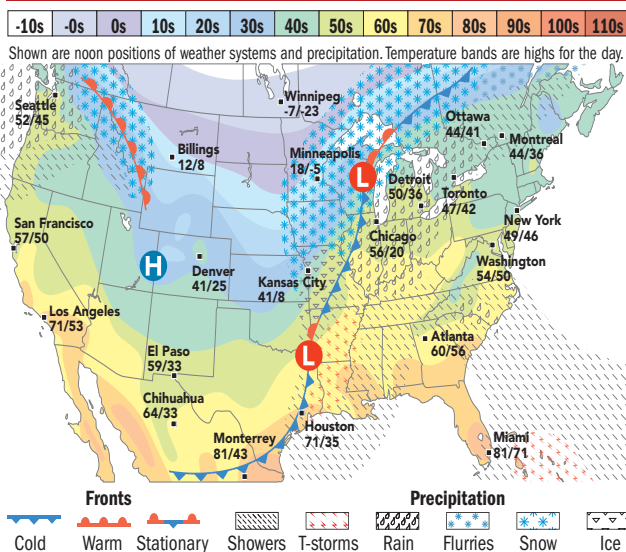
WEATHER HISTORY

A siege of extreme cold began in the Dakotas on Jan. 11, 1936. Langdon, N.D., failed to reach zero all day.

WEATHER TRIVIA

Q: What was the warmest presidential inauguration?

THE NATION



U.S. Extremes

High: 80° at Harlingen, TX; Low: -6° at Cut Bank, MT

WORLD CITIES

Table showing weather conditions (High/Low) for various international cities like Amsterdam, Baghdad, Beijing, etc.

PORT CHARLOTTE

Weather forecast for Port Charlotte, including temperatures and precipitation.

SEBRING

Weather forecast for Sebring, including temperatures and precipitation.

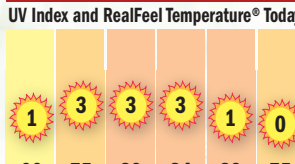
MONTHLY RAINFALL

Table showing monthly rainfall trends for 2018 and 2017, including average and record values.

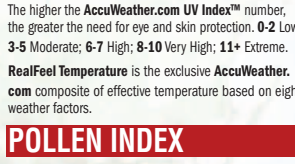
AIRPORT

Table showing possible weather-related delays at various airports.

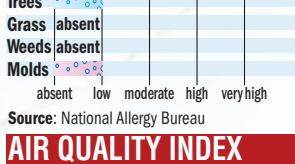
CONDITIONS TODAY



POLLEN INDEX



AIR QUALITY INDEX



WEATHER HISTORY

A siege of extreme cold began in the Dakotas on Jan. 11, 1936. Langdon, N.D., failed to reach zero all day.

WEATHER TRIVIA

Q: What was the warmest presidential inauguration?

WORLD

Iran suspends death penalty for some drug crimes, potentially sparing thousands on death row

By **RAMIN MOSTAGHIM** and **SHASHANK BENGALI**
LOS ANGELES TIMES

TEHRAN, Iran — Iran has lifted the death penalty for certain nonviolent drug offenses, relaxing some of the world's harshest laws on drug crimes and potentially sparing the lives of thousands of death row inmates.

An amended narcotics law directs judges to suspend executions for 5,000 people convicted of drug-related offenses and review their cases, Mizan news agency, the mouthpiece of Iran's judiciary, reported Wednesday.

Most of the 5,000 convicts would have their punishments "converted to life sentences," Mohammad Ali Esfanani, assistant judge of the Iranian Supreme Court, told state media.

A spokesman for the

judiciary committee of Iran's Parliament, Hasan Nourouzi, told the Jam-e-Jam daily newspaper that violent drug offenders — including those who had committed murder in the course of drug crimes — would still be subject to the death penalty if convicted.

But the moratorium on executions for those found guilty of nonviolent crimes — such as drug smuggling — is a victory for reformists and human rights advocates who fought for years to change Iran's draconian drug laws. Proponents of the changes say that 90 percent of those imprisoned on drug convictions are first-time offenders younger than 30 years old.

The amended law had been in the works for more than two years, ever since a majority of Iran's

290 lawmakers said they endorsed a moratorium. After parliament approved the bill, it won approval from Iran's all-powerful Guardian Council, a conservative body made up of Islamic jurists and theologians.

Hard-liners had long opposed the changes, but the influence of moderates and reformists in parliament, and a rising backlash against executions, has contributed to a softening stance.

Lawmakers have raised the limits on the amounts of drugs one can possess before it becomes a capital offense. An earlier law provided for the death penalty if someone was caught with an ounce of cocaine; the new limit is 4.4 pounds.

Iran is in the grip of a terrible drug abuse problem, mainly driven by easy access to cheap



PHOTO PROVIDED

Iran has lifted the death penalty for certain nonviolent drug offenses, relaxing some of the world's harshest laws on drug crimes and potentially sparing the lives of thousands of death row inmates.

and plentiful narcotics, especially opium, coming over the border from Afghanistan. Health officials say there are more than 2 million drug addicts in a country of 80 million, but doctors say the actual figure is higher. Iran puts more

convicts to death per capita than any country in the world, most for drug crimes. Amnesty International says that since 1988, Iran has executed, usually by hanging, approximately 10,000 people for drug-related offenses.

WORLD NEWS BRIEFS

5 Mexican states get US 'do not travel' warning

MEXICO CITY (AP) — Five states in Mexico have gotten the sternest "do not travel" advisories under a revamped U.S. State Department system unveiled Wednesday.

The five include the northern border state of Tamaulipas and the Pacific coast states of Sinaloa, Colima, Michoacan and

Guerrero.

The State Department had previously discouraged travel to all or part of the five states' territories but the new warnings are sterner, placing the drug- and crime-plagued states on the same level warning level as Somalia, Yemen, Syria or Afghanistan.

Mexico as a whole has a level-two rating, "exercise increased caution" in the new four-level alert system,

because of concerns about crime.

But an additional 11 Mexican states got a level-three warning, "reconsider travel." Mexico has 31 states, half of which are under level 3 or 4 warnings.

Honduras next in line for US decision on protected migrants

TEGUCIGALPA, Honduras (AP) — This

week's news that the Trump administration is ending temporary protected status for 200,000 migrants from El Salvador is also rattling nerves in neighboring Honduras.

A decision on the fate of more than 50,000 Hondurans living in the United States under TPS is expected in July. And it could have severe social, economic and political consequences for the Central American nation.

Experts say the

return of tens of thousands of people threatens to exacerbate grave problems like high rates of murders and other crime, political instability, widespread poverty and inequality.

Perhaps most immediately, there would be a hit to remittances, which typically account for about 20 percent of the country's economy — though most of that is sent by Hondurans who would not be affected by cancellation of TPS.

ALMANAC

Today is **Thursday, Jan. 11**, the 11th day of 2018. There are 354 days left in the year.

Today in history

On **Jan. 11, 1964**, U.S. Surgeon General Luther Terry issued "Smoking and Health," a report which concluded that "cigarette smoking contributes substantially to mortality from certain specific diseases and to the overall death rate."

On this date

In **1861**, Alabama became the fourth state to withdraw from the Union.

In **1908**, President Theodore Roosevelt proclaimed the Grand Canyon National Monument (it became a national park in 1919).

In **1913**, the first enclosed sedan-type automobile, a Hudson, went on display at the 13th National Automobile Show in New York.

In **1927**, the creation of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences was proposed during a dinner of Hollywood luminaries at the Ambassador Hotel in Los Angeles.

In **1935**, aviator Amelia Earhart began an 18-hour trip from Honolulu to Oakland, California, that made her the first person to fly solo across any part of the Pacific Ocean.

Today's birthdays

Former Canadian Prime Minister **Jean Chretien** is 84. Actor **Mitchell Ryan** is 84. Actor **Felix Silla** is 81. Movie director **Joel Zwick** is 76. Country singer **Naomi Judd** is 72. World Golf Hall of Famer **Ben Crenshaw** is 66. Musician **Vicki Peterson** (The Bangles) is 60. Actress **Kim Coles** is 56. Actor **Jason Connery** is 55. Rock musician **Tom Dumont** (No Doubt) is 50. Singer **Mary J. Blige** is 47. Actress **Amanda Peet** is 46. Actor **Rockmond Dunbar** is 45. Actress **Aja Naomi King** is 33. Reality TV star **Jason Wahler** is 31. Pop singer **Cody Simpson** is 21.



FUTURE DEFENDERS OF OUR FREEDOM GOLF TOURNAMENT

Heron Creek Golf and Country Club

To benefit the Brian Bill Foundation and NPHS Navy JROTC "The Future Defenders" of our Freedom.

January 13, 2018

Check In: 7:00am Shotgun: 8:00am Format: 4 Player Scramble

Includes Golf, BBQ Buffet & Prizes (Limited to 128 Players)

Make Checks Payable to: NPHS Navy JROTC

Drop off or mail to: 5301 Heron Creek Blvd. North Port, FL 34287 Attn: Bart Cook .Golf Pro Shop: 941-423-6955

Email: administrativeassistant@heron-creek.com with your digital logo to be featured on your Hole

Yes, Please Reserve a 1 Hole Sponsor Sign for my Business/Organization — \$50 per sign Please specify if more than 1 sign. Sign Information — Deadline: 1-8-18

Sign Information Deadline: January 1, 2018

Make Checks Payable to:
NPHS Navy JROTC
Drop off or mail to:
5301 Heron Creek Blvd.
North Port, FL 34287
Attn: Bart Cook

Golf Pro Shop:
941-423-6955



Team - \$100 Per Player	Contact #
Name:	
Name:	
Name:	
Name:	

The Brian Bill Foundation (BBF) is a 501c (3) charity organization dedicated to honoring and preserving the memory of Chief Petty Officer (SEAL) Brian Bill and all those who have paid the ultimate sacrifice in defending the Global War on Terror. www.brianbillfoundation.org.

North Port High School Navy JROTC (NJROTC). The mission of NJROTC is to develop citizens of character dedicated to serving their nation and community. This is accomplished by educating an training high school cadets in the areas of: citizenship, promoting community service, instilling personal responsibility, character, and self-discipline in the Navy's core values of Honor Courage and Commitment. Last year NPHS's NJROTC unit committed 3,500 hours of community service to the North Port and Sarasota County areas.

Through your generous donations Heron Creek's "Future Defenders of our Freedom" tournament allowed the following actions to take place:

- Awarded Distinguished Unit for the second year in a row!!
- Six of our 2017 graduated cadets are now serving in the U.S. Military on active duty
- One rising senior attended the U.S. Naval Academy Summer Seminar program
- Six cadets attended and graduated Navy Area 7 Leadership Academy
- Five cadets attended and graduated from Navy Area 7 Sail Academy (one as Honor Cadet)
- Two cadets attended Cyber Patriot Summer Camp (first time for this event)
- Competed at four Drill Competitions earning 17 trophies and numerous medals
- Hosted a Shoulder-To-Shoulder Rifle Team shooting competition
- Competed at a Suncoast Orienteering Event
- Professional trip to Eglin AFB, NSA Pensacola, U.S. CG Station and NSA Panama City
- Donated \$5000 to Brian Bill Foundation
- Performed in/at numerous community events (i.e. parades, Color Guards)

We would not have been able to afford to operate at this level without the funding from this Golf Tournament.

With Sincere Thanks,
Former Cadet LCDR A. Wood
Commanding Officer, NPHS NJROTC

STATE-BY-STATE

News from across the USA

ALABAMA Decatur: Construction of two schools is on track for completion by this fall, WAAY-TV reports. Both new high schools will have storm shelters.

ALASKA Juneau: The state will levy a \$3 per-ride fee on ride-sharing programs such as Uber and Lyft that use the Anchorage and Fairbanks airports, *The Juneau Empire* reports.

ARIZONA Phoenix: A grand jury indicted a Tempe man for allegedly operating a large-scale cannabis extraction lab in a condominium.

ARKANSAS Little Rock: The University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences says it will lay off 258 workers and leave another 350 positions unfilled as it addresses a \$30 million hole in its budget.

CALIFORNIA Anaheim: Officials notified hundreds of homeless people camped out along a dusty Orange County riverbed that they must move starting in two weeks.

COLORADO Denver: A village of tiny homes in Denver's RiNo Arts district has moved, KMGH-TV reports. The Beloved Community Village's move affected at least 15 people.

CONNECTICUT Enfield: State prison officials say an inmate who escaped from a medium security prison has a tattoo on his neck that reads, "Time Waits For No One." Jerry Mercado, 25, was serving three years for burglary.

DELAWARE Dover: State lawmakers are back at work on issues ranging from the budget to capital punishment and recreational marijuana.



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA: Customs officers at Dulles Airport in suburban Washington seized 400 pairs of counterfeit Air Jordan shoes last month that arrived from China.

FLORIDA Fort Lauderdale: Weather officials say stricter safety policies have cut the number of fatal lightning strikes in the state, the *Sun Sentinel* reports. Florida had five lightning fatalities last year.

GEORGIA Atlanta: Emory University is receiving a \$400 million gift from the Robert W. Woodruff Foundation to find new cures for disease.

HAWAII Honolulu: Hawaii State Hospital has earned a three-year reaccreditation, two months after a high-profile patient who escaped was able to fly to California, where he was arrested. Randall Saito said the facility made him want to escape.

IDAHO Coeur d'Alene: A family is seeking the return of a blanket made by the Texas grandmother of a 7-year-old girl. The blanket was in a package stolen from the family's porch, *Coeur d'Alene Press* reports.

ILLINOIS Aurora: Libraries in Chicago's suburbs are making efforts to welcome people who are homeless, the *Chicago Tribune* reports. Staffs in Aurora and Naperville are getting training from a shelter official on how to work with homeless patrons.

INDIANA Bloomington: City officials say sharpshooters killed 62 deer during a hunt to reduce the herd at Griffy Lake nature preserve, *The (Bloomington) Herald-Times* reports.

IOWA Des Moines: The Iowa Board of Regents isn't expected to decide tuition increases at the state's three public universities until June, *The Des Moines Register* reports.

KANSAS West Mineral: Preservationists and volunteers are working to get a 5,500-ton electric shovel on the National Registry of Historic Places. Big Brutus was placed on the Kansas register in November.

KENTUCKY Hazard: Citing "extraordinary" cold, local officials declared a water emergency this week and implemented mandatory conservation.

LOUISIANA New Orleans: A new statue of Pope John Paul II is in place at the French Quarter cathedral where he celebrated Mass in 1987, *The New Orleans Advocate* reports.

MAINE Scarborough: The 480-acre Scarborough Downs track in Maine

HIGHLIGHT: VIRGINIA



Democrat Shelly Simonds' concession cleared the way for David Yancey to be formally seated as a delegate Wednesday. JOE FUDGE/AP

Democrat concedes tied delegate race settled by lot

John Bacon
USA TODAY

A Virginia Democrat who lost a contentious and crucial delegate race settled by lot after the vote ended in a tie conceded to the Republican incumbent Wednesday.

The announcement from Shelly Simonds means the GOP will remain in the majority, albeit by the razor-thin margin of 51-49. Democrats flipped more than a dozen seats in the November election, claiming the results as a renunciation of President Trump.

The concession cleared the way for David Yancey to be formally seated later Wednesday, the first day of the legislative session. Simonds said she was bowing out "with great disappointment."

"I have conceded because I do not see any legal pathways forward and I want representation for the 94th district today," Simonds tweeted. "I just tried to make a personal phone call to him and would like to ask him to vote for Medicaid expansion."

Ralph Northam, a Democrat who won the governor's race, campaigned on a pledge to expand Medicaid for hundreds of thousands of low-income state residents. Carl Tobias, a professor at the University of Richmond School of Law,

called Simonds' decision "pragmatic."

"Another recount could have left constituents without representation and would have taken time and resources," Tobias told USA TODAY. "She will ... try to persuade (Yancey) to favor Medicaid expansion. And she pledged to run again in 2019."

The race had flipped back and forth, with Yancey appearing to win by several votes on election night. A recount in the ensuing days put Simonds ahead by a single vote of more than 22,000 cast.

But Republicans challenged the decision made on one ballot, on which the circles next to both names were filled in. A line was drawn through Simonds' circle. The vote, initially not counted, was flipped to Yancey and then upheld by the courts.

That sent the decision to a tie-break. The state elections board placed both names in a ceramic bowl, and drew one. Yancey's name emerged, and Simonds decided not to seek another recount.

Yancey declared victory after Thursday's drawing.

"For those of you who voted for me, thank you, for those of you who did not, please know that I will continue to do my best to represent all of us in Richmond," he said.

has sold for \$6.7 million to Cross Roads Holdings. The buyer plans to transform the site into a town center that sits alongside an active race track.

MARYLAND Annapolis: Gov. Larry Hogan announced \$2.5 million in emergency funds to fix heating problems in Baltimore schools.

MASSACHUSETTS Springfield: Control of the historic Springfield Armory was transferred this week from the Army to the National Park Service.

MICHIGAN Detroit: The Detroit Institute of Arts will debut a gallery Friday dedicated to some of the museum's newest acquisitions. "Out of the Crate: New Gifts & Purchases" will also offer a look at the art acquisition process.

MINNESOTA Chaska: A building and grounds worker making repairs to a heater at a middle school athletic center died after falling off a ladder, *The Star Tribune* reports.

MISSISSIPPI Columbus: A federal judge has rejected a strip club's demand for longer business hours, *The Commercial Dispatch* reports. The Pony wants to stay open to 3 a.m., but Lowndes County refused to extend the 1 a.m. closing time.

MISSOURI Jefferson City: A state audit shows that Missouri is paying out income tax refunds later and later because of a cash shortage. The state paid roughly \$423,000 in interest on late refunds to nearly 155,000 taxpayers last fiscal year.

MONTANA Polson: Lake County Sheriff Don Bell has started posting on Facebook the names of people who are cited for crimes rather than jailed. He says that's because his



46-inmate jail is full.

NEBRASKA Lincoln: State lawmakers are reviving up another debate this year on whether to repeal the law requiring motorcyclists to wear helmets.

NEVADA Las Vegas: Police are seeking an armed suspect who robbed a Subway restaurant of \$69 and two macadamia nut cookies, KSNV-TV says.

NEW HAMPSHIRE Bedford: State environmental officials will meet with Bedford residents Thursday to give an update on the investigation into PFOA chemicals.

NEW JERSEY Hoboken: A suspect jumped into a New Jersey Transit SUV and drove it into the doors of the waiting room at the Hoboken rail terminal. No one was hurt.

NEW MEXICO Santa Fe: City officials are considering installing a public toilet in a downtown area that lacks public restrooms, *The Santa Fe New Mexican* reports.

NEW YORK New York: Authorities say a man arrested 30 times for stealing buses and trains is taking a plea deal that will send him to a mental institution. Darius McCollum, 52, has a disorder that includes difficulty with impulse control.

NORTH CAROLINA Morehead City: State officials are rethinking commercial fishing licenses because only about 3,000 fishermen who have one sell their catch to dealers, while another 4,000 don't, the *Virginian-Pilot* reports.

NORTH DAKOTA Fargo: The two-day National Sunflower Association

forum is in Fargo this week. Researchers present findings on sunflower studies dealing with disease, insects, irrigation and blackbirds.

OHIO Rocky River: Postal carriers say a cluster of aggressive wild turkeys makes it unsafe to deliver mail to homes in this Cleveland suburb. Officials say some carriers have been pecked but none have been injured.

OKLAHOMA Oklahoma City: Five limestone panels attached to a building being renovated in downtown Oklahoma City came loose and fell 22 floors to the street below. No one was injured, but three vehicles were damaged, *The Oklahoman* reports.

OREGON Bend: A \$10.7 million project designed to help fish move around better is coming to the Crooked River, *The Bend Bulletin* reports. It's called a fish ladder, and it allows chinook salmon and steelhead in the Deschutes Basin to travel up the river more effectively.

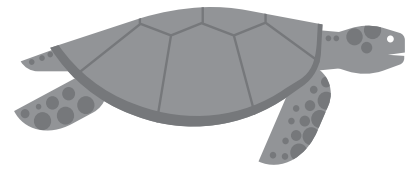
PENNSYLVANIA Pittsburgh: A federal judge sanctioned two environmental attorneys \$52,000 for "continued pursuit of frivolous claims and defenses" in fighting an oil and gas wastewater disposal well, *The Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* reports.

RHODE ISLAND Newport: Officials are planning a multimillion-dollar restoration project on the landscape at The Breakers mansion, *The Providence Journal* reports.

SOUTH CAROLINA Irmo: Authorities say a man buying drugs and the man selling them killed each other during a weekend shootout in Richland County. A third person was wounded.

SOUTH DAKOTA Belle Fourche: Officials don't believe any sensitive information was compromised when city servers were hacked, *The Black Hills Pioneer* reports.

TENNESSEE Nashville: Wildlife officials propose endangered species designation for the Barrens topminnow, found only in central Tennessee. Fewer than 400 are left.



TEXAS Corpus Christi: Nearly 400 sea turtles found stunned by the cold weather along the Texas coast have been warmed up and returned to the Gulf of Mexico, *The Corpus Christi Caller-Times* reports.

UTAH Salt Lake City: Police are investigating two attempts to use propane tanks to blow up ATMs. One succeeded in causing an explosion. At the other location, the propane was turned off by officers before an explosion occurred.

VERMONT Montpelier: State residents who don't identify as male or female may soon get to choose another gender on their driver's license. Oregon, California and the District of Columbia offer a third gender option.

VIRGINIA Richmond: State colleges awarded the highest number of bachelor's degrees in Virginia history last year, *The Times-Dispatch* reports.

WASHINGTON Spokane: The \$40 million Spokane Tribe Casino opened this week, the third casino serving the regional gambling market, *The Spokesman-Review* reports. The casino was first proposed in 2006.

WEST VIRGINIA Charleston: The state Department of Environmental Protection has awarded nearly two dozen recycling grants worth \$1.3 million to groups in 20 counties.

WISCONSIN Madison: The state reached a \$1 million settlement in a lawsuit filed by the estate of a prisoner who died after a guard ignored a warning from his cellmate that he was having a seizure, *The Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* reports.

WYOMING Casper: The University of Wyoming will host its first diversity workshops next month since hiring a chief diversity officer last May, *The Casper Star-Tribune* reports. The university has a five-year plan to boost enrollment of "underrepresented students."

Compiled from staff, wire reports.

STOCKS LISTING CHANGE - REQUESTS WELCOME!

The Sun Newspaper is tweaking the way stocks are listed in the daily paper. We will continue to run a wide range of stocks, but we're trying to eliminate stocks our readers don't want. If you do not see your stock in the paper, please let us know

and we will put it in the listings. Email the name of the company and the symbol to nlane@sun-herald.com, or call 941-206-1138. You can leave the stock name and symbol on voice mail. When requesting a stock, please include where you live so we can run the listing in the appropriate edition. If you reach voice mail, please leave your contact information so your call can be returned.

Market summary table with columns: DOW (25,369.13 -16.67), NASDAQ (7,153.57 -10.01), S&P 500 (2,748.23 -3.06), 10-YR T-NOTE (2.56% +0.01), 30-YR T-BOND (2.90% +0.01), CRUDE OIL (\$63.57 +6.1), GOLD (\$1,317.40 +5.70), EURO (\$1.1957 +0.024)

Money & Markets

Combined Stocks From the New York Stock Exchange and the Nasdaq.

Table of stock listings with columns: Tkr, Name, Last, Chg. Includes various stocks like AES, AFL, AGNC, AKS, etc.



Stocks Recap table with columns: NYSE, NASD, Vol. (in mil.), Pvs. Volume, Advanced, Declined, New Highs, New Lows.

Table of stock prices with columns: HIGH, LOW, CLOSE, CHG, %CHG, WK, MO, QTR, YTD.

Main table of stock listings with columns: Tkr, Name, Last, Chg. Includes various stocks like GUT, GME, GMAC, etc.

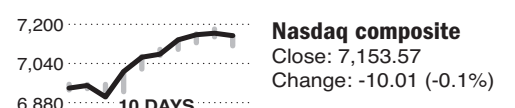


Table of stock prices with columns: HIGH, LOW, CLOSE, CHG, %CHG, WK, MO, QTR, YTD.

Main table of stock listings with columns: Tkr, Name, Last, Chg. Includes various stocks like SBI, SRI, SJK, etc.

Table of stock prices with columns: Tkr, Name, Last, Chg. Includes various stocks like UNH, UJW, UVM, etc.

Table of stock prices with columns: Tkr, Name, Last, Chg. Includes various stocks like VEC, VFC, VLE, etc.

Interestrates logo and text: The yield on the 10-year Treasury note rose to 2.56 percent on Wednesday. Yields affect rates on mortgages and other consumer loans.

TREASURIES table with columns: LAST, PVS, NET CHG, 1YR AGO. Includes 3-month T-bill, 6-month T-bill, etc.

Foreign Exchange section with text: The dollar briefly surged on reports the U.S. might quit the NAFTA trade pact. It finished higher compared to the Canadian dollar and Mexican peso.

MAJORS table with columns: LAST, CHG, %CHG, 1YR AGO. Includes USD per British Pound, Canadian Dollar, etc.

EUROPE/AFRICA/MIDDLE EAST table with columns: LAST, CHG, %CHG, 1YR AGO. Includes Israeli Shekel, Norwegian Kroner, etc.

ASIAPACIFIC table with columns: LAST, CHG, %CHG, 1YR AGO. Includes Australian Dollar, Chinese Yuan, etc.

Commodities table with columns: CLOSE, PVS, %CHG, %YTD. Includes FUELS (Crude Oil, Ethanol), METALS (Gold, Silver), AGRICULTURE (Cattle, Coffee).

Stock Footnotes: Stock Footnotes: old - issue has been called for redemption by company. d - New 52-week low. ec - Company formerly listed on the American Exchange's Emerging Company Market- place. g - Dividends and earnings in Canadian dollars. h - Does not meet continued-listing standards. i - Late filing with SEC. n - Stock was a new issue in the last year. The 52-week high and low figures date only from the beginning of trading. pf - Preferred stock issue. pr - Preferences. pp - Holder owes installments under purchase price. r - Right to buy security at a specified price. rs - Stock has undergone a reverse stock split at least 50% within the past year. s - Stock has split at least 20 percent within the last year. u - Trades will be settled when the stock is issued. wd - When distributed. wt - Warrant, allowing a purchase of a stock. u - New 52-week high. un - Unit, including more than one security. vj - Company in bankruptcy or receivership, or being reorganized under the bankruptcy law. Appears in front of the name. Stocks in bold are worth at least \$5 and changed 5 percent or more in price. Underlining for 50 most actively traded stocks of the day. Dividend Footnotes: a - Extra dividends were paid, but are not included. b - Annual rate plus stock. c - Liquidating dividend. e - Amount declared or paid in last 12 months. f - Current annual rate, which was increased by most recent dividend announcement. i - Sum of dividends paid after stock split, no regular rate. j - Sum of dividends paid this year. Most recent dividend was omitted or deferred. k - Declared or paid this year, a cumulative issue with dividends in arrears. m - Current annual rate, which was decreased by most recent dividend announcement. p - Initial dividend, annual rate not known. yield not shown. r - Declared or paid in preceding 12 months plus stock dividend. t - Paid in stock, approximate cash value on ex-dividend date. PE Footnotes: g - Stock is a closed-end fund - no P/E ratio shown. cc - P/E exceeds 99. dd - Loss in last 12 months. Mutual Fund Footnotes: b - Fee covering market costs is paid from fund assets. d - Deferred sales charge, or redemption fee. f - front load (sales charges). m - Multiple fees are charged, usually a marketing fee and either a sales or redemption fee. NA - not available. p - previous day's net asset value. s - fund split shares during the week. x - fund paid a distribution during the week. Source: Morningstar and the Associated Press.

Thursday Television

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

Main television schedule table with columns for channel, time slot, and program details. Includes sections for BROADCAST, CABLE, NEWS, and SPORTS.

Today's Live Sports

- List of live sports events including Golf BMW South African Open, ESPN2 High School Basketball, ESPN Women's College Basketball, ESPN2 College Basketball, FSN Women's College Basketball, Golf PGA Tour Golf Sony Open, FSSUN NHL Hockey, FS1 College Basketball, TNT NBA Basketball, ESPN College Basketball, ESPN2 College Basketball, FS1 College Basketball, TNT NBA Basketball, ESPN2 College Basketball, Golf European Tour Golf, and ESPN2 College Basketball.

Today's Talk Shows

- List of talk show appearances including ABC Good Morning America, NBC Today, CBS LIVE with Kelly and Ryan, NBC Megyn Kelly TODAY, CW Rachael Ray, NBC Today with Kathie Lee & Hoda, ABC The View, ABC The Chew, CBS The Talk, CW The Wendy Williams Show, NBC The Dr. Oz Show, TBS Conan, ABC Jimmy Kimmel Live, and NBC The Tonight Show.

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

Goal of angioectasia treatment is to control the bleeding

DEAR DR. ROACH: I am 40 years old and have been diagnosed with angioectasia of the gastrointestinal tract.



Dr. Roach

ANSWER: The word "angioectasia" is from Greek roots, meaning "dilated blood vessel." This condition is more commonly called angiodysplasia...

ANSWER: Mature red blood cells do not contain DNA, but early red cells do. Although it is possible to find a few persistent cells in some people within a week after blood transfusion...

DEAR DR. ROACH: I suffer with numerous cysts in my pancreas and from rough bouts of diarrhea and stomach bloating.

ANSWER: It sounds like the primary problem with your pancreas is that it isn't doing its major job, which is to secrete digestive enzymes into the intestines.

The most common location for angiodysplasia to be found in the GI tract is the colon, usually during a colonoscopy.

Cysts in the pancreas can be asymptomatic, but I am concerned that you may have chronic pancreatitis, which can cause not only the pancreatic insufficiency but also cystic structures in and around the pancreas.

DEAR DR. ROACH: I had a blood transfusion in 2000. Would the fact that someone else's blood was used affect the results of a DNA test for ethnic breakdown for genealogical purposes?

ANSWER: The fact that someone else's blood was used affect the results of a DNA test for ethnic breakdown for genealogical purposes? — H.P.S.

JANRIC CLASSIC SUDOKU

Fill in the blank cells using numbers 1 to 9. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and 3x3 block.

9x9 grid for Janric Classic Sudoku with some numbers pre-filled.

Rating: BRONZE

Solution to 1/10/18

9x9 grid showing the solution to the Sudoku puzzle.

www.whatzit.com

January 11, 2018

WHATZIT?

Find the familiar phrase, saying or name in this arrangement of letters.



SOLUTION

Bear up under the strain

See more puzzles in the front section

WORDY GURDY

BY TRICKY RICKY KANE

1. TV's "Anatomy" doctor's fixed stare (1)

2. "School of Rock" Jack's paraffin (1)

3. Singer CeeLo's denim pants (1)

4. "What About Us" singer's cocktails (1)

5. "Wheel" letter lady Vanna's yoga gear (1)

6. "Peanuts" boy Charlie's non-smiles (1)

7. "Gone With the Wind" O'Hara's knaves (2)

Every answer is a rhyming pair of words (like FAT CAT and DOUBLE TROUBLE), and they will fit in the letter squares. The number after the definition tells you how many syllables in each word.

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ANSWERS: 1. GREYS GAZE 2. BLACKS WAX 3. GREENS JEANS 4. PINKS DRINKS 5. WHITES TIGHTS 6. BROWNS FROWNS 7. SCARLETS VARELTS

TODAY'S CROSSWORD PUZZLE

- ACROSS: 1 Egypt's capital, 6 Sell cheap, 10 Gawker, 14 Poe's middle name, 15 Son of Rebekah, 16 Mailbox attachment, 17 Rotisserie parts, 18 Actress Deborah, 19 Snake's tooth, 20 Far East cuisine, 21 Relevance, 23 The blues, 25 Provided financing, 26 Moo goo — pan, 27 Muddies up, 29 The thick of things, 32 Long short story, 36 Bother, 37 Gave out sparingly, 38 Mattress problem, 39 Mall amenity, 42 River horse, for short, 44 Softball teams, 45 Crooner —, 46 Sewed loosely, 49 Snapshot takers, 53 Disagreement, 56 Speech imperfection, 57 Not enclosed, 58 Wyatt the lawman, 59 End-of-year temp, 60 Dispatch, 61 Gin-fizz flavor, 62 Rile up, 63 School period, 64 Take care of, 65 Some bouquets, DOWN: 1 Flings, 2 Precedes beta, 3 Siege of Troy story, 4 PG and R, 5 Add- (extras), 6 Fakes out, on the rink, 7 Tech-support caller, 8 Retail center, 9 Cleansed, 10 Stadium cry, 11 Hormone producer, 12 Knight's weapon, 13 Urged on, 21 Frat letter, 22 Invalid, 24 Munch on, 27 Flies alone, 28 In charge of, 29 Daisy — caller, 30 Badges, 31 Rx giver, 32 Jot down, 33 Sugar amt., 34 Knock politely, 35 Id companion, 37 Most nifty, 40 "Low" re "high", 41 Golf positions, 42 "She Done — Wrong", 43 Island nation, 45 Mover's rental, 46 Upward shove, 47 Fruit stand buy, 48 Javelin, 49 Managed somehow, 50 Beatles drummer, 51 Autumn flower, 52 Ships' booms, 54 Scheherazade offering, 55 Tailor's need, 59 — Paulo, Brazil

Grid for previous puzzle solved with words like SPEED, STIR, PAN, AISLE, CARNE, ORE, INTEL, EXURB, LEI, LEACHED, EASING, TIRADE, UTAH, THOR, GREATAPES, NADIR, SCRIMP, THEFTS, CALLAS, YEARS, HEALS, WHISPERED, MDSE, DEAN, VACATE, RANGED, EMENDED, AVG, WIPED, ATARI, PEA, EMILE, SAHIB, ERR, REEF, ELLES.

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Large crossword grid with numbers 1 through 65 indicating starting points for clues.

Want more puzzles? Check out the "Just Right Crossword Puzzles" books at QuillDriverBooks.com

HOROSCOPE

ARIES (March 21-April 19). Your social life is a series of concentric circles. The rules are different depending on which strata you're dealing in. To act intimately with the outer ring or respectfully distant with the inner ring is a breach of unspoken contract.
TAURUS (April 20-May 20). You like people, but you don't cling. You're confident that you can find kinship with any number of people in the world. You'll wait for a love that's intriguing.
GEMINI (May 21-June 21). You're a naturally hospitable person, so you can't fully enjoy yourself unless

you know that everyone is having a good time. Your generosity in this regard won't drain you; instead it will actually renew your energy.
CANCER (June 22-July 22). Account for what is going right for you: So much is that this will be a very long list. Your focus on the positive will reduce your worries. Your lighter, more joyful heart will attract the same.
LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). Two people make the same mistake. One agonizes over it for ages; the other ponders what happened just long enough to decide what the takeaway is, then moves on to new mistakes. Be like the second person.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). You have the chance to work behind the scenes. Is that really where you can do the most good? What if you put yourself front and center instead? You're in fine form and have something unique to contribute.
LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). It's inside you now — that impish urge to upset the applecart. You know better, and you won't make a move, but someone will find the daring gleam in your eye very intriguing.
SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). You don't preserve your self-esteem by doing things perfectly. Self-esteem is built through realizing that even when you make

mistakes you're still awesome and worthy of your own love and the love of others.
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). Everyone needs help from time to time, but even if you don't really need it, you should ask for it anyway. Because people need to give you help.
CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). With little on your plate, you'll work slowly, take detours and barely meet deadlines. With lots on your plate you'll work quickly, take shortcuts and barely meet deadlines.
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). What stops people from having fun together is an entire story in their heads about how it should go — a story based on

their assumptions about each other and not based on getting to know who is really there.
PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). There's an art to making mistakes well. The weak way is to pass the blame. The strong way is to think in terms of cause and effect instead and just figure out how to fix things.
TODAY'S BIRTHDAY (Jan. 11). You've much to share and the right people to share it with, too. People should prove themselves over time before you let them get close to you. Your care in choosing bright environments and influences will bring beauty to your days. Libra and Virgo adore you. Your lucky numbers are: 9, 40, 22, 12 and 36.

BIBLE

"Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal. But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." — Matthew 6:19-21.

Send as much as you can ahead by the giving of yourself and means to earthly causes for Christ. It's the safest investment!

Challenger

DIRECTIONS:

- Fill each square with a number, one through nine.
- Horizontal squares should add to totals on right.
- Vertical squares should add to totals on bottom.
- Diagonal squares through center should add to total in upper and lower right.

THERE MAY BE MORE THAN ONE SOLUTION.
Today's Challenge
 Time **9** Minutes
59 Seconds
 Your Working Time Minutes Seconds

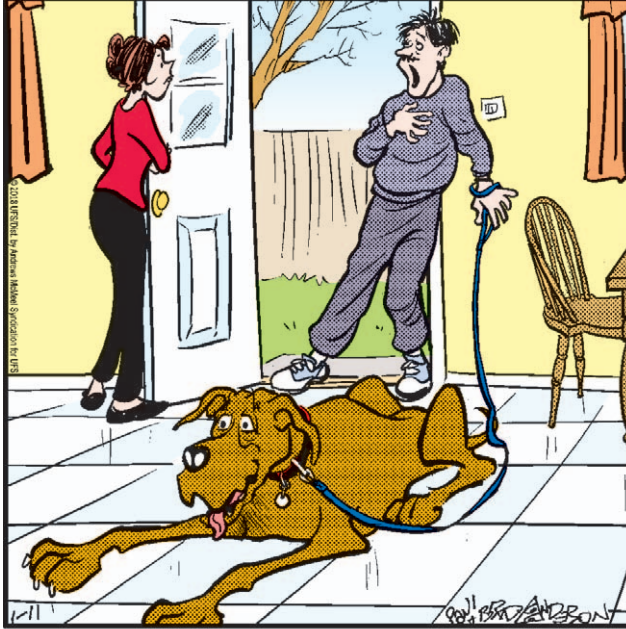
				8	22
7					34
			4		26
		3			18
					10
24	24	20	20	22	

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Yesterday's Challenger Answers

2	1	1	3	7
1	2	1	3	7
1	1	1	3	6
1	1	2	3	7
5	5	5	12	8

MARMADUKE By Brad Anderson



"Now I understand what 'dog tired' means."

Cryptoquip

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1-11

XSP BZMKR XSP'AT BSZC KO
 LTAT HLTO TUTAXGSCX TZNT
 NMXN VLTX MAT UTX HMAR?
 CSO'V GT BLKZZX!

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: WHAT COULD YOU CALL IT WHEN SOMEBODY WEARS A SMALL ORNAMENT ON A BRACELET? BODILY CHARM.
 Today's Cryptoquip Clue: B equals C

SPORTS SLEUTH

BOSTON RED SOX MANAGERS

Y V S P L I E B Y V R O L I F
 C Z W T Q N S K I F C Z W U R
 P M J H E C Z N X U S Q N L J
 G E V A L E N T I N E S C Z X
 V T R P N N N A L L L J H E C
 A Y W V T O R I G E L P M N L
 K I G E S C C B N I E O Z X A
 W U S B R K P N T O R O C R M
 L Y O U N G U T A G R R O J I
 L H A T S R L O A R A C E G E
 D B Y K S E P N H F F U H K A

Wednesday's unlisted clue: BAILIFF

Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions - forward, backward, up, down and diagonally.
 Thursday's unlisted clue hint: FORMER PITCHER CY —

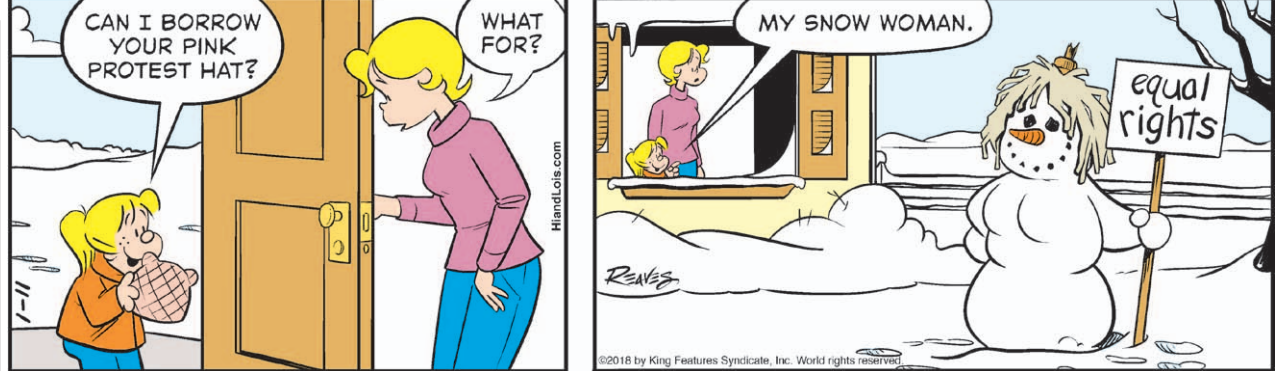
- | | | | |
|---------|----------|----------|-----------|
| Collins | Francona | Kerrigan | Runnels |
| Cora | Hobson | Little | Stahl |
| Cronin | Houk | Morgan | Valentine |
| Farrell | Huff | Pesky | |

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MALLARD FILLMORE By Bruce Tinsley



HI AND LOIS By Brian and Greg Walker



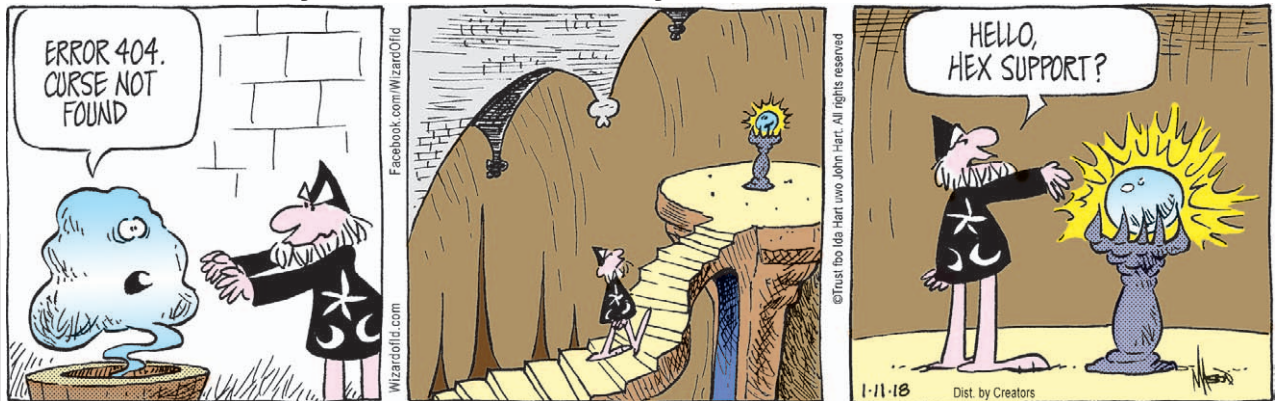
BEEBLE BAILEY By Mort Walker



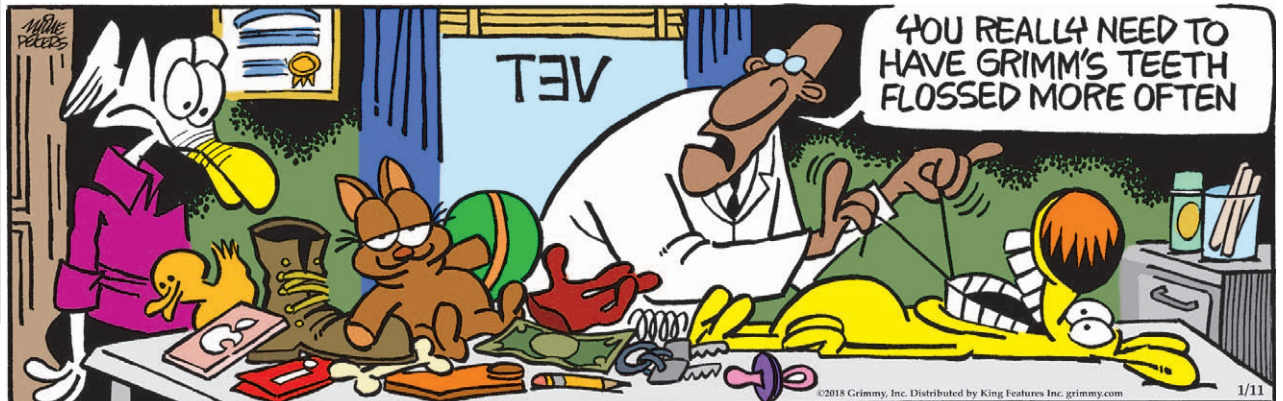
HAGAR THE HORRIBLE By Chris Browne



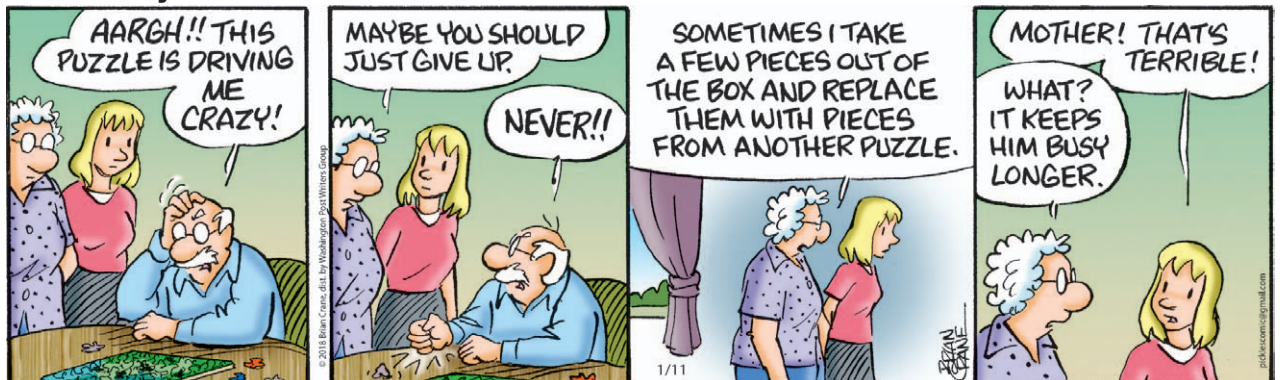
THE WIZARD OF ID By Brant Parker and Johnny Hart



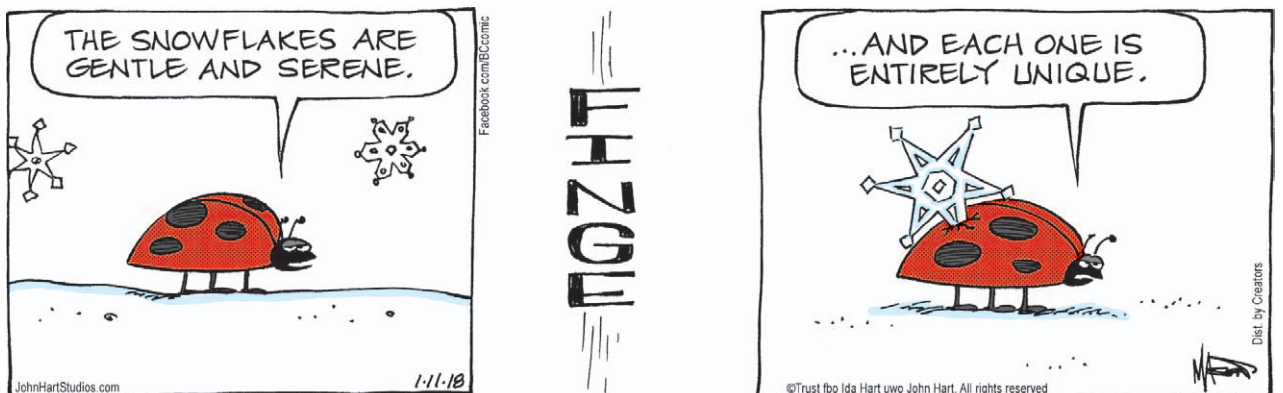
MOTHER GOOSE AND GRIMM By Mike Peters



PICKLES By Brian Crane



B.C. By Mastroianni & Hart



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Runaway granddaughter avoids grandma's attempts to connect

DEAR ABBY: My 18-year-old granddaughter ran away twice last year. She's now living with her boyfriend and refuses to have any contact with her dad. I know my son is very strict, and I'm pretty sure she could just no longer live by his rules. Her mom passed away eight months ago, and my son is all she has besides her sister.



Dear Abby

She opened a Facebook page. I was able to write to her a couple of times and she responded. She isn't answering my messages now. I suspect her boyfriend is controlling and is preventing her from contacting her family. I'm also afraid she may be involved with drugs now. She and the boyfriend were recently arrested for shoplifting, and this just isn't typical of my granddaughter.

I have trouble sleeping at night worrying about her. I know she's an adult, but I don't want her to give up on her family who loves her. Do you have any suggestions? Should I go to the house and try and see her, or must we just sit back and wait for her to grow up? Any advice will be appreciated. — WORRIED NANA

DEAR WORRIED NANA: Do not just sit back. By all means, visit your granddaughter! She needs to know you love her and will be supportive if things don't work out with her boyfriend.

Because she's 18 and now considered an adult, you can't force her to reunite with her father, whose heavy-handed parenting may or may not be the reason she left home. But you can, however, point out that if she needs something, there are better ways to go about acquiring it than shoplifting. You should also encourage her to find a job. If she does, it will increase her independence, not only from her father, but also her boyfriend, if it becomes necessary.

DEAR ABBY: I was recently diagnosed with a stage four cancer. My surgeon has offered me an opportunity to be part of a clinical trial, which my family is aware of. They do not, however,

know the details of how far the cancer has spread.

The prognosis for patients in this trial is about two more years. My wife thinks I should share this information with my extended family and friends immediately (although there are few signs that I'm ill). I prefer to remain silent until the disease catches up with me and my time gets closer. Your advice or reader response would be greatly appreciated regarding this very emotional decision. —

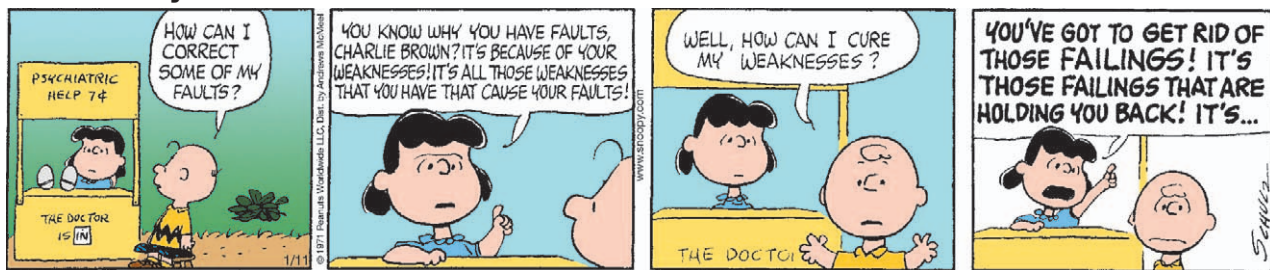
KEEPING IT TO MYSELF DEAR KEEPING IT TO YOURSELF: I'm sorry about your diagnosis. I'm sure when your letter is published there will be a tsunami of reactions — both pro and con — from readers.

Of course your wishes should be respected, but since you asked, I am inclined to agree with your wife. Your illness affects not only you but also the rest of your family and friends. If you reveal your prognosis now, it will give the people who love you an opportunity to step up to the plate and offer emotional support, not only to you, but also to her and your family.

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

What teens need to know about sex, drugs, AIDS and getting along with peers and parents is in "What Every Teen Should Know." Send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for \$7 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Teen Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

PEANUTS By Charles Schulz



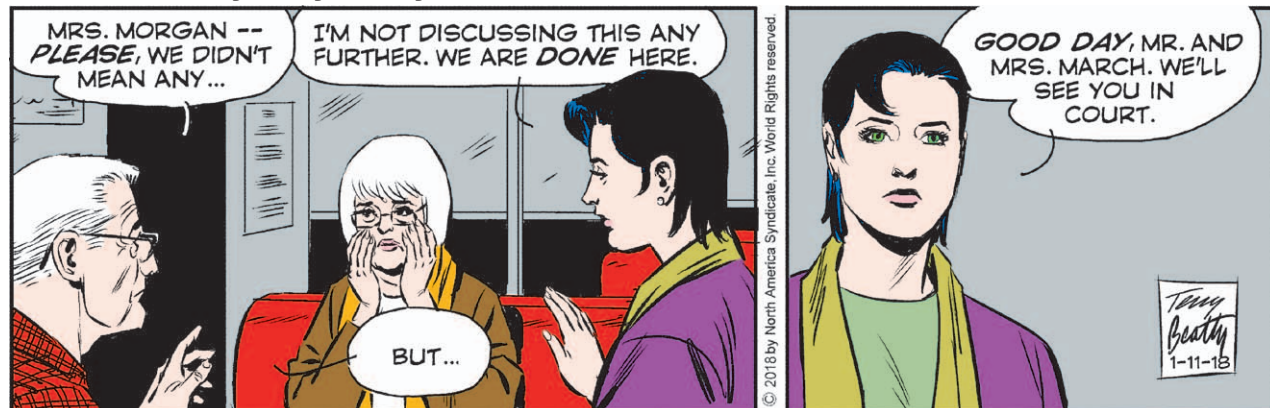
CRANKSHAFT By Tom Batiuk & Chuck Ayers



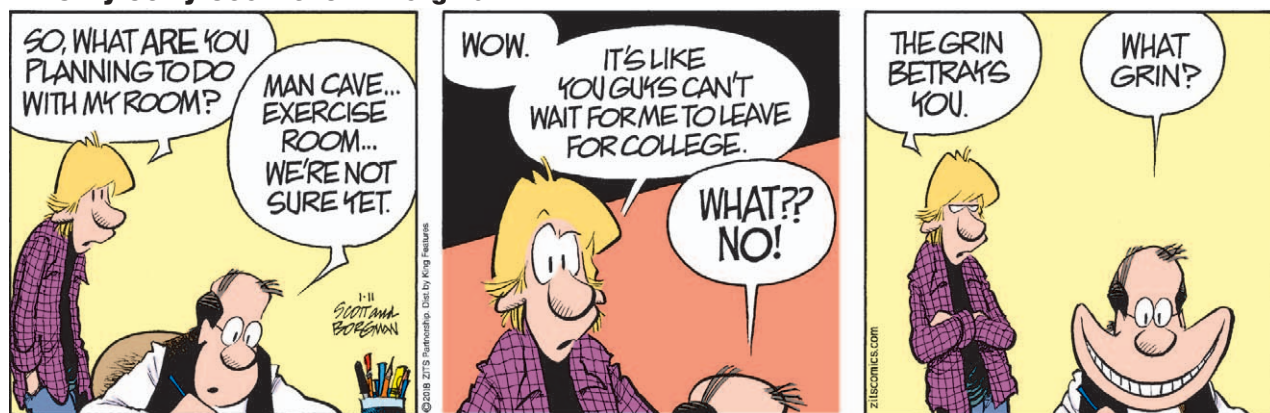
SHOE By Gary Brookins & Susie MacNelly



REX MORGAN By Terry Beatty



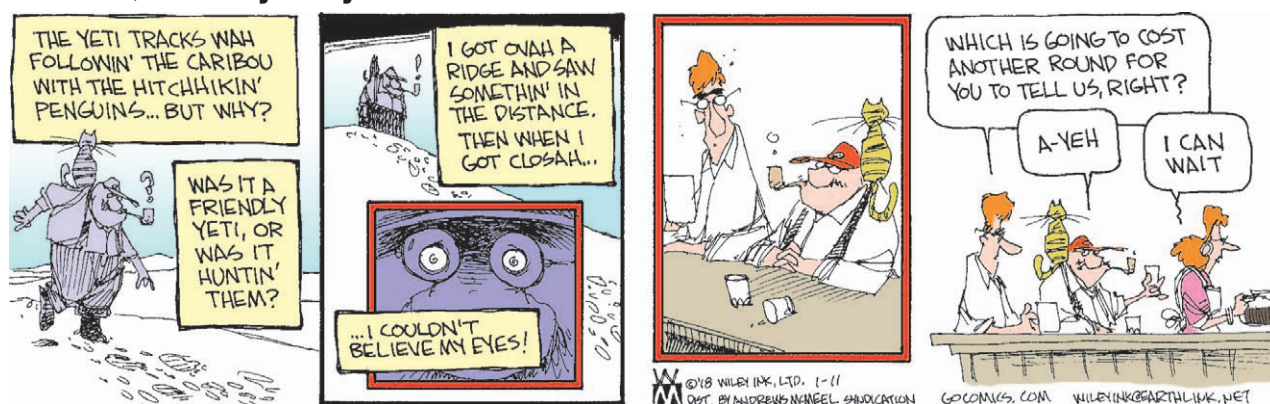
ZITS By Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman



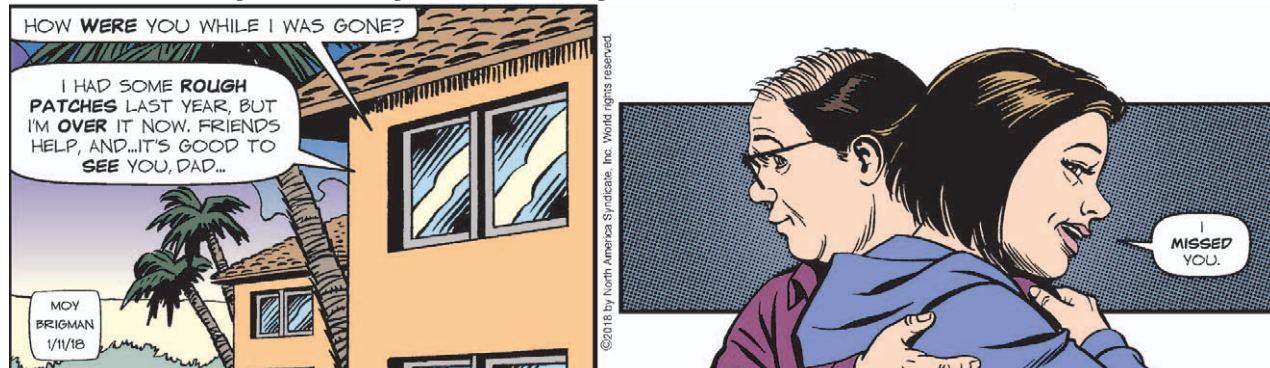
GARFIELD By Jim Davis



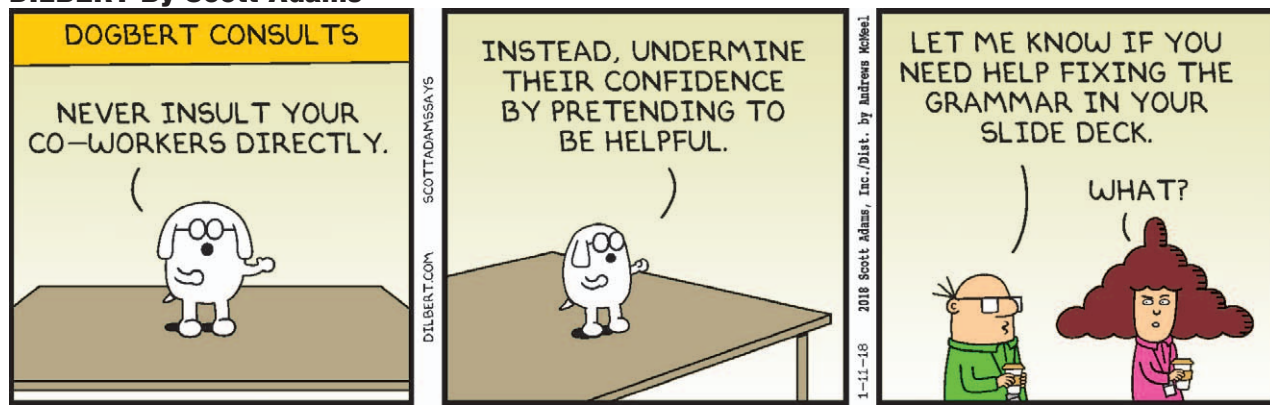
NON SEQUITUR By Wiley



MARY WORTH By Karen Moy and June Brigman



DILBERT By Scott Adams



Here's the breakdown

Dear Readers: We've become better at recycling, reusing and repurposing items, and keeping them out of the landfill, but we can always do more.

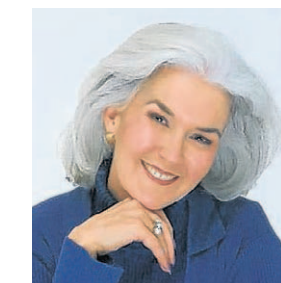
Here are some eye-opening stats on the time it takes trash to decompose in the environment, according to the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services website (www.des.nh.gov):

- Paper towel — two to four weeks
- Plastic bag — 10-20 years
- Aluminum can — 80-200 years
- Disposable diaper — 450 years
- Plastic bottle — 450 years
- Glass bottle — 1 million years

Plastic never fully breaks down; it just gets smaller and smaller, and it can always pose a threat to wildlife. This is especially true with the plastic six-ring holders for soft drinks and other items. Please, cut the rings before putting them in the recycle bin or trash. — Heloise

Water saver

Dear Heloise: During the winter months, I turn on my hot water first thing to brush my teeth. By the time I finish brushing, the water is warm enough to



Hints from Heloise

wash my face. This way, I don't waste water or have to use ice-cold water to wash my face. — Vicky C., Fargo, N.D.

Swallowing pills

Dear Heloise: I have a hard time swallowing pills. I've found that the use of a straw helps greatly. I put the pill in my mouth, suck up enough liquid to swallow, then do it! This makes it easier for me. — E.L.Y., Villa Park, Calif.

Also, take a sip of water before taking the pill, then a big gulp after. An old hint, but still true, is to use a spoonful of applesauce. Put the pill in the applesauce and then swallow it. This really makes the pill go down easier. Sit or stand up straight, too. If the pills are large, ask your doctor or pharmacist if they can be crushed or cut in half to make taking them easier. — Heloise

Thursday, January 11, 2018

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH BOB JONES
©2018 Tribune Content Agency, LLC

AN EXTRA CHANCE

East-West vulnerable, South deals

NORTH			
♠	K 5 4 2	♥	A 9 2
♦	10 3	♣	Q 9 6 3
WEST			
♠	J 10	♥	K Q 8
♦	J 9 5	♣	J 10 7 5 4
EAST			
♠	Q 9 8 6	♥	5
♦	Q 8 6 4 2	♣	A K 8
SOUTH			
♠	A 7 3	♥	J 10 7 6 4 3
♦	A K 7	♣	2

The bidding:
SOUTH WEST NORTH EAST
1♥ Pass 2♥ Pass
4♥ All pass

Opening lead: Jack of ♠

South's jump to game was aggressive, but passing would have been too timid and North would have accepted any invitation. They were always getting to four hearts.

The contract seemed to depend on the trump suit. It is very close, with this trump combination, as to whether you should play the ace and another or double finesse. Ace first wins against a singleton honor in the

East hand and all 2-2 splits. Double finessing wins against a small singleton in the East hand and loses to king-queen doubleton with East. The problem on this deal is that declarer has to ruff a diamond in dummy. This makes playing the ace of hearts first a much stronger line of play. That would seemingly lead to defeat on this deal, but declarer found a slim extra chance.

South won the opening spade lead in hand with the ace and led his low club at trick two, ducking in dummy when West played the 10. The spade continuation was won in dummy with the king and declarer ruffed a club, East playing the king. South led a trump to dummy's ace and ruffed another club. The fall of the ace made the trump position irrelevant. South cashed the ace and king of diamonds, ruffed a diamond in dummy, and discarded his remaining spade on the queen of clubs.

Declarer lost two hearts and a club, but never lost a spade trick. Well done!

(Bob Jones welcomes readers' responses sent in care of this newspaper or to Tribune Content Agency, LLC., 16650 Westgrove Dr., Suite 175, Addison, TX 75001. E-mail: tcaditors@tribpub.com)

7 LITTLE WORDS

Find the 7 words to match the 7 clues. The numbers in parentheses represent the number of letters in each solution. Each letter combination can be used only once, but all letter combinations will be necessary to complete the puzzle.

CLUES

- 1 where to open the box (9)
- 2 like a Lego masterpiece (9)
- 3 wild, as a hedge (8)
- 4 Mercedes-Benz work van (8)
- 5 river feeding Caspian Sea (5)
- 6 Secretary of State Albright (9)
- 7 neighbor of Windsor, Ontario (7)

SOLUTIONS

TR	TE	STR	GA	UNPR
SPRI	EL	ABLE	DE	IP
NE	BU	MAD	AR	VOL
ILD	OIT	NTER	UNED	EI

Wednesday's Answers: 1. ACCORD 2. UNFINISHED 3. SENTENCE 4. CASCADE 5. FIFTY 6. CONFIRM 7. FLATBUSH

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JUMBLE

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

KEPYR

OTAIP

MIFYAL

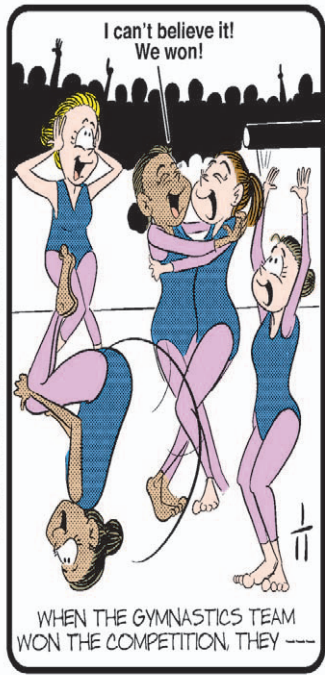
UTPADE

Check out the new, free JUST JUMBLE app

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THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

by David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek



Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

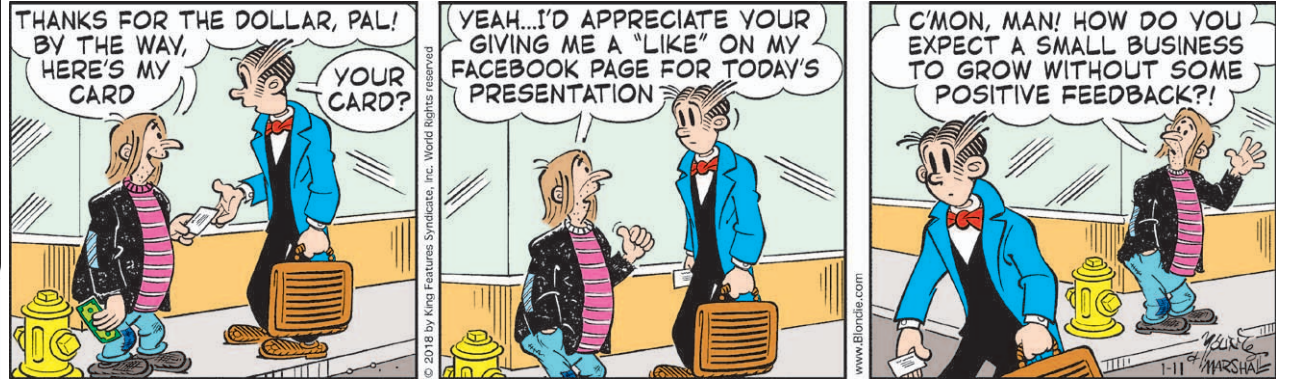
Answer here:

Yesterday's Jumbles: FLOOR SCARF NOBODY GOSSIP
Answer: When asked how her long-distance relationship was going, she said — SO FAR, SO GOOD

BORN LOSER By Art and Chip Sansom



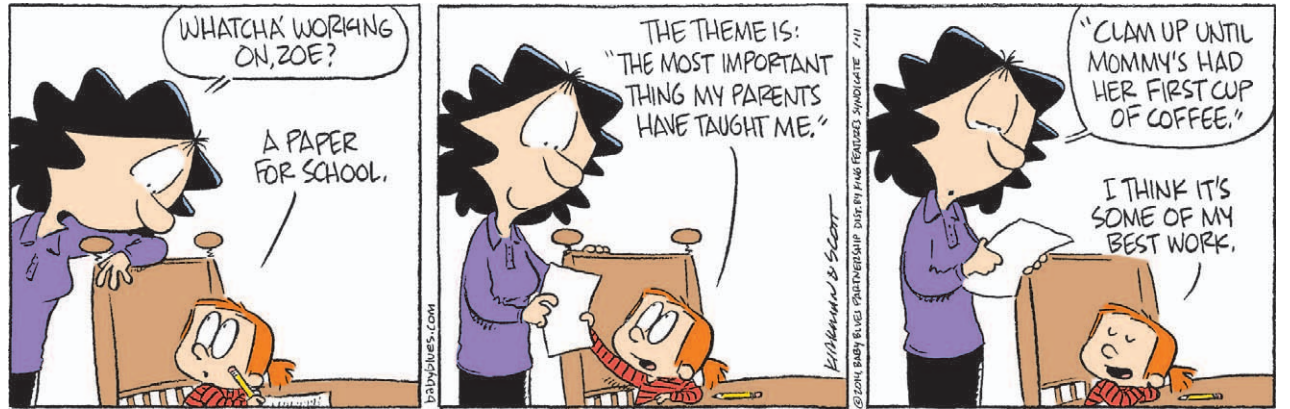
BLONDIE By Dean Young and John Marshall



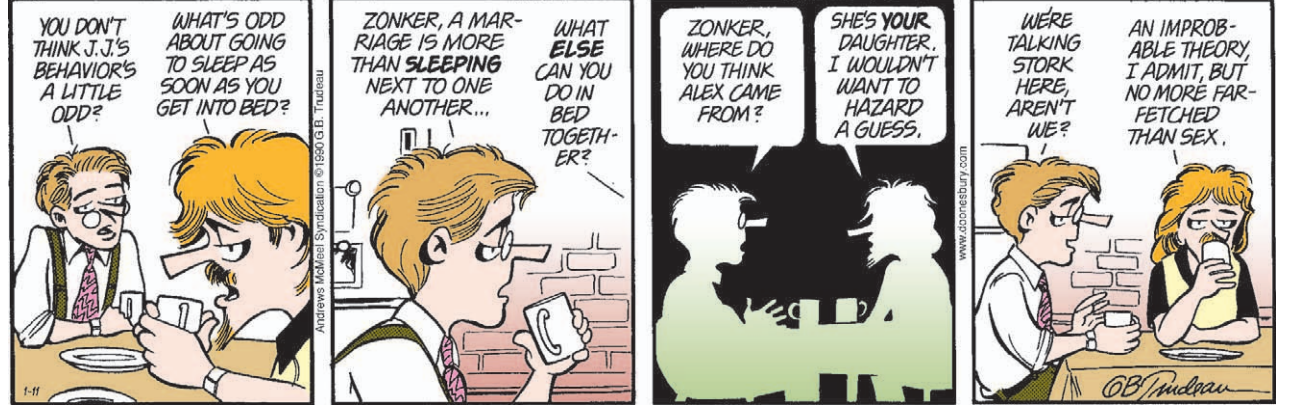
MUTTS By Patrick McDonnell



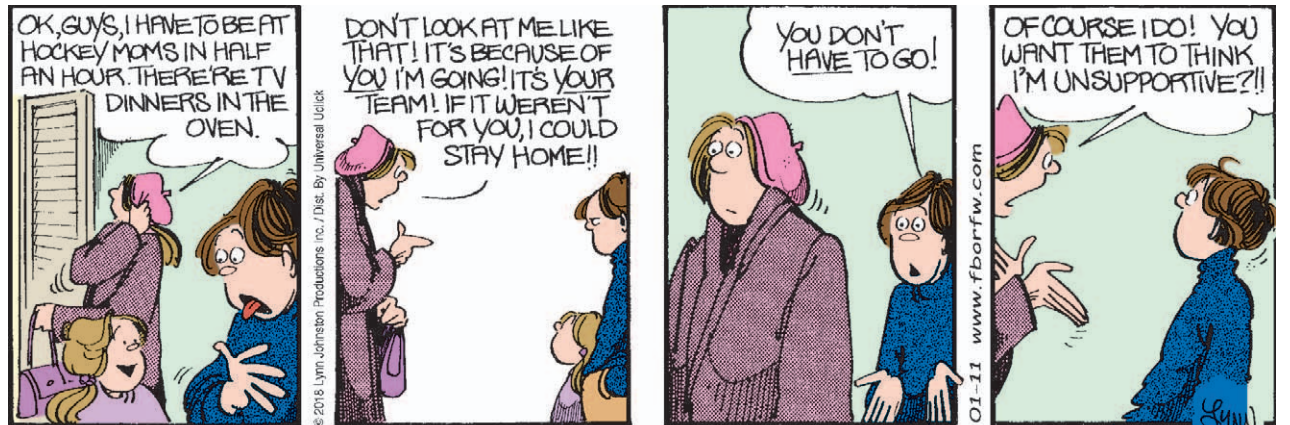
BABY BLUES By Rick Kirkman and Jerry Scott



DOONSBURY By Garry Trudeau



FOR BETTER OR FOR WORSE By Lynn Johnston



KENKEN

THE LOGIC PUZZLE THAT MAKES YOU SMARTER.

EASY

2	2-	2÷	1-
3-			
	6X		1
7+		2÷	

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CHALLENGING

15X	7+	3÷	5
	2÷	11+	3
	3÷	1	40X
6		2-	3÷
2÷	1		72X
	1-	3-	

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RULES

- Each row and each column must contain the numbers 1 through 4 (easy) or 1 through 6 (challenging) without repeating.
- The numbers within the heavily outlined boxes, called cages, must combine using the given operation (in any order) to produce the target numbers in the top-left corners.
- Freebies: Fill in single-box cages with the number in the top-left corner.

PREVIOUS ANSWERS

6X	3	2	1	4
9+	1	4	2	3
6+	2	3	4	1
1	4	1	3	2

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Boneless Rib Eye Steaks
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Bananas
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Fresh Chicken Drumsticks or Thighs
\$.89 lb.

Fresh Whole or Half Boneless Pork Loin
\$1.69 lb.

Whole Boneless Beef Tenderloin
\$7.99 lb.

Whole Boneless Beef Ribeyes
\$5.49 lb.

Whole or Half Boneless Beef Eye Round Roast
\$2.99 lb.

Bone In Center Cut Rack Pork
\$1.29 lb.

Bone In Sirloin or Rib Cut Pork Loin
\$1.19 Bag

Bone-In New York Strip Steaks
\$4.29 lb.

USDA Choice High River Angus Beef, Bottom Round Shoulder Roast
\$2.99 lb.

Fresh 73% Ground Beef
\$2.59 lb.

Bone In Beef Ribeye Steaks \$5.29 lb.	Fresh Pork Baby Back Ribs \$2.69 lb.	Fresh Bone-In Split Chicken Breast \$.99 lb.
Fresh Boneless Chicken Breast \$1.79 lb.	Boneless Top Sirloin Steaks \$3.99 lb.	Fresh Pork St. Louis Spare Ribs \$2.59 lb.
Fresh Pork Steaks \$1.69 lb.	USDA Choice Beef Cube Steak \$4.29 lb.	Fresh Whole Beef Brisket \$2.99 lb.
Fresh Pork Picnic \$1.39 lb.	Boneless Beef Sirloin Tip Steak \$3.99 lb.	Bone In Seven Bone Chuck Roast \$3.49 lb.
Whole boneless New York Strips \$3.99 lb.	Boneless Beef Chuck Roast \$3.69 lb.	Fresh Iceberg Head Lettuce \$.99 ea.
Bone In Center Cut Pork Chops \$1.99 lb.	Boneless Beef Sirloin Tip Roast \$3.49 lb.	Fresh Cucumbers & Green Bell Peppers \$.49 ea.
Rib Cut or Sirloin Cut Bone In Pork Chops \$1.29 lb.	Fresh 10lb. bag Chicken Leg Quarters \$5.90 a bag	Fresh Broccoli Crowns \$1.29 ea.
Bone In Boston Butt Pork Roast \$1.49 lb.	Ground Round or Sirloin \$2.99 lb.	Hard Squash Butternut, Acorn, Spaghetti \$.99 lb.
Fresh Assorted Pork Chops \$1.49 lb.	Fresh 80/20 Ground Chuck \$2.89 lb.	Fresh Romaine Green Leaf or Red Leaf \$1.29 ea.
Boneless Beef London Broil or Top Round Roast \$3.49 lb.	Boneless Pork Finger Ribs or Cube Steak \$1.99 lb.	Florida Yellow or Zucchini Squash \$1.29 lb.
Bone In Pork Country Style Ribs \$1.59 lb.	Whole Fresh Frying Chicken \$1.19 lb.	Fresh Green Cabbage \$.49 lb.
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For Directions

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NYSE

Table with columns: Name, Ticker, Div, Yield, PE, 52-week High, Low, Vol, YTD %Chg. Includes entries like BarFiEur, BarFiHY, BarSPVeq, etc.

Table with columns: Name, Ticker, Div, Yield, PE, 52-week High, Low, Vol, YTD %Chg. Includes entries like BrMySq, BristolSq, BrtAtoB, etc.

Table with columns: Name, Ticker, Div, Yield, PE, 52-week High, Low, Vol, YTD %Chg. Includes entries like ChOnEd n, ChinaPst, ChinaPHH, etc.

Continued from previous page

NYSE

Main table containing NYSE stock listings with columns for Name, Ticker, Div, Yield, PE, 52-week High/Low, Vol, YTD %Chg, and various financial metrics.

Continued from previous page

NYSE

Table with columns: Name, Ticker, Symbol, Div, Yield, PE, 52-week High, Low, Vol 1000s, Last, YTD %Chg. Contains stock data for companies like FQOEUrDv, FQFOSDv, FTS Invest, etc.

Table with columns: Name, Ticker, Symbol, Div, Yield, PE, 52-week High, Low, Vol 1000s, Last, YTD %Chg. Contains stock data for companies like FrankRes, FrkShDgV, FrkSlrPp, etc.

Table with columns: Name, Ticker, Symbol, Div, Yield, PE, 52-week High, Low, Vol 1000s, Last, YTD %Chg. Contains stock data for companies like GranSP n, GraphPkg, GrayTele, etc.

Continued on next page

Continued from previous page

NYSE

Table listing NYSE stocks with columns: Name, Ticker, Symbol, Div, Yield, PE, High, Low, 52-week High, 52-week Low, Vol 1000s, Last, YTD %Chg.

Table listing NYSE stocks with columns: Name, Ticker, Symbol, Div, Yield, PE, High, Low, 52-week High, 52-week Low, Vol 1000s, Last, YTD %Chg.

Table listing NYSE stocks with columns: Name, Ticker, Symbol, Div, Yield, PE, High, Low, 52-week High, 52-week Low, Vol 1000s, Last, YTD %Chg.

Continued from previous page

NYSE

Table with columns: Name, Ticker, Div, Yield, PE, 52-week High, Low, Vol, YTD %Chg. Includes entries like LG Display, LGL Grp, LML Capln, etc.

Table with columns: Name, Ticker, Div, Yield, PE, 52-week High, Low, Vol, YTD %Chg. Includes entries like MetLife pA, MetroBK n, Mettler T, etc.

Table with columns: Name, Ticker, Div, Yield, PE, 52-week High, Low, Vol, YTD %Chg. Includes entries like NushSmCap, NushShTrm, NushEssg of, etc.

- M -

Table with columns: Name, Ticker, Div, Yield, PE, 52-week High, Low, Vol, YTD %Chg. Includes entries like AM&T Bk, M&T Bk wt, M&T Bk pA, etc.

- N -

Table with columns: Name, Ticker, Div, Yield, PE, 52-week High, Low, Vol, YTD %Chg. Includes entries like NCI BidSy, NCR Corp, NGL EnPt, etc.

- O -

Table with columns: Name, Ticker, Div, Yield, PE, 52-week High, Low, Vol, YTD %Chg. Includes entries like OCI Ptrs, OFG Bncp, OFG pA, etc.

P-Q

Table with columns: Name, Ticker, Div, Yield, PE, 52-week High, Low, Vol, YTD %Chg. Includes entries like PBF Engy, PBF Logist, PBF Fund, etc.

Continued on next page

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NYSE

Table with columns: Name, Ticker, Symbol, Div, Yield, PE, 52-week High, Low, 1000s, Last, YTD %Chg. Lists various stocks like Pac Cash n, PacDvCsh n, PacCashCov n, etc.

Table with columns: Name, Ticker, Symbol, Div, Yield, PE, 52-week High, Low, 1000s, Last, YTD %Chg. Lists various stocks like PSS&Pmcom, PstIntLw, Pss&PntVl, etc.

Table with columns: Name, Ticker, Symbol, Div, Yield, PE, 52-week High, Low, 1000s, Last, YTD %Chg. Lists various stocks like PubSt pfa, PulteGrp, PureStrg n, etc.

Continued on next page

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NYSE

Table with columns: Name, Ticker, Symbol, Div, Yield, PE, 52-week High/Low, 1000s, Last, YTD %Chg. Lists various stocks including SPDR, SPY, and various sector funds.

Table with columns: Name, Ticker, Symbol, Div, Yield, PE, 52-week High/Low, 1000s, Last, YTD %Chg. Lists various stocks including ShutterStk, SbernyGk, SideruNat, and various technology and financial stocks.

Table with columns: Name, Ticker, Symbol, Div, Yield, PE, 52-week High/Low, 1000s, Last, YTD %Chg. Lists various stocks including TanagerFac, TangerFy, Tapestry, and various consumer and healthcare stocks.

- U -

- T -

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Continued from previous page

NYSE

Table with columns: Name, Ticker, Symbol, Div, Yield, PE, 52-week High, Low, Vol 1000s, Last, YTD %Chg. Includes entries like Unilever, UnionPac, UniqueF n, Unisys, Unit, UdContl, etc.

- V -

Table with columns: Name, Ticker, Symbol, Div, Yield, PE, 52-week High, Low, Vol 1000s, Last, YTD %Chg. Includes entries like VFC Corp, VOC EnTr, VaalcoE, VailRsr, Vale Sa, etc.

Table with columns: Name, Ticker, Symbol, Div, Yield, PE, 52-week High, Low, Vol 1000s, Last, YTD %Chg. Includes entries like VangMCGr, VangREIT, VangDivAp, etc.

- W -

Table with columns: Name, Ticker, Symbol, Div, Yield, PE, 52-week High, Low, Vol 1000s, Last, YTD %Chg. Includes entries like W&T Off, WBI TactV, WBI TactY, etc.

Table with columns: Name, Ticker, Symbol, Div, Yield, PE, 52-week High, Low, Vol 1000s, Last, YTD %Chg. Includes entries like WellsF wt, WellsF pY, WellsF pX, etc.

Table with columns: Name, Ticker, Symbol, Div, Yield, PE, 52-week High, Low, Vol 1000s, Last, YTD %Chg. Includes entries like A-MarkPM, AAO, AC Immun, etc.

- A -

Table with columns: Name, Ticker, Symbol, Div, Yield, PE, 52-week High, Low, Vol 1000s, Last, YTD %Chg. Includes entries like ADDvtgTch, AdestoTc n, AdmaBio, etc.

Nasdaq

Table with columns: Name, Ticker, Symbol, Div, Yield, PE, 52-week High, Low, Vol 1000s, Last, YTD %Chg. Includes entries like AllenaPh n, AlliHold, All MMA n, etc.

Continued on next page

Continued from previous page

Nasdaq

Table with columns: Name, Ticker, Symbol, Div, Yield, PE, 52-week High/Low, Vol 1000s, YTD Last %Chg. Includes stocks like AmicusTch, AmkorTch, AmpPhar, etc.

- B -

Table with columns: Name, Ticker, Symbol, Div, Yield, PE, 52-week High/Low, Vol 1000s, YTD Last %Chg. Includes stocks like B Comm, BCFN, BRiley7.5, etc.

Table with columns: Name, Ticker, Symbol, Div, Yield, PE, 52-week High/Low, Vol 1000s, YTD Last %Chg. Includes stocks like Biocyst rs, Biocyst, Biogen, etc.

- C -

Table with columns: Name, Ticker, Symbol, Div, Yield, PE, 52-week High/Low, Vol 1000s, YTD Last %Chg. Includes stocks like C&F Fnc, CA Inc, CAS Med, etc.

Table with columns: Name, Ticker, Symbol, Div, Yield, PE, 52-week High/Low, Vol 1000s, YTD Last %Chg. Includes stocks like CheckC wt, ChckPnt n, Cheesecake, etc.

- D -

Table with columns: Name, Ticker, Symbol, Div, Yield, PE, 52-week High/Low, Vol 1000s, YTD Last %Chg. Includes stocks like DBV Tech, DHX Mda n, DLHG Hlids, etc.

Continued from previous page

Nasdaq

Table with columns: Name, Ticker Symbol, Div, Yield, PE, 52-week High/Low, Vol 1000s, YTD Last %Chg. Includes stocks like DelTaco, DOW, DEX, etc.

Table with columns: Name, Ticker Symbol, Div, Yield, PE, 52-week High/Low, Vol 1000s, YTD Last %Chg. Includes stocks like Fidelity, Fiserv, Fis, etc.

Table with columns: Name, Ticker Symbol, Div, Yield, PE, 52-week High/Low, Vol 1000s, YTD Last %Chg. Includes stocks like Gentex, Genentech, Geopac, etc.

- F -

Table with columns: Name, Ticker Symbol, Div, Yield, PE, 52-week High/Low, Vol 1000s, YTD Last %Chg. Includes stocks like F5 Networks, FAT Br n, FC GblRtly, etc.

- G -

Table with columns: Name, Ticker Symbol, Div, Yield, PE, 52-week High/Low, Vol 1000s, YTD Last %Chg. Includes stocks like G.WillitFood, G1Thera n, GDS Hld n, etc.

- I -

Table with columns: Name, Ticker Symbol, Div, Yield, PE, 52-week High/Low, Vol 1000s, YTD Last %Chg. Includes stocks like I-AMCap n, I-AMCap wt, I-AMCap ht, etc.

Continued on next page

Continued from previous page

Nasdaq

Main table containing Nasdaq stock listings with columns for Name, Ticker, Div, Yield, PE, 52-week High/Low, Vol, YTD %Chg, and YTD %Chg. Includes sub-sections for -L-, -N-, and -M-.

Continued on next page

Continued from previous page

Nasdaq

Table with columns: Name, Ticker, Div, Yield, PE, 52-week High/Low, Vol 1000s, Last, YTD %Chg. Includes stocks like Novelis, Novocure, Novum, etc.

- O -

Table with columns: Name, Ticker, Div, Yield, PE, 52-week High/Low, Vol 1000s, Last, YTD %Chg. Includes stocks like P&F, PAM, PB Banc, etc.

P-Q

Table with columns: Name, Ticker, Div, Yield, PE, 52-week High/Low, Vol 1000s, Last, YTD %Chg. Includes stocks like PorterBc, Portofa, Potbelly, etc.

- R -

Table with columns: Name, Ticker, Div, Yield, PE, 52-week High/Low, Vol 1000s, Last, YTD %Chg. Includes stocks like RushEnt, S&W Seed, SB FinGp, etc.

Continued on next page

Continued from previous page

Table with columns: Name, Ticker, Div, Yield, PE, 52-week High, Low, 1000s, Vol, YTD %Chg. Includes entries like Stratiasys, Stratus, StratusPwp, Strayer, StreamHlth, etc.

Table with columns: Name, Ticker, Div, Yield, PE, 52-week High, Low, 1000s, Vol, YTD %Chg. Includes entries like TracorpPh n, TradTrack, TradDsk A n, TrnVEnt n, etc.

Table with columns: Name, Ticker, Div, Yield, PE, 52-week High, Low, 1000s, Vol, YTD %Chg. Includes entries like VantIntTr, VantIntSk, VantEng wt, VantEngUn, etc.

- U -

Table with columns: Name, Ticker, Div, Yield, PE, 52-week High, Low, 1000s, Vol, YTD %Chg. Includes entries like T-MobileUS, TAT To n, TCB BDC n, etc.

Table with columns: Name, Ticker, Div, Yield, PE, 52-week High, Low, 1000s, Vol, YTD %Chg. Includes entries like US AutoPts, US Concrete, US Gld rs, etc.

Table with columns: Name, Ticker, Div, Yield, PE, 52-week High, Low, 1000s, Vol, YTD %Chg. Includes entries like VantIntTr, VantIntSk, VantEng wt, VantEngUn, etc.

- W -

Table with columns: Name, Ticker, Div, Yield, PE, 52-week High, Low, 1000s, Vol, YTD %Chg. Includes entries like WCF Bcp n, WDFC, WMH, etc.

Table with columns: Name, Ticker, Div, Yield, PE, 52-week High, Low, 1000s, Vol, YTD %Chg. Includes entries like VBI Vac n, VEON, VOXX Intl, etc.

Table with columns: Name, Ticker, Div, Yield, PE, 52-week High, Low, 1000s, Vol, YTD %Chg. Includes entries like WCF Bcp n, WDFC, WMH, etc.

- V -

Table with columns: Name, Ticker, Div, Yield, PE, 52-week High, Low, 1000s, Vol, YTD %Chg. Includes entries like VBI Vac n, VEON, VOXX Intl, etc.

Money Funds

Large table listing various Money Funds with columns: Fund, Assets, Mat, Avg, Comp, Yld, Yld. Includes entries like AAFP MM, AAdvGovP, AAdvMMPlat, etc.

Continued on next page

Top 20 Mutual Funds

Table: By Year-to-Date Percent Return. Columns: Name, Obj, Pct Load, NAV, YTD Rtn, Phone Number.

Table: By Total Net Assets. Columns: Name, Obj, Total Assets, Percent Return/Rank, YTD, 5-Yr, Pct Load.

Table: By 4-Week Percent Return. Columns: Name, Obj, Pct Load, NAV, 4-Wk Rtn, Phone Number.

Continued from previous page

Table: Continued list of mutual funds from previous page, including ValAdv, AC Alternatives, AIG, ALPS, AMF, AMG, APEX, AQR, Aberdeen, Absolute Strategies, Acadian, Access, AdvisorOne, Advisory Research, Aegis, Akre, AI Frank, Alger, AptApprec, Alliazng, Amana, American Beacon, American Century, etc.

Mutual Funds

Table: Mutual Funds. Columns: Name, Obj, NAV, 4-wk Rtn, YTD Rtn, 3-yr Rtn/Rk, etc.

Table: Mutual Funds. Columns: Name, Obj, NAV, 4-wk Rtn, YTD Rtn, 3-yr Rtn/Rk, etc.

Continued on next page

Continued from previous page

Mutual Funds

Table with 15 columns: Name, Obj, NAV, 4-wk Rtn, YTD Rtn, 3-yr Rtn/Rrk, Name, Obj, NAV, 4-wk Rtn, YTD Rtn, 3-yr Rtn/Rrk, Name, Obj, NAV, 4-wk Rtn, YTD Rtn, 3-yr Rtn/Rrk, Name, Obj, NAV, 4-wk Rtn, YTD Rtn, 3-yr Rtn/Rrk. Includes various fund categories like Fairhorne Funds, Federated, Dodge & Cox, Dominion, DoubleLine, Eaton Vance, Fidelity, and others.

Continued from previous page

Mutual Funds

Table with multiple columns: Name, Obj, NAV, 4-wk Rtn, YTD Rtn, 3-yr Rtn/Rrk, Name, Obj, NAV, 4-wk Rtn, YTD Rtn, 3-yr Rtn/Rrk, Name, Obj, NAV, 4-wk Rtn, YTD Rtn, 3-yr Rtn/Rrk, Name, Obj, NAV, 4-wk Rtn, YTD Rtn, 3-yr Rtn/Rrk. Lists various mutual funds and their performance metrics.

Continued on next page

Continued from previous page

Mutual Funds

Table of Mutual Funds with columns for Name, Obj, NAV, 4-wk Rtn, YTD Rtn, 3-yr Rtn/Rk, and 5-yr Rtn/Rk. The table lists various fund categories including Dividend, Equity, Fixed Income, and Specialty Funds, with their respective performance metrics.

January 11, 2018

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WaterLine photo by Josh Olive

Is this your dream boat? For many local anglers, it just might be. For others, a small skiff won't cut it. Visit the boat show this weekend and dream a little.



FROM THE PUBLISHER'S DESK • JOSH OLIVE

The right one



Photo provided

Exploring all the cool stuff at a boat show is lots of fun, even if you're not planning a purchase in the near future.

At the Charlotte County Boat Show this weekend, a lot of you will be looking at the latest and greatest from the marine industry. It's a lot of fun to play "what if" and picture yourself at the helm of one of these sleek and gleaming beauties. Let your fantasies run wild.

Then, back to earth.

Choosing the right boat, and then outfitting it the right way, is not a task to be done spur of the moment. You need to put some serious thought and planning into it. A boat represents a significant investment — and like any investment, you need to consider every aspect before pulling the trigger.

Most of us have to compromise on our boat choices. You might want a comfortable and spacious pontoon boat for when the grandkids come to visit, but perhaps your husband is thinking more along the lines of a technical flats skiff that will run super skinny. Or perhaps you love to target tailing redfish and red snapper. It's hard to find middle ground on something like that, since the two requirements are so different.

But for most of us, it's easier. Boat manufacturers have simplified things somewhat by crafting boats with more inherent versatility. Only a few years back, pontoon boats were basically slowpoke party barges and almost all made for fresh water.

Now, there are tritoons that have no problems with salt and can run twin 350s on the back (yes, a 700-horsepower pontoon boat). Larger and more seaworthy bay boats are coming to market. Tunnel hull advances are allowing boats to run shockingly shallow while also being not overly punishing in moderate seas.

No matter how much versatility they build into them, there's never going to be a boat that does it all. So let's talk about boats that can do most of it.

Your problem is my problem. I like to fish the reefs and the flats. I want to be able to go out on windy days without getting beat to death but still get into shallow water. I want it to be fast but fuel-efficient. I want it to be spacious and comfortable but not so big that it's hard to trailer. I want a boat that does as much as possible.

And so — I bought a mid-size bay boat. Now, be careful with that term. Some "bay" boats are too big, or draft too much, or just can't take rough water. A real bay boat should be 18 to 26 feet long, float in 14 inches or less, and have a deep enough vee to cut 2- to 3-foot seas with relative ease. My classic Mako 23 fits the bill nicely, and is more than sufficiently powered with a 225 Suzuki.

Since I want to explore deep and shallow, I'm outfitting the boat for both. I've got 250 feet of

anchor line, a side-scan Lowrance and an EPIRB for the Gulf. I've got a jackplate and am adding a trolling motor and Power-Pole for the Harbor. Other features I've found useful: A T-top (shade and weather protection, but not in the way of fishing like a Bimini), a swim ladder (great to get back in after wading or if someone goes overboard) and a comfortable head (the ladies love it).

I think my boat is just about the perfect choice for running from the rivers to the Gulf, but your perfect boat might be something very different. The point is that I thought about what I wanted to do with a boat, then I found a boat that would allow me to do those things, and that I could modify for my specific purposes.

Too often, people make snap decisions and then regret them. Buying the wrong boat is an expensive mistake, because most owners take a loss — sometimes a huge one — when they sell. I know it's easy to get excited, but tamp that down long enough to make a wise decision.

With all that in mind, you should still go check out the show. Even if you're not planning to buy a boat anytime soon, it's a lot of fun to look at what's new and imagine yourself behind the wheel (or sunbathing on deck, or whatever you like to do on a boat). I'll see you there.

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**ANGLING 201
CAPT. MIKE MYERS**

**Spring shark
dreams**

The last 10 days or so have been downright cold here in Southwest Florida. Our fish and the hordes of thin-skinned Floridians have been freezing our butts off. Seeing as the weather has been "sporty" for way too long, I've had a lot of time to think about the spring fishing — which has led me to write this column on early-season shark fishing.



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OUTDOOR NEWS BULLETIN BOARD

If you have an event you want included in the Outdoor News Bulletin Board, email it to Editor@WaterLineWeekly.com

GOT AN EVENT COMING UP?

We'd be happy to let people know. Email your info to Editor@WaterLineWeekly.com at least two weeks before the event.

WCV OPEN HOUSE

The Wildlife Center of Venice invites you to attend their open house from 2 to 6 p.m. Jan. 13 at their new location, 925 N. Jackson Road, Venice. See the wonderful new space the center will be occupying in 2018. Tours will also be offered of their old area across the street (where the animals are currently residing). Children are welcome. Admission is free, but consider making a contribution to support the center's ongoing efforts to rescue wildlife and make the purchase that will finally provide them with a permanent home. For more info, email TheWildlifeCenterOfVenice@hotmail.com

CALLING ALL BUTTERFLY LOVERS

The next meeting of the Peace River Butterfly Society will be held at 10 a.m. Jan. 17 at the GFWC Women's Club of Port Charlotte, (0271 Tappan Zee Drive, Port Charlotte). This month's program will be a monarch workshop. Learn everything you should know about raising monarch butterflies, including a hands-on opportunity for both beginners and experts. There will be a talk, slide show and demonstrations. Seating is limited, so RSVP to Steve or Olivia Scott at 941-625-0381 or sfscott2011@hotmail.com.

LECTURES AT DING

The J. N. "Ding" Darling National Wildlife Refuge (1 Wildlife Drive, Sanibel) will host a series of weekly free lectures beginning Jan. 19. Lectures will be held twice each Friday, at 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. The season's complete schedule is listed below. Seating for the lectures is limited and available on a first-come basis. Early arrivals can save one seat each and then may explore the Visitor & Education Center or Indigo Trail before the lecture starts. Saved seats must be filled 15 minutes before lecture time. For more info, call 239-472-1100 ext. 241 or visit <https://goo.gl/B37knm>. **Jan. 19: Author Noah Strycker**, *Birding Without Borders: An Obsession, a Quest, and the Biggest Year in the World* — **Jan. 26: Author Jack Davis**, *The Gulf: The Making of an American Sea* — **Feb. 2: Author James McClintock**, *Lost Antarctica: Adventures in a Disappearing Land* — **Feb. 9: No lecture** — **Feb. 16: Impersonator Joe Weigand**, *"Theodore Roosevelt Speaks out on Conservation"* — **Feb. 23: Author Stephen Kress**, *The Puffin Project: The Improbable Quest to Bring a Beloved Sea Bird Back to Egg Rock* — **March 2: Author Larry Nielsen**, *Nature's Allies: Eight Conservationists Who Changed Our World* — **March 9: Author Kevin Carlson**, *Birds of Prey: Hawks, Eagles, Falcons, and Vultures of North America* — **March 16: Author Tom Butler**, *Wildlands Philanthropy: The Great American Tradition* — **March 23: Photographer-sound recordist Gerrit Vyn**, *The Living Bird: 100 Years of Listening to Nature* — **March 30: Artist and author Dawn and Blair Witherington**, *Our Sea Turtles: A Practical Guide for the Atlantic and Gulf, from*

ONGOING EVENTS

FISHIN' FRANK'S FISHIN' CLUB: Learn all about fishing Charlotte Harbor. Meetings are held the second Tuesday and Wednesday of each month at Luigi's Italian Restaurant (3883 Tamiami Trail, Port Charlotte). Reservations are required; call 941-625-3888 for more info or to sign up.

FISHING CLUB MEETINGS: The Gulf Cove Fishing Club meets on the second Monday of the month from October through May at the Hope Lutheran Church in Gulf Cove (14200 Hopewell Ave., Port Charlotte) at 7 p.m. At each meeting, a speaker will talk on a timely topic. The public is invited to attend, but only Gulf Cove residents can be members. For more info, call 941-698-8607.

NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY MEETINGS: The Mangrove Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society meets from 7 to 9 p.m. the second Tuesday of each month (Oct-May) at Lemon Bay Park (570 Bay Park Blvd., Englewood). Call 941-769-3633. The Coccoloba Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society meets from 7 to 9 p.m. the second Thursday of each month at the Calusa Nature Center and Planetarium (3450 Ortiz Ave., Fort Myers). Call 239-275-3435. Meetings are free and the public is welcome.

HANG OUT WITH SCRUB JAYS: Spend the morning with the scrub jays at Oscar Scherer State Park (1843 S. Tamiami Trail, Osprey) from 8:30 to 10:30 a.m. every Sunday. This

unique Central Florida experience includes a nature walk to see the park's diverse ecosystems, native flora and fauna. Call 941-483-5956 for info.

WHAT'S THAT BIRD?: Volunteer bird interpreters share their expertise on ID and behavior of raptors, shorebirds, waterfowl and other avian visitors at Myakka River State Park (13208 S.R. 72, Sarasota). Volunteers set up scopes and help people identify birds from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. every day of the week.

SARASOTA FITNESS WALKS: Join Sarasota County Parks staff from 8:30 to 9:30 a.m. each Friday for a fitness walk through Rothenbach Park (8650 Bee Ridge Road, Sarasota). The pace will be geared toward fitness, aiming for a 20-minute-mile pace. The walk will cover approximately three miles in one hour of brisk walking. Wear good walking shoes and bring your water bottle. Call 941-861-5000 for more info.

CHARLOTTE HARBOR MULTIHULL ASSOCIATION: Members of this club for multihull owners, sailors or those who are interested in the exchange of ideas about equipping and sailing boats, share information about anchorages and cruising destinations, hold informal races and have raft-ups. No dues. The club meets at a local restaurant the first Monday of each month at 6 p.m. For more info, call 941-876-6667.

COASTAL VENTURES CRUISE CLUB: This club, designed for personal boat cruising, meets on the third Tuesday of the month at the Waterfront Restaurant (2205 N. Tamiami Trail, Nokomis). Join them for dinner at 6 p.m. and/or the 7:30 p.m. meeting where they'll discuss upcoming cruises and activities. Enjoy the camaraderie of like-minded water rats. If interested, attend a meeting or call 941-493-0070 for more info.

VOLUNTEER AT SHAMROCK PARK: Shamrock Park Nature Center (3900 Shamrock Drive, Venice) holds its monthly volunteer work mornings from 8 to 10 a.m. on the third Friday of each month. For more info, call Jennifer Rogers at 941-861-5000 or email her at jrogers@scgov.net.

PEACE RIVER PADDLING: Join a guided kayaking trip on the Peace River. Free if you bring your own kayak, or rent equipment for \$25 per person. Paddle with an experienced guide and explore remote areas of the Peace River. These trips are intended to be easy paddling for everyone to have fun, meet people with similar interests, and enjoy the outdoors. We paddle from 9 to 11 a.m. each Tuesday if weather permits. Meet at the Nav-A-Gator (9700 SW Riverview Circle, Lake Suzy) 30 minutes prior to departure. Sign up by calling Steve Burroughs 813-857-4634. Trips are provided by KayakEcoTours.com.

Canada to Mexico — **April 6: Mote Marine Researcher Dr. Erinn Muller**, "Coral Restoration" — **April 13: Avian researcher Dr. Kenneth Meyer**, "Swallow-tailed Kites: 10,000 Miles to Survival."

PEACE RIVER AUDUBON MEETING

The public is invited to attend the next meeting of the Peace River Audubon Society, slated for 6:30 to 9 p.m. Jan. 20 at First Alliance Church (20444 Midway Blvd., Port Charlotte). Snacks and social time is 6:30 to 7; at 7 p.m., a presentation of the results of the recent Annual Audubon Christmas Bird Count will commence. More than 60 participants spent more than 400 hours in search of birds by foot, car, cart or boat, and covered over 500 miles by land or sea. For more info, go to PeaceRiverAudubon.org or contact Mike at 863-244-2652.

VISIT THE FAKAHATCHEE

The Friends of Fakahatchee have announced their 2018 schedule of guided adventures to introduce visitors to Florida's largest state park, Fakahatchee Strand Preserve. The park entrance is on State Route 29 in Copeland. Ghost rider tram tours will be offered from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Jan. 25 and 27 at \$25 per person. The tours are named for the famous ghost orchid found in the park. Naturalist-led swamp walks are scheduled for 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Jan. 20, Feb. 10 and Feb. 25. The Feb. 10 walk will be led by

park biologist Mike Owen. On these five-hour adventures, naturalists lead participants deep into the swamp in knee-high water. Swamp walks are \$75. The combination tram tour and swamp walk is offered from 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Jan. 16 and 23. This popular four-hour tour pairs a one-hour swamp walk with a guided tram tour for \$60 per person. For required reservations and additional dates through March, visit OrchidSwamp.org and click on "Tours and Events."

JUVENILE TARPON RESEARCH

Join the Lemon Bay Conservancy from 7:45 a.m. to noon Jan. 20 in hands-on volunteer work as we use long seine nets to study the juvenile tarpon population in Lemon Creek at Wildflower Preserve. Interested volunteers should contact Jim Cooper in advance for details on participation at 941-979-6258 or JCoop43@comcast.net.

VENICE AUDUBON MEETS

The Venice Audubon Society invites the public to attend their next meeting, scheduled for 6 to 8:30 p.m. Jan. 23 at the Venice Audubon Center on Annex Road (behind RL Anderson Admin. Bldg). This month's program will focus on the Rare Species Conservatory Foundation's landmark projects. Dr. Paul Reillo will discuss

VABA BIRDING TRIPS

The Venice Area Birding Association will host the following field trips. The public is welcome to come along at no charge; no birding experience is necessary. For more info or to sign up, email the listed trip leader. **Abbie:** Amberina@aol.com | **Steve:** SFreedman7@gmail.com | **Deb:** Boss302@comcast.net | **Christine:** ChrisBDukes@gmail.com | **Robert:** RAKraft2@gmail.com | **Andy:** AWhite369@me.com | **Don:** DonRippeon@aol.com | **Margaret:** MKDunson1@comcast.net | **Jean:** FlutterbyQuilts@verizon.net | **Kate:** KateBorduas@gmail.com.

Jan. 16: Babcock/Webb WMA Deb
Jan. 23: Carlton Preserve Deb
Jan. 26: Babcock/Webb WMA Deb
Feb. 1: Myakka River State Park Margaret
Feb. 6: Feltz Audubon Preserve Steve
Feb. 14, 15, 16: East Coast trip Abbie & Don
Feb. 21: Ollie's Pond Jean
March 7: Harns Marsh Andy
March 18: Celery Field Andy

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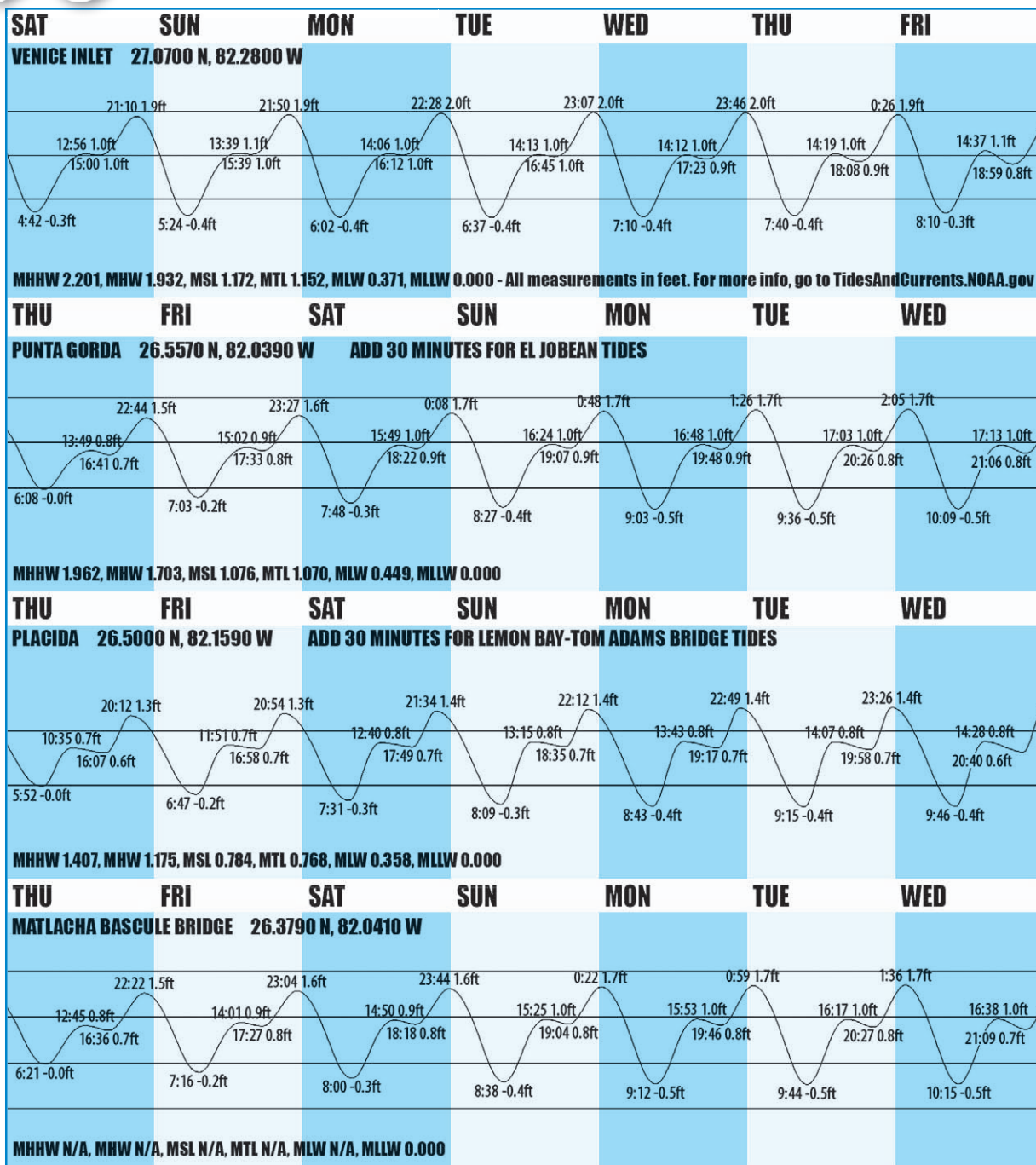
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Saturday	Low Tide 4:42 -0.3 High Tide 12:56 1.0 Low Tide 15:00 1.0 High Tide 21:10 1.9	Thursday	Low Tide 6:08 -0.0 High Tide 13:49 0.8 Low Tide 16:41 0.7 High Tide 22:44 1.5	Thursday	Low Tide 5:53 -0.0 High Tide 10:35 0.7 Low Tide 16:07 0.6 High Tide 20:12 1.3	Thursday	Low Tide 6:21 -0.0 High Tide 12:45 0.8 Low Tide 16:36 0.7 High Tide 22:22 1.5
Sunday	Low Tide 5:24 -0.4 High Tide 13:39 1.1 Low Tide 15:39 1.0 High Tide 21:50 1.9	Friday	Low Tide 7:03 -0.2 High Tide 15:02 0.9 Low Tide 17:33 0.8 High Tide 23:27 1.6	Friday	Low Tide 6:47 -0.2 High Tide 11:51 0.7 Low Tide 16:58 0.7 High Tide 20:54 1.3	Friday	Low Tide 7:16 -0.2 High Tide 14:01 0.9 Low Tide 17:27 0.8 High Tide 23:04 1.6
Monday	Low Tide 6:02 -0.4 High Tide 14:06 1.0 Low Tide 16:12 1.0 High Tide 22:28 2.0	Saturday	Low Tide 7:48 -0.3 High Tide 15:49 1.0 Low Tide 18:22 0.9	Saturday	Low Tide 7:31 -0.3 High Tide 12:40 0.8 Low Tide 17:49 0.7 High Tide 21:34 1.4	Saturday	Low Tide 8:00 -0.3 High Tide 14:50 0.9 Low Tide 18:18 0.8 High Tide 23:44 1.6
Tuesday	Low Tide 6:37 -0.4 High Tide 14:13 1.0 Low Tide 16:45 1.0 High Tide 23:07 2.0	Sunday	High Tide 0:08 1.7 Low Tide 8:27 -0.4 High Tide 16:24 1.0 Low Tide 19:07 0.9	Sunday	Low Tide 8:09 -0.3 High Tide 13:15 0.8 Low Tide 18:35 0.7 High Tide 22:12 1.4	Sunday	Low Tide 8:38 -0.4 High Tide 15:25 1.0 Low Tide 19:04 0.8 High Tide 23:26 1.4
Wednesday	Low Tide 7:10 -0.4 High Tide 14:12 1.0 Low Tide 17:23 0.9 High Tide 23:46 2.0	Monday	High Tide 0:48 1.7 Low Tide 9:03 -0.5 High Tide 16:48 1.0 Low Tide 19:48 0.9	Monday	Low Tide 8:43 -0.4 High Tide 13:43 0.8 Low Tide 19:17 0.7 High Tide 22:49 1.4	Monday	High Tide 0:22 1.7 Low Tide 9:12 -0.5 High Tide 15:53 1.0 Low Tide 19:46 0.8
Thursday	Low Tide 7:40 -0.4 High Tide 14:19 1.0 Low Tide 18:08 0.9	Tuesday	High Tide 1:26 1.7 Low Tide 9:36 -0.5 High Tide 17:03 1.0 Low Tide 20:26 0.8	Tuesday	Low Tide 9:15 -0.4 High Tide 14:07 0.8 Low Tide 19:58 0.7 High Tide 23:26 1.4	Tuesday	High Tide 0:59 1.7 Low Tide 9:44 -0.5 High Tide 16:17 1.0 Low Tide 20:27 0.8
Friday	High Tide 0:26 1.9 Low Tide 8:10 -0.3 High Tide 14:37 1.1 Low Tide 18:59 0.8	Wednesday	High Tide 2:05 1.7 Low Tide 10:09 -0.5 High Tide 17:13 1.0 Low Tide 21:06 0.8	Wednesday	Low Tide 9:46 -0.4 High Tide 14:28 0.8 Low Tide 20:40 0.6	Wednesday	High Tide 1:36 1.7 Low Tide 10:15 -0.5 High Tide 16:38 1.0 Low Tide 21:09 0.7

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FRESH LOCAL FISHING REPORTS FROM VENICE TO PINE ISLAND

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MALCOLM

COOKS SPORTLAND
Venice
941-493-0025

Sporadic red tide reports have still been coming in, but you have to look because it's probably not in your spot. Anglers along the Intracoastal in Venice have been catching **sheepshead** and schoolie **jack crevalle**. If you're willing to head inland, limits of **crappie** are coming from Okeechobee. Minnows and jigs are hot. The pre-spawn **bass** fishing has also been good out of Lakeport in 3 to 5 feet of water. Watch out for duck hunters.

Before the front showed up there was a fantastic **grunt** and **snapper** bite in about 50 feet of water. Lots of **red grouper** out there too, but they're all shorts that shallow. There are keepers at 20 miles and out.

Avoid the mornings — too cold — and fish lee shore-lines out of the wind.

JIM

FISHERMAN'S EDGE
Grove City
941-697-7595

Before the front, there were some big **whiting**, **black drum** and a few **flounder** in the surf. The Ainger Pier has been producing **drum** as well. Anglers are reporting feeling red tide in their lungs but not seeing many dead fish. The Manasota Bridge area has been producing **trout** on shrimp. Whidden Creek and Turtle Bay have also had **trout** along with some decent **redfish** action. All the piers and docks have **sheepshead** around.

King mackerel have been trolled up on the Power Poles reef, and deep-running plugs have been getting catch-and-release **gags** in 45 to 50 feet. Some **snapper** and **porgies** have been caught around 8 miles out.

Pompano have been caught in the Manasota Key surf and around the Tom Adams Bridge. Live shrimp, either on a plain hook or silly jig, will get 'em.

CAPT. ROGER

FINE BAIT & TACKLE
North Port
941-240-5981

Crappie are active now that it has cooled down. Most anglers report best luck with a jig or minnow rigged under a float. **Bass** fishing has been awesome; try a senko fished slowly on the bottom. Some over-slot **redfish** have been coming from the local passes on outgoing tides. Pinfish and shrimp are hot. Lots of **snook** have pushed into the Peace and Myakka rivers with the cold temps. Fish live pinfish in the Harbor and live shiners in the rivers.

Within 10 miles of the beach you can find all kinds of life. **Kingfish**, **little tunny**, plenty of **lane** and **mangrove snapper**, **tripletail** and the **gags** have pushed in as well. Out past 10 we're seeing **amberjack**, **blackfin tuna**, **permit** and **African pompano**.

Look for **trout** on grassy flats with 1 to 5 feet of "clean" water. A popping cork or clacker with an average-size live shrimp is a sure shot.

JEFF

CAPT. TED'S TACKLE
Port Charlotte
941-627-6800

Patchy red tide has been around, with dead fish scattered in various spots, but there's still plenty of fishable water. Pine Island Sound has been hit or miss, with some anglers reporting a few small **trout** and others coming back with 100-fish days. Small **snook** are hungry in the canals and other warmer spots. With this weather, it's probably a good time to focus on your tackle and boat maintenance and go through all of your gear.

Those who have braved the wind report there are **snapper**, **grunts** and **porgies** out there, but also a lot of wind.

The **crappie** bite has been hot, hot, hot. You'll find some fish in the local canals but for full stringers head inland to Okeechobee. Minnows and jigs are great.

ROBERT

FISHIN' FRANK'S
Charlotte Harbor
941-625-3888

Trout should be on the lower east side from Pirate Harbor to Matlacha and in Bull and Turtle bays. The bays have also been giving up **sheepshead** and **mangrove snapper** around oysters and in deeper holes. **Bonnetheads**, **pompano** and short **flounder** are coming from Cape Haze and the north end of Pine Island Sound. **Black drum** and juvenile **tarpon** are biting in the Punta Gorda canals.

Before it was too windy to go, there were **snapper**, **porgies** and **sheepshead** on the reefs inside of 15 miles. If it lays down, the **amberjack** bite should be very good on the wrecks.

Don't get beat up — stick to the canals and catch fish while keeping out of the wind.

CHUCK

LAISHLEY MARINE
Punta Gorda
941-639-3949

The northeast wind will be pushing the tides very low. Head south for **speckled trout** on the deeper grassflats and look around pilings for **sheepshead**. Rat **redfish** are starting to show up in the deeper creek holes. **Snook** are lock-jawed with this cold. Red tide reports have slacked off this week, though there are still some dead and rotting fish around.

No reports this week — too windy.

Stick with the canals to stay out of the wind. Targets are **trout**, **redfish**, **black drum**, **snook**, **snapper** and **sheepshead**.

JESSE

OLD PINE ISLAND
MARINA & TACKLE
St. James City
239-283-2548

Snook are doing decent in the canals, mainly around dock lights. Most are pretty small. The shallow oyster bars have been producing OK numbers of **redfish**; most folks can't get to them. The **sheepshead** are eating shrimp on jigheads around rocks and docks and in the passes. **Pompano** have been skipped in boat wakes all along the ICW, especially around harder sandbars. Shrimp or silly jigs will work. **Bonnetheads** are all over the flats.

The wind will probably keep most boats in, but if you can get out there are **snappers** and **grunts** on the nearshore reefs, **amberjack** on the wrecks, and **cobia** scattered anywhere you might happen to go (with any luck, they'll just appear next to the boat).

Some larger **trout** have been coming from under the mangroves, where you would expect to catch small snook.

THE FISH COACH'S TIP OF THE WEEK: Many people have been wondering about how snook survive the cold water we've seen over the past week. Different studies have found varying lethal temperatures, ranging from 43 to 55 degrees. The slower the temperature drops, the lower temps the fish can survive. However, there are lots of warmer microclimates that fish can and do seek out. Deeper water is a common refuge because water is a good insulator. When water cools, depth will hold warmth a little longer. Many local canals have depths of 15 feet or more in spots. Other snook move offshore and stay around the reefs and hard bottom areas. This is far more common than most local anglers realize. Some snook don't have the instinct to head to warm water and die on the flats, where temperatures fall rapidly. That's just natural selection doing its job, weeding out the unfit. Despite the chill, snook have been actively feeding in the canals. When the air is cold, get them back in the water as fast as you can. — For more local fishing tips, go to FishCoach.net.

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A BASIC GUIDE TO THE WATERS OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA

LOCAL POINTS OF INTEREST: 1-Bayshore Piers, 2-Laisley Pier, 3-Ponce de Leon Park Pier, 4-The Skating Rink, 5-Alligator Creek Reef (Charlotte Harbor Reef), 6-Matlacha Bridge, 7-Sanibel Lighthouse Pier, 8-Jug Creek, 9-The Phosphate Docks, 10-Danger Reef, 11-Gallagher Cut, 12-The Tailing Flats, 13-Placida Pier / Placida Trestles, 14-Ski Alley (western cut), Rag Alley (eastern cut), 15-Tom Adams Bridge/Ainger Pier, 16-El Jobean Pier, 17-Snook Haven, 18-Venice Municipal Pier, 19-Venice Jetties.

Want to learn more local fishing spots? Tune in to Radio WaterLine on KIX Country 92.9 FM every Saturday from 7 to 9 a.m. for Spot Check! This week's spot will be the Ainger Pier & Tom Adams Bridge.



PUBLIC BOAT RAMPS

- SARASOTA COUNTY**
- Blackburn Pt Boat Launch • 800 Blackburn Pt Rd, Osprey
 - Dallas White Park • 5900 Greenwood Ave, North Port
 - Higel Park • 1330 Tarpon Center Dr, Venice
 - Indian Mound Park • 210 Winsom Ave, Englewood
 - Loreto Bay Access • 800 Loreto Court, Nokomis
 - Manasota Beach Park • 8570 Manasota Key Rd
 - Marine Boat Ramp Park • 301 E. Venice Ave, Venice
 - Marina Park • 7030 Chancellor Blvd, North Port
 - Nokomis Beach Park • 901 Casey Key Rd
 - Snook Park • 5000 E. Venice Ave, Venice

- DESOTO COUNTY**
- Brownville Park • 1885 NE Brownville St
 - Deep Creek Park • 9695 SW Peace River St
 - Desoto Park • 2195 NW American Legion Dr
 - Liverpool Park • 9211 Liverpool Rd
 - Nocatee • 3701 SW County Road 760
 - Lettuce Lake • 8801 SW Reese St

- CHARLOTTE COUNTY**
- Ainger Creek Park • 2011 Placida Rd, Englewood
 - Butterford WaterwayPark • 13555 Marathon Blvd, Port Charlotte
 - Darst Park • 537 Darst Ave, Punta Gorda
 - El Jobean Boat Ramp • 4224 El Jobean Rd, Port Charlotte
 - Harbour Heights Park • 27420 Voyageur Dr, Punta Gorda
 - Hathaway Park • 35461 Washington Loop, Punta Gorda
 - Placida Park • 6499 Gasparilla Rd, Placida
 - Port Charlotte Beach • 4500 Harbor Blvd, Port Charlotte
 - South Gulf Cove Park • 10150 Amicola St, Port Charlotte
 - Spring Lake Park • 3520 Lakeview Blvd, Port Charlotte

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This map is not intended for navigational purposes. Refer to a nautical chart for navigation information.

*Blind Pass is not considered navigable

The perfect boat



ANGLING 101 • ROBERT LUGIEWICZ

Let me guess: You're looking for a boat that will run the flats in 5 inches of water, get you safely out 30 miles in the Gulf after grouper, tow the kids tubing, fit the whole family for cruising, run comfortably and dry in any sea conditions, and return 5 miles to the gallon at 40 knots. Sounds great, right?

But you'll be doing a lot of looking, because that perfect boat doesn't exist. Every boat design involves compromise.

Now, that doesn't mean you can't find a boat that's versatile. You just need to be aware of its limitations. You can take your 18-foot flats skiff 15 miles offshore — as long as it's a very calm day, with no storms or fronts or wind in the forecast. Even then, it's a good idea to use the buddy system and get another boat to come out with you.

A boat is a major purchase, and as with any major purchase you should do your research and then make a careful, informed choice. Spur-of-the-moment decisions are rarely the best ones. Whether you're looking at a new or used boat, always take it for a sea trial (test ride, for the non-nautical). If you can, choose a

breezy day for the trial. A piece of plywood will run smooth and dry on a calm day.

Decide what you want your boat to do. If you want to do some hardcore flats fishing, you need a boat designed to run and float in shallow water. Again, be aware of the vessel's limitations. Flats skiffs are usually small and lightweight, and don't offer a lot of room for comfy cruising with passengers. Maybe you're thinking, "What will I do when the family comes to visit? They won't all fit in this little boat."

Well, that's true. But they aren't the ones making the payment. They're not going put gas in it. They probably won't even help you clean it after the trip. And they won't be there when you're kicking yourself for buying a boat that runs too deep to fish the flats. Better idea: Get the boat that works for you, and rent a big cushy one when the kids come down for a week. They'll be happy for the week, and you can be happy the rest of the year.

Maybe you're looking for a boat that will fish and cruise. Deck boats are good all-rounders. They're similar to pontoon boats, but there's a fiberglass vee-hull under the deck instead

of hollow metal tubes. Fishing-style deck boats usually have passenger seating on the side or center and a trolling motor up front. Cruising-style boats offer seating in the bow as well. Most deck boats will float in about 14 inches of water, and the vee-hull means they can run through rough water when necessary (although it might not be a dry ride).

Some modern pontoon boats have been designed for speed. These boats have pontoons shaped more like canoes than tubes, and are able to actually get up on plane. Pontoon boats boast a lot of space, and that space can be customized almost any way you want it. If you're looking at these boats, be sure to get one built for saltwater use. Freshwater pontoon boats have very short lifespans in marine conditions.

If you're planning to spend a lot of time in the open Harbor or the Gulf, center console bay boats generally offer the driest, most comfortable ride. With deep vee-hulls and concave bows, these vessels are designed to cut through waves and deflect spray away from those on board. Of course, they aren't the best choice in skinny water unless you like spending

time stuck on sandbars.

There are a lot of different boats out there, and it's impossible to determine what a particular vessel can or can't do just by looking at it. Boat design is as much art as it is science (and maybe a little magic). Two boats that look a lot alike can be completely different on the water. You don't want to waste a lot of money on a boat that disappoints.

Your best resource here is other boat owners. Don't just ask the dealer; he wants to sell you a boat. Talk to charter captains, tackle shop staff, people at the marina or boat ramp. Join an Internet forum (start with TheHullTruth.com and Forums.FloridaSportsman.com). There's no such thing as a truly unbiased opinion, but the more info you have, the more likely you are to be happy with your decision in the long term.

Robert Lugiewicz is the manager of Fishin' Frank's Bait & Tackle, located at 4425-D Tamiami Trail in Charlotte Harbor and at 14531 N. Cleveland Ave. in North Fort Myers. Call 941-625-3888 for more information about the shop or for local fishing info, or visit them online at FishinFranks.com.

Photo provided

That's a beautiful offshore boat, but it would be just about useless in the shallow waters of the Harbor. There is no perfect boat.



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AROUND CHARLOTTE HARBOR • CAPT. RALPH ALLEN



Sheepshead musings



Photo provided
Two big, toothy grins.

Ever have song lyrics stuck in your head? How about made-up, nonsensical song lyrics? "I like sheepshead and I cannot lie." (Editor's note: Sir Mix-A-Lot would probably not approve.) What a horrible refrain to have replaying in one's mind. But there it sits, torturing me this morning as it repeats over and over and over again.

Sheepshead are looked upon with disdain by some anglers and are revered by others, but even the most ardent fans of these zebra-striped members of the porgy family can't claim that sheepshead are beautiful fish. They're big-headed and buck-toothed, and the faces of large specimens are often scraped-up and scarred from a lifetime spent chasing crabs and shrimp among rocks, roots and pilings encrusted with sharp-edged barnacles and oysters. Many of the biggest sheepshead are gap-toothed, presumably having broken off some of their chompers on particularly tough-shelled prey. I suspect taxidermists are seldom asked to memorialize sheepshead by creating wall-mounted replicas of these homely fish.

But I do like sheepshead. I like to catch them, I like to eat them, and I like the fact that the best fishing for sheepshead occurs during the winter when it can be tough to catch some of our more glamorous species. When you leave the dock on a winter morning in see-your-breath cold while wearing every warm garment that you own, and you're loath to push the boat up on plane because you know that your eyes will be watering and your cheeks will burn, it will not be a good morning to find hungry snook. But sheepshead don't care about wind chill factor. They're also less affected by discolored water and barometric pressure than most other fish.

Winter is spawning season for sheepshead, and they prepare for their spawn by gathering in schools around hard structures such as pilings, artificial reefs, wrecks and rock ledges. This schooling behavior occurs in the estuaries as well as offshore in the Gulf out to water depths up to about 50 or sometimes 60 feet. The result is that more anglers see and catch more sheepshead during the winter months than at any other time of year, and many of them are large, mature fish that are in ready-to-spawn mode.

There are different theories about exactly how these spawning aggregations form and where the fish come from. Many anglers think that these fish move in from offshore, but I think it's just the opposite. I believe that during the warmer months, sheepshead are simply scattered throughout the backcountry in the estuaries, many of them so far back in the bushes that they are seldom seen. Then

when nature calls on them to prepare for spawning, they work their way out into more open water and start ganging up in places where they are easily found and where they are sometimes quite visible.

Sheepshead are notoriously efficient bait thieves. This is because smaller sheepshead tend to be bait nippers, nibbling away at a hooked bait until they've completed their act of larceny. As they peck away at the bait, they may never give a frustrated angler a good chance for a hookup because they might never get the hook fully inside their mouths. Larger sheepshead are more inclined to suck in an entire bait so that it can be crushed before swallowing, and this offers anglers at least somewhat of a chance for a hookup.

There is much debate about the efficiency of circle hooks for catching different species of fish. My own opinion is that sheepshead are better caught on J-hooks, and that very sharp and strong-shanked J-hooks are best. Anglers who are having trouble hooking sheepshead can often improve their success rate by going to smaller hooks.

Sheepshead eat worms, crustaceans, mollusks and very little else, so it's easy to understand why these creatures make the best sheepshead baits. Fiddler crabs, sand fleas, shrimp, tubeworms, clams and even barnacles are all good choices. Anglers sometimes talk about using oysters for sheepshead bait, but be aware that harvesting oysters for bait is subject to the same regulations as harvesting them to eat, and many of the places where you'd be likely to collect oysters are closed to the harvest of oysters.

Once bait is in hand, all that's required is that a hopeful angler put that bait in front of a sheepshead (even better, a group of sheepshead) and then pay close attention for the faint signs that the bait is being munched. Sheepshead have a very subtle pick-up, and the first sign of a bite is often that the line just feels oddly heavy, or that it starts to move slowly across the current. If a hookset occurs, then it's game on. Large sheepshead are very strong fish, as many an angler has discovered when they find themselves fast to their first 5-pounder.

Since sheepshead eat things like shrimp, crabs and other shellfish, it shouldn't be too surprising that their meat is tender and sweet. But they are a royal pain to fillet due to their heavy scales and very thick ribcage bones. The use of an electric fillet knife really helps with cleaning these guys.

Run timing varies from year to year, but figure that it will peak sometime around late February or early March. This means

that you've got a little time to hone your sheepshead technique, so get out and start practicing.

Let's go fishing!

Capt. Ralph Allen runs the King Fisher Fleet of sightseeing and fishing charter

boats located at Fishermen's Village Marina in Punta Gorda. He is an award-winning outdoor writer and photographer and is a past president of the Florida Outdoor Writers Association. Call him at 941-639-2628 or email Captain@KingFisherFleet.com.

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FROM HOOK TO TABLE • TIM SPAIN



Eat it raw

What the heck is a poke? It's pronounced POE-kay, and it's a staple in Hawaii — and here as well. It's a raw fish salad, with tuna usually being the fish of choice. I love this dish and every time I make one for a guest I always save a bite for myself. The way I like to make it is by first getting the best sashimi grade tuna available and dice it into tiny little blocks and then put it back into the cooler while preparing the Mise en Place to be able to put the dish together.

You're going to have to do some chopping, so find your sharpest chef's knife and gather everything you need before you start to chop. I have watched cooks for years grab one ingredient and prep it, then go get the next one and do the same thing. It drives me crazy. Why not just get a big mixing bowl, take the recipe to the cooler, and gather everything needed to make the dish? I asked a cook that one time, and he said "Chef, you pay me by the hour, so I want to make this last as long as possible" He didn't last long in my kitchen.

After gathering all your ingredients, it's time to start chopping. I suggested the chef's knife because of the tapered edge. It rocks back and forth while chopping, and I like to never lose contact with the cutting board. This way I can make better cuts that

are uniform. Chopping at your food like a crazy person will make your food look like Ray Charles prepped it.

You're going to need something crispy to put your poke on to add another texture. I suggest crispy wonton chips or maybe plantain chips. I have put it on potato chips too, and it works just fine.

The key is to not over-season the poke. You want to be able to taste the tuna as well as all the other ingredients that you took the time to chop, so remember it's easier to add a touch more seasoning than it is to correct an over-seasoned dish. A little chef trick I learned is if something is too salty, try adding just a drop of lemon juice to it. It's not magic, but it often helps.

If the idea of eating raw fresh tuna isn't your thing, you could ask your fish monger to get you some saku block tuna. Saku is frozen to -4 degrees for at least seven days, which will kill and little nasties that could be hiding in it. Saku works just fine, and I have used it many times for poke.

Tim Spain is a Florida native and has years of experience cooking professionally, both in restaurants and in private settings. He offers private catering and personal culinary classes. For more information, visit ChefTimSpain.com or call 406-580-1994.

WaterLine photo by Tim Spain

Raw tuna is best zesty, spicy and a little crunchy.

TUNA POKE

- 1/2 cup mayo
- 1 tsp prepared wasabi
- 1/2 tsp toasted sesame oil
- 1/4 tsp fresh grated ginger
- 1/4 cup fresh chopped cilantro
- 1/2 tsp finely diced fresh jalapeño
- 1/2 tsp toasted sesame seeds
- 1/2 tsp chopped scallions
- Zest of one lime
- 1/2 cup diced avocado
- 1/2 cup diced tomato
- 1/2 lb of the best tuna available

Mix mayo and wasabi together. Set aside. Dice your tuna, place in a bowl, cover and refrigerate. Prep all the other ingredients (a Microplane is great for the ginger and lime, by the way) and put them in a mixing bowl. Add tuna and fold together all ingredients (gently, so you don't smash the avocados). Place poke on wonton chips, plantain chips or potato chips. Top with wasabi mayo and enjoy. Serves 4 as an appetizer.

A clip-n-save seafood recipe provided by



— Recipe by chef Tim Spain



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FLORIDA FAUNA • JOSH OLIVE

Who cooks for you?



WaterLine photo illustration by Josh Olive

A barred owl dives on an unsuspecting cotton rat. Due to their unique feathers, owls are nearly silent in flight and can sneak up on even the wariest prey.

It's an unusual question for a bird of prey to ask, but he wants to know all the same: "Who cooks for you? Who cooks for you all?"

That's what the call of a barred owl sounds like, though the enunciation isn't very clear (you can watch a video of one calling at <https://goo.gl/5Jyo7o>). Despite their inexplicable interrogations, barred owls are near the top of my favorite birds list. Unlike their larger cousins the great horned owls, which prefer to live away from human habitation, barred owls are often heard in suburban neighborhoods. In fact, because their main prey species (rodents and songbirds) do very well around people, barred owls may actually benefit from suburban sprawl.

Because they prefer to live near water, barred owls are at risk from fishing lines that get tangled in trees. They are just one of many species that can be hurt or killed by abandoned line, so make every effort to remove any monofilament or braid that gets stuck in a tree.

Most of the time, owls are heard rather than seen. Barred owls are more likely to be active in the late afternoon than other owls, so they're the species you're most likely to spot. They do have excellent camouflage, though — it's pretty easy to be looking right at one and not see it. A good way to get an owl's attention is to imitate its call, or at least the last two notes (the "you all" part). A barred owl will often call back to you, or at least turn its head and stare in your direction. Either way, you should see the motion if you're looking in the right vicinity.

Barred owls have huge distribution, from Florida north to Canada and west to northern Mexico. In recent years, barred owls have made a push into the Pacific Northwest, where they may be displacing endangered northern spotted owls.

In 2007, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service proposed shooting barred owls to eliminate the competition, which was done on an experimental basis. The experiments did slow the spread of barred owls, and in 2014 the federal government released its spotted owl recovery plan, which includes killing more barred owls.

But the problem isn't really barred owls — the problem is a climate shift and more people living in the region, both of which are making more barred owl habitat and less spotted owl habitat. Shooting barred owls is a poor solution, but since there's no way to reverse the actual causes of spotted owl decline, wildlife managers have decided to blame the birds.

In most of their range, voles make up the bulk of a barred owl's diet. Since voles are uncommon in this part of the state, the owls instead focus on other rodents, especially cotton rats. When the sky is overcast, the barred owl sometimes hunts during daylight hours. This is usually when they take smaller birds, including doves and pigeons. Snakes, grasshoppers and lizards are also potential prey. They've even been known to kill and eat smaller owls — and in turn, barred owls are sometimes preyed on by great horned owls.

If you know where the owls in your neighborhood, it's not difficult to find out exactly what they've been eating. Owls eat their prey whole. To rid their systems of indigestible matter — hair, feathers, bones, etc. — they regularly regurgitate clumps of it. These clumps, called owl pellets, can be picked apart. Trained biologists can tell what species the hairs and teeth in these pellets came from, which not only identifies what the owls are dining on but in what proportions.

In Florida, barred owls nest in mid to late January. Most frequently, the adults will select a cavity in a dead tree. If a suitable hole can't be found, an old squirrel or large bird nest is sometimes appropriated. Barred owls are not nest builders and rarely if ever construct their own. They do, however, usually line the hole with down feathers or palmetto fibers.

The eggs are white, almost round, and usually laid in a clutch of two or three. The time between hatching and fledging is 40 to 45 days, and the parents will feed the young birds for several weeks after they can fly while they learn to hunt. Eventually, the adults will chase their offspring from their territory. Barred owls are homebodies and usually stay in the same area year-round. A pair will often nest in the same hole for years.

Having a resident pair of barred owls for neighbors is one of the many wonderful wildlife experiences you can have here in South-west Florida. And remember, the next time you hear "Who cooks for you?" coming from a nearby tree, don't answer the question. Just ask it back, and make an owly friend.

Josh Olive is a Florida native and amateur naturalist, and has been fascinated by all sorts of wild animals since he was able to walk. If you have questions about living with wildlife, email him at Publisher@WaterLineWeekly.com.



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Reader Photos



Kimberly Plummer got this 30-inch black drum near the Pellam Waterway on a live shrimp.



Doug Rhees with a 31-inch snook caught and released in a Burnt Store Isles canal.



Thomas Voigt with the 34-inch gag he caught aboard the Reef Raider out of Englewood while season was still open.



Ryan White caught this 23-inch, 10-pound tripletail off Osprey.



Bluebird skies, chilly weather, choppy water? No problem for catching sheephead, as demonstrated by Punta Gorda resident Joe Spadafora.



Nick Caciolo with a 21-inch redfish caught on the Myakka River in North Port.



Marjorie Bray of Port Charlotte caught and released her overslot red near Port Charlotte Beach before the cold snap.



Erik Huber was visiting from Indiana and wanted to catch a big fish. Is a 250-pound Golaith grouper big enough, Erik?



Dan Mattingly caught this bass in a Rotonda canal on a Storm WildEye Shad with shrimp Pro-Cure.



Glenn Groff and his son Bill with a catch-and-release snook.



Marc Dingman's big black drum ate a soft plastic under the El Jobean bridge.

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The right rod can help, but no piece of equipment will make you expert — you have to put in the time.

Choosing a fly rod: A hands-on project

ON THE FLY • CAPT. REX GUDGEL

It has happened again: One year disappears and another begins. What will 2018 bring us? Unfortunately, there are very important issues going on in this world that are forced on us every day, and if we were being dealt within the virtues of true concern and common sense they wouldn't be issues to begin with.

I'm not a politician or political analyst, nor do I want to be. I'm just a charter captain, analyzing tides and the actions of fish during these natural occurrences in order to help my clients catch a few fish and have a day of escape, learning and relaxation punctuated by moments of adrenalin rushes. So no talk today of who has a bigger button to push, disappearing seagrasses or polluted water running in the wrong directions. Today, in the beginning stages of this New Year, let's talk about and analyze what you may need to begin your year on the water.

Everybody asks about "the gear" to have. What's the best fly rod? What rod should I buy? What's the best reel to put on that rod? Will it help me cast farther and catch more fish?

We will start with that last question and get it out of the way. The answer is definitely no. No rod, reel or line will not make you a better fisherman or caster — only you can make yourself better! I will be addressing this issue in columns to come.

Now let's address that first question — what's the best rod for you? This is such a loaded and lopsided question. Many variables go into trying to make this decision, and there isn't one clear answer (if there were, think about all the rod designers who would be out of work). Let's look at just one rod attribute — weight.

We can talk about the rod's true weight (what it weighs on a scale). We can evaluate swing weight. The term swing weight has been well established in many sports using a bat racket or club. In those sports the term swing weight means the moment of inertia around a predetermined axis — in our case, the inertia of a single-handed fly rod around the axis at the butt of a fly rod. In terms that I can understand, we could look at how the weight is distributed and how the rod feels in your hand.

Then we can talk about other variables, such as tapers, resins, graphite, graphite layout and the part they play in where the rod flexes, how much it flexes, will it track properly, generate line speed and how that pertains to action and rod durability. Then, if we decide to change reels or even put on a different fly line, we have to start all over because we have added a new variable into the formula. I don't know about all of you, but I just got a math headache.

Then we must take into account the biggest variable of all — the caster themselves. Children, adults or senior citizens? Guys or gals? Experienced, intermediate, or rank beginners? We are not robots that do the exact same movement, with the exact same computerized and calculated grip, stroke length, speed or stopping point. So how do we calculate and allow for human error in the formula for the "best rod?"

Just for fun, let's throw in a couple of qualities that have nothing to do with performance but still draw consideration when people buy a rod: Aesthetics (is it pretty? does it look expensive?) and price.

When it comes right down to the nitty-gritty, color probably won't make or break the sale of a rod. If it looks decent and performs well, then the requirements have been met. Sure, there are people out there that have the obsessive-compulsive need to have everything match.

I used to ("used to" being the key words here) fish with a buddy who got so bad that he and his wife had to have all of their gear match. Waders, vests, boots, gloves, shirts, jackets socks (even though you can't see them), rods, reels, buffs and lines . . . not just having the same brands, but also the same colors or at the very least complementary colors. Their Labrador, Murphy, even had to have matching dog collar! If they could have, they would have special-ordered rods and reels in specific colors to complete the ensemble.

Now, price can be a point of contention for a lot of us. For the sake of the column, we will set an entry level rod mark of \$150. At the other end, we now have the most expensive production fly rod to date. The Gloomis Asquith at \$1,100.

There are many great rods that will fit your needs that run through that \$950 price spread. To pick one out, you have to cast them. Don't — I repeat, do not — read a bunch of blogs and reviews about rods and then buy one online or run to a big box store to make your purchase. Use all that information to start your own search. Go to a fly fishing specialty shop and put your hands on the rods. Cast them. How does it feel to you?

If you don't feel confident in your own skills, there will be someone there to help you make an educated decision after you cast it.

Better yet, take a casting lesson or two before making that initial purchase. Learn how to get the "feel" of a rod first. Whether I'm teaching beginners or advanced students, I can tell within 5 minutes what type of rod they should be casting. Not the brand of rod, but the action type. I can then help steer them toward the proper action and explain why they should be using it. Then I can lead them to different brands and price points.

After that, you will feel much more confident in going to the fly shop and casting the rods on the rack. I could even meet you there to help out. We have a few fly shops in the area. The one with the biggest selection of rods, reels and tying material by far is West Wall Outfitters in Port Charlotte. Capt. Josh Greer, the owner, carries six different brands of rods. The prices range from \$40 to that sky-high \$1,100. The shop has about 50 rods in stock that you can put your hands on and cast.

I know some of you were hoping for a simple answer, but there just isn't one. The good news is that finding the right rod is just the beginning of many days on the water escaping, learning, relaxing, and having those periodic adrenalin rushes caused by a tugging fish caught on your new rod.

Stay fly.

Capt. Rex Gudgel is a fly fishing guide in the Boca Grande area and an International Federation Of Fly Fishers Master Certified casting instructor. If you'd like to get casting lessons, book a trip or just need more fly fishing info, contact him at 706-254-3504 or visit BocaGrandeSlamFlyFishing.com or CastWithRex.com.



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ANGLING 201 • CAPT. MIKE MYERS

WaterLine photo by Josh Olive

For a shark fanatic, winter can be a very long season indeed.



Spring shark dreams

The last 10 days or so have been downright cold here in Southwest Florida — unless you're a snowbird, that is. For just folks just arriving to your winter roost, I'd guess this weather is fair to middling for you. But let me tell ya, our fish and the hordes of thin-skinned Floridians have been freezing our butts off.

Because of the wind and cold, I have been stuck at the dock way more than I ever care to be, and my poor wife has to deal with the repercussions of my lack of water time. I'm not saying that I'm hard to be around after I haven't been fishing for a few days, but . . . I am.

They say (whoever they are) that there are pros and cons to everything that life has to throw at you. But when it comes to not being able to get out on the water for more than a few days, the pros become very hard to find. Within the first 48 hours of this recent chill, all of my rods and reels were washed, oiled, re-rigged and put away so that I'm ready to go when the weather allows.

Now at hour 49, I started getting a little antsy. By the end of day four, I pretty much just went into a vegetative state, doing nothing more than dreaming about all the fish I'll catch in the upcoming spring season. Seeing as the weather has been "sporty" for way too long, I've had a lot of time to think about the spring fishing — which has led me to write this column on early-season shark fishing.

If normal weather patterns return here in 2018, then I should be targeting sharks in the Harbor as early as the last week in February. One of my favorite early season target areas is around Robert's Little Rocks. If you want to know where this area is, you'll have to head over to Fishin' Franks and ask Robert himself where his little rocks are. I also like to target the ICW just north of Redfish Pass.

I'm not much on chumming, but in late February and early March, I do anchor up in these areas and toss over a few store-bought chum bags. I have found that if I toss one rod out with a free-lined chunk of jack and another one out with a balloon attached about 6 feet above the bait, I do better. If I find that I keep getting runs on the free-lined rod, then I'll take the balloon off the other rod (and vice versa).

Patience pays when you're targeting early-season sharks, but the payoff can be large. Don't go checking your baits every 10 minutes;

let them sit and draw those fish to them. These areas produce some rather large lemon and spinner sharks, so they're well worth a try.

I primarily run 5000 series Daiwa Saltist reels spooled with 50-pound J-Braid and 7-foot Reaper Rods during the early season. Why spinning tackle? For one, it's more sporting. For two, it's not unheard of to have an early school of tarpon just happen to show up in your chum slick. I'm partial to my Saltists because they've never let me down, but any spinner in the 5000 to 6500 sizes will work just fine. If conventional reels are more your style, then by all means feel free. It's not quite as challenging, but a Senator 4/0 or Daiwa Black Gold 30 will get the job done for sure.

Now for the most important part of your setup: Your wire leader. I personally like No. 9 AFW Tooth Proof wire, which is 105 pound test, but that's my preference. You can go lighter and possibly get more bites, or heavier and be able to manhandle your fish with a little more confidence. That's up to you.

As far as hooks and swivels go, don't go cheap. There is nothing worse than losing a big fish to a straightened hook or a broken swivel. Owner and Gamakatsu 3X hooks are always a good choice, but VMC and Daiichi also make very sturdy hooks. Whether you select a J-hook or circle is just up to your preference. I use both and really don't see much of a difference in hookups. Quality barrel swivels are worth the extra money if you ask me. You can buy a cheap swivel, but the outcome usually doesn't end in the angler's favor.

I know I'm jumping the gun here talking about early-season shark fishing, but what else do I have to do as I sit here on my couch waiting for this weather to warm up and the wind to stop blowing? Trout and sheepshead are fun, but if I'm going to dream about fishing, it's going to be for something bigger. I should have asked Santa for an early spring.

Tight lines.

Capt. Mike Myers, owner and operator of ReelShark Charters, is a full-time Charlotte Harbor guide. Having fished the waters all along the Southwest Florida coast for nearly 40 years, he has the experience to put anglers on the fish they want. His specialties are sharks, tarpon and the nearshore Gulf waters. For more info, visit ReelShark.com or call Capt. Mike at 941-416-8047.

WARNING



DO NOT FEED THE PELICANS

Florida Administrative Code 68A-4.001 (4): The intentional feeding or the placement of food that attracts pelicans and modifies the natural behavior of the pelican so as to be detrimental to the survival or health of a local population is prohibited.



This message brought to you by



Photo provided

There are squirrels everywhere, so it's probably not a big deal if some got dropped off at the wrong address.



PEACE RIVER WILDLIFE CENTER • ROBIN JENKINS, DVM

Special delivery

The rehabbers at Peace River Wildlife Center did an amazing job in 2017. They treated 2,443 injured, ill, or orphaned wild animals — another record for patient intake. Thanks to the support of the community, PRWC has been able to hire a few more part-time employees to help with patient care, but we still rely on our army of volunteers to get us through the day.

The rehabbers are tasked with managing the care of the patients and residents at PRWC. They spend their days tending to the weak and broken. Is it any wonder that their compassion does not extend to people? At least not to me. I'm pretty sure they are trying to get me killed. They often send me on rescues or releases into dubious conditions.

I was recently given a nest box full of baby squirrels that we had raised at PRWC. They had been in home care for weeks, then placed in outdoor habitats to get them used to being outside. When the time came for their release back into the wild, we locked them into the nest box in their habitat, reattached it to a tree at a location where at least one of them was originally found, and then opened the box to allow them to explore their new (old) home at their leisure.

The directions I was given to find this nirvana seemed fairly straightforward. The homeowners at the given address were out of town for a few days, but gave us permission to return the squirrels. There was no ladder

onsite, so I had to bring my own. Not an ideal situation, but nothing I couldn't handle.

When I got there, the garage door was wide open as were the windows. This was a rural community, but no one is going to leave for a few days and leave everything wide open. I had either been given the wrong address (wouldn't be the first time) or they hadn't left yet. I rang the doorbell, and hearing nothing, knocked. At this point I probably should have left the property. I, of course, just started hiking around, looking for a good tree in which to attach the squirrel box.

Around the first corner there was a ladder leaning up against the side of the house. Further proof that I was in the wrong place. But, having found a fun tree to climb, I gathered my equipment and began the task. Balancing a drill and a couple screws, plus the nest box full of juvenile squirrels careening around inside, I climbed up the ladder to a fork in the tree where I could lean the box while attaching it to the trunk.

Mission accomplished, I returned my gear to my car and placed the homeowner's ladder where I found it. Still no one threatening me with a shotgun. No vicious attack Rottweiler coming at me á la Cujo. I'm still pretty sure I had the wrong place. Won't these people be surprised when they get home from work and find a weird little wooden box in their tree?

While the rehabbers failed to get me shot or

mauled by a guard dog on this adventure, I did get two screws in one tire. So, they did have some satisfaction. Oh, how I love badly rutted dirt roads in my Volt — which was made for minimum wind resistance, not the Baja 1000.

Happy to have provided some entertainment for my overworked staff back at PRWC, I have finished tallying the numbers for 2017. Our patient total of 2,443 reflects an increase of approximately 10 percent over last year. We had a few more mammals than birds this year, an unusual occurrence. Since PRWC's educational exhibits include mostly birds, many people thank we treat only avian species. Our 2017 statistics show we treated 44 percent birds, 48 percent mammals and 8 percent reptiles.

We saw a total of 113 different bird species, 27 different mammals and 28 different reptiles. The top three types of birds were mourning doves, northern mockingbirds and common grackles. The three most common mammals seen were eastern cottontails, eastern grey squirrels and Virginia opossums. Gopher tortoises comprise the vast majority of reptiles we see.

One of the most important figures at year's end is patient outcome. Overall, PRWC had a positive outcome for 49 percent of our patients and a negative outcome for 51 percent. A positive outcome includes patients that recovered well enough to be released, or were trans-

ferred to another facility for continued care or to become an education resident.

It is an unfortunate fact that some patients are dead on arrival, or very nearly so. After removing patients that do not survive the first 24 hours of care, our positive outcome increases to 82 percent. That number is increased over last year, and that is definitely good news.

Thanks to the community that supports us both financially and by volunteering their time, PRWC is able to help the injured, ill, and orphaned wild animals in and around Charlotte County. A huge thanks to our employees who, while being paid to do the job, could be making much more money if employed by a for-profit company. Wildlife rehabilitation is a labor of love and we all love the animals we are able to help and all the other people who assist us in that endeavor.

Peace River Wildlife Center is a nonprofit organization, dedicated to the care, preservation and protection of Charlotte County's native wildlife since 1978. They are open seven days a week year-round, including holidays. Tours are offered from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. at their rehab center (3400 Ponce de Leon Pkwy, Punta Gorda). PRWC receives no government funding and relies entirely on private donations. For more info, visit PeaceRiverWildlifeCenter.org, email PeaceRiverWildlife@yahoo.com or call 941-637-3830.

FISH PROFILE • SILVER MOJARRA (SILVER JENNY)

SIZE LIMIT: n/a

BAG LIMIT (per harvester per day): 100 lb

SEASON: No closure.

LOCAL AVERAGE SIZE: 3 to 5 inches

MAXIMUM SIZE: About 10 inches

FOOD VALUE: Probably very good, but rarely eaten due to their small size.

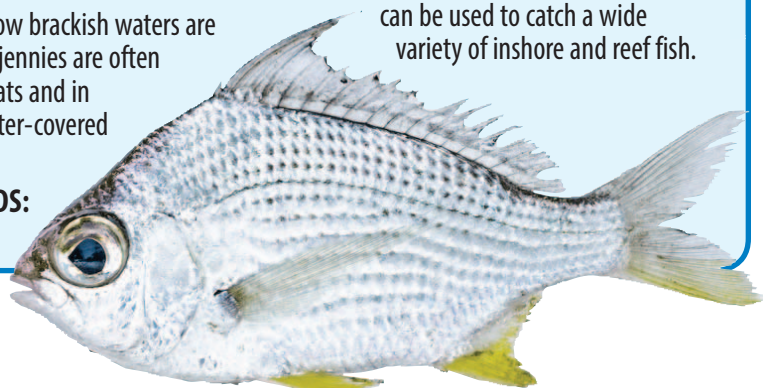
HABITAT: Shallow brackish waters are preferred. Silver jennies are often found on grassflats and in canals along oyster-covered seawalls.

LEGAL METHODS: Hook and line,

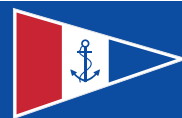
castnet, seine, dip net, spear, gig. Treble hooks OK with natural bait. Snagging OK.

FISHING TIPS: Rarely caught on hook and line, but will take bits of shrimp on very small hooks. Sometimes netted or trapped alongside pinfish.

NOTES: An old-time favorite tarpon bait, silver mojarra (say moe-HARR-uh) can be used to catch a wide variety of inshore and reef fish.



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Some big numbers



A LIFE ON THE WATER • CAPT. VAN HUBBARD



Photo provided

Phebe Cosmo of North Port caught and released this beautiful baby gag grouper near Cape Haze. Just by being on the water, we all have an impact on the places we love.

Talk is cheap. Here are some actual statistics that may catch your attention.

I try to do some research, gather facts, and feedback to back up my observations. You should do the same. Try reading on the NOAA Fisheries site (Fisheries.noaa.gov) to garner information. You can select Gulf Council pages for specific Gulf management rules and info. Invest some time to better understand the system before you complain or criticize. There are many balls in play here — they are trying to be as fair as possible, follow their guidelines, and manage for tomorrow. Please educate yourselves before jumping into discussions.

We have 100-plus species of saltwater fish to chase in the Gulf. It's easy to key the red snapper for example because of all the controversy. Just note in the following information that red and gray (mangrove) snapper only are 6 percent of the fishing activity each. Yes, this is the most vocal aspect of our fisheries but red snapper account for only 6 percent of total efforts. Sheepshead is a 7 percent effort fishery, but because it doesn't require big expensive boats, it's forgotten.

Redfish and speckled trout account for a third each, totaling two-thirds of the Gulf fishing efforts. While the powers that rule fight over a fish that only concerns 6 percent of anglers, everything else is on a back burner. I know here in Southwest Florida we need to work on recovering our red and trout populations.

Along the U.S. Gulf Coast, the economic impact of saltwater Gulf fishing in 2015 was \$10.4 billion, covering trips and durable goods for 2.5 million Gulf anglers. About half of this — almost \$7 billion dollars — was on the west coast of Florida! The rest divided among the other four Gulf-bordering states. The industry supported 61,278 jobs in Florida, and then about

as many spread out among the other four Gulf States. These are significant figures to consider — that's a lot of money and a big impact.

Many of us want to believe that recreational anglers don't affect fish stocks. Try more than 20 million trips on for size, then you can begin imagining our impacts. These numbers should begin to shift your focus. We all add pressure and take fish, and of course that affects our fish stocks. Remember that most of these efforts fishing are concentrated into populated areas, adding to our influences.

Please also keep in mind Florida's Gulf coast is half of the entire U.S. Gulf fishery. Let's consider adding the Keys and east coast numbers; fishing is critical to our whole state's economy! And this is only salt water, not including largemouth and peacock bass, etc. With so much to lose, don't we need to address water quality issues and pollution problems?

Also note that more than 90 percent of this effort is in state waters. In several cases, it's 100 percent for all intents and purposes. Who fishes redfish, trout or snook in federal waters?

Breaking some of this down: We have more than 100 species of saltwater fish to enjoy catching. This is 2015 info, and each year we have grown in both population and visitors. In 2017, we had about 23 million residents and another 115 million visitors. Can you ponder how much impact almost 140 million people have on our environments?

I'm begging us to discover ways to minimize our negative effects on our state's natural resources, to protect the reasons most of came for and live here to enjoy. If we continually neglect these problems, they just grow and add additional risk and costs later.

Right now, as this cold wave overcomes our state, I'm praying it breaks

up the red tide bloom we had around Christmas. Red tide has been bouncing around for several months — mostly in background concentrations, but with some patchy harmful blooms killing fish. Sporadic concentrations have induced significant fish kills locally and throughout the area. We have received some negative press about this problem. If the media decides to blow this up, the negative exposure could devastate our busy season.

It's predicted to warm up for the next week. Time will tell what we have to play with then. I'm looking forward to some good trout action, since cold waters concentrate the fish we have. Any redfish around will be available. Sheepshead action should be improving significantly. Expect to see them schooling up any time. It's usually later, but this is a crazy year.

Outside action will be productive whenever we can safely get into deeper Gulf waters. Remember that gag season is now closed. We might have some red grouper, and snapper action should be good on natural hard bottom. I find dead cut bait works better in colder waters. It's my belief the stronger scent travels better. Always keep your terminal gear to a minimum for the most fishy results. AJs are open until Jan. 27 in federal waters only. State waters are closed for AJs, so don't stop to fish if you have any in the box.

Enjoy the fair-weather days and be safe. We do have some good action when it's safe. And remember, you can't catch fish if you don't go fishin', so let's go fishin' soon.

Capt. Van Hubbard is a highly respected outdoor writer and fishing guide. He has been a professional USCG-licensed year-round guide since 1976, and has been fishing the Southwest Florida coast since 1981. Contact him at 941-468-4017 or VanHubbard@CaptVan.com.

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Chilly memories

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Well, that's one way to catch a bass.



TOURNAMENT BASSIN' • GREG BARTZ



Most of my regular readers know that I am originally from Wisconsin. Raised in the shadows of Lambeau Field, I had the pleasure of living through many frigid winters. Blech! Last week is about as cold in Florida as I hope it ever gets, and I sure hope it doesn't repeat itself too often.

Those of you who have lived up north, you know about shoveling your way out of your house from the inside, allowing the water to drip at night from all of your faucets to keep the pipes from freezing, plugging your car into a heater to avoid frozen lines in your engine — all sorts of tricks to keep you from basically losing your sanity in relentless cold weather. I'd just as soon forget them.

I can remember one good thing about the frigid cold, and that was ice fishing. Now, let's make sure we understand something here. Personally, I love being able to jump into the Ranger on any given weekend in Florida 12 months out of the year and go catch bass. To me, that has become a necessity in life. But an

ice fishing trip with the fellas was a fun thing to do every once in a while. As I grew older, ice fishing became much more . . . what's the word I am looking for — comfortable.

When I was young, we used to get dropped off at Shawano Lake with our wagon full of tip-ups, a hand-powered ice auger, a tent, and a packed lunch from one of my grandmas (depending on which one we were staying with at the time). We would grab our gear and head out, walking across the lake until we found a spot to start drilling holes in the ice and set up our tent. Once all of the tip-ups were set, we would get the tent up to get out of the cold and wait for a bite. One year, the local sports fishing guy on one of the TV channels came out and saw us setting up and came over to interview us. We thought we were something then.

As time went on, we graduated up to fishing in an ice shanty with our high school buddies. That had a wood-burning stove, and the ice holes were inside the shanty so we didn't even have to go outside to catch fish. Plus,

we learned you could lower your beverages of choice down into the icy waters to keep them cold. How's that for innovative? There was nothing better than sitting around with your buddies, listening to the Packers game on the radio, playing a little poker, and maybe catching a few fish.

All that is behind me now. To be honest, as much fun as those times were, I don't miss them today. As a matter of fact, like I stated earlier, I hope we don't see this kind of cold for a good long while. I do believe that my blood has thinned out. The cold is nowhere near as welcome as it once was, and I like fishing in shorts. So you can take this cold weather back up north for those who actually like to live in it. Today, I'm more worried about lines in the RV freezing up, and we simply can't have that.

I know all of you folks from the northern territories are probably laughing at us Floridians. I get it — we don't know cold, right? Well, I lived it, I don't like it anymore, and I don't want any part of it. In my opinion, north

is on the northern side of I-4. And I am close enough to it that I can see I-4 less than a mile out my front window through a huge field. In other words, I am as far north as I care to be.

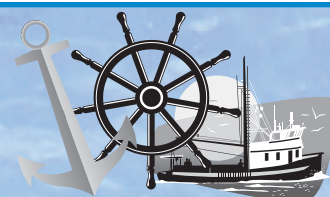
Tomorrow we kick off our new bass club season with a club meeting at a Beef O'Brady's in Seffner. I can't wait. Fortunately, the weather will be changing, and low to mid 70s are expected for the upcoming week. Just in time, because our first tournament is Jan. 13 on the Harris Chain of Lakes. I would prefer not to freeze on my very first tournament of the year. Besides, that lake is tough enough to fish even when you can find bass, much less hunt around when it's freezing cold.

So here's to memories, both new and old — and hopefully making some real good memories in this upcoming fishing season.

Greg Bartz is a tournament bass fisherman based in Lakeland. Greg fishes lakes throughout Florida's Heartland with his wife and tournament partner, Missy. Contact him at Greg.Bartz@SummitHoldings.com.



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Upscale pontoons gain popularity



Photo provided

Slowpoke pontoons are speeding up these days.

JUPITER, Fla. (AP) — Pontoon boats — those flat-decked vessels used for everything from dancing to fishing to water sliding into the Intracoastal Waterway — are becoming more popular.

"Pontoons fit more passengers than regular boats. They are affordable for more people. They are more comfortable. They have more shade. They sip gas," said Bret Beach, owner of Beach Water Sports, a company that rents the vessels along the ICW on Florida's East Coast, just north of the Palm Beach County line.

Once thought of as floating lawn chairs, pontoon boats are growing in versatility and popularity. Some have bars. Mini-kitchens. Bathrooms. Televisions. They pull water-skiers.

"The type of boats is constantly shifting. It depends on the price of gas. What type of fishing is popular. How well the economy is doing," said Chuck Collins, executive director of the Marine Industries Association of Palm Beach County.

A decade or so ago, pontoon boats were the ugly duckling of the boating industry. No more, according to the National Marine Manufacturers Association.

Pontoon boats led the recreational marine industry out of the Great Recession and the worst boating sales slump in decades. Sales have been growing steadily. Pontoons now represent about one-third of sales of new boats, according to the National Marine Manufacturers Association.

American builders sold a total of 49,829 pontoon boats during the 2016 calendar year. That's almost a 10 percent increase over the number of pontoon boats sold during 2015. And in 2015, there was an increase of about nine percent from the previous year, according to the NMMA.

Why? Price is one reason. A new 26-foot pontoon boat costs about \$25,000. A new single-engine outboard 26-foot motor boat with a center console the same length would start at about three times that much.

"Pontoon boats are introducing younger people to boating. Pontoon boats are very popular with families. They like to go to a sandbar or freshwater lake and totally relax," said Collins.

Comfort is another factor. Pontoons are easier to get in and out of from a dock. There's more room for coolers and other boat stuff. There's more seating for passengers than on a V-hulled boat the same size.

Usually about 22 to 28 feet long, they rely on two air-filled aluminum pontoons to float. Much of the flat surface is covered by a canopy. They usually have engines that can push them to about 15 to 20 miles per hour.

Then there are boats with three pontoons. They are called — what else? — tritoons. Most of these vessels have pontoons shaped

more like standard boat hulls, allowing them to get on plane and move across the water faster — some as fast as 50 miles an hour or more. They are more stable than twin pontoons.

The tradeoff is tritoons are not as maneuverable as twin pontoon boats. They require larger trailers. And larger docks.

And there are big pontoon boats, like the 50-foot Manatee Queen that brings up to about 45 passengers for sightseeing tours on the ICW off Jupiter.

Then there are party pontoons, such as the Pontiki, docked on the Jupiter River just south of Guanabanas restaurant. Advertised as a "floating tiki bar," the 28-foot pontoon boat has a refrigerator, wet bar, grill, television and stereo. Beer and wine are available. Up to six passengers pay \$30 each per hour.

"My most popular events are bachelorette parties," said co-owner Tom D'Alessandro.

Docking his 26-foot pontoon boat at the public boat ramp at Harbourside Place on a recent afternoon, Jimmy Haywood said price was the main reason he bought his twin pontoon boat.

Haywood, 36, a traffic engineer from Port Salerno, fits up to a dozen people comfortably. They can bring fishing rods, towels, snorkels, fins, coolers and other stuff.

More stability means fewer people get seasick. He uses way less gas than his pals with V-hulled boats, he said.

"I'm less worried about the little ones falling overboard," he said, tapping the thigh-high side rails that surround the inside of the craft.

There are disadvantages, too. Most pontoons don't go as fast as other motorboats. Their turn radius is not as tight (in other words, they don't handle as well). They aren't safe on rough waters. That means no grouper fishing or offshore hunting for lobster.

But fishing is popular on pontoon boats in the Intracoastal Waterway and inland lakes, not only in Florida but other states from Minnesota to Maine. Many pontoon boats come equipped with fishing rod holders, fish-finder mounts, small anchors and other fishing gear.

Fans say fishing on a pontoon boat is more productive. A pontoon boat is stable so it doesn't spook fish as does a rocking V-hulled boat. And the flat surface gives fishermen more room to move around.

Pontoon boat drafts may be as shallow as eight inches, far less than most V-hulled boats. That reduces risk of running aground and potential hull damage while fishing or stopping at a sand bar.

"Pontoon boats are great for a family or group going out for a few hours on the Intracoastal Waterway or on a lake. I've been renting boats for 30 years. I see more pontoons now than ever," said Beach.

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Salt and pepper to taste
Creole seasoning blend
1 small tomato, chopped
4 green onions, thinly sliced

A clip-n-save seafood recipe provided by

WaterLine

— Recipe from
FishRecipe.org

Spray a 9x13-inch baking dish with cooking spray; add spinach. If necessary to make the spinach fit into the baking dish, steam or saute the spinach for a minute or two to wilt slightly. Sprinkle spinach with salt and pepper and onion powder add the chicken broth. Sprinkle fillets lightly with salt, pepper, and Creole seasoning. Arrange the fillets over the spinach and sprinkle with chopped tomato and sliced green onion. Cover the baking dish with foil and bake at 350°F for 20 to 25 minutes, or until fish flakes easily with a fork. Serves 4.

FISH PROFILE • DOG SNAPPER

SIZE LIMIT: 12" min. in state waters; n/a in federal waters

BAG LIMIT (per harvester per day): 10 within the aggregate bag of 10 snappers

SEASON: No closure.

LOCAL AVERAGE SIZE: 1 to 3 lb

WORLD RECORD: 24 lb, 0 oz

FOOD VALUE: As with other snappers, very good. The mild white flesh is versatile and can be baked, fried or poached.

HABITAT: Inshore when young, reefs and hard bottom from 10 to 120 feet deep when mature.

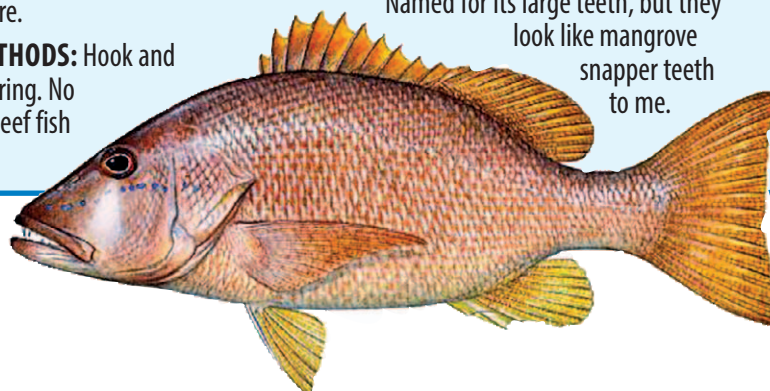
LEGAL METHODS: Hook and line or spearing. No snagging. Reef fish rules apply.

Non-offset circle hooks are required when using natural baits and a dehooking device must be available and used when needed.

FISHING TIPS: Live or fresh cut fish and shrimp are readily taken. As with other snappers, heavy chumming and light leaders are advised to get the bigger, more wary fish feeding.

NOTES: Very similar in appearance to a brightly colored mangrove snapper. Adult fish can be distinguished by a pale streak extending downward from each eye (almost like the fish has been crying).

Named for its large teeth, but they look like mangrove snapper teeth to me.



Gun on the boat



AT THE RANGE • BILLY CARL

Why take a gun on a boat? Well, I don't think target shooting on your favorite sandbar is a good idea, but I have done some duck hunting over at Okeechobee in an air boat. I guess if you had a large boat and could mount a clay pigeon thrower on it, you could break some clay birds under ideal conditions while offshore with no other boats in sight. There's always defense of self and property.

Guns have of course been used to dispatch unruly sharks next to the boat, but even the commercial guys I know hardly do this anymore. It's just a lot easier to simply snip the leader and let him go about his business. But I have to admit that in my days as a commercial longline fisherman I took revenge on many hooked sharks that had taken 50-pound bites out of a hooked swordfish or tuna before I could get to it. Now, before all you anti-commercial fishermen folks set fire to my column, I never set any gear inside of 50 fathoms of water and actually received a number of awards from Woods Hole and Mote Marine Laboratory for tagging and releasing many species of fish. I worked in conjunction with these people on several research projects, tagging and releasing marlin, sailfish, sharks and other species. I fished the waters from the Grand Banks to the Amazon Basin, and all of the Caribbean and the Gulf of Mexico. The data I collected for these folks was helpful in conservation efforts.

Anyway, you know how I am all about gun safety, and one thing I learned early on is that handling a gun on a boat is a lot different than onshore. Constant movement of the vessel can affect safety in a big way. Slippery deck conditions and wind and weather make handling a gun on a boat a whole different ballgame. Close or cramped quarters on deck or in the cabin require extra consideration and training in order to safely deploy a gun. For self-defense, a shotgun is often chosen for use on a yacht or boat. What many people don't realize that handling a shotgun, even a short-barreled tactical model, in a cramped area like a boat cabin or passageway requires some specialized training. If you don't believe me, take your prized Mossberg or Remington tactical gun aboard unloaded and run some practice scenarios getting the gun out of its rack or case and trying to acquire a target picture in the dark. It's a little harder than you probably thought, and did you sweep anyone in the process? Training and practice, my friend, training and practice.

OK, so were going to take a gun on a boat. First of all, understand that the marine environment is hard on everything, including firearms. Of course, a stainless steel gun will survive a whole lot better in a salty environment, but they are not immune to serious problems in the case of salt water intrusion. If you keep a gun on a boat and it stays there, you will have a continual battle fighting corrosion and rust. Keeping the gun wrapped in an oil-impregnated rag or towel helps somewhat, but it's still a pain. Corrosion in a marine environment is relentless. Some of your home-defense shotguns and handguns are marinated and will hold up pretty well, but even these will need twice the maintenance of a gun that stays away from salt water. We all know that when operating a boat salt spray is everywhere. The salt gets into everything, and it will definitely reach your gun no matter how hard you try to prevent it.

Another consideration is where to keep your gun on the boat. As far as concealed carry, you're going to have a hard time holstering it in your Speedo. A glove compartment or console will work, or you could even mount a holster in a convenient place near you or under the console in a center-console boat. It's going to have to endure a lot of pounding, so some type of retention holster would be a must. You will have to adapt to what you have to deal

with in these situations. When you come off the water and go home, your gun, like everything else, must be attended to right away or you will have a pile of rust and corrosion and frozen parts in no time flat.

What does the law say about carrying a gun on your vessel? Your self-defense rights under the Castle Doctrine and the "stand your ground" rule apply in any means of conveyance, which your motorized vessel would fall under. There has been a recent change in this rule that will not allow you to use Castle Doctrine defense if you are in a small non-motorized boat like a canoe or kayak. You would still have the right to concealed carry with a permit or securely encased possession, but would not have the benefits of the Castle Doctrine rules. If you do not understand the Castle Doctrine rules and you carry a gun, your trainer failed you and you could be in for major problems if something bad should happen. Get additional training or do some reading in Jon Gutmacher's book "Florida Firearms: Law, Use and Ownership." This is the bible of Florida firearms law and should be required reading for everyone who owns a firearm.

In a regular motorboat, similar rules apply as in your vehicle with some slight variation. Once you're outside the limit of state waters (9 nautical miles on our coast) you are in federal waters and state rules do not apply. In federal and international waters, you can do almost anything you want — short of piracy, shooting at other people or their boats, killing protected marine life or having a machine gun. I warn you though that in this era of drug trafficking, piracy, immigration violations, human smuggling and so on, don't try the patience of the U.S. Coast Guard, Customs or Border Patrol. If you do, you're going to have a very bad experience.

If a boat from one of these agencies approaches, you should hail them on VHF Ch. 16. Once you make contact, they may or may not switch you to another channel. If they intend to board you, follow the directions carefully. As a general rule they will ask if you have weapons aboard and other pertinent questions. Unload your weapons and place them in a visible place, like on a towel or pad on the deck or in the cabin, away from where everyone is standing. This will also help keep them from flying around if the sea conditions are rough. Assemble your people on the deck area, usually in the stern where they can be plainly seen. When the boarding party approaches is not usually necessary to help them. They are highly trained and usually don't need or want any ropes or assistance. What they really want is to see everyone together in a clear area with their hands in plain sight. This is not a time to be handling guns. If you are new to this type of boarding, it can be a bit scary and intimidating — welcome to the world the way it is today. Once aboard, they will secure the boat and the chief or the man in charge will ask for the captain and tell him what he intends to do. As a distant water fishermen and yacht delivery captain, I have been involved in probably a hundred of these boardings, and as long as nobody does something foolish with a gun, having one on board is no big deal.

In local waters, our FWC officers will board you in a similar though maybe less formal way. They are concerned with safety, drugs, BUI, fishing violations and other law enforcement concerns. My friend Officer Barry Shaw told me he expects cooperation, and though the law does not require you to tell him you are carrying concealed or have a gun on the boat, he would rather that he knows ahead of time before he boards the boat. Chances are he is going to be going through lockers, coolers and maybe some compartments — it's better he know if there is a gun is that in one of these places. Officer Shaw



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Scott, Nelson scorn Trump drilling plan

By Jim Turner
The News Service Of Florida

Gov. Rick Scott and U.S. Sen. Bill Nelson, widely expected to battle this year for Nelson's Senate seat, said Jan. 4 they both intend to fight a Trump administration plan to open previously protected parts of the Atlantic Ocean and eastern Gulf of Mexico to offshore oil and gas drilling.

Scott said he has requested a meeting with Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke to discuss opposition to President Donald Trump's effort to expand domestic energy production.

"Based on media reports, it is likely that the Department of the Interior will consider Florida as a potential state for offshore oil drilling — which is something I oppose in Florida," Scott said in a prepared statement shortly before Zinke unveiled the drilling proposal. "I have already asked to immediately meet with Secretary Zinke to discuss the concerns I have with this plan and the crucial need to remove Florida from consideration."

Scott was not the only Florida Republican criticizing the proposal.

U.S. Rep. Vern Buchanan, a Republican from Longboat Key, called the proposal "reckless, misguided and potentially catastrophic to Florida."

"As the state with the longest coastlines in the continental United States, Florida is especially vulnerable to oil spills," Buchanan said. "Have we forgotten so soon the devastating damage caused by the Deepwater Horizon disaster in 2010?"

But the Florida Petroleum Council, an industry group, hailed the Trump administration move as a way to benefit Florida consumers by potentially creating jobs and additional government revenue while strengthening national security.

"Allowing us to explore our offshore energy will boost our state economy and spur investment — all while safely coexisting with our agriculture, tourism and fishing industries as well as U.S. military operations," council Executive Director David Mica said in a statement. "The administration has recognized that the ability to access our abundant offshore resources in a safe and environmentally responsible way will help our nation meet our energy needs well into the future."

Mica said Florida relies on natural gas for nearly 70 percent of its electricity and that the industry is "constantly developing and improving safety standards, programs, new technologies, and best practices to protect our workers, the environment and marine life."

Floridians will get a chance to comment on the proposal Feb. 8 at the Four Points by Sheraton in Tallahassee. The hearing is one of 23 that will be hosted by the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management across the nation between Jan. 16 and Feb. 28.

Aliki Moncrief, of the Florida Conservation Voters, described the proposal as "reckless" and added that "it's refreshing to see (Scott) catching up with what Sen. Nelson has been saying for years."

The topic of oil drilling did not come up when Scott recently had lunch with Trump in Palm Beach County, Scott spokesman John Tupps said.

White House press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders said the administration will continue

to work with Scott.

"Our goal certainly isn't to cross Gov. Scott," she said during a daily press briefing. "Just because we may differ on issues from time to time doesn't mean that we can't have an incredibly strong and good relationship."

In the announcement, Zinke said nearly all of the nation's outer continental shelf — a jurisdictional term describing submerged lands 10.36 statutory miles off Florida's west coast and 3 nautical miles off the east coast — will be considered for drilling.

In 2017, Trump signed an executive order asking Zinke to consider opening the Atlantic Ocean and the Arctic to drilling.

Under Zinke's proposal, which must still go through a public comment period and potential revisions before being finalized, 90 percent of the nation's offshore reserves would be open to leasing between 2019 and 2024. Money raised from the leases would go toward improving national parks.

Nelson, a Democrat, panned the plan as "an assault on Florida's economy, our national security, the will of the public and the environment."

"This proposal defies all common sense, and I will do everything I can to defeat it," Nelson said in a statement.

In 2006, Nelson and then-U.S. Sen. Mel Martinez, R-Fla., brokered a deal to ban drilling off Florida's Gulf Coast through 2022.

Nelson has long maintained that oil rigs being "too close" to Florida's shoreline could impact the state's tourism-driven economy and military training areas in the eastern Gulf of Mexico.

Environmental groups expressed a similar view.

"The plan proposes to expand offshore oil drilling everywhere, including in our most sensitive waters," Earthjustice President Trip Van Noppen said in a statement. "It puts irreplaceable wildlife and coastal communities at risk for the sole benefit of big oil, and it takes us in exactly the wrong direction on the urgently needed transition to a clean energy future."

Nelson's statement came a day after he announced plans to invoke a procedural rule known as the Congressional Review Act to try to block efforts to roll back safety standards the Obama administration put in place after the 2010 Deepwater Horizon disaster.

The issue of offshore drilling also could confront state lawmakers during the annual legislative session, which starts Jan. 9.

Sen. Doug Broxson, R-Gulf Breeze, and Rep. Mel Ponder, R-Destin, have proposed a resolution (SR 550 and HR 319) seeking to maintain a decades-long moratorium against oil drilling in an area of the eastern Gulf of Mexico used by the military for air and sea training.

The resolution, introduced last month, asks Congress to maintain the moratorium, which is in place from east of the Military Mission Line, which runs south of Hurlburt Field in Okaloosa County, to Key West. The moratorium is set to expire in 2022.

"The military missions require day and night access to the airspace, from the surface up to 60,000 feet, for high-speed flying and maneuvering, as well as day and night access to the seaspace, from the sea surface to the subsurface areas, for use by ships and submarines," the resolution says.

also says that in a cabin cruiser type situation, if you have a gun down below secured in a compartment locker, is not necessary to take it out as this cabin generally carries the same rules as if it were your home. When dealing with law enforcement of any sort, it's just plain dumb to put your hands on or near a gun.

Traveling to foreign ports with a gun in your boat can get real involved, and in some countries it's forbidden altogether. Unfortunately, these are the countries where you possibly might need to be thinking about self-defense. The Bahamas allows you to have a gun aboard, but you must declare the guns as soon as you make contact with Customs and Immigration and follow their directions. Some countries will take possession of the guns when you enter, and you may or may

not get them back when you leave. Mexico and a few of the Caribbean islands are so plagued by violence, drugs and gun violence that it just isn't worth the risk to take a gun on a boat there. Spending even a little time in the Third World jail can be a very enlightening experience, to say the least.

OK, there you have it on guns in boats. As always, safety is priority #1. And no, you can't shoot seagulls or pelicans if they poop on your teak deck. Safe shooting.

Billy Carl is an NRA-certified firearms instructor and is available for individual instruction in firearms safety and concealed carry classes. Contact him at 941-769-0767 or through J&J One Stop Gun Shop at 2324 Tamiami Trail, Port Charlotte, or 941-979-5008.



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SHRIMP-TOPPED SNAPPER

- 4 (6-oz) snapper fillets
- 2 tbsp lemon juice
- Dash pepper
- 1 cup sliced fresh mushrooms
- 6 cloves garlic, minced
- 1/2 cup butter
- 1/2 pound medium raw shrimp, peeled and deveined
- 1/4 cup sliced green onion

a clip-n-save seafood recipe provided by



—Recipe from AllRecipes.com

Place the fillets in a shallow 2-qt. baking dish coated with nonstick cooking spray. Sprinkle with lemon juice and pepper. Bake, uncovered, at 350°F for 15-20 minutes or until fish flakes easily with a fork. Meanwhile, in a small skillet, sauté the mushrooms and garlic in butter until tender. Add shrimp; cook for 2-4 minutes or until shrimp turn pink. Spoon over fish. Sprinkle with onion. Serves 4.

SOLUNAR TABLES

What is a solunar table?

The sun and moon, even when they are out of sight, exert forces wild creatures can feel. These forces affect when fish and other animals feed. Weather and tide also play a role, but expect fish to be more active during the major and minor solunar times.

THURSDAY

Sunrise: 07:19
Sunset: 17:53
Moonrise: 02:40
Moonset: 14:06
Moon Phase
21% waning
Major Times
06:17 - 09:28
19:47 - 21:49
Minor Times
01:37 - 02:37
14:05 - 15:09
Prediction: Average

FRIDAY

Sunrise: 07:19
Sunset: 17:54
Moonrise: 09:11
Moonset: 21:34
Moon Phase
14% waning
Major Times
08:08 - 10:14
20:33 - 22:35
Minor Times
02:23 - 03:23
14:51 - 15:55
Prediction: Average

SATURDAY

Sunrise: 07:19
Sunset: 17:55
Moonrise: 04:24
Moonset: 15:27
Moon Phase
8% waning
Major Times
08:54 - 11:00
21:19 - 23:21
Minor Times
03:08 - 04:08
15:36 - 16:40
Prediction: Average

SUNDAY

Sunrise: 07:19
Sunset: 17:56
Moonrise: 05:16
Moonset: 16:11
Moon Phase
4% waning
Major Times
09:41 - 11:47
22:07 - 00:09
Minor Times
03:56 - 04:56
16:24 - 17:28
Prediction: Good

MONDAY

Sunrise: 07:19
Sunset: 17:56
Moonrise: 06:05
Moonset: 16:59
Moon Phase
1% waning
Major Times
10:29 - 12:35
22:55 - 00:57
Minor Times
04:44 - 05:44
17:12 - 18:28
Prediction: Very good

TUESDAY

Sunrise: 07:19
Sunset: 17:57
Moonrise: 06:52
Moonset: 17:49
Moon Phase
New moon
Major Times
11:17 - 13:23

Minor Times
05:36 - 06:40
17:08 - 18:27
Prediction: Very good

WEDNESDAY

Sunrise: 07:19
Sunset: 17:58
Moonrise: 07:37
Moonset: 18:40
Moon Phase
2% waxing
Major Times
23:43 - 01:45
12:05 - 14:11
Minor Times
06:24 - 07:50
17:29 - 18:56
Prediction: Excellent

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U.S. POWER SQUADRONS

SARASOTA POWER SQUADRON — 941-400-6467

- America's Boating Course (8 hr) 7 p.m. Feb. 5
- Marine Communications Systems 7 p.m. Feb. 6
- Using VHF/DSC Marine Radio 7 p.m. Feb. 8

VENICE SAIL & POWER SQUADRON — 941-408-8591

Call for upcoming courses.

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- Sail 1 p.m. Jan. 15
- Marine Electrical Systems 9:30 a.m. Jan. 17
- Marine Communications Systems 1:30 p.m. Jan. 17
- America's Boating Course (12 hr) 8:30 a.m. Jan. 27
- Partner in Command 8:30 a.m. Feb. 3
- America's Boating Course (12 hr) 6:30 p.m. Feb. 7
- Weather 9:30 a.m. Feb. 19

CAPE CORAL POWER SQUADRON — 239-549-9754

- America's Boating Course (12 hr) 7 p.m. Jan. 8
- America's Boating Course (12 hr) 7 p.m. Feb. 12

— Provided by Ron Jones

COAST GUARD AUXILIARY

PROGRAM	START DATE	LOCATION	CONTACT
About Boating Safely	Jan. 13	Rotonda West	407-359-9649
About Boating Safely	Jan. 20	Fort Myers	734-626-0261
Suddenly in Command	Jan. 22	Englewood	941-270-3555
Suddenly in Command	Feb. 1	Venice	941-492-5904
Boating Skills & Seamanship	Feb. 5	Venice	941-492-5904
About Boating Safely	Feb. 12	North Port	941-661-5774

— Provided by Dave Nielsen

THE CAPTAIN SCHOOL

PROGRAM	START DATE	LOCATION	CONTACT
OUPV/Masters/Towing	Begins March 5	Gasparilla Marina	239-549-0271

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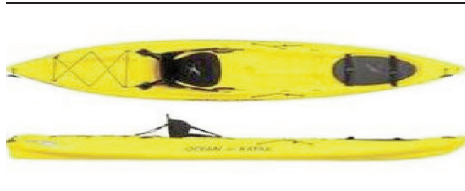
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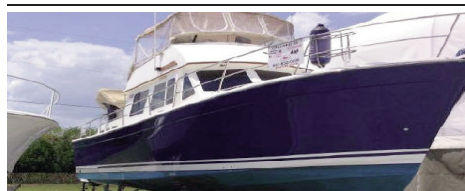
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SLACK TIDES NEWS OF NOTE FROM AROUND THE GLOBE

AUSSIE GRANDER BLUE

The first grander blue marlin — weighing more than 1,000 pounds — has been landed off Exmouth, in the Indian Ocean off Australia's northwest coast. While a number of grander black marlin have been caught and weighed or released in the Pacific off the northeast coast of Australia, this is the first blue. A group of anglers celebrated New Years Day on a Peak Sportfishing Adventures charter out of Exmouth, skippered by Capt. Eddy Lawler, by hooking and landing the 1,090-pound blue. The veteran captain was in the spotlight last year for releasing a grand slam — blue marlin, black marlin and striped marlin — on each of three consecutive days. Criticism on social media for killing the marlin has been widespread, though Lawless told NT News in Australia that no part of the fish would go to waste. Exmouth Game Fishing Club former president Jeni Gates points out that Lawler had released more than 1,000 billfish in the past four years after tagging them. Jim Harnwell, a past editor and publisher in fishing media and who now works in fisheries management, pointed out in an impassioned defense of the kill on abc.net.au that recreational anglers Down Under release 96 percent of all marlin they catch, versus the tonnage killed on commercial longlines annually.



REWARD FOR MISSING ANGLER
LAKE OKEECHOBEE — More than \$45,000 has been donated to the family of Nik Kayler, a 38-year-old

Army and fishing veteran who was thrown overboard during a fishing tournament Jan. 4. Tuesday, Kayler's family announced it was offering \$10,000 to anyone who finds the missing fisherman. "I'm basically kind of pointing people where to go," said Kayler's younger brother, Anthony Llanos. "We're trying to cover every base we can." Llanos, 31, said his brother was wearing a life vest, helmet and thermal top Thursday morning before he and partner Bill Kisiah set out on the lake — the first day of a three-day fishing tournament at Lake Okeechobee. Treacherous water conditions with choppy, ocean-like waves inundated the bass boat Kayler and Kisiah were fishing from shortly into the competition. A wave overtook the vessel, knocking Kayler out of the boat, according to reports from the FWC. Kisiah remained inside the boat, likely by holding onto the steering wheel, Llanos said. Kisiah wasn't able to recover Kayler in the water after the two lost sight of each other.



IT'S A BIG FAMILY TREE

Humans and sharks are incredibly different creatures, but the two shared a common ancestor 440 million years ago, a new study finds. Researchers made the discovery by studying the fossilized bones of a shark that lived during the Devonian, a period lasting from 416 million to 358 million years ago, when four-legged animals first started colonizing land. By studying the remains of this 385-million-year-old shark, scientists were able to deduce that sharks and the ancestors of humans split before the Devonian, during the Silurian period (443 million to 416 million

years ago), a time when the first fungi and arthropods, including arachnids and centipedes, moved onto land. *Gladbachus adentatus* is one of the earliest known fossil sharks on record. After analyzing it with a high-resolution computed tomography (CT) scan, the researchers found that the animal "represents the tip of a branch, a side-shoot, from the base of the shark family tree," Coates said. "As such, [it] reveals new information about the diversity of early sharks that we haven't had access to before." These features suggest that other, even older fossils of isolated scales do, in fact, come from early sharks. This discovery helped the researchers make the new estimate that at least 440 million years have passed since humans and sharks shared a common ancestor, Coates said.

BOATS KILLED MANY MANATEES

Boats killed 106 manatees in Florida during 2017, tying the record set the year before. About one in five manatee deaths in the state last year was caused by a boat strike, according to data released Jan. 4 by the FWC. "We use our statistics to see long-term trends," said Dr. Martine de Wit, a veterinarian at the FWC's lab in St. Petersburg. "One trend is that boats continue to account for a large portion of manatee deaths. And we can predict that they will in the future." Because boat strikes are a preventable cause of manatee deaths, powerboats are required by law to stay at least 50 feet from sea cows. In all, the commission reported 538 manatee deaths in Florida waters last year, up from 507 in 2016. It's the third-highest number since the commission started keeping statistics in the 1970s. The record — 830 dead manatees — was set in 2013, when hundreds of manatees died in the Indian River Lagoon for still-unknown reasons.

WRONG FISH, BUT IT'S A RECORD

Ohio brothers Jim and Mike Beres were working hard trying to win the top prize in the Walleye Fall Brawl tournament, fishing beyond Thanksgiving and into early December as the high-stakes event moved into its final days. With a \$70,000 boat going to the winner, plus loads of other cash prizes and bonuses in play, the duo had skipped deer hunting and fished all night in pursuit of that huge jackpot. They were trolling in about 45 feet of water, five miles out in

Lake Erie, when something slammed one of the baits. As the brute battled the Jim over a 15-minute period, it managed to snarl up the other trolling lines and Jim feared he might lose this potential grand-prize winner. Just as Mike netted it, the net snapped from the weight of the behemoth. "It looked a little different than a walleye, but we're screaming like little girls because we're thinking it's just a really old walleye and maybe we won this tournament," Jim said. "My brother is trying to convince me that's an \$80,000 fish laying there in the bottom of the boat." But it wasn't a walleye — it was a big lake trout. They went to a marina and had the fish weighed, with the scale punching its way to 26 pounds, 8 ounces — short of the 28-pound Lake Erie record, but shattering the previous Ohio state record of 20.40 pounds.



GOOD REASON

Joe had saved up for many years and was finally going to purchase the fast offshore boat of his dreams. Shortly after hitting the water, curiosity got to him and he pushed the throttle forward. With the wind blowing his aging hair back, he smiled — until he noticed a marine patrol boat chasing after him. At first he sped up to run away, then realized that was the wrong thing to do. With a terrible feeling he slowed to a stop. The officer asked his name. A very frightened, "J-J-Joe," was the response. Seeing that Joe was feeling really bad about being pulled over, the officer told him that if he could tell him a good reason for speeding, he would let him go with just a warning. Joe thought for a moment then said, "My wife ran off with an officer years ago, and I thought you were trying to give her back." With a smile, the patrolman said, "Don't do it again!" and left.

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