



THE ARCADIAN

"Serving DeSoto County since 1887"



"Skinny" Maybell steps up, Mele sidelined, Wilson, Richardson and Redden fill gaps in big win over Hardee.

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INSIDE



ALLEGED DRUG DEALERS NABBED

Local, state cops bust Arcadia coke ring

Informants make purchase, 3 arrested, also find marijuana, pills, small cash cache. PG 7



KEY WEST ADVENTURES

Arcadia jewelry artist's craft-fair picks

Manageable show fees, 'still welcome new people,' smooth drive to/from paradise. PG 8



SPECIAL OLYMPICS DAY AT DCHS

Really 3 events at Friday contest

Athletes tested, 'buddies' volunteer, go for the gold under sunny DeSoto skies. PG 12

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SOCIAL MEDIA

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"Rodeo Romeo" at Turner Center, meet Moe Bandy

By DANIEL SUTPHIN
SUN EVENTS CORRESPONDENT

Moe Bandy has come a long way since his bull-riding days in Texas.

But the country music legend has never forgotten them — that part of "Rodeo Romeo's" life can be heard in his music.

With such hits as "Bandy The Rodeo Clown" and "Rodeo Romeo," Bandy brings his take on honky-tonk to the Turner Center on Tuesday. And a ticket to witness one of America's classic country performers includes a steak dinner, as well as the opportunity for select ticket-holders to visit with the honky-tonk hero himself.



PHOTO BY DAVID BAILEY

Moe Bandy

"There are a lot of great cowboys and cowgirls in that

part of the country," Bandy in an interview said of central Florida. "A lot of times (the people) understand my rodeo songs better; it will be fun."

This is not Bandy's first time in DeSoto County. Five years ago he played the old Arcadia Rodeo Grounds.

"I really enjoy Moe Bandy's music," said Jimmy Fussell, a one-time professional rodeo cowboy who today is an Arcadia businessman. "He plays a lot of traditional country music and has lots of good songs. I'm lucky to support and see another one of his concerts."

Patty McKinley, of Arcadia Village, also attended Bandy's show five years ago and has been following his music for

around 30 years.

"Great music. Great performer," she said.

Tuesday Roundup

When: Feb. 26

Where: Turner Center, 2250 NE Roan, Arcadia

Opening performer, Red Griffin: 5:30-7:25 p.m.

Dinnertable ticket purchasers: Early access, dinner 5:30-7 p.m.

Meet and greet: backstage, 7-7:20 p.m.

Gold sponsor: DeSoto Auto Mall

General admission: Doors open 7 p.m.

Showtime: 7:30 p.m.

Tickets or information: www.sunevents.com, 863-494-9362.

History's mysteries: Burton's Barbershop, voting pioneer

By CAROL MAHLER
ARCADIAN HISTORY EDITOR

William Burton (1900-1977) was a businessman in Arcadia's African-American community. The mortal legacy of his time is a vacant building in which he lived and operated Burton's Barbershop. But his work in civil rights and other pioneering leadership in DeSoto County endures.

He must have moved to Arcadia sometime in the early 1930s, as in the 1940 U.S. Census, Burton, age 40, is listed as single and living alone at 412 Bond St. (as he was in 1935) and working as a barber. He reported his education as through the third grade.

However, he did more than barber his clients. In the Feb. 12, 1987, Arcadian, for instance, Helen C. Washington, another civil rights pioneer, compared Burton to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., remembering that he "made trips to Tallahassee, held meetings, had conferences with people who were in office, trying to get rights for the black people to vote. He was threatened, thrown after and talked about, but he kept fighting until we were allowed to vote. He wasn't an educated man but God gave him a talent and gave him the leadership ability that he was able to lead his people the right way."

Washington quoted a letter written by Burton that was published in the Aug. 16, 1941, Arcadian:

"To the voters of the City of



PHOTO BY CAROL MAHLER

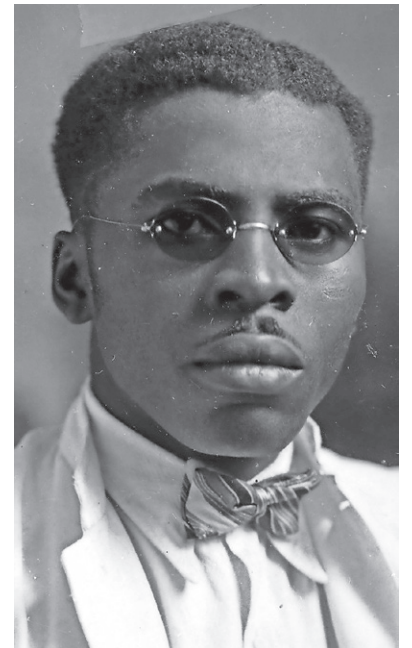
William Burton was a businessman and leader in achieving voting rights. He had lived and worked in this Arcadia building that has fallen on hard times.

Arcadia, Florida. Since we as Negro citizens of the City of Arcadia are denied the right to register for the coming city election, to vote for the candidates of our choice, and that we feel will be best for the offices which they seek, we are appealing to the voters to look out for the interest of the Negro citizens as well as the white when they go to the polls.

"In some instances we do feel that there ought to be changes. It has been known that some candidates seek office on the issue of Negroes from a prejudice platform, but we hope all the

candidates are looking forward to the betterment of this city from Lincoln Park to beyond the Orphan's home for all of that territory is in the bounds of taxpayers and city budget under its laws and regulations, we ought to be concerned more about the things that will make our city more presentable to our visiting friends, and that will entice some other person to make their home here.

"Now to the candidates, we don't know all of you personally, but we hope that you have surveyed the condition of the Negro settlement here and feel



HISTORIC IMAGES COURTESY DESOTO COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Tributes after his death in 1977 compared William Burton's civil rights work to a Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. type of figure.

within ourselves that we are a part of the city, within your power you will do your best to make Arcadia, amongst the Negroes, one of the best towns for decent men and women to live in. — Wm. Burton."

Established in 1889 and abolished in 1938, the poll tax impeded African-Americans in Florida from voting. In addition, elections were settled in white-only

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Little Willies luncheon and fashion show

By **GERRY LEFFLER**
LITTLE WILLIES RV RESORT



The waitcrew includes Greg Greene, Bob Milks, Frank Leffler, Mike Bain, Gene Vossler, Doug Sibbets, Don Jefferies and Bill Borders.

Little Willies RV Resort held the 11th annual Luncheon and Fashion Show on Feb. 18. BonWorth of Port Charlotte supplied the fashions.

A wonderful luncheon of cream of broccoli soup, chicken salad with tomato and lettuce, and roll and dessert was a pudding with a "surfer" and paddleboard. A wonderful time was enjoyed by all who attended.



Beautiful models for the show include Jane Lashley, Madge Bush, Martha Howe, Jackie Paradise, Fredda Bain, Nancy Dorak, Beverly Grubb, Grace Helms, Judy Kennedy and Beverly Stewart.



PHOTOS PROVIDED

The annual Fashion Show is coordinated by Gerry Leffler and her helpers, Sandy Sweeny, Martha Vossler and Marnaca Lambert. The luncheon was prepared by Tangee Green, Rob and Jerri Slaughterbeck, Linda Milks and Jeannie Hulme.

Why preschool is good for your child

When you think of preschool, what do you think?

Are you afraid your child is too young to be placed in a structured environment? Does it scare you how they might cope with the separation?

Well, don't be, preschool can only help your child. Children learn a lot from going to preschool. They are exposed to numbers, shapes, and art. But most importantly they develop social and emotional skills and learn how to get along with other children.

According to research children who attend a high-quality preschool enter schools with better pre-reading skills, richer vocabularies, and stronger math skills than those who do not.

Below are six reasons why preschool is good for your child.

1. Preschool provides a foundation for learning, both socially and academically.
2. Preschool is an opportunity for kids to be in a structured environment.
3. Preschool prepares children for elementary school.
4. Preschool helps your child develop socially and emotionally.
5. Preschool will help your child find answers to their numerous questions.
6. A child will learn their alphabets and how to count numbers and so forth.

Preschool programs are based on learning through play, so learning will be fun for children, while acquiring the important social skill to be successful, have no doubt!

Sheila Robinson Clark
Lil Kreative Handz Development Center
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Taterhill BBQ Cook Off, benefits Boys & Girls Club/Arcadia



Boys & Girls Club/Arcadia representatives at Saturday's BBQ include club director Sofia Gilot (left), Adrianna Rodriguez-Lopez, Illiana Rodriguez-Lopez, Daniel Rodriguez-Lopez and event organizer Ashley Coone.

By **ASHLEY COONE**

BOYS & GIRLS CLUB/ARCADIA

The 2019 Taterhill BBQ Cook Off was held this past Saturday at Veterans Memorial Park in Arcadia. The friendly competition raised funds for the new Arcadia Boys & Girls Club. Over 300

meals were purchased throughout the day. Dr. Jeff Johnson, a DeSoto County High School alum, purchased 100 meals distributed to local first-responders, hospital staff and other kids enrolled in the Arcadia Boys & Girls Club.

The event was sponsored by the Robert Bob Allen family, Cheney Brothers, and



PHOTOS PROVIDED

BBQ crew from the Beef O' Brady's team includes Rocky Myers (left), Andy Slemons and store manager Julie Payne.

each of the teams who paid \$100 to enter the contest. There were seven teams who participated in this year's cook-off, including Franklin's BBQ, Boss BBQ, Nav-a-Gator, Team Lippy's BBQ, PJ's BBQ, Beef's Arcadia, and Bobby's Big BBQ.

The following teams placed in the 2019 Taterhill BBQ Cook Off:

- Best Chicken:** Nav-A-Gator
- Best Beans:** Nav-a-Gator
- Best Ribs:** Franklin's BBQ
- Best Chef's Choice (Prime Rib):** Franklin's BBQ

On May 4, the Smith Brown Community Foundation will hold its 5th Annual Kentucky Derby fundraiser benefit for the Arcadia Boys & Girls Club at the Turner Center. All proceeds from these events will support youth development programs at the club, matched proceeds through the Arcadia Community Matching Challenge, thanks to the Charles & Margery Barancik Foundation. For more information about the club or the Kentucky Derby fundraiser, contact Ashley Coone, 863-990-0527, acoone@bgcsarasota.com.

SUN NEWSPAPERS

Member of the Audit Bureau of Circulation

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DEADLINES

Editorial: Monday Noon
Classified & Legal Ads: Tuesday 5 p.m.
Display Ads: Monday at Noon to reserve space

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L&E Club's February meeting, earned Minnie Mouse ears

By **MINDY RYALS**
L&E CLUB

L&E Club members met at the lovely home of Nancy Ambler on Feb. 5 for their monthly meeting. Co-hostesses for the event were Edith Wildt and Shelia Knoche. Members enjoyed blueberry poundcake.

Martha Jo Markey presented a biography of Walt Disney. Mrs. Markey enlightened the club on the life and accomplishments of Walt Disney, who was considered an intellectual celebrity by the time he was 30 and hailed a genius by the time he was 40. He built a media and entertainment company that stands as one of the most powerful on the planet, won more Academy Awards than anyone in history, created a cinematic artform and invented a new kind of American vacation destination.

The program covered all of Walt Disney's life, from his birth in 1901 to his death in 1966. Highlights included Walt forging his birthdate on his passport application so that he could enlist in the army at the age of 16. In 1918, he served with the Red Cross Ambulance Corps in France. He came back stateside and went to

Kansas City, where he worked as an ad cartoonist and also started his first film company, Laugh-O-grams Studio, with a borrowed camera. He created the short film "Alice's Wonderland," where a live-action girl interacted in cartoon worlds. After his company went bust, he moved to Los Angeles and worked with his brother, Roy.

From the beginning with Alice, and Oswald the Lucky Rabbit to the empire of Mickey Mouse, Walt Disney changed the world of entertainment. He created feature films and beloved characters who stole hearts and imaginations of children of all ages. He entered the world of television and produced The Mickey Mouse

Club. Then he fulfilled a dream and opened Disneyland in Anaheim in 1955. In the mid-1960s, Walt and his team started buying land in central Florida. In total they purchased 27,400 acres to build Epcot and Walt Disney World. Walt wasn't able to see his vision completed. In November 1966, Walt checked himself into the hospital for neck surgery. While in the hospital, a tumor was found in his lung. He lived two more weeks and died on Dec. 15, 1966.


Walt Disney World opened in 1971 and Epcot opened in 1982. The Walt Disney Co. has grown to be a world leader in the motion picture and entertainment business. In one of his last interviews, Walt was asked

if he would do anything differently in his life, if he could. He thought about it, and said, "No, I don't think so ... Fancy I'm being remembered around the world for the invention of a mouse!"

L&E Club attendees were given Minnie Mouse ears to honor Walt.

Attending members were: **Nancy Ambler, Betty Brown, Shirley Cullom, Jane Dasher, Muriel Hall, Margaret Hays, Susan Head, Linda Hollingsworth, Susan Lanier, Martha Jo Markey, Genie Martin, Sue Overcash, Ann Ryals, Mindy Ryals, Sue Ellen Smith, Mary Ann Treadwell, Nancy Jo Vaughn, Angela Waters, Edith Wildt, Marlou Zolkos** and guest **Michelle Keen**.

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DeSoto

Viewpoint

Craig Garrett — Arcadian Editor

E-mail letters to cgarrett@sun-herald.com

OUR VIEW

Update laws for felony theft charges

OUR POSITION: *It's time for Florida to move forward into the 21st century with a realistic monetary threshold for felony theft crimes.*

We're familiar with the case of one teenager who, years ago, made the very bad decision of trying his hand at shop-lifting.

His friend worked part-time at a department store. Mr. Inside convinced his pal he could fill up a shopping bag with stuff and simply walk out the door. Easy.

Hoo-boy.

Both were dopey teenage boys — not venal or stupid, but mid-teen dopes. It happens. Teenage boys seem particularly vulnerable to mental lapses of this sort.

But, said teenager filled shopping bag with clothing, video games and electronic items, then strolled out the door.

Only to be busted by store security, of course.

It was only just before the initial court appearance that he found he'd be charged with a felony: The stuff in the shopping bag exceeded the value threshold for a felony charge. A serious mark on the permanent record.

He got lucky: For various reasons, the charge was reduced on condition of participation in a diversion program. Apologies were written, community service done. The official record was erased and, as far as we know there were no further legal infractions. The teenager went to college, graduate school, raised a family, enjoyed a distinguished career and contributed the well-being of his community.

It might have been otherwise.

That situation is common in the court system. Youthful offenders are rightly given a chance to redeem themselves for indiscretions. Prosecutors may deal charges down to misdemeanors, or they may not.

One big problem in Florida, though, is the low monetary threshold for felonies: \$300.

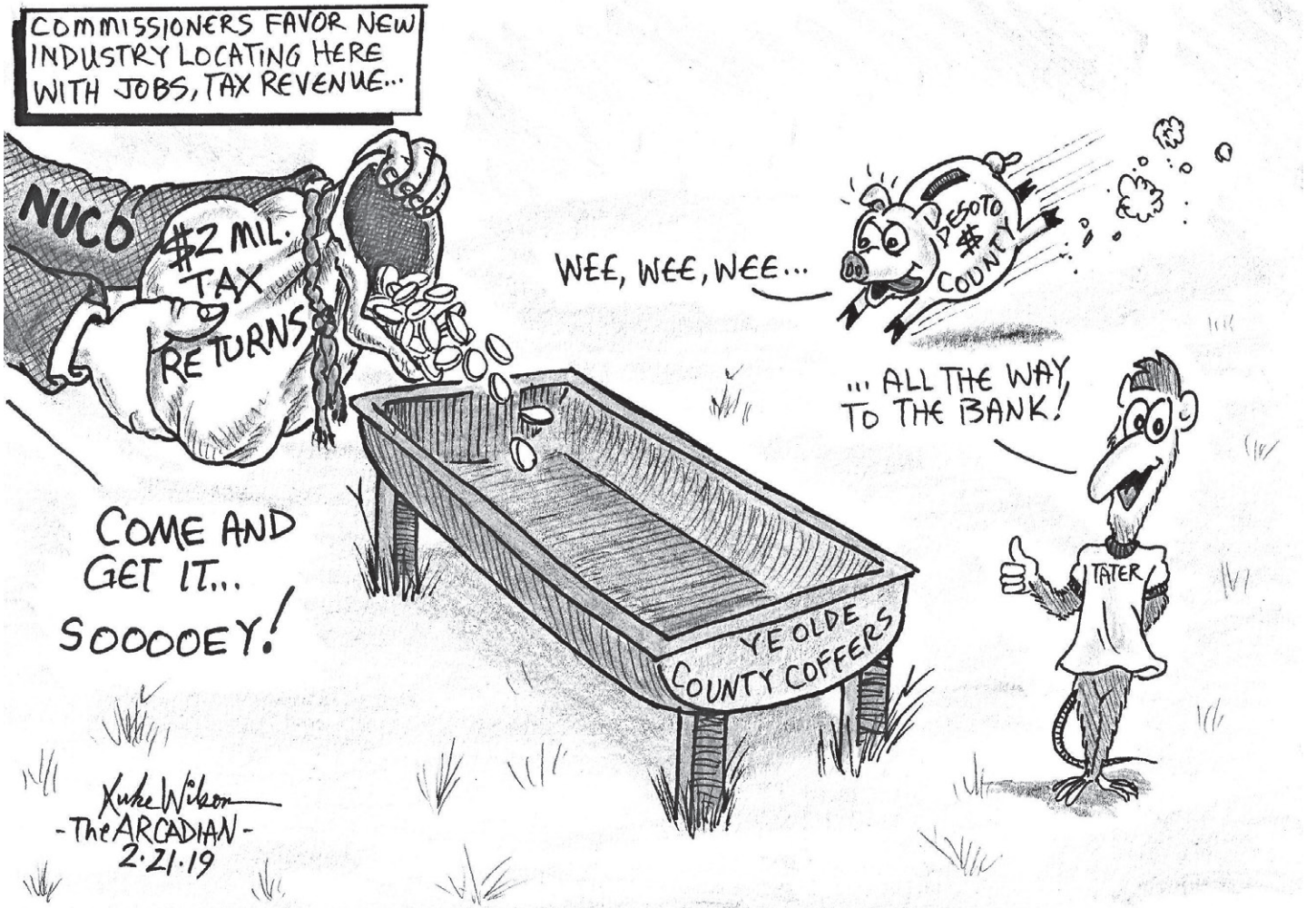
The law setting the minimum for felony grand theft was established three decades ago, in 1986. Ronald Reagan was president. The price of gas was 85 cents a gallon.

Since then, consumer price index has more than doubled. What cost \$300 when Chernobyl exploded now costs \$650.

As a recent Sun story noted, Florida now has the second lowest felony threshold in the nation. Bills filed in the Legislature aim to raise the figure to either \$1,000 (in the House bill) or \$1,500 (in the Senate.)

Pick a number. But, from our vantage point, it makes sense to raise the threshold above the level of inflation. It makes very little sense to fill jail or prison cells for what are, relatively speaking, minor offenses. What should be misdemeanors.

According to a Pew Charitable Trust study, 38 states have raised their felony theft thresholds since 2000. The Pew analysis showed those actions "had no impact on property



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Odd otter encounter

While visiting Myakka River State Park, the largest state park in Florida, my wife, daughter, her friend and I were picnicking in the upper river picnic area. I had caught a large bass, put it on a stringer and put it back in the water. We had enjoyed a nice lunch and were relaxing ... when out of the water and up the riverbank came this river otter. We called him Otty. He went to where my daughter was sitting, reared up on her legs and sniffed around, then visited my wife. Finding no food, he loped over to the picnic table where we had left our meals before cleaning up. Up on the table he went and proceeded

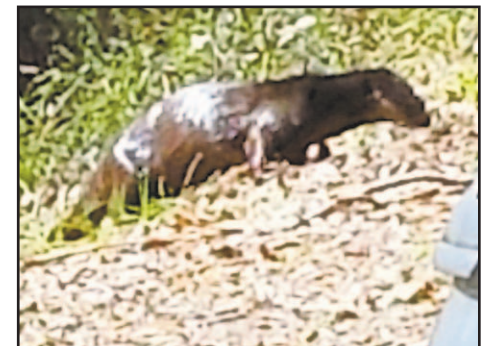
to go through all of our leftovers and devoured whatever he liked. He then explored the other tables; but finding nothing, went to the restroom area and got some fresh water.

Then he came back to our area and entered the water exactly where I had my fish. Yep, he stole my fish. Then he went across the river to a sandbar and proceeded to eat the fish. He would roll over on his back, take a bite and look over at us. As if to say, thanks. He devoured the whole fish. He went back into the river, swam towards us, as if to say thank you, and then took off down the river.

Otters are wild creatures. If one comes to you, do not try to pet them.

They are inquisitive, intelligent and excellent swimmers. It was an interesting experience and very educational.

Neville Smith
Arcadia



GRITS & PIECES

Thou shall read this and hopefully comply

Rules are a necessity, I think we call all agree. Otherwise, this crazy world would be a whole lot more crazier than it is, so I reckon we ought to be thankful for them.

Today I'd like to present some new rules that need enforcing in the worst kind of way, even if they're not written. On second thought, they're written as of today, in this column.

We're all familiar with the Ten Commandments and are familiar with the definition of the haves and the have nots. I call mine the shalls and the shall nots, and though they're not inscribed on stone tablets, they ought to be. Here's a dozen for you.

Thou shall not walk around with thy britches pulled down so low that thy underpants are exposed to the world. Penalty for such behavior may result in



Luke Wilson

troubador55@embarqmail.com

an atomic wedgie.

Thou shall use turn signals when driving. Nearby drivers are not mind-readers, thou knowest.

Thou shall not create and perpetuate drama on Facebook by posting cryptic lamentations that beseech others to ask what ails thee. Knock it off, or risk being deleted.

Thou shall not use cellphones during family dinners. That is just plain rude and, besides, thy phone may get all

greasy if thou art eating fried chicken.

Thou shall chew with thy mouth closed. Nobody wants or needs to see the mess thy teeth have ground food into, nor hear the smacking racket it makes. Eww.

Thou shall not leave the toilet-paper roll empty without replacing it with a fresh roll. Failure to do so will ensure that thee will find it empty some day, when thou art most deserving.

Thou shall respect thy parents and elders. Otherwise, thy children and grandchildren will learn such behavior and impart it to thee.

Thou shall not talk during theater movies, nor when watching television with others, except during commercials. Hold thy comments and thy tongue.

GRITS & PIECES | 10

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.

Kayla Patton: Teacher of the Year

By JIMMY PETERS

ARCADIAN HOMETOWN EDITOR

Last week I visited a class at West Elementary. In every respect these children were normal fourth-graders, rambunctious, trying hard to sit still and concentrate ... but kept in check by a calm, even-toned but persistent voice. It was Kayla Patton, this year's DeSoto County Teacher of The Year.

Every year DeSoto teachers in each school choose from among themselves a person they feel presents an exemplary example of education. Teachers chosen then prepare a packet consisting of a video, interviews, letters of recommendation and several essays. Bess Hodges, West assistant principal, commented that "this material contains evidence on how they have impacted their students' learning; in the video they must demonstrate how they self-assess their strengths and weaknesses." Select community members then form a committee to evaluate each teacher and choose a "Teacher of the Year" representing



DeSoto County.

Rebecca Cothorn, West principal, explained: "We hold a beautiful ceremony that is put on by the DeSoto County Educational Foundation where we recognize every nominee, support staff, teachers and rookie teachers. This is where we announce the DeSoto County Teacher of The Year. The winner also receives a \$5,000 cash award."

When I entered Kayla Patton's fourth-grade class, the first thing was that the desks and students were not in neat little rows but clustered in small communication groups. She was asking her students to analyze a picture projected on the wall. "Make sure you notice the colors and the details, then discuss them within your group — in



PHOTO BY JIMMY PETERS

Kayla Patton mixes advice and lessons with questions, giving her West Elementary fourth-graders ownership in learning.

your whisper voice — then record your thoughts in your notebook," Kayla instructed.

One would think this was an art class, but, no, it was a writing class, students composing essays about the picture. Kayla was teaching how to translate details of what they saw into words.

Kayla Patton kept control of her class

in a very quiet and pleasant manner. She kept her students on task, interested in the subject at hand. But most impressive was the way she interacted with them on a personal level. She became a member of each group, asking questions and giving advice. Perhaps why Kayla Patton is DeSoto County's Teacher of the Year.

Heavenly tastes, writer's love affair with the moon

By VICTOR C. ROGUS

ARCADIAN SCIENCE EDITOR

The moon has always been a companion to the people of the earth. We give it names for the various seasons, write songs about it, use it in artwork and consider it romantic. It causes the tides to rise and fall, and sometimes lights our way in the dark.

The moon has fascinated me since I was a small child; I have heard it said that an infant held outside under the moon will often reach out for it as if it were within grasp. It is often the first target for beginning astronomers with their new telescopes, as it is bright and easy to find, and offers a world of fantastic sights unlike any we see anywhere in the visible universe. It is truly the earth's own.

A friend of mine once pointed out how it has been his extreme pleasure to just watch the faces of people he invites to view the moon for the very first time through his telescope. I can understand, as I have introduced a few folks to a telescopic view of the lunar surface for the first time myself—and I must admit it is a thrill. Many amateur astronomers, eager to view "deep space," seem to overlook our nearest neighbor after a couple of viewings. Sometimes, they do not feel it worthwhile to set up their equipment on moonlit nights, as the reflected sunlight on the lunar surface makes it difficult to see fainter, more distant objects. I, myself, have grumbled when the moon is bright during certain meteor showers, or when I am trying to photograph a faint comet.

Just a lover's spat—I could never be angry with my friend the moon, as it is just doing its thing; never mind about me.

To those who desire to rush past the quarter-million miles (more or less) in their haste to find more distant objects, I say, "Hold on, there is much to see here!" The moon holds many fantastic sights: the great craters (many named for astronomers and scientists from the past), mountain ranges, ridges, valleys, great "seas"—the Maria with romantic names. The Maria are areas with relatively flat and un-cratered surfaces, once thought to be actual lakes, oceans and seas. These were formed by ancient volcanic eruptions. An investment in a good lunar globe or map will aid in your exploration of the lunar surface. And each time you

do, you will see something new. As the "terminator"—the line between the light of the sun and the dark of its shadow—slowly moves, the lunar landscape is illuminated in different ways, and more features will be revealed.

One of my favorite things to do while viewing the moon is to study the way the craters are arranged. It is sometimes easy to see which craters are older and which are younger, as the edges of the older craters are often peppered by newer, younger craters. Some observers suggest that the younger the crater, the lighter in color it is. The brightest crater (or object) on the moon is Aristarchus; it can be seen near the moon's northwestern edge. Also be sure to look for where the effects of lunar gravity have caused crater walls to fall in. While erosion on the moon is much slower than on the earth, gravity there is still at work!

While these are all fascinating subjects for the small telescope—and I highly encourage my fellow stargazers not to waste those moonlit nights—there is much excitement to be had in imaging the full lunar disc. A great project is to try and capture all of the major lunar phases, but not just at any time during the night: try to make your exposure is as close to the exact moment of the lunar phase as possible.

The exact timing for lunar phases can be found on the U.S. Naval Observatory website. Attempting to make an exposure as close to the moment of the actual event adds a new level of accuracy in its documentation.

But preparing for your best photographs takes a bit of planning and effort. Consider polar aligning your mount the night before, so if your event is early evening, the mount should be pretty well set to use, even if aligning stars are not yet visible. It's also a good idea to make practice exposures, so when the moment comes, you will be ready! To capture the best image, take no shortcuts.

Of course, there are special occasions when the moon plays a starring role: solar and lunar eclipses, conjunctions, occultations, transits and more. Again, timing is crucial.

I had an image of the moon in total eclipse on April 15, 2014—a stunningly beautiful sight. I had lived deep in the backwoods of Missouri, and there were many creatures of the night that lurked nearby while I imaged. On this night, the forest was very quiet and



PHOTOS BY VICTOR C. ROGUS

The first quarter moon, captured precisely at that phase, plus two seconds. A nice terminator shadow perfectly divides the lunar surface. The photo was taken on Jan. 18, 2013, at 17:45:02 CST local time in Jadwin, Missouri, just seconds after the predicted timing given by the U.S. Naval Observatory. The writer used an atomic clock to time the event; the additional two seconds were due to human reactions and camera functioning.



Timing for this photograph was less than perfect, as this night the moon slipped behind the treetops approximately two hours before the moment of exact last quarter. Practice makes perfect and improving on this image is something the writer looks forward to in the near future. Weather, object location, astronomical telescope placement and sky clarity are all factors in such projects.



An exact full moon, plus three seconds, of the Aug. 21, 2013, blue moon event. The U.S. Naval Observatory predicted the precise moment at 20:45:00 CDT local time in Jadwin, Missouri. Notice the completeness of the full lunar disk.



Total lunar eclipse at the exact moment of totality.

calm—that was until the moment of totality, when the moon turned a shade of blood red, when seemingly hundreds of coyotes all around me howled in an eerie chorus unseen. They carried on for the longest time, until the familiar color and brightness of the moon began to re-emerge. That experience followed a recurring theme for me in the backwoods, as I follow lunar eclipses and have witnessed the

deep connection between coyotes and the moon, especially when the moon is in total eclipse.

This is my story, my love affair with the moon. I can tell you for certain that the moon loves all of us who inhabit planet earth, and it holds special gifts for those who spend time with it and seek those gifts out. And as for my wife, it's OK—she's cool with it.

FEBRUARY COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2 Groundhog Day
3 Super Bowl	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14 Valentine's Day	15	16
17	18 Presidents' Day	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28		

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.

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

- **A free seminar on Hands-Only CPR and Early Heart Attack Care** is presented by Bayfront Hospital at Friendship Centers in Arcadia, 1 S. Orange Ave.; open to the public, on Thurs., Feb. 28 from 10 a.m.-11 a.m. To register, call 494-5965.
- **Peace River Audubon Society** meets Thurs., Feb. 21 at 6:30 p.m. at First Alliance Church, 20444 Midway Blvd., Port Charlotte. Kellie Phillips and Hunter Folmar will discuss Red-cockaded Woodpecker Management at Babcock/ Webb and Babcock Ranch Preserve.
- **The Arcadian Housing Authority** Board of Commissioners holds its regular meeting at noon at the Arcadia Housing Authority, 7 Booker T Washington Road. Call 494-4343 for details.
- **Parents of children with special needs** meet at 6 p.m. for a time to connect and fellowship at Pine Creek Chapel, 1267 S.W. Pine Chapel Dr. or details, call or text Heather at 444-0817.
- **DeSoto County Historical Society** Research Library and John Morgan Ingraham House museum are open at 120 W. Whidden Street, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. (library) and 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. (museum) on Thursdays (except for the second

- Thursday of the month).
- **The Friendship Centers**, 219 W. Oak St., offer daily coffee and conversation 9 a.m.-1 p.m., crafts 9:30 a.m., second and fourth Thursdays free blood pressure screenings by Desoto Memorial Home Health. Lunch served at 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.
- **DeSoto County Library** story time is at 3:30 p.m. at 125 N. Hillsborough Ave., Arcadia. Call 993-4851 for information.

FRIDAY

- **Portrait of the Community Art Show** at South Florida State College, E. Gibson and Turner. Exhibit showcases life in Arcadia through art, photography, media, and sculpture. Free reception Friday 6 p.m.; entertainment and exhibit Saturday 10 a.m.-3 p.m.
- **The AA G.I.R.L.S.** Anniversary Night is at 6 p.m. on the fourth Friday of the month at St. Edmund's Episcopal Church, 327 W. Oak St.
- **The Senior Friendship Centers**, 219 W. Oak St., offer daily coffee and conversation 9 a.m.-1 p.m., low-impact exercises start at 10:00 a.m., Bingo 10 a.m. Lunch served at 11:30 a.m.
- **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.
- **Walk & Talk:** gentle exercise and conversation at 8 a.m. every Friday at the DeSoto Public Library.

- **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.
- **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.

SATURDAY

- **Portrait of the Community Art Show** at South Florida State College, E. Gibson and Turner. Exhibit showcases life in Arcadia through art, photography, media, and sculpture. Entertainment and exhibit Saturday 10 a.m.-3 p.m.
- **The Antique Fair** takes place in downtown Arcadia on the fourth Saturday of every month starting at 8 a.m. Dozens of dealers line the sidewalks on and around West Oak St. For information, visit www.ArcadiaFLantiques.com; to inquire about booth space, call 993-5105.
- **The John Morgan Ingraham House** museum, 120 W. Whidden St., is open from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. on the fourth Saturday of the month.
- **The NAACP** meets at 6 p.m. every fourth Saturday of the month at Pleasant Hill United Methodist Church, 319 S. Lee Ave.
- **Children's movies** are shown at DeSoto County Library at 10:30 a.m., 125 N. Hillsborough Ave. Children must be accompanied by an adult. Call 993-4851 for more information.

SUNDAY

- **Bicycling Adult Group Ride** Sunday; meet at

Portrait of a Community
Arcadia, FL 2019
DeSoto Arts & Humanities Council

An Art Show That Captures Life in Arcadia

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 10AM-3PM
South Florida State College • 2251 NE Turner Ave.

- Winn-Dixie parking lot at 7:45 a.m. All riders must wear approved bicycling helmet and obey all FL traffic safety laws. For more information, email gypsygirlrides513@gmail.com.
- **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

- **DeSoto County Historical Society** board meets at 5:30 p.m. at the Ingraham Seed House on W. Gibson St.
- **The Senior Friendship Centers**, 219 W. Oak St., offer daily coffee and conversation 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Low-impact exercises start at 10 a.m. Lunch served at 11:30 a.m.
- **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** distributes free meals every Monday and Wednesday, 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. at Trinity United Methodist Church, 304 W. Oak St. Call 494-2543 for details.
- **Alcoholics Anonymous Brown Baggers** Group meets at noon Monday at Trinity United Methodist Church, 304 W. Oak St.
- **Prescription Assistance** is available at the DeSoto County Health Department Clinic, 1031 E. Oak St., Arcadia. To make an appointment or for more information, call 491-7580 ext. 256.

TUESDAY

- **DeSoto County Commission Board** meets

- at 3 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. in room 103, County Administration Building, 201 E. Oak St., Arcadia.
- **DeSoto County School Board** meets at 5:30 p.m. every second and fourth Tuesday in the School Board meeting room, 530 La Solona Ave., Arcadia.
- **Tuesday Night Quilters** meet twice monthly — second and fourth Tuesdays — at the Turner Civic/Ag Center from 5:30-7 p.m. For more info call 494-4652.
- **The DeSoto County Library** hosts a movie for seniors at 1 p.m.

WEDNESDAY

- **The AA Serenity Group** Anniversary Night is held at 8 p.m. on the last Wednesday of the month at Grace Lutheran Church, 1004 W. Oak St.
- **The Senior Friendship Centers**, 219 W. Oak St., offer daily coffee and conversation 9 a.m.-1 p.m., low-impact exercises start at 10 a.m., Weigh-In Healthy Eating and Recipe Sharing 10 a.m. Lunch served at 11:30 a.m.
- **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. AA "Brown Bagger" meetings are offered every Wednesday at noon at Trinity United Methodist Church, 304 W. Oak St.
- **Alcoholics Anonymous Serenity** meets at 8 p.m. at Grace Lutheran Church, 900 W. Oak St. (State Road 70).
- **Art for Kids** is at 3:30 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.

COMING EVENTS

- **The DeSoto County Library is hosting Preserving Memories**, a free Community Digitization Project on March 1, 2-5 p.m. Bring your old photos, journals etc. and a USB jump drive and the library will help you digitally preserve your family history. For details, call 993-4851.
- **Calvary Baptist BBQ Fundraiser** is Friday, March 8. Just \$10 a meal. Delivery available for 10 or more meals. Funds go the South Dakota mission trip.
- **4th Annual Rodeo Beer Walk** is March 8, 5:30-8:30 p.m. in Historic Downtown Arcadia, presented by Arcadia Main Street.
- **All Faiths Food Bank** will be available to assist with SNAP benefits applications on Mon. March 11 from 9:30 a.m. — 12:30 p.m. at Friendship Centers, 1 S. Orange Ave. (corner of W. Oak and S. Orange). Bring a photo ID, Social Security card and proof of income.
- **The Bugtussle Ramblers** will perform at the monthly Bluegrass Saturday on Sat., Feb. 16 at 2 p.m. at Harbor Heights Park, 27240 Voyageur Drive, Punta Gorda. Donation is \$5 plus one canned good for the local food bank. For details, call 941-626-5399 or visit www.southwindbluegrassband.com.
- **Arcadia Bikefest** is scheduled for March 30 from 9 a.m.-6 p.m. on West Oak St. Live music, vendors, stunt show, motorcycle show and Daisy Duke Bike Wash. For details visit www.arcadiamainstreet.com.

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Arcadia, Florida 34266
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Major alleged drug dealers nabbed

Several local and statewide law enforcement agencies teamed up recently to nab three allegedly major drug dealers in the area.



SIMPSON



MCCOWN



MORRIS

The Florida Department of Law Enforcement, DeSoto County Sheriff's Office and Arcadia Police Department, along with representatives of the other police departments and the Drug Enforcement Administration, cooperated in identifying and ultimately arresting members of an alleged "Drug Trafficking Organization" in Arcadia.

Based on information from those agencies and the DeSoto Clerk of Court, law enforcement officers reportedly used Confidential Informants to arrange a controlled purchase from a man said to be the leader of the DTO. The CI called Tarence Javanghan Simpson, the alleged leader, on Dec. 20 and said he needed a "whole one" (meaning an ounce of cocaine). Simpson called back saying he had left the package with one of his "guys."

The CI went to an address on S.W. Hendry Street as indicated, where he met Calvin Sean McCown, 40. The CI gave McCown \$1,400. McCown went into the house and returned shortly with a red Solo cup holding a Ziploc bag that contained white powder.

The powder was later measured at 28.9 grams and tested positive for cocaine.

On Feb. 14, FDLE, DCSO and APD executed a search warrant at the same Hendry Street location. McCown, along with Debra Lee Morris, 56, and another man were outside the apartment next door. A plastic bag containing a leafy green substance was found 5 or 6 feet from Morris. She also had \$264 in currency, reportedly consistent with drug sales.

Morris was arrested, at which time she spontaneously said she "only sold drugs five times."

McCown was also arrested on a charge he had been trafficking drugs. On his arrest, he was found to have a small amount of cocaine hidden in his sock.

Officers secured a search warrant for the Hendry Street location and found:

- cup holding small plastic bags of a green leafy substance and \$87 in cash, on a nightstand
- paper bag containing plastic bags of a green leafy substance under a seat cushion
- plastic bag containing currency and more bags of a green leafy substance (on the refrigerator)
- an unlabeled pill bottle containing pills
- a bag containing numerous white and tan pills (behind the toilet seat)
- a bag containing numerous individual bags of a white powdery substance (in a charcoal grill)
- a paper ledger with handwritten notes

Mail and other items found inside the residence identified Morris. The green leafy substances were confirmed to be marijuana, and the white powdery substances tested positive for cocaine.

Morris was charged with trafficking cocaine (more than 28 grams but less than 150 kilograms), possession of cocaine with the intention to sell or deliver, possession of marijuana with the intention to sell or deliver, and two counts of possession of a controlled substance without a prescription. She is being held on a \$112,000 bond.

McCown was arrested on charges of trafficking cocaine (more than 28 grams but less than 150 kilograms), possession of cocaine and possession or use of drug equipment. He remains in jail on \$52,000 bond.

POLICE BEAT

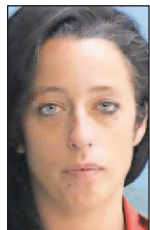
The information for Police Beat is gathered from police, sheriff's office, Florida Highway Patrol, jail and fire records. Not every arrest leads to a conviction and guilt or innocence is determined by the court system.

Simpson was arrested the following day in Charlotte County on an out-of-county warrant, and is being held on \$514,998 bond.

Morris and McCown have arraignment dates of March 18.

Woman charged with gun theft, witness tampering heads to prison

Jessica Lynn Saleman, 31, pleaded no contest to several criminal charges and was transported Monday to the Department of Corrections to serve a three-year sentence.



SALEMAN

In September 2018, she was arrested for stealing a gun from a man's home and then selling it to someone else. Charges arising from that incident included grand theft of a firearm, possession of a weapon by a convicted felon, dealing in stolen property, and burglary of an occupied conveyance. Later that month she was also charged with possession of a controlled substance without a prescription.

After she was jailed for the gun theft, she contacted the victim while she was still in jail, asking him to drop the charges. She offered to repay him for the \$130 it cost him to get his gun back. She talked with someone else over the phone, asking him to pay the money to the victim so he would drop the charges against her. For that, she was found guilty of obstructing justice by tampering in a felony proceeding.

Following her three years in prison (she is projected to be released by Sept. 25, 2021), she will be on drug offender probation for an additional three years, under which she will be evaluated for drug and alcohol abuse and may be required to undergo treatment.

Woman charged with misusing senior's debit card

Katherine Paige Williams, 46, was arrested on three counts of exploitation of an elderly man for less than \$10,000 and three counts of grand theft of between \$300 and \$5,000.



WILLIAMS

According to records of the DeSoto County sheriff's Office and Clerk of Court, a woman noticed unusual charges under the debit account of an elderly relative, who resides in an assisted living facility. She noticed multiple charges at a local restaurant, along with charges from Walmart, a local hotel and a liquor store. All told, the suspicious charges added up to \$329.14.

The woman contacted the sheriff's office and an officer reviewed the Walmart charges and video of the transactions. They went to the hotel where a clerk confirmed the person pictured in the Walmart video was staying in a room there.

When DCSO officers spoke with the woman, she said her name was Paige Treadwell Williams. (She later said she used "Treadwell" because it was a well respected name in the community.) When asked about the transactions with the elderly man's card, she claimed he gave her the card to pay for a room and things she needed. She said she would sometimes see hi around town and he would give her money.

When asked, the man adamantly denied even knowing Williams, let alone letting her use his card.

She was arrested initially in January and is being held on \$26,000 bond.

Church bus wreck injures 7

A church bus was involved in a wreck around 8 a.m. Monday on U.S. Highway 17 near S.W. Wood Street, injuring several passengers.

According to the Florida Highway Patrol, the bus was traveling northbound in the right lane when a right front tire failed, causing the bus to drive off the road into the adjacent ditch. The right front of the bus collided with the ditch embankment and a wire fence.

The bus had 20 occupants, including the bus driver. Four adults and a 3-year-old child were taken to DeSoto Memorial Hospital for treatment of non-life-threatening injuries. Two additional adults were taken to Bayfront Medical Center with non-life-threatening injuries.

The driver was 59-year-old Benny McLeod of Fort Myers. He was not cited.

Pedestrian killed on S. Brevard

A 50-year-old man was killed Sunday evening around 7 p.m. when he was struck by a 1995 Ford F350 pickup driven by Martin Duran, 50, of Arcadia. According to FHP, he man — who had not yet been identified — was walking in an easterly direction across U.S. 17 by Heard Street, directly into the path of the pickup. The impact pushed the man into the right lane where he was hit by a 2019 Hyundai Santa Fe driven by 79-year-old William Marsh of Arcadia.

Alcohol was not a factor for either of the drivers. It was unknown whether alcohol played a role for the victim. Neither driver has been cited and the crash remains under investigation.

The DeSoto County Sheriff's Office reported the following arrests:

- Shalana Paulette Cook, 32, 1200 block of N.E. Cross Ave., Arcadia. Charges: unarmed burglary of an unoccupied dwelling, grand theft between \$300-\$5,000, battery on an officer, firefighter or EMT, and resisting an officer with violence. Bond: \$15,500.
- Laura Ramirez Guzman, 36, 1100 block of S.E. 2nd Ave., Arcadia. Charge: failure to appear. Bond: none.
- Blake Angel Morales, 22, no address, Arcadia. Charge: battery by a person in a detention facility. Bond: \$1,000.
- Champ Smith Jr., 77, Orange Ave. and Pine St., Arcadia. Charge: failure of sex offender to report name or residence change. Bond: \$2,500.
- Antone Terrell Adams, 29, Daytona, FL. Charge: driving on a suspended license. Bond: \$120.
- Dwayne Sherard Blanden, 36, Port Charlotte. Charge: out-of-county warrant. Bond: \$500.
- Maricruz Nicole Gonzales, 20, 6400 block of N.W. Algar Terrace, Arcadia. Charge: battery. Bond: \$500.
- Megan Lynn VanDeusen, 36, Punta Gorda. Charge: battery. Released on recognizance.
- Scotty Lynn Whatley, 30, 6300 block of S.W. Pablo Ave., Arcadia. Charge: driving on a suspended license. Bond: \$120.
- Tria LaShaun White, 40, 200 block of Friendship Court, Arcadia. Charge: battery. Bond: \$500.
- Crystal Ann Berk, 39, 2700 block of S.E. Joshua Estates, Arcadia. Charge: unarmed burglary of an unoccupied dwelling. Bond: \$7,500.
- Terence Devon Calhoun, 33, 100 block of S. Jordan Ave., Arcadia. Charge: violation of probation. Bond: none.
- Marcelino Gomez Diaz, 28, Sebring, FL. Charge: out-of-county warrant. Bond: \$500.
- Joseph Kent Romero, 26, 1600 block of 1st Ave., Arcadia. Charge: unarmed burglary of an unoccupied dwelling. Bond: \$7,500.
- Ronald Gene White, 57, 1800 block of S.W. Harlem Circle, Arcadia. Charges: driving on a suspended license, DUI with

BAC .15 or higher or with person under 18, and grand theft auto. Bond: \$2,120.

• Amy Sue Ballard, 47, 1000 block of S.E. Olive St., Arcadia. Charge: battery. Released on recognizance.

• Sandra Lee Carey, 69, 1000 block of S.E. 4th Ave., Arcadia. Charge: failure to appear. Bond: \$2,000.

• Tyavoris Tyrell Florence, 26, 2500 block of S.E. Lois Ave., Arcadia. Charges: resisting an officer by fleeing while lights and siren are active, and driving on a suspended license. Bond: \$5,120.

• Omar Masterkeyla Hillman, 36, no address, Arcadia. Charge: violation of probation. Released to Dept. for Corrections.

• Anthony Mundo, 25, 4600 block of S.E. Navajo Drive, Arcadia. Charge: violation of probation. Transferred to Dept. of Corrections.

• Justin Allen Wagner, 22, no address. Charge: violation of probation. Sentenced to Dept. of Corrections.

• Alandre Daren Cooper, 30, 1200 block of S.W. Harlem Circle, Arcadia. Charge: battery. Bond: \$500.

• Rodney Rodriguez Randolph, 27, 700 block of OLeary Drive, Arcadia. Charges: sale of cocaine within 1000 ft. of a church or business, possession of less than 20 grams of marijuana, possession or use of drug equipment and smuggling contraband into a detention facility. Bond: \$52,500.

• James Clarence Williams, 40, 1900 block of S.W. Martin Luther King St., Arcadia. Charge: violation of probation. Bond: none.

The Charlotte County Sheriff's Office reported the following arrest:

• Tarence Javanghan Simpson, 45, 1900 block of S.W. Hendry St., Arcadia. Charge: out-of-county warrant. Bond: \$514,998.

The Hardee County Sheriff's Office reported the following arrests:

- Lydia Ann Borjas, 20, Zolfo Springs. Charges: possession of methamphetamine, possession of less than 20 grams of marijuana, possession or use of narcotics equipment, and four counts of violation of probation or community control. Bond: none.
- Alberto Perez Reyes, 42, Zolfo Springs. Charge: driving without a valid license. Bond: \$250.

— Compiled by Susan E. Hoffman

ROADWATCH

Desoto County

State Road 70 from North Pasco Avenue (westbound) and South Luther Avenue (eastbound) to Turner Avenue: Watch for nighttime/overnight lane closures and pedestrian detours as crews work on sidewalk, curb and gutter. This project includes widening and resurfacing, drainage improvements, curb, gutter, sidewalk and signalization. Ajax Paving Industries of Florid, LLC is the contractor. Expected completion is summer 2019.

Charlotte County

State Road 31 at Bermont Road: Crews will remove the flashing beacon and add a traffic signal to improve safety at the intersection. Motorists should expect lane closures, except during the hours of 6 a.m. to 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. Drivers should use caution while traveling in this area. Expected completion is Spring 2019. The contractor is Ajax Paving Industries of Florida.

Highlands County

State Road 70 near the DeSoto County line: Crews will be installing utility poles at the back of the right-of-way. Motorists should use caution and watch for crews working on State Road 70 from the DeSoto County line to US 27.

Real gem: Arcadia artist's Key West adventures

By ANITA WHITNEY

ARCADIAN ART CORRESPONDENT

If you are an artist or craftsman living in Arcadia and you would like to show your work where it might sell better, consider a trip to the Florida Keys. I lived in the Keys since 1984 as a long-staying snowbird, and earned my living as a craftsman and artist doing some of these shows.

There are two in particular that I would recommend, because the fees are not unmanageable and they still welcome new people, which the usual big high-dollar shows in Florida do not.

The first is the annual **Pigeon Key Art Festival**, held every first weekend in February. It is a grand, colorful event, spreading over the Community Park in Marathon. Originally it was held on the actual tiny island of Pigeon Key, but the logistics of getting both exhibitors and public out there proved impossible. The entry fee is under \$300. The staff is a huge friendly group of volunteers who attend to the needs of exhibitors throughout the show, bringing food and water and offering breaks to the exhibitors so that we can walk around, see the other booths, and buy beer, wine, and great food items. This show is juried.

The second show I like very much is the **Schooner Wharf Art and Craft** show that is held in Key West annually in early March. It is a boisterous waterfront event that takes place in front of the Schooner Wharf bar and restaurant. The narrow street where we set up is packed with tourists, and there are a lot of sippy cups in their hands. In my experience, they are happy to spend their money. The fee for this jewel is under \$100. It is not juried.

Surprisingly, the trip from Arcadia to the Keys is fast and easy. Head east on State Road 70, pass Walmart, pass the rural



The writer is a jewelry artist. She travels to the Keys to sell her work.

outskirts of Arcadia and keep going about 30 miles until you are intersected by U.S. Route 27, the Okeechobee Road. This road is almost haunting in its ability to cut time and distance: there is hardly a car in sight in either direction; a few behemoth semis, but less than 10 cars in one hundred miles. Your car starts to feel like a little plane, alone in space. Before you know it, you've reached the Interstate-75 overpass. Ignore it. Go straight underneath it and continue down until you get to the entrance onto the Florida Turnpike. This will take you to the gateway to the Keys, where it ends at Florida City. Traffic tends to be heavy on the turnpike, but it moves very fast. All cars are little planes at this point, so watch out!

At Florida City you have your choice of two roads that lead into the Keys. One is U.S. Route 1. This does have traffic lights along its 18-mile stretch. The other option, which I much prefer, is the Card Sound Road. It has only one stoplight and offers a panoramic scenery of water and distant shores of Key Largo. Once in the Keys, prepare for some traffic and low speed limits; 45 mph most of the way, although there are stretches where you can go faster. The whole trip to Marathon is about six hours from Arcadia. At this point, you are 50 miles from Key West. Throughout this



PHOTOS BY ANITA WHITNEY

Surprisingly, the trip from Arcadia to the Keys is fast and easy.

ride down the Keys you will be surrounded by the most incredibly turquoise blue water.

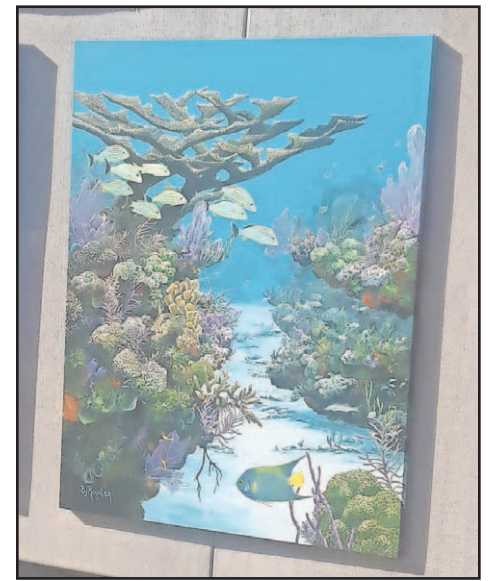
Fortunately, I have friends to stay with when I visit the Keys. I do not have to mess with hotels, etc., which can be very expensive. I lived there long enough to have very strong roots in the community. For me, the Keys are a healing place. Every time I go there, I come back with a renewed faith in humanity. The people I know there are some of the best examples of the best character traits that exist in humans. I come away from there, back up the easy, solitary stretch of Route 27 to Arcadia, filled with a quiet light.

At a Glance

Schooner Wharf Open Air Art & Music Affair (2019)

19th annual, March 2, 9:30 a.m.-midnight
schoonerwharf.com

Pigeon Key Art Festival
www.pigeonkeyartfestival.com



Two good art shows are Pigeon Key Art Festival in Marathon in February and the Schooner Wharf Open Air Art & Music Affair in Key West that runs in March.

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Did you purchase or construct a new home last year?



Remember to file your application for Homestead Exemption before March 1st!

Each individual applying should bring ALL of the following documents:

- Social Security Number
- Florida Driver's License (with current address)
- Florida Vehicle Tag Number
- Voter Registration (if applicable)
- Immigration Information (Residency, Passport, etc.)
- School Information where dependent children are registered
- Checking/Savings Account Statement
- Paid Utility Bill with Current Address

To qualify for homestead exemption, you MUST own and occupy your home as your primary residence and be a Florida Resident as of January 1st.

Additional exemptions are available to qualifying individuals, including:

- Senior's Exemptions (Age 65 or Older, Limited Income)
- Disabled Veteran's Exemption
- Widow's/Widower's Exemption
- Disability Exemption
- Exemption for Blind Persons
- Veteran's Combat-Related Percentage Discount (Age 65 or Older)
- Deployed Military Exemption
- Exemptions for Surviving Spouse of Veteran or First Responder

Applications for exemptions and discounts **MUST** be made **IN PERSON** at the office.

If you have questions concerning the qualifications for these exemptions, please contact our office.



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8:30 am - 5:00 pm

Arcadia Garden Club meets DeSoto Extension director

By **JAMIE PIPHER**
ARCADIA GARDEN CLUB

Arcadia Garden Club met Feb. 4 for its monthly meeting, with 26 members and nine guests attending. Guests included: **Susan Kuczenska, Mary Ruckle, Nancy Baldarn, Barbara Stacy, Linda Stachler,** and speakers, **Karla Hernandez** and **Katelyn Mulinix.** Hostesses Dorathea McCall and Theresa Collins-Hill provided a beautiful Valentine theme with table decorations and plants.

Karla Hernandez was introduced as the new DeSoto County UF/IFAS Extension Office director and livestock agent. She stated that her desire is to bring research-based programming and educational resources focused on supporting agricultural and livestock producers in DeSoto County. Hernandez introduced Katelyn Mulinix, DeSoto County Extension agent for 4-H Development. Hernandez has been with DeSoto County for one month and this was the first day for Mulinix. Both received a warm welcome to our community.

Extension services are a partnership between state, federal, and county governments to provide scientific knowledge and expertise to the public, including scientific and problem-solving information, educational programs in agriculture, 4-H development and family nutrition. The University of Florida, together with Florida Agricultural & Mechanical University, administers the Florida Cooperative Extension Service.

Mulinix noted that DeSoto County 4-H is a youth development organization that offers opportunities for youth (ages 5-18) to work on activities ranging from animal sciences, health, career development, food preparation, shooting sports and much more.

Hernandez provided information on



PHOTOS PROVIDED

Speakers and members discuss how to perform a soil sample as part of preparing a vegetable garden. Pictured are: Katelyn Mulinix, Trudi Super, Karla Hernandez, Roberto San Luis and David Arguijo.

access to Extension Office resources: 2018 Vegetable Production Handbook of Florida, 2019 UF/IFAS Extension Calendar and Report, website: <http://sfl.ifas.ufl.edu/desoto/>, and soil sample bags/collection forms.

Hernandez reported that soil testing is the number-one best management practice. Samples should be collected from up to six-inches in depth and should represent the area to be planted. Why test my soil? Because Florida soil is often lacking in nutrients and other attributes necessary for good plant growth. To improve soil's productivity, one should know these soil attributes: pH, lime requirement, P, K, Ca, Mg, Cu, Mn, Zn and irrigation quality. For more information and sample bags kits, contact the DeSoto County Extension office at desoto@ifas.ufl.edu, or stop by 2150 NE

Roan St., Arcadia, on the same property as the Turner Center.

An Arcadia garden Club fieldtrip to Oaks of Devonaire was announced for (Monday) March 18, starting at 9 a.m., at 1423 SE County Road 760A, Nocatee (2.4 miles east off U.S. Highway 17). Cost of admission will be willingness to take home free plants! Bring gloves and plastic bags! Everyone who has visited this site has rated it a 5 Star.

The next meeting for Arcadia Garden Club will be March 4 at noon, 1005 W. Magnolia St., Arcadia. The speaker will be Marilyn Eigsti on the role of aquatic plants in our landscape. The public is welcome to attend as guest of the club. For more information about AGC and its activities, go to: <https://www.facebook.com/ArcadiaFloridaGardenClub> and click the "Like" button. For an electronic



Members and guests greeted with a Happy Valentine's wish.

copy of the AGC Newsletter, to receive a meeting reminder or if you are interested in being a presenter, send an email to: gardenclubarcadia@gmail.com.

DeSoto Church Directory

... And Make Your Choice from our Church Directory

 Calvary BAPTIST CHURCH Real, Relevant, Relational Sundays Life Groups - 9:30am Contemporary Worship - 10:45am Wednesdays Adult, Youth & Children's Ministries - 6pm 863-494-4345 www.cbcarcadia.org	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	"But to you who are listening I say: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you. Luke 6:27-28	First Church of the Nazarene <i>A LIGHTHOUSE IN OUR COMMUNITY FOR 85 YEARS</i> 132 W Gibson Street Arcadia FL 34266 863-491-1422 Rev. Steve Johnson Sunday Worship 10:45 am Sunday School 9:30 am The VOICE of God will never contradict the WORD of God	Grace Lutheran Church, LCMS 1004 W. Oak Street Rev. Anthony Arias Pastor Adult Sunday School 11:00 AM Sunday Worship 11:00 AM <i>All Welcome!</i>
See your Church in this spot Contact Tami 494-5201 for more information	 Oak Hill Baptist Arcadia, Florida 5104 NW Oak Hill Ave. 863-494-6224 INTERM HIXON HELTON Sunday School 9:30 am Sunday Worship 10:45 am Wednesday 6:30 pm for Prayer Group, Youth & Children		See Your Church in this spot Call Tami at 494-5201 for more details.	 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 Study 11AM-6PM
See your Church in this spot Contact Tami 494-5201 for more information	PINE LEVEL UNITED METHODIST CHRIST CENTERED, CHRIST LED. 9596 Pine Level St., Arcadia 863- 494-0044 9am Children Church 9am Contemporary Service 10am Sunday School 11am Traditional Service Wednesday Adult, Youth & Children's Programs 7 PM <i>Nursery Always Available</i> www.pinelevelumc.com	 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	St. Edmund Episcopal Church 327 W. Hickory St. Arcadia 863-494-0485 Sundays 8am & 10am Misa en espanol Dom 7:00 pm www.EpiscopalArcadiaFl.com	 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
				See your Church in this spot Contact Tami 494-5201 for more information

HPC decides mid-century structures, Faison award

By CAROL MAHLER

ARCADIAN HISTORY EDITOR

On Jan. 14 and Feb. 11, Arcadia's Historic Preservation Commission considered two homes and a building that "didn't seem historic," as one commission member noted. However, the structures were included in the Arcadia Historic District when listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1984.

Built in 1969, the concrete-block home at 136 S. Osceola Ave. was on the agenda for both months: to replace windows at the January meeting and for a new roof at the February meeting. Although it was listed as a non-contributing structure in the original survey, at 50 years it is now considered historic.

Across the street is 143 S. Osceola, constructed in 1957. A mid-20th century example of "frame vernacular" construction, the 62-year-old house is now a contributing structure in the district. At the February meeting, the certificate of appropriateness for a new roof was approved.

A new sign for "Alma's Fashions" on the fascia of the concrete-block building, built in 1956, at 15 N. Brevard was approved to replace other signs on the walls. This office has also gained historic status.

At the January meeting the current owners of the home at 313 N. Manatee Ave. had a certificate of appropriateness approved for new single-hung windows to fit the original window frames and to replace the lattice on the front porch with screen. The house may have been built 1924-1925 for Henry W. and Lucy Rice, the owners listed in the 1926 Arcadia city directory. He owned the H.W. Rice Garage and Machine Shop at 15 S. Polk Ave. that was later owned by Lewis Bishop, who invented the rotary mower that revolutionized mowing grass.

At the February meeting the DeSoto County Historical Society requested to replace with a locally built, prefab shed, the temporary storage unit built during restoration to the north of the John Morgan Ingraham House Museum, 300 N. Monroe Ave. The new shed will have whitened board-and-batten-style siding and a traditional silver metal roof. The Society also requested a waiver of fees that was approved Tuesday by Arcadia city council.

The next meeting of Arcadia's Historic Preservation Commission will be 4 p.m. March 11 in city council chambers, 23 N. Polk. The meeting is open to the public. 863-494-4114.

In other news

DeSoto County Historical Society president Norma Banas presented a certificate



PHOTO BY CAROL MAHLER

Faison and Banas

of appreciation to James Lee Faison III, president of the HCW Foundation, for his presentation about the Smith-Brown School to the DeSoto County Historical Society at last Thursday's meeting.

Mr. Faison talked about his family moving to Arcadia in 1956 so that his parents could teach at the Smith-Brown School for Arcadia's African-American students. He showed images of his family, his wife Mae Faison—the first "Black DeSoto County Fair Queen" in 1967—plus pages from the only two yearbooks that the school ever produced—1952 and 1962. He ended with a collage of images about Ernie Clark, Class of 1959, who became a football linebacker for the Detroit Lions (1963-1967) and the St. Louis Cardinals (1968).

Historical Society member James Westberry, who served on the DeSoto County school board for more than 30 years, thanked Faison and his family for their assistance during integration. Mr. Faison's mother, Ruby Faison Womack, was the first African-American teacher at West Elementary School, the same year that her son in 1966 attended DeSoto County High School as one of 33 first-generation African-American students. Westberry explained that the school board at that time had a committee "with some black folks on it and some white folks on it" choosing a few special students to start the integration process. He said, "We didn't want to let the government tell us how to do our school system."

In the transition to desegregation, Westberry also credited Richard Bowers, who served as Florida's first African-American head football coach at DeSoto High and as the state's first black athletic director. "He worked so well with both white and black students," Westberry said of Mr. Bowers.

The DeSoto County Historical Society next meets at noon March 14, at the Family Service Center Annex. www.historicdesoto.org, 863-266-5774.

OBITUARIES

Rev. Dr. Bertha M. Hooks

The Rev. Dr. Bertha M. Hooks, 76, of Arcadia, Florida, passed away peacefully at home on Feb. 15, 2019. She was born on Dec. 12, 1942, in Gunnison, Miss., to Henry Smith and Mary Allen.



She is survived by her children: James Gant Smith of Arcadia, Fla., Willie Gant Smith of Pascagoula, Miss., Donita (Pete) Sesler of Wildwood, Fla., John

(Bretina) Gant of North Port, Fla., Gracetta Ijames of Arcadia, Fla., and Lonnie Ijames of Pascagoula, Miss.; a sister, Marilyn (Carl) Piggott Smith of Miami, Fla.; a brother, Alonzo Smith of Punta Gorda, Fla.; 20 grandchildren; 23 great-grandchildren, and numerous nieces and nephews.

The Rev. Dr. Bertha Hooks had been an Arcadia resident for 50 years; her work experience included being an educator/mentor on the board of USE; and an owner-operator of ABC Learning Academy CRM, Inc.

She had earned an undergraduate, post-graduate and a Ph.D in theology; she was a faithful member of Assembly of Praise. Some of her hobbies included reading, teaching others, studying her bible, traveling and doing what she loved best—spending time with family. She will be remembered by anyone who met her or knew her as a role model; her caring, generous and sharing nature.

Services will be held (Friday) Feb. 22, 2019. Family will receive friends from 6-8 p.m. at Ponger-Kays-Grady Funeral Homes, 50 N. Hillsborough Ave., Arcadia. A funeral service will be held (Saturday) Feb. 23 at 11 a.m. at Elizabeth Missionary Baptist Church, 101 S. Orange Ave., Arcadia.

Ponger-Kays-Grady Funeral Homes/Arcadia has been entrusted with the arrangements.

Wanda Darlene Young

Wanda Darlene Young, a lifelong resident of Arcadia, Fla., was born to the late Marvin and Ruth Jackson on May 17, 1953. She attended Smith-Brown School. She was later employed at G. Pierce Wood Memorial Hospital, where she retired.



Ms. Young joined the love of her life, Bobby L. Young Sr., in holy matrimony on May 16, 1981. She enjoyed

cooking and feeding the community, helping those in need.

She leaves to cherish the loving memories of four beautiful children: Michael (Rita) Jackson, Charles Jackson, Melinda (Ronnie Smith) Jackson, Bobby (Jenice) Young Jr.; two grandchildren, Jakarri Cook and Ivey Lee Young; one great-granddaughter, Marcella Cook; three sisters, Loretta Tice, Janita Cross, Ethel Thomas; two brothers, Marvin Jackson and Johnnie Lee Jackson. She also leaves a host of nieces, nephews, cousins and friends. She was preceded in death by her parents; one grandson, Hakeem Jackson Cook; one sister, Louiza Burgess; and two brothers, Willie Jackson, Ray Jackson.

A viewing will be held at Hickson Funeral Home on (Friday) Feb. 22, from 5-7 p.m., 142 S. Orange Ave., Arcadia. A Homegoing Celebration service will be held on (Saturday) Feb. 23 at Mt. Zion AME Church, 256 S. Orange Ave., Arcadia.

OBITUARY POLICY

Obituaries are accepted from funeral homes and crematories, and from families if accompanied by a death certificate. Full obituaries, notices of services, remembrances and death notices are subject to charges. Email the item for publication to obits@sun-herald.com; it must be accompanied by a phone number. For more information, call 941-206-1028.

GRITS & PIECES

FROM PAGE 4

Thou shall refrain from sharing spoilers in regards to movie or book endings. Jumping the gun may result in thee being jumped thyself.

Thou shall not text while driving, less thee risk meeting thy maker too soon. Alas.

Thou shall wash thy hands before

exiting restrooms, especially in dining establishments. Those failing to comply need to be scourged and forced to eat liver in exile for the rest of thy days.

Thou shall not put sugar on grits. Woe be unto those who do, and may infestations and plagues be upon those who do.

These are but a few, but implementation and enforcement of all this just might bless this mess we call life here on earth. Amen.

OUR VIEW

FROM PAGE 4

crime or larceny rates." Those states have seen roughly the same decrease in crime rate as states that did not raise thresholds. In fact, the study saw no correlation between the felony trigger number and crime rates.

As for the impact on the level of crime, it just didn't matter. However, for individuals — especially young people — a felony rap can be a life-altering deal.

Add to that the savings in court costs. As an attorney aptly put it, this is also a matter of "judicial economy and judicial efficiency."

All in all, time to adapt and update.



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Tiny Changes: Three squares a day

“Call me irresponsible,
Call me Unreliable,
Throw in undependable too ...”
—Sammy Kahn

We’ve all heard it countless times before—“Three squares a day.” “No snacking, you’ll ruin your dinner!” “Three meals a day, nothing in between, one day at a time.” This advice may seem terribly pedestrian and old-fashioned. Happily we are not on a ship in the middle of the ocean, eating from wooden plates and worrying about scurvy. But it’s still true.

What we should be concerned with is maintaining the health of our muscles. Three, high-protein meals each day is just what the doctor ordered. This will start us on the road to where we want to be ... the land of feeling great!

The research is definitive and muscle health is completely within our control. We must manage our muscles well by choosing to drink our 85 ounces of water to hydrate them, choosing to eat the 30 grams of protein at each meal for repair, and choosing to stretch daily as part of the activation of the repair process. We can, over time, develop our ability to automatically make the most healthful choices and turn those choices into excellent lifelong habits.

The latest brain science tells us



Marilyn McConnell

that the “old dog, new tricks” adage is complete hogwash. It is *never* too late to learn. We can form new, empowering habits and, let’s face it, our health is our personal responsibility. Muscles can be kept very healthy by focusing on two simple things: feeding and activation, i.e. get nutrients in and waste out. Choose to seriously focus on your health, because it is the foundation of energy, vitality, mobility and balance. Each of these will greatly impact the overall quality of your life.

In terms of food, it’s probably easiest for you to start fresh and have a child’s mind. Start as though you know absolutely nothing about what you should be eating. You might be trying really hard and eating ostensibly healthful foods. Since you’ve been fed faulty or incomplete information, however, you’re making choices that defeat the objective. Let yourself off the hook and don’t feel badly or guilty. Much of what we’ve heard over the past 50 years has been complete and

total bunk.

The government promoted food pyramid was upside down for decades. Following its guidelines has made Americans less healthy than ever. Grazing, just like the food pyramid, is not based on science. These “diets” are designed to sound like the answer you’ve been searching for, but most often are geared toward corporate profits. The big food companies are making a killing selling you processed diet food. Instead, let’s start fresh. It’s time to get back to basics and commit to what has been scientifically proven to be foundational for optimal health.

Every day for two weeks eat three meals, each containing 30 grams of protein. That will reset your metabolism. You must make protein your first thought. Read labels and do simple math. An open-faced meat sandwich, meaty stew, or ham-and-cheese omelette are ideal examples. Any combination of animal proteins will work. You can be creative and avoid boredom. It’s worth the effort, because this way of eating delivers tremendous benefit and will become second nature.

How do you know that you’re in metabolic imbalance and that your metabolism needs resetting? Look in the mirror! If you have a pot belly,

muffin-top, love handles or can’t tie your shoes without huffing and puffing ... the evidence is staring back at you. The great news is that no matter how far up the scale you have gone, you can get on the right track and see results quite quickly. The average fat loss of an obese subject is one pound per day. A middle-aged woman can lose 30 pounds in 12 weeks and keep it off. The program works 100 percent of the time.

The question is are you ready and willing to apply yourself and learn something new? Even if you are naturally lean, your muscles will thank you in the form of increased energy. Please remember that muscle health is the single greatest indicator of longevity. You can have reasons and excuses for not taking good care of yourself, or you can have great, life-changing results. The choice is yours!

Go for it! As Sammy Kahn suggested, “Don’t be irresponsible, undependable or unreliable.” I’m here to help. Best of luck until next week!

Marilyn McConnell is a wellness expert who, over three decades in Toronto and Chicago, has helped people with personal presentation, weight loss, longevity, organization, downsizing and related lifestyle design. She now lives in Arcadia, much closer to her immediate family. 312-659-2424

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Best time ever! Special Olympics Day at DeSoto High

They came to compete in the first Special Olympics Day at DeSoto High. These amazing athletes were running, jumping and throwing things, each hoping to achieve a gold medal, or to test their abilities in friendly competition.

The one-day contest on Friday was really three events; a Field Day, the Olympics and the Little Elites, each for athletes ages 5-21. The day was hosted by the DeSoto school district,

organized by Colleen Harchuck, the district's physical therapist. Opening ceremonies included marching bands, torch-bearing athletes, fellow student "buddies" such as JROTC, cheer/sports, Chef Martin's culinary students, FFA and others enlisted to assist volunteer adults and teachers, social/society groups, DeSoto public safety and donors, those whose goal was to support the Games ... and its 75 or so competitors.



PHOTOS COURTESY BILL WIGHT/WIGHT ZEBRA PHOTOGRAPHY

Lining up for opening ceremonies.



National Anthem moments.



For the joy of sport.



Torch-bearers in opening moments.



Best day ever.



Perfect weather for sporting contests.



Let the Games begin.



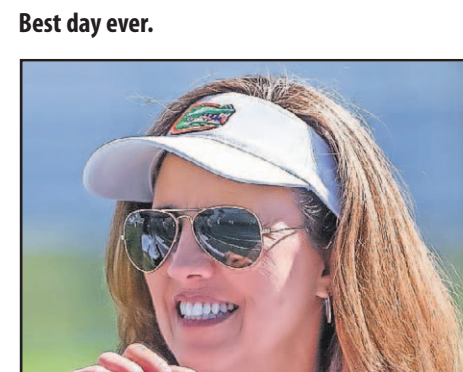
Some athletes take longer to gear up for events.



Long-jumpers compete.



Organizer Colleen Harchuck gets hugs.



Volunteers are critical in any group event.



High fives all around.



Volunteers, staff and school "buddies" assist in the first Special Olympics Day at DeSoto High. Some 75 athletes from ages 5-21 competed under mild and sunny skies.



All smiles.



First things first.



Athletes of every ability compete.

DeSoto SPORTS EXTRA

Maybell, Bulldogs knockout Wildcats, 58-56

By **STEVE KNAPP**
ARCADIAN SPORTS EDITOR

It seemed as if every time the Hardee Wildcats narrowed the gap or took the lead, there was Nate "Skinny" Maybell for the Bulldogs stopping them in their tracks. The result was a hard fought 58-56 win over Hardee.

It was the third time this season the Bulldogs took a bite out of the Wildcats, winning the previous games 80-79 and 72-60. Arnold Mele had scored 20 points in each of the DeSoto wins, but suffered a spider bite under his eye the morning of the game and didn't make it to school. According to the rules, he could not play that night.

Just as the team had been doing all season, however, other players stepped up to fill in the gaps. Kawassmi "Kdubb" Wilson knocked down 10 points, with Keimar Richardson right behind with nine. Ethan Redden tallied eight more in the win. With the balanced attack, it was Maybell's 20 making the difference.



PHOTO PROVIDED

Nate Maybell puts up two of his game-high 20 points in DeSoto's district tournament elimination of the Hardee Wildcats.

MAYBELL | 15

Lady Bulldogs perfect in preseason

By **STEVE KNAPP**
ARCADIAN SPORTS EDITOR

The Lady Bulldogs were perfect in two preseason games, downing Imagine, 14-8, and then two nights later slamming East Lee, 15-3.

These games allowed coaches to see who will play which positions and gives them the opportunity to tinker with the batting order. As the season progresses, positions will be clear and a set lineup will be used to give the team the best chance to advance in the district games.

Coach Keith Wallace said: "As the season goes on, we will have our best nine out there. Until then, everything is open."

The Bulldogs took a huge hit through graduation last season, losing five key players, including three playing college ball now. Those graduates led the team in every offensive and defensive category. When a team loses their battery (pitcher and catcher) and three quarters of their infield, that is a lot of skill and leadership to replace.

In the final tuneup before the games start for real this week, the Bulldogs blasted the Jaguars for seven runs in the first, and coasted to a 15-3 mercy-rule shortened game.



PHOTOS PROVIDED

Kaselyn Fonger and Savannah Davis had lots of fun in the 15-3 win over East Lee.

DeSoto sent up 13 hitters in the first — six base hits, a pair of walks and two hit batters. The big hit was a Jocelyn Villarreal double to score the first two runs. Villarreal also contributed a single in the first, as the first seven Bulldogs reached base safely to begin the game.

DeSoto added three in the second. And after the Jaguars scored twice in the third, the Bulldogs answered with five more to complete their scoring. Besides Villarreal, Bre Tew, Jasmyn Vest and Kaselyn Fonger each had a pair of hits. The Bulldogs totaled 11 hits in the game, along with five free passes and two hit batters to go along with their seven strikeouts.

Project Graduation

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Mah jonggers strike, next year play in Arcadia

By **NEIL SIMPSON**
HEARTLAND SENIOR GAMES

He may not have been the last man standing, but Paul Hudnall was the only man sitting with 47 women in Lake Placid's Tropical Harbor clubhouse on Feb. 15 for the Heartland Senior Games mah-jongg tournament. Hudnall mentioned that some places where he has played mah jongg, women refused to play with him, saying "mah jongg is not a man's game." The ladies at Tropical Harbor, however, were delighted to have him join them for the day.

At last year's tournament, held at Tanglewood in Sebring, the ladies were asked if they would be willing to make the drive to Lake Placid if the mah-jongg fanatics at Tropical Harbor would be willing to host this year's event. The players, led

by Patty Lee, said, "Sure thing."

The change of venue brought many new faces, including six from Cross Creek RV Resort in Arcadia. Next year, Theresa Mansfield and her fellow players from Cross Creek — Liz Strutt, Cheryl Kiser, Carol Polk, Janice Larsen and Betty Seatter — have agreed to host the tournament. This will mark the first time that one of the Heartland Senior Games events has been held in Arcadia.

The Cross Creek crew is hoping that many mah-jongg enthusiasts from other Arcadia parks/resorts will take advantage of this opportunity to compete close to home.

If you have a group playing mah jongg, you might like to contact Theresa Mansfield at robinandtheresa@yahoo.com so that she can keep you and the members of your mah-jongg group fully informed about plans for 2020.

January's Player of the Month ... entire team



PHOTO PROVIDED

Athlete of the month for January was a team — as the boys basketball team had solid play and made it to the district semifinals.

It's in the cards!



PHOTO BY NEIL SIMPSON

Hats off to Arcadians competing in euchre play at the Heartland Senior Games in Sebring. Those competing include Norma Woodall (left/Oakview Estates), Brenda Shevchik (Craig's RV Resort), Michael Woodall, Bob Margetin (Cross Creek RV Resort), Bill Shevchik and Bob Rogers (Cross Creek RV Resort). Mr. Margetin and Mr. Rogers picked up gold medals, while Mr. Shevchik and Ms. Woodall earned bronze in the competition at Tanglewood. South Florida State College organizes the Heartland Senior Games.

MAYBELL

FROM PAGE 14

Not only did Skinny lead the Bulldogs, but he got the points at big times in the game when they were needed the most.

At the midway point in the third period, for instance, Hardee took their second lead of the game at 31-30. Skinny hit from outside the arc to put DeSoto back on top 33-31, then went on a personal 8-0 run to put the Bulldogs up 38-31. The Wildcats went on a 7-0 run to close out the third

period with the game tied at 38 going into the final eight minutes of the season for the losing team.

Hardee completed their 13-2 run early in the final period to lead 44-40. Richardson got the Bulldogs back on top 46-45, and Wilson hit a very important trey to stretch the lead to 49-45. "Kawassmi hit that big three from the corner, that was a big-time shot. It was much needed at the time," said DeSoto coach Darrel Nicklow. Hardee tied the game at 49, but Skinny hit a jumper to retake the lead 51-49.

With the Bulldogs on top 55-51 with 37

seconds left in the season, Hardee got the game back to a one-possession contest at 55-53. Hardee had to foul the Dawgs to get the ball back and Redden missed both attempts from the charity stripe. Skinny, who was 4-5 from the line, had better luck. He dusted the net with two freethrows that turned out to be the winning points to give the boys in blue and white a 57-53 lead.

"Without Bubba (Mele), it wasn't just me that had to step up," Maybell said, "it was the whole team that had to step up. It isn't just one shooter that makes the difference in a win or loss. Knocking Hardee out of

the districts and beating them three times feels really good, especially since they beat us in football ... and I don't like losing to them, period. They're our biggest rivals and now I want to beat them in track when our basketball season is over." (Maybell was just one spot away from going to the state tournament in the high jump last year.)

"Nate (Maybell) played big tonight. He stopped their best player, and without his effort, I don't know what would have happened tonight. Everybody that stepped on the floor contributed, it was a complete team effort," said Nicklow.



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BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT



Meet the CEO: Jake Crews of Crews Bank & Trust

By **CRAIG GARRETT**
ARCADIAN EDITOR

First State Bank of Arcadia officially became **Crews Bank & Trust** on Tuesday. The bank's fourth-generation chief executive, **Jake Crews**, welcomed the corporate rebranding at two locations in town. His firm has other banks in central and southwest Florida.

Question: First State Bank/Arcadia has a generation of history in town. Any concerns with rebranding?

Crews: "Everything about what First State Bank of Arcadia is at its core will remain the same. There's no change in ownership, no change in the way we do business. We are the same bank, with the same focus on our customers and their businesses. The only thing new is putting our family's name on the sign out front."

Question: Rebranding means expansion?

Crews: "We are expanding, both geographically and at the product level. We currently have a loan office in Manatee County and we are opening

a full-service branch in downtown Sarasota in the spring. We are also adding Trust and Investment Management Services to our product offerings."

Question: Your family has been in banking since 1929. What would your great-grandfather think about the business today? Would he recognize it? What is the greatest challenge in your profession?

Crews: "Over the past 90 years a lot has changed in banking, particularly the delivery channels. Consumers demand for digital banking products remains strong, and we continue to deliver cutting-edge solutions. Our online and mobile banking, and treasury management products offer both business and consumer clients the flexibility and convenience they want. This is something my great-grandfather probably couldn't have imagined. For us, the part that hasn't changed, is our emphasis on the client. The trust, the accuracy, the confidentiality — all those things have stayed the same."

Question: Fourth-generation, is there



PHOTO PROVIDED

Crews Bank & Trust CEO Jake Crews

added pressure in your position?

Crews: "I have been working at our banks after school and during the summer since I was 16. Before joining the bank's management team back in 2010, I worked three years as a bank examiner in Florida. I think everyone remembers how hard things were then. I saw a lot of mistakes banks made. On the other hand, my entire life I've had a front-row seat to what good, conservative fiscal

management looks like."

Question: Advice to younger people considering a banking/financing career?

Crews: "Banks have a broad range of operations, from accounting and information technology, to underwriting, sales, and even marketing. My advice is to find someone who is doing what you want to do, and learn from them. This can even be done with someone online."

Friends of Arcadia Airport pancake breakfast

By **GEORGE CHASE**
FRIENDS OF ARCADIA AIRPORT

Friends of Arcadia Airport on Saturday held their monthly pancake breakfast fundraiser at Arcadia Municipal. As usual the traffic pattern

and ramp were busy with aircraft arriving to attend the great meal. The Friends group holds monthly breakfasts on third Saturdays from October through April to attract out-of-town pilots to fly in to visit our town.

Aviation City, the airport Fly-In/

Camp-Out Center, was full of aircraft and tents from the EAA (Experimental Aircraft Association) Chapter 1551 from Opopka, Fla., who had flown in on Friday for a weekend campout and to attend the pancake breakfast Saturday morning.

That Thursday (Feb. 14) Friends hosted about 40 Canadian pilots for a fly-in BBQ at Aviation City. We had 11 planes with Canadian registrations on site that day plus one from Illinois and three from Florida. The pilots were given a brief background on the facility by the Friends group and learned about what Arcadia has to offer visitors before enjoying a great BBQ lunch.

This week at Aviation City we will have three Canadian aircraft flying in with 12 guests for airport camping, plus another aircraft from Illinois onsite as well. They will all be spending multiple nights in our town. Visitors also viewed an emergency vehicle at the airport from DeSoto Fire-Rescue. The vehicle had been decommissioned by the U.S. military.

With the Friends group and airport Manager Shelley Peacock working on growing the airport, things are turning around. Word is getting out that Arcadia Municipal is a great place for pilots from all states and even Canada to visit and enjoy the warm winter weather.

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PHOTO PROVIDED

New fire vehicle introduced at Arcadia Municipal Airport on Saturday.

 **Go find us on Facebook!**

Mash Bash to benefit McSwain Park



Arcadia councilmember Judy Wertz-Strickland and Arcadia police Marshal Matthew Anderson pause for a photo.

Mash Bash on Saturday was a benefit hosted by Leadership DeSoto Class X. Proceeds from the event at the Arcadia Armory go toward improvements at McSwain Park in Arcadia. Company clerk report: Fun time had by all soldiers!



PHOTOS BY PRISCILLA MCDANIEL

Jennifer Bowser, executive director Habitat for Humanity-DeSoto, getting into the spirit of the event honoring the classic television comedy.



Mayor Jaccarie Simons keeps busy in his hometown.



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Conflicting worldviews—finding your way

We are living in the midst of a great cultural war which is trying to overthrow our beliefs, values, traditions, and our American history. Our minds are being besieged with radically different ways of looking at the world and our place in it.

From protecting our children to killing babies, from respecting the rule of law to illegal immigration, from capitalism to socialism.

Our Judeo-Christian worldview with its attendant values has created a unique country that produced opportunities by which we could transcend our backgrounds and thrive—if we wanted to. But under the euphemisms of pro-choice, social justice, and social democracy, these values are being discarded.

Navigate life using our worldview as a map

“Worldview” refers to the way in which we interpret reality, our understanding of what life is all about and our place in it. It is a set of ideas and beliefs as to the essential nature of the world. Our worldview influences the way we respond to life and the decisions we will make.

Psychiatrist M. Scott Peck warns, “If our worldview is based on illusions, lies, pretensions, fantasies, and hypocrisy, we will be unable to negotiate our conflicts and problems in a life-giving way.

“The problem comes when our world map was created as a child but never updated as we matured. It is



Judith Doctor

vital our worldview be a personal one, forged through the fire of questioning and doubt, in the crucible of our own experience of reality.” (“The Road Less Traveled”)

Do you have your own view of the world? Is the world a:

Chaotic place, without meaning — grab whatever pleasure you can whenever possible?

Dog-eat-dog place — heartlessness is essential for survival?

Place that owes you a living — no matter how you conduct your life?

Place of rigid law — step out of line, you’ll be struck down and discarded?

Nurturing place — something good will turn up; we don’t need to be anxious about the future?

Destructive worldviews of the radical Left and socialism

The radical Left and socialism with their destructive worldviews have been trying to destroy our national monuments, symbols, and slogans. Also, they are working to rob us of our “inalienable rights” given us by our Creator — Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness.

They embrace a culture of death, rather than affirming the culture of life.

They promote conformity, making us all alike, under the control of more regulations, rather than the liberty of individual choice.

They foster a culture of victimhood and serving the common good, rather than empowering people to pursue their individual dreams and become the author of their own life.

Must understand what’s happening

Decades ago, renowned psychiatrist Karl Menninger warned of the danger of mental *dullness*, calling it the twin of mental illness: “Mental dullness can afflict whole societies ... as out of touch with reality as the psychotic lost in catatonic torpor.” He suggests that the voice of intelligence is too often drowned by the roar of fear and silenced by ignorance.

We must wake up, throw off our mental dullness — even if we are over seventy — and learn to understand the worldviews being aggressively pushed on us by the radical Left and socialism. We must also recognize how they are trying to silence our voices, manipulate us with guilt and fear, and falsely accuse us of various *-isms*.

Moreover, we must examine our own worldview for deception and illusions. The more clearly we see the reality of the world, the better we will be able to evaluate other worldviews.

Use our inalienable rights as a gauge

Let’s use our inalienable rights as a gauge to help us evaluate conflicting worldviews and their policies. We can learn to think and ask questions like the following:

Life: What will *this* do to support and protect the life of our citizens?

Liberty: What will *that* do to protect the liberty of our individual choice?

Pursuit of Happiness: How will *it* empower us to pursue our individual dreams and become the author of our own lives?

Need a spiritual awakening

At root, our problems are spiritual. There are times when psychiatry, medicine, or science cannot help us. Dr. Carl Jung understood this; writing to Bill W. (founder of A.A.), he said that at some point in our life, a spiritual experience would be the only way to save ourselves.

Here are some things the Bible tells us we can do to save ourselves and our country:

Humble yourself, therefore, under the mighty hand of God — 1 Peter 5:5

Cast all our anxiety upon Him, because He cares for you — 1 Peter 5:7

Be on the alert, resist the devil, and be firm in your faith — 1 Peter 5:8-9

Judith Doctor, RN, MSW, is an Arcadian author, speaker, and spiritual life mentor. President of Kairos Ministries, Inc. her live broadcasts can be heard monthly on Radio Horeb in Europe. Her books on dreams and forgiveness are available on Amazon and other online booksellers. www.judithdoctor.com|doctorj@judithdoctor.com.

Budget disaster kit in 20 weeks: Week 7

Topic: Skywarn spotters ... boots on the ground with an eye on the sky

Many Americans feel the effects of severe weather every year. To obtain critical weather information, NOAA’s National Weather Service, part of the U.S. Department of Commerce, established Skywarn with partner organizations.

Skywarn is a volunteer program with nearly 290,000 trained severe weather spotters. These volunteers help keep their local communities safe by providing timely and accurate reports of severe weather to the National Weather Service, or the NWS. Although Skywarn spotters provide essential information for all types of weather hazards, the main responsibility of a Skywarn spotter is to identify and describe severe local storms. In the average year, 10,000 severe thunderstorms, 5,000 floods and more than 1,000 tornadoes occur across the United States. These events threaten lives and property. Since the program started in the 1970s, the information provided by Skywarn spotters, coupled with Doppler radar technology, improved satellite and other data, and



Brian Newhouse

has enabled NWS to issue more timely and accurate warnings for tornadoes, severe thunderstorms and flash-floods.

Skywarn storm-spotters are part of the ranks of citizens who form the nation’s first line of defense against severe weather. There can be no finer reward than to know that their efforts have given communities the precious gift of time—seconds and minutes that can help save lives. While the main role of a storm-spotter is to be their community’s first line of defense against dangerous storms, they also provide important information to NWS, warning forecasters who make critical warning decisions. Storm-spotters play a critical role because they can see things that radar and other technological tools cannot, and this ground truth

is critical in helping the NWS perform our primary mission ... to save lives and property.

As part of the DeSoto County Storm Ready community re-certification process, DeSoto County Emergency Management is hosting a **FREE** Skywarn Spotter class on (Friday) **March 1**, 10 a.m.-12 p.m. The class will be held at the Emergency Operations Center, 2200 NE Roan St., Arcadia, in front of the Turner Center. To register, simply email eoc@desotobocc.com, or call 863-993-4837. Everyone is welcome to attend and there is no obligation.

For questions or more information about all the emergency management programs available in DeSoto County, please call 863-993-4831, or email eoc@desotobocc.com.

Get emergency alerts by email, text or directly to your phones by signing up for “DeSoto Alerts,” a free service provided by DeSoto County Emergency Management, on our Facebook page at: <https://www.facebook.com/DesotoEM/>. Click on the blue SIGN UP button to register and “Like” our page while you are there.

Remember, the 2019 hurricane season is only 13 weeks away. Do not wait until there is a storm coming to start your preparations, because disasters of all types can occur at any time. Here is this week’s shopping list for your kit. Shopping lists are just a guide. Please adjust to your family’s needs. Always check expiration dates. Make the item last as long as possible (at least through Nov. 30) and be sure to check in next week for our next shopping list.

Things to do

Establish an out-of-state contact.

Items to purchase (per person):

- 1 gallon water
- 1 can meat
- 1 canned fruit
- 1 can vegetables
- 1 box quick energy snacks

This list was adapted from a series by Candi Kelly, Manatee County Emergency Management.

Brian Newhouse is emergency management coordinator for DeSoto County Emergency Management

Quilters, carvers, more: Big Tree RV Park’s March 5 artisan show

By STAFF REPORT

The artisans of Big Tree RV Park in Arcadia will present their biennial show on Tuesday March 5 in the clubhouse at the park, 2626 NE U.S. Highway Hwy 70. Although they create all year long, they have concentrated on special projects for the past two seasons.

Crafters will display a selection of their creations that they made with the help of many talented instructors. Carvers will show a portion of their efforts from the past two seasons. Many of the carvers also participate with others in the area, as they share new

ways to make wood come alive.

The quilters of Big Tree have gathered their various projects for display. There will be a showing of king-sized quilts made as part of this year’s class project. Other displays are based on class challenges from the past two years. Last year’s challenge was to create a piece incorporating a “fat quarter” sized fabric drawn at random. This year’s challenge was to create a quilted piece which expressed “what the quilter liked most about spending the season in Florida.” There will be a display of the class efforts based on a log-cabin pattern, as well as the results from a class discussion

creating a collage of cut fabrics.

The past several seasons this group has held a “sew-in” to make charity quilts, most of which are made with fabrics donated by class members. In the past they have sewn “Quilts for Linus,” which have been donated to the local chapter for children who have been hospitalized. These are treasured by the recipients and the child has something positive to take home from a stressful experience. To date this group has donated close to 500 quilts to the local organization.

Last year the group directed their efforts at the sew-in to “Fidget Quilts” for use by Alzheimer’s patients, or anyone

who needs the calming effects of these creations. There will be a display of these various charity quilts at the show on March 5.

There will be tickets available for chances on several raffle prizes. Each person coming will receive a free ticket for a chance at a door prize donated by the participants.

There is no admission charge, but donations will be accepted to help with the cost of batting and backings used to finish the charity quilts.

There will also be ongoing demonstrations of various techniques of interest occurring throughout the day.

Family Album

FAMILY ALBUM PHOTOS

Send us a photo to celebrate a birth, birthday, engagement, wedding, anniversary, etc. The Arcadian will run it free. We must have it no later than noon on Monday. Bring your photo to the office or e-mail to Arcadian.editor@gmail.com

Time-traveling milk butler for hire

Columnist
Curtis HONEYCUTT

I need a milk butler. "Need?" you ask, followed by, "What's a milk butler?" Feel free to replace those question marks with interrobangs if you want.

Every morning I eat cereal, then I drink tea. Both activities require adept milk pouring skills. Have you ever opened a brand new gallon of milk and thought to yourself, "Now what?" Inevitably, you mis-pour the milk and have a cascade of milk down the side of the milk container, only some of which ends up in your bowl. And, when it comes to tea, a milk-pouring catastrophe is the quickest way to end up with way too much milk in your tea. So — yes — I need a milk butler. I just can't afford one yet.

In the same way that I struggle with pouring milk, many people struggle with knowing the right time to use "that" and "which." I'm just going to hit you with the punchline on this one: if your sentence doesn't need the clause your word (that or which) is joining, use which. If your sentence does need the clause your word (that or which) is connecting, use that. It's as simple as that.

Now for some examples. Here are two nearly identical sentences:

My milk butler's DeLorean, which is painted space gray, gets up to 88 miles per hour quite quickly.

My milk butler's DeLorean that is painted space gray gets up to 88 miles

per hour quite quickly.

This is a tale of two sentences. In the first sentence, I implied that the milk butler (whose name is Percy) only has one DeLorean, and it just happens to be painted space gray. The detail about the paint color isn't necessary, so I chose to use "which." Removing the phrase "which is painted space gray" doesn't change the meaning of the sentence, but simply adds a nice detail to the already intriguing sentence.

In the second sentence, however, you get the impression that Percy owns multiple DeLoreans. The phrase "that is painted space gray" is an example of a restrictive clause; another part of the sentence (My milk butler's DeLorean), depends on it. If you remove "that is painted space gray," the meaning of the sentence changes completely.

Do I need a milk butler? Probably so, but my finances don't yet allow for it. Until then, I'll just have to make sure I'm using "that" and "which" correctly.

Curtis Honeycutt is an award-winning, nationally syndicated humor writer. Connect with him on Twitter (@curtishoneycutt), or at curtishoneycutt.com.

NAACP Freedom Fund Banquet, March 22 at Turner Center

STAFF REPORTS

The DeSoto County Chapter of the NAACP holds a variety of fundraising events throughout the year in order to give two qualifying DeSoto High School seniors \$1,000 scholarships before going off to college. The **NAACP Scholarship Freedom Fund Banquet** will be held March 22 at the Turner Agri-Civic Center Annex, 2250 NE Roan St., Arcadia. The event begins at 6 p.m.

This year's theme is "Called to Action Through Service to Humanity." Organizers need the community, church, city and county leaders for support and partnership. The Arcadia city council on Tuesday voted to sponsor a table, for example.

It takes more than a great plan. It takes great people to see that plan through. "A change is brought about because ordinary people do extraordinary things." —President Barack Obama

This is another unifying event for our

community. We can, together, make a difference in a young person's life and give him or her an awesome start to continuing his or her education.

You may sponsor a table at this year's event for \$300, an investment in education and community. This will allow 10 of your family, friends, church members or employed associates to have tickets. NAACP Scholarship individual tickets are \$30—ticket donations will benefit two qualifying high school seniors in DeSoto County.

At a glance

Make checks payable to DeSoto County Branch NAACP

Linda Howell, event coordinator/chair, details, 863-244-1768

Rev. Samuel Morgan Jr., DeSoto County Branch NAACP President

Deborah Clifton, event coordinator/co-chair

Women of the Moose strive for a cure



PHOTO PROVIDED

Women of the Moose Arcadia Chapter 1597 present a \$500 check for the Strolling 4 A Cure campaign for uninsured or low-income cancer victims. The ceremony includes Dian Burge (left), Kathy Borsmann, Janet Preston, Sheila Groover and Cindi Beeson. Congratulations, ladies!

Keeping our DeSoto County courthouse safe

We often get comments at the DeSoto County clerk's office when customers have to come through security to get to our offices. Some see it as a hindrance while others appreciate the effort to keep everyone within the courthouse safe. The DeSoto County Sheriff's Office provides the courthouse security, and it has most definitely evolved over the years.



Nadia Daughtrey

The bailiffs in DeSoto County are fully certified sheriff's deputies. Over the years we have seen our bailiff presence become greater as the needs of the courthouse have increased. We also have seen the installation of a metal detector and X-ray machine at the main entrance, located on the east side of the building. This is the only entrance accessible to the public.

The courthouse is equipped with accessibility for persons with disabilities. When planning to come to the courthouse, especially for a court date, you should give yourself a few extra minutes to comply with the security requirements. One way to expedite the process is to make sure you have no weapons in your purse or on your person. This includes pocket knives, an often overlooked and forgotten item that many carry. A basket is provided for you to empty your pockets and remove any metal you may have. These items, as well as any purses or bags are sent through the X-ray machine for inspection, similar to what you find at an airport. A hand-held wand is also available if the metal detector is picking up things such as metal rods or plates a person may have. The wand is also used at our basement entrance to ensure those coming in are free of any weapons.

While our bailiffs are extremely efficient, on highly populated court days it can take a little longer to gain access inside, as there are many needing to get in at the same time. Another great advantage to having bailiffs posted at the main entrance is that they are very knowledgeable and can direct you to the office or courtroom you need to

get to, even if you may be unsure of where you need to be.

A bailiff is present with the judge at all times when he or she is in the courtroom. If you attend any court hearings, you will often hear our bailiff announce that court is now in session and which judge is presiding. Their presence in the courtroom ensures that disruptions are kept to a minimum and everyone in attendance is able to hear what is going on without distraction. Our bailiffs also escort incarcerated defendants brought over for court from the jail.

I would like to thank Sheriff Potter for providing such a great staff of bailiffs to keep all of us safe. We also thank our bailiffs for their daily service and dedication to their duty and our beautiful courthouse.

In other news at the Clerk's Office: **Friday, March 8** will kick off our first fundraiser breakfast for 2019. Beginning at 8:30 a.m., you can enjoy hearty homemade breakfast dishes from some of the best cooks in DeSoto County. The cost is \$5 per plate and all proceeds go towards purchasing Christmas gifts for the Guardian Ad Litem program, which advocates for children removed from their homes and placed in foster care or relative/non-relative placement for charges such as neglect or abuse.

SAVE THE DATE! A date has been set for our 3rd Annual Passport Fair! It runs (Saturday) April 27, 8 a.m.-12 p.m. We will be open to process new and renewal passport applications. On this day all passport photos will be free!

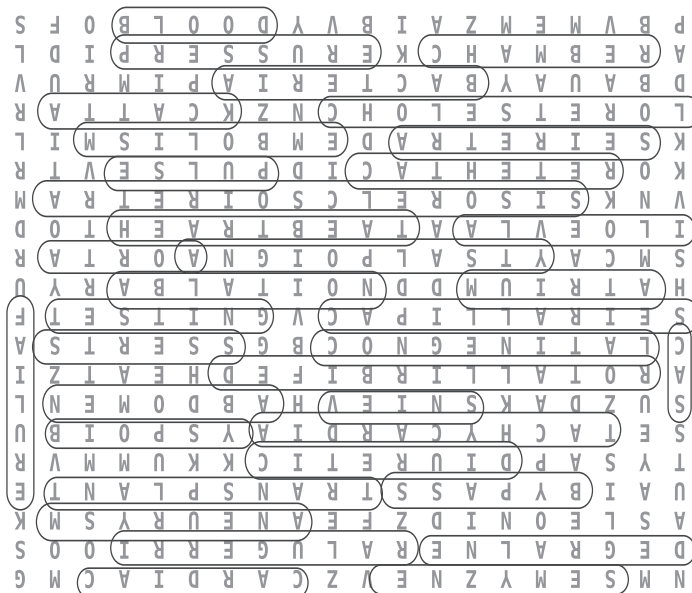
CARDIAC WORD SEARCH

N M S E M Y Z N E V Z C A R D I A C M G
D E G R A L N E R A L U G E R R I O O S
A S L E O N I D Z F E A N E U R Y S M K
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Find the words hidden vertically, horizontally, diagonally, and backwards.

WORDS

- ABDOMEN
- ABLATION
- ALVEOLI
- ANEURYSM
- ANGIOPLASTY
- AORTA
- ARTERIES
- ARTERIOSCLEROSIS
- ATRIUM
- ATTACK
- BACTERIA
- BIOPSY
- BLOOD
- BYPASS
- CAPILLARIES
- CARDIAC
- CATHETER
- CHAMBER
- CHOLESTEROL
- CONGENITAL
- DEFIBRILLATOR
- DIURETIC
- EMBOLISM
- ENLARGED
- ENZYMES
- FAILURE
- HEARTBEAT
- IRREGULAR
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- STRESS
- TACHYCARDIA
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TAX PREPARATION

The biggest change this year is a higher standard deduction: \$12,000 for single filers, \$18,000 for heads of household and \$24,000 for people married filing jointly.

Ready or not, tax season is here and this year is going to present unique challenges. From tax reform to refund delays and big swings in refund size, it's going to take some work for people to untangle their tax situations. The good news is that H&R Block is ready to help and has been preparing since the moment tax reform passed.

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We would also like to say THANK YOU to Debbie Wertz for her invaluable assistance, past Leadership class members for their insight, and the community for their support!



Florida governor wants to import drugs from Canada

DeSantis says he wants to cut health care costs and has the support of President Trump

By **MIKE SCHNEIDER**
ASSOCIATED PRESS

ORLANDO, Fla. — Florida's governor on Wednesday proposed bringing cheaper, Canadian prescription drugs to Florida as a way to cut health care costs.

Gov. Ron DeSantis said that he wants to create an importation program that brings Canadian prescription drugs to the Sunshine State.

It is illegal to import unapproved prescription drugs into the United States. But the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services secretary has the power to approve a program allowing drugs from Canada.

"So far, because of concerns over safety, no secretary has ever given such approval," a Congressional Research Service report noted last December.

DeSantis said he spoke this week with President Donald

Trump about the plan, adding the Trump administration was onboard with the idea.

"He not only supports this, he is enthusiastic, and he supports what we are doing," DeSantis said at a news conference at The Villages, the fast-growing retirement community northwest of Orlando, Florida.

Vermont last year became the first state in the nation to enact a prescription-drug importation law. The Green Mountain State

is still developing its plan, and it hasn't yet submitted an application to the federal health agency.

Not only would a drug importation program save Florida residents money, but it could save the state budget tens of millions of dollars spent on prescription drugs for prisoners, DeSantis said.

"Once we get this in place, you as a citizen will have access to more affordable drugs," the governor said.

The 2003 Medicare Modernization Act gave the U.S. health secretary authority to permit importation of prescription drugs from Canada if the agency certifies there is no health risk to the public and it will result in reductions in the costs of prescription drugs.

"This has been on the books, but it hasn't been practiced," said DeSantis, whose campaign last year was based in part on his closeness with the president.

Arsenic, lead in water pouring out of former US mine sites



AP FILE PHOTO

Wastewater streams out of the Gold King Mine in southwestern Colorado after a contractor crew led by the Environmental Protection Agency triggered the release of about 3 million gallons of water tainted with heavy metals.

Contaminated wastewater roughly 20-million-gallon daily dose of pollution

By **MATTHEW BROWN**
ASSOCIATED PRESS

RIMINI, Mont. — Every day many millions of gallons of water loaded with arsenic, lead and other toxic metals flow from some of the most contaminated mining sites in the U.S. and into surrounding streams and ponds without being treated, The Associated Press has found.

That torrent is poisoning aquatic life and tainting drinking water sources in Montana, California, Colorado, Oklahoma and at least five other states.

The pollution is a legacy of how the mining industry was allowed to operate in the U.S. for more than a century. Companies that built mines for silver, lead, gold and other "hardrock" minerals could move on once they were no longer profitable, leaving

behind tainted water that still leaks out of the mines or is cleaned up at taxpayer expense.

Using data from public records requests and independent researchers, the AP examined 43 mining sites under federal oversight, some containing dozens or even hundreds of individual mines.

WATER | 8



AP PHOTO

Hoda Muthana, an Alabama woman who left home to join the Islamic State after becoming radicalized online, now wants to return to the United States.

US says woman who joined Islamic State can't return

Alabama woman wants to come home to protect her 18-month-old son

By **MATTHEW LEE and JAY REEVES**
ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — An Alabama woman who joined the Islamic State group in Syria won't be allowed to return to the United States with her toddler son because she is not an American citizen, the U.S. said Wednesday. Her lawyer is challenging that claim.

In a brief statement, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo gave no details as to how the administration made their determination.

"Ms. Hoda Muthana is not a U.S. citizen and will not be admitted into the United States," he said. "She does not have any legal basis, no valid U.S. passport, no right to a passport nor any visa to travel to the United States."

But Hassan Shibly, a lawyer for the woman, insisted Muthana was born in the United States and had a valid passport before she joined the Islamic State in 2014. He

WOMAN | 8

Aid wars: US & Russia vie to ease Venezuelan crisis

'The fate of Venezuela is in the hands of outsiders'

By **JOSHUA GOODMAN and VLADIMIR ISACHENKOV**
ASSOCIATED PRESS

MOSCOW — Call it the aid wars.

The Trump administration is accusing President Nicolas Maduro of starving Venezuelans by blocking tons of American-supplied humanitarian aid stored next door in Colombia.

In Russia, the Kremlin sees the opposition's plan to ram the aid across the border as a reckless pretext for ordering a U.S. military intervention.

As tensions in Venezuela mount ahead of a Saturday showdown over humanitarian aid, both sides are digging in, highlighting how the South American nation's crisis has become the latest fault line in a battle for global influence by the former Cold War adversaries.

At stake is the future of Venezuela, a once oil-rich country gripped by hyperinflation and widespread shortages of food and medicine. Opposition leader Juan Guaido



AP PHOTO

Venezuelans protest the government of Venezuela's President Nicolas Maduro, and its blocking the entry of humanitarian aid, in Cucuta, Colombia, on the border with Venezuela. The sign reads in Spanish "Urgent. The entry of humanitarian help is needed now. There are Venezuelans at risk of dying."

CRISIS | 8

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STOCKS LISTING CHANGE - REQUESTS WELCOME! Mutual funds listings will run on Saturdays.

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...

Market summary table with columns: DOW, NASDAQ, S&P 500, 10-YR T-NOTE, 30-YR T-BOND, CRUDE OIL, GOLD, FOXO. Includes up/down arrows and values.

Money&Markets

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

Large table of stock listings with columns: Tkr, Name, Last, Chg. Includes sub-sections for A-B-C, D-E-F, G-H-I, J-K-L, M-N-O, P-Q-R, S-T-U, V-W-X-Y-Z.



Stocks Recap table with columns: Vol. (in mil.), NYSE, NASD, DOW, NYSE Comp., NASDAQ, S&P 500, S&P 400, Russell 2000, Toronto TSX.



Table with columns: HIGH, LOW, CLOSE, CHG, %CHG, WK, MO, QTR, YTD. Lists various stock performance metrics.

Table with columns: S-T-U, listing various stock symbols and their corresponding values.

Table with columns: V-W-X-Y-Z, listing various stock symbols and their corresponding values.

Interesterates section with a graphic of a yield curve and text explaining the 10-year Treasury note yield.

Table of interest rates for TREASURIES, BONDS, and TIPS, including columns for LAST, PVS, NET CHG, 1YR AGO.

Foreign Exchange section with a graphic of the Euro symbol and text describing the dollar's rise against the Japanese yen.

Table of MAJORS, EUROPE/AFRICA/MIDDLE EAST, and ASIA/PACIFIC exchange rates.

Commodities section with a graphic of a barrel and text describing U.S. crude oil prices.

Table of COMMODITIES, FUELS, METALS, and AGRICULTURE prices.

Source: Morningstar and The Associated Press. Includes a disclaimer about stock data accuracy and timing.

Climbing platelet count deserves reasonable diagnosis

DEAR DR. ROACH:

My wife is 58 years old, in good health, exercises and gets regular checkups. The bloodwork from those checkups has shown that her platelet count was 400 a year ago, 600 six months ago and 800 a couple weeks ago. She went to a hematologist who had little more information than her internist on why it's happening, stating it was "blood tumors."

My wife has no other symptoms like bruising, bleeding, headaches, tiredness or vision issues. Her blood pressure is within the normal range. The hematologist wants to prescribe blood. The next step will be a bone marrow biopsy.

The only thing she takes now is vitamins, and she will add a baby aspirin to her daily routine. The only changes to her lifestyle in the past year have been an increase in weight gain, but she is not overweight, and an increase in alcohol consumption. Both factors are a



Dr. Roach

result of us being empty nesters and doing a lot more entertaining and traveling.

What are the causes of platelet counts dramatically increasing like that? Are there effective ways besides blood thinners to reduce or control the platelet production? — Anon.

ANSWER: I find the treatment of (and communication about) your wife's condition frustrating (I'm being kind). You and your wife deserve to have the correct diagnosis and a thorough

explanation of her treatment options. I hope she will hear more once the bone marrow biopsy is back.

By far, the most likely diagnosis is essential thrombosis ("essential" in this context means we don't know what causes it; the "thrombosis" means "too many blood-clotting cells," otherwise known as platelets).

ET is a chronic myeloproliferative neoplasm, a type of blood cell cancer. Most people with this disease have a mutation in the blood cell (an acquired mutation, one not present at birth) causing the cells that make platelets (called megakaryocytes) to proliferate in the bone marrow. The bone marrow biopsy will show large numbers of megakaryocytes if she indeed has ET. She will also be tested for the JAK2 mutation since that has important information to help predict the course of her disease.

Treatment for symptoms is not appropriate if she has no symptoms. The goals of treatment are to prevent complications of this disease (abnormal clotting is the major concern: bleeding is less common) and to be alert for transformation to a more aggressive disease, acute myelogenous leukemia.

There is no treatment known to cure this disease nor prevent its transformation to leukemia. However, most people with this disease do not have a shortening of their life expectancy.

The aspirin she was given was to reduce clot risk. If she turns out to be higher risk, she may be offered additional therapy, such as hydroxyurea, to reduce the number of clotting cells and further reduce clotting risk. Since hydroxyurea has a potential for side effects, it is given only if the benefits outweigh the risks. I'd like to hear back from you after the biopsy.

Son is secretive about his social life toward parents

DEAR ABBY:

Our 22-year-old son stays with us. He has a part-time job and goes to school part-time. He is somewhat secretive. We don't know his friends or where he goes.

One day he brought a male friend over and they hung out in our guesthouse, drinking and playing video games. This went on for several hours and then the blinds closed. My husband wasn't comfortable with that, so he knocked on the door and went in to talk to them. He asked the friend if he had a girlfriend, and the friend said no — that he's bisexual. Our son then announced that he is also bisexual.

We have only met one girl that he dated and the male friend who was over. The friend did say he isn't interested in our son, that they are strictly friends. I don't think my husband should have quizzed our son in front of his friend.

Our son has a chip on his shoulder and an "I don't care attitude" about many things. He blames a lot of things on his ADHD. He acts like he can't multitask or concentrate on what he's supposed to do. He tries, but if he forgets to do some-



Dear Abby

thing, he gets an attitude from time to time. — Frustrated in Washington

DEAR FRUSTRATED: I can't help but wonder if your husband would have been as curious if your son had been entertaining a woman in the guesthouse.

Your son has been honest with you about his sexual orientation. He's an adult and should be entitled to privacy regardless of the gender of his companion. He has also been honest about his limitations because of his attention deficit problem.

Unless he is breaking some rule that you and your husband have set in your home, what you should think is that your son is working, taking classes and trying his best to become independent. Perhaps if your husband is less heavy-handed with his questions, your son's attitude may improve.

No drawstrings attached

Dear Heloise:

I'm pleased to see manufacturers produce hooded sweatshirts WITHOUT DRAWSTRINGS.

A drawstring can be extremely dangerous; it poses a strangulation risk. — Janet M. in Illinois

Janet, how right you are! Parents, many children's garments today are made without a drawstring, either for the hood, the waist or around the bottom of the garment. The drawstring can catch on the slide at the playground; it can get caught in the door of a vehicle; it can get yanked on — too many scary scenarios.



Hints from Heloise

If there's drawstring attire that your child still wears, remove the drawstring, for safety's sake. — Heloise

P.S. The Consumer Product Safety Commission (www.cpsc.gov) has recommended recalls for many garments with drawstrings.

WHATZIT?

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



SOLUTION: Life begins at forty

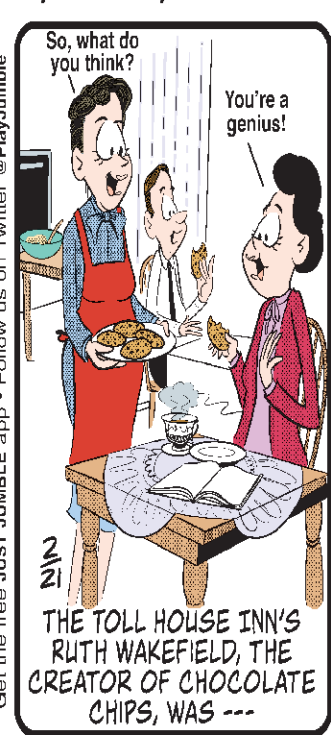
JUMBLE

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

LENTK (5 letters)
ROMBO (5 letters)
CNIESC (6 letters)
IROADH (6 letters)

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THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME By David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek



So, what do you think? You're a genius! THE TOLL HOUSE INN'S RUTH WAKEFIELD, THE CREATOR OF CHOCOLATE CHIPS, WAS ---

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

(Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: ABATE MESSY ACCENT SKIMPY Answer: She could hand-sew a hem very quickly and made it — "SEAM" EASY

KEN KEN

THE LOGIC PUZZLE THAT MAKES YOU SMARTER.

EASY logic puzzle grid

CHALLENGING logic puzzle grid

RULES and PREVIOUS ANSWERS section

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 and SOLUTIONS table with 7 clues and corresponding solution boxes

Word bank grid with letters LE, LO, CAP, PE, RD, LS, MM, GGA, ON, SU, MO, LE, GRO, LS, RRI, LA, SS, OVE, PUL, ETS

Wednesday's Answers: 1. RECORDS 2. SUPERPOWER 3. INSTINCT 4. MOUTHED 5. FINCHES 6. ANDRETTI 7. JUTES

Challenger

Challenger puzzle grid with directions and solution key

MARMADUKE



"Uh-oh. Marmaduke got caught playing with a cat toy."

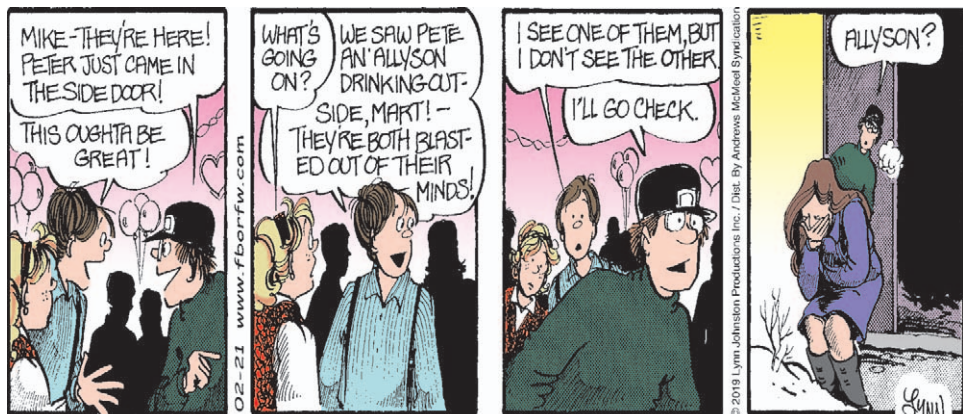
Cryptoquip

Cryptoquip puzzle with word lists and clues

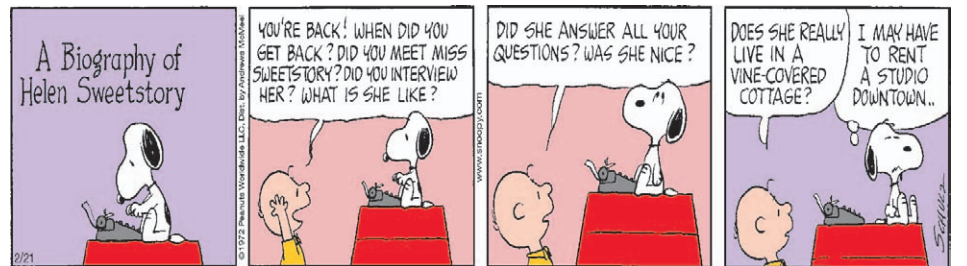
SPORTS SLEUTH

Sports Sleuth puzzle grid and word list

FOR BETTER OR FOR WORSE By Lynn Johnston



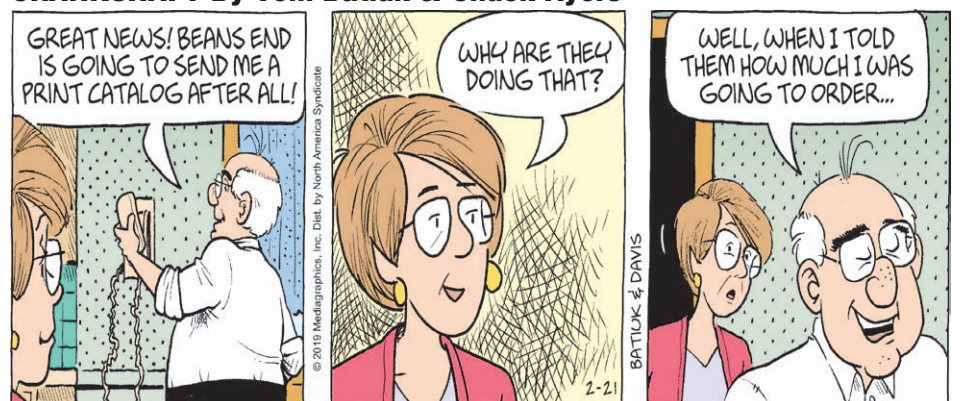
PEANUTS By Charles Schulz



MALLARD FILLMORE By Bruce Tinsley



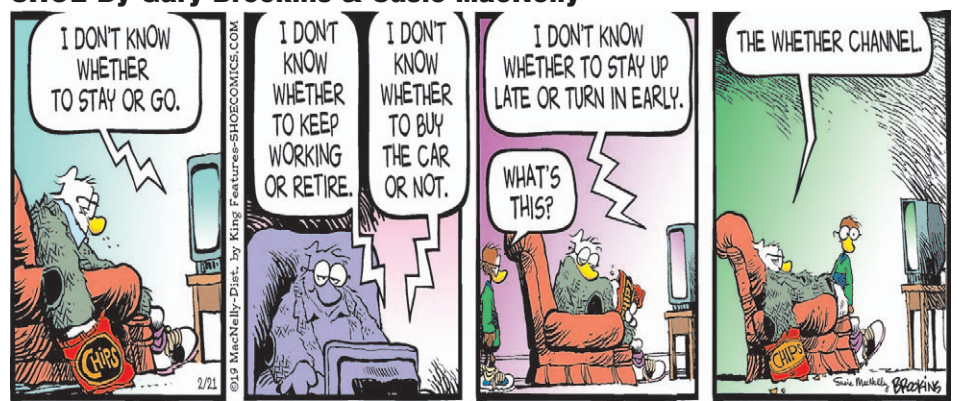
CRANKSHAFT By Tom Batiuk & Chuck Ayers



HI AND LOIS By Brian and Greg Walker



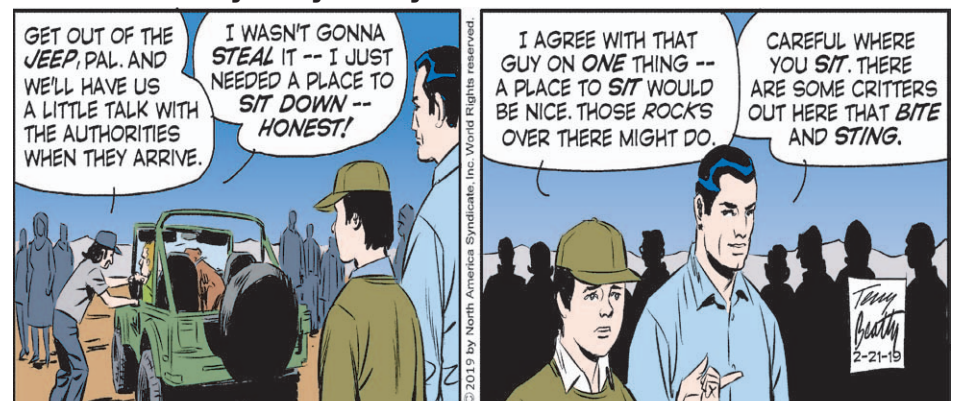
SHOE By Gary Brookins & Susie MacNelly



BEEBLE BAILEY By Mort Walker



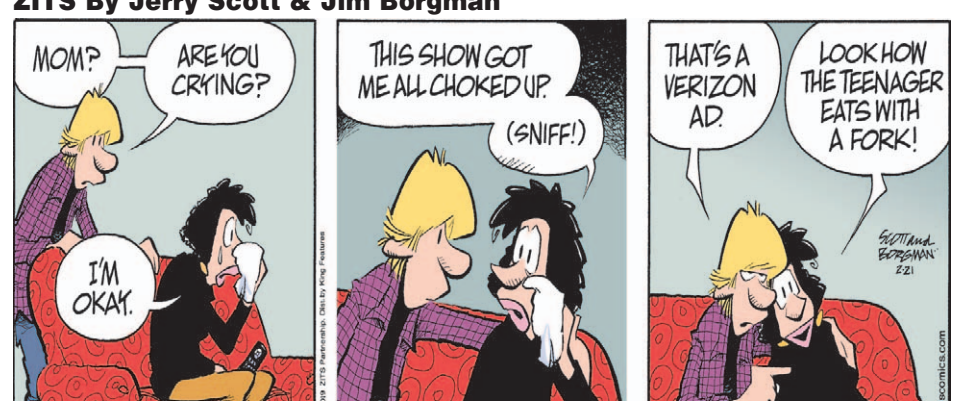
REX MORGAN By Terry Beatty



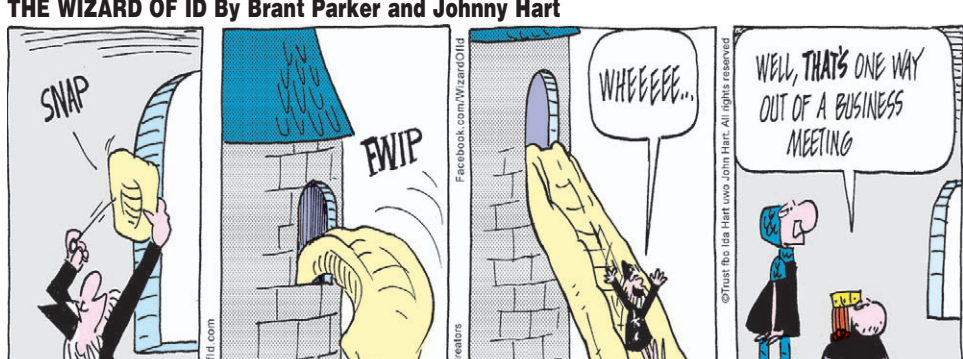
HAGAR THE HORRIBLE By Chris Browne



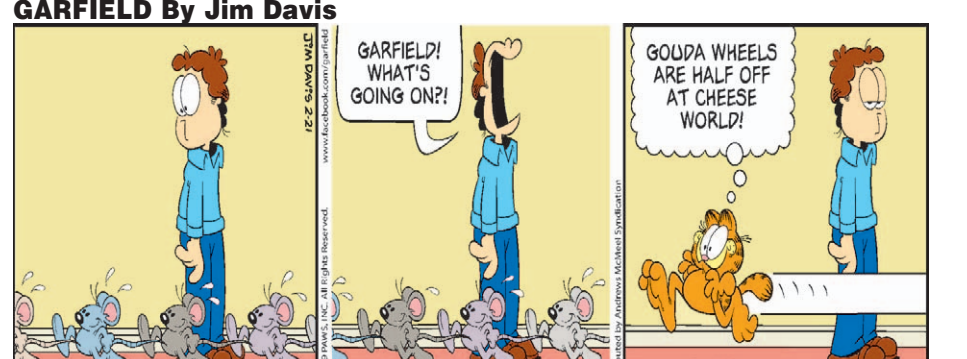
ZITS By Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman



THE WIZARD OF ID By Brant Parker and Johnny Hart



GARFIELD By Jim Davis



MOTHER GOOSE AND GRIMM By Mike Peters



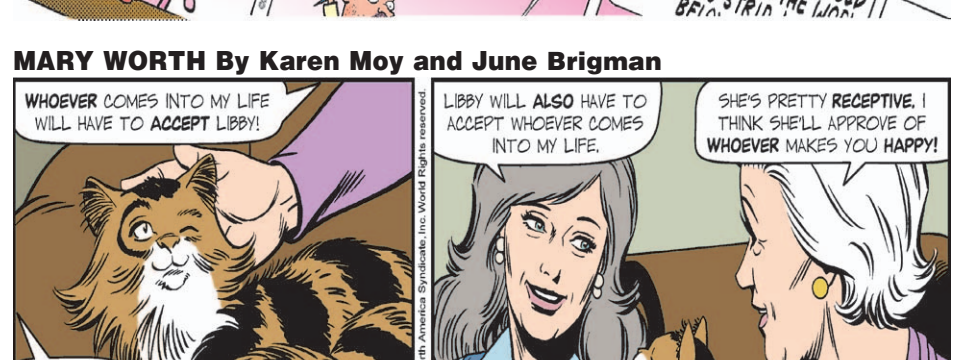
PEARLS BEFORE SWINE By Stephan Pastis



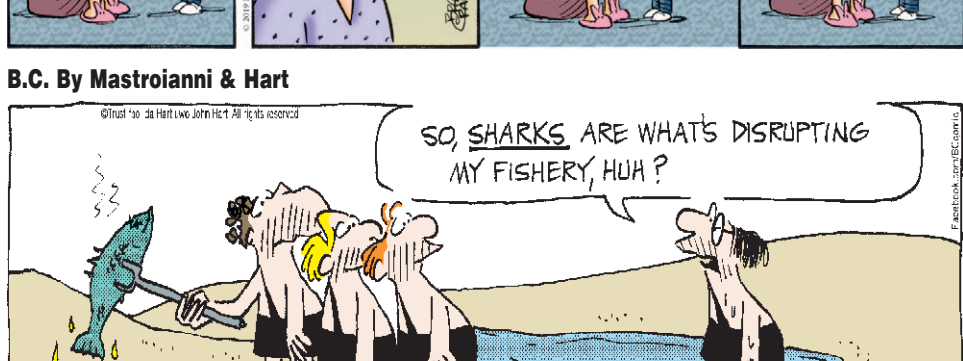
PICKLES By Brian Crane



MARY WORTH By Karen Moy and June Brigman



B.C. By Mastroianni & Hart



DILBERT By Scott Adams



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NYSE

Table with columns: Name, Ticker, Div, Yield, PE, 52-week High, Low, Vol 1000s, YTD %Chg. Includes tickers like BIP Cocoa, BarcBk pR, BiPpCup, etc.

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D

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NYSE

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Table with columns: Name, Ticker, Symbol, Div, Yield, PE, 52-week High, Low, Vol 1000s, Last, YTD %Chg. Lists various stocks including ElingIR, Ellomay, EllswthF, etc.

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NYSE

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Table with columns: Ticker, Symbol, Div, Yield, PE, High, Low, 52-week, Vol, YTD, %Chg. Lists various stocks including GugIndls, GugHlthC, GugFncI, etc.

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Table with columns: Ticker, Symbol, Div, Yield, PE, High, Low, 52-week, Vol, YTD, %Chg. Lists various stocks including GAMCO s, GATX, GATX 66, etc.

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NYSE

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Table with columns: Name, Ticker, Symbol, Div, Yield, PE, High, Low, 52-week, Vol, YTD, %Chg. Includes tickers like InnvUIB n, Insnutes, iAlpha, etc.

Table with columns: Name, Ticker, Symbol, Div, Yield, PE, High, Low, 52-week, Vol, YTD, %Chg. Includes tickers like iShCHSwitz, iShLgdtly bt, iShCHUpjn, etc.

J

Table with columns: Name, Ticker, Symbol, Div, Yield, PE, High, Low, 52-week, Vol, YTD, %Chg. Includes tickers like JAlExHld n, JIlln n, JBGS Smlth n, etc.

K

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Table with columns: Name, Ticker, Div, Yield, PE, 52-week High, Low, Vol, Last, YTD %Chg. Includes stocks like MonRE, MonRE pB, MonRE pC, etc.

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

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P-Q

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

Table with columns: Name, Ticker, Div, Yield, PE, 52-week High, Low, Vol, Last, YTD %Chg. Includes stocks like NuvHi2020, NuvEnhMu, NNYAmfF, etc.

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

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

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NYSE

Table with columns: Ticker, Symbol, Div, Yield, PE, 52-week High, Low, Vol, YTD %Chg. Lists various stocks including PennyMac, PFI, PFI, etc.

Table with columns: Ticker, Symbol, Div, Yield, PE, 52-week High, Low, Vol, YTD %Chg. Lists various stocks including ProShtg, ProShtg, ProShtg, etc.

Table with columns: Ticker, Symbol, Div, Yield, PE, 52-week High, Low, Vol, YTD %Chg. Lists various stocks including RennaSola, RennaSola, RennaSola, etc.

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NYSE

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

Table with columns: Name, Ticker, Symbol, Div, Yield, PE, 52-week High/Low, Vol 1000s, Last, YTD %Chg. Includes entries like TrnsRty, UBS 3xLcr, UBS 3xInvr, etc.

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NYSE

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

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

X-Y-Z

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 TacGr, WBI TacV, etc.

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

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

Nasdaq

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

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

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

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Nasdaq

Main table containing Nasdaq stock listings with columns for Name, Ticker, Div, Yield, PE, High, Low, 1000s, Last, %Chg, and YTD. Includes sub-sections for - C - and - D -.

Continued on next page

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Nasdaq

Table with columns: Ticker, Symbol, Div, Yield, PE, High, Low, 52-week, Vol, YTD, %Chg. Includes tickers like DUNK, DUREC, DYNAL, etc.

Table with columns: Ticker, Symbol, Div, Yield, PE, High, Low, 52-week, Vol, YTD, %Chg. Includes tickers like FITR, FIVR, FIVE, etc.

Table with columns: Ticker, Symbol, Div, Yield, PE, High, Low, 52-week, Vol, YTD, %Chg. Includes tickers like GRSB, GRBK, GPPE, etc.

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Table of stock market data for various companies, including columns for Name, Ticker, Div, Yield, PE, 52-week High/Low, Vol, and YTD %Chg.

Nasdaq

Table of stock market data for various companies, including columns for Name, Ticker, Div, Yield, PE, 52-week High/Low, Vol, and YTD %Chg.

Table of stock market data for various companies, including columns for Name, Ticker, Div, Yield, PE, 52-week High/Low, Vol, and YTD %Chg.

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Nasdaq

Main table containing stock market data for Nasdaq, including columns for Name, Ticker, Div, Yield, PE, 52-week High/Low, Vol, and YTD %Chg. The table is organized into sections labeled P-Q, R, S, and T.

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Nasdaq

Table with columns: Ticker, Div, Yield, PE, 52-week High/Low, Vol, YTD %Chg, Name, Symbol, Div, Yield, PE, 52-week High/Low, Vol, YTD %Chg, Name, Symbol, Div, Yield, PE, 52-week High/Low, Vol, YTD %Chg. Includes sections for -V-, -U-, and -X-Z-.

Money Market Funds

Table with columns: Fund, Avg Maturity, Avg Yield, Fund, Avg Maturity, Avg Yield, Fund, Avg Maturity, Avg Yield, Fund, Avg Maturity, Avg Yield. Lists various money market funds like Cash Account Tr, Government Money, and various bond funds.

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Money Market Funds

Table with multiple columns: Fund, Avg Maturity, Avg Yield, Fund, Avg Maturity, Avg Yield, Fund, Avg Maturity, Avg Yield, Fund, Avg Maturity, Avg Yield, Fund, Avg Maturity, Avg Yield. Lists various money market funds and their performance metrics.

Tax Exempt

Table listing tax-exempt funds with columns: Fund, Avg Maturity, Avg Yield, Fund, Avg Maturity, Avg Yield. Includes funds like AIMTX, AmC CATF, AmC TF, etc.

Toronto stocks

Table of Toronto stock market data with columns: Name, Vol, High, Low, Last, Chg, Name, Vol, High, Low, Last, Chg, Name, Vol, High, Low, Last, Chg, Name, Vol, High, Low, Last, Chg. Lists various stocks and their price movements.

Treasury bonds

Table of Treasury bond market data with columns: Rate, Date, Bid, Ask, Chg, Yld, Rate, Date, Bid, Ask, Chg, Yld, Rate, Date, Bid, Ask, Chg, Yld, Rate, Date, Bid, Ask, Chg, Yld. Lists various Treasury bonds and their yields.

FOOTNOTE: Rate-The annual interest rate the Treasury bond provides to investors. Date-The month and year the bond will expire. Bid-The price investors will pay for the bond. Ask-The price at which investors will sell. A bond price is expressed as a percentage of its original purchase cost of \$1,000. The whole numbers and the decimals which represent 32nds of a point must be converted to dollars and cents; for example, 103.18 equals \$1,035.63. Chg-The change between the preceding day's final bid price and the final bid price from the day before. Yld-The annual percentage return to the investor, based on the bond's current price, if the bond is held until it matures. K-Taxes on interest will not be withheld from non-U.S. citizens. n-Treasury note. p-Treasury note; taxes on interest will not be withheld from non-U.S. citizens.

Mutual Funds

Section titled 'How to Read the Mutual Fund Tables' containing a table of mutual fund data and explanatory text. The table includes columns for Name, Obj, NAV, 4-wk Rtn, YTD Rtn, 3-yr Rtn/Rk. The text explains how to interpret the data, including fund objectives, performance metrics, and risk factors.

Continued on next page

Continued from previous page

Mutual Funds

Table of mutual fund data with columns for Name, Obj, NAV, 4-wk Rtn, YTD Rtn, 3-yr Rtn/Rk, and various fund names and metrics.

Continued from previous page

Mutual Funds

Table with columns for Name, Obj, NAV, 4-wk Rtn, YTD Rtn, 3-yr Rtn/Rk, and Name, Obj, NAV, 4-wk Rtn, YTD Rtn, 3-yr Rtn/Rk. It lists various mutual funds such as GrStrategies, HighIncAdvgt, and Fidelity Advisor, along with their performance metrics.

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Mutual Funds

Table with multiple columns: Name, Obj, NAV, 4-wk Rtn, YTD Rtn, 3-yr Rtn/Rk, Name, Obj, NAV, 4-wk Rtn, YTD Rtn, 3-yr Rtn/Rk, Name, Obj, NAV, 4-wk Rtn, YTD Rtn, 3-yr Rtn/Rk, Name, Obj, NAV, 4-wk Rtn, YTD Rtn, 3-yr Rtn/Rk. Contains fund names like CptlApprecR4, FllngRtA, LldDurBdA, etc.

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Table with columns: Name, Obj, NAV, 4-wk Rtn, YTD Rtn, 3-yr Rtn/Rk, Name, Obj, NAV, 4-wk Rtn, YTD Rtn, 3-yr Rtn/Rk, Name, Obj, NAV, 4-wk Rtn, YTD Rtn, 3-yr Rtn/Rk, Name, Obj, NAV, 4-wk Rtn, YTD Rtn, 3-yr Rtn/Rk. Contains multiple sections of mutual fund data including 1919, North Country, Northeast Investors, Northern, Matrix Advisors, Matthews, McKee, Meeder, Merger, Meridian, Merk, Metropolitan West, Miller, Mondrian, Monetta, Morgan Stanley, Macquarie Investment, Madison, Mainstay, Mairs & Power, Manning & Napier, Marathon Funds, Marketfield, Marsico, MassMutual, Newberger Berman, Oak Associates, Oak Ridge, Oakmark, Oberweis, Old Westbury, Oppenheimer, PIMCO, and Sun Life.

Continued from previous page

Mutual Funds

Table with 20 columns: Name, Obj, NAV, 4-wk Rtn, YTD Rtn, 3-yr Rtn/Rk, Name, Obj, NAV, 4-wk Rtn, YTD Rtn, 3-yr Rtn/Rk, Name, Obj, NAV, 4-wk Rtn, YTD Rtn, 3-yr Rtn/Rk, Name, Obj, NAV, 4-wk Rtn, YTD Rtn, 3-yr Rtn/Rk. The table lists various mutual funds under categories like Undiscovered Manager, VALIC Co I, VALIC Co II, Vanguard, Vericimetry, Victory, Viking, Villere, Virtus, Westmark, Western Asset, and Westwood.

Southwest Florida fishing, boating, wildlife, paddling, hunting and all things outdoors

Shootin' smokepoles:

The history of blackpowder guns is fascinating.

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Don't feed the birds:

It seems like a nice thing, but it creates many problems.

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Bobwhite and mantas:

We used to have lots, but no more. Where'd they go?

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Big mack attack:

As the water warms, mackerel fishing will heat up.

— PAGE 20 —

February 21, 2019

WaterLine

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Produced & printed by
Sun Coast Media Group

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ON THE COVER

WaterLine photo by Capt. Josh Olive

When you're fishing a topwater plug in fresh water, always keep an eye out for the alligators.



It's enough for me

FROM THE PUBLISHER'S DESK • CAPT. JOSH OLIVE

How do you define a great day of fishing?

Do you have any fishing buddies who just never seem to be satisfied? You know the type — they go out and catch 15 redfish, but they're grumbling because the biggest one was only 26 inches. Or they come back from the wrecks offshore with a mess of fish in the cooler, but all they can focus on is how they didn't get any yellowtail snapper.

I have a hard time relating to those guys. I recently had one of my absolute best days of fishing. If you measured it by the fish tally at the end, it was pretty much a failure. But for me, the quality of the experience is what really matters.

The day started out with a long walk. I was wade fishing at Burnt Store, and the water is nowhere near where the truck gets parked. On the trail I saw two hogs and a doe — a good beginning, and maybe a good omen.

By the time I got to the water, the cloud cover was breaking and it was starting to get warm. I had to walk through a bit of mud to get out to the grass, but once there I found it to be in pretty good shape, considering it's winter. I started seeing small fish all over — another good sign, I figured.

Once I got to about 18 inches of water, I started casting my DOA shad at likely looking spots. There were no takers initially, but that was all right — I was finding all kinds of neat stuff, from dinner plate-size stingrays to a lightning whelk as big as my foot. Out past the bar I could see a fair-sized flock of gulls and terns wheeling and occasionally diving, so I knew there was bait out there.

My plan was to wade all the way out to the

bar, fishing along the way, to see if there might be a cobia hanging out on the dropoff. This area is one of the places that holds some early in the season, and I thought it was worth a try.

My next cast connected with a trout about 17 inches. I wasn't planning to keep anything, so I released it and then caught its twin on the same spot. Several more casts brought nothing, so I logged on toward the bar.

Shortly, I caught sight of a boat wake out of the corner of my eye. I turned to look, surprised because I had heard no boat. Then I realized there was no boat to hear: It was a bottlenose dolphin streaking across the flat, throwing water as it went. I love watching dolphins do their thing, so I stopped walking and just watched.

There were three of them, and they were hunting together. Every couple minutes, one would zip along in the shallows, immediately followed by the other two coming in from the side to grab whatever fish had been disturbed by their zoomy friend. I didn't see them toss any fish skyward, so I assume they were focused on smaller prey.

After a half-dozen drives, all three dolphins vanished. I watched for a couple more minutes but saw nothing, so I started making my way out to the bar again, casting as I went.

As the lure swam through an open sandy hole just inside the bar, it suddenly snagged on grass. At least, that's what it felt like. But I know how flounder bite. I gave it a five-count and then reeled and set the hook. Sure enough — a flattie. It was all of 10 inches long. I admired his weird googly eyes and let him go.

Now I was standing on the bar. The water

was very shallow — just ankle deep in spots. I decided to hang out on a shallow spot that had a decent view of the deeper water outside and just watch for a few minutes.

Soon I saw a shadow moving along the bar. Cobia? Maybe. I waited a few seconds and it resolved into a bonnethead shark. I watched it cruise along the bottom, sweeping its head back and forth in search of prey. Just to see what would happen, I tossed my soft plastic in front of it. Immediately the little shark turned 180 degrees and boogied, then banked left for deeper water.

The bird activity was way too far out to cast at, and after the bonnethead was gone, there was nothing else moving. I waited a few more minutes and then started walking south on the bar. A boat came by, headed north. He waved. I waved.

Some deep pockets back toward shore looked inviting, so I began heading that way. I managed to hook another (smaller) trout on the way in and lost a couple baits to puffers. On the walk back through the woods, all was quiet.

I've had days in this spot where the redfish were just on fire. I've caught upper 30s snook and hooked small tarpon off the bar. But this day, with a complete lack of other waders and only that one boat buzzing past, goes in the books because it was such an intimate connection with nature.

Enjoy what comes and be grateful for what you have. Believe me, you'll be a lot happier than "those guys."

Contact Capt. Josh Olive at 941-276-9657 or Publisher@WaterLineWeekly.com.

Commissioners named to water committee

BY BRIAN GLEASON
CHARLOTTE COUNTY COMM. DIRECTOR

Charlotte County Commission Chairman Ken Doherty and Vice Chairman Bill Truex were named to the Florida Association of Counties Water Policy Committee. The committee is comprised of 37 county commissioners from across the state. It will serve as the association's voice when addressing water-related policy concerns and provide a structure for the organization to recommend solutions.

"The counties in Florida are diverse and so are the water quality and supply issues they face on

the front lines," said FAC President and Hendry County Commissioner Karson Turner. "The Water Policy Committee allows counties to have direct input in future environmental policy reform, recognizing water issues know no boundaries in Florida but are still not solved with one size fits all solutions."

The committee, created with a mission for counties to set policy priorities on the local, state and federal level, will take the lead in working with the state. Gov. Ron DeSantis signed Executive Order 19-12, which emphasizes the need

to engage local government officials to help protect Florida's vulnerable coastline and natural resources, shortly after taking office.

"Working together, we will be able to find impactful solutions to protect our most precious resource and build a stronger Florida for our citizens and future generations of Floridians," said Turner.

The committee will be meeting for the first time during the association's Legislative Day on March 27 to set an agenda and a list of goals for the upcoming years.

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**ASK YOUR SEA GRANT AGENT
BETTY STAUGLER**

Seagrass awareness

Helping our seagrasses is a no-brainer, because without healthy seagrass, everything we love about Charlotte Harbor will suffer.



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Reader Photos



Left: Kaitlyn Hoglund with her spotted trout.

Above: Jim Stockman of Englewood and Grand Island, NY, caught and enjoyed this mangrove snapper out of Stump Pass.

Right: Suzanne from Port Charlotte with her 23.5-inch porgy, caught 17 miles off Boca Grande.

SEE MORE READER PHOTOS ON PAGE 12

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Saturday	High Tide 2:31 1.4ft Low Tide 8:49 0.3ft High Tide 14:53 1.6ft Low Tide 21:52 0.1ft	Thursday	High Tide 3:45 1.7ft Low Tide 10:56 -0.3ft High Tide 17:01 1.2ft Low Tide 22:51 0.2ft	Thursday	High Tide 1:07 1.4ft Low Tide 10:33 -0.3ft High Tide 14:25 1.0ft Low Tide 22:26 0.2ft	Thursday	High Tide 3:17 1.7ft Low Tide 11:02 -0.3ft High Tide 16:35 1.2ft Low Tide 22:55 0.2ft
Sunday	High Tide 3:34 1.1ft Low Tide 9:09 0.5ft High Tide 15:27 1.7ft Low Tide 23:03 0.0ft	Friday	High Tide 4:41 1.5ft Low Tide 11:28 -0.1ft High Tide 17:27 1.3ft Low Tide 23:49 0.1ft	Friday	High Tide 2:05 1.3ft Low Tide 11:05 -0.1ft High Tide 14:51 1.1ft Low Tide 23:25 0.1ft	Friday	High Tide 4:15 1.5ft Low Tide 11:34 -0.1ft High Tide 17:01 1.3ft Low Tide 23:54 0.1ft
Monday	High Tide 4:57 0.9ft Low Tide 9:16 0.7ft High Tide 16:07 1.7ft	Saturday	High Tide 5:40 1.3ft Low Tide 11:58 0.2ft High Tide 17:56 1.5ft	Saturday	High Tide 3:05 1.1ft Low Tide 11:33 0.1ft High Tide 15:20 1.2ft	Saturday	High Tide 5:15 1.3ft Low Tide 12:02 0.2ft High Tide 17:30 1.4ft
Tuesday	Low Tide 0:21 -0.0ft High Tide 16:55 1.7ft	Sunday	Low Tide 0:53 0.0ft High Tide 6:44 1.0ft Low Tide 12:24 0.4ft High Tide 18:30 1.6ft	Sunday	Low Tide 0:27 0.0ft High Tide 4:12 0.9ft Low Tide 11:59 0.3ft High Tide 15:52 1.3ft	Sunday	Low Tide 0:56 0.0ft High Tide 6:22 1.0ft Low Tide 12:28 0.4ft High Tide 18:02 1.5ft
Wednesday	Low Tide 1:38 -0.1ft High Tide 17:54 1.7ft	Monday	Low Tide 2:02 -0.0ft High Tide 8:03 0.8ft Low Tide 12:39 0.6ft High Tide 19:07 1.6ft	Monday	Low Tide 1:36 -0.0ft High Tide 5:34 0.7ft Low Tide 12:18 0.5ft High Tide 16:29 1.3ft	Monday	Low Tide 2:05 -0.0ft High Tide 7:44 0.8ft Low Tide 12:47 0.6ft High Tide 18:39 1.6ft
Thursday	Low Tide 2:47 -0.2ft High Tide 19:02 1.7ft	Tuesday	Low Tide 3:20 -0.1ft High Tide 19:51 1.6ft	Tuesday	Low Tide 2:55 -0.1ft High Tide 7:56 0.6ft Low Tide 12:02 0.6ft High Tide 17:12 1.3ft	Tuesday	Low Tide 3:24 -0.1ft High Tide 10:06 0.7ft Low Tide 12:31 0.7ft High Tide 19:22 1.6ft
Friday	Low Tide 3:45 -0.3ft High Tide 12:35 1.1ft Low Tide 14:19 1.1ft High Tide 20:12 1.7ft	Wednesday	Low Tide 4:42 -0.1ft High Tide 20:44 1.6ft	Wednesday	Low Tide 4:23 -0.1ft High Tide 18:07 1.3ft	Wednesday	Low Tide 4:52 -0.1ft High Tide 20:17 1.5ft

WHY IT MATTERS

Seagrasses are vital habitat for many fish and also for the forage species they eat. Without healthy grass, the fish population drops fast.

HOW WE HARM IT

Seagrass needs no mowing by us. Running in water that's too shallow puts your prop in the grass, creating long-lasting prop scars. Herbicides sprayed on land can run off and do significant damage to plants growing in the water.

MAKING BETTER CHOICES

If you're going to fish a grassflat, you've probably got to boat there too. Follow these tips for avoiding damage to this precious resource:

- Know how deep you're running. No one wants to run aground — it just kind of happens when you're not paying attention. Keep an eye out.
- If you do run aground on a grassflat, don't try to motor your way off. Shut the engine off, tilt it up, and push off with a pole or leg power.
- Use your trolling motor or a push pole to move around in shallow water. Firing up the big engine is likely to cause damage to the grass (and sucking up sediment or bumping bottom doesn't do your engine any favors either).
- Be careful about spraying herbicides if you live within a mile of the Harbor, river or a canal. Especially in the rainy season, runoff can quickly carry poisons right into the Harbor. Limit your use to dry days, or avoid it altogether.

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Shutterstock photo
European re-enactors demonstrate the use of antique muzzleloaders.



The history of muzzleloaders

AT THE RANGE • BILLY CARL

Like many of you folks, I have been around firearms most of my life. My early life was almost idyllic as far as I was concerned, almost like Tom Sawyer or Huck Finn: A young country boy with his dog, Old Town canoe, muskrat and mink traps, camping gear and all that other fun stuff in lots of remote north woods with a single-shot .22 rifle.

I had three brothers just back from WWII, so I got a lot of great gun training at a young age. But I was never really interested in muzzleloaders. Even back then they seemed old-fashioned, outdated and too much trouble to deal with. I kept that attitude most of my life.

Shift forward 60ish years, and recently I was reading a book in a great series about the Napoleonic wars between France and England. These wars were fought with wooden ships and iron men. The book talks about the Royal Marines of the time.

These guys were posted way high up in the rigging. When these big ships locked horns to board each other for close-quarters combat, the Marine sharpshooters in the rigging would try to shoot the opposing force's officers — and yep, they were shooting muzzleloaders.

It's quite a challenge to just hang on 150 feet or more up on a piece of rigging swinging in maybe a 60-degree arc, nevermind trying to hit a small target 200 feet away. Now they had my attention, and I thought maybe this muzzleloading thing might be interesting — if maybe just the

historic arena.

Since I didn't know squat about muzzleloaders, I thought I should check it out. I needed some hours of continuing firearms study to keep my law enforcement and armed security credentials in effect, and this qualified. So after a very interesting week, I am now also an NRA Muzzleloading Instructor.

Let's start out with a little history, and maybe we'll go on from there in later columns. These puppies go back a long, long time. Actually, the history of these firearms is one of the best and interesting parts of all (not to say it wasn't really cool to load and shoot a .68-caliber Spanish flintlock from the 15th century).

Black powder is what makes muzzleloaders go bang and propels the bullet, of which there are many types. The Chinese first used black powder in fireworks as far back as around 1200 A.D. A little after that, Germans and some Englishmen refined it and came up with the first practical muzzleloading gun in around 1300.

By the middle of the century, a sort of hand cannon — and yes, they were dangerous as hell — came about, and some of the first larger black powder artillery pieces were in use. These first attempts, as you might guess, weren't exactly safe.

Trial and error was the practice of the day, and many failures occurred — some with disastrous results. Powder measure was very iffy. Sometimes convicted criminals were

used to test the devices. They could climb the gallows steps to the noose, or walk up and light that thing off.

Black powder was then and still is now what is used as a propellant for these devices. Black powder is an explosive propellant made by mixing sulphur, saltpeter (potassium nitrate) and charcoal. Modern "smokeless" gunpowder is a completely different animal and should never be used in a muzzleloading gun. I don't care what your nutty uncle says he's done, the answer is still no, never.

The term muzzleloader, of course, comes from the way the gun is loaded from the business end or muzzle of the gun. Modern guns are loaded from the breech (the rear into the chamber) in one of several ways. Shoulder-fired muzzleloaders were developed over the course of about four centuries, and they fell into five basic phases.

The earliest ones were called matchlock guns and were invented in the early 15th century. The name came from the wick, or "slow match," that was lit before the gun was fired. Needless to say wet weather conditions or a marine environment was not very desired or helpful. These wouldn't have worked well in monsoon season in Vietnam.

A slight improvement in them was called the wheel lock gun, so called because it used a piece of pyrite held against a small steel wheel. The spark to ignite the powder charge was created as the wheel turned — much better in adverse weather conditions.

The next major step was the flintlock of the early 1600s. As I found out, keeping a flint mounted correctly, let alone keeping it sharp so it will produce a spark, is a real challenge. I began to think that my instructor (not the most patient man I have ever met) had made up his mind that I was probably mentally challenged. I eventually made it work, but it's a good thing I wasn't being charged by a platoon of enemy soldiers.

Next in the progression of muzzleloaders was the percussion cap gun of the early 1800s. These used a type of primer cap to ignite the powder. The cap was placed on a steel nipple. Pull the trigger, and the hammer strikes the cap to create sparks, setting off the powder charge.

The percussion gun was a huge improvement, and paved the way for the last evolution — the modern break-action inline muzzleloader still in use today. Many purists do not consider this inline a true primitive weapon but that debate will go on forever.

And that is a very basic history of the muzzleloader. If that's enough for you, or if you want to learn more in future columns, let me hear yes or no in my email and we'll go from there. Until then, 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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INSHORE & FRESHWATER

ASHLEY L.

ECONOMY TACKLE
Sarasota
941-922-9671

(2/14 report) Sarasota Bay is still a bit slow other than lots of **sheepshead** and **snook** in the creeks mouths. Live shrimp will get both, and the snook are likely to hit a bone Spook in low light. A few **redfish** have been caught in the north end of the bay by wade fishermen. Lakewood Ranch has had lots of **largemouths**, and the spawn is on. Bluegill-colored worms and other soft plastics are killer.

GULF & OFFSHORE

Good numbers of big **mangrove snapper** and **yellowtails** are coming in at about 65 feet. Live shrimp or frozen squid will work. Some **red snapper** have been caught at that depth too. Little tunny and a few **blackfin tuna** have been over the reefs but no huge schools. **Tripletail** are on any floating debris.

BEST BET

The **snapper** offshore are plentiful, hungry and relatively close to shore — go get 'em!

MALCOLM

COOKS SPORTLAND
Venice
941-493-0025

A few **cobia** have been cruising through Boca Grande Pass. Anglers are catching some **pompano** off the Venice beaches; in clear water use silly jigs or try shrimp if it's dirty. **Snook** reports are good in the backwaters. Topwaters and shallow-running lippled plugs are good. **Redfish** are around but no one spot seems hotter than another — they're scattered all over.

Big **Spanish mackerel** have been cruising the beaches, some almost on the sand. It's been a little too bumpy for most anglers to go farther out.

Lots of **sheepshead** are around the jetties and all the ICW structure. Frozen shrimp are killer.

JIM

FISHERMAN'S EDGE
Grove City
941-697-7595

(2/14 report) A few **Spanish mackerel** have popped up around Boca Grande Pass. Coral Creek has been producing some juvenile **tarpon**. The **trout** fishing has been decent, with good numbers of keepers on soft plastics. Whidden Creek and Turtle Bay have been good. **Redfish** and **snook** are both under the mangroves and will take shrimp or plugs. **Largemouth bass** are biting in the Rotonda canals.

Red grouper are coming from 90 to 100 feet. **Lane snapper** are abundant as shallow as 35 feet, and some decent **mangroves** are coming from shallow as well. Of course, the deeper you go, the bigger they get. **Yellowtail** are on the wrecks. A few anglers have found **cobia** out there as well.

The **sheepshead** bite is strong on the nearshore reefs and the inshore docks. Cut shrimp are fine.

JEFF

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

Big **ladyfish** have been showing up. Good numbers of **rat redfish** have been caught in Lemon Bay and along the west wall. We're waiting for **tarpon** any time now. A few **cobia** have also been caught along the west wall, following schools of rays. The full moon has had the **largemouth bass** all fired up, and the spawn is in full swing. A few anglers have been doing well on **crappie**.

The nearshore reefs have been producing **sheepshead**. The full moon slowed the bite, but it should be picking up again. It's been just a touch windy offshore anyway. Once it settles, we're looking for a hot **mackerel** bite.

The **trout** action has been consistent if not amazing. If you want to catch something, they're probably in a cooperative mood.

ROBERT

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

Mixed reports of juvenile **tarpon** have come from the upper rivers, the canals, and even the Harbor. River fish are most likely to bite. **Snook** are all over in the canals, on the flats and around the mangroves. Some very large **redfish** have been caught this week. Good **jacks** are in the PGI and Port Charlotte canals and on the bar edges. **Bonnetheads** are showing up in Bull and Turtle bays.

Snapper, grunts and **porgies** are good 5 to 15 miles out. We're hearing a handful of **cobia** and a handful of **Spanish mackerel**, but nothing amazing yet. **Red grouper** and **amberjack** are good 25 to 30 miles out.

Sheepshead are still abundant on most ICW structure and nearshore reefs. We're also seeing some at Danger Reef, Alligator Creek Reef and El Jobean. Try fiddler crabs.

CAMERON

RIO VILLA
BAIT & TACKLE
Punta Gorda
941-639-7166

Some **redfish** are in Pine Island Sound. Fish just off the islands on the high tide and in potholes on low tide with cut ladyfish, shrimp or live pins. A few **trout** and **snook** are in the same holes. **Bass** have turned on in Webb Lake on live shiners suspended about 2 feet under a float. Bigger **panfish** have been taking small minnows under a float just a few feet from shore and around structure in deeper water.

A mixed bag of **lane snapper, grunts, porgies** and **red grouper** are over live hard bottom on cut squid, sardines, shrimp and small pinfish. Bigger grouper are taking a whole squid or larger live pinfish. Keep a rod rigged with a jigging spoon ready to throw at **bonita** and **Spanish mackerel**.

Big **jacks** have been roaming the canals. Most any topwater plug or twitchbait will get their attention, or troll a Rapala X-Raps or Bomber.

DOUG

D&D MATLACHA
BAIT & TACKLE
Matlacha
239-282-9122

(2/14 report) There are lots of **trout** around the Matlacha area, and DOA shad in clear/glitter colors are doing well. The **mangrove snapper** have also been pretty active. Juvenile **redfish** have been feeding on the flats; a live shrimp under a popping cork is a good plan. Big **snook** have been along the mangroves in Big Jim Creek; try a live pin or jumbo shrimp.

Tripletail have been eating live pinfish or shrimp around the stone crab traps, but we have no bottom fishing reports this week.

The **sheepshead** are abundant off the D&D dock and most other inshore structures. Cut shrimp or live fiddler crabs will work fine.

ARTIE

BAIT N WAIT
Fort Myers Beach
239-466-8737

(2/7 report) The Hurricane Bridge has been producing **mangrove snapper, snook** and a bunch of **sheepshead** on shrimp. There are also **sheepshead** and some baby **grouper** at the Fort Myers Beach Pier.

A lot of guys are going out after **grouper** but settling for **snapper** instead. At least there are plenty of them.

Stick to the ICW and fish shrimp around the piers and mangroves for whatever bites.

THE FISH COACH'S TIP OF THE WEEK: To wire or not to wire? When mackerel are around, that's the eternal conundrum. A mackerel's mouth is basically a pair of scissors. You really want to use wire to prevent them from cutting off your baits. Often, it's not the fish you hook that cuts you off — it's another mack in the school trying to steal the food from your fish's mouth. But there's a problem: Wire is a lot more visible in the water, and it turns a lot of potential bites into almosts. So here's the straight poop: If you use 60-pound fluorocarbon, you'll get a lot more strikes. However, you'll lose some fish. A realistic guess is about 20 to 30 percent of your Spanish mackerel and 40 to 80 percent of your kingfish. With wire, you'll have very few cutoffs — but your strikes will go down. In my experience, expect to have something like 30 percent of the action you do with fluoro. — *As the Fish Coach, Capt. Josh Olive offers personalized instruction on fishing techniques. To book your session or for more information, go to FishCoach.net, email Josh@FishCoach.net or call 941-276-9657.*

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FLORIDA IS WILD • CAPT. JOSH OLIVE



Photo provided by Anne Fillion
A female northern cardinal at a bird feeder in a North Port yard.

Don't feed the birds

Why that free buffet isn't actually doing wildlife any favors

If you read this column, you're probably fascinated with wild things. You probably want to surround yourself with them whenever possible. Lovers of wildlife usually want to bring a piece of the wilderness into their yards and even homes. It's natural.

One way to do that is by setting up a bird feeder, or maybe a dozen of them. Who wouldn't want to look out the window and see dozens of colorful songbirds, or hear them starting their day with cheery tunes? It seems like a no-brainer.

On the one hand, I hate to burst your bubble (no, really). But on the other — well, let's look at the ways bird feeders can harm your feathered friends, and then you can decide.

CREATING DEPENDENCE

You check your feeders every day, right? You diligently refill them, making sure all the birds in the yard have plenty to go around. No hungry bellies here.

What happens if you're not there? Maybe you're leaving for a weeklong cruise of the Caribbean. Or, if your luck is not so great, maybe you get rear-ended by a minivan and spend 10 days in the hospital. What happens when the feeders run empty?

You might reason that birds have been finding their own food for millions of years. Certainly a week won't hurt. Except that you've created an artificial abundance, which has allowed more birds to set up territories than the natural food supply can support.

Now, your unfed birds are on their own, and having to go to other birds' territories for sustenance. For some birds, this is no big deal. For others — those that are strongly territorial, or have small home ranges, or are raising a family — it can be a huge problem.

SPREADING DISEASE

In a natural system, birds often congregate densely around food sources. However, no natural food source is as small and compact as a bird feeder. When a lot of individuals are sharing from the same dish, as it were, the risk of spreading disease is much higher.

Think of it like passing a bag of pretzels around a big room full of strangers. Everybody reaches into the bag opening and roots around with their grubby paws, trying to find a pretzel that isn't broken. If somebody has a cold and less-than-ideal hygiene, everyone is exposed.

Bird baths are even worse, since most germs live longer in damp conditions. Replace that pretzel bag with a big glass of

water. Pass it around and everybody take a sip. Seems like a great way to spread germs, huh? That's because it is.

PREDATOR BUFFET

Your little cheep-cheeps aren't the only ones that bird feeders attract. They'll also be noticed by any bird predators that happen to be in the area. In more rural areas, those might include bobcats and foxes. But even in town, you'll get hawks and neighborhood cats.

Now, whether this is a positive or negative will depend on your particular point of view. If you enjoy the predator/prey interactions that you will be able to witness if you spend enough time trying, then perhaps you'll see indirectly feeding the predators as a good thing. However, I refer you back to the first point: Creating dependence. It's never a good thing.

JUNK FOOD DIET

A bird foraging on its own usually picks up a little of this, a little of that, and a dab of this over here. While there will sometimes be high levels of abundance with specific foods — for example, when beautyberries are in season, many birds eat a lot of them — there's an overall balance of different foods.

But when birds eat primarily from feeders, there's not much variety. Even the better bird seed mixes, which might have a dozen different ingredients, can't come close to matching the broad spectrum of choices foraging birds have.

And remember, bird seed is supposed to attract birds. The best way to do that is with the seed equivalent of french fries: Fatty types like peanuts and sunflowers. While fat provides lots of energy for a bird on the go, it also packs weight on one that's more sedentary (and especially on the ever-present squirrels).

RATS AND ROACHES GALORE

Most bird seed blends include seed types that are cheap and less popular, such as millet and milo. These are eaten by some birds, but they're mostly included as filler. But nothing really goes to waste. Something is going to eat it. And often, that something is rats and roaches.

There are several types of rodents that may come to enjoy the birds' leftovers. Woodrats (aka citrus rats or roof rats) are abundant and unlikely to come into your home, although they might break into a shed or lanai — especially if you store bird seed there. Norway rats sometimes show up as well, and those can become house pests. It's also common to have palmetto bugs

show up after dark, especially on warm damp nights. They're a lot less picky than any bird.

As people who enjoy nature, we have to decide how much we're going to mess with the natural balance. Yes, you can use feeders to bring many birds to you — but is it worth the risk to the birds themselves? My answer

is no, and so there are no bird feeders in my yard. What are you going to choose?

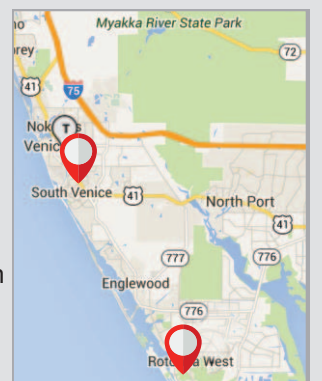
Capt. Josh Olive is a fifth-generation native Florida Cracker and a Florida Master Naturalist, and has been fascinated by all sorts of wild things and places since he was able to walk. If you have questions about living with wildlife, email him at Publisher@WaterLineWeekly.com.

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Photo provided
Don Karlgaard with a very respectable Florida pompano. Once you get the basics down, fish like this will be more realistic catches for you.

Basic fishing questions, part two



ANGLING 101 • ROBERT LUGIEWICZ

In last week's column, I got started with a question-and-answer session that covers a lot of the things people ask every day in the tackle shop. There were too many to run all at once, so this week we have a continuation of the list.

Why are there so many fishing rules?

Mostly because we're so blessed with an abundance of species. If you come from an area where there are only half a dozen different kinds of fish, then it's probably pretty easy to memorize that short set of rules. Here, we have hundreds of species you might catch. Really, the amazing thing is that there aren't more fishing regulations. And I know you can't memorize them all. That's why there's a list of regulations in WaterLine every week. (It's on page 16 this week.)

Do I need a fishing license?

Probably. If you're a Florida resident fishing from land in salt water, you don't. If you're a Florida resident 65 or older, you can fish license-free in salt or fresh water,

on land or from a boat. Otherwise, you need a license. And if you aren't a legal resident of Florida, you'll have to pony up for the nonresident license. No, it doesn't matter if you own a house here. What matters is your state of legal residency.

Why are nonresident fishing licenses so expensive?

They're not, at least by comparison. Florida charges \$47.50 for a one-year license, which is good for 12 months from the date of purchase. Take a look at what an annual nonresident license costs in some other states: Texas, \$63 (expires Aug. 31 each year). Michigan, \$76 (expires March 31 each year). Alaska, \$145 (or \$70 for seven days!). Sure, there are some like New York (no fee for saltwater fishing; just a no-cost registration). But overall, it's not a bad deal.

Where does the fresh water end and the salt water start?

There is no actual line. Generally, if you're canal fishing in Port Charlotte, the waterways on the west side of U.S. 41 are

salt and the ones on the east side are fresh (unless they connect right to the river). In Punta Gorda, all the canals are salt. On the rivers, consider it salt water until you start seeing cattails. Even then, you'll often find saltwater fish well up the rivers. If you are river fishing and catching both snook and bass, I'd suggest having both freshwater and saltwater licenses.

Why do I need a leader?

Because there are a lot of sharp things out there. It's not just fish teeth; you also have to contend with oysters and barnacles. For most inshore use, 30-pound monofilament or fluorocarbon is ideal. Steel leaders are tougher, but they're a lot more visible. The less visible your leader is, the more fish you'll catch.

What's the best bait to use?

For local saltwater fishing, shrimp are our nightcrawlers. They catch everything, and you can use them live or dead. Are there better baits to use in specific circumstances? Well, yeah. But for just going out and getting your

rod bent, shrimp are king. A lot of people like squid because it stays on the hook well. Catfish and stingrays like squid too.

My neighbor has one of those green underwater lights. How do I catch the fish I can see there?

Get some small lures. Be quiet and sneaky as you approach the seawall or dock. Don't be someplace the fish can see you — stay farther away. Fish the edges of the shadow line, not the light itself. The fish you see aren't the ones that are feeding. If you fail, try again the next night, but be quieter and sneakier.

I know this doesn't answer every question you have. If you'd like to learn more, stop in and see me or one of the guys at the shop. We love to watch you learn.

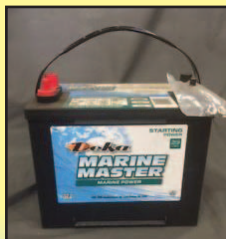
Robert Lugiiewicz is the manager of Fishin' Frank's Bait & Tackle, located at 4425-D Tamiami Trail in Charlotte Harbor and at 14531 N. Cleveland Ave. in North Fort Myers. Call 941-625-3888 for more information about the shop or for local fishing info, or visit them online at FishinFranks.com.



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SLACK TIDES NEWS OF INTEREST FROM AROUND THE GLOBE

STRIPERS OVERFISHED



Striped bass, a summertime favorite with fishermen and diners, has joined the ranks of New England's overfished species. A summary from the Feb. 6 meeting of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission's Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board stated that a computer population model revealed the species was overfished in 2017 and that fishermen were still catching too many fish to sustain the population. The report is a reality check, and while it isn't official, the result of the striped bass assessment will likely be the same as the draft version when the final report is issued at their next meeting April 30, said Michael Armstrong, chairman of the striped bass board and an assistant director at the Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries. Declaring the species overfished does not mean a return to the 1980s, Armstrong said, when a coastwide moratorium was instituted after striped bass stocks collapsed. But the news that striped bass, long touted as one of the region's great conservation success stories is now classified with cod, flounders and other depleted species was greeted by some with renewed cries to end the commercial fishery. "We need to do what we did the last time: Put a total moratorium on the harvesting of wild striped bass," said Dean Clark, of Marstons Mills, a sport fisherman who is a board member of the striped bass conservation organization Stripers Forever. Clark and Stripers Forever want to end commercial fishing. Just about every year, they get a legislator to sponsor a bill that phases out commercial fishermen, buying up their licenses as they retire or pass away, so far unsuccessfully. "The only way to increase (striped bass) biomass is to manage them as a recreational species," Clark said.

FISHING WITH ELECTRICITY

THE HAGUE, Netherlands (AP) — Dutch fisherman protested last week outside parliament in a last-ditch attempt to avert a European Union ban on the practice of using electric shocks to stun fish before scooping them up in nets. The fishermen argue that the technique, known as electric pulse fishing, is environmentally friendly because it allows trawlers to use far less diesel and doesn't damage the seabed. Opponents call it industrial fishing that is wiping out fish stocks. The Dutch fishing industry has invested heavily in the practice, although it is only supposedly being carried out on an experimental

basis under special EU exemptions. Nearly 80 of the Dutch fleet's 137 trawlers are equipped for pulse fishing. The pulse trawlers caught 75 percent of the total catch of sole in 2016, according to figures released by the country's fishing groups. Jerry Percy, director of an association of small-scale fishers in Britain, said he had repeatedly heard from local fishermen that not only fish but even worms that live in the sands off the coast disappeared after pulse trawlers passed by. "Commercial fishers were coming to me and saying, 'this is like fishing in a graveyard,'" Percy said. Carola Schouten, the Dutch minister for agriculture, nature and fisheries, said in Parliament that "it doesn't look good" for pulse fishers, but defended the method. "It is sustainable. It is good for the seabed. It is good to counter overfishing and it generates fewer emissions. And the fishers can earn a good living," Schouten told lawmakers in parliament as the protesting fishers looked on from the public gallery.



FISHERMEN RESCUE SHARK

STUART, Fla. — Two fishermen in Stuart were in the right place to help a shark, struggling with a rope tied tightly around its neck, cutting into its gills. Cellphone video captured the moments when David Fleming and Ethan Crawford came to the shark's aid near Sandsprit Park Feb. 12. The two friends said they were out fishing when they saw two fins in the water. They got close enough to see there was a shark in shallow water, swimming in circles. They believe it was a lemon shark. "When we first saw it we thought it was working up some fish like it was feeding," Crawford said. "Then it kept circling and circling so we watched it for quite a while and we realized something was probably wrong with it." "We noticed it had like cuts around the gills and we noticed there was a rope wrapped around it," Fleming said. Fleming eventually jumped off their boat, hoping to grab the shark, which was already fatigued, without wearing it out even more. Fleming was able to grab the shark's tail and pull it closer to the boat. Fleming and Crawford worked to tie a rope to the shark's tail. Once it was controlled, they removed the rope from the shark's neck and carefully removed the rope around the tail. The duo says there is a lesson to be learned for fishermen. "Don't put anything around their head or their gills. If you see one injured, go for the tail like we did," Fleming said. "If you lose a rope around its tail, it's not really going to

have any effect on him like it did his gills," Crawford said.

THAT'S ONE BIG GOLDFISH



One Kentucky man had the catch of a lifetime Saturday, snagging a 20-pound fish resembling a goldfish. Hunter Anderson and his girlfriend were on their way home last Saturday when he thought to take her to a pond in Danville, about 50 miles southeast of Louisville. "I told her, 'Hey, there used to be some big koi and goldfish in that pond,' so she said 'I want to see,'" Anderson said. After baiting up with a piece of a Lee's Famous Recipe biscuit, Anderson cast his line and was surprised at what he reeled in. "I cast out there and the fight was on," Anderson remembered. "This fish was different. It was one of the hardest fighting fish I've ever fought." But as a tournament fisherman, Anderson said he wouldn't give up against the giant orange-colored fish. "I don't know if maybe it was the biggest koi or gold fish ever caught, but I would like to find out," Anderson said. He claims he didn't take too many pictures, which has some on social media questioning the authenticity of the photo and the type of fish. Anderson said he quickly tossed the fish back into the Danville pond and it swam off "just fine." "Maybe a kid can catch it some day and be as happy as I was," Anderson said. "That's what it's all about."

FROM THE FWC CASE FILES

Officer Karr and Officer Specialist Cloud were on patrol in Hardee County when a truck slowly drove by their location. A spotlight from the truck began to illuminate the side of the road. They followed the vehicle as it traveled north towards Polk County. The driver braked many times to slow down and continued to shine the spotlight on property on both sides of the road in a manner capable of disclosing wildlife. After following the truck for several miles, Officer Karr conducted a traffic stop. The driver admitted to having two firearms in the backseat of the vehicle. Officer Specialist Cloud secured two scoped rifles from the driver and passenger. One rifle was loaded with multiple rounds and the second rifle was unloaded, but there was a live round underneath the rifle. Both occupants of the truck were cited for hunting with a gun and light. Both rifles and the spotlight were seized as evidence.

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ANGLING 201 • CAPT. STEVE 'PEGLEG' PHILLIPS

Spring has sprung

Tips to bend a rod now that the weather is warming up

Well, another frigid Southwest Florida winter has come and gone. What a tough couple weeks it was. But we survived, and spring is around the corner. Now that the weather is changing, so will the fishing.

Spring is one of my favorite times of the year. The days are getting longer (more time to fish). The water is warming (so fish eat better). Tides are getting higher (so we can get to more fishing spots). And the fish are getting hungry. For most species of fish, spring is spawning time — and before they spawn, they eat.

What triggers this event is water temperature. When the water is cold, fish are lethargic and sluggish. But when that water warms into the 70s, a fish's metabolism speeds up, which makes it hungry. Obviously, hungry fish feed more often.

Another big change this time of year is the arrival of baitfish: Greenbacks and threadfins are returning, and non-migratory pinfish are getting bigger on the flats. These protein-packed treats are on the menu for most anything swimming in our waters. In the springtime, I switch from shrimp and slow-moving lures to my faster-moving, more erratic baits like X-Raps, Rat-L-Traps. I want to cover a lot of water while looking for active feeding fish.

If you plan to fish live bait, pinfish would be a good choice because they're usually readily available at your local bait shop. If you want threadfins or greenbacks, you'll have to learn to throw a castnet. If you would like to learn to throw a net, stop by Fishin' Frank's — we'll be glad to help you.

Baitfish tend to hang out on or near shallow flats, so I like to look for mangrove shorelines near these areas. My

usual setup is a 30-pound leader, a 2/0 hook and a bobber. I use a float because it keeps the bait from going down and hiding on the bottom. The depth you need to fish the bait depends on the depth of the water you're fishing. Set the bobber so your bait is about 6 inches from the bottom.

I have found the if you hook a baitfish just above the anal fin, it will swim straight ahead and not back to the boat. It will also stay alive longer because you're avoiding any vital organs or its spine.

Shrimp will also work. Break the fan off the tails and rig it on a jighead. Fishing shrimp aggressively will often trigger a strike.

Don't spend a lot of time in one area. The fish are way more active this time of year, and if they're there, they'll usually bite pretty quick.

Another one of my favorites to target in spring is sharks. I anchor up in deeper holes near the bait flats and tie a chum bag off the boat. Cut a 2-inch chunk of ladyfish or mullet and rig it on a steel leader and a 6/0 hook with the barb removed. I generally drift my shark baits with no weight.

Spring can lead to some memorable days fishing on beautiful Charlotte Harbor, so get out there and get a rod bent. Remember, get your kids hooked on fishing and they won't be able to afford drugs.

Capt. Steve "Pegleg" Phillips owns and operates Southern Charm Charters, with his wife Heather as occasional first mate. If you're wondering why his friends call him Pegleg, stop in at Fishin' Frank's and meet him. For charter info, contact him at 678-787-4750 or through his Facebook page at <https://bit.ly/2vesgvn>.

GRANDMA'S FAVORITE FLOUNDER

- 2 pounds flounder fillets
- 2 tbsp lemon juice
- 1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 1/4 cup butter, melted
- 3 tbsp mayonnaise
- 3 tbsp chopped green onions
- 1/4 tsp salt

A clip-n-save seafood recipe provided by



— Recipe adapted from AllRecipes.com

Coat a piece of heavy-duty foil (about 14x14 inches) with nonstick cooking spray. Place fillets on foil; brush with lemon juice. Crimp foil, forming edges. Place foil flat on the grill (do not seal). Grill, covered, over medium-hot heat for 4 minutes. Combine Parmesan cheese, butter, mayonnaise, onions and salt; brush over fillets. Grill 3 to 4 minutes longer or until fish flakes easily with a fork. Serves 4.



Photo provided

Kim Clouden caught this 34-inch snook near Turtle Bay. As the water warms, the snook will be feeding much more aggressively.



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Reader Photos



5-year-old Isaac Garcia caught this snapper at Laisley Park in Punta Gorda.



Miguel Perez caught this baby bull shark in a Port Charlotte canal.



Barry Kennedy of North Port with a fat Webb Lake tilapia.

WE WANT YOUR PHOTOS!
Here's how it works: Take pictures of your outdoor adventures. Send your high-quality digital photos to Editor@WaterLineWeekly.com. DO NOT send us photos of oversized or other release-only fish being poorly handled. Photos of such fish being gaffed, held by the lower jaw only or obviously damaged or dead will not be published, no matter how big the fish or how proud the angler may be.



Peter Shopa, 86 years young, caught and released this black drum that pegged his 40-pound fish scale.



Robb Johnson caught and released this small snook using a live shrimp at Port Charlotte Beach.



Richard Cimochowski snapped this white pelican photo at Coral Creek.



The Moyer family (Marti, Doug and Don) with their bag from a charter in Aruba.



Amy Lueck from Minnesota caught this 20-inch mangrove snapper in the Gulf fishing while with her dad.



Capt. Gary Cumberworth with a 29-inch red snapper that had to be released because the season is closed.



Minnesotan Shirley Brause with a tasty yellow jack.



AROUND CHARLOTTE HARBOR • CAPT. RALPH ALLEN



Photo provided
This is a famous photograph of Teddy Roosevelt posing, harpoon in hand, with a beached manta ray somewhere in Southwest Florida. The photo was taken in 1917, several years after he'd left the presidency.

What do bobwhites have in common with manta rays?

Does it sound like a trick question? Whatever in the world could an extremely large saltwater fish have in common with a small upland game bird? But they do indeed share an interesting trait: They are both animals that were once common in Southwest Florida, but now both of them are quite scarce for reasons that no one seems to be able to understand.

There were still a few manta rays around when I arrived here in the 1970s, but they were not abundant. I can remember following them around the north bar alongside the Boca Grande ship channel and casting to cobia that clustered around them. The trick was to cast near enough to the giant rays to entice the cobia but not so close that we'd snag the huge, unstoppable mantas. This happened less and less often, and I don't think I ever saw a manta ray in this area after about 1980 or so.

Apparently those '70s rays were the last remnant of a much larger group which used to frequent our coastline. There was such a large population of manta rays in the area in the early 1900s that wealthy sportsmen traveled here to hunt them.

It sounds a bit gruesome, but in those days the practice was to slip in close behind a surface-cruising manta ray in a small boat and dart the ray with a harpoon, akin

to harpooning a whale. Then the hunters would cleat the harpoon's rope off to the front of the boat and enjoy the ride while the ray exhausted itself by towing the boat around. Sometimes these "Nantucket sleigh rides" would go for miles before the ray would tire sufficiently to be hauled up on a beach somewhere.

But now there are no manta rays in our area. We do see a few of the similar-looking but much smaller devil rays along the coast, but I cannot recall the last time that I heard a report of a manta ray in the waters of Southwest Florida.

Why is this? Did we harvest so many from the local population that some minimum threshold or tipping point was reached and their numbers became unsustainable? Did they just move elsewhere? There are populations of manta rays not too far away in other parts of the Gulf of Mexico. Did the water quality change somehow in the middle part of the last century to become unsuitable for manta rays, or for their prey? No one seems to know.

There used to be lots of quail here too, but their numbers have crashed. A hundred years ago it was possible to hunt for quail by simply grabbing a shotgun and going for a walk in the woods. No hunting buggies, no purebred and highly trained bird dogs —

just go for a walk with your gun.

In the 1970s, we used to hunt quail in eastern Port Charlotte by simply cruising the endless miles of newly-built roads, mostly between U.S. 41 and where I-75 now runs. General Development Corporation had crews building those roads way out in advance of the construction of any homes. You could drive for miles without encountering any houses and you'd probably not see any other vehicles while you were cruising.

We'd drive around until a covey of quail ran across the road, or until we saw quail heads pop up in the swale. Then we'd stop the car, grab our guns and walk the birds up. We didn't spend much time chasing singles after flushing a covey; it was easier to just hop back in the car and go find another bunch. Quail were common in built-up neighborhoods too as long as there were a few vacant lots around, and hearing the characteristic "bob-bob-white" call was not unusual at all.

But something happened to our quail, and now they are mostly gone. True, there are still some quail around. For example, there are pretty good numbers of wild birds living at the Webb/Babcock WMA just south of Punta Gorda. But that property is managed specifically to produce quail. Underbrush is chopped and burned and food plots are

maintained just for quail.

Elsewhere in the area, you might be lucky enough to hear a quail call or see a few birds do their comical head-held-high scamper across a road, but this doesn't happen very often any more. My unscientific and totally seat-of-my-pants guess is that there are less than 10 percent of the quail in Charlotte County that we had in the '70s.

What happened to them? No one seems to know. The mystery of disappearing quail is not unique to our neck of the woods. Quail numbers have plummeted across much of the southeastern U.S. All kinds of theories have been put forth: Fire ant predation on quail nests, overdevelopment of former quail habitat, housecats, coyotes, and many more. But no one knows the answer.

Could the crash in quail population somehow be related to the disappearance of our manta rays? It seems unlikely, but since neither has been explained, who really knows? We just know that they're gone. I miss them both.

Capt. Ralph Allen runs the King Fisher Fleet of sightseeing and fishing charter boats located at Fishermen's Village 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@KingFishFleet.com.

SNAPPER SOFT TACOS

- 2 tbsp olive oil, divided
- 1 medium white onion, diced
- 1 bell pepper, seeded and diced
- 1-2 jalapeño or habanero peppers, diced (optional)
- 1 pound snapper fillets (or other white fish)
- Paprika**
- 2 tbsp lime juice
- 1 large tomato, diced
- Taco sauce** (hot or mild)
- 8 medium flour tortillas
- Shredded lettuce** (optional)
- Shredded cheese** (optional)
- Sour cream** (optional)
- Guacamole** (optional)

Heat 1 tbsp oil in small skillet. Add diced onion and peppers. Saute 8 minutes, then set aside. Heat 1 tbsp oil in large skillet. Add fillets, season with paprika. Saute 4-5 minutes, then turn and saute 2-3 minutes on second side. Using a spatula, break up fillets into large or small pieces as desired. Pour lime juice over fish pieces. Add onion, bell pepper and tomato and stir together. Simmer uncovered 5 minutes, then add taco sauce. Spoon mixture into tortillas. Top with lettuce, cheese, sour cream and/or guacamole. Serves 4.

A clip-n-save seafood recipe provided by



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Be seagrass aware



Without healthy seagrass, kiss your fishing goodbye

ASK YOUR SEA GRANT AGENT • BETTY STAUGLER

Shutterstock photo
Healthy seagrasses are the basis of much of Charlotte Harbor's bounty.

Throughout the month of March, coastal communities across Florida will observe Seagrass Awareness Month as a means of bringing attention to the importance of seagrass meadows to our ocean's health. To get everyone ready for this important month, let's learn a little bit about these important underwater plants.

Seagrasses are marine flowering plants that live in submerged environments around every continent except Antarctica. Unlike algae, seagrasses have a fully developed root and rhizome system. This root system keeps them anchored to the bottom of the seafloor and allows them to form expansive meadows in nearshore coastal waters.

Seagrasses thrive in areas with good water clarity, which allows abundant sunlight to reach the bottom. Seagrass meadows are most abundant in areas of brackish to full seawater salinities with soft sediments and moderate to low wave energy and currents.

Florida's tourism and fishing industries rely on the important benefits provided by seagrasses. Seagrasses reduce shoreline erosion, oxygenate the water, capture carbon, trap sediments, and improve water clarity. Seagrasses also form extensive structural habitat that supports a diverse array of species, including economically valuable fishes and invertebrates. About 85 percent of the species targeted in commercial and recreational fisheries in Florida depend on seagrasses for at least part of their life cycle.

Earlier this month, during a talk with the South Gulf Cove Fishing Club, one of the members asked what the greatest threats to seagrass are. My answer mirrored that of a 2012 report by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission: Reduced water quality, habitat destruction and physical damage through propeller scarring and vessel groundings, and sedimentation. Seagrasses also face temperature and salinity stress, especially in areas where freshwater inputs to the coast have been extensively altered.

It's important to note that one threat — physical damage to seagrass from careless boating practices — is 100 percent preventable. Propellers and anchors dragging the bottom create scarring, and vessels running aground and attempting to power off can

form deep holes. The time for recovery from physical damage can exceed 10 years, especially when the root systems of slower-growing species such as turtle grass are damaged or when currents and wave action cause erosion and expansion of scars.

By following responsible boating practices like these from BeSeagrassSafe.com, you can help ensure that seagrasses in Florida continue to thrive.

Avoid seagrass beds and use navigation channels or deeper water while under power. Simply remaining aware of your surroundings and being mindful of where you are can go a long way toward protection.

If boating over seagrass beds in shallow water, be sure to trim your motor up and idle to a safe depth before getting on plane. Not only does this prevent seagrass damage, it will also save you costly repairs to props and engine skegs in the process.

If you run aground, do not proceed under power. Turn off and trim up your motor, and while wearing protective footwear push the boat to safe depth. There will often be times when avoidance is impossible, and trimming is not an option. In these cases, pushing your boat helps you avoid damaging both seagrass and your expensive prop and engine. A short push is a small price to pay for what you'll save.

- At home and in your community:
- Get involved with local organizations that promote nature protection.
 - Don't litter.
 - If you live near water, keep a buffer of plants along your shoreline to reduce runoff pollution from entering bays. This will also help to protect your property from erosion and slow flood waters during storm events.
 - Plant native plants that don't require lots of fertilizers and pesticides.
 - Maintain septic tanks.

Betty Staugler is the Charlotte County extension agent for the Florida Sea Grant Program. She is active in many areas relating to boating, fishing, and watershed/coastal living. The Florida Sea Grant College Program supports research and education activities that help Florida's shoreline communities, industries and citizens wisely use the state's coastal and marine resources. Contact her at staugler@ufl.edu or 941-764-4346.

LOCAL BOATING SAFETY PROGRAMS

U.S. POWER SQUADRONS

SARASOTA POWER SQUADRON — 941-400-6467

America's Boating Course (8 hr)..... 7 p.m. March 18

VENICE SAIL & POWER SQUADRON — 941-408-8591

America's Boating Course (8 hr)..... 8:30 a.m. Feb. 23

America's Boating Course (8 hr)..... 8:30 a.m. March 23

America's Boating Course (8 hr)..... 8:30 a.m. April 27

PEACE RIVER SAIL & POWER SQUADRON — 941-637-0766

America's Boating Course (12 hr)..... 8:30 a.m. March 23

How To Use A Chart 8:30 a.m. April 6

Using GPS..... 1 p.m. April 6

America's Boating Course (12 hr)..... 8:30 a.m. April 27

CAPE CORAL POWER SQUADRON — 239-549-9754

America's Boating Course (12 hr)..... 7 p.m. March 11

America's Boating Course (12 hr)..... 7 p.m. April 1

— Provided by Ron Jones

COAST GUARD AUXILIARY

PROGRAM	START DATE	LOCATION	CONTACT
About Boating Safely	Feb. 23	Cape Haze	772-359-7312
About Boating Safely	Feb. 23	Punta Gorda	941-639-3811
Boat Smart (free FWC class)	Feb. 23	Englewood	941-460-8949
Suddenly in Command	Feb. 28	Venice	941-492-5904
GPS for Mariners	March 4	Venice	941-492-5904
Suddenly in Command	March 9	Englewood	941-460-8949

— Provided by Dave Nielsen



FROM HOOK TO TABLE • CHEF TIM SPAIN

WaterLine photo by Chef Tim Spain

This whole roasted black sea bass is a treat for the eyes and the palate. (If you don't like it looking at you, you can remove the head.)



Stuff that snapper

Last Saturday morning I was listening to Radio WaterLine and the boys were talking about all the snappers that were being caught. I thought I'd try and catch some inshore mangroves and do another snapper recipe. Well, that didn't work out too well — nature reminded me that it's called fishing, not catching. I caught fish, but none were keeper snapper.

So, what was I to do? I decided to go buy some black seabass instead. I decided I'd roast them whole because they weren't very big, and I think it's a waste to fillet tiny fish.

Since they were on the smaller side, I decided to stuff them with something. Crab meat is always good, but I didn't have any on hand. However, I did have some prosciutto, shallots, scallions and garlic. I threw all that into the food processor and blended until it was smooth. The prosciutto added just enough fat to make the little bass taste great, and the other ingredients made it even better.

Black seabass aren't very common around here. After speaking with my publisher, I learned they're usually a little further north of us. It's not impossible to catch them here, but they're just incidentals while targeting other reef fish. You just might have a better chance of getting some if you fish the waters of Tampa Bay.

If I had caught some snapper or grunts, I would have cooked them the exact same way I did with these little black seabass. Keep this

recipe in mind when you're wondering how you might cook your next snapper, or any other smaller fish with mild white meat. (For you freshwater fishermen, tilapia and Mayan cichlids would be excellent this way.) Don't forget the deep scores on both sides of the fish — that ensures it's cooked all the way through.

I have to say that I was very happy way the way this dish came together. I'll definitely be putting this dish on my event order guide so it came be offered at my private caterings and culinary classes.

I didn't have a lot of time, since it was already after deadline as I was preparing the dish and writing my column at the same time. I needed a sauce and didn't have time to make one. But I did have some leftover Dijon aioli that I had served with salmon at a recent event, so that's what I paired with the fish. It was wonderful.

A glass of chardonnay would have been a great pairing. Although I do like an occasional adult beverage, I don't drink while working with knives. Simple rule: Alcohol and knives don't mix. If you're enjoying an adult beverage at home while cooking, be careful and don't cut yourself.

Chef 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.

When you have smaller fish, don't fillet them — try this instead

STUFFED ROASTED FISH

- 4 fresh **whole fish**, about 1 pound each
- 4 cloves fresh **garlic**
- 1 bunch **scallion greens**
- 2 small fresh **shallots**
- 8 slices **prosciutto**
- Montreal seasoning**
- 1 cup **mayonnaise**
- Zest and juice of one lemon**
- 2 tbsp **Dijon mustard**
- 1 pinch **salt**
- 2 tbsp **olive oil** (optional)
- 1 sprig fresh **parsley** (optional)

A clip-n-save seafood recipe provided by



— Recipe by Chef Tim Spain, ChefTimSpain.com

Prepare your fish by scaling, gutting and removing the gills. (Fins and heads can also be removed if you wish.) Preheat oven to 350°F. Place three garlic cloves, shallots, scallions and prosciutto in the food processor and blend until smooth. Rinse each fish with cold water and pat dry, then score each side deeply. Sprinkle with Montreal seasoning, then stuff each fish with the pureed stuffing mix. Place fish in a roasting pan and roast them uncovered for 11 minutes. While they're roasting, wash your food processor bucket and make your aioli by blending the mayonnaise, lemon juice, zest, that last clove of garlic and salt until smooth. If desired, blend olive oil and parsley to make a colorful serving sauce. Serves 4.



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Simple RV maintenance



Photo provided
Draining your RVs water heater can be a messy job, but the alternative is worse.

THE RV LIFESTYLE • GREG BARTZ

An ounce of prevention is worth \$700 of cure

There is always something to be maintained. And, according to the service people, there are varying opinions on how to do that. Recently my friend Joe had an issue with his RV. What he was told that with some simple maintenance, the issue he ran into could have been avoided.

Your probably familiar with home water heaters. They stand in the corner of the garage (unless you have the new tankless versions) and go out on you about every 15 years. We never think about maintaining it; we just hope it works every time we step into the shower.

RVs have water heaters too. Did you know your RV water heater needs maintenance? According to his serviceman, you are supposed to empty these tanks twice a year. This helps from any sediments that may set up in the bottom of the tank that can eventually cause the tank some damage. As my friend found out, that little bit of maintenance can save you a \$700 bill.

Joe has a 5th wheel that he purchased pre-owned — used but not old. He did get a warranty, but he was told that since the tank wasn't properly maintained, he had to pay the price for the repair. I thought that was just a simple way for the serviceman to collect full cost for the repair.

But it got me thinking. I've read some of my manuals about the various items in our RV, but I have not looked at the maintenance section in any of them. It got me wondering that if things aren't properly maintained, will I be dealt the same hand that my friend received? I'm not sure, but I would hate to find out.

I have to travel to Georgia this weekend for a few days, but one of the things on my to-do list is to double check the manuals and see what they say about maintaining some of the appliances and accessories we have in our RV. The last thing anyone wants is an unsuspected bill — especially if it can be avoided by something simple, like draining your hot water tank twice a year.

Now, there is a difference between how Joe uses his 5th wheel and how we use our Class C unit: Joe and his fiancée live in their unit, while we use ours once or twice a month. On top of that, we don't always use the shower if we just go for one evening during a fishing tournament. So the hot water does not get used often when we "dry camp." I would think the more you use it the less chance you have for an issue to arise. Then again, that whole dimension about tank size may be related to this as well.

Like I said, it got me thinking about

looking at my manual to see what is recommended for our RV. I am going to do my best to prevent ever having a maintenance issue if I can help it. And draining a tank that holds 12 gallons of water twice a year is far better than getting a \$700 bill for the repairs. For that kind of money, I can drain anything and often.

So, just a little tidbit that I wanted to pass on to all of you RVers out there. As always, I welcome your thoughts and opinions on any shared experiences that you may have had with a similar issue. So far, some of you have taught me a thing or two about RVs, and especially the service and maintenance about them. I always appreciate a better way to do anything and gladly pass along any tips that I may come across in my travels.

I hope everyone has safe travels. I know we have a lot of folks down in their RVs this time of year. Spring training is in full swing and that brings many northerners to our great state. I hope all of you visitors have a great stay and safe travels.

Greg Bartz is a tournament bass fisherman based in Lakeland. Greg fishes lakes throughout Florida's Heartland and enjoys RV travel around the Southeast with his wife and tournament partner, Missy. Contact him at Greg.Bartz@SummitHoldings.com.

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Game on for mackerel

A LIFE ON THE WATER • CAPT. VAN HUBBARD



Photo provided
Spanish mackerel are showing up now, and the kingfish can't be far behind. Time to take advantage of a hot bite!

Our weather is changing. There may be more cool spells ahead, but this week has been warm and humid. I've already observed white pelicans migrating back north. Plants are budding and citrus is blossoming. Best of all, I'm catching some Spanish mackerel. Larger kings are sure to be close behind.

The baitfish are moving in and everything is ready to spring into life. Area waters are looking great right now — clean and clear! It's time to find out how our fish populations fared. I'm optimistic and I believe we will enjoy awesome action this spring. Our area's fishing, boating and tourism all require a good run to recover and survive.

Let's talk about some signs to look for, and how to enjoy our mack attack. Terns were nicknamed mackerel birds by the old-time fishermen. They indicated the return of baitfish, and fish migrations follow their food. Striking fish are obvious indicators; if you are lucky enough to see fish, go for it. Remember that if you circle or drift quietly around the activity you catch more fish. Happy fish feed and scared fish run away.

You might encounter other boats with bent rods. They don't own the ocean, but you will find life is better if you don't bite the hand that feeds you. Make friends and earn respect. Be courteous. You could break down and need that boat to rescue you.

You need the right gear and rigs. My

best suggestion is to hire a local guide that fishes the way you want to learn. The second-best advice is to make friends at your favorite local tackle shop. Get to know key staff members and ask for help. They are in business to assist you. Just please remember that your purchases keep their doors open. Don't pick their brains and then shop online.

I recommend purchasing several of the items they suggest because sharp teeth steal rigs. As the word gets out, lure stocks sell down. You may only have one opportunity to buy your choice rigs. Always match the gear to the size of your target. Spanish on king rods are boring, and kings on Spanish tackle can be too much to handle.

With mackerel of any species, you need to carry plenty of ice to maintain the quality of your catch. Always ice fish immediately and chill completely. Mackerel have firm meat if iced properly but get mushy when mishandled. Try brining them as they come into the boat. Immediately immerse fish into icy cold slush. Just add some clean salt water from the Gulf to your cooler of ice. You will be amazed at the improved quality of your fish.

Everyone has a favorite way to prepare fish. My Spanish mackerel choice is broiled with Duke's mayo. Lay your fillets skin side down on a foil-lined baking sheet and season them with Everglades and Old Bay,

then place under a red-hot broiler until seared. Baste liberally with Duke's, place back under the broiler and watch close. When they begin to turn golden brown, shut off the broiler; close the door and let them sit a few minutes (longer for thicker fillets). Remove, serve and enjoy. I like a spatula to serve the fillets and leave the skin on the foil.

King mackerel are great for sushi and ceviche. If you don't like the raw texture, try them grilled, smoked or blackened. We sometimes marinate them in soy sauce and Italian dressing, or apply spice rubs. Smaller fish are best but larger ones smoke great. I make fish spread from smoked kings, again using Duke's mayo (no, they're not bribing me, it's just good stuff). Some like cream cheese instead. Either way, add seasonings and enjoy.

You won't find a faster, more exciting fish to tangle with than mackerel. We have plenty of fish and liberal bag limits. We encounter schools that have fish exploding all around us in peak runs. Big kings smoke reel drags with their speedy, powerful runs. Always beware of sharp, toothy fish coming in the boat and in the cooler!

Use wire for kings but keep terminal gear to a minimum. These are sharp-eyed fish and we find them in clear waters. Mackerel are always on the move. They have to be;

they have no swim bladders. They literally don't ever stop swimming.

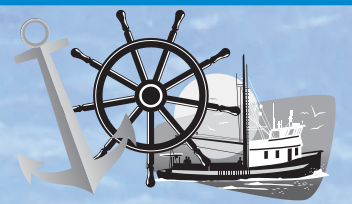
We are blessed with numerous options to stay up on weather patterns. Try observing several and average out the odds for your area. The last day before a cold front is the warmest because south winds precede fronts. North winds are the chilly days. Northeast to easterly winds are offshore. We frequently encounter good fishing in our nearshore Gulf waters during northeast winds. Just be sure near shore waters have cleared from the onshore windy days. It can get windy too, so play it safe. Never risk your life and others taking big chances.

Florida's waters are beautiful again. Let's enjoy these blessings, but don't forget to stay on top of options to reduce our nutrient inputs. Celebrate our recovery, but remember we didn't fix anything. Cool water subdued our problems. No one knows what we can expect long-term, but it's obvious we must slow down the degradation of our waters.

And remember, you can't catch fish if you don't go fishin', so let's go fishin' now!

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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The last straw



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Although plastic straws are not the primary trash we find in our waters, they have become symbol of the larger problem.



PEACE RIVER WILDLIFE CENTER
ROBIN JENKINS, DVM

Local project seeks to get plastic trash out of the environment

The mission of the Peace River Wildlife Center is to contribute to the survival of native Florida wildlife through rescue, rehabilitation and education. We are always hoping to expand the breadth of our educational message and have recently gotten involved with several other local non-profits with a similar mission.

The Last Straw is a grassroots project is to preserve our environment by encouraging the public to commit to using biodegradable products. This project is an initiative of civic and nonprofit groups in Punta Gorda and throughout Charlotte County. Its aim is to protect and restore the greater Charlotte Harbor estuary system and watershed by developing a campaign to reduce the use of non-biodegradable service products, starting with plastic drinking straws and beverage stirrers.

Charter members of the group's cause also include the Punta Gorda Civic Association, TEAM Punta Gorda, the Punta Gorda Rotary Club, Charlotte Harbor Environmental Center, Charlotte Harbor National Estuary Program and Smart Growth Punta Gorda.

The project seeks to reduce plastic pollution, both in our waterways and on land. Single-use items are one of the biggest threats to our environment. Plastic grocery bags, water bottles and straws are some of the most common litter seen strewn about any neighborhood and are especially dangerous in an area surrounded by water like Southwest Florida.

Petroleum-based plastics never biodegrade by breaking down into innocuous component atoms. Over time (measured in decades), plastics exposed to air and sunlight become brittle and break apart into smaller

and smaller pieces until you would need a microscope to see them (microplastics.) Plastics that end up in an ocean, lake or river take even longer to break apart.

Often these microplastic particulates end up in our waterways and can cause harm to the creatures living there. The animals ingest the plastics, causing irritation to the digestive system, obstruction or a satiated feeling even when no nutritional substance has been eaten. This can lead to wasting and starvation.

These tiny plastic pieces also contain harmful chemicals and collect other toxins that are ingested by aquatic life. These products greatly harm our environment and injure our wildlife. Through local efforts we aim to raise awareness of these issues and join in a worldwide grassroots campaign encouraging the responsible use of plastics.

The plastic straw has become the misleading symbol of this movement. Straws are neither the number one culprit in environmental pollution nor the most dangerous. They are simply a shining example of the amount of single-use plastics we go through on a daily basis — and one that is easily given up.

Yes, there are people who need to use straws. And plastic straws are cheaper to manufacture than paper or metal ones. I don't personally think governmental regulations are the correct way to cut down on pollution. I don't think we need to outlaw plastic straws or plastic bags. But we do need to make them the exception rather than the rule for most people.

I'd like to believe that if people are educated about the problem, they will be willing to make the changes that need to be

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made voluntarily. If we each do one thing to help the environment, it will add up to big changes.

PRWC and The Last Straw will be at Taste of Punta Gorda from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. March 3 in Laishley Park (100 Nesbit Street, Punta Gorda). Taste of Punta Gorda is a culinary delight with all-day entertainment, vendors serving desserts and specialty drinks, arts, crafts, nonprofits, a don't-miss silent auction, and a great Kids Fun Zone. 100 percent of the event's net donation revenue benefits local nonprofits and charitable organizations. In the past three years, the Punta Gorda Rotary and its charitable foundation have given \$134,000 in grants and community projects.

PRWC has been the recipient of many of those grants. The Rotary Club is instrumental in helping us with the educational component of our mission. They support us in our position that an enlightened populace will benefit the wildlife with which we share this little corner of paradise. Participation in The Last Straw initiative may result in fewer animals needing medical assistance.

Stop by our tents at Taste. If you are interested in volunteering your time and

expertise, contact one of the member organizations. Like any fledgling group, we need your help. Our goal is to keep the copious amounts of single-use plastics and non-biodegradable products out of our environment.

Select products with less packaging, recycle properly, and throw trash in an appropriate receptacle — never litter. Many of the practices we are encouraging are simple to do and require no sacrifice at all. So, even if you're not quite ready to use that last straw, there are still things you can do to help preserve the beauty of the Charlotte Harbor estuary system we rely on for our quality of living, and which the wildlife relies on for its very existence.

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. PRWC receives no government funding and relies entirely on private donations. For more info, visit PRWildlife.org, email PeaceRiverWildlife@yahoo.com or call 941-637-3830.



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Plastic trash in the ocean has consequences. This gannet dies after becoming entangled in a rope.

FISH PROFILE • SPOTTED SEATROUT (SPECK)

SIZE LIMIT: 15" min.; 20" max. (overall length)

BAG LIMIT (per harvester per day): 4; may possess one over 20"

SEASON: No closure.

LOCAL AVERAGE SIZE: About a pound.

FLORIDA RECORD: 17 lb, 7 oz

WORLD RECORD: 17 lb, 7 oz

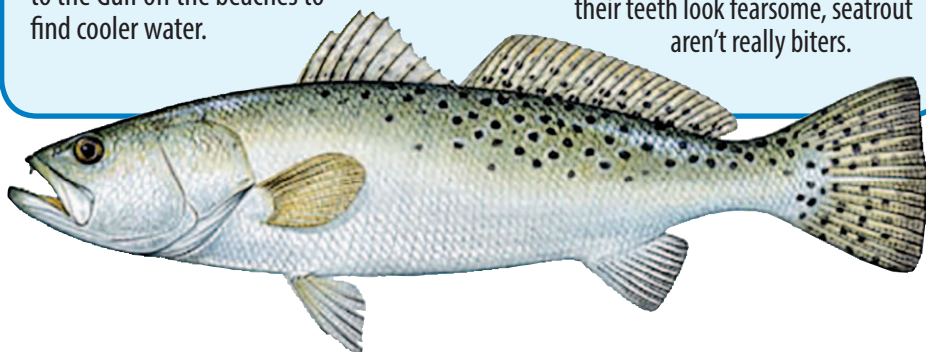
FOOD VALUE: Some anglers find them excellent; others say the texture is too mushy. Be sure to ice well and they'll be fine.

HABITAT: Shallow estuarine waters. Strongly associated with seagrass beds, though trout are found over mud also. In warm conditions, many trout will relocate to the Gulf off the beaches to find cooler water.

LEGAL METHODS: Hook and line, castnet. Use of treble hooks with natural bait prohibited.

FISHING TIPS: Seatrout are easily caught on live shrimp or small baitfish, and will usually take small lures with little hesitation. As they get larger, they become a lot wrier and harder to hook. Trout over about 22 inches feed almost entirely on smaller fish, including their own kind.

NOTES: Take care when catching and releasing these fish; even semi-rough handling will easily kill them. No relation to freshwater trout, but a very close relative of the weakfish or squeteague of the Atlantic seaboard. They share the weakfish's delicate mouth tissue, so don't horse them in — you'll lose the big ones this way. Although their teeth look fearsome, seatrout aren't really biters.



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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 **Danger Reef.**



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