

# Observer

Winter Park / Maitland

Thursday, Dec. 12, 2013

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## Capen House sets sail for new home

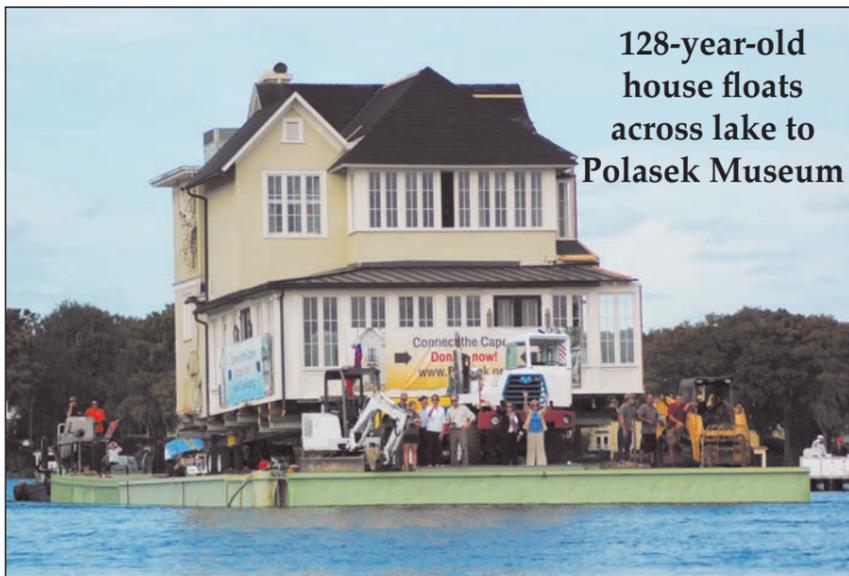
TIM FREED  
Observer staff

A historic home took to the high seas Tuesday, floating to its new home at the south end of Lake Osceola in Winter Park. Historic preservationists in Winter Park cheered from the shoreline at the Albin Polasek Museum and Sculpture Garden as the city's 128-year-old Capen House arrived by barge.

Movers pulled the first half of the house toward the shore of its old address on Interlachen Avenue via tractor-trailer last Saturday before finally steering it onto a large barge Tuesday afternoon.

Dozens of paddle boarders, kayakers and spectators on boats swarmed around the floating structure as it crossed the lake, cheering as it reached the shore of the Albin Polasek Museum grounds.

"It's a very difficult thing to put into words," said Debbie Komanski, executive director of the Albin Polasek Museum and Sculpture Garden. "This has been a very concerted effort by a lot of



128-year-old house floats across lake to Polasek Museum

PHOTO BY ISAAC BABCOCK — THE OBSERVER

Preservation Capen organizers wave from their house boat as it floats across Lake Osceola Tuesday.

people to make this happen in this short period of time."

"To see it actually coming through is both very emotional as well as extremely rewarding and inspiring for the future in what we'll be able to do with it."

The house's journey across Lake Osceola resembled a parade on water. Komanski, Executive Director Betsy Owens of Casa Feliz, and Executive Director Susan Skolfield of the Winter Park Historical Association waved to residents from the barge, which flew an American flag and a Czechoslovakian flag as a symbol of the Albin Polasek Museum.

"I think we really made history today," said Owens, who played a significant role in the fundraising efforts.

"It was pretty exciting to be a part of it ... we've worked very hard to make today a reality."

It's been six months since the historic home — built in 1885 for early Winter Park settler John S. Capen — faced the wrecking ball. Residents cried out for the protection of the house after property owners John and Betsy Pokorny planned to demolish it to make way for a new lakefront home.

But the Pokornys agreed to

■ Please see **CAPEN** on page 2

## Maitland goes electric, adds Chevy Volt to fleet

SARAH WILSON  
Observer staff

Maitland is greening up its public works' department next year, with the City Council voting to add an electric hybrid Chevy Volt to its fleet last week.

The 2013 Volt will be the city's first foray into utilizing alternative energy sources.

Public Works Director Rick Lemke said the \$35,895 electric-operated vehicle will save the city roughly \$14,000 in gas and maintenance over its estimated 10-year life span.

"It gives us the opportunity to enter the green world," Lemke said, adding that this purchase opens the door to the city adding additional electric vehicles in the future, if the Volt is found to perform well.

At the Council's urging, Lemke sought out bids from local Chevrolet dealers and received the lowest bid from Starling Chevrolet in Kissimmee, which offered the city a purchase price \$4,000 below originally budgeted estimates.

"This is a win-win situation where we can do the right thing environmentally, and the right thing by the city's pocket book by saving us lot of money," said Councilman John Lowndes, a

■ Please see **ELECTRIC** on page 2

## Wedding chapel gets hitched

Seventy-year-old former church hits the road to avoid wrecking ball

TIM FREED  
Observer staff

Winter Park residents and business owners Steven and Suzanne Graffham breathed a sigh of relief Sunday afternoon as the historic chapel that houses their wedding business was successfully relocated to its new home.

The historic building began its journey through the streets of Winter Park around 7 a.m., trav-

eling down New York Avenue on three hydraulic construction dollies it had been placed on the day before.

Dozens of residents stopped to watch the spectacle as movers took the structure from its former site on New England Avenue to a corner parcel at the intersection of New York and Lyman avenues across from the

■ Please see **CHAPEL** on page 2



PHOTO BY TIM FREED — THE OBSERVER

The Winter Park Wedding Chapel rolls to its new plot after being uprooted Sunday.

USPS 00-6186  
Publisher's statement on page 4.



## CHAPEL | Relocation spares venue from destruction

■ CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE  
farmers market.

The relocation meant a new beginning for the Graffhams and their wedding business, which was forced to move along with the chapel to make way for future development along New England Avenue.

"We're really relieved to see it in one piece at its new home," Suzanne said. "We're very excited for the future."

But the chapel hasn't tied the knot with its new location quite yet. The new basement for the building still needs to be constructed, along with the surrounding walls and minor repairs from the moving process.

Movers took a top-down approach with constructing the new foundation, carefully steering the chapel on wheels down a slope into an 8.5-foot-deep hole and raising it 11 feet high to make room for the basement to be built underneath.

The Graffhams couldn't help but feel uneasy as their 103-ton business venture slowly rolled down a sandy slope.

"Watching it happen, even though we're not responsible for actually moving it, is very nerve-racking," Steven said as the house began its short descent toward its new foundation. "I haven't felt like this since my wife had a baby."

The move wouldn't have been possible without the support of Traditional Neighborhoods Inc. a local nonprofit "committed to enriching Hannibal Square" that's now spearheading a fundraising effort for the construction.

It'll cost just over \$160,000 to complete the project, including the relocation, setting the foundation and restoration.

Traditional Neighborhoods Inc. has

raised about \$18,000 thus far and will continue to accept donations on its website as construction moves forward, said Dan Bellows, the founder of the nonprofit organization and the general contractor for the chapel relocation.

Moving day had been a long time coming for the Graffhams. The building should have been destroyed to make way for new development years ago, but property owners allowed the couple to use the space for a photography studio and, eventually, a wedding chapel.

The couple were assured that the building would be eventually demolished.

But the chapel went on to marry hundreds of couples since the wedding business began in 2009, turning the building into a community staple. The property owners took notice and chose to donate the chapel to the couple instead to have it relocated.

Bellows plans to make the wedding chapel even more charming than before with the addition of a new courtyard, a fountain, a slated roof and bronze trimmings on the exterior.

"The fact that it's going ahead means we can move forward; we can have many more weddings there," Steven said. "It gives us stability in our business and our future."

A \$50 fundraising event with hors d'oeuvres, cocktails and live entertainment for the Winter Park Wedding Chapel will take place tonight, Dec. 12, from 7 to 9 p.m. between Hannibal's and Armando's off New England Avenue.

Bellows said he hopes to have construction complete by mid-February.

*"The fact that it's going ahead means we can move forward; we can have many more weddings there."*

## CAPEN | Barge operation took more than 6 hours

■ CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

let it stay until fundraisers could find the house a new home. The Albin Polasek Museum and Sculpture Garden stepped forward, proposing a plan to move the house to the museum grounds so it could be used for program space.

The Pokornys gave the community until the end of 2013 to raise at least \$400,000 and move the house – a goal that's now halfway to becoming a reality.

"I couldn't be more pleased with how it's gone today," said Frank Roark, the general contractor for the project.

"There's been a lot of uncertainty and challenges with this thing. To get it to this milestone was a big deal for us."

But the Capen House isn't home free just yet. Movers are now in the process of turning around the first half of the home 180 degrees so that the back faces Lake Osceola, while another group of movers prepares the second half for placement on the barge.

The second half of **The Capen House, decked out in a Christmas wreath, heads to its new home.**

the house is set to float across the lake on Dec. 21, meeting the Dec. 31 deadline, Komanski said.

The museum still needs to raise between \$120,000 and \$130,000 to pay for the reassembling and furnishing of the historic home.

Komanski said it's now up to Winter Park residents and historic preservationists to give new life to the Capen House.

"Many, many people came together in order to get this to this point," she said. "I feel the majority of the citizens in our town feel strongly about preserving our history here in Winter Park and helping it cohabitate with things we need for the future."



PHOTO BY TIM FREED — THE OBSERVER

## ELECTRIC | Car expected to save Maitland money

■ CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

proudly proclaimed longtime driver of a Toyota Prius hybrid.

Councilman Ivan Valdez said he was still hesitant to declare electric cars a real win looking toward the future, but applauded city staff for their continued forward-thinking. After a vote to purchase the car was tabled at Valdes' suggestion for more discussion in October, the Council plugged

in a unanimous vote to approve the car's purchase Nov. 25.

Since that meeting, the Public Works department said the vehicle has been ordered, and can be expected to hit city streets in four to six weeks.

"This is not a risk; it's a deal that's going to save us a lot of money," Lowndes said. "Every time you drive past a gas station, just smile and wave."



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**Maitland City Talk**  
BY HOWARD SCHIEFERDECKER  
MAYOR

# Keeping up conduct

The Maitland City Council met on Monday, Dec. 9, at 6:30 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chambers. Below is a synopsis of that meeting.

**Old Business:**

- Orange County Natural Resource Ordinance: The City Manager stated that there was nothing new to report at this time and that we should receive an update sometime in January.

**Public Hearings:**

There were no scheduled Public Hearings.

**Consent Items:**

- The City Council Meeting Minutes of Nov. 25, 2013 were approved.

- The Planning & Zoning Commission Meeting Minutes of Oct. 17, 2013 were accepted.

- A Sidewalk Maintenance Easement Agreement with Uptown Maitland Partners, LTD. was approved.

- The purchase of a 2014 Chevy Tahoe Vehicle in the amount of \$40,770 for the fire department was approved.

- The City Council Meeting of Dec. 23, 2013 was canceled.

**Decision Items:**

- The Council approved a contract with Keith and Schnars, P.A. as the Select Mobility Fee Consultant in the amount of \$45,335.

- The Council requested a workshop be scheduled to discuss the options for the Thurston House Lease Renewal.

- The Interlocal Agreement for the Summit Centre Way Row was approved.

- Chicken Keeping Ordinance – Interpretation of Separation Re-

quirements. After discussion, an amendment to the Chicken Keeping Ordinance will be presented for first reading at the Jan. 13, 2014 Council Meeting.

**Discussion Item:**

- The Chairman of the Code of Conduct Committee discussed

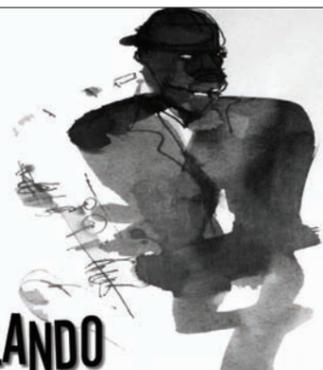
the ordinance that was drafted by Committee and answered questions posed by Council. Various members of the Committee addressed the draft ordinance.

To listen to a recording of the meeting, please check our website at [itsmymaitland.com](http://itsmymaitland.com)

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# Observer

Winter Park / Maitland  
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## FAMILY CALENDAR

### DEC. 12-13

Orlando Circle of Friends is rehearsing and polishing for our audiences a fun and entertaining collection of many holiday favorites at **An Ugly Sweater Christmas** at Orlando Museum of Art. We'll take a "Sleigh Ride" as we "Let It Snow" then we'll have "Chestnuts Roasting on an Open Fire." Join us for some rollicking fun, or have a "Blue Christmas" without us! Tickets are available for \$20 for shows at 8 p.m. Friday, Dec. 13, and 3:30 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 14. Student/senior/child rate is \$15. As always, a portion of the proceeds of our concerts benefits a charity. Visit our website at [ocofchorus.com](http://ocofchorus.com) for more information and to purchase tickets.

### DEC. 12-14

Join the Winter Park High School drama department at their production of **"Almost, Maine."** A charming romantic comedy about love, loss, and the northern lights, "Almost, Maine" is full of warm fuzzies in the midst of winter. "Almost, Maine" plays at 7 p.m. on Dec. 12-14

at the Winter Park 9th Grade Auditorium. There is a special matinee performance at 2 p.m. on Dec. 14. Tickets are \$10 at the door. Written in 2004, this play is set in the small territory of Almost, Maine. It follows 19 residents as they attempt to make sense of love and loss. These sundry people overcome their fear of the unknown, accept each other for who they are, and rediscover lost hope, all in the midst of a cold Maine winter. Call 407-622-3200 for tickets.

### DEC. 15

Come enjoy **"Winter Dreams,"** the holiday sounds of the Maitland Symphony Orchestra at 7:30 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 15, at the Maitland Presbyterian Church, 341 N. Orlando Ave. The concert is free. For information, call 321-303-1404.

A **Christmas musical presentation** at Winter Park Presbyterian Church will lift your holiday spirits at 10:30 a.m. Dec. 15. Enjoy a special harpist-accompanied musical presentation, "The Ceremony of the Carols" at Winter Park Presbyterian Church, 400 S. Lakemont Ave. Call 407-647-1467 or visit [winppc.org](http://winppc.org) for more information.

### DEC. 19-22

The Winter Park Presbyterian Church's

holiday schedule will again feature **the Longest Night**, which is a worship service of remembrance, and its 45th annual Living Nativity. The Longest Night service, scheduled for Sunday, Dec. 22, at 7 p.m., provides a time of quiet reflection, special music, healing prayer, and candlelight for those experiencing loneliness and loss because of the death of a loved one, relationship problems, job insecurities, health concerns, or weariness from holiday preparations. All are welcome. Show times for the Living Nativity are 7, 7:30, 8, and 8:30 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 19, and Friday, Dec. 20. The Living Nativity, a tradition of the telling of the Christmas story, features a storyteller, carols and live animals.

### DEC. 22

Please join Winter Park Presbyterian Church at 10:30 a.m. on Sunday, Dec. 22, for a lessons and carols service with congregational participation in **singing of classic Christmas carols** at 400 S. Lakemont Ave. Call 407-647-1467 or visit [winppc.org](http://winppc.org) for more information.

### ONGOING

The Emil Buehler Perpetual Trust Planetarium at Seminole State College offers Central Florida the chance to celebrate the holidays with multiple performances

of its most popular show. **The Planetarium will present "The Star of Bethlehem"** two showings each on Dec. 13, Dec. 20 and Dec. 21. Show times for each date are 7 p.m. and 8:30 p.m. "The Star of Bethlehem" looks at how the calendar system has changed over the millennia and examines clues from the Bible to pin down the birth year of Jesus under our current calendar. The origins of the Magi are then looked at to determine what celestial phenomena they would have most likely interpreted to be the Star.

Now through Sunday, Jan. 5, the city of Winter Park is bundling up once again for **"Winter in the Park,"** the city's annual holiday ice skating rink in Central Park West Meadow. The West Meadow is located at 150 N. New York Ave., on the corner of New York Avenue and Morse Boulevard, in downtown Winter Park. Snowflakes of all ages and skill levels are invited to chill out as they glide, spin and turn at "Winter in the Park": Monday through Thursday, 3 to 9 p.m.; Friday, 3 to 10 p.m.; Saturday, 10 a.m. to 10 p.m.; and Sunday, noon to 8 p.m. See website for extended school holiday hours.

Snow angels are invited to skate all day for only \$10 per skater (skate rental included). For a blizzard of 20 or more people, some cool group discounts are available for all this frigid fun. The rink is also available for rental opportunities.

Advance reservations are required for private party and group reservations to avoid an icy avalanche of skaters at the rink. Holiday music, games, carolers and so much more will flurry around you as you enjoy "Winter in the Park." For more information, please call 407-599-3203 or visit [cityofwinterpark.org/WITP](http://cityofwinterpark.org/WITP).

If you are interested in showcasing your business during the busy holiday season to the 30,000-plus expected rink attendees, please visit the website and click on the "SPONSOR" tab for information on how to become an ice rink dasher board sponsor.

Take a stroll down memory lane as the Winter Park Playhouse pays tribute to two of America's most well-loved composers of all time, George and Ira Gershwin! This **high-energy song and dance celebration** will put a smile on your face and a song in your heart! Featuring a collection of Gershwin favorites, including "Embraceable You," "I've Got a Crush on You," "I Got Rhythm," "Someone to Watch Over Me," and "S Wonderful!" Who could ask for anything more? It's through Dec. 14. It's all conceived by Roy Alan with the narrative by Todd Allen Long and musical arrangements by Christopher Leavy.



### Christmas Celebrations

**Winter Park Presbyterian Church**  
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**Living Nativity**  
Thursday & Friday, December 19 & 20, 7:00-9:00pm - on the half hour  
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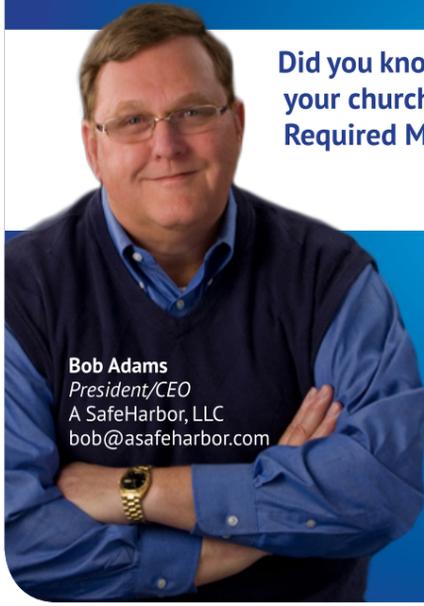
**Christmas Musical Presentations**  
Sunday, December 15 at 10:30am - Enjoy a special harpist-accompanied musical presentation, *The Ceremony of the Carols*  
Sunday, December 22 at 10:30am - Lessons and Carols service with congregational participation in singing of classic Christmas carols



**Christmas Eve Services**  
Tuesday, December 24 at 5:00pm - Family Christmas Service  
Tuesday, December 24 at 7:00pm - Candlelight Service  
Tuesday, December 24 at 11:00pm - Candlelight Communion Service

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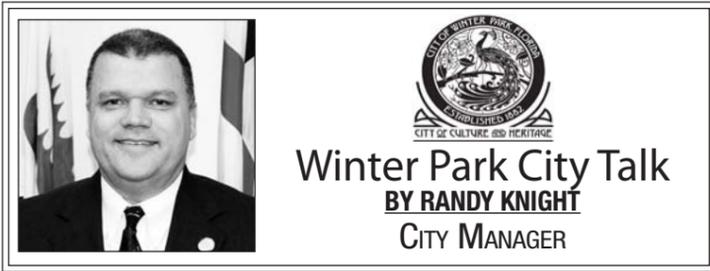
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## Community Bulletin

### Letters to Santa contest

Hey kids, write your letters to Santa and you could win a **prize package including tickets for ice-skating!** The theme for the Winter Park-Maitland Observer's Letters to Santa contest this year is "The gift I most want to give is..." and write what you'd do if you could be Santa Claus to the world. Letters to Santa contest entries are to be no longer than one page, and we've extended our deadline to Dec. 16. Send emails to [ibabcock@turnstilemediagroup.com](mailto:ibabcock@turnstilemediagroup.com) or physical mail to Santa Claus, 1500 Park Center Drive, Orlando FL 32835. Include the author's name, phone number, address and email. Good luck! The contest sponsored by the Observer, city of Winter Park, Winter Park Chamber of Commerce, Maitland Public Library and Winter Park Public Library.



**Winter Park City Talk**  
BY RANDY KNIGHT  
CITY MANAGER

# Saving more lives

## Dec. 9 City Commission highlights

There was a City Commission meeting held Dec. 9 in City Hall Commission Chambers. Below are a few highlights of decisions made at the meeting:

### Mayor's Report

The Winter Park Chamber of Commerce gave a summary presentation regarding the tremendous success of "Feed the Need," the first time ever, community-wide fundraiser for Second Harvest Food Bank of Central Florida. More than \$96,000 was raised in this fundraising campaign to help end hunger in Central Florida. Congratulations and thanks to everyone who helped support this worthy cause.

Artist Blair Sligar was recognized as the featured artist in the city's current "Art in Chambers" exhibit.

### Non-Action Items

An update was provided regarding downtown parking. Recommendations will be brought to the Commission in January 2014.

### Consent Agenda

- The minutes of 11/11/13 and

11/25/13 were approved.

- The purchases and contracts were approved (for a complete listing, please visit [cityofwinterpark.org/ccpackets](http://cityofwinterpark.org/ccpackets)).

- The budget adjustment to appropriate \$25,000 for street paving materials was approved.

- The Second Amendment to the Native Load Firm Fixed Capacity and Partial Requirements Transaction Confirmation between city of Winter Park and Florida Power & Light Company dated Aug. 12, 2013, was approved.

### Action Items Requiring Discussion

- The two "Notice to Dispose" advertisements of two parcels of land located at 300 N. Pennsylvania Ave. and 321 Hannibal Square West located within the CRA district for possible development options were approved with an amendment to the 300 N. Pennsylvania Ave. property for the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board to look at this property for potential a potential park.

### Public Hearings

- Request of Ramber Arlington LLC:

- The subdivision or lot split to divide the property at 1280 Arlington Place, Zoned R-2, into two lots was approved.

- Request of Nort Northam:

- The second reading of the ordinance to amend Chapter 58, "Land Development Code," Article I "Comprehensive Plan" Future Land Use Map so as to establish Commercial Future Land Use on the annexed property at 656 Overspin Drive and to indicate the annexation of this property on the other maps within the Comprehensive Plan was approved.

- The second reading of the ordinance to amend Chapter 58, "Land Development Code," Article III, "Zoning" and the official Zoning Map so as to establish Commercial (C-3) Zoning on the annexed property at 656 Overspin Drive was approved.

- The second reading of the ordinance to vacate and abandon a portion of Gaines Way, lying between 610 and 1760 Gaines Way, but retaining and reserving to the city a utility easement over the entire area thereof, was approved.

A full copy of the Dec. 9 City Commission minutes will be available at [cityofwinterpark.org](http://cityofwinterpark.org) the week of Jan. 13, pending approval by the City Commission.

### More public parking available

The city of Winter Park has opened up new public parking spaces just west of City Hall on Lyman Avenue. This lot was previously designated for City Hall employee parking only. However, due to the busy holiday season and the identified need for more parking during this time, the city has repurposed those spaces to

three-hour public parking.

### New AED locator network

Winter Park Fire-Rescue announces the addition of a new information system intended to assist 9-1-1 dispatchers by helping them locate life-saving automated external defibrillators (AEDs) available near victims of sudden cardiac arrest.

Sudden cardiac arrest is responsible for more than 300,000 deaths in the United States each year. Compact and portable, an AED is designed to be used by laypeople, with little or no training, to deliver a shock designed to save the victim's life before paramedics arrive.

"The problem is that, until now, publicly available AEDs are rarely used in an emergency because people are unaware of their location, and 9-1-1 dispatchers are unable to provide the location of the nearest AED to the responder," said, Winter Park Fire Chief Jim White. "The new AED locator system lets us instantly see the location of all the registered AEDs that are near a victim of a sudden cardiac arrest so we can alert someone to get the device in time to help save their life."

To encourage the registration of all AED devices, the city of Winter Park will reach out to owners and managers of office buildings, restaurants, gyms, recreational venues, churches and other locations where AEDs may be available. AED owners are encouraged to visit [NationalAEDRegistry.com](http://NationalAEDRegistry.com) to register their AEDs at no cost. The new system from Atrus, called AED Link™, shows the location of all registered AEDs on electronic maps. Dispatchers can

then direct callers to a nearby device before paramedics arrive.

Having the Atrus system in place throughout the area increases the effectiveness of every registered AED. Winter Park joins Orange County in encouraging all AED owners to register their devices as soon as possible, making them accessible in an emergency. The system is offered to the community through the Orange County Department of Emergency Management and will go live in Winter Park on Dec. 16.

### The only cool place in town!

It can't be December – it's way too hot! But you can find wintery freezing temperatures in Winter Park's holiday ice rink. Now through Sunday, Jan. 5, you can skate at the city's coolest event of the year "Winter in the Park," the city's annual holiday ice skating rink in Central Park West Meadow. The West Meadow is located at 150 N. New York Ave., found at the corner of New York Avenue and Morse Boulevard in downtown Winter Park. Snowflakes of all ages and skill levels are invited to chill out as they glide, spin and turn at "Winter in the Park":

- Monday through Thursday, 3 to 9 p.m.
- Friday, 3 to 10 p.m.
- Saturday, 10 a.m. to 10 p.m.
- Sunday, Noon to 8 p.m.

See website for extended school holiday hours.

For more information, please call 407-599-3203 or visit [cityofwinterpark.org/WITP](http://cityofwinterpark.org/WITP)

Visit the city's official website at [cityofwinterpark.org](http://cityofwinterpark.org), like us on Facebook, follow us on Twitter, and watch us on Vimeo.

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# Lifestyles

## Lafayette & Rushford rushes W.P.



PHOTOS BY SARAH WILSON — THE OBSERVER  
 Christmas cheer is everywhere at Hannibal Square's newset shop. Manager Chris Scott and sales associate Kim Whittaker help shoppers find the best gifts for all occasions at Lafayette & Rushford.



**KRISTY VICKERY**  
 Observer Staff

Christmas trees sparkle, glimmer and glow, draped in different themes pulling the eye in to a holiday kaleidoscope of gifts hand-picked for customers from around the world.

But the items found here are not just holiday themed, they come and go with the seasons, as quick as one season ends and another begins, so does the décor at the newly opened Winter Park Lafayette and Rushford home store.

"We approach home décor and gift giving in a creative and unexpected way; we have an outside of the box approach to things that we all

need," Lafayette & Rushford co-owner Kristen Painter said. "We try to offer something unique and more interesting than you would find elsewhere, because we want people to come in and see something new that they've never seen that's fresh and inspires them."

Want to wash your hands with grapefruit and sugar? There's a soap for that. Don't have a Christmas garden gnome yet? They've got that. Hand-beaten metal bowl with a crab guarding the rim? They have that too.

Painter said she travels to markets across the U.S. and handpicks every product for her home store.

"For the size of the store that we are, we have far more manufacturers that we work with than most stores," Painter said. "Most stores will have a dozen, maybe two dozen manufacturers that they order from, we have well into the hundreds; so we're always adding something new."

Lafayette and Rushford customer and Winter Park resident Carolyn Bethel said the new home décor store fits perfectly into Win-

■ Please see **GIFTS** on next page

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# GIFTS | From handmade Santas to eclectic ornaments, Winter Park's newest shop is prepped for the season

■ CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

ter Park. "I think it's (the store) amazing, and there's nothing like it," Bethel said. "I do a lot of shopping and I think all of their things are unique...the store stands apart." The family-owned business has had a

store in Dunedin for more than 10 years, and decided it was time for a second store. With much research to the Central Florida area they decided Hannibal Square was the right fit and their grand opening was held on Nov. 16.

"The people of Winter Park really just came out and showed tremendous support and far exceeded any expectations," Painter said. "People really like to support the independently owned businesses. We've been just astonished by the amount of traffic we've gotten thus far, and taken back by how kind everyone has been."

She said that their grand opening was elbow-to-elbow with people, not only shopping, but just coming out to show support.

"It's really a community here; everyone is so wonderfully supportive here,"

Lafayette & Rushford manager Christopher Scott said. "It feels like

here in Hannibal Square we are all a family."

Lafayette and Rushford Sales Associate Kim Whittaker said the Hannibal Square community has welcomed the new home store with open arms.

"There are so many neighbors that are upscale and people just don't reach out... but not here," Whittaker said. "We want to see everyone succeed, and anything we can

do for each other is just going to make it a better community."

Lafayette and Rushford know Winter Park was the right choice for them and couldn't be happier with their decision to open here.

"I feel like we fill a niche that has been waiting for us here," Painter said. "It feels like we've already been here forever, there's an intangible quaintness to this area."





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## Christmas in the Park



PHOTOS BY  
SARAH WILSON  
— THE OBSERVER  
Christmas arrived early in Winter Park thanks to the Morse Museum's annual event on Dec. 5.

# NCAA's top offense awaits Knights

ISAAC BABCOCK  
Observer staff

After struggling in the wake of defensive player injuries that took a toll but never knocked them off their eight-game win streak, the Knights will have more than 20 days to rest before the biggest game in team history. And after Sunday night's announcement they know they're heading to Glendale, Ariz., to face Baylor in the Tostitos Fiesta Bowl.

But until this weekend the Knights thought they'd be heading to the Sugar Bowl in New Orleans. The change of flight schedule was set into motion Friday

night, when unranked Bowling Green upset the Northern Illinois Huskies, who were No. 14 in the BCS Standings at the time, with a 47-27 rout. That loss put UCF in position to play in NIU's place, a presumptive slot in the Fiesta Bowl. After UCF's win over SMU in Dallas on Saturday night, their fate was all but sealed.

Ten years after head coach George O'Leary took the helm of the UCF Knights football team, they hammered in their final win in their best season ever en route to their biggest bowl game. The Knights (11-1, 8-0) kept things

■ Please see **KNIGHTS** on next page

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**Date:** Saturday, December 14, 2013

**Place:** South Seminole Middle School  
101 Winter Park Drive, Casselberry, FL 32707

**Route:** [www.mapmyride.com/events/537255/](http://www.mapmyride.com/events/537255/)

**Time:** Registration and festivities start at 4PM  
Ride starts promptly at 6PM

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Children under 10 ride for free and must be in a trailer or on a tandem.

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# KNIGHTS | After another heart-attack victory to close out the season, UCF's biggest challenge awaits

■ CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

interesting, but controlled their destiny all the way to the closing siren in another nail-biter finish against SMU Saturday.

"They hung in there and made some good adjustments at halftime," Head Coach George O'Leary told UCFKnights.com after the game. "We came out in the no-huddle and Blake did an outstanding job of controlling the ball."

UCF had struggled against the bitter cold all game, which had been in the 20s on account of a morning kickoff in Central Time. The Knights dropped passes,



ARCHIVE PHOTOS BY ISAAC BABCOCK — THE OBSERVER  
Knights fans have reason to cheer after learning the football team is Fiesta Bowl bound.

tially was first downs, gaining 24 versus SMU's 15.

For the better half of the fourth quarter the Knights were in control, shutting down the Mustangs' defense and driving down the field, despite icy hands that had trouble on receptions and runs.

UCF receiver Rannell Hall had crucial catches all game to advance the offense, and the UCF defense found ways to stop the

SMU offense in the second half after giving a concussion to SMU quarterback Neal Burcham in the fourth quarter. Hall would catch 44 yards of receptions. Wide receiver Jeff Godfrey led the team in reception yardage with 62 yards.

The Knights had trouble early on after letting the Mustangs score first with a short field goal to put it to 3-0. The Knights wouldn't catch up to the Mustangs until

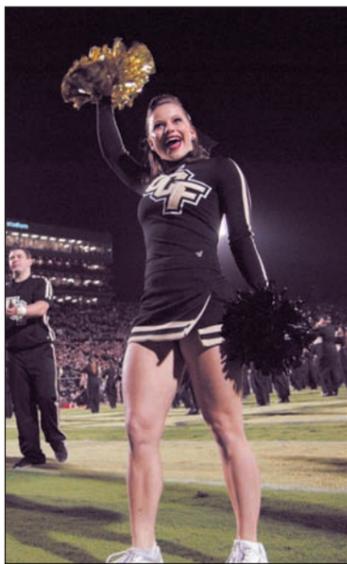
after the half, overtaking them in the fourth quarter and holding on for the win.

Thanks to the win, which set a school record for the team's first sweep of conference play in team history, the Knights finish the regular season ranked No. 15 in the BCS Standings – an all-time high.

At 8:30 p.m. on New Year's Day they face the most prolific offense in NCAA Division 1 football this season. The Baylor Bears have

gained an average of 624.5 total yards per game and 53.3 points per game, about 20 points more per game than the Knights.

But the Bears have also been known to give up big plays, making for high-scoring games for both teams. With the Knights' prolific offense that has turned on for blowout performances against Akron, FIU, UConn and Rutgers, it could be an offensive slugfest. The game will be aired on ESPN.



flubbed throws and fumbled runs in the frigid weather in Dallas, where snow ringed the edges of the field all game. Quarterback Blake Bortles found the end zone himself in the deciding score, racing to the left sideline and cruising past the pylon to put the Knights up for good. Bortles would throw for 242 yards to lead the Knights to victory.

After barely cracking double-digit yardage in the first quarter, the Knights would go on to rack up 338 yards in the game after accelerating their offense in the second half. They would outgun the Mustangs offense, which had 313 yards, most of them on the ground. Where UCF led substan-

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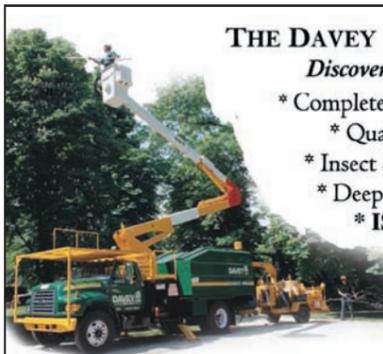
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## Jumbo Mortgages Are Alive and Well

By Richard P. Bryan

Make sure that you do your homework when shopping for a jumbo mortgage. Jumbo mortgages are not nearly as commoditized as conforming mortgages since they are not sold to Fannie Mae or Freddie Mac. Although the lending environment today remains constrained when compared to the boom time of the early to mid 2000s, jumbo mortgages are still out there.



A jumbo mortgage is defined as a loan amount greater than \$417,000. Unlike conforming loan amounts of \$417,000 and below, jumbo mortgages are not purchased by Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac. For that matter, jumbo mortgages are rarely sold on the secondary mortgage market at all today. Jumbo mortgages originated today will likely remain on the bank's balance sheet for the foreseeable future. This means that the bank's chief concern is whether the loan is prudent relative to the borrower's credit history, documented income and the transaction characteristics — not whether the loan will meet someone else's standards for sale. This represents a return to traditional lending before securitization became the norm.

Today, if you want a jumbo mortgage, you should prepare for the following:

- Have a down payment of at least 20%.
- Have your monthly debt payments be no more than 38-45% of your gross income.
- Be able to document your income.
- Have a very good credit score.
- Be comfortable with an adjustable rate mortgage. Fixed rate jumbo mortgages are relatively rare since these loans will remain on the bank's balance sheet.

While pricing can vary somewhat from bank to bank, most important are probably the bank's underwriting criteria and the bank's ability to close your transaction on time. Community banks and smaller regional banks can be great sources for jumbo mortgage lending. Their underwriting criteria can be more flexible than that of a large national bank and they typically have much less bureaucracy to slow down the process. Smaller banks will take a look at the whole loan as well as the potential deposit relationship which may follow.

Richard P. Bryan – Personal & Small Business Regional Director - NMLS#553152 – (321) 441-8404

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## Median home prices a true barometer of market

Almost every week you read the predictions of real estate experts on the state of the current home market and just what buyers and sellers can expect now and in the near future. Most experts see home prices climbing by single digits over the next four years, while a number of real estate forecasters see prices plateauing early in 2014 before picking up speed in the second and third quarters.

While national statistics don't always reflect what's happening in a given market, we have seen local existing home prices continue to climb over the past 24 months which has helped narrow the median price differential from the boom market days of 2005-2007. Real estate experts and savvy homebuyers alike look at median price as the true barometer of housing market conditions over a period of time. Median prices are much more accurate numbers to work with than average home prices which can be skewed by one or more million-dollar-plus residences or several lower priced homes.

Historically, local residential real estate has appreciated about 4-6 percent annually. In fact, when we straight-line the appreciation of existing homes in Orange and Seminole counties over the past 20 years we're right on a 4 percent pace. At this writing there is a 4-month supply of existing homes which will hold prices steady or perhaps result in slightly higher prices depending on location. There also is the possibility that we may see an onslaught of properties coming on the market

in January and February which will increase inventory and keep prices steady. If, however, inventory drops below a 3-month supply existing home prices will probably increase.

That said, the median price of existing homes locally is nowhere near what it was in the boom years of July 1, 2005 through June 30, 2007 when it stood at \$249,000. The gap, however, has been narrowed from 56.2 percent in 2010 when the median price had dipped to \$109,000, to 38.5 percent in the past 12 months when the median had risen to \$153,000.

There are a variety of reasons, but location often has a great deal to do with some areas/neighborhoods performing better than others when it comes to closing the median price gap. Our analysis showed the median price off from a low of 21.2 percent in Baldwin Park (32814) where the price gap is closing quicker, to a high of 43.7 percent east of Winter Park (32792), which covers both Orange and Seminole counties, where the price gap is currently the widest.

Just as the median price of existing homes in Orange and Seminole counties is improving, so is home buyer optimism and that bodes well as we prepare to enter a new year.

Scott Hillman is president of Fannie Hillman + Associates, a 32-year-old Winter Park-based real estate company specializing in residential real estate sales. He can be reached at (407) 644-1234 or scott@fanniehillman.com.

## Maitland's Season of Light



PHOTOS BY SARAH WILSON — THE OBSERVER  
**The holiday season kicked off in Maitland, with the lighting of the tree at Lake Lily Park on Dec. 7.**

## Winter Park Tree Lighting



PHOTOS BY ISAAC BABCOCK AND SARAH WILSON — THE OBSERVER

**Local news anchor Bob Opsahl** told the story of Winter Park's Christmas tree and then hit the lights for the city's tree lighting on Dec. 7.

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## Congratulations to Kelly Price & Company's Five Star Professional Award Recipients!



Congratulations to Jennifer King, Dee Morgan, Kelly L. Price, Pamela Ryan, Jennifer Sloan and Audra Wilks on winning the 2013 Five Star Professional Award! The winners were evaluated against five objective criteria and were chosen for their exceptional communication skills, integrity and customer service. These agents are part of a select group representing less than 2% of the Real Estate agents in the Greater Orlando area.

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Jennifer King    Dee Morgan    Kelly L. Price    Pamela Ryan    Jennifer Sloan    Audra Wilks

# Rising home values to greet us in 2014



**Christina Rordam**  
Keepin' it Real Estate  
for many homeowners' neigh-

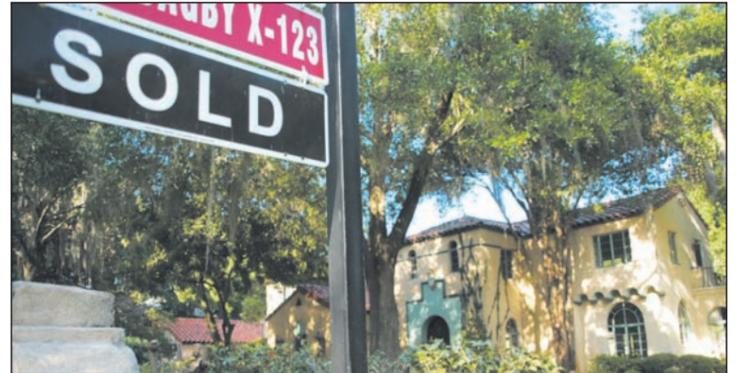
Housing trends in 2014; Tight inventory, rising interest rates and home value gains  
Out with the old and in with the new! 2013 was a great year for many homeowners' neigh-

borhoods and buyers alike as home values rose, interest rates remained affordable, and many communities in the greater-Orlando area saw fewer vacant homes and foreclosures. It's been said that slow and steady wins the race, and 2014 is projected to continue the housing recovery this year began. Let's look at some of the expected trends for the New Year.  
Home values will continue

to make gains, specifically in the West and South.  
Great news for Central Floridians here: According to the August/October Realtors Confidence Index Survey, 3,000 Realtors were asked about expectations for home values in 2014. The Western and Southern regions were ranked highest with professionals predicting gains of 4 to 8 percent. This is great news for local homeowners and it also echoes

a poll taken earlier in the year by Realty Trac, which indicated that more than 8 million homeowners nationwide are estimated to be in positive equity situations on their primary home loans this year.  
Interest rates will rise, but that's not likely for a few months. Attention homebuyers on the

proverbial fence! Buying before March may save you money on your monthly mortgage payments. As of print deadline, the Fed had not yet met for the last policy-making committee of the year. In this meeting the Fed will probably do one of two things,  
■ Please see **CHRISTINA** on page 14



ARCHIVE PHOTO BY ISAAC BABCOCK — THE OBSERVER  
More sold signs and less inventory are expected for 2014, plus higher interest.

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\$500,000.	\$30,000.	\$17,500.	\$12,500.	\$5,000.	\$25,000.
\$600,000.	\$36,000.	\$21,000.	\$15,000.	\$6,000.	\$30,000.
\$700,000.	\$42,000.	\$24,500.	\$17,500.	\$7,000.	\$35,000.
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# Building a fire? Don't get smoked

**Q:** This is our first year in a house that has a working fireplace, but we've never used one before. We'd like to have a crackling fire during holiday get-togethers and throughout the winter, but so far I can't get one to light. I just get a lot of smoke in the room and no flame. Any tips? — Dale C., Madison, Wis.

**A:** It can be a little tricky to get a nice fire going in the fireplace if you've never done it before, and there are some safety tips you need to follow as well.

First, be certain the fireplace is safe to use. If it was inspected and cleaned when you moved in, you're good to go; but if it hasn't, or you don't know when it was last inspected, contact a chimney cleaning service.

Make sure the area around the fireplace is safe: move furniture, rugs, boxes, paper and other flammable items several feet away. If you don't have a fire extinguisher nearby, get one and place it in an accessible spot.

To light a fire, you'll need several pieces of wood in various sizes, along with old newspaper or a fire starter stick. The small bundles of firewood sold in grocery stores and home improvement stores are expensive, but they'll do for a first-time fire, as they're medium-size and usually cut to fit most fireboxes. You should also go out for a walk and collect an armful of fallen, dry twigs and small branches.



By Samantha Mazzotta

With your fuel ready, it's time to get started. Open the fireplace damper fully — this flap is located at the top of the firebox (the area in which the fire burns) and when opened allows air to flow up the chimney and outward. It's probably the reason your house was filling with smoke when you tried to light a fire before.

Twist a half-sheet of newspaper into a cylinder. Holding it inside the firebox, light one end. Hold the burning end a few inches underneath damper for about 30 seconds or until you see smoke from the burning paper flowing freely upward into the chimney flue.

Stack your firewood prior to lighting the fire. Opinions vary on how to build the stack, but it's important to make sure air flows freely between the logs. I prefer stacking four small- to medium-sized logs in a square or triangular pattern. Tuck an

assortment of twigs, shredded newspaper and small branches between and underneath the logs. Don't go overboard — the kindling can flare up too high when lit.

Carefully light the kindling, starting near the back of the log stack and working your way forward. Once the initial flame has died down somewhat — but before it disappears — carefully feed in more twigs and branches. Properly seasoned logs should catch within a few minutes, but don't be disappointed if you have to repeat the process.

Once a good fire is going, make sure the protective screen is in place. Remember to never leave a fire unattended. And once the fire is out, don't remove the cinders until they are completely cold, and dispose of them in a fire-resistant container, away from the house or garage.

Send your questions or home tips to ask@thisisahammer.com. My new e-book, "101 Best Home Tips," is available to download on Amazon Kindle! Pick it up today for just 99 cents.

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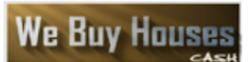
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# CHRISTINA | Expect bond spending to drop in March, avoiding a mortgage rate spike

■ CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12  
 either begin to cut back on their bond purchasing campaign straight away, or schedule a more gradual pull back. The most likely time frame for these changes to take effect is March, according to experts like Vincent Reinhart. Reinhart is the chief United States economist for Morgan Stanley, and he believes the Fed will set in

motion a plan for reducing bond spending around that time. If this plays out as he expects, then we will likely avoid another mortgage rate spike in the immediate future like the one we saw back in June when Bernanke first announced he would be scaling back bond buying.

Inventory will remain tight, especially in hot neighborhoods.

In yet another continuation of 2013's market, Realtors are anticipating inventory to remain tight in high demand areas such as the Southern region we call home. This means we will continue to see what is considered a "sellers market," and the hottest homes fetching top dollar and multiple bids. Sellers can maximize this opportunity by fixing a home up be-

fore putting it on the market and hiring an agent that has a wide digital reach so their home is seen by both local, out-of-state and out-of-country buyers. As for the buyers, rates are still currently in the 4-percent range and there are still plenty of homes for sale. Your dream home is within reach, just be sure to act fast once you find it. Happy New Year!

# Young home buyers exuding optimism, confidence

The Millennial generation — those 32 years old and younger — is made up of enthusiastic homebuyers that have more optimism and confidence about their recent home purchases than any other age group.

According to a recent National Association of Realtors study that evaluated the generational differences of recent homebuyers and sellers, 85 percent of buyers younger than age 32 believe their home purchase was a good financial investment.

The oldest individuals of the Millennial generation are starting to buy their first homes. They understand that homeownership is one way to accumulate wealth, especially for younger families in today's world.

The Millennial generation is the largest in history after the baby boomers, and they are expected to give the housing market a boost. However, there are challenges that might hinder their ability to purchase homes, in particular tight lending standards, student loan debt, and an uncertain job market.

"The impact of student loan debt is a concern for future generations and the ability to become homeowners," explains Orlando Regional Realtor Association Chairman Steve Merchant, owner-broker of Global Realty International. "Those burdened with growing monthly debt payments will have restricted access to mortgage credit and could find it harder to save for a down payment."

Yet those challenges aren't changing younger buyers' attitudes about homeownership. In Orlando, Millennial buyers are fortunate to be in a housing market with record affordability and a rising inventory level, which means more great homes to choose from.

"Today's market presents great opportunities for young buyers to own a home," says Merchant. "Orlando Realtors are committed to making sure those who are willing and able to own a home have the opportunity to do so, and can expertly guide young buyers through the complicated process."

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**Now through Dec. 29 – ‘It’s a Wonderful Life’: A live radio play**

The Orlando Shakespeare Theater invites us to share the holiday cheer of “It’s a Wonderful Life,” performed as a 1940s radio broadcast, running through Dec. 29. Inspired by the legendary film, “Wonderful Life” includes an ensemble of five actors who bring to life a dozen characters in a radio broadcast complete with commercial jingles. Orlando Shakes invites us to fall in love all over again with George Bailey and the angel who saves his life on Christmas Eve. Call 407-447-1700 or visit [orlandoshakes.org](http://orlandoshakes.org)

To Editor: photo features actors Brad DePlanche, Suzanne O’Donnell, and Piper Rae Patterson. Photo by Landon St. Gordon.

**Dec. 12 to 22 – Breakthrough Theatre presents ‘The Best Christmas Pageant Ever’**

In this hilarious Christmas classic, a well-intentioned couple struggles to put on their church Christmas pageant with a cast that includes the Herdman kids, the most inventively awful kids in history. Its fun and mayhem as the Herdman kids collide head-on with the Christmas story! Running from Dec. 12 to 22, place



your ticket reservation by calling 407-920-4034. The Theatre is at 419A W. Fairbanks Ave. in Winter Park.

**Dec. 13 through Jan. 5 – ‘Bookish’ sculptures at A&H Museums – Maitland**

With an opening reception on Dec. 13, the A&H’s Maitland Art Center will present new sculptures by Dawn Rosendahl, an A&H Artist-In-Action. In her exhibit – “Ex Libris” – Rosendahl transforms books into sculptures, ‘resurrecting’ the books like blocks of wood, rendering them into fascinatingly surrealist works of art. Call 407-539-2181 or visit [ArtandHistory.org](http://ArtandHistory.org)

**Dec. 13 – Free Fridays at the Morse Museum**

While all Fridays are free at the Morse Museum (after 4 p.m.),



the evening of Dec. 13 will be extra special with Victoria Schultz performing on the harp, docent-guided family tours beginning at 5:15 p.m., an art demonstration by author and illustrator Mark Wayne Adams at 6 p.m., and a curator tour of Louis Comfort Tiffany’s Laurelton Hall at 7 p.m. It’s all free at the Morse Museum

in Winter Park. Call 407-645-5311 or visit [morsemuseum.org](http://morsemuseum.org)

**Dec. 13 and 14 – McRae Artists’ Holiday Open House**

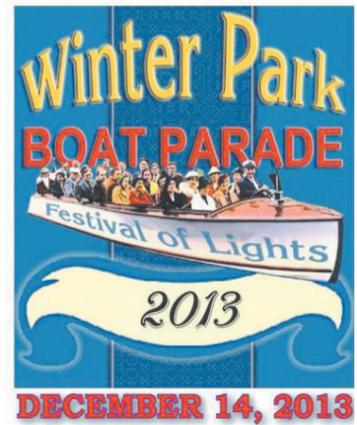
The 21 artists at McRae Art Studios in Winter Park will welcome art lovers and collectors to a Holiday Open House on Dec. 13 from 6 to 9 p.m., and Dec. 14 from 4 to 9 p.m. The annual event is an opportunity for the public to walk through the artists’ studios, visit with artists and purchase original works of art from the more than 1,000 available artworks. The Studios are at 904 Railroad Ave. in Winter Park, and the event is free and open to the public. Visit [mcraeartstudios.com](http://mcraeartstudios.com) or call 407-682-2740.

**Dec. 14 – ‘Clare and the Chocolate Nutcracker’**

It’s an up-tempo “Nutcracker” when Clare ‘lives’ her enchanted dream, traveling with



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the Chocolate Nutcracker to the Kingdom of Toys. Visiting Candy Land and New Orleans (Clare’s birthplace), they arrive in time for Mardi Gras. This “Nutcracker” is performed in ballet, jazz, modern, swing, gospel and hip hop as Tchaikovsky and Duke Ellington are fused to bring us a very contemporary version of the holiday classic. Call 407-403-5519 or visit [clareandthechocolatenutcracker.net](http://clareandthechocolatenutcracker.net)

**Dec. 14 – A boat parade for the history books ...**

The Rotary Club of Winter Park will present the ninth annual Winter Park Boat Parade & Ski Show on Dec. 14 on Lakes Virginia and Osceola in Winter Park. The on-the-water Parade features holiday-lighted boats along the lakes’ shorelines. Events begin at 3:30 p.m. with a water ski show, followed by a

■ Please see CULTURE on page 16

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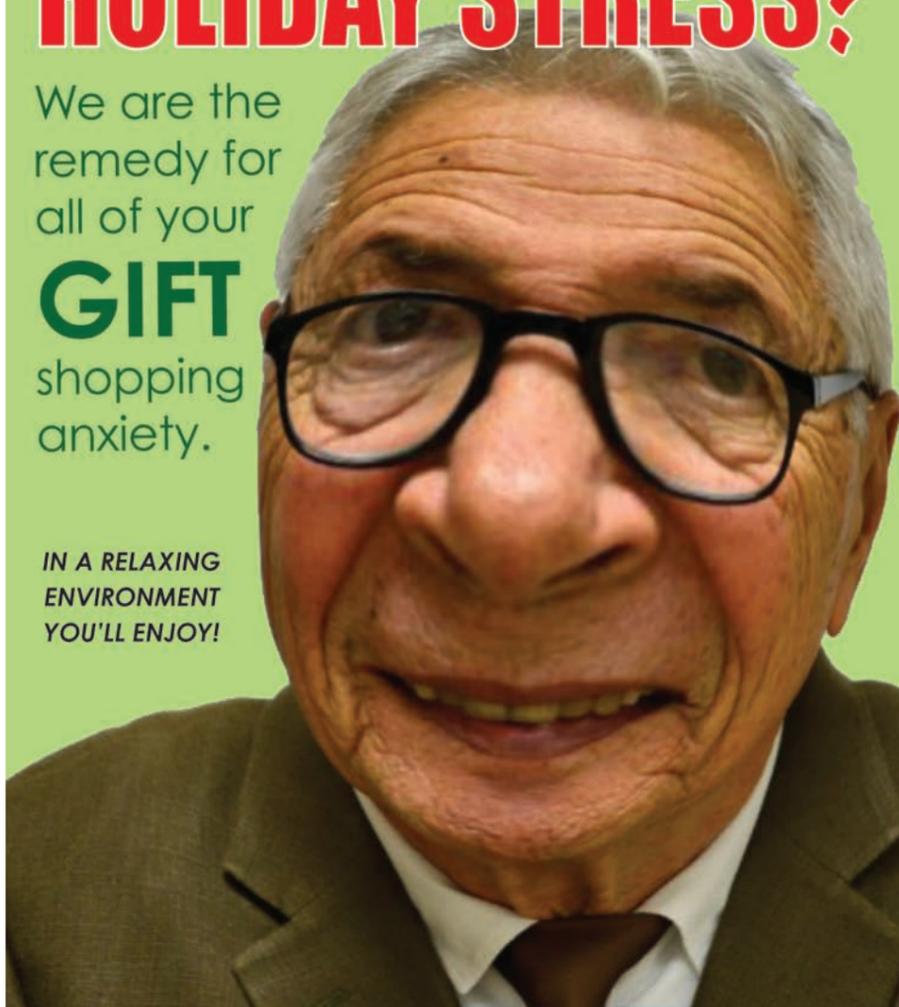
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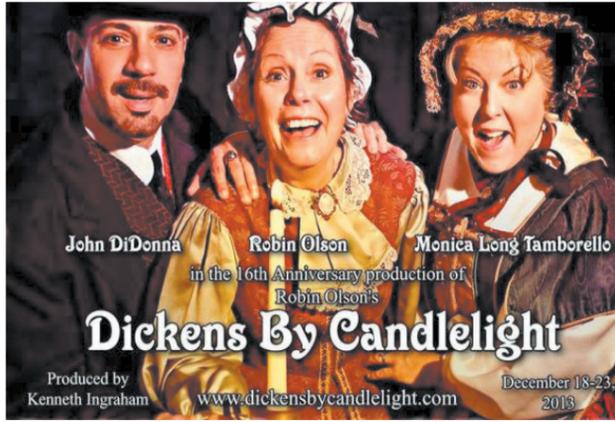
# CULTURE | The Christmas cheer keeps coming with concerts, parties, plus tea and cookies with Dickens

■ CONTINUED FROM PAGE 15

move to the Polasek Museum, home of the official viewing station. A sculptural Christmas tree by sculptor Amy Wieck will also be unveiled. The Parade will pass the Polasek Museum at 6:30 p.m. Call 407-647-6294 or visit [wp-boatparade.com](http://wp-boatparade.com)

## Dec. 14 and 15 – Bach Festival Society presents 'A Classic Christmas'

The Bach Festival's most popular performances – in the beautiful Knowles Chapel at Rollins College – are the Classic Christmas performances that find the Choir and Orchestra performing holiday classics and choral masterworks. With only two performances – Dec. 14 at 7:30 p.m. and Dec. 15 at 2 p.m., these much-loved choral concerts exemplify the holiday season. Visit [bachfestivalflorida.org](http://bachfestivalflorida.org) or call 407-646-2182.



## Dec. 14 and 15 – Eat, Drink & Be Merry with the Orlando Gay Chorus

Who better to Eat, Drink & Be Merry with than the Orlando Gay Chorus as they present their Holiday Concert at the Plaza at 425 N. Bumby Ave. in Orlando. At this celebration of "Faith, Fun and Festivity," the OGC will sing and dance to the music that captures

the festive heart of the Holiday. Performances are set for Dec. 14 at 7:30 p.m. and Dec. 15 at 4:30 p.m. Please bring a new, unwrapped toy to support Toys For Tots! Visit [orlandogay-chorus.org](http://orlandogay-chorus.org)

## Dec. 15 – Maitland Symphony free holiday concert

The Maitland Symphony Orchestra invites everyone to their annual free holiday concert on Dec. 15 beginning at 7:30 p.m. Including music from "The Nut-



cracker" and familiar melodies of the Christmas season, a special feature will be the Florida premiere of a work by Michael Mahadeen called "Winter Lights." Performing Arts of Maitland invites the whole family to dream together with music from the past, from the heavens and into the New Year. At the Maitland Presbyterian Church, call 321-303-1404 or visit [pamaitland.org](http://pamaitland.org)

## Dec. 15 and 22 – Breakthrough Theatre's Cabaret Sunday goes 'Holidaze'

Winter Park's Breakthrough Theatre will present a special two-night-only cabaret called the "Breakthrough Family Christmas" on Sundays, Dec. 15 and 22, at 7 p.m. With a huge cast of Breakthrough alumni singing favorite Christmas songs and sharing stories of Christmas-past, this event-from-the-heart is the perfect way to put you and your family in the Christmas spirit. For reservations, call 407-920-4034.

## Dec. 17 and 18 – Andrea McArdle's 'Sounds of the Season'

Broadway's "Original Annie" – Andrea McArdle – will celebrate the holiday season at The Abbey with "Sounds of the Season," with performances on Dec. 17 and 18 at 8 p.m. The show business legend will offer traditional holiday favorites along with beloved

Broadway hits from "Oliver" and "Annie." McArdle was the youngest performer ever nominated for a Tony Award (in 1977) for the title role in "Annie" and has since appeared in countless musicals and cabarets. For tickets, visit [ticketweb.com](http://ticketweb.com)

## Dec. 17 and 18 – The Winter Park Playhouse's Cabaret Series

That powerhouse duo – Heather Alexander and Laura Hodos – will perform their newest cabaret, "Happy Hour," at the Winter Park Playhouse on Dec. 17 and 18. "Happy Hour" celebrates the lighter side of life with comedic and uplifting songs, ranging from musical theatre to standard hits, all of which is extra special as rendered by the charming, comedic, and always spontaneous – Heather and Laura. Call 407-645-0145 or visit [winterpark-playhouse.org](http://winterpark-playhouse.org) for reservations.

## Dec. 18 to 23 – 'Dickens by Candlelight' – with tea and cookies

Of all the ways to experience Charles Dickens' "A Christmas Carol" my favorite is the production called "Dickens by Candlelight." While candlelight is in the title, the production brings us into the action by seating us at tables where we are served tea and homemade cookies as the extraordinary three actors (who play all the parts) 'act' among us. And this year is extra special to have Robin Olson, who created "Dickens by Candlelight" in 1997, return to the cast along with audience favorites John DiDonna and Monica Tamborello. Running Dec. 18 to 23, call 407-222-7669 or visit [Dickensbycandlelight.com](http://Dickensbycandlelight.com)

Josh Garrick is a writer, photographer, educator, and fine art curator. He is a member of the Curatorial Council for the Museum of Florida Art. Garrick can be reached at [joshgarrick9@gmail.com](mailto:joshgarrick9@gmail.com) or 407-522-3906.

**WEED** – Robert William, 58, artist. Robert "Bob" Weed passed away suddenly on Thanksgiving Day November 28, 2013 in Santa Fe, New Mexico following brief respiratory complications from chemotherapy treatment. Bob was born on July 18, 1955 in Norwalk, Connecticut. Bob graduated from Fairfield College Preparatory School in Fairfield, Connecticut. Bob lived in various artist communities including Westport Connecticut, Winter Park, Colorado and Saint Thomas, Virgin Islands. Bob's tremendous thirst for life and his wit and charisma cast a huge shadow and all who loved him are devastated by his sudden departure. Bob enjoyed painting well into the night with his beloved cat Pearl at his side. He would pour his soul out on his canvas and entertain all who would listen with wisdom and wine. Bob was a big man who did everything in a big way. He lived life on his terms with optimism, zeal and a great sense of humor. He found beauty in everything and the world is less beautiful without him. Bob is survived by his wife Raven L. Weed, his father George W. Weed, his brothers Damian G. Weed and Thaddeus G. Weed and his nephew who honors Bob's name with his middle name - Erik Robert Weed. Bob is predeceased by his mother Philomena F. Murray.



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# Opinions



**Chris Jepson**

## Perspectives

# More time? Not in the cards

Why is more better? When asked what we should toast to, one of my responses is, "To More!" — as in, more life. More camaraderie. More fun. More introspection. More grace. More champagne. You get the idea. I think it challenging as human beings to not want more.

I subscribe to design, fashion and architectural publications and I look at what others "possess" and some of it I want. I would love to have a house, a refuge just outside of Florence, on the way to Sienna. I'd take a beach house on the west coast of Costa Rica and if I had a big pile of chips, I'd have an apartment (with a view of Central Park) in New York City. Four residences would be just about right for my personal design ambitions. Creating, experiencing and living in beautiful environments ranks high on my list of priorities.

Interesting to me is my lack of interest in cars. I could give two twits what I ride in as long as it is reliable, has A/C and a radio to pick-up WUCF-FM 89.9 Jazz (the "bestest" jazz station in America). I have even less interest in wristwatches. I find it absolutely amazing that anyone invests in an expensive watch. That's me. I have not worn a watch since 1985. I purchased that watch for \$3 at an Omaha pizza restaurant that was doing a promotion; it was colorfully amusing.

Our stuff, our desire for stuff, however, is killing us.

More. The more stuff and experiences we accumulate — the more damaging we are to the planet and its environment. We (the Boomers) are the first generation of Americans (humans) to unequivocally understand how absolutely devastating human beings are to our fellow species as well as to the land, water and air of the planet. There is no ambiguity that the more human beings on the planet, the worse our prospects as a species.

More. Do more human beings imply a

better life for all? An argument for more is that the bigger the pool of humanity, the more prospects that there will be more geniuses born — more phenomenal scientists to solve our environmental problems, more creative geniuses to artistically enthrall, inspire and amuse us. Alas, that may be true, but more humanity also increases the probability of more psychopaths and deadbeats.

*Do more human beings imply a better life? More humanity also increases the probability of more psychopaths.*

If America's population is to grow 100 million this century, will the number of serial killers increase proportionally? How many more low-wage, fast food workers does America require?

More. Small populations can create phenomenal environments producing incredible creative advancements. Consider 5th century B.C. Athens or the Ancient Library of Alexandria, or 15th century Florence or 16th century Elizabethan England. Extraordinary advances in what it

means to be a human being were achieved by getting "enough" people together under the "right" circumstances, and our species flowered as a result. It didn't require hundreds of millions of people (now billions) to achieve Periclean Athens or Renaissance Florence. More humanity is not axiomatically progress. Actually, it will prove an impediment to human advancement.

More. That is the dichotomy we all face as 21st century Americans. What we need more of is birth control and responsible adults. Our future as a species, our planet depends on it. I'd toast to that.

And we don't need no expensive watch to know time is running out. Cheers.

Jepson is a 27-year resident of Central Florida. He's fiscally conservative, socially liberal, likes art and embraces diversity of opinion. Reach him at [Jepson@MEDIAMERICA.US](mailto:Jepson@MEDIAMERICA.US)

## Letters to the editor

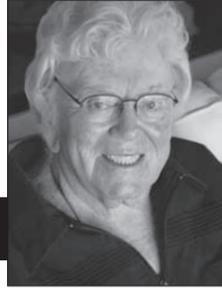
Send your thoughts (400 words or less) to Managing Editor Isaac Babcock at [ibabcock@turnstlemediagroup.com](mailto:ibabcock@turnstlemediagroup.com)

In November, the Winter Park Chamber of Commerce helped lead the first-of-its-kind, community-wide effort to raise funds for Second Harvest Food Bank of Central Florida. With partners Rollins College, Sodexo, the city of Winter Park, and Think Creative, as well as sponsors Winter Park Memorial Hospital, Mayflower Retirement Community and Florida Distributing, and many community champions we were able to raise \$96,145 to help fight hunger in our community!

I want to thank everyone who participated and supported this great cause. I'm incredibly proud of the Winter Park

community. This was truly a monumental endeavor that encompassed our entire community, including local government, higher education, corporate offices, local merchants, houses of worship and individual residents. Special thanks also to the amazing group of folks who worked so hard behind the scenes to make this such a success. I've never worked with a better group of people, and I have never been as thankful as I was this Thanksgiving.

Patrick W. Chapin  
President / CEO  
Winter Park Chamber of Commerce



**Louis Roney**

## Play On!

# Getting things done

Some guys measure success in terms of dollars. I concentrate on what I have managed to accomplish.

About the time that Lindbergh flew across the Atlantic, Admiral Byrd spent a year alone at the South Pole, Bill Tilden was beating everybody at tennis, Bobby Jones was world golf champion, and Babe Ruth was the "sultan of swat." These guys were among the "accomplishers" of their day.

I was a little kid noticing that the way to get recognized favorably in this world is to do something — not just talk about it. I was taught that my own accomplishments were all that would ever bring me credit. As a result, I look back over some 92 years at things I managed to get done come hell or high water, and my charitable memory allows me to forget a multitude of my flops and near-misses.

One glaring truth rises to the surface: I never did anything worthwhile without the help of someone else, and worthwhile things are usually difficult projects. If you're honest and looking to build self-esteem, don't kid yourself by thinking you can do it with things that are "snaps," and that just anybody can do all by himself.

I didn't expect to fly to the moon or to break the 100-yard dash record, but early on I was shooting for successes that lay quite far beyond the end of my nose. I found out rather soon that the best oranges were at the top of the tree, not down low where pickers had already been busy, and where no climbing was required.

In athletics, the sports that made one think better of himself had to involve competition with other guys of at least the same age and size. In the classroom, one had to vie successfully with that homely gal who always made straight A's. To be good in both directions, one had to "Render unto Caesar those things which are Caesar's, and unto God those things that are God's."

The ultimate terrible human competition is war, whose results are life and death. Such realizations make one try rather hard and put out everything he has before admitting that he is a loser—wiped

out, that is. War is a game invented by old men who put young men in the position of "kill or be killed," a very simple formula that works only because young men have a strong will to survive. To fight someone who is trying to kill you does not necessitate that your ideology be the opposite of his. However opposite convictions are often the cases between deadly competitors.

Competition is historically the spark of the most worthy human accomplishments. The need creates the invention, doesn't it? Would Edison have come up with the electric light bulb if he had been living alone on a desert island? Why did the first automobile makers put the engine in the front? That's where the horse was in the horse and wagon, wasn't it?

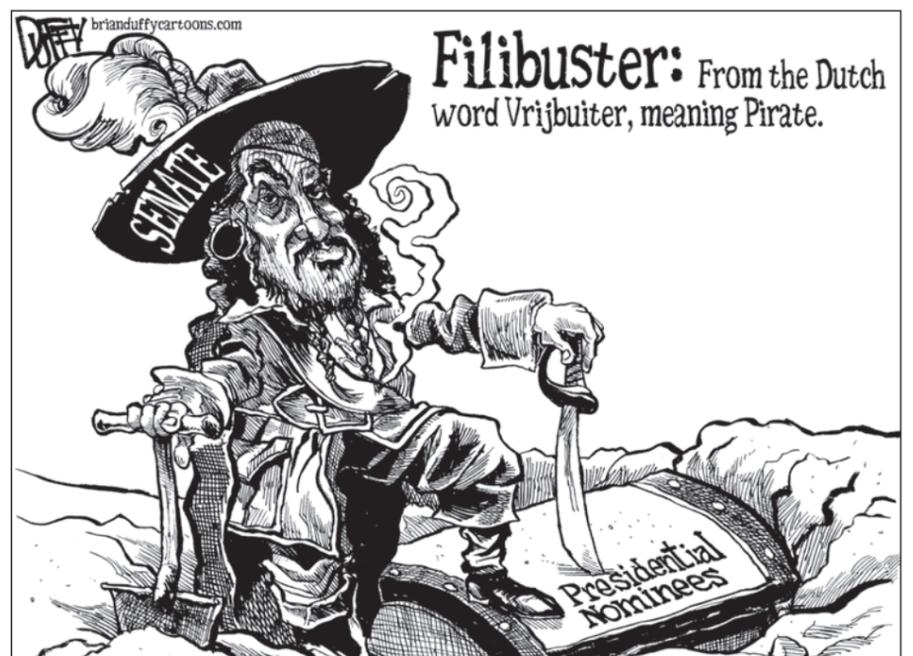
Traditional change calls for need plus imagination, and opportunity, and the human animal has always had a goodly supply of these. "Necessity is the mother of invention." In the human mind, "wanting" and "needing" often meld into one identical inventive compulsion.

Years ago I made a movie in France of the opera "Faust" whose title role I sang many times in France and America. The ancient Faust legend concerns a brilliant scientist, who in his old age trades his soul to the Devil for a return to the youth and romance of his early years. Faust's mad desire to employ alchemy—the changing of base metal into gold — has consumed his life and brought him to the verge of suicide, but the appearance of the Devil in a puff of smoke holds the promise of Faust's regaining his youth temporarily. Faust trades his eternal soul to the Devil.

Are many people today driven by the craving for the acquisition of power? A recent world-visitor, Adolf Hitler, is enough proof that power can be attained evilly. And Jack Kennedy was quick to remind us, "Life is not fair." But, then again, "All's fair in love and war," isn't it?

About Roney:  
Harvard'42—Distinguished Prof., Em.—UCF  
2004 Fla. Alliance for the Arts award  
(Assisted by beautiful wife Joy Roney)

# EDITORIAL CARTOON





# Salome's Stars

**ARIES** (March 21 to April 19) The arts are a strong part of the Arian aspect, with music becoming more dominant. An important decision looms as a longtime relationship takes an unexpected turn.

**TAURUS** (April 20 to May 20) Surrounding yourself with beautiful things helps restore the Taurean soul. Enjoy an art exhibit, for example. Or redecorate your personal space with something truly splendid.

**GEMINI** (May 21 to June 20) Some colleagues might try to talk you out of what they insist is a risk, but which you consider an opportunity. As usual, follow your own good sense when making your decision.

**CANCER** (June 21 to July 22) A workplace change you might have worried about soon proves to be highly favorable for the clever Crab who is ready to take advantage of new opportunities opening up.

**LEO** (July 23 to August 22) Congratulations. Your Leonine pride is polished to a dazzling new brilliance thanks to your success in winning support for your new project from even the most doubtful of detractors.

**VIRGO** (August 23 to September 22) An unsettling rumor about a colleague's apparently regrettable behavior is soon proved groundless, allowing you to enjoy the upcoming end-of-year festivities in a happy mood.

**LIBRA** (September 23 to October 22) Your success in helping to create a harmonious environment out of a chaotic situation earns you the admiration of someone who could become an important new presence in your life.

**SCORPIO** (October 23 to November 21) Your Scorpion's sense of loyalty could find you leading a passionate defense of a loved one you feel is being unfairly treated. The week's end brings long-awaited family news.

**SAGITTARIUS** (November 22 to December 21) Your keen instincts are once more on high alert as you find yourself being pressured to make a quick decision about a certain matter. More facts come to light by week's end.

**CAPRICORN** (December 22 to January 19) An unexpected workplace development could disrupt some family plans. A full explanation, however, averts domestic discord. A financial matter continues to need attention.

**AQUARIUS** (January 20 to February 18) Spend time away from distractions to reassess some recent moves that might not have worked out as you had hoped. What you learn could be invaluable for future decision-making.

**PISCES** (February 19 to March 20) A recent act of kindness is a reminder of how important your friends are to you. You might want to show your appreciation by hosting a special pre-New Year's party just for them.

**BORN THIS WEEK:** You always try to do your best, which sometimes causes you to be critical of those who don't live up to your standards.

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## Moments in time

THE HISTORY CHANNEL

• On **Dec. 26, 1908**, Jack Johnson becomes the first black American to win the world heavyweight title when he knocks out Canadian Tommy Burns in the 14th round in a championship bout near Sydney, Australia. Johnson held the heavyweight title until 1915.

• On **Dec. 25, 1914**, just after midnight on Christmas morning, German troops fighting in World War I cease firing their guns and artillery, and commence to sing Christmas carols. At points along the eastern and western fronts, Russian, French and British soldiers even heard brass bands joining the Germans in their joyous singing.

• On **Dec. 28, 1938**, silent-film star Florence Lawrence commits suicide in Beverly Hills, Calif. Lawrence also was an inventor: She designed the first "auto signaling arm," a mechanical turn signal, along with the first mechanical brake signal. She did not patent these inventions, however, and as a result she received no credit for — or profit from — either one.

• On **Dec. 23, 1946**, President Harry Truman appoints an amnesty board to review cases of conscientious objectors who were imprisoned after refusing to serve during World War II. Of the 15,000 violators of the World War II Selective Service Act, only 1,500 were considered entitled to full amnesty.

• On **Dec. 29, 1956**, the New York Times leaks the news that the United States is preparing a major policy statement on the Middle East. The U.S. would oppose any Soviet military intervention in the region, and Middle Eastern powers could count on economic help and military help in opposing any Soviet aggression.

• On **Dec. 27, 1968**, Apollo 8, the first manned mission to orbit the moon, returns safely to Earth after an historic six-day journey. Astronauts Frank Borman, James Lovell, Jr., and William Anders were the first human beings to see the dark side of the moon.

• On **Dec. 24, 1972**, comedian Bob Hope gives what he says is his final Christmas show to U.S. forces in Saigon. The show marked Hope's ninth consecutive Christmas appearance in Vietnam.

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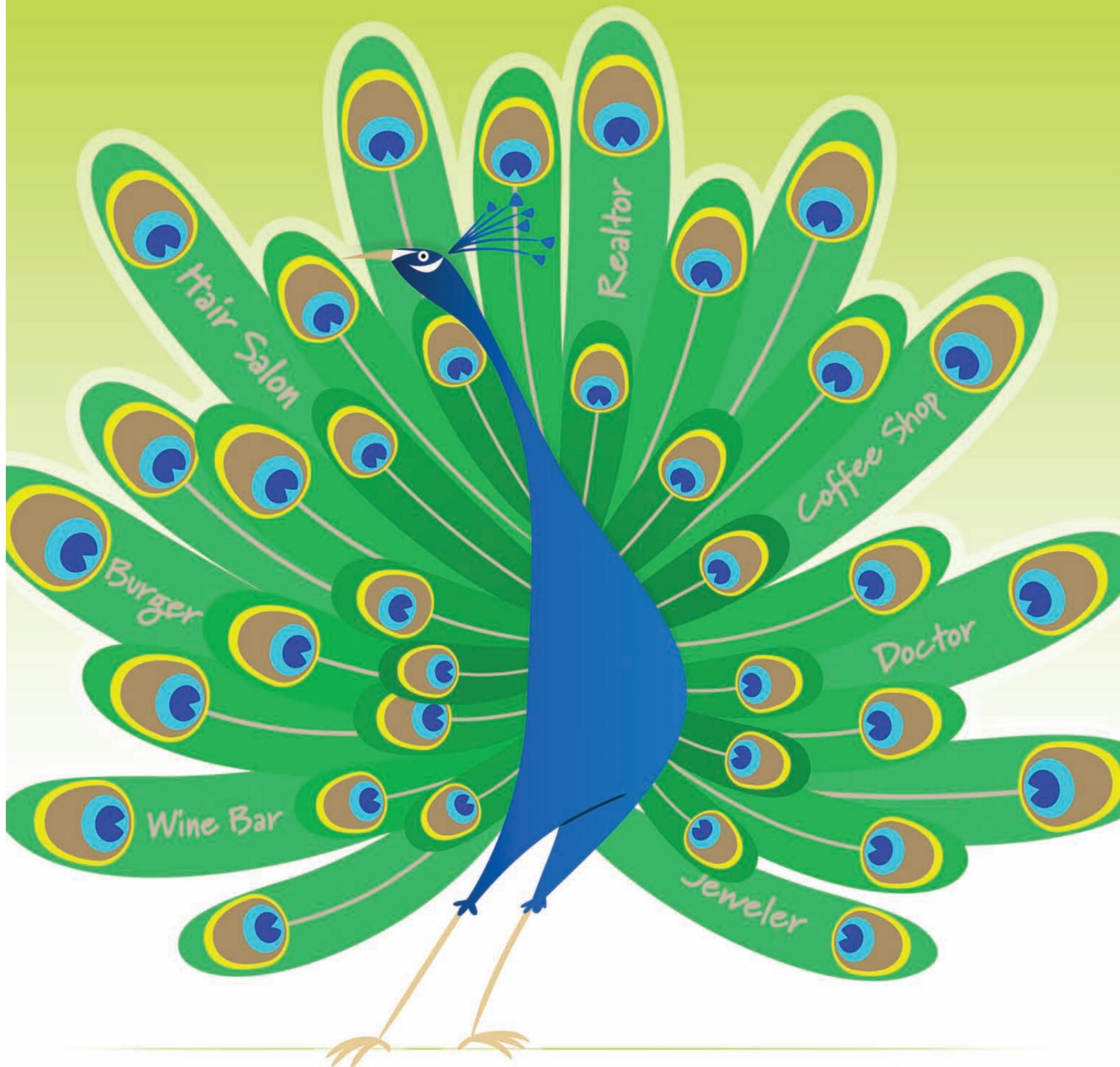
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