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MARK YOUR CALENDAR

The Taste of Oviedo arrives this year with more to do than ever, with a Citrus and Celery Cook-Off, Chicken Chomp Competition, live entertainment and more.

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Welcome to the jungle

Oviedo High School wins state basketball championship

TIM FREED
The Voice

Oviedo High School (32-4) won it all Saturday night on Florida's biggest high school basketball stage — redeeming a heart-breaking loss two years earlier in the semifinals.

The Lions defeated Bartow High School (26-10) 55-52 in a heart-stopping showdown at the Lakeland Center for the FHSAA Class 7A state championship, keeping a slim lead out of the Yellow's Jackets' reach until the final buzzer.

Bartow chased Oviedo frantically through four quarters, but couldn't build a lead over the tenacious Lions.

Oviedo's sound ball handling and lack of turnovers helped the team hang on, Coach Ed Kershner said, leading the high school to its second state championship since 1992.

"This is really a dream come true," Kershner said.

"It was my privilege to coach them — this will go down as one of my all-time favorite teams because of the fact that they all got along and did what needed to be done to win."

The Lions numbed the pain of a crushing loss to Oak Ridge High School in the 2012 state



championship semifinals. A three-point play with six seconds left in the game put the Pioneers up by one point and left Oviedo out of the finals.

Saturday's victory two years later couldn't have been any sweeter for senior R.J. June, who was named the most valuable player of the state tournament following a 19-point performance.

Fellow senior and teammate Dexter Graham knew what was at stake that night: a final chance for redemption.

"We talked about how bad we want this and how bad we want to accomplish it," Graham said.

"To win a game like this was surreal."

The championship also marks Kershner's second state championship since his Osceola Kowboys went undefeated in 1983. He's savoring every moment of the recent title after waiting 31 years.

"It gets sweeter every time," Kershner said.



PHOTOS BY TIM FREED — THEVOICE
Oviedo fought to a narrow win in the title game.

Teaching kids to speak in code

Lake Mary resident teaches the littlest software developers

TIM FREED
The Voice

A gallery of vibrant artwork lays scattered across the dining room table at the Balwalli family's Lake Mary home. Whimsical pictures drawn in crayon of superheroes fighting evil villains and cats the size of skyscrapers cover the tan and green tablecloth where 10-year-old Ria clicks away on a laptop.

Her younger sister Ritika sits across from her drawing streaks of red over sheet paper with a colored marker — another masterpiece for the collection. Ria's creating something of her own — not with markers, but with pixels.

She carefully draws a smiley face in Microsoft Paint, her right hand guiding the computer

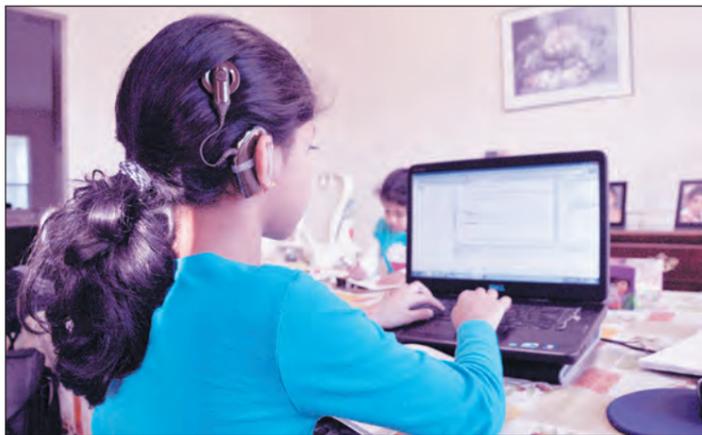


PHOTO BY TIM FREED — THEVOICE
Ria Balwalli, 10, creates a computer app with the help of her father's book.

mouse with care like an experienced painter would a brush. Thin lines form a green nose, brown eyes and yellow mouth.

Ria saves her creation and drags the file into a Java code program. Her fingers carefully hunt across the keyboard for the correct letters and symbols as she

strings together lines of code, the keys to bringing her portrait to life.

She converts her creation to an .apk file with a few mouse clicks and keyboard strokes, transferring it to a plugged-in Android Nexus tablet beside her keyboard.

One tap of her finger on the icon labeled 'MYAPP' and her smiley face appears on screen followed by Ria's own laughter, captured in a sound bite she recorded with Audacity studio software earlier.

"I like to make apps so I can enjoy the stuff from my imagination," she said.

Ria loves creating apps, but her knowledge and passion for technology might be a rare exception among children in the U.S. — a country that studies show lacks in computer education while other nations march toward a technology-driven future.

The language of computer coding that makes programs like Ria's app tick continues to surface in more jobs throughout the country. The U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics projects that the number of computer occupations will grow by

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PHONE: 407-563-7000
FAX: 407-563-7099
SEMINOLEVOICE.COM
Orlando, FL 32835-5705

PUBLISHER

Tracy Craft
407.515.2605
TCraft@TurnstileMediaGroup.com

MANAGING EDITOR

Isaac Babcock
407.563.7023
IBabcock@TurnstileMediaGroup.com

ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Sarah Wilson
407.563.7026
SWilson@TurnstileMediaGroup.com

DESIGNER

Tom Miller
407.563.7032
TMiller@TurnstileMediaGroup.com

STAFF WRITERS

Brittni Larson
Megan Stokes
Tim Freed
Allison Olcsvay
Kristy Vickery

COLUMNISTS

Janet Foley
jwfoley75@gmail.com

Sandi Vidal
Sandi@ChristianHelp.org

Tom Carey
SundewGardens@gmail.com

Karen Phillips
KarenMPhillips@bellsouth.net

Josh Garrick
JoshGarrick9@gmail.com

ADVERTISING SALES
(Display & Classifieds)

Linda Stern
407.376.2434
LStern@TurnstileMediaGroup.com

LEGAL NOTICE ADVERTISING
(Orange & Seminole Counties)

Ashley McBride
407.286.0807
Legal@FLALegals.com

SUBSCRIPTIONS/CIRCULATION

Luana Baez
407.563.7013
LBaez@TurnstileMediaGroup.com

MEMBER OF:
Florida Press Association
Oviedo-Winter Springs Regional
Chamber of Commerce

TURNSTILE MEDIA GROUP

CHAIRMAN
Rance Crain

PRESIDENT/CEO
Francis X. Farrell

VICE PRESIDENTS
Patti Green & Jeff Babineau

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FAMILY CALENDAR

MARCH 7

Come support your local farmers and friends at the **Geneva Farmers Market**. It's every Friday from 2 to 6 p.m. at the Focal Point Nursery on the corner of State Road 46 and County Road 426. Buy local raw honey, organic produce, fresh ground grain bread, gluten free baked goods, homemade jams and jellies and more.

Neilen, Zumba, Linda McKenzie, The 13th Floor Band, and the School of Rock.

MARCH 9

Food Truck Crazy is back at the Oviedo Mall from 4 to 8 p.m. March 9 at the Oviedo Mall. Come out and enjoy the top food trucks from around the area. Visit foodtruckcrazy.com for more information.

MARCH 8

It's time to taste what Oviedo has to offer at the 20th annual **Taste of Oviedo** event. It's filled with food vendors, local businesses, live entertainment and fun for the kids. Come out and enjoy a tasting buffet at the Citrus and Celery Cook-Off, or compete in the first ever Chicken Chomp Competition for fun and prizes. It's all from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. March 8 at the Oviedo Mall, followed by fireworks. Live entertainment has been announced for the event, featuring (in order of appearance): the 17-70 Band, The Dealers, The Barley Wine Band, Marlee Shaw Piercy, Patience Ferguson, Bailey Callahan, Alexa

MARCH 15

HOPE's **Sham Rock N Run 5K** takes off next weekend with registration at 7 a.m. and race start at 8:30 a.m. on March 15. It's at St. Luke's Lutheran Church, 2021 W. State Road 426 in Oviedo. An expected 400 Central Floridians will run, walk, skip, or hop through a 5K course in their St. Paddy's Day best, all to help HOPE continue on its mission of preventing and reducing homelessness in Central Florida. This family-friendly 5K is full of Irish fun, with a costume contest, shamrock shirts, Irish dancers, and an after-party at a local restaurant. Visit shamrocknrun5k.eventbrite.com to register.

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Calendar

MARCH 9

Rumba dance lessons are at 2 p.m. March 9 at the Geneva Community Center on First Street in Geneva. Learn to make magic on the dance floor in this four-week excursion, taught by Larry Silverberg and Debby Cole. Each lesson is \$10 per person or \$15 per couple. Singles and couples welcome. Call 407-314-7667 or contact debbincole@bellsouth.net for more information.

The First Tee of Central Florida and LPGA-USGA Girls Golf will be hosting their next event from 6 to 7 p.m. Monday, March 10, at the Winter Park Country Club. Visit firstteecfl.org for more information.

MARCH 12

The **Oviedo Businesswomen Network** will host a networking luncheon at 11:30 a.m. on March 12 at Tuscawilla Country Club. RSVP by noon March 10 by visiting Oviedowintersprings.org

MARCH 10

The **First Tee of Central Florida** recently announced its partnership with LPGA-USGA Girls Golf, a nationwide developmental golf program that encourages girls ages 7-17 to learn to play golf, build friendships and sample competition in a supportive and positive learning environment.

MARCH 13

A new bakery is celebrating its grand opening at **All From Scratch** from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. March 13 at 2781 Wrights Road, Suite 1225, in Oviedo. There will be food, beverages, door prizes, networking and it's free!

Notes

Fire stats for 2013

Oviedo's Fire Rescue Department recently released its stats from last year. It received 4,010 emergency calls, with 7,020 units responding in an average of five minutes. The EMS unit received 2,722 calls and transported 1,588 patients to nine different hospitals in the area. There were only 93 fire calls, or about one every four days in 2013.

biggest fundraiser. The event, themed "30 Rocks," marked the gala's 30th anniversary and took place at the Orlando Marriot Lake Mary.

More scholarship money

The Foundation for Seminole State College of Florida raised a **record of nearly \$325,000 for scholarships** and other academic support for the College at the 30th annual Dream Gala held Feb. 15. More than 375 people, including prominent community and business leaders, attended the sold-out event, the college's

In special recognition of the event's 30th anniversary, the evening featured remarks by Gerry Weldon, wife of founding president Dr. Earl Weldon. Gerry Weldon was escorted to the stage by her grandson, Christopher Weldon, a freshman at Seminole State. In a video tribute, the Foundation also saluted Dream Gala co-founder Dede Schaffner and Sally Moore, a long-time supporter. Schaffner, a Seminole County School Board member and former Seminole State trustee, also serves on the Foundation's Board of Directors. Schaffner, her late husband, Bill, and the late Art Grindle founded the Dream Gala in 1984.

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THIS WEEK

THIS WEEK IN WORLD HISTORY — MARCH 10, 1927 — Robert Kearns, who patented a design for the intermittent windshield wiper, is born in Gary, Ind. Kearns later won a multi-million-dollar judgment against Chrysler (\$20 million) and Ford (\$10 million) for using his concept without permission.

COMPUTERS | Kids in other countries outpacing students from United States in computer programming

■ CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

18 percent between 2012 and 2022. Software development jobs are expected to see an increase of 22 percent.

"There's great jobs out there for people who want to do this and our economy needs it," said Professor Richard Grant of the Seminole State's Computer Programming and Applications department. "Our economy doesn't need more people working at McDonalds."

But other numbers point to a disparity in technology education. Only one out of every 10 schools in the U.S. teaches a computer programming class, according to Code.org, an advocacy group pushing for more computer coding education.

Ria didn't learn about apps in school; she learned from her father, Krishna Balwalli. The Lake Mary resident has more than 20 years of experience in computer software and at one point developed combat simulators for the U.S. Army, working in software architecture.

He saw a unique opportunity when his daughter started asking questions about game apps like Angry Birds last year. He conducted his own research and learned how to create apps himself, realizing that Ria could learn too.

"I thought, 'How can I help her achieve her goal of learning about technology while at the same time

feeding into her ambitions, goals and interests?'" Balwalli said.

"I thought 'Why don't you just make apps?'"

Balwalli took it a step further by writing "Make Your Own Game Apps - For Kids," a step-by-step book that walks children through the coding process of making simple apps. He hopes to eventually gather enough support from people in the academic community to have similar books used to teach school standards.

The ambitious author hosted a demonstration of the book at Seminole State College's Hot New Technologies Expo on Feb. 22, where he encouraged groups of elementary and middle school students to draw a character, scan it and bring it to life in their very own app.

Seminole State College of Florida puts on the expo to create interest in technology among youth, but the event only occurs once a year. The college won't expend too many resources on the expo due it having more of a long-term benefit than an immediate benefit, Grant said.

The push for teaching young children to code and learn about technology would be virtually



PHOTO BY TIM FREED — THE VOICE
Krishna Balwalli teaches his daughter to create apps at their home.

non-existent in Seminole County without events like the expo, Grant said. Many Seminole County high schools offer the AP Computer Science program, though not all. Oviedo High School does not offer the course, and Lake Howell High School, alma mater of recently minted internet billionaire Brian Acton, does not offer the program either. The virtual school program, which uses the internet the most extensively, also does not offer it.

Children need to be exposed much sooner to technology if it's going to stick with them, Grant said. Preconceived notions of computer science being 'too difficult' or 'too nerdy' start to drive many students away by middle school.

"You have to have that incuba-

tor where you're growing enthusiasm," Grant said.

The computer software professor said that a student's interest and performance in math and science directly correlates with the problem solving and abstract thinking required for computer programming.

Results from the 2012 Programme International Student Assessment, an exam that measures student aptitude, showed that countries such as China, Korea and Japan were the most proficient in math and science, scoring in among the top 10 in both subjects out of 64 countries.

The U.S. sat much lower in the standings, ranking 36th in math and 28th in science.

"The economic benefits are going to go to the countries that can grow people to do [computer programming]," Grant said.

Balwalli grew up in the bustling metropolis of Mumbai, India, immigrating to the United States in 1990. He still remembers computer science being widely promoted and praised in India's mainstream culture. Many Indian universities focusing solely on

computer technology have their own standardized tests, similar to the SAT but geared toward STEM.

Television shows and advertisements feature celebrities such film actor Amitabh Bachchan encouraging the public to take on STEM careers.

"If Hulk Hogan was out there saying 'Guys, you should learn science and technology,' wouldn't the kids be inspired?" Balwalli said. "It could be movie stars or whoever, but they would always be promoting math and science."

Numbers may show a disparity in technology education in the United States, but a country's history or culture doesn't decide tomorrow's computer software developers, Balwalli said. People just need a sense of curiosity and a desire to learn to propel themselves into the industry, he said.

Balwalli pulls up a YouTube video on his laptop at the dining room table and clicks play. An 8-year-old Ria stares back at him on screen through black, thick-rimmed glasses. His daughter sports an oversized white lab coat as she motions toward a robot made of Lego pieces using a backscratcher as her makeshift pointer.

Ria, looking every bit the scientist, hopes to one day use technology to help the blind see.

"Good morning professor, what are you doing?" said Balwalli from behind the camera.

His daughter always preferred 'professor' over 'princess.'

Oviedo ~ Winter Springs Regional Chamber of Commerce

Upcoming Events

March 12th- OBN Luncheon

11:30am-1:00pm, Tusawilla Country Club

Join the Ladies of Oviedo Businesswomen Network at their monthly luncheon. OBN consists of area businesswomen who meet monthly to exchange information, share contacts and provide a support system for professional women within our chamber's service area.

March 13th — All From Scratch Grand Opening

5:30-7:30pm, 2781 Wrights Rd. Ste.1225 Oviedo FL 32765

Join us at the Grand Opening of All From Scratch in Oviedo. The Casselberry Chamber will join us in a Ribbon Cutting Ceremony, followed by great food, drinks, door prizes, and networking. We hope to see you there!

March 20th- Lunch & Learn

11:30am-1:00pm, 815 Eyrie Drive Suite 4 Oviedo FL 32765

Join us at our March Lunch & Learn with Steven Placey from Rock Your Business on Video Marketing. Lunch & Learns are always aimed towards marketing and FREE to OWSRCC members. Sponsored by Oviedo Meeting Rooms, we hope to see you there!

March 26th- Bagels & Business

8:00-9:30am, 1700 Oviedo Mall Blvd Oviedo FL 32765

Join us for our monthly morning seminar in the Oviedo Mall Community Room. The topic changes monthly and is great for networking. This event is FREE to attend, open to everyone, and sponsored by Costco!

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INTERESTS

THIS WEEK IN HUMAN HISTORY — MARCH 8, 1962 – The Beatles make their TV debut with original drummer Pete Best on the BBC show “Teenager’s Turn” and performed Roy Orbison’s “Dream Baby.” Ringo Starr replaced Best a few months later, playing with them for the first time as their official drummer on Aug. 18, 1962.

Casselberry paints the town

Neighbors pitch in to make giant mural

ALLISON OLCSVAY
The Voice

Armed with paintbrushes and trays of vibrant paint, citizens of Casselberry and nearby communities took to the streets Feb. 21 to paint a mural unlike any other in Central Florida.

Located at the center of the intersection of Lilac Road and Palm Drive, just off South Winter Park Drive, the new mural is painted directly on the street in a round medallion shape.

“We got the idea at a recent League of Cities convention,” said Casselberry Mayor Charlene Glancy. “Similar murals can be found in just a few cities across the country, and we are proud to be the first to bring the idea to Florida.”

The design, created by local artist Marla E, was selected by residents and reflects the street



PHOTOS BY **ALLISON OLCSVAY** — THE VOICE
Volunteers paint by numbers at the Feb. 22 event.

names with lilac flowers in the center, ringed by palm trees.

“I incorporated dragonflies into the design to symbolize transformation, renewal and life,” said Marla.

The symbolism is appropriate for Casselberry, currently going through its own renaissance of sorts.

“We are positioning ourselves to be the art city of Seminole County,” said Casselberry City Com-

missioner Sandra Solomon.

With the arrival of the new flyover at the intersection of U.S. Highway 17-92

and State Road 436 and the new city center project on 17-92 near Lake Concord Park, Casselberry is working hard to erase the days when they were known for strip clubs and run-down strip malls.

Instead, residents and visitors

are treated to art festivals, jazz concerts and food-truck gatherings at Lake Concord Park. These events – which are often free – have become huge draws for the community.

The city recently acquired a second art house, near the first one to expand their exhibit and teaching space, Solomon said.

“Art brings business and provides us a way to stand out,” she



said.

The new mural not only beautifies the neighborhood, but it will also have a traffic calming effect, encouraging drivers to slow down as they encounter the unusual feature.

It is already a source of pride for the residents who live near it.

“I get to drive over it everyday and when I go for walks with my granddaughter and her dog, we will always remember the day it was painted and how we had a small part in that,” said Lilac Road resident Judy Boryk.

Boryk and her 3-year-old granddaughter couldn’t resist picking up a brush and painting their own section of the mural alongside many other volunteers.

Students from as far away as Lake Brantley High School and the University of Central Florida showed up to volunteer their time.

Casselberry Elementary second grade teacher Sandy Simon lives nearby and also came out to help paint the street.

“I wouldn’t have said this was on my bucket list, but what a fun way to show support for your community,” Simon said. “I think it’s looking fabulous and I can’t wait to see it when it’s finished.”

Volunteers who came out Saturday dodged light rain and the threat of thunderstorms to hurry and get the paint down before it was too late.

Using large white tents, workers were able to cover most of the mural to keep it dry while painting progressed.

“As soon as everything is dry, I will come back and finish the details and outline everything so it really pops,” Marla said.

PPG Architectural Coatings donated the special road paint used in the mural’s creation, and Home Depot stepped up to donate brushes, trays and labor to the project.

“We have a goal to do this on all of the flower streets,” said Casselberry economic development planner Kyle Dudgeon. “We’re starting with this intersection and we’ll see where it goes from there.”

“This type of project is a win-win for the city,” said Mayor Glancy. “It is an opportunity to help create community involvement, spur property improvement and increase property value over time.”

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ATHLETICS

THIS WEEK IN SPORTS HISTORY — MARCH 13, 1979 — Power pitcher Johan Santana is born in Tovar Merida, Venezuela. He went on to become the dominant left-handed pitcher in baseball from 2003 to 2006 and won the Cy Young Award as the American League's top pitcher in 2004 and again in 2006.

Bears strike gold at state meet

Winter Springs Bears grab hold of two wrestling state championships

TIM FREED
TheVoice

Winter Springs High School juniors Brandon Staley and David Moodie did their school's wrestling heritage proud on Feb. 15 and 16 as they both took home gold in their respective weight classes at the FH-SAA 3A State Wrestling Championship.

Staley came out on top in the 113 pound weight class, pinning his first two opponents at the Lakeland Center en route to a 9-2 finals victory over Braddock High's Nicholas Villamil.

But Staley's most thrilling moment came off a last-second comeback win in the state semifinals against Jordan Marshall of Miami Southridge. Down by a point in the third period, Staley hit a throw with just two seconds left in the match to capture a 5-4 win.

"I don't know why but all the other mats just stopped and you saw everyone looking at me," Staley said. "The whole stadium just erupted."

He'd won in a similar dramatic fashion on a national stage last summer, pulling off a late throw on the reigning California state champion in the finals match to capture a USA Junior National Greco-Roman Championship.

Staley's last-minute heroics have earned him the nickname 'Mr. Clutch' among his teammates.

A state championship meant a tremendous weight lifting off Staley's shoulders. He started wrestling at the age of 9, taking after his father and quickly excelling at an early age. Wrestling for so long placed great expectations on his career, Staley said.

But now the Winter Springs Bear feels a bit more at ease, able to keep his mind on his love for wrestling rather than obtaining another milestone, he said.

"From day one when you start wrestling its 'win state in high school,'" Staley said. "That's like the first goal you're given."

"As bad as it is, I've been expected to do this my whole life. I've been expected to win states and I've been expected to win nationals. Winning it is a relief to me like, 'Alright, I finally did it. People can stop doubting me.'"

Moodie's journey to a state championship began only 27 months ago – he stepped onto a wrestling mat for the first time in December 2011. The junior also balances football, track and weight lifting at Winter Springs High. He joined the wrestling team after some coaxing from freshman football coach Rocky Ciero, who doubles as the wrestling assistant coach.

Moodie not only conquered the 182 pound weight class at states last month, he pushed through his bracket without being thrown a single time.

"It feels unreal – like a dream come true," Moodie said. "It feels good knowing that all that hard work and sacrifice, missed



TOP PHOTO COURTESY OF ALLISON PETRO
LEFT PHOTO BY TIM FREED — THEVOICE

Brandon Staley and David Moodie won state titles at the championships Feb. 16.

ment.

Staley and Moodie may have taken different paths to win state, but the two gold medals for Winter Springs High marks the first time the school has had two first place winners in wrestling since 2011, when O'Neil and his brother Robert finished at the top of the podium.

"As a coach you're real fortunate to have kids that are hard-working and are that

dedicated and that talented," Coach Scott Gomrad said.

"These are guys that are getting it done in the classroom, they get it done in the community, and they obviously are getting it done on the mats."

Staley has his eyes set on defending his national title later this year, while Moodie plans to prepare for the upcoming track and weight lifting seasons at Winter Springs High School.

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VOICES

THIS WEEK IN POLITICAL HISTORY — MARCH 11, 1942 – During World War II, Gen. Douglas MacArthur leaves the Philippines as the American defense of the islands against the Japanese collapses. MacArthur had received a message from President Franklin D. Roosevelt on Feb. 20 ordering him to leave immediately. He finally obeyed the order on March 11.

Adaptive gardening during a flood

With the 'Boiling Frogs' principle applied to climate change, more of the same that already makes gardening in Florida



Tom Carey
From my garden to yours

special will necessitate ever-greater adaptive methods applied to managing our gardens. Luckily, a major strength of our family scaled farming operations is our ability to make quick decisions and changes. Learning to adapt and innovate can be frustrating, almost painful work. Embrace your failures; they make change and

success all the more savory as you adapt what thrives.

A few years ago, around the start of our

growing season early one October evening, after days of tilling, direct seeding, and establishing hundreds of transplants, we received 6 inches of rain. The ground was still saturated from the Summer's precipitation and the ensuing pooled waters could easily be construed as a flood (I'm still waiting on my FEMA disaster declaration). Running the inside perimeter of my garden is a tractor width, turfed swale. This shallow ditch, assisted by the paths between the wide growing beds, provided drainage. The rain pounded so abruptly that much of it flowed off the planted garden to puddle in the swale. Many crops were decimated, but our garden design aided in a swift recovery and we quickly replanted to save the season.

When the majority of us think of onions, we think of tennis ball sized, tan, purple, or white papery skinned Vidalia

type bulbs. Vast acreages of these storage onions are grown, but the single season of mono-crop production limits their edible portions to whatever survives the mass distribution networks from huge cold storage warehouses to a piled high display in a big-box grocery. Since I do not have a root cellar, fresh green onions, better known as scallions, are a more productive option for my home gardening efforts. In trying to dodge the established competition, I recognized a crop that grows rapidly, provides fresh, live, highly nutritious food, and survives the worst of our summer and winter growing conditions. Further research concluded I harvest four times the edible value of scallions than trying to compete by investing in a crop of bulbing onions.

Following the news of drought (and now floods) in California brings to light

our dependence on a national food production policy heavily leveraged on thousands of miles of transportation networks and artificial irrigation, labor, fertility and pest control methods. I was recently asked whether I planned to raise my prices when much of our supply of lettuce is grown under contract to ensure the consistency of fast food burgers. The simple answer is no, but I am planting a lot more lettuce and hoping for more local community awareness.

WHO IS CAREY

Tom Carey is the owner of Sundew Gardens, a you-pick gardening business in Oviedo. Visit the Sundew Gardens Facebook page and email him at sundewgardens@gmail.com

Orlando area traffic lights turn me red

MARK ROUTHIER
UCF Forum columnist

OK, I admit it: I have road rage, just not the kind that makes me drive four feet behind someone who has made me angry, or leads me to any other kind of exacting vengeance on other drivers.

Other drivers rarely do anything that makes me insane. Yes, there are people who cut me off, or people who drive 20 mph in a 35 mph zone. That does make me a little crazy, but I don't flip anyone off or pass them with a disgusted look, or in any way endanger myself or another driver because I think they're driving stupid. I have flipped off someone who has flipped me off, but I prefer responding with a peace sign. That really gets under their skin.

No, my road rage is comical. I yell obscenities at the top of my lungs. I won't go into specifics because the things I yell are unprintable. But if I were to set up a camera and then forget it's there, I'm sure the resulting video would go viral and people would laugh heartily about what an idiot I am. And I do my best to spare people driving with me, although sometimes I am told to calm down.

I have a transponder in my car so I can stay in the through lanes at tollbooths and so I can actually get off the Florida's Turnpike at my mom's exit, where you cannot exit unless you have one. (Umm, why?)

I am convinced that someone, perhaps the Department of Transportation, or SunPass, or maybe even a mischievous friend who knows I have this problem, has added a special feature to my transponder that makes traffic lights change to red as I pull up to them. Nothing drives me more insane than watching a light turn yellow at the distance where it is unsafe to accelerate through it, because in Orlando, the lights stay red forever. If you get stopped at a traffic light just as it turns, you might as well have a kitchen in your car because there's enough time to make dinner before it turns green again.

In order to not die of an aneurysm, a self-inflicted rupture of an innocent blood vessel from screaming, I check my emails while I wait. Or distract myself with Facebook. Or play Scrabble. Might as well get some work done, because this light will never change back to green.

I should just keep my computer out or have a pad handy to see if I can write a

play when I'm stuck at lights. I will only write at stoplights and it'll probably take less than a month to write a full-length play. But here's the problem with that: You become focused and then someone else is going to get road rage because they have to honk to get you to go.

Here are some specific places in Central Florida where it's particularly maddening. If you are driving north on Mills Avenue, say 4 to 6 p.m. (ish), and you come to Colonial Drive, the light lasts about three full minutes (an eternity in idle time), and then the green lasts less than a minute. Many drivers seem to not have any urgency when the light turns green, so if you are far back, you might have to wait through three lights. That's about 11 minutes to get through an intersection.

My brother lives at the end of Sand Lake Road near Apopka-Vineland Road and, because of the traffic and lights, it has taken me 18 minutes to go from Interstate 4 to his house about 1 and a half miles away. I can walk it faster.

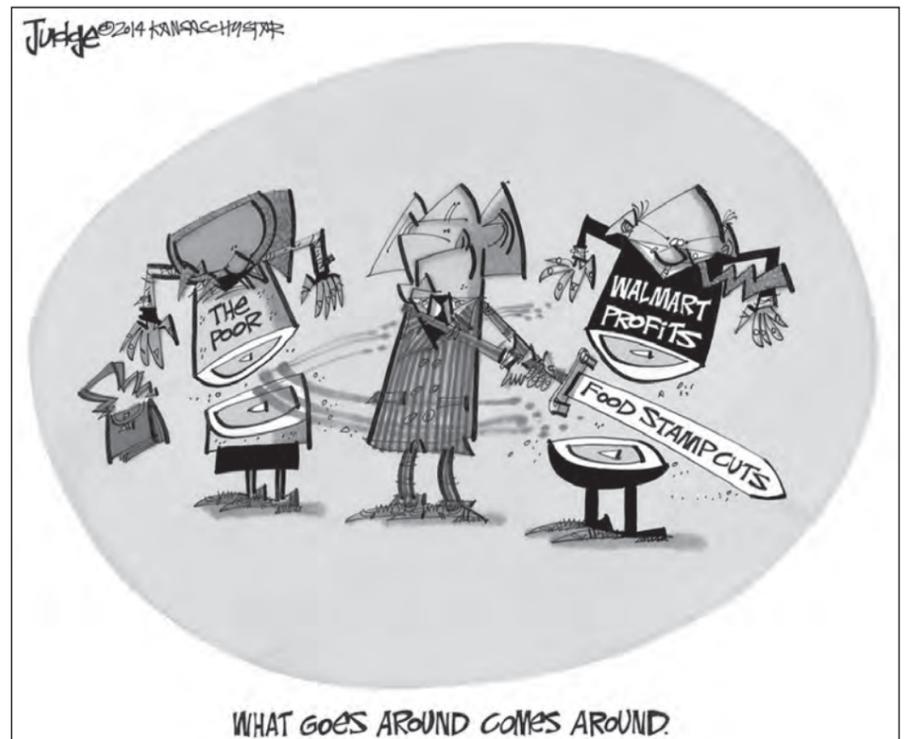
And while driving on University Boulevard between Semoran Boulevard and the campus at UCF, the lights seem to be timed so you actually never see two

greens in a row. I commute between the Orlando Shakespeare Theater in Loch Haven Park and UCF, and I prefer to take the surface streets because getting trapped in traffic on the highways is even more miserable than getting trapped in traffic on the surface streets, where you can perhaps be wily and find a way around it.

This is the commute where my play will be written: from Mills Avenue going north to Orange Avenue, to Aloma Avenue, to Semoran Boulevard, to University Boulevard, and then six miles on University. Or it is where I will spontaneously combust. I will be driving from my office hours at UCF to a production meeting at Orlando Shakespeare Theater at 3:30 p.m. on a Friday afternoon (the reverse of the commute I just described), and as my evil transponder makes the seventh light I've pulled up to turn red, I will start screaming obscenities at the top of my lungs and I will just disappear.

I will spontaneously combust like the drummer in Spinal Tap, and I will be sent to an endless sprawl where I always have to be in my car pulling up to traffic lights—that are turning red. And Cerberus will be my co-pilot.

EDITORIAL CARTOONS



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O	P	H	O	H	C	U	B						

Solution time: 21 mins.

King Crossword
Answers

King Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 Unexciting
- 5 Baby bear
- 8 Use a cleaver
- 12 Franc replacer
- 13 — budget
- 14 "Mary — Little Lamb"
- 15 First victim
- 16 Long-running reality game show
- 18 Gobi or Mojave
- 20 Harsh
- 21 Thy
- 23 Midmorning hour
- 24 Smith and Jones, e.g.
- 28 Kind
- 31 Eisenhower
- 32 Credit-card users' problems
- 34 With 45-Across, a martial art
- 35 Fender bender
- 37 Made an educated guess
- 39 Foot part
- 41 Layer
- 42 Open out, as a flag
- 45 See 34-Across
- 49 Unexpected

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11		
12				13			14					
15				16			17					
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31				32				33		34		
35				36			37		38			
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42	43				44		45			46	47	48
49					50				51			
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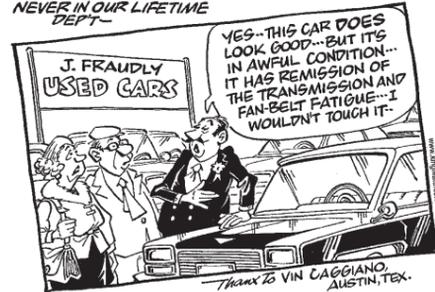
- 6 Big name in Burma's history
- 7 Taverns
- 8 Sour cream and —
- 9 Poorer folks
- 10 Smell
- 11 Rid of rind
- 17 Ex-soldier
- 19 Street
- 22 Argue against
- 24 Comedian
- 25 Guitar's smaller cousin
- 26 Like the superintendent's apartment, maybe
- 27 Picket-sign carriers
- 29 "Norma —"
- 30 Danson or Koppel
- 33 Small diving duck
- 36 Hairpiece
- 38 Pressed
- 40 Blunder
- 42 Abbr. on a B-52
- 43 — and void
- 44 Biographer's subject
- 46 Actress Campbell
- 47 Slay
- 48 Sole
- 50 Male child

DOWN

- 1 Out of play
- 2 Cartoonist Goldberg
- 3 War god
- 4 One of Henry's Annes
- 5 Halloween outfits

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Pet Rescue by Judy finally finds forever home

The new Pet Rescue by Judy Animal Resource Campus will open March 23

BRITNI LARSON
Central Florida Senior

It's finally Judy's time. In this place, her legacy is secured; her "babies" will always have a home. She'll always have a home.

"She's found all these animals a forever home and now finally she has a forever home," said Susan Elliott-Rink, project manager for the construction of the new location for nonprofit, no-kill rescue organization Pet Rescue by Judy.

Judy Sarullo, founder of PRBJ, received her certificate of occupation on the new 6,000-square-foot, state-of-the-art Pet Rescue by Judy Animal Resource Campus on Feb. 27. Within minutes she was already moving in. The grand opening is tentatively set for March 23, where the public can meet the famed animal lover, who has saved tens of thousands of abandoned animals, and see her new home. The Sanford facility was made possible over the last year through \$704,000 of donated money, labor and materials.

"To to see all these people who came forward to help the animals is just kind of life building," Sarullo said. "It's



PHOTOS BY ISAAC BABCOCK — CENTRAL FLORIDA SENIOR
Judy Sarullo, left, inside her new adoption facility, poses for the camera with Totally Wired's Peter Iwanowski, one of many who volunteered to help Sarullo's pet rescue dream come true.

going to take me so much time to really inhale this; that it's here, after 21 years."

It's been a dramatic 21 years. There've been 11 moves — one leaving Sarullo with nowhere to go, caring for her rescues in a warehouse in the woods for seven months without running water. She had to have the water brought in by

van. But with this building that will never happen again. It was an incredible amount of money to raise, and it was possible because people believe what Sarullo does is worthwhile, Rink said.

"You can't not be inspired being around her, her passion and her commitment," she said.

At the new facility, 100 dogs can wait for their forever homes in spacious kennels with natural light shining in from the sun and stars, and cats can jump from branch to branch on life-like cat trees adorned with butterflies and cardinals. One of the very first residents of the new cat space is Buster, who raced to claim

his spot on an extra wide window sill — custom made for the cats' lazing enjoyment — to gaze outside and feel some warm sun trickling in.

For Cheryl Zambrano, a volunteer from PRBJ's beginnings, it's hard not to cry with happiness every time she walks in the new shelter. She'll be crying for weeks, she said, smiling as her voice cracked in emotion.

"It's overwhelming because I know it's going to make their quality of life better," she said. "When it gets dark at the other shelter, it's just pitch dark, so now when it's nighttime they'll get to see the stars, they'll be able to see the moon shine."

"I get goose bumps," Sarullo said. "I always get the chills; every time I come in here I get the chills."

The building was donated to PRBJ along with the one next door, which will be torn down to build a low-cost spay and neuter clinic, and has come a long way from the falling apart, holes in the floor place it once was. Sarullo cried when she got new poured cement floors, and loves that she can pump in serene music for her babies to listen to all day.

They have a room for puppies with nearly floor-to-ceiling windows so that the kids who come by can look right in, Sarullo said, and a living room area for people to relax and

■ Please see JUDY on page 2

For now, it's business as usual at the Oviedo Mall, where you can check out pets to adopt and drop off much needed supplies for the rescue animals, while they continue the finishing touches and move all the animals to the new location over the next few weeks. The public is welcome to celebrate Pet Rescue by Judy's grand opening at the new location, 401 S. Laurel Ave. in Sanford, on March 23. For more information about the construction process, and how you can help the nonprofit, visit savethetails.com.
To see adoptable pets, visit petrescuebyjudy.com or facebook.com/petrescuebyjudy

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When Ruth McDaniel and her son David agreed she needed a lifestyle with more security, she visited The Mayflower on the recommendation of friends. "Everyone there was so friendly and interesting, and the amenities were so far beyond what I saw at other communities. In the end, the choice was clear." Now living only a mile apart, Ruth and her three granddaughters enjoy cultural outings and Sunday brunches in The Mayflower's dining room. "The memories we've made here are priceless," she says.

"Mom is just as independent as always," adds David. "At the same time, it's reassuring to know she'll always be well cared for. As a family, we couldn't ask for anything more."

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More proof that exercise pays off for seniors

Have you noticed that your muscles seem to get weaker as you get older? It's thought that starting at age 40, we lose about 1 percent of muscle mass each year. Multiple studies have questioned whether that muscle loss is true aging or whether it's from disuse.

One particular study compared "master athletes" (recreational athletes who seriously exercised four to five times a week) who were 40 to 80 years old. Researchers

SENIOR NEWS LINE

by Matilda Charles

measured leg strength, muscle mass and fat content of their muscles. They even took MRI scans of cross sections of the muscles of those at various ages who exercised versus those who didn't.

They discovered that the loss of muscle mass and

strength was not due to aging alone. Senior athletes had almost as much leg muscle as the younger athletes. There was little fat in the muscles of senior athletes. There was little loss of strength.

Which means there's hope for the rest of us.

Here's my theory, after viewing the photos: We might not get back all the muscles and strength we had when we were very active and younger, but we can get back some of

it, even if we've been sedentary for years. At the very least we can maintain what we have and avoid further loss of strength.

Here's what we get with regular exercise:

- Physical stability: Our core muscles and legs can hold us up, keeping us strong and agile. Without that strength, we're more likely to suffer from falls and broken bones.

- Calcium remains in our bones, which gives them strength.

- Self-confidence: When we can continue to do things for ourselves; we keep our independence.

Ask about classes at your local senior center. Even yoga or tai chi would be a good place to start.

Matilda Charles regrets that she cannot personally answer reader questions, but will incorporate them into her column whenever possible. Send email to columnreply2@gmail.com © 2014 King Features Synd. Inc.

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JUDY | Pet rescue dream comes true

■ CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE
 get to know their future pets before they adopt.

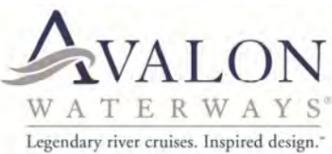
They also have an enrichment center open to the public where Sarullo wants to teach the community how to care for animals and educate future pet fosterers and volunteers. That's why it's called the PRBJ Resource Campus – they want to be more than just a shelter.

During the day Sarullo lives PRBJ constantly, dog and cat fur always under her fingertips as she pets animals eager for attention, her phone glued to her ear, professing genuine

love to each person who helps her cause. But it's only started to feel real in her dreams, what she's finally accomplished – and it feels pretty good.

"All of sudden I'm dreaming and I'm doing like a cheerleader, and my arms are stretched out and I'm flying in the air," she said. "... And everybody was applauding me and I was just out there screaming and jumping up in the air, and then I wake up and I'm going 'Was I dreaming?' I get the chills."

"This is Judy's dream; it finally came true," Zambrano said.



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New education tool for vets getting benefits

Whether you're a veteran or a family member using GI Bill benefits or the Department of Defense Military Tuition Assistance Program, if things go wrong, it's hard to know where to turn. The Department of Veterans Affairs has launched a new complaint system online, in partnership with the departments of defense, education and justice, as well as the Federal Trade Commission and the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau — big guns all of them.

This reporting system will help in three ways: Veterans can report negative experi-

VETERANS POST

by Freddy Groves

ences with a school; the government can identify unfair or misleading practices; quality academic support will be available.

The range of complaint topics is broad and includes problems with credit transfers, changes in degree requirements and unfair recruiting practices, all covered by the Principles of Excellence that

schools must follow if they receive government money for veterans programs.

The reporting program can be reached on the GI Bill and DoD websites. Once a complaint is received, the agencies will contact the school and work at a resolution. Go to benefits.va.gov/gibill and click on GI Bill Feedback System. For DoD, go to militaryonesource.mil and put "school complaints" in the search box to reach the Postsecondary

Education Complaint System.

At the same time, the VA has opened up the GI Bill Comparison Tool. This is quite a site, even though it's in Beta testing (still being tried out). In one place you can explore your career, compare schools, choose a school, apply for benefits and more. Just by answering a few questions, you can get an estimate of your benefits and information about the school's value (how much you'll earn in your career).

For the comparison tool, go online to www.benefits.va.gov/gibill and click on GI Bill Comparison Tool. If you don't know exactly the direction you want to take, start with the CareerScope assessment tool.

Freddy Groves regrets that he cannot personally answer reader questions, but will incorporate them into his column whenever possible. Send email to columnreply2@gmail.com © 2013 King Features Synd. Inc.

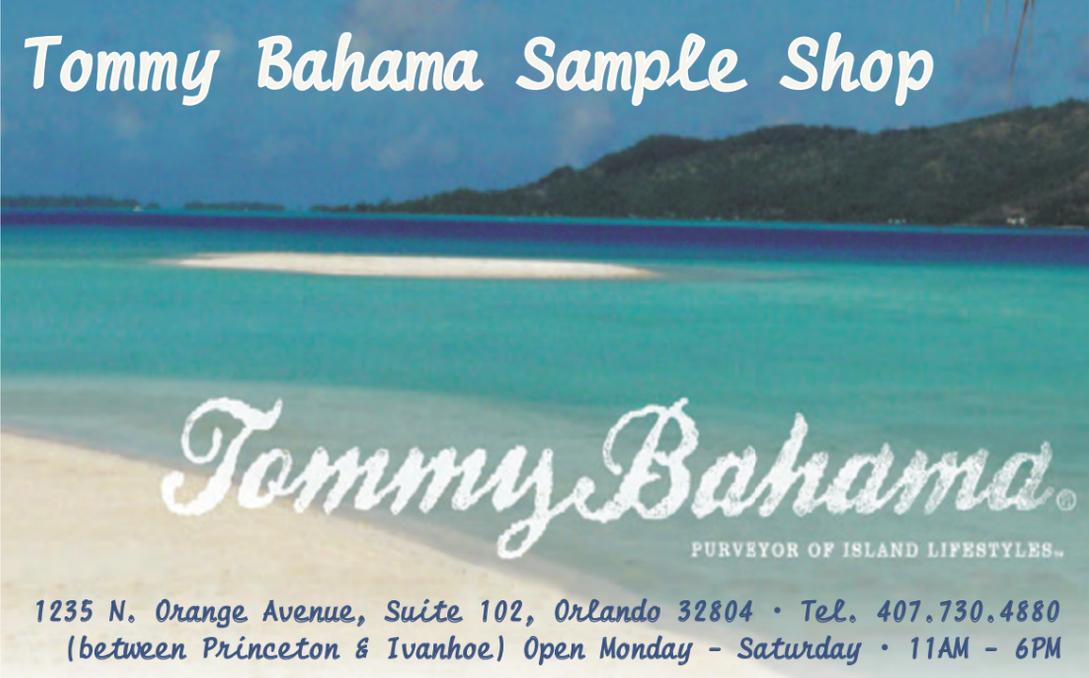
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- On Target Web Solutions
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- 50plusFYI.org
- Physician Associates
- Orlando Family Physicians
- WellCare Health Plans, Inc.
- LTC Advisors
- Growing Bolder Magazine
- Certified Financial Group
- Compass Research
- Long Term Care Insurance Services
- Orlando Healthcare Guide
- Exit Real Estate Results
- MSA Home Health
- Freedom Health
- Florida Blue-McBride Insurance Agency
- Harmony Mediation

Meet these Senior Living Communities and Resources

- One Senior Place Care Management
- Orlando Senior Health Network
- Creating Divine Order
- After 55 Housing & Resource Guide
- Senior Living Guide
- Elder Move Managers
- Serenades by Sonata
- Longwood Healthcare Center
- Life Care Centers of Orlando and Altamonte Springs
- Savannah Court & Cottage of Oviedo
- Brookdale Senior Living
- Villa Grande on Saxon
- Eastbrooke Gardens
- Grand Villa Senior Living
- Orlando Senior Services Directory
- Emeritus Senior Living
- Village on the Green



March Calendar of Events

EDUCATIONAL

Ask Granny: Create a Genealogical Gift for Your Descendants Tuesday, March 4th 10am-12pm
By Central Florida Genealogical Society. Limited Seating. RSVP Required 407.949.6733

Ready, Set, GO! Conquer Your Clutter!
Thursday, March 13th 11am-12:30pm
By Creating Divine Order. RSVP 407.699.5600

FUN & EXERCISE

Senior Club
Every Monday 10am-12pm
By Family Physicians Group
March 3rd – Bingo
March 10th – Computer Club
March 17th – St. Patrick's Day Celebration
March 24th – Movie Day
March 31st – Casino Day

Chair Pilates
Friday, March 7th & 21st 1:30pm-2pm
By VITAS. RSVP 407.599.2522

Crafts & Conversation
Tuesday, March 11th 2pm-4pm
By VITAS. Limited seating, must RSVP 407.599.2522

Bingo Bash
Wednesday, March 12th 11am-12pm
By Orlando Family Physicians. Open to the Public

March Birthday & Massage Celebration
Wednesday, March 19th 10am-1pm
By Freedom Health. RSVP 407.488.6766

HEALTH RELATED

Is It Wax or Is It My Hearing?
Wednesday, March 5th 3pm-4:30pm
By Harmony Hearing. RSVP 407.949.6737

Your Lungs – Keeping Them Healthy
Thursday, March 6th 10:30am-1pm
By American Lung Association & VITAS.
RSVP 407.599.2522

FREE- I Quit Tobacco Program
Wednesday, March 12th 10am-12pm
By AHEC. RSVP 1.877.252.6094

Free Ear Cleaning & Checks!
Wednesday, March 12th 3pm-4:30pm
By Harmony Hearing. RSVP 407.949.6737

Are Your Hearing Aids in the Drawer?
Wednesday, March 19th 3pm-4:30pm
By Harmony Hearing. RSVP 407.949.6737

Healthy Aging with Chelsea Mabry, PhD.
Thursday, March 20th 10am-11:30am
By Compass Research. RSVP 407.218.6220

Hearing Aids Users Improve Relationships & Self Image!

Wednesday, March 26th 3pm-4:30pm
By Harmony Hearing. RSVP 407.949.6737

INSURANCE & REAL ESTATE

The Real Estate Specialists Are In!
Monday, March 3rd 10th, 17th, 24th & 31st
10am-1pm
By Exit Real Estate Results.
Appointment Only 407.949.6714

New to Medicare? Know Your Options!
Tuesday, March 4th 10am-11:30am
By Medicare Plan Options. RSVP 407.949.6723

The Real Estate Specialists are In!
Thursday, March 6th, 13th, 20th & 27th 9am-12pm
By EXIT Real Estate Results

Health Care Reform & How It Affects Seniors
Friday, March 7th 10am-12pm
By Medicare Plan Options. RSVP 407.949.6723

Selling Your Home & Moving Made Easy
Tuesday, March 11th 10am-12pm
By EXIT Real Estate Results. RSVP 407.949.6714

AARP Medicare Complete
Tuesday, March 11th & 25th 2pm-3:30pm
By LTC Advisors. RSVP 407.949.6722

BlueMedicare 2014
Wednesday, March 13th 3pm-4pm
By Florida Blue-McBride Insurance Agency.
RSVP 407.949.6735

LEGAL & FINANCIAL

Truth about Medicaid Planning
Tuesday, March 18th 9:30am-12pm
By The Law Offices of Hoyt & Bryan.
RSVP 407.977.8080

Truth about Estate Planning
Tuesday, March 18th 2pm-4pm
By The Law Offices of Hoyt & Bryan.
RSVP 407.977.8080

Senior Survival Workshop
Tuesday, March 25th 2pm-4pm
By Kathleen Flammia, P.A. RSVP 407.478.7800

Evaluating Your Tax Rate
Wednesday, March 26th 12pm-1pm
By Price Financial Services. RSVP 407.339.4500

Mistakes to Avoid Your RMD's
(Required Minimum Distributions)
Thursday, March 27th 10am-11am
By Estate & Business Planning Group.
RSVP 407.389.1122



Bingo Extravaganza!

Friday, March 14th 1pm-3pm
By One Senior Place. Limited seating,
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Do big dogs mean a stronger economy?

Is our growing preference for larger dog breeds a sign that the economy is recovering? According to the American Kennel Club, that's a possibility.

"Owning bigger breeds — an economic indicator of sorts — [has] been on the rise during the past five years," said Lisa Peterson, an AKC representative. "As the economy has improved, people are turning back to the big dogs they love, which cost



more to feed and care for than the smaller breeds that saw a rise in popularity in 2007 and 2008."

That's an odd statement to

make, considering the most popular large dogs have never been out of the AKC's annual top-10 breeds. The Labrador retriever has held the No. 1 spot for 23 years, and the German shepherd and Golden retriever consistently make the top five. The Dachshund and the Yorkshire terrier are the only small breeds to consistently break into the top 10.

It raises questions about what the AKC thinks of dog owners. What were we doing when we were supposedly out of love with big dogs six years ago? What about own-

ers who prefer smaller dogs?

While financial problems are often cited as a reason for owners to neglect or abandon their dogs, the size of the dog isn't the biggest cause. Smaller breeds can cost just as much or more to care for, and I've met many owners who would gladly go hungry to make sure their pet has food.

Owners have many reasons for choosing the pet they bring into the family. Economic concerns are an important consideration, but responsible owners consider a lot

of factors, such as the breed, its size, potential behavioral or health issues, apartment or homeowner association rules, and local pet ordinances.

It's irresponsible of the AKC to correlate breed size with growth or dampening of the economy and smacks of bias by the organization.

Send your questions or comments to ask@pawscorner.com. Did you know mosquitos can transmit heartworm larvae to dogs, but fleas don't? Find out more in my new book, "Fighting Fleas," available now. © 2013 King Features Synd. Inc.

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Senior Calendar

MAITLAND SENIOR CENTER PROGRAMS

Join Audrey every Tuesday in March at 10:30 a.m. for **Line Dance Lessons**. Class is 1.5 hours and perfect for all levels of dancers. Beginners are always welcome! Cost of the class is \$4 to the teacher.

Join us every Monday and Friday in March at 1 p.m. to **see your favorite movies!** Check our calendar online to see what movies are showing in March. Please call to reserve your seat!

Join John every Monday, Thursday and Friday in March at 9 a.m. for **Yoga**. Please wear comfortable clothes and bring your own mat. The cost of the class is \$2 to the teacher.

Join us every Monday in March at 1 p.m. for our **Conversational French group**. Spend some time chatting with others and making new friends.

Join Esther every Tuesday in March at 9 a.m. for **Tai Chi classes**. Cost of the class is \$10 per month to the teacher. Please wear

a white shirt, black pants, and comfortable shoes.

Join us every Tuesday in March at 1 p.m. for our **Conversational Spanish group**. Spend some time chatting with others and making new friends. Must be fluent in Spanish to participate.

Join Sher're every Wednesday in March at 10 a.m. for Instructor's Choice. This class is a **combo of mat and chair yoga** that is great for all levels. Cost of the class is \$5 to the teacher. Please bring a

■ Please see SENIOR CALENDAR on next page

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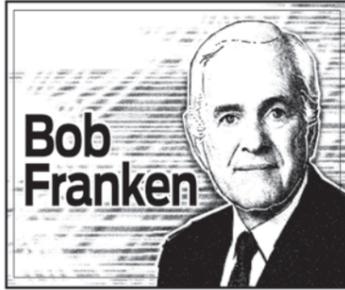
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Hard-line politics and the losing game

I've described politics as the dark side of government, but, as usual, things have gotten worse: Politics is just about all there is to government these days, certainly on the national level. The sad election choice for Americans has degenerated into "Pick Your Poison." Republicans largely offer a field of bizarre extremist candidates who not only should be laughed off the stage, but shouldn't have been in the theater in the first place. They are enabled by Democrats, who are so inept that they waste every opportunity to advance their progressive agenda.

Their standard-bearer for now is Barack Obama, of course, but he and his peeps are blowing their chance to shape the country in their image. The most glaring example is Obamacare. Ron Fournier, who proves that "respected journalist" is not necessar-



ily an oxymoron, cites in the National Journal how, "It's getting difficult and slinking toward impossible to defend the Affordable Care Act." His frustration boils over at the latest decision to delay another employer mandate until after the midterm election, which Fournier describes as further proof that, "The White House has politicized its signature policy."

Setting aside the criticism that the law itself was twisted by special-interest lobbyists and a ruthless GOP opposition into a Rube Goldberg substitute for genuine reform,

it still offers some improvement for millions of people who had been shut out of their right simply to be well. The administration's carelessness between passage and reality has undermined its credibility. It's worsened even now by a White House that lurches, blinded by shortsightedness.

Even with the latest report that more people are signing on, the mixed messages give powerful ammunition to those whose passion it is to destroy the current presidency by demonizing Obama and flogging him with his signature program. He makes it easy by symbolically wearing a "Kick Me" sign.

Sen. Ted Cruz and others of his ilk have learned that they can have it both ways. They can demagogue the debt ceiling issue, for instance, knowing full well that their weary leaders will see to it that a disaster is avoided. In the

House, Speaker John Boehner is taking heat for rescuing the crazies from themselves. In the Senate, it's Minority Leader Mitch McConnell fending off Cruz, who couldn't care less that McConnell's re-election is endangered back home in Kentucky.

The hard-liners can vote against new borrowing authority and brag to their voters back home that they did, secure in the knowledge that they will not take the blame for forcing the nation into financial disgrace. While there will be some distractions this year, like immigration reform (don't bet on that one), the thicket has been cleared. The campaign is about Obamacare.

Democrats will have to play defense, mired in the garble from the White House. Cruz and the others can lick their chops as they contemplate the real possibility of controlling the entire Congress for two years and then taking the whole shebang in 2016, stuffing even Hillary. She, of course, saw her own effort at health-care reform go down in flames.

Maybe it has become a political fourth rail, but now that Barack Obama has grabbed it, he can't let go. Ted Cruz and the others won't.

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Senior Calendar

■ CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE
yoga mat.

Join Ty every Wednesday in March at 11 a.m. for **Yoga Nidra**, a sublime conscious sleep (meditation) class. Cost of the class is \$5 to the teacher. Please bring a yoga mat, something to cover yourself with (if you tend to get cold), and a small pillow.

Join Donna every Thursday in March at 11:30 a.m. for **Chair Yoga**. Cost of the class is a \$2 donation to the teacher.

Join Ann every Friday in March for **Recorder classes** at 12:30 p.m. Lessons are free! Please call the Senior Center at 407-539-6251 for specifics on this class. (There will be no class on March 2.)

The Maitland Senior Center presents a program for elders on the second Friday of the month (March 14 this month) that is staffed by counselors from S.H.I.N.E. (Serving Health Insurance Needs of Elders). The program provides **free unbiased counseling about Medicare, Medigap, HMOs, Medicaid, prescriptions drug plans, and long term care.** For more information, email information@elderaffairs.org, call 1-800-96 ELDER, or visit floridashine.org

The Maitland Senior Center is located at 345 S. Maitland Ave. in Maitland. We are open Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. For more information please call us at 407-539-6251 or visit us on the web at itsmymaitland.com

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Back 2 Basics is a **low-impact workout** at noon on Tuesdays

and Thursdays, and 8:30 a.m. on Saturdays. It's \$49.99 a month for unlimited classes.

Chair Yoga is at 10 a.m. every Monday and will get you moving again! The cost is \$2 per class.

Gentle/Restorative Yoga is from 8:45 to 10 a.m. on Sundays. Cost is \$10 per class. Senior citizen's discount is \$5 per class. For more information, contact Alice Gomes at 609-290-8195 or email alice@imagineyoga.net

Yoga Technique is 8:45 to 10 a.m. on Saturdays. Cost is \$10 per class. Senior citizen's discount is \$5 per class.

Chairobics is from 11:05 a.m. to noon on Mondays and Wednesdays. The class is free. For more information, contact Claudia Laine at 407-718-9066.

Tai Chi for Beginners is at 1 p.m. on Tuesdays. An intermediate class is at 2 p.m. For more information, contact Eric Raboy at 407-731-9130. Cost is \$5 per class or \$20 per month.

For more information on classes and registration, contact Mario Algarin at 407-262-7700, ext. 1576, or malgarin@casselberry.org or visit casselberry.org/register

■ Please see SENIOR CALENDAR on page 8

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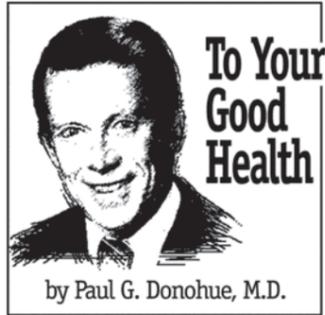
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Does smoking increase hemoglobin count?

DEAR DR. DONOHUE: My blood count showed that my hemoglobin is too high. All else is normal. My doctor says the hemoglobin is high because I smoke. The doctor is on me everytime I see him to stop smoking. I want to, but I haven't been able to. Is he putting me on with another scare tactic? — S.C.



ANSWER: Hemoglobin is the stuff inside red blood cells that grabs onto oxygen as the blood cells pass through the lungs. Determining a person's hemoglobin is a surrogate for determining the number of red blood cells.

The carbon monoxide in cigarette smoke prevents the attachment of oxygen to the red blood cell. The body senses an oxygen deficit. It ups the production of red blood cells to compensate. The hemoglobin count rises. Your doctor is telling you the

truth. Now you've got two doctors harping on you.

DEAR DR. DONOHUE: What is the best way to get rid of tonsil stones, besides sticking my finger down my throat as far as I can and trying to dislodge the smelly things? More importantly, what is the way to prevent tonsil stones? I never had them until a year or so ago. — S.M.

ANSWER: Tonsil stones, or tonsilloliths, are the not uncommon (one study reported them in 7 percent of young adults) but seldom discussed clusters of calcified material that lodge in the tonsils. Your tonsils, those oval-shaped

swellings on the sides of the back of your throat, are important for the cells of the immune system.

Tonsilloliths form in the crypts (deep valleys) of the tonsil, and sometimes are visible as white or yellow spots when looking in the mirror. They become bothersome if they are large enough to cause discomfort or difficulty swallowing, but often they are noticed because of their unpleasant odor. Tonsilloliths often spontaneously come out of the tonsils; they usually are described as waxy or hard, with a peculiar odor.

I don't recommend sticking

your finger in the back of your throat. The gag reflex can be very strong, and the tonsils have a very good blood supply, so damaging them can be very bloody. Some authorities recommend removal using the tongue attachment of a Waterpik (or similar device), but I have had general success with saltwater gargles. Very large or recurrent tonsilloliths are an indication for a visit to the ENT doctor.

Dr. Donohue is unable to answer individual letters, but he will incorporate them in his column whenever possible. Write him or request an order form of available health newsletters at P.O. Box 536475, Orlando, FL 32853-6475.

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Senior Calendar

■ CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7
WINTER SPRINGS SENIOR CENTER

Learn ceramics 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Mondays at the Winter Springs Senior Center at 400 N. Edgemon Ave. in Winter Springs. Call 407-327-6556 for more information.

Have fun and get moving at **yoga classes** at 10 a.m. every Friday morning. Chair yoga is also available.

Bingo is Wednesday, Friday and the last Sunday of the month. Lunch is 11:45 a.m. then Bingo at 1 p.m. There is no bingo prior to the last Sunday of the month.

A bridge class meets at 10:30 a.m. Tuesdays to help your game.

Tuesdays at 10:30 a.m., we will start a **"Guided Meditation"** class. This will be a 30-minute class. We are excited about this class and want to thank Robin Ward for taking the time to offer it. Hope to see you all then!

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