

County OKs money for Friendship Trailbridge

Aging structure exceeds design life ... Page 6A.

LARGO LEADER

Volume XXXIV, No. 45

www.TBNweekly.com

May 31, 2012

SCHOOLS



New LHS principal to start July 2

Osceola High School assistant principal named to succeed Marjorie Sundstrom, who is retiring. See the story written by student journalists.

... Page 9A

BUSINESS

Jobless rate drops

Pinellas County unemployment continues to fall.

April's not seasonally adjusted unemployment rate was 8.2 percent, down from 8.7 percent in March. A year ago, Pinellas had an April unemployment rate of 10 percent.

... Page 10A

COUNTY

Historical Society holds lecture series

The Pinellas County Historical Society is sponsoring Pinellas by the Decades: A Centennial Celebration Speaking of History Lecture Series on second Sundays, 2 p.m., at Heritage Village, 11909 125th St. N.

With more than 28 historic structures and features set amidst a natural pine and palmetto landscape, Heritage Village is home to structures dating back to the 19th century, including a school, church, sponge warehouse, railroad depot and store as well as a variety of historic homes.

Admission is free but donations are greatly appreciated. A minimum donation of \$2 an adult is suggested.

On Sunday, June 10, the lecture will be Building Bridges and Aspiring for the Major Leagues: 1982 to 1991.

During this decade many new bridges, physical and social, spanned the county and across Tampa Bay. The new Sunshine Skyway and the Bayside bridges promoted regional connections, while the pursuit of a major league baseball franchise sparked lively debates.

Pinellas County is celebrating 100 years of independence from Hillsborough County. As part of the centennial activities, the Pinellas County Historical Society is presenting an engaging, ongoing series of multidisciplinary lectures.

VIEWPOINTS

Bill Cotterell

Prepare for major mudslinging, columnist says.

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'Snow White and the Huntsman' opens in theaters this weekend

Also at the box office will be 'For Greater Glory,' starring Andy Garcia. ... Page 1B.



FCAT under fire at board meeting

School Board urged to adopt national resolution against testing

By TOM GERMOND

LARGO - Pinellas County School Superintendent John Stewart said May 22 he has "grave concerns" about high-stakes testing, and the state should investigate how students are evaluated.

Stewart said at the School Board's meeting May 22 that the board will discuss a national resolution against testing mandates, notably the FCAT, at a work session. He said he shared the concerns expressed by Pinellas Classroom Teachers President Kim Black, who encouraged the School Board to adopt the resolution at its June 12 meeting.

"I think that every School Board member will echo that message to you," Stewart said. "I just didn't think tonight was the night without having a proper chance to discuss it in the proper forum. So we will do that and we will join you some way, some how, in trying to bring Pinellas County's attention to this issue."

"It's time the state investigated how we are doing high-stakes testing and how we are evaluating our students and move forward with that. I hope they do that, and I'm all for it," Stewart said.

Black said the resolution has been adopted by the Palm Beach and St. Lucie school boards and is being considered for adoption by Indian River and Martin

County school boards.

The resolution was modeled after a similar resolution from Texas that 460 school boards have signed, she said.

"Adopting the resolutions would send a message that the board values accountability in multiple measures of student growth and that you recognize that changes must be made to Florida's accountability system from Washington, D.C., to Tallahassee to Largo," she said.

"Our students, teachers and schools have shouldered the burden of an accountability system that

See TESTING, page 5

Honoring those who made 'the ultimate sacrifice'

By TOM GERMOND

LARGO - A decorated U.S. Army soldier who recently returned from an 18-month combat tour in Afghanistan

said at the city's Memorial Day ceremony that the names of Americans on the war memorials represent "our freedom and our future."

Command Sgt. Maj. Marvin L. Hill, the keynote speaker

at the event May 28, said he is often reminded of the walls of honor that have countless names of "our brave men and women" who have made the

"ultimate sacrifice."

"Some made the sacrifice for their country. Others made the sacrifice for their brothers and sisters who fought alongside them. Many see those names as a means to pay tribute to our heroes. But when I look at those names, I'm reminded of the liberties, freedoms and futures of our sons and daughters that were paid because of those

names on those walls," said Hill, who joined the Army in 1978.

Hill has been involved in dangerous assignments all over the world. As the Division



Photos by TOM GERMOND
U.S. Command Sgt. Maj. Marvin Hill, above, who served in Iraq, Afghanistan and other theaters, addresses the audience at the Largo Memorial Day ceremony May 28. Below, attendees of the ceremony show their patriotic pride. More photos on page 3A.



Command sergeant major of the 101st Airborne Division, Hill was deployed to Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. He also served as Task Force command sergeant major for Multinational Force and Observers in Egypt and as the Task Force Falcon command sergeant major in Kosovo. He also served as the Task Force command sergeant major for the Joint Task Force-Katrina in response to Hurricane Katrina and Rita.

Hill said "with no hesitation" that the men and women who served America in the military "make up the finest fighting force in the world and perhaps ever."

Since Oct. 7, 2001, when the United States initiated Operation Enduring Freedom, and March 19, 2003, when it began Operation Iraqi Freedom, nearly 6,500 soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines have paid the "ultimate sacrifice in the war on terror. Another 66,000 service members have been wounded in action," he said.

"That equates nearly the en-

tire population of Largo, Florida," he said, "either being injured or killed."

He said that not everybody goes to Memorial Day ceremonies. But he urged people to reach out to veterans and their families.

"Every day we owe these brave men and women more than a flag-draped coffin, more than a solemn place to rest, more than a building or a training facility to a street named in their honor and much, much more than a moment of silence," Hill said.

Hill's awards and decorations include the Defense Superior Service Medal with oak leaf cluster, the Legion of Merit, the Bronze Star Medal, the Defense Meritorious Service Medal, the Meritorious Service Medal, and the Joint Service Commendation Medal for Valor.

The presentation of colors, POW/MIA remembrance service, a wreath presentation, three rifle volleys, musical tribute and other events were part of the evening ceremony at Largo Central Park.

Largo officials asked by resident to ban pit bulls

By TOM GERMOND

LARGO - City officials have been asked to ban pit bulls in the city limits, but the mayor says taking such action would be difficult to enforce.

Charlene Lord, a city resident, said in an email to Mayor Pat Gerard that her neighbors have a pit bull that she is concerned about.

"Not all, but most owners, have vicious tendencies just as the pit bulls do. Many cities throughout the U.S., including Miami, have banned these dogs," she wrote.

"Our houses are so close together here that having those dogs creates very scary situations for us residents. I am scared on a daily basis that my son or my cat will be mauled. I should not have to live like this," she wrote.

Gerard wrote back to Lord that having an ordi-

nance banning a particular breed of animal would be difficult to enforce and would place an enormous strain on the city's police department.

"As you mentioned, the problem is not so much about the breed of the animal but more the individual treatment of the breed. I will not dispute the fact that pit bulls have been associated with some horrific acts; however, it is the classic case of nature versus nurture. Society has labeled these animals with an unjust stereotype when it is actually the owner of the animal that determines and molds its behavior which sometimes results in violence," Gerard wrote.

The Miami-Dade ordinance, the only one of its kind in the state, "is being highly contested and will be presented to the voters as a referendum in the fall. You can be assured we will monitor the outcome of that vote," Gerard wrote.

She added that Lord's concern for her family and pets is understandable. The city, like other jurisdictions, has an ordinance, which addresses vicious animals, those that pose a physical threat to other animals or to humans. Gerard encouraged Lord to contact the city's code enforcement division if she thinks the neighbor's dog poses such a threat.

Pinellas County Senior Animal Control Officer John Hohenstern said he doesn't know of any municipality in the county that is considering an ordinance that would ban specific breeds.

He said the county would need to have about 20 people to enforce such an ordinance.

"It would be a nightmare," he said. Pinellas Animal Control's website said that pit

See PIT BULLS, page 4A

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Around Largo

Free genealogy/family history classes in June at Largo Library provided by Pinellas Genealogy Society. Largo Public Library, 120 Central Park Drive.

Description: "Free classes this month include: Ancestry.com – how to use this huge site, Getting Started in Genealogy, Using family search.org (LDS-Mormon website) and Internet Genealogy – getting started. See the complete listing with details of classes and scheduled

How to contribute

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We are not able to predict exactly the issue it will be printed or even guarantee that it will be used.

The deadline for all copy is Friday, noon, preceding publication date. The newspapers are published Thursdays. For upcoming events, please send in your announcement two weeks in advance, if possible.

All submissions can be dropped off at the office or mailed to Tampa Bay Newspapers, 9911 Seminole Blvd., Seminole, FL 33772, emailed to editorial@TBNweekly.com or faxed to 397-5900.

Questions? Call 397-5563 or send an email.

Please include a contact name and number on all submissions.

Personal photographs can be picked up at the office after publication; however, their safety is not guaranteed (please don't give us the last picture you have of Ol' Uncle Albert.)

Please type letters to the editor (or print legibly) and include your name, town of residence, phone number and signature and mail to Tampa Bay Newspapers, 9911 Seminole Blvd., Seminole, FL 33772. E-mails should include town of residence and telephone and be sent to tgermond@TBNweekly.com. We will not print the letter writer's phone number.

Letters are printed on a first-come, first-served basis. They may be edited to correct grammar, spelling and factual errors. They also may be edited for clarity.

Please keep letters to editor to 500 words. Longer letters may be cut due to space limitations.

Note: Email is the most effective way to submit press releases. Name your club in the subject area of the email so we can recognize it as a nonprofit group.

times at www.flpgs.org/classes.aspx. Email Bob Bryan at BBryan84@gmail.com or call 595-4521 for more information."

Call 587-6715.

The event is free.

Square dancing – June 1, 8, 15, 22 and 29, 7:30 until 9:45 p.m., Largo Community Center, 400 Alt. Keene Road.

Description: "Like country style dancing? Square or round? Spend the evening dancing to professional caller Allen Snell. Join anytime."

Call 518-3131.

The fee is \$6.

Open air market – June 2, 9, 9 a.m. until 2 p.m., Largo Community Center, 400 Alt. Keene Road.

Description: "Enjoy your Saturday morning browsing through a variety of vendors at the brand new Largo Community Center's Open Air Market. The market will consist of local produce, crafters, food vendors, jewelry, artists and entertainment. For more information visit LargoCommunityCenter.com."

Call 518-3131.

The event is free.

Stories in the Park – June 2, 10:30 a.m., McGough Nature Park, 11901 146th St. N

Description: "Come join our park rangers each month for a morning story, a hike through the park and snacks with your kids. Held the first Saturday of each month."

Call 518-3047 to preregister today!

The fee is \$3 per family.

Train Weekend – June 2-3, 10 a.m. until 4 p.m., Largo Central Park, 101 Central Park Drive.

Description: "Ride the miniature trains of Largo Central Railroad on the first full weekend every month in Largo Central Park. For a schedule of dates as well as pictures from this event, please go to the Special Events Train Weekend page at LargoEvents.com."

Call 587-6740, ext. 5014.

The event is free but donations accepted.

Largo Clay Court Championship – June 2-3, Largo Tennis Center, 13120 Vonn Road.

Description: "Adult combo doubles tournament with rankings of 6.0-9.0. Must be a USTA member. Registration and additional information at Tennislink.com."

Call 518-3125.

Swing Dance Saturdays – June 2, 9, 16, 23 and 30, 7 until 11 p.m., Largo Community Center.

Description: "Come enjoy an evening of dancing and socializing every Saturday night. Enjoy a free lesson from 7 to 8 p.m. and a DJ dance from 8 until 11 p.m. Our resident DJ is Savoy Swing. Don't miss out on our 5,600-square-foot sprung hardwood floor. For more information visit LargoCommunityCenter.com or call 518-3131."

The fee is \$7.

Southwest Neighborhood Summer Kickoff – June 9, 11 a.m. until 3 p.m., Southwest Pool, 13120 Vonn Road.

Description: "Come celebrate summer with friends and family. A hot dog lunch and bottled water will be available as well as floats, inner tubes and diving boards for recreational use. Experience underwater exploration with Discover Scuba, ages 17 and younger require a parent signature. Door prizes will be given away. For more information call 518-3126."

The event is free and there is a fee of \$10 per entry.

The first day of summer camp – June 11.

Description: "The city of Largo Recreation, Parks and Arts Department

welcomes you to another exciting summer of camp. This year's theme is Play! Unplugged. We are dedicated to getting kids active and using creativity in play, without being "plugged in." We offer sports, dance, teen, nature, golf, tennis, performing arts, health and wellness, specialty camps and preschool camps."

For more information, visit LargoCamps.com or call Highland Recreation Complex at 518-3016 or Southwest Recreation Complex at 518-3125."

Itty Bitty Splashtime – June 11, 13, 15, 18, 20, 22, 25, 27 and 29, 9:45 until 10:45 a.m., Highland Family Aquatic Center, 400 Highland Ave.

Description: "Parents can spend quality time with their preschool aged children in a safe and playful aquatic environment. Mom's clubs are welcome. Children not potty-trained must wear a plastic swim diaper under their bathing suit."

For more information, call 518-3018 or visit LargoPools.com.

The fee is \$1.50 per person

Teen Tidalwave Tuesdays – June 12, 19 and 26, 7 until 9 p.m., Highland Family Aquatic Center, 400 Highland Ave.

Description: "Teens can meet up with friends, swim, and catch up on what happened over the weekend. Sponsors will provide snacks and giveaways are planned."

For more information, call 518-3018 or visit LargoPools.com.

The fee is \$3 per teen.

Monthly Night Hikes – June 16, 6:30 p.m., McGough Nature Park, 11901 146th St. N.

Description: "Join us every third Saturday of the month for a guided walk through the woods, seeking out nocturnal animals such as raccoons, owls, opossums, bats and more. Flashlights are optional. Donations are kindly accepted. Preregister by calling 518-3047."

The even is free.

Recognizing Father's Day – June 17, 1:30 until 3:30 p.m., Highland Family Aquatic Center, 400 Highland Ave.

Description: "In honor of Father's Day, all dads will be admitted free with one paid child admission. Free hot dogs will be given out (while supplies last) and licensed massage therapist, Dana Crane will be on site providing free chair massages. All fathers in attendance will receive a special gift, courtesy of Missing Links in Largo."

Call 518-3018.

Child admission is \$4 with a recreation card and \$7 without a card.

Community Luncheon and Show – June 21, noon until 2 p.m., Largo Community Center.

Description: "Enjoy a scrumptious meal, dessert and entertainment. Purchase tickets in the office one month prior to the luncheon."

Call 518-3131.

The fee is \$10.

Bi-Monthly Golf Tournament – June 23, 10 a.m., Largo Golf Course, 12500 Vonn Road.

Description: "Compete for prizes and enjoy our skills challenge holes. Includes lunch, prizes and more."

Call 518-3024.

The fee is \$40 per golfer.

Silver Screen Classics: "A History of the Movies" – June 28, noon, Largo Community Center.

Description: "Enjoy an afternoon of viewing a classic movie on our 20 foot screen. Refreshments will be sold and information on the movie will be handed out. Movies are shown in the ballroom. Call for a listing of movies."

The event is free.

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Photos by TOM GERMOND
Largo Police Department/Fire Department Honor Guard members, left, stand at attention during the Memorial Day ceremony at Largo Central Park May 28. The Honor Guard's Bob Larche, above, plays taps at the end of the ceremony.

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Get ready; hurricane season off to an early start

By SUZETTE PORTER

The 2012 Atlantic basin hurricane season officially begins June 1, and two names are already crossed off the list.

Tropical Storm Alberto, which formed May 19 off the coast of South Carolina, is the earliest-forming tropical storm in the Atlantic Basin since Ana in 2003, according to the National Hurricane Center. This year also is the first time that a tropical storm has formed before the official start of the hurricane season in the Atlantic and East Pacific basins.

The Atlantic basin hurricane season runs from June 1 to Nov. 30. It includes the Atlantic Ocean, Caribbean Sea and Gulf of Mexico. The East Pacific season began May 15.

Tropical Storm Beryl arrived just in time for Memorial Day, coming ashore at Jacksonville Beach at near-hurricane strength with maximum sustained winds of 70 mph just after midnight May 28. A minimum Category 1 hurricane has maximum sustained winds of 74 mph. Beryl caused numerous power failures as it downed trees and flooded streets. Vacationers and residents spent much of the holiday dealing with high winds, heavy rains, dangerous surf and rip currents.

Locally, Beryl's rain bands didn't make it far enough south to provide much rain. The rain gauge at the Pinellas County Emergency Management in Clearwater showed just over a quarter inch of rain for Sunday and no rain for Monday. Rain totals varied with the National Weather Service reporting nearly a half-inch in Pinellas Park over a 24-hour period from 4 p.m. Sunday to 4 p.m. Monday.

2012 season predictions

The research team at Colorado State University's Tropical Meteorology Project released its predictions April 4 for the Atlantic Basin. The forecast calls for a below-average chance of major hurricanes making landfall along the U.S. Coastline and the Caribbean this year.

A report written by Dr. Phil Klotzbach, research scientist, and William Gray, Professor emeritus of atmospheric science, forecasts 10 named storms forming in 2012, four hurricanes and two major hurricanes. A major hurricane is a Category 3, 4 or 5.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration released its predictions on May 24, calling

for a near-normal season.

"NOAA's outlook predicts a less active season compared to recent years," said NOAA Administrator Jane Lubchenco, Ph.D.

Based on statistical data from 1981 to 2010, average activity has been 12 named storms, six hurricanes and three major hurricanes.

NOAA's Climate Prediction Center says there is a 70 percent chance that nine to 15 named storms will form in 2012, with four to eight hurricanes and one to three major hurricanes.

Gray and Klotzbach will update the season forecast on June 1 and in August. NOAA also will update its forecast before August and the beginning of what is considered the peak of the season.

2012 storm names

Since 1953, Atlantic tropical storms had been named from lists originated by the National Hurricane Center. The 2012 list of names include Alberto, Beryl, Chris, Debby, Ernesto, Florence, Gordon, Helene, Isaac, Joyce, Kirk, Leslie, Michael, Nadine, Oscar, Patty, Rafael, Sandy, Tony, Valerie and William.

It only takes one

In the first hurricane e-Alert of the season, Pinellas County's Emergency Management Director Sally Bishop remembers Hurricane Andrew, which hit south Florida in 1992 – another year forecast to have below-average activity.

Andrew became the costliest hurricane in American history and maintained that title until Hurricane Katrina surpassed it in 2005.

"The moral of the story is it doesn't matter how many storms are forecast, nor how busy the season is. It only takes one making landfall where you live to make a quiet season one to remember," Bishop said.

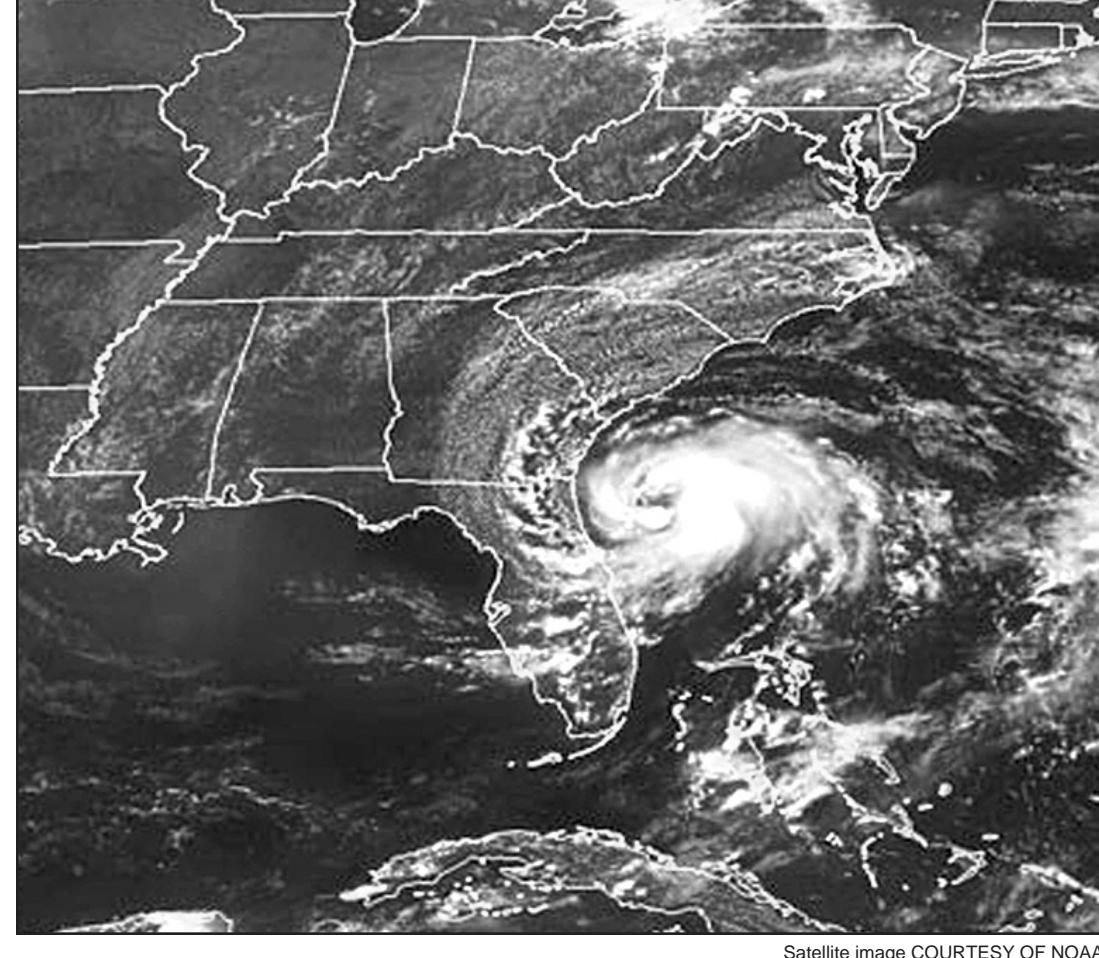
For evacuation zones and more hurricane information, visit www.pinellascounty.org/emergency.

Lubchenco also talked about Hurricane Andrew.

"We have a stark reminder this year with the 20th anniversary of Hurricane Andrew. Andrew, the Category 5 hurricane that devastated South Florida on Aug. 24, 1992, was the first storm in a late-starting season that produced only six storms."

She cautioned against relying on predictions.

"Regardless of the outlook, it is vital for anyone



Satellite image COURTESY OF NOAA
A report written by Dr. Phil Klotzbach, research scientist, and William Gray, Professor emeritus of atmospheric science, forecasts 10 named storms forming in 2012, four hurricanes and two major hurricanes.

living or vacationing in hurricane-prone locations to be prepared," she said.

Hurricane preparedness week

NOAA has designated May 27-June 2 as Hurricane Preparedness Week.

"History teaches that a lack of hurricane awareness and preparation are common threads among all major hurricane disasters. By knowing your vulnerability and what actions you should take, you can reduce the effects of a hurricane disaster," ac-

cording to NOAA officials.

On the website, www.nhc.noaa.gov/prepare, people can learn about hurricane hazards, the role the National Weather Service plays in protecting life and property and other essentials to protecting home and family. Website visitors also can download a PDF of the Tropical Cyclone Preparedness Guide.

"The first and most important thing anyone should do when facing a hurricane threat is to use common sense," NOAA says.

Around Pinellas

Plans for bike trail near completion

TREASURE ISLAND – Design plans for a proposed bicycle and walking trail from the Treasure Island Causeway to Gulf Boulevard is nearing completion.

Jerry Dabkowski, a traffic consultant for the Baker Corp., told city commissioners at a May 15 workshop that the work is about 90 percent complete with drainage and signage issues still to be resolved.

Commissioners also will need to decide what manner they want traffic to flow in and how much they want to spend before the details are complete.

The trail will begin eastbound at the northwest corner of Gulf Boulevard and 104th Avenue. The 10-foot-wide trail will go east on the north side of 104th Avenue, "meandering onto Community Park property and through trees" toward 106th Avenue.

At 106th Avenue, plans call for the route to split – one 4-foot lane on the north side of the street and another on the south side of the street – due to property dimensions and drainage concerns.

When the trail reaches the 104th/107th/108th Avenue intersection, the two split lanes will merge on the southeast side of the intersection next to the St. James Condominium property where the trail will continue eastward toward St. Petersburg.

Among the traffic changes is a proposal to put a channeled left turn lane on westbound Treasure Island Causeway at 104th Avenue and a channeled right turn onto the causeway from 104th.

A concern is 108th eastbound onto the causeway and possible traffic backups.

One option would be to force motorists into a right-hand turn that would ultimately, planners hope, lead motorists to using First Street East southbound to 107th where a 4-way stop would allow them to turn left (eastbound) toward the causeway.

Commissioner Butch Ellsworth suggested the possibility of a traffic signal at the 3-way intersection but Dabkowski said it wasn't feasible.

"That would require a set of lights for 108th, a set for 104th, a turn lane for 104th and the causeway and another set west to the clock tower," he said.

Commissioner Phil Collins concurred.

"The last thing people want to see is another 4-way stop or a light put up," said Collins. "I don't think that's going to garner much support."

Dabkowski said city leaders could stay away from putting up stop signs initially and evaluate the situation later.

The cost for the trail design and resurfacing of 104th Avenue is estimated at \$195,000. Depending on the direction city leaders go with the other options, the total cost would be anywhere between \$245,000 and \$255,000.

The city has about \$90,000 available for the project now and would get the remainder from about \$404,000 available in the budget for street resurfacing.

- Bob McClure

Narrows density, height increase debated

INDIAN ROCKS BEACH – Several weeks ago the city's Planning and Zoning Board recommended that the height requirements for buildings in the business triangle area, known as The Narrows, be increased to 75 feet.

The City Commission did not go along with that recommendation.

At Tuesday's commission meeting, local businessman Bob Munce said in order for his plan to build a hotel on his 1.8-acre property in The Narrows to be profitable, he will need to have 105 hotel rooms and the old density restrictions of 15 rooms an acre, would make that impossible. The height restriction also would have to increase to make it viable.

TESTING, from page 1A

undermines educational quality and equity in our schools long enough," Black said.

The burden hampers educators' efforts to focus on the broad range of learning experiences that promote the innovation, creativity, problem solving and other skills. Pinellas teachers have not shied away from accountability and have embraced high standards and high quality education for all students, she said.

"We are asking the governor and state board of education to develop a system of multiple forms of assessment that accurately reflects student learning to improve schools instead of punishing them, does not require extensive standardized testing, and a system that supports and uplifts our students and schools, therefore instilling a lifelong love of education," she said.

Black asked that the board take action on the resolution at its June 12 meeting.

She said she talked with Stewart about the

issue the afternoon of May 22, and they agreed that it should be discussed at the board's next workshop and then be placed on the June 12 board meeting.

"If we don't stand up against these punitive measures for our students and our schools, then who will," she said.

Under heavy criticism since it was first administered in 1998, the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test is given to Florida students to measure what they know and are able to accomplish in reading, writing, mathematics, and science. The test is part of Florida's plan to improve student achievement.

Student achievement data from the FCAT are used to report educational status and annual progress for individual students, schools, districts, and the state. Grades are given to schools based on the percent of students meeting certain standards and the percent of students who make learning gains.

edgeable and educated decisions regarding adoption/ownership of these types of dogs. There are many pet owners who have very well-mannered pit bulls as pets and they never have a moment's worry with them. Tragically, others are mistreated by previous owners and raised to fight or be exceptionally aggressive," the website said.

School Board member Linda Lerner said she agreed with Stewart's remarks about the high-stakes testing.

"I fully support this resolution and going beyond the resolution. But we have to do it in the proper way. We will discuss it at our workshop and I'm quite sure it will be on our agenda for June 12," she said.

"I, we also have to look to school grades," she said. "If you celebrate them, you say they are valid, and I think it's time to say we are going to look at the progress students are making, and the other good things that are happening in schools, and I would like to stop celebration of grades."

The resolution says the "overemphasis on standardized testing has caused considerable collateral damage in too many schools, including narrowing the curriculum, teaching to the test, reducing love of learning, pushing students out of school, driving excellent teachers out of the profession, and

undermining school climate."

It calls on the governor, state Legislature and state education boards and administrators to "re-examine public school accountability systems in this state, and to develop a system based on multiple forms of assessment which does not require extensive standardized testing, more accurately reflects the broad range of student learning."

Superintendent search

In other board matters, Chairperson Robin Wikle said as of May 22, the board has received 12 applications. The deadline to apply is July 2. Interviews will be conducted in August and board action is expected in September.

Stewart, a long-time educator who served as deputy school superintendent for Pinellas County from 2000 to 2003, was appointed by the board to serve in an interim capacity in September and subsequently was named school superintendent. He is scheduled to retire at the end of the year.

PIT BULLS, from page 1A

bulls are probably one of the most misunderstood breeds and they have the lowest adoption rate to prove it.

The first step in changing this trend is to equip the public with the information and resources necessary to make knowl-

edgeable and educated decisions regarding adoption/ownership of these types of dogs. There are many pet owners who have very well-mannered pit bulls as pets and they never have a moment's worry with them. Tragically, others are mistreated by previous owners and raised to fight or be exceptionally aggressive," the website said.

The website offers advice on proper training for pit bulls.

Visit www.pinellascounty.org/animalservices/pitbull.htm

Drug dealer gets 10-year sentence

LARGO - A drug dealer was sentenced to 10 years in prison last week.

In September 2011, detectives of the Largo Police Department's Special Operations Unit conducted an investigation into a suspected drug dealer on the west side of the city. The subject of the investigation, Jonathan Brown, 34, had a significant criminal history dating back to 1994. He had been in and out of prison since 1998 and at the time was on inmate release status. During the operation, a myriad of felony charges were developed. Additionally, while conducting surveillance of Brown, detectives observed him get into a traffic crash, which led to additional charges.

At the culmination of the investigation, Brown was arrested and charged with possession of cocaine sale of cocaine, violation of probation, driving on a suspended license, leaving the scene of a crash with property damage, possession of a controlled substance with intent to sell and possession of Alprazolam.

Brown was sentenced in Pinellas County Circuit Court on the charges developed during the investigation.

22 year old arrested for sexual battery

PALM HARBOR - A 22 year old from Palm Harbor was arrested May 24 and charged with three counts of sexual battery on a minor.

Pinellas County Sheriff's detectives assigned to the Crimes Against Children Unit arrested Andrew Christopher Davis-Burton after he met a 15-year-old girl by a Palm Harbor residential neighborhood pool. The suspect provided alcoholic beverages to the minor and then invited her back to his residence, where he sexually battered her.

The crime occurred at a private residence in Palm Harbor about 5:30 p.m. on Sunday, May 20.

The victim is a 15-year-old female not known to the suspect. Per Florida Statute 119, no further information will be released that would tend to identify the minor victim.

According to detectives, the victim agreed to go with the suspect to his home. While there, he provided her with additional alcoholic beverages. He then forcefully removed her swimsuit and sexually battered her three times. Davis-Burton then forced her to clean herself up, before allowing her to leave the residence.

The victim reported the crime to her grandmother, who in turn contacted the Sheriff's Office. Crimes Against Children detectives responded and began their investigation.

Davis-Burton was located on the afternoon of May 24 in a home in Oldsmar and was arrested for three counts sexual battery and for contributing to the delinquency of a minor.

Police beat

a minor. He was subsequently transported to the Pinellas County Jail without further incident.

Detectives say there may be other victims and are asking anyone with information that may assist them in this case to contact Detective Amy White of the Crimes Against Children Unit at 582-6200.

Man charged with procuring females

PALM HARBOR - A Palm Harbor man was arrested May 23 for procuring juvenile females for prostitution, possession of methamphetamine and drug paraphernalia.

According to the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office, Crimes Against Children Detectives began receiving complaints in early May that James Garrett Perdue, 61, was harboring runaways and providing them with alcohol and drugs.

Through their investigation, detectives developed information that Perdue had been assisting juveniles engaged in prostitution since January. Detectives served a search warrant at Perdue's apartment on Ninth Street and found evidence linking to the charges. He was subsequently arrested.

He was charged with procuring a person under 18 for prostitution, a felony, with a bond of \$10,000; possession of methamphetamine, a felony with a bond of \$2,000; and possession of drug paraphernalia, a misdemeanor, with a bond of \$150.

Detectives believe there may be other victims. If anyone has further information, they are asked to call the Pinellas County Crimes Against Children Unit at 582-6200. Or, to remain anonymous, call Crime Stoppers at 1-800-873-TIPS.

Man almost drowns off Madeira Beach

MADEIRA BEACH - Pinellas County sheriff's deputies responded to a near drowning in Madeira Beach about 4:30 p.m. May 28.

According to the sheriff's report, Renato Morales Mendoza, 45, was taken to a nearby hospital where he is in serious but stable condition.

Deputies and fire rescue personnel responded to 12960 Gulf Blvd. where Mendoza was found unresponsive in the water just offshore. Bystanders pulled him from the water and gave him CPR until fire rescue arrived on scene.

Family cat dies in house fire

LEALMAN - Pinellas County sheriff's deputies responded to a residential fire at 3560 55th Ave. in Lealman at approximately 8 a.m. May 27.

As fire rescue personnel extinguished the fire, deputies ensured the safety and well-being of the neighboring community.

One resident in the home, Joseph Phanphilathip, 30, suffered second-degree burns to his body. He was taken to a local hospital and has since been released. The family cat succumbed to injuries suffered from smoke inhalation.

It is estimated that the fire caused \$50,000 in damage to the residence.

Fire officials and detectives believe a citronella candle left burning on the back porch caused the fire.

Three arrested after brief pursuit

ST. PETERSBURG - Members of the Violent Crime Task Force arrested three individuals about 11:25 p.m. May 25 after they rammed into a police cruiser and then fled the scene in south St. Petersburg.

The Violent Crime Task Force includes Pinellas County sheriff's deputies and St. Petersburg Police officers.

According to a release from the Sheriff's Office, Task Force members originally tried to stop the 2012 Chevrolet Camaro being driven by Larry Moseley near 3810 18th Ave. S. in St. Petersburg. The vehicle fled the traffic stop and intentionally struck the police cruiser that task force members were driving.

The Camaro was unable to negotiate a turn at 18th Avenue South and 49th Street and crashed into a light pole, then a tree in the grass median on the west side of 49th Street.

Moseley, 19, of St. Petersburg fled the crash scene on foot but was apprehended by K-9 deputies a short distance away.

The other passengers in the vehicle, Cornelius Flanning, 21, and Marques L. Rowe, 18, both of St. Petersburg were arrested at the crash site, 3810 18th Ave. S., St. Petersburg.

Task force members located a stolen Smith and Wesson 9mm handgun, 3.5 grams of crack cocaine and 10 grams of marijuana in the vehicle.

Law enforcement personnel in the damaged cruiser were not injured.

Moseley was charged with possession of crack cocaine, delinquent in possession of a firearm, resisting an officer without violence, grand theft of a firearm, two charges of aggravated battery on a law enforcement officer, hit and run with property damage, aggravated fleeing and eluding of a police officer, possession of a firearm while in commission of a felony and violation of probation warrant for driving with a suspended or revoked license out of Collier County. Bonds total in excess of \$175,000.

Flanning was charged with resisting an officer without violence (obstruction), grand theft of a firearm, possession of cocaine, felon in possession of a firearm and possession of marijuana. Bonds total \$31,000.

Rowe was charged with delinquent felon in possession of a firearm. Bond was set at \$20,000.

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County OKs money to take down Trailbridge

By SUZETTE PORTER

CLEARWATER - Approving money for demolition does not necessarily mean the old Friendship Trailbridge will be coming down.

Pinellas County Vice-chair Ken Welch made that point clear after commissioners voted unanimously May 22 to advance \$515,000 budgeted in fiscal year 2015 to the current year to fund the county's share of demolition costs. Commissioners John Morroni, Susan Latvala and Norm Roche were absent.

The money will be transferred to Hillsborough County. Pinellas and Hillsborough have operated the bridge via an interlocal agreement since 1999.

The Friendship Trail was temporarily shut down in November 2008 due to safety concerns. In December 2008, a report from Kisinger, Campo & Associates and SDR Engineering Consultants talked about the potential for the bridge to collapse due to eroding structural integrity. The bridge was then closed permanently.

Engineers said the aging structure, which has been in service nearly 60 years, had well exceeded its service design life of 50 years.

County staff explains that the bridge's location over Tampa Bay has exposed it to "an extremely corrosive environment for many years, which has caused extensive chloride intrusion of the steel reinforced concrete members."

The result is "ongoing degradation of the concrete piles, caps, beams, deck and other concrete elements."

In April 2010, the condition of the bridge was reassessed. Engineers estimated repair costs at \$48 million. Hillsborough and Pinellas decided to demolish the bridge and have since been working to budget the money to pay for it.

Hillsborough County, per the interlocal agreement, has spearheaded efforts to get bids for the demolition. American Bridge Company submitted a bid of nearly \$4.2 million to take down about 11,000 linear feet of the bridge, plus \$1 million to remove another 3,000 linear feet.

Pinellas County has already contributed \$2 million to the project. Another \$515,000 is needed to provide 50 percent of the cost.

Hillsborough County deferred a decision to award the demolition contract on April 4 due to a request by a Tampa-based citizen group that wants to turn the old structure into a linear park. The citizens are expected to present a business plan to Hillsborough County on June 6.

Pinellas County staff reviewed the draft plan the citizens presented and provided technical review and feedback.

The plan recommends replacing 252 low-level concrete spans with

prefabricated aluminum or galvanized steel metal spans and maintaining the remainder of the bridge intact with minor repairs. Cost is estimated at \$18.7 million to reopen the bridge and another \$33.2 million over the next 30 years.

Pinellas County staff identified areas of concern. First on the list was the service life of the piles, which are concrete columns driven below the seabed, and the concrete pile caps, which are the beams that connects the piles. The citizen's group estimates a \$1 million repair bill. Staff says the work will cost \$14 million to get 15 years of life.

Overall, the biggest concern was structural integrity and the saltwater environment that constantly erodes the concrete and steel.

Staff says, "Even with the expenditure of millions of dollars, there is no guarantee that these corrosive forces can be controlled to the point of restoring and/or maintaining the desired structural integrity of the steel in the concrete members."

The present lack of structural integrity of this facility has the potential for unanticipated hazards to boat traffic traversing underneath the bridge.

Staff recommends supporting Hillsborough County's plans to demolish the bridge as "the most fiscally responsible action plan from an engineering and liability perspective."

Friendship Trailbridge history

The old Gandy Bridge was used by people traveling west across Old Tampa Bay from 1956 to 1995, when a new bridge was opened. At the time, the Florida Department of Transportation declared the old bridge "structurally deficient to vehicular traffic." Plans called for demolition of the middle section, leaving the ends as fishing piers.

Citizens from Pinellas and Hillsborough counties began a movement to save the 2.6-mile long span. The counties agreed in 1997 to assume joint ownership of what was to become the Friendship Trailbridge, one of the longest pedestrian structures over water in the world. According to the Friendship Trail Corporation, before it was closed, more than 600,000 people were using the pedestrian bridge annually for activities, including walking, jogging, bicycling, skating and fishing.

After the trail bridge was closed in 2008, some attempts were made by citizens to save it, but the price tag of \$48 million seemed insurmountable.

New group steps in to help

Now a new yet-to-be-named group steps up that wants to not only save the old bridge but also turn it into an "iconic linear park

for all of Tampa Bay to enjoy." These citizens believe the old pedestrian bridge "can be transformed" and a new bridge built that will last until at least 2047.

The plan outlined in the draft report, available at friendshiptrailbridge.com, calls for partial demolition of damaged sections, light repair of sound portions of the bridge and replacement of damaged decking sections. The goal is to form a public-private partnership with Pinellas and Hillsborough.

A nonprofit organization would be formed that would be responsible to manage day-to-day operations, provide maintenance, raise funds, assist the counties with immediate and long-term operations and maintenance and "guide the vision of the bridge, including design, capital improvements and services."

A five-year plan sets a reopening date of 2017.

Donations, grants and fees would pay for the care of construction, operation and maintenance. The group expects to raise more than \$20 million over the 35 years of estimated life for the structure with 55 percent of the money coming from donations and another 45 percent from vendor rentals, parking fees and special events.

Pinellas County will wait to see if the citizen's group can convince Hillsborough County to give the bridge another chance at life.

Kevin Thurman and Ken Cowart, both of Tampa, and members of the group trying to save the bridge attended the May 22 meeting in Clearwater. Welch thanked them for their work.

"We're moving on bringing the budgeted money forward," Welch said. "But there is still time to make a decision."

Cowart said the group "wants as many opinions as possible on this project."

The commissioners wished them good luck.

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Retired surveyor puts his skills to work for the county

By BOB COSTIGAN

The 65-year-old retired surveyor from upstate New York said he was tired "of getting up every day and looking for something to do."

"I needed to do something that was rewarding for me, that brought me intrinsic reward and was a way to give back to the community," said Carl Stump, who turned to Pinellas County's Volunteers in Pinellas program to see if his skills could be utilized in some way.

At the same time Christina Pellegatti, technical project coordinator for the Cross Bayou Water Reclamation facility in St. Petersburg, was looking at an annual report that was required by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection Agency.

The report required a reclaimed water inventory for seven locations in the county, including a pond at the Mainlands Golf Course in Pinellas Park. In the past, information about the water quantity at the pond listed was reported as "unknown."

Upon hearing about Stump and his background, Pellegatti took a chance and called Stump to see if he knew how to calculate the amount of water in the pond. Pellegatti was pleasantly surprised to learn he did.

Helping hands Outstanding volunteers

"He was quite enthusiastic about helping us out and took care of the whole thing," said Pellegatti.

He went to the pond with his kayak and portable sonar unit and reported his findings, approximately 3.5 million gallons of water.

Pellegatti said that Stump had such a great attitude and was eager to help, so she asked him to do additional work. That includes doing survey work on the aeration basins at the water reclamation facility to ensure all the effluent gates are level and all the flow is leaving the tanks at a uniform rate.

She believes it's a win-win situation for both the county and for Stump.

"Carl is a very important member of our community and he's a very important volunteer for the plant," she said. "He has the skill set that we would have to pay a consulting firm for or tie up other county resources in order to bring in a surveyor crew onto the plant site to make sure the plant runs at optimal levels."

The South Cross Bayou facility treats more than 33 million gallons of water per day and is the second largest wastewater treatment plant on the west coast of Florida. Stump, who lives in nearby Seminole, can now be found helping out at the facility once or twice a week. He encourages others looking for something to do with their spare time to pursue becoming a VIP.

This article was provided by Pinellas County Communications.



Photo courtesy of PINNELAS COUNTY COMMUNICATIONS

Carl Stump has become a valued volunteer at the South Cross Bayou Water Reclamation facility in St. Petersburg.

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Briefs

Sheriff's debate location set

CLEARWATER — A Pinellas County sheriff's candidates debate will be held on Tuesday, July 17, 7 to 9 p.m., at the Unitarian Universalists of Clearwater Octagon Arts Center located at 2470 Nursery Road, located between U.S. 19 and Belcher Road.

All candidates that qualified for the primary election in August are expected to participate.

On April 18, candidates outlined their differing positions in sheriff's candidate forum hosted by the National Armed Services & Law Enforcement Memorial Museum in Dunedin, where more than 200 voters heard from all six announced candidates as they answered questions from forum moderator, Al Ruechel. The Bay News 9 senior anchor will again question can-

candidates as the debate moderator on July 17.

Debate organizers and sponsors expect a larger audience due to expectations of an increased voter turnout.

Tax certificate sale set June 1

Pinellas County Tax Collector Diane Nelson announced the tax certificate sale for 2011 delinquent real estate taxes is June 1 from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. at bidpinellas.com. All 2011 property taxes unpaid as of 5 p.m. on May 31 will be eligible for purchase.

The tax certificate sale is an annual online auction where bidders purchase a delinquent taxpayer's debt in exchange for an annual interest rate, ensuring the majority of unpaid property taxes are collected and distributed to taxing authorities.

Last year, more than 17,000 certificates were sold for a total of \$45 million, recovering 99 per-

cent of delinquent taxes. All delinquent real estate accounts are published online at bidpinellas.com and in the Gulf Coast Business Review.

To prevent a certificate from being sold, property owners with delinquent taxes must make their payment by May 31 either through the tax collector's website, taxcollect.com, or at any tax collector office.

Registration for the sale is open at bidpinellas.com and will continue until the sale ends June 1. The sale is a reverse-auction, with interest rates on individual certificates starting at 18 percent. Bidders compete for the lowest rate, and certificates are awarded to those with the lowest bid. All unsold certificates will be issued to Pinellas County at 18 percent annual interest.

For more information about the tax certificate sale or other tax collector services, visit taxcollect.com or call 464-7777 to speak to a customer service rep-

resentative.

Commission OKs new precinct map

CLEARWATER — The Pinellas County Commissioners approved new county precinct lines submitted by Supervisor of Elections Deborah Clark in compliance with Florida Statute 101.001 May 22. This approval brings Pinellas County near the completion of its redistricting process.

"It is important going into a presidential election to provide our voters with as much continuity as possible," Clark said. "After complying with the requirements of new district lines, our number one priority was to minimize the number of polling place changes and to adjust precinct lines so voters are closer to their polling places."

Efforts to maintain continuity resulted in the following:

• 80 percent of voters will vote at their current polling places

- 32 percent (122) of the precincts have no boundary changes
- Number of polling places reduced from 238 to 234
- Number of precincts reduced from 376 to 298, largely by combining precincts that already voted at the same polling places

Voter information cards will include new voting district and precinct numbers, as well as polling places.

The new precinct map, along with new congressional, state senate and state house district maps are posted online at www.votepinellas.com by selecting Maps/District Maps.

The voter registration database will be updated this weekend, and data will be uploaded to the Web site's Precinct Finder feature to allow voters to look up their precinct, district and polling place information next week.

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New principal takes the reins July 2 at Largo High

By ASHLEY RUCH AND MATT TYSON

LARGO — As the school year begins to wind down, all of the students and staff were sitting on the edge of their seat wondering who would be their new principal. In July there will be a passing of the torch at Largo High School.

Marjorie Sundstrom, the principal, will be retiring. After spending the last four years making improvements to Largo High School's landscape and academic demeanor, she is pleased that Brad Finkbiner will continue with

the improvement to the school she has grown to love. He will be starting his tenure on July 2 at Largo High School.

Finkbiner grew up in a farming community in central Illinois with a family that is comprised of educators. His uncle was region superintendent, his mother was a teacher at a high school and a community college, and during his high school years, his father was the president of the school board. It only seems fitting that he is appointed the job of principal.

He went to a community college in Illinois

before going to Eckerd College on a basketball scholarship. After he received his bachelor's degree, he went back to school in order to get his secondary education degree from Eastern Illinois University. He earned his master's degree in educational leadership from the University of South Florida, and is currently working on his doctorate at USF Tampa. Finkbiner is scheduled to graduate in December.

Finkbiner has been in education in Pinellas County for 27 years. He taught at Osceola

High School for eight years. He then became assistant principal at Osceola HS in 1999. His tenure in education has given him many valuable experiences that can be used in the principal's position.

After spending 20 years at Osceola HS, Finkbiner will take the lead of Largo High School. All of his experience is preceded by growing up around education. He will certainly be welcomed as the new principal.

Ashley Ruch and Matt Tyson are editors in chief of the Packer Press at Largo High School.



Brad Finkbiner

Notepad

Local teen wins state rowing championship

CLEARWATER — Clearwater Beach native, Blake Kleinhans recently won the Florida State Scholastic Rowing Championship, representing his Berkeley Prep High School with his varsity Four Boys Lightweight Rowing team at the state finals. The event, Florida Scholastic Rowing Association Sweep Championship Regatta was held at Nathan Benderson Park in Sarasota.

Kleinhans has been rowing on the school varsity team for three years and has spent his entire 17 years growing up on Clearwater Beach waters, participating in all kinds of boating.

He and his team are headed to the Scholastic Rowing Association of America National Championship Regatta on Memorial Day weekend on the Cooper River in Camden, N.J.

Clearwater Christian College honors students

CLEARWATER — Clearwater Christian College has announced the recipients of its 2011-2012 academic awards. Students were chosen from each educational division to receive recognition based on their exemplary character, high academic achievements, and scholastic abilities. Outstanding Academic Achievement Award winners for each division received plaques commemorating the honor.

Nathan Allen of Clearwater received the 2012 Academic Achievement in accounting and business administration. As an accounting major, Allen is a graduate of North Atlantic Regional High in Lewiston, Maine, and is the son of Tim and Susan Allen of Mt. Vernon.

Clearwater Christian College has more than 500 under-

graduate and graduate students pursuing a distinct Christian education in a liberal arts environment.

CCC students sign for college sports

CLEARWATER — Clearwater Central Catholic High is proud of five of its seniors who have recently signed letters of intent to play college sports.

Kyle Curinga of Clearwater signed to play soccer for the Florida Atlantic University Owls. Curinga was a four-year starter for the CCC soccer team and was captain his senior year. In his career as a Marauder, he played in 100 soccer games, scored 72 goals and had 60 assists. During his senior season, he scored 34 goals — the most of any player in Pinellas County. He was named Tampa Bay Times Pinellas County Boys Soccer Player of the Year, was a member of the Pinellas County All-Star team and a member of the All-State All-Star team. He has also played on the Florida State Olympic Development Team. He hopes to play professional soccer in the future.

Marisol Doglioli of Italy, who is staying with a Clearwater family, signed with Mount St. Mary's University in Emmitsburg, Md., to play golf for the Mountaineers. In her senior year playing golf for CCC, Marisol won the district tournament with a score of 72, won the regional tournament with a score of 79, and placed 36th at the state tournament. A native of Italy, she was a member of the National Italian Golf Team. From 2009 to 2011, she played in six international tournaments and won the Scottish International Championship. She plans to study pre-med.

Devon Garnett of Dunedin signed with Stetson University in DeLand, Fla., to play football for the Hatters. He has been a

two-year starter for the Marauders on the varsity football team as well as the track team. As a senior champion, he recorded 35 tackles, had 11 passes defended, one interception and two fumble recoveries playing as a defensive back. He was a member of the Pinellas All-Star team and was named the Defensive MVP for the All-Star game. As a member of the CCC track team, he qualified for the state championship meet in the 4 by 100 meter relay where he and his teammates placed fifth.

Ian Koch of Tarpon Springs signed with Florida International University in Miami to play football for the Golden Panthers. He was a two-year starter for the Marauders on the offensive line and was captain his senior year. He was the 2011 Most Valuable Offensive Player of the Year for the Marauders as well as being named to the 2011 Class 3A All-State team, the Pinellas County All-Star team, and the 2011 IMG All-Madden team. He was also a member of the CCC weightlifting team his junior year and a member of the wrestling team his senior year.

Blair Vaughan of Clearwater Beach signed with Western Kentucky University in Owensboro, Ky., to play football for the Hilltoppers. He played varsity football for CCC for four years and was a three-year starter. In his senior year playing fullback for the Marauders, he had more than 400 rushing yards, averaging almost five yards per carry, and he scored 10 touchdowns. He was a member of the 2011 Pinellas County All-Star team and received honors from myfoxprep.com for the top play in week two of the season when he hurdled a defender and ran 55 yards for the touchdown. He was also a member of the weightlifting and wrestling teams at CCC. He plans to study accounting.



Photo courtesy of DON KLEINHANS
Blake Kleinhans holds the trophy he and his varsity rowing team received for winning the state rowing championship.

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Pinellas County's unemployment decreases again

By SUZETTE PORTER

TALLAHASSEE – Good news again from the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, Pinellas County unemployment continues to fall.

April's not seasonally adjusted unemployment rate was 8.2 percent, down from 8.7 percent in March. A year ago, Pinellas had an April unemployment rate of 10 percent.

The unemployment rate also declined statewide from 8.6 percent in March to 8.3 percent in April. Last April, the state's unemployment rate was 10.2 percent. U.S. unemployment fell to 7.7 percent, down from 8.4 percent in March and 8.7 percent a year ago.

The Tampa-St. Petersburg-Clearwater metro statistical area continues as one of eight Florida counties with over-the-year job gains. The local MSA ranked No. 2 with 12,600 more jobs, an increase of 1.1 percent. Miami-Miami Beach-Kendall MSA ranked No. 1 with

over-the-year job gain of 12,700 jobs, 1.3 percent increase.

April's unemployment rate for the local MSA was 8.5 percent, down from 8.9 percent in March and 10.5 percent at year ago. The local MSA includes Hernando, Hillsborough, Pasco and Pinellas counties.

Hernando County has the second highest unemployment rate in the state at 10.8 percent. Flagler County has the highest at 11.6 percent. Pasco County ranks No. 10 with 9.7 percent. Pinellas and Hillsborough counties tie for the No. 29 spot with 8.2 percent unemployment.

The Tampa-St. Petersburg-Clearwater MSA ranks No. 10 among the state's 23 areas.

Pinellas County's labor force declined slightly in April down to 437,126, compared to 441,837 in March. It is close to the April 2011 level of 437,012. More than 2,300 less were unemployed, 35,886, compared to 38,240 in March and 43,850 last April.

Statewide, 758,000 were unemployed in April and 11.91 million were without jobs nationwide.

Business and professional services is the industry with the most job growth, 2.3 percent, followed by private education and health services with 2.2 percent growth and trade, transportation and utilities at 1.2 percent.

Construction continues as the industry with the most job losses, 24,500, or 7.3 percent, followed by total government at 1.1 percent and information at 0.5 percent.

"With 243,594 Florida job openings listed by various help-wanted websites, we are seeing positive trends of job creation by companies and employers throughout our state," Florida Gov. Rick Scott said in a press release after April's report was released. "Florida's jobless rate moved to its lowest point in more than three years and is a clear sign we are moving Florida in a direction that gives businesses and job creators the confidence they need to grow and expand."

Biz notes

Blue Dog Po Boys opens

PALM HARBOR – Blue Dog Po Boys and Catering recently opened at 25708 U.S. 19 N.

Diners can experience a "taste of New Orleans" at the sandwich shop. The owner was born and raised in New Orleans and brings to the area some hometown favorites such as po boys, muffuletta, gumbo and red beans and rice.

Blue Dog also caters events, working with any budget and offering a wide selection from Louisiana, Spanish and American cuisine.

Hours are Monday through Thursday and Saturday, 11 a.m. to 7 p.m.; Friday, 11 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Bouchard sponsors Finance Park

CLEARWATER – Bouchard Insurance recently signed a 10-year contract with Pinellas Education Foundation to be a corporate sponsor for Finance Park at the Stavros Institute in Largo.

Finance Park is a partnership between the Pinellas Education Foundation, Pinellas County Schools, and the Stavros Institute. The program allows eighth-graders to learn about personal finance and budgeting, in line with Florida's state education standards.

"In today's economy, it is more important than ever that our students learn financial responsibility," said Matt Elsey, CFO at Bouchard Insurance, in a press release. "Finance Park provides a unique opportunity for eighth-graders to receive hands-on experience in managing personal finances, and Bouchard is proud to support this initiative and the development of our community's future leaders."

Bouchard's role will include, but is not necessarily limited to, designing an innovative booth where students will "purchase" auto and homeowners insurance for vehicles and homes that fit into their assigned "personal monthly budget", and keeping that area of Finance Park updated during the next decade. Bouchard's booth will be up and running in time for the 2012-13 school year.

Bouchard Insurance, founded in 1948, is the second largest privately owned independent insurance agency in Florida. Bouchard is headquartered in Clearwater.

Beaches Chamber to host mixer

ST. PETERSBURG – The Tampa Bay Beaches Chamber of Com-

merce will host its June mixer Wednesday, June 13, 5:30 to 7 p.m., at the Hangar Restaurant and Flight Lounge, 540 First St. SE, St. Petersburg.

The Hangar will provide an array of complimentary appetizers and a cash bar. Drink specials are available daily before 6 p.m.

Alligator Attraction of John's Pass Village will sponsor the event. Cost is \$10 for members and \$20 for nonmembers.

Call Amanda Page at 360-6957 or email RSVP@tampabaybeaches.com.

Sweet Tomatoes Express opens

CLEARWATER – Garden Fresh Restaurant Corporation, known for its 124 Souplantation and Sweet Tomatoes restaurants, has opened its third quick-serve restaurant in Clearwater.

Sweet Tomatoes Express, the first restaurant of this new concept in Florida, opened on May 29 at 2689 Gulf to Bay Drive.

Sweet Tomatoes Express features the fresh, quality food diners expect from Sweet Tomatoes in a new, quick and convenient way. Although not a buffet, guests still create their own personalized salad from over 30 different ingredients or enjoy a Sweet Tomatoes signature tossed salad. Guests have the option to pair any salad with one of five made-from-scratch soups or mac and cheese and complimentary garlic focaccia to complete the meal. Guests can add on made-from-scratch muffins, chocolate chip cookies and frozen yogurt, all available a la carte to create a customized meal.

The expansion of the Sweet Tomatoes Express concept will allow Garden Fresh to continue growing and increase their presence in the 15 states they currently have full-scale buffet-style restaurants. They also will look to expand their full-scale restaurants in expanding markets.

Fletcher Music Center celebrates birthday

LARGO – More than 50 Largo residents filled the Fletcher Music Center at 3690 East Bay Drive May 21 to take part in the store's 107th birthday celebration.

The celebration included an organ concert by Bobby Speaker.

Attending the event were Largo Vice Mayor Harriet Crozier and Com-



Taking part in Fletcher Music Center's 107th birthday celebration are, front, from left, Barbara Pietro, Harriet Crozier and Bill Steurnagel; and back, Art Bishop, Bobby Speaker, Curtis Holmes and Bob Pietro.

missioner Curtis Holmes.

John Riley – the first non Fletcher family member to own Fletcher Music Centers – has continued the All Children's Hospital Music Therapy Charity that takes place at All Children's and includes taking holiday gifts to the children that are patients at the hospital.

Safety Harbor Resort joins Historic Hotels

SAFETY HARBOR – Safety Harbor Resort and Spa recently joined Historic Hotels of America, a program of the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

Safety Harbor Resort and Spa is one of more than 235 hotels and resorts throughout the country that is recognized by Historic Hotels of America for preserving and maintaining its historic integrity, architecture and ambiance.

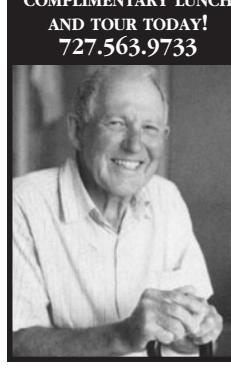
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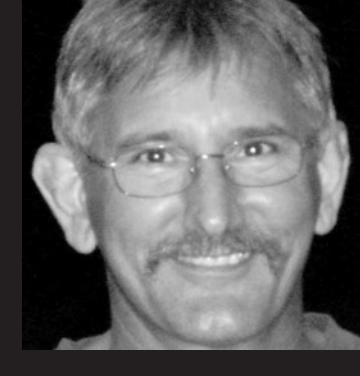
My business opened up in mid-February. I was looking for ideas to get the news out. I looked at several different options and decided to give the Seminole Beacon a try. Wilda talked with me and offered a very fair package. They made a very nice ad for me with a professional look to it. I have been in Seminole for a long time and know that they have been here a long time also. Almost daily, someone mentions that they saw my ad in the Beacon. It has been very beneficial to my business startup. In this tough economy, a small business needs all the help it can get.

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Tarpon remain at the top of the list for area anglers

The tarpon migration continues along Pinellas County beaches. So far this has been an excellent first part of the season; favorable winds have made for ideal conditions for spotting incoming pods of fish.

The tarpon have been easiest to spot in that first hour of daylight. This is the time when the fish are "happy;" often they can

be seen milling as they slowly drift with the tide. A well-placed cast with a live pinfish, threadfin, scaled sardine or crab will usually draw a strike this time of day. Once the sun is a bit higher the fish don't show as much, but are still there. Anchoring up in the same lanes where you have been spotting fish and keeping fresh baits out is a good option. Keep



Fish Tales
Capt. Tyson
Wallerstein

one rod baited and ready in case fish pop up out of your spread.

Light east winds have made short runs offshore for a chance

at a few hogfish a good option. Anchoring on the same ledges where you would typically target gag grouper will put you in the right spot. Then have everyone on the boat drop down either live or fresh frozen shrimp. Be sure to use light rods, as the bite can be very subtle, as more and more shrimp go down your odds of hook-ups go up as these fish re-

spond well to chum.

Inshore, redfish have been co-operating on the afternoon high tides. Cut-bait fishing along the mangrove shorelines has still been the pattern. With the water temp on the flats getting into the low 80s during the day these fish are going to get into the shade just as soon as the water is high enough to allow it.

Until next week - get bent! Tyson Wallerstein can be reached at capt.tyson@hotmail.com. To get a fish photo in the paper, send the photo along with your name, when and where it was caught to bmcclure@TBNweekly.com or mail it to Tampa Bay Newspapers, 9911 Seminole Blvd., Seminole, FL 33772.

Briefs

Monopoly fundraising tournament slated

LARGO - The Largo Recreation, Parks and Arts Department will be hosting its first ever Monopoly Fundraising Tournament Saturday, July 14, at the Highland Recreation Center, 400 Highland Ave.

All proceeds from this event will go toward the City of Largo Summer Camp Scholarship Fund, providing financial assistance to youth campers in Largo.

The tournament will take place from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. and will consist of three rounds. Prizes valued at \$250, \$150, and \$75 will be awarded to the top three winners overall. Players must complete all three rounds to be eligible for prizes. Entry cost is \$25 per player, \$20 for students or military, or \$100 for a team of six.

Hasbro, Regions Bank, Chick-fil-A Largo, Pinch-a-Penny, Largo Cultural Center, and Holiday Inn and Suites HarbourSide sponsor Highland's Monopoly Tournament. Food will be available on site for purchase.

For more information, call Highland Recreation at 518-3016 or visit HighlandRecreation.com.

Largo Recreation to host Camp Funshine

LARGO - Largo Recreation will host more than 60 full- and half-day summer camps.

Camp Funshine, a full day camp for grades completed K-5, will feature themed activities, swimming, field trips, arts and crafts, sports and special guests. The camp will be offered Monday through Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 6 p.m., at Ponce De Leon Elementary School, 1301 Ponce De Leon Blvd., Clearwater. Camp Funshine will kick off on Monday, June 11 and will continue through Friday, Aug. 10.

Campers may sign up by the week or for the entire camp. Cost is \$76 a week for residents and \$95 for nonresidents. After care is available from 4 to 6 p.m. for an additional cost.

For information on Camp Funshine and other Largo summer camps, call 518-3016 or visit LargoCamps.com.

Gator Club hosts scholarship event

ST. PETERSBURG - The Pinellas County Gator Club's 10th Annual Emerson Celebration of Scholarship will be held Tuesday, June 5, 6:30 p.m., at 11 Central Ave.

The event's mission is to raise money for scholarships awarded to county students who will attend the University of Florida.

The evening will include passed hors d'oeuvres, live entertainment, a silent auction, presentation of scholarships to local students, and a cash bar with signature Gator cocktails.

Each year, the Pinellas County Gator Club honors a Gator great who makes a difference in the community. This year the club will recognize David Feaster, president and CEO of Cornerstone Community Bank.

Tickets are \$30 for UFAA members, \$40 nonmembers. Space is limited. Register for this event online at PinellasGators.com. Sponsor tables and VIP tickets are available.

Contact Lauren Christ for more information. Call 432-1470 or Gatorlcv@gmail.com.

Rays Foundation gives \$72,500 to nonprofits

ST. PETERSBURG - The Rays Baseball Foundation, the official charity of the Tampa Bay Rays, recently awarded \$72,500 to 15 local nonprofit organizations through the Community Fund Grant.

"We were very impressed by the creativity and depth of the grant applications from so many Bay area nonprofits," said Rays President Matt Silverman. "The Foundation selected grant opportunities that will help sustain and strengthen not only the youth-focused, nonprofit organizations themselves, but our greater community."

The Rays Community Fund Grant Program provides assistance to local nonprofits in the Tampa Bay region. Grants worth up to \$5,000 are awarded to help support and enhance current programs offered by community-based nonprofit organizations. Through its first five years, the Community Grant Fund has awarded 102 grants to local charities totaling \$497,500.

The Rays will award a second round of grants from the 2012 Community Fund Grant in September. Applications for those grants will be available on raysbaseball.com beginning June 1.

The Rays Baseball Foundation is committed to supporting youth and education programs throughout the Tampa Bay community. Key contributors to the Foundation include Rays owners,

players, sponsors and fans.

Since 2008, the Foundation has invested more than \$2.2 million in youth and education programs in the region through grant programs and special events.

The Rays 2012 Community Fund Grant will support the following 15 organizations and their corresponding programs:

- Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Sun Coast, Sports Buddies Program.
- Boys and Girls Clubs of Plant City Unit, Project Learn Academic Enrichment Program.
- Brookwood Florida-Central, Inc., independent living training.
- Children First, childcare scholarships.
- Devereaux Florida, Sulphur Springs Youth Leadership Council.
- Forty Carrots Family Center, On Wheels Parenting Program.
- Front Porch Community Development Association, 4-H Gardening and Art Camp Summer Experience.
- Junior League of St. Petersburg, Back-to-School Care Fair Program.
- Junior League of Tampa, Children's Literacy Project.
- Manatee Education Foundation, Ca\$h for Clas\$room grants program.
- Mount Zion Human Services, Inc., Computer and Literacy Enhancement Program.
- Pinellas Opportunity Council, Inc., Youth Development Program.
- PlaySmart, Inc., Playsmart 2012 Academy.
- Starting Right, Now, technology and supplies for at-risk youth.
- The Spring of Tampa Bay, Planting Seeds of Hope and Renewal Program.

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Briefs

East Bay Rehabilitation offers new technology

LARGO — Alter G, the anti-gravity treadmill, is now being used at East Bay Rehabilitation Center for the first time to help orthopedic conditions, stroke patients and amputees excel in therapy.

The Alter G treadmill is a unique treadmill offering an impact on those conditions that make walking a difficult task. Patients undergoing rehabilitation for complications of a stroke comprise a significant segment for the orthotic and rehabilitation practice. Approximately 4 million Americans are living with the effects of a stroke, with the majority being moderately or severely impaired. During the primary recovery period, generally defined as the first six months following the stroke, many patients will recover a substantial degree of lost function, thanks in large measure to aggressive therapy and newer technologies, such as the Alter G, that allow integrating a normal gait pattern.

Some post-surgical protocols partially restrict weight bearing on a newly repaired hip, knee or ankle and can make it difficult for the patient. Surgeons commonly write orders to only allow 20 percent weight bearing onto the affected limb until the leg is fully recovered.

"With the precise weight calibration from the Alter G treadmill, a patient can safely ambulate and surgeons are pleased with the early mobility they see in our patients," said Brian Parsons, administrator for East Bay Rehabilitation Center, in a press release.

For information regarding Alter G rehabilitation, call 530-7100.

Rotary continues polio campaign

SEMINOLE — The Rotary Foundation's No. 1 priority is the eradication

of polio.

Since the Rotary became involved with the Polio Plus program, the number of polio cases has drastically been reduced. In 1985, 350,000 children were stricken in a year. That is almost 1,000 children a day. Due in part to the Rotary International Polio Project, there has only been a total of 48 cases of polio reported this year through April 25 worldwide. This compares to 120 cases reported at the same time last year.

To learn more about Rotary International or to get involved in the local Rotary Club, call Mindy Rovillo at 641-6773 or Bill and Sue Slodokkin at 593-0747.

St Petersburg General earns ACR accreditation

ST. PETERSBURG — After voluntary rigorous review by the Committee on Ultrasound Accreditation of the Commission on Quality and Safety by the American College of Radiology, St. Petersburg General Hospital has been awarded a three-year term re-accreditation in ultrasound services — obstetrical (first, second and third trimesters), gynecological and general.

Ultrasound imaging, also known as sonography, uses high-frequency sound waves to produce images of internal body parts to help providers diagnose illness, injury, or other medical problems.

In addition, a fourth accreditation was newly awarded for vascular services including abdominal, cerebrovascular, deep abdominal and peripheral.

The ACR gold seal of accreditation represents the highest level of image quality and patient safety. It is awarded only to facilities meeting ACR practice guidelines and technical standards, following a peer-review evaluation by board-certified physicians and medical physicists who are experts in the field. Image quality, personnel qualifications, adequacy of facility equipment, quality control procedures, and quality assurance programs are assessed. The findings are reported to the ACR Committee on Accreditation, which subsequently provides the practice with a comprehensive report they can use for continuous practice improvement.

This accreditation means that St. Petersburg General Hospital personnel are well qualified through education and certification to perform medical imaging and interpret images, that the equipment is appropriate.

ate for the test(s) and that the facility meets or exceeds quality assurance and safety guidelines.

Nanda performs single-site cholecystectomy

ST. PETERSBURG — A surgical team at St. Petersburg General Hospital recently performed the hospital's first single-site cholecystectomy.

The patient's gallbladder was removed through one tiny incision in the belly button, making the procedure virtually scarless.

Performed and led by Dr. Manu Nanda, the minimally invasive procedure used robotic assistance to remove the gallbladder through an incision of approximately one inch. Two single-site gall bladder procedures were performed today and the typical hospital stay will be less than 24 hours. The Food and Drug Administration cleared the specialized single-site instruments for use with the robotic surgical system in December 2011.

Nanda and robotic coordinator Lisa Buchianico P.A., were trained for this specific procedure in March at the prestigious Cleveland Clinic in Ohio.

More than 1 million people in the U.S. have their gallbladder removed each year. Most are performed with traditional laparoscopy using several incisions. Robotic surgeries typically require three to five small incisions and now, this new technology allows for a single incision in the belly button.

HealthSouth to present Aging Well

LARGO — HealthSouth Rehabilitation Hospital will present its Aging Well Series Friday, June 8, 2 to 3 p.m., at 901 Clearwater-Largo Road.

Seating is limited. Refreshments will be provided. Registration is required by June 1. To RSVP, call 588-1865.

Hospice to host volunteer event

CLEARWATER — Suncoast Hospice will host a volunteer orientation Tuesday, June 5, noon to 5 p.m., at Lakeview Baptist Church, 1430 Belleair Road.

The Suncoast Hospice Volunteer Orientation is a four-hour training program for anyone interested in learning more about Suncoast Hospice volunteer opportunities. Registration is required. Call 586-4432, ext. 4100, or visit www.SuncoastHospice.org.

Wellness clinic set

PINELLAS PARK — A Palms Staffing and Comfort Home Health will sponsor an Ask A Nurse Wellness Clinic on Monday, June 4, 2 to 4 p.m., at VFW Post 4364, 5773 62nd St. N.

The free clinic will include blood pressure checks, carotid artery checks, wound care and draw labs from orders including mini-medical evaluations. Attendees can learn about a proper diet for diabetes, hypertension, gait and balance and more.

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LETTERS

Republicans fulfill an admonition

Editor:

Who was in charge? During the four years before the 'great depression'? During the late 1950s - early 1960s recession? When the president resigned, the only one in U.S. history? During the 1973 - 1975 gas crisis? Prior to the late 1970s - early 1980s stagflation? During the U.S. military build up, fulfilling Eisenhower's "military-industrial complex" warning?

Prior to the late 1980s - early 1990s recession?

As the U.S. court system was stacked with conservatives that resulted in the "citizens united" decision?

When the U.S. government shut down, twice?

When the U.S. incurred the greatest debt in its history?

As banks scammed the economy that caused the current "Great Recession"?

There is only one answer to all these questions: the Repooplikin party!

If you think mega-rich, mega-out-of-touch, Romney, with his car elevator, is going to change the course of this nation's government, then our destiny will be worse than Portugal, Ireland, Italy, Greece and Spain combined.

Current events prove that truth, underscored by the slash and decimate policies of conservatives in the E.U. Only informed, passionate, citizens affect the change needed to become more civilized, to reach-across-the-aisle to solve the nation's problems.

Extreme right wing conservatives are incapable of any of those civilized objectives. Their only objective is to rid the White House of a black man.

They have said so, too many times to count.

To achieve that objective, conservatives and their mouthpieces are fulfilling Joseph Goebbels admonition: "If you tell a lie big enough and keep repeating it, people will eventually come to believe it."

Mike MacDonald

Clearwater

Leaving the party

Editor:

I believe that you will see many Democrats leaving their party and not just because of the gay marriage issue but because of much more important issues.

A good example is Evan Gold, publisher of Senior Voice America, who says, "Ever been to a party and you try and gauge when is the best time to leave? We always think are we going to miss something exciting, or is the party just not going to get any better? Well, just like a birthday party or wedding reception so goes a political party."

I have been a Democrat since I was 18 years old. I come from a Democratic family. Many of my friends are Democrats. I consider myself a conservative Democrat. But all that being said, it is time for a change.

I have been watching the direction that the Democratic Party has been moving in, and I no longer feel that it is in the best interest of America. But first, let me tell you that this is not a letter to convince you to leave the Democratic Party, but to give you my views on what is best for our country, children, families and grandchildren.

There seems to be some sort of concept where we need to take away the wealth of Americans that they have worked a lifetime to earn. America was once a place where we felt we had the right to work as hard as we wanted and earn as much as our talents were worth. It was a place where you were not ashamed to earn what you earned. Now we have a president and a political party that feels that individuals who work hard should support those who are not willing to put in the same effort. Plain and simple, this is nothing less than socialism. What would Reagan, Lincoln, Jefferson or Washington say to this?

There is a group of Americans that feel that they are entitled to take other people's wealth and redistribute it. This is extremely dangerous and will lead to a complete downfall of America. Let me give you an example. The leadership of the Democratic Party feels that taking 50 percent of someone's salary to fund government programs is fair. This is communicated to the public that the more well-to-do (not even the wealthy) need to unjustly and inequitably support the have not's, or have less. This is being drilled into our youth.

We say to our children that if you study and do well in school you can get into a good college and get a well paying job. But why bother? We are making it abundantly clear to America's youth that they need not worry since America will take care of them. Now more than ever, we need to make a stand to keep the ideals alive of our forefathers.

Let me sum it up by a famous quote from Dr. Adrian Rogers: "You cannot legislate the poor into freedom by legislating the wealthy out of freedom. What one person receives without working for, another person must work for without receiving. The government cannot give to anybody anything that the government does not first take from somebody else. When half of the people get the idea that they do not have to work because the other half is going to take care of them, and when the other half gets the idea that it does no good to work because somebody else is going to get what they work for, that my dear friend is the end of any nation. You cannot multiply wealth by dividing it."

Dr. Rogers was a pastor, author and president of the Southern Baptist Convention. President Obama is an attorney. Tell me whom you are more likely to trust with our future and the future of our country?

Chuck Graham

Pinellas Park

Fourever Friends a success again

Editor:

On behalf of the Richardson, MacCollom and Ruzecki families, they would like to thank the Seminole community for another successful round of golf at the third annual Fourever Friends Golf Tournament held on April 14.

This tournament was started to give remembrance and hope from a tragedy. After the accident on April 10, 2009, the families of the boys wanted to give back to the community by allowing students to continue to achieve their goals, either through sports or academics. The tournament was the best way to reach out to the community to gain support and keep the boys' memories alive.

Over 142 golfers were able to enjoy a fun-filled day with good weather and entertainment, while they enjoyed 18 holes of championship golf. The tournament featured both a lunch and dinner along with live music provided by Carlos and Joe. A raffle, silent and live auction kept people in a competitive mood as people bid for competitive prizes such as vacation and golf packages, Rays games and prize packages donated by local restaurants and businesses. Golfers and members of the community were able to view memorable photos and videos of Keith MacCollom, Nate Richardson, Joey Ruzecki, and LeShawn Smith inside the clubhouse.

After the auction, the families delivered a heartfelt thank you to more than 300 guests and friends. Along with country club General Manager Norm Haglund, golf pro Bruce Chaffee, they thanked the continuing support of the golf course along with the countless volunteers that helped make the event run smoothly for the afternoon shotgun.

The families would like to thank title sponsor Audibel Hearing Aide Centers for its generous support and contributions to this year's tournament. They would like to thank gold sponsors Helinger Advertising, Clear Tech Pool Service, Relief at Hand, and Twiss Transport as well as silver sponsor the Kenny Family and bronze sponsors Biff Burger, the Bluett Family and Schooner Prints.

We were able to raise money that will benefit high school students and athletes with their college and career plans; along with giving local children the opportunity to follow their dreams to play football, baseball, basketball and soccer. Proceeds from the tournament will go to benefit The Keith MacCollom Hoops and Heritage Memorial Scholarship fund, the Joey Ruzecki Memorial Scholarship Fund, The Nate Richardson Memorial Baseball Scholarship Fund, the YMCA of Largo and Play for Us Memorial Foundation.

On May 15, the families presented the awards to the recipients of each winners of the scholarship. Winners for the Keith MacCollom Hoops and Heritage Memorial Scholarship award were Madalyn Sowada, Alicia Tyler, Samuel Weldon, Jonathan Zanga, and Tyler Zulewski. Winners for the Nate Richardson Baseball scholarship award were Kristina Fudge, Katherine Cattrell, and Jordan Doyle. Winners for the Joey Ruzecki Memorial Scholarship were Alicia Tyler, Tyler Zulewski, Danielle Schmidt, and Jonathan Zanga.

Senior Barrett Pluskatt was able to win all three awards. He was a member of the 2012 varsity basketball and baseball team as well as having a 4.5 weighted GPA. The families hope to see the continuing support next year when the tournament will be held on April 6 at the Seminole Lake Country Club. For more information about the Fourever Friends Golf Tournament, please visit foureverfriends.org.

Brad Richardson

Seminole

Letting go of some of the reins



Driver's Seat

Bob Driver

One of the benefits of growing old – or older – is that you learn not to give a hoot the way you used to. Let's consider a few examples that strike my mind, and perhaps yours as well.

I used to be concerned about the steady decline of American English, both written and spoken. I have watched and listened as ordinary conversation among supposedly educated Americans has decayed and crumbled into repetitive, unthinking near-gibberish. Today the average citizen – especially those in the baby-boomer generation – uses only a dozen or so words and expressions in his/her daily exchanges with other humans. They include like, y'know, awesome, totally, I mean, oh my god, the bottom line, the name of the game and whatever. Take these and a few others away from today's man or woman on the street and they would be struck dumb. As for correct grammar and pronunciation, forget it.

I've been griping for decades about the de-composing of our language, and guess what? No one listens, or at least not enough of them to turn back the tide. Finally I've begun to relax and admit defeat. The barbarians are not only at the gates, they've stormed through and have taken control. Still the world keeps on turning, and my morning oatmeal still tastes as good as ever.

Aging also can bring with it a personal mellowing about the madness of the political wars. The past several months of the GOP primary contests have been instructive. Seldom in history has so much pointless and deceitful hot air been generated in the name of choosing a presidential candidate.

healthiest course will be to ignore most of it. The main thing to keep in mind is this: no matter who is elected president, fate (i.e., ungovernable circumstance) will largely determine the course of national and world events. That sounds as if it could be frightening, but it's not. It's reassuring for millions of worri-

The past several months of the GOP primary contests have been instructive. Seldom in history has so much pointless and deceitful hot air been generated in the name of choosing a presidential candidate.

ers, who tend to carry around the mistaken notion that they should all be trying in some way to save the world.

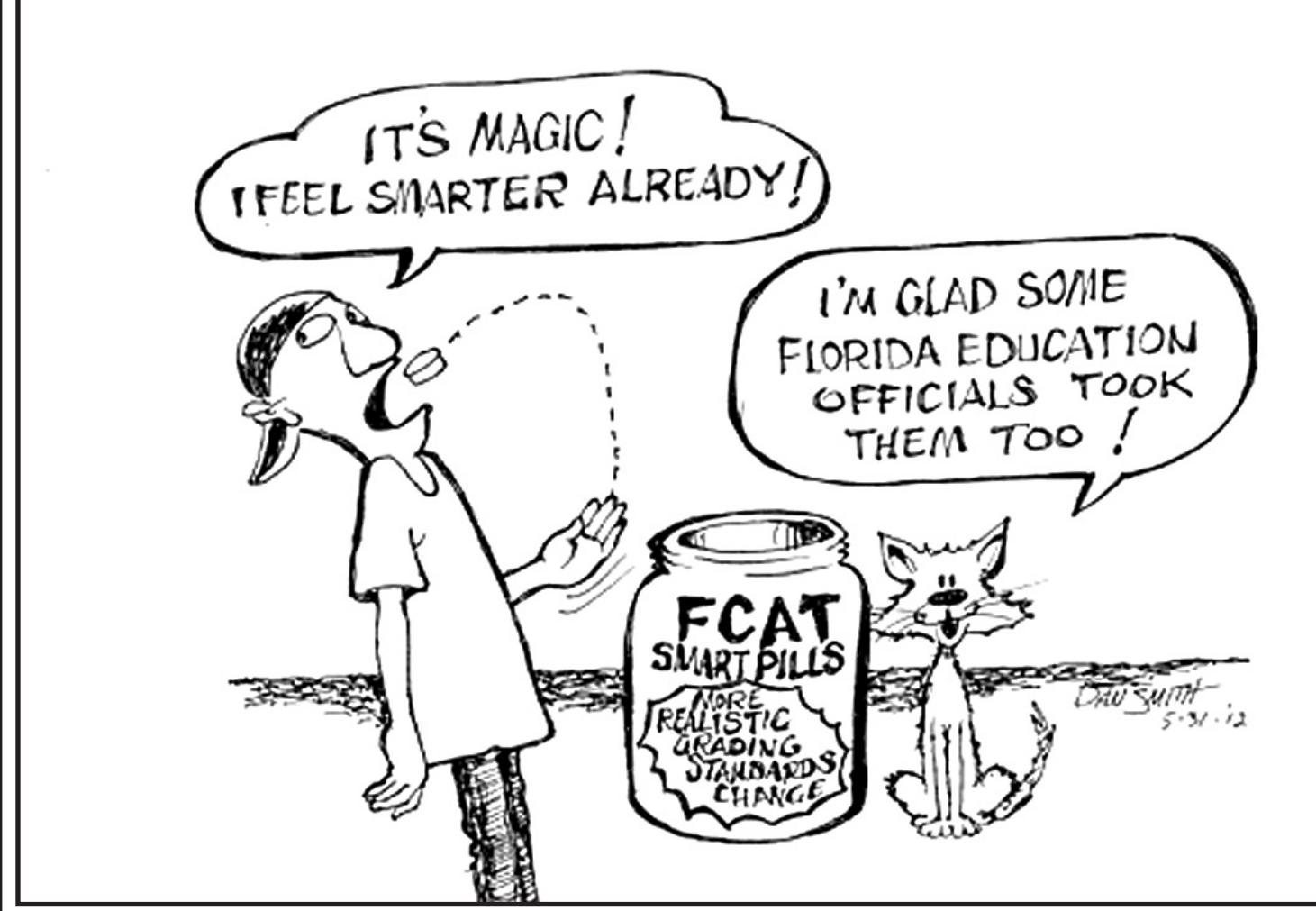
As the years pass, I also worry much less about fat. I think it was in the 1990s when I looked around one day and exclaimed, "Holy Nellie, we're all turning into fat!" Everywhere I looked, including in my own bathroom mirror, I saw people who were obese, or at least overweight. I listened to all the dire medical warnings, and foresaw the day when 80 percent of Americans would be suffering from di-

abetes, heart trouble or one of the other maladies that attend fatness. My fears continued for years. And do you know what happened? They've pretty much come true. All my fuss and worry did nothing to stop them. So I changed my attitude and tactics. I stopped wringing my hands, and today I just sit back and calmly watch the avoiddupe levels rise. I'm sorry it's happening, but – except for my own eternal dieting – I can't change it.

For a time I fretted daily about the number of people who were injured in slips, falls, dog bites, barroom brawls and auto accidents. The indicator of all this misery was, and is, the number of personal injury lawyers that seem to abound in the Tampa Bay area. Newspapers, TV and our local highways are awash in ads for PI attorneys. One day I woke up and reasoned, "No one should worry about all these unfortunate accident victims. With all these heroic PI lawyers defending them, they'll be well-compensated." My pity was misplaced.

Matter of fact, I now wonder why we don't see more advertising on behalf of corporations, hospitals, and other rich and powerful entities who are always being sued by the supposed accident victims. Don't the high and mighty also deserve a fair shake in our courts? I envision the day when we will switch on our TV sets and hear a chubby-cheeked lawyer say, "Business leaders and other plutocrats, aren't you tired of seeing the little guys walk away with all those excessive jury awards? Why should those crippled workers get all the gravy? Our attorneys will fight for YOU – the top dogs and moneyed interests. So remember our name and our motto: Horrigan and Horrigan – screw the people!"

Bob Driver is a former columnist and editorial page editor of the Clearwater Sun. Send Driver an email at talee71@comcast.net.



Ads: Make candidates own them



Florida Voices

Bill Cotterell

Former Gov. Jeb Bush recently predicted the 2012 presidential campaign will be the nastiest ever.

Bush's campaigns for governor were not horribly negative, but he knows nasty. He's the son of the former president whose supporters made us familiar with Willie Horton, and the brother of the president whose allies added the word "swiftboat" to America's political lexicon.

The aggressive tactics in both Bush presidential campaigns emanated not from the candidates or the Republican Party, but from the kind of independent campaign committees we saw smearing GOP candidates in the primary this year.

Freed by two Supreme Court rulings – an old one that said money is a form of speech and a comparatively new one that said corporate interests can spend as much as they please to praise or attack candidates – these autonomous advocacy organizations are likely to finance unprecedented sludge-fests for both sides. Of course, it's possible they could take the high road with positive ads about issues such as health care, Social Security, job creation, taxes and war. Yeah, right.

Forget truth. You can't legally stop them from lying in political advertisements. Libel and slander laws don't apply to political speech and, alas, former Georgia Sen. Zell Miller's 2004 suggestion that we bring back dueling never quite caught on.

Fortunately, there are three things voters can do to inoculate themselves against the hype about to come.

First, don't believe any of it. Whether the message is nice or nasty, remember that either the candidates or some wealthy interests supporting them are spending a lot of money to bring that information to you. Somebody really wants you to think of the candidate, or an issue, in a certain way. You know what they say about something that sounds too good to be true? Well, the same goes for anything that sounds too bad.

Second, do a little research of your own. Don't get your information from TV ads, Tweets or Facebook postings put out by either side. There are independent, non-partisan, reliable fact-checking Internet sites. There's also a lot of garbage. Check things out as you would before buying a car or changing jobs.

Third, hold the candidates personally responsible for what is said on their behalf. It's too easy for candidates to keep clean hands and let the "527s" or "Super PACs" sling the mud. We shouldn't let them get away with it.

If Obama or Romney benefits from some wild, outrageous smear done by an independent organization, he owns it. Unless he calls a news conference to disassociate himself, the attack belongs to whichever campaign wants you to believe it.

We recently saw an encouraging pre-emptive strike in this direction. An outside organization planned to attack Obama with advertisements dredging up the 2008 furor over the Rev. Jeremiah Wright, the president's former pastor in Chicago. Although his campaign was not technically involved in the plan, Romney publicly disassociated himself from it.

Maybe the Romney forces engineered the whole thing, to remind everybody of Wright's past statements while making the Republican nominee-to-be look virtuous for repudiating it. But it sets a good precedent for what portends to be an ugly presidential campaign.

Bill Cotterell, retired senior writer for the Tallahassee Democrat, has covered Florida government and politics since 1969. He can be reached at bcotterell@gmail.com

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Please type letters to the editor (or print legibly) and include your name, town of residence, phone number and signature and mail to Tampa Bay Newspapers, 9911 Seminole Blvd., Seminole, FL 33772. E-mails should include town of residence

and telephone and be sent to tgermond@TBNweekly.com. We will not print the letter writer's phone number.

Here are some more guidelines for letters:

- Letters are printed on a first-come,

first-served basis. They may be edited to correct grammar, spelling and factual errors. They also may be edited for clarity.

- Please keep letters to editor to 500 words. Longer letters may be cut due to space limitations.

**Tampa Bay
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Phone: 727-397-5563

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Here and there

Tables, booths available for garage sale, wellness expo

LARGO - The Southwest Recreation Complex's Community Garage Sale and Health and Wellness Expo will be held Saturday, Aug. 18.

Garage sale tables will be available for \$9 starting Friday, June 1.

Vendor booths at the Health and Wellness Expo will be available for \$15. Both events will be held at the Southwest Recreation Complex, 13120 Vonn Road, and are free to the public. Space sells out quickly, so call and reserve your table today. For more information, contact Southwest Recreation at 518-3125 or email cheubel@largo.com.

Ombudsman program seeks volunteers

LARGO - Florida's Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program needs volunteers to join its corps of dedicated advocates who protect the rights of elders residing in nursing homes, assisted living facilities and adult family care homes.

The program's local councils are seeking additional volunteers to identify, investigate and resolve residents' concerns. Special training and certification is provided.

All interested individuals who care about protecting the health, safety, welfare and rights of long-term care facility residents - who often have no one else to advocate for them - are encouraged to call toll-free 888 831-0404 or visit the program's website at ombudsman.myflorida.com.

The local council meets on the third Thursday of each month at the Mary Grizzle Building, 11351 Ulmerton Road, Room 136 to discuss the program's current activities and give the public a chance to provide comments about long-term care facility issues. The open session of these meetings begins at 1 p.m. Concerned citizens and those interested in volunteering are welcome to attend.

Ahern to speak to Republican women

BELLEAIR - State Rep. Larry Ahern will be speaking to the Belleair Women's Republican Club luncheon Friday, June 1, 11:30 a.m., at Belleair

Country Club.

Ahern will explain Florida's new redistricting rules. Ahern, who is affected by redistricting, currently represents District 51, and is running unopposed in the Aug. 14 Republican primary for the new District 66 seat.

For more information, call 595-1791.

SPCA Tampa Bay to host cat talk program

LARGO - A program on the mysteries of cat talk will be presented Saturday, June 2, 2 to 4 p.m., at SPCA Tampa Bay, 9099 130th Ave. N.

SPCA Tampa Bay training director Donna Bainter will host the workshop devoted to felines. She will explore the feline psyche and discusses feline health. The workshop also will include a Tellington Touch demonstration.

Cost is \$25 a person or \$20 a person for SPCA and Pinellas County Animal Services adopters. To register, visit www.spcatampabay.org.

Dog training workshop set

LARGO - A free dog-training workshop will be offered Saturdays, June 2 and July 7, 10 a.m., at Pinellas County Animal Services, 12450 Ulmerton Road.

Attendees will learn the basics of dog training in a seminar for all who have adopted dogs from Pinellas County Animal Services or other shelters in the county. Topics will include house-training, loose-leash walking and dealing with challenging dog behaviors. No dogs will be allowed in the class.

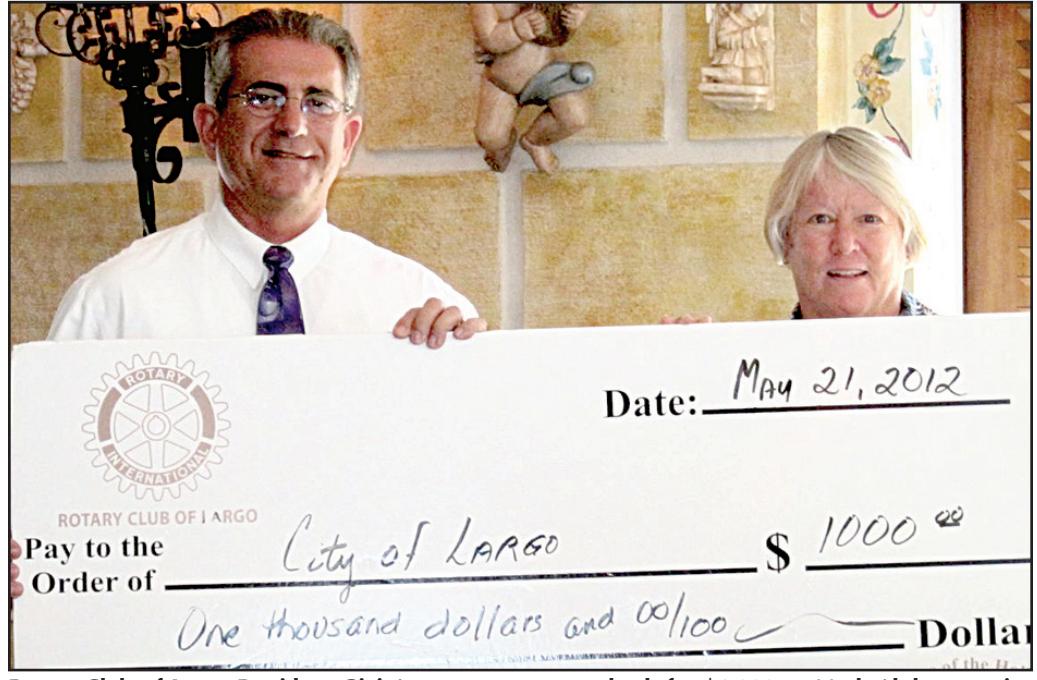
Call 582-2600 or visit www.pinellascounty.org/animalservices.

County to offer Saturday pet adoptions

LARGO - Volunteers from Pinellas County Animal Services will offer pet adoptions and adoption information on the following days and locations:

- Saturday, June 2, 9 a.m. to noon, at Pinellas County Animal Services, 12450 Ulmerton Road.
- Saturday, June 9, 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m., Pets-Mart, Largo Mall, 10500 Ulmerton Road.
- Saturday, June 16, 9 a.m. to noon, at Pinellas County Animal Services, 12450 Ulmerton Road.

Rotary donation



Rotary Club of Largo President Gigi Arntzen presents a check for \$1,000 to Mark Abdo, aquatics program manager for the city. Largo Rotarians have provided financial assistance to Adaptive Aquatics Competitive Swim Team including the team's participation in Special Olympics competitions for the last four years. These funds are a portion of the proceeds from the club's "Death by Chocolate - A Taste of the Holidays" held each year on the first Friday of December.

• Saturday, June 23, 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m., Pets-Mart, Largo Mall, 10500 Ulmerton Road.

Call 582-2600 or visit www.pinellascounty.org/animalservices.

Ruskin at 584-0958.

Garden sale to benefit ERA

REDINGTON BEACH - A garden sale to benefit the National Equal Rights Amendment Alliance to pass the ERA will be held June 8-9, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., at 305 173rd Ave. N.

The sale features low-cost plants that are easy to grow: Red geraniums; ferns; r radiant red, salmon, yellow canna; ginger; frangipanni (Hawaiian lei flower plants) pink, red, yellow, white; red kalanchoe; red/pink salvia; oregano, basil plants; one full white mum; one red poinciana small tree. Some freebies. Nursing texts and journals.

Military news

Brittany Dove

LARGO - Marine Corps Pvt. Brittany Dove recently completed 12 weeks of basic training at Marine Corps Recruit Depot, Parris Island, S.C., designed to challenge new Marine

recruits both physically and mentally.

Dove is a 2011 graduate of Largo High School.

Jeffrey Taylor

ST. PETERSBURG - Air

Force Airman Jeffrey Taylor recently graduated from basic military training at Lackland Air Force Base, San Antonio, Texas.

Taylor is the son of David Taylor of St. Petersburg. He is a 2011 graduate of Dixie Hollins High School.

Keith Roggenstein

PINELLAS PARK - Air Force Airman Keith Roggenstein graduated from basic military training at Lackland Air Force Base, San Antonio, Texas.

Roggenstein is the son of Eric Roggenstein of Pinellas Park, and grandson of Samuel Ward of Muskegon, Mich. He is a 2007 graduate of Enid High School, Okla. He earned an associate degree in 2009 from the University of Maryland University College.

Erik Lightle

CLEARWATER - Army Pvt. Erik Lightle has graduated from basic infantry training at Fort Benning, Columbus, Ga.

Lightle is the son of Richard Lightle of Clearwater. The private is a 2009 graduate of East Lake High School.

Carlos-Fabian Gomez

ST. PETERSBURG - Army Reserve Pvt. Carlos-Fabian Gomez recently graduated from One Station Unit Training (OSUT) at Fort Leonard Wood, Waynesville, Mo., which included basic military training and advanced individual training.

Gomez is the son of Carlos-Arturo Gomez and Marissa Alberti-Gomez of St. Petersburg. The private is a 2009 graduate of Canterbury School of Florida.

Ivan Estrada

ST. PETERSBURG - Air Force Airman Ivan Estrada recently graduated from basic military training at Lackland Air Force Base, San Antonio, Texas.

Estrada is the son of Elizabeth and Rafael Estrada of St. Petersburg. The airman is a 2011 graduate of Boca Ciega High School.

Victoria Perez

PINELLAS PARK - Navy Fireman Victoria Perez recently deployed.

Perez is a 2007 graduate of Pinellas Park High School.

Perez along with fellow Sailors and Marines, assigned to the nuclear powered aircraft carrier USS Enterprise (CVN 65), departed Norfolk Naval Station for the ship's 22nd and final deployment.

Enterprise is slated to deploy to the U.S. Navy's 5th and 6th Fleet areas of operation as part of an ongoing rotation of U.S. forces supporting maritime security operations in international waters around the globe.

Ryan Walters

ST. PETERSBURG - Air Force Airman Ryan Walters recently graduated from basic military training at Lackland Air Force Base, San Antonio, Texas.

Walters is the son of Sally Walters of St. Petersburg. He is a 2010 graduate of Northeast High School.

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Dakota

Dakota is a 1-year-old, 82-pound female American bulldog. She is a calm, sweet girl who does well with other dogs her size and would fit in best with a family that has older, active children. Call Pet Pal Animal Shelter at 328-7738 or stop by the shelter at 405 22nd St. S. in St. Petersburg. Visit www.petpalanimalshelter.com.



Squeak

Squeak is a 4-year-old female tabby with white markings on her face. She likes human attention but isn't keen on other cats. Squeak is a nice girl and would love to have her own home. She has been spayed, vaccinated and microchipped. Call Save 481-5262 for information on adopting from Save Our Strays Inc. or visit www.saveourstraysinc.com.



Calendar of events

Minnesota Club, meets the first Wednesday of the month, October through April, at different restaurants. Call Marquette Origer at 517-0874.

The Moms Club of Largo meets monthly at the Largo Library and has weekly play groups. Visit MOMSClubofLargo@yahoo.com or email MOMSClubofLargo@yahoo.com.

Mothers and More of Largo/Seminole, meets last Mondays, 7 p.m., at Seminole Community Library, Room A, 9200 113th St. N. Email creativemommy2@yahoo.com.

National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association, Clearwater Chapter 259, meets for refreshments and socializing first Wednesdays (except July and August), 1 p.m., at the Clearwater East Library, 2251 Drew St. Meeting begins at 1:30 p.m. Blue Cross/Blue Shield Rep will cover FEHBP changes. Call 599-2031.

National Association of Retired Federal Employees, Largo-Seminole Chapter 845, meets first Tuesdays, at different venues each month. Speakers begin at 12:15 p.m., followed by a business meeting. Guests may eat lunch before or after the meeting. Call Susan at 397-8232 for locations.

National New Yorkers of Tampa Bay, meets monthly on different Sundays at various locations. Call Arlyne Popick at 585-0992 or email ATP1946@yahoo.com.

New Neighbors, meets first Tuesdays, 7 p.m., at Kissin Cuzzins Restaurant, 28910 U.S. 19 N., Clearwater. This is a woman's group for meeting new friends, social activities and informative programs. Cost is \$4.50 and includes dessert, beverage and program. Call 796-2006.

Newcomers Club of Greater Dunedin, meets second Thursdays, 11:30 a.m., at the Dunedin Golf Club. For information on the next meeting, call Sylvia Bock at 736-3235.

North Pinellas County Democratic Club, meets second Wednesdays, 7 p.m., at the Clearwater Countryside Library. Call Joyce at 538-0043.

Overeaters Anonymous, meets Mondays, 7 p.m., at Friendship United Methodist Church, 2039 East Druid Road, Clearwater; and Wednesdays, 7:30 p.m., at Anona United Methodist Church, 13233 Indian Rocks Road, Largo. Call 800-544-6353.

Palm Harbor Men's Barbershop Chorus, meets Mondays, 6:45 p.m., at the Palm Harbor Senior Activity Center, 1500 16th St. The 60-man chorus seeks tenors, leads, baritones and basses. Call 773-0049.

Palm Harbor Newcomers Alumnae and Friends Club, meets first Thursdays, 11 a.m., at East Lake Woodlands Country Club, 300 East Lake Fairway, Oldsmar. For reservations, call Pat at 786-2110.

Parkinson's Support Group, meets third Tuesdays, noon, at Cypress Palms, 400 Lake Ave. NE, Largo. Roni Hellwig, a registered nurse, acts as facilitator. A light lunch is served. To RSVP, call 437-1639.

Pennsylvania Association of School Retirees, meets third Mondays, every other month, 1 to 3 p.m., at Panera's in Bardmoor Shopping Center at the intersection of Starkey and Bryan Dairy roads. Coffee, tea and lunch will be available for purchase. Call Patricia Albrecht at 578-5526.

Peoples Spiritualist Church Healing and Peace Meditation, meets Tuesdays, 6 to 7 p.m., at Peoples Spiritualist Church, 1011 Ninth Ave. N, St. Petersburg. Program includes discussion, healing, peace meditation and chakra balancing. Email dsg@tampabay.rr.com.

Pet loss support group, meets second Wednesdays, 7 to 8:30 p.m., at Pinelands Animal Foundation, 10825 Seminole Blvd., Building A, Unit 3, Seminole. Call 347-PETS.

PINAWOR writers group, meets Saturdays, 9:30 a.m. to noon, at the Highland Recreation Complex, 400 N. Highland Ave., Largo. Members read their work and receive helpful critiquing from the other writers. Go to Pinawor.org.

Pinellas Genealogy Society, family history workshops, meets the third Saturday of each month at 11 a.m., Largo Library, Jenkins Room. All visitors welcome. Phone 586-7410, or go to www.rootweb.ancestry.com/~flpgs/

Pinellas Homeschool LEGO Club, meets second and fourth Fridays, 2:30 p.m., at Pinellas Park Library, 7770 52nd St., Pinellas Park. Email jknsm@hotmail.com.

Pinellas Opera League, meets first Wednesdays, October through June, 11 a.m., at the Dunedin Country Club, 1050 Palm Blvd., Dunedin. Cost for luncheon and performance is \$20. For reservations, call Nancy at 738-4007.

Pinellas Parent Educators Association, meets first Tuesdays, 7 to 9 p.m., at Suncoast Community Church, 12855 110th Ave. N., Largo; and second Tuesdays, 7 to 9 p.m., at Glad Tidings Church, 4200 17th Ave. N, St. Petersburg. Email strouseacademy@yahoo.com or sarnold17@tampabay.rr.com.

Pinellas Park Civic Orchestra, rehearses on Mondays, 7 p.m., September through March, at the Pinellas Park Performing Arts Center. Concerts are held first Sunday at 7:30 p.m. Call 415-9650.

Pinellas Park Photography Society, meets first Mondays, 7 p.m., at the Train Station, 5851A Park Blvd., Pinellas Park. Call Steve Daniels at 391-3134.

Pinellas Park Rug Hooking Group, meets Mondays, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., at Clark Senior Center, 7625 59th St. N, Pinellas Park. Email dschulz1@tampabay.rr.com.

Pinellas Weaver's Guild, meets third Saturdays from September to May, 10 a.m., at Heritage Village, 11909 125th St. N, Largo, FL 33542.

Polish American Society, meets Sundays from September to May, at 1343 Beach Drive, St. Petersburg 2:30 to 7 p.m. Dinner 3 to 4 p.m. and dancing 4 to 5 p.m. Members pay \$5 and guests \$7. Call Beverly at 526-6835 or Randy at 525-8255.

Promenade Squares, meets for square dancing on Thursdays at the Pinellas Park Senior Citizens Center, 7625 59th St. N. Lessons are from 5:30 to 7:15 p.m., pre-rounds are from 7:15 to 7:45 p.m. and the dance is from 7:45 to 9:45 p.m. Call 799-3068.

Recovery Inc., a support group for anxiety and depression, meets Thursdays, 7:30 p.m., at Grace Lutheran Church, 1812 N. Highland Ave., Clearwater. Call 525-1749.

Redington Beach Garden Club, meets monthly at various locations. Call Zor Roseman at 515-6804.

Rhode Island Club, meets monthly, October to April, on different dates at different locations. Call Art Hebert at 595-6834 or Carol Barney at 596-8284.

Rotary Clubs:

- Belleair meets Thursdays, noon, at the Belleair Country Club, One Country Club Lane. Visit www.belleairrotary.org.
- Dunedin, meets Tuesday, 12:15 p.m. at the Episcopal Church of Good Shepherd, 639 Edgewater Drive.
- Indian Rocks Beach, meets Wednesdays, 7:15 a.m., at Holiday Inn HarborSide. Visit www.indian-rocks-rotary.org.

Announcements are submitted by the public; information is subject to change. To place an item in the ongoing calendar or networking leads, send it at least two weeks in advance to **Calendar-Leads**, Tampa Bay Newspapers, 9911 Seminole Blvd., Seminole, FL 33772, or e-mail editorial@TBNweekly.com. Please include date, time, place and phone number and don't forget to send a notification when the information changes, or the group stops meeting.

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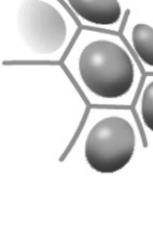
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To learn more about what we're doing to help strengthen the local economy, visit bankofamerica.com/facts

Diversions

Things to do around Pinellas County



- Classifieds
- Events
- Movies

Leader
Section B
May 31, 2012

Visit www.TBNweekly.com

Top five diversions

Kathy Griffin, Friday, June 1, 8 p.m., at Ruth Eckerd Hall, 1111 McMullen Booth Road, Clearwater. Tickets start at \$52.50. Call 791-7400 or visit www.rutheckerdhall.com. Two-time Emmy winner, NY Times bestselling author, four-time Grammy nominee, Broadway darling, 2009's GLAAD Vanguard recipient and 2011 Trevor Project Life Award honoree, Griffin will be making her fourth appearance at Ruth Eckerd Hall. She will be discussing Hollywood gossip and celebrity blunders. Like the previous three shows, which sold out in 2009 and 2010, we expect tickets to go quickly. Griffin has performed many successful stand-up specials for Bravo. The first in 2005 was called "Kathy Griffin ... Is Not Nicole Kidman" and the second in May of 2006 was called "Strong Black Woman." These were followed by "Kathy Griffin: Straight to Hell," (2008) and "Kathy Griffin: She'll Cut a Bitch" (2009) which were both nominated for an Emmy in the category Outstanding Variety, Music or Comedy Special.

Downtown Digital Block Party, Saturday, June 2, noon to midnight, at Jannus Live, 16 Second St. N., St. Petersburg. Early bird tickets start at \$25. Call 565-0550 or visit www.jannuslive.com. The event will bring the latest and biggest sounds from across the country to downtown St. Petersburg. The Downtown Digital Block Party is brand new and original, with one vision: to unite music lovers of all electronic genres for a whole day and night of carefree vibes and massive beats. Downtown Digital will feature Ladytron (DJ Set), Mustard Pimp (live), Boombox, Amtrac, Sonic C. Party Supplies, Defep, Machines Are People Too, Hi-Rez, Blood Eagle, Skyway and Milo & Otis. In addition to straight house and electro raves, the block party will include breakbeat, dubstep and hip-hop.

Bobby Collins, Saturday, June 2, 8 p.m., at the Mahaffey Theater, 400 First St. S., St. Petersburg. Tickets start at \$25. Call 892-5767 or visit www.themahaffey.com. Star of VH1 and Showtime, Collins – an award-winning comedian – left a lucrative position as vice president of Calvin Klein to pursue his dream and ended up working alongside such comedy legends as Jerry Seinfeld and Jay Leno. Collins starred in his own Showtime Special and hosted VH1's "Stand Up Spotlight." While other comics have left stand-up behind, Collins has kept going, preferring the intimacy and energy he finds in live clubs, theaters and casinos. Collins' heartfelt brand of humor is delivered in clever bits of witticism that will draw you into his own world.

Styx, Sunday, June 3, 7:30 p.m., at Ruth Eckerd Hall, 1111 McMullen Booth Road, Clearwater. Tickets start at \$35. Call 791-7400 or visit www.rutheckerdhall.com. Styx continues to perform all over the United States in celebration of the 40th anniversary of their self-titled debut release and in support of their recently released "Regeneration, Vol. I and II," released last fall via Eagle Rock Entertainment. In addition to the reinterpretation of 13 Styx classics and the new song, "Difference In The World," the double-disc collection also includes new versions of "High Enough" and "Coming Of Age," originally recorded by Damn Yankees, which featured Tommy Shaw, along with Ted Nugent, Night Ranger's Jack Blades and drummer Michael Cartellone. Spawned from a suburban Chicago basement in the early '70s, Styx would eventually transform into the virtual arena rock prototype by the late '70s and early '80s, due to a fondness for big rockers and soaring power ballads.

Neil Diamond, Sunday, June 3, 8 p.m., at Tampa Bay Times Forum, 401 Channelside Drive, Tampa. Tickets start at \$52.25. Call 800-745-3000 or visit www.tampabaytimesforum.com. Diamond, a rock and pop icon, was a 2011 Rock and Roll Hall of Fame inductee and 2011 Kennedy Center Honoree. The showman will be taking his greatest hits on the road on this much-anticipated North American tour. The show will feature many of Diamond's classic favorites. Diamond recently released "The Very Best of Neil Diamond – The Original Studio Recordings." The album features 23 of the most popular hits and signature tracks from America's quintessential singer-songwriter. This is the first Diamond collection to draw from the artist's complete studio discography and includes tracks such as "Forever In Blue Jeans," "Cherry, Cherry," "Sweet Caroline," "I'm A Believer," "Girl, You'll Be A Woman Soon," "You Don't Bring Me Flowers," "Red, Red Wine" and "America."



Photo by ALEX BAILEY

Charlize Theron stars as the Queen in the epic action-adventure "Snow White and the Huntsman," the breathtaking new vision of the legendary tale from the producer of "Alice in Wonderland."

Opening this weekend

'Snow White' pits Kristen Stewart against Charlie Theron

Compiled by LEE CLARK ZUMPE

A number of new movies will hit theaters this week, including the following films opening in wide release:

'Snow White and the Huntsman'

Genre: Action and adventure

Cast: Kristen Stewart, Charlize Theron, Chris Hemsworth, Sam Claflin, Ray Winstone, Ian McShane, Eddie Izzard, Bob Hoskins, Toby Jones, Eddie Marsan, Stephen Graham, Lily Cole, Sam Spruell, Liberty Ross and Noah Huntley

Director: Rupert Sanders

Rated: PG-13

Kristen Stewart plays the only person in the land fairer than the evil Queen Ravenna (Charlize Theron) who is out to destroy her.

But what the wicked ruler never imagined was that the young woman who has escaped her clutches and now threatens her reign has been training in the art of war with a Huntsman named Eric (Chris Hemsworth) who was dispatched to capture her.

Sam Claflin accompanies the film's cast of international superstars as William, the young duke long enchanted by Snow White's defiance and innate purity. He is joined in this quest by dwarves accompanying Snow White and the Huntsman on their fantastical journey.

'For Greater Glory'

Genre: Drama

Cast: Andy Garcia, Eva Longoria, Peter O'Toole, Oscar Isaac, Ruben Blades, Bruce Greenwood, Nestor Carbonell, Bruce McGill, Santiago Cabrera, Catalina Sandino Moreno and Eduardo Verastegui

Director: Michael Lovre

Rated: R

What price would you pay for freedom?

In the exhilarating action epic "For Greater Glory," an impassioned group of men and women each make the decision to risk it all for family, faith and the very future of their country, as the film's adventure unfolds against the long-hidden, true story of the 1920s Cristero War – the daring people's revolt that rocked 20th century North America.

Academy Award nominee Andy Garcia headlines an acclaimed cast as General Gorostieta, the retired military man who at first thinks he has nothing personal at stake as he and his wife (Eva Longoria) watch Mexico fall into a violent civil war. Yet the man who hesitates in joining the cause will soon become the resistance's most inspiring and self-sacrificing leader, as he begins to see the cost of religious persecution on his countrymen ... and transforms a rag-tag band of rebels into a heroic force to be reckoned with.

The general faces impossible odds against a powerful and ruthless government. Yet it is those he meets on the journey – youthful idealists, feisty renegades and, most of all, one remarkable teenager named Jose – who reveal to him how courage and belief are forged even when justice seems lost.

'Piranha 3DD'

Genre: Comedy, horror and thriller

Cast: Danielle Panabaker, Matt Bush, Chris Zylka, David Koechner, Meagan Tandy, Paul James Jordan, Jean-Luc Bilodeau, Hector Jimenez, Adrian Martinez, Clu Gulager, Gary Busey, Katrina Bowden, Christopher Lloyd, Ving Rhames, Paul Scheer and David Hasselhoff

Director: John Gulager

Rated: R

After the terror unleashed on Lake Victoria in "Piranha 3D," the prehistoric school of bloodthirsty piranhas are back.

See OPENING, page 2B

DON'T BUY A HEARING AID UNTIL YOU SEE US!

- Do you **HEAR** but **DON'T UNDERSTAND**?
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- Do you often ask others to **REPEAT**?
- Do you have trouble understanding in **BACKGROUND NOISE**?

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\$1,599

Our Price RIC only

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NEW LISTING

As you enter the main part of the home there is a centrally located kitchen, living room, separate dining area, 2 bedrooms, & laundry room. Beyond the main home there is a workshop, half bath, outdoor shower & hot tub.

\$57,000

This perfectly immaculate 2 bedroom, 2 bath condo is located in prestigious Imperial Point. Features include glass enclosed lanai, large master bedroom with his and her closets, kitchen with updated appliances and pass through to dining area.

\$149,000

This stunning custom built home is located on Seminole Lake Course on a double lot with expansive views. The main living level features formal living room, family room with water views, 5th bedroom or office, formal dining room & gourmet kitchen.

\$799,000

SEMINOLE TOWNSOME

- 3BR/2.5BA
- Pets allowed
- All ages welcome
- Waterfront Lake Seminole Community

109,900

"I liked the organization and division of duties among Sandy's Team. They worked well together to achieve a good result."

- Marilyn Weeks

It's easy to enjoy the gorgeous water views from this 2 bedroom, 2 bath corner condo in the Presidential Building at Bay Island. Each room has water views and overlooks the well maintained grounds & pools.

\$230,000

IMPERIAL COVE

- Spacious 2 Bedroom 2 Bath villa in Imperial Cove.
- Villa features great room floor plan, Florida room, inside utility, updated kitchen with new appliances, new glass mosaic tile back splash and new light fixtures.

\$74,900

Spacious 4 bedroom split plan that offers a living room that could also be a formal dining area, centrally located kitchen, large family room that is large enough for a pool table, ping pong, or even a home theater.

\$197,000

Spacious 3 bedroom, 2 bath, 1 car garage condo is move-in ready. Ideal floor plan features a great room with easy access to the kitchen & dining area, & master bedroom with large private bath.

\$125,000

Sandy Hartmann & Associates has been providing exceptional real estate services to their clients for over 31 years and is consistently ranked in the top 1% of Real Estate agents across the United States. So, before you buy or sell... get your facts from a professional.

OPENING, from page 1B

This time, no one is safe from the flesh eating fish as they sink their razor sharp teeth into the visitors of summer's best attraction, *The Big Wet Water Park*. Christopher Lloyd reprises his role as the eccentric piranha expert with survivor Paul Scheer and a partially devoured Ving Rhames back for more fish frenzy.

David Hasselhoff trades in the sandy beaches of "Baywatch" to be a celebrity lifeguard at the racy water park. Prepare for double the terror, double the action and double the D's in this sequel also starring Gary Busey, Katrina Bowden, Danielle Panabaker, Matt Bush, Chris Zylka and David Koechner.

The following will open in limited release. It may be several weeks before these films appear in local movie theaters.

'A Cat in Paris'

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Cast: Marcia Gay Harden, Anjelica Huston and Matthew Modine

Director: Jean-Loup Felicioli and Alain Gagnol

Rated: PG

From Folimage, the animation studio behind "Mia & the Migoo" and "Raining Cats and Frogs," comes a beautifully hand-drawn caper set in the shadow-drenched alleyways of Paris.

Dino is a pet cat that leads a double life. By day he lives with Zoe, a little mute girl whose mother, Jeanne, is a detective in the Parisian police force. But at night he sneaks out the window to work with Nico - a slinky cat burglar with a big heart, whose fluid movements are poetry in motion - as he evades captors and slips and swishes from rooftop to rooftop across the Paris skyline. The cat's two worlds

collide when young Zoe decides to follow Dino on his nocturnal adventures - and falls into the hands of Victor Costa, a blustery gangster planning the theft of a rare statue.

Now cat and cat burglar must team up to save Zoe from the bumbling thieves, leading to a thrilling acrobatic finale on top of Notre Dame. *A Cat in Paris* is a warm and richly humorous love letter to classic noir films and the stylized wit of the Pink Panther cartoons - and Dino, the literal cat burglar, manages to steal the show with little more than a subtle swish of the tail and quiet mew.

'High School'

Genre: Comedy

Cast: Adrien Brody, Sean Marquette, Matt Bush, Colin Hanks, Adhir Kalyan, Mykelti Williamson, Yeardley Smith, Curtis Armstrong and Michael Chiklis

Director: John Stalberg Jr.

Rated: R

The day after soon-to-be valedictorian Henry Burke (Matt Bush) takes a hit of the chronic for the first time, his school principal (Michael Chiklis) institutes a zero tolerance drug policy and administers a mandatory drug test for all students.

Henry has two options: fail and lose his college scholarship, or team up with his stoner friend Breaux (Sean Marquette) to beat the system. They steal a high-powered ganja from law student-turned-drug dealer Psycho Ed (Adrien Brody) and spike the school's bake sale brownies, getting the whole school - faculty included - completely stoned out of their minds. But with the student body getting higher and higher with every brownie, and a pissed-off Psycho Ed on their tails for stealing his stash, they must find a way to keep their half-baked plan from going up in smoke.

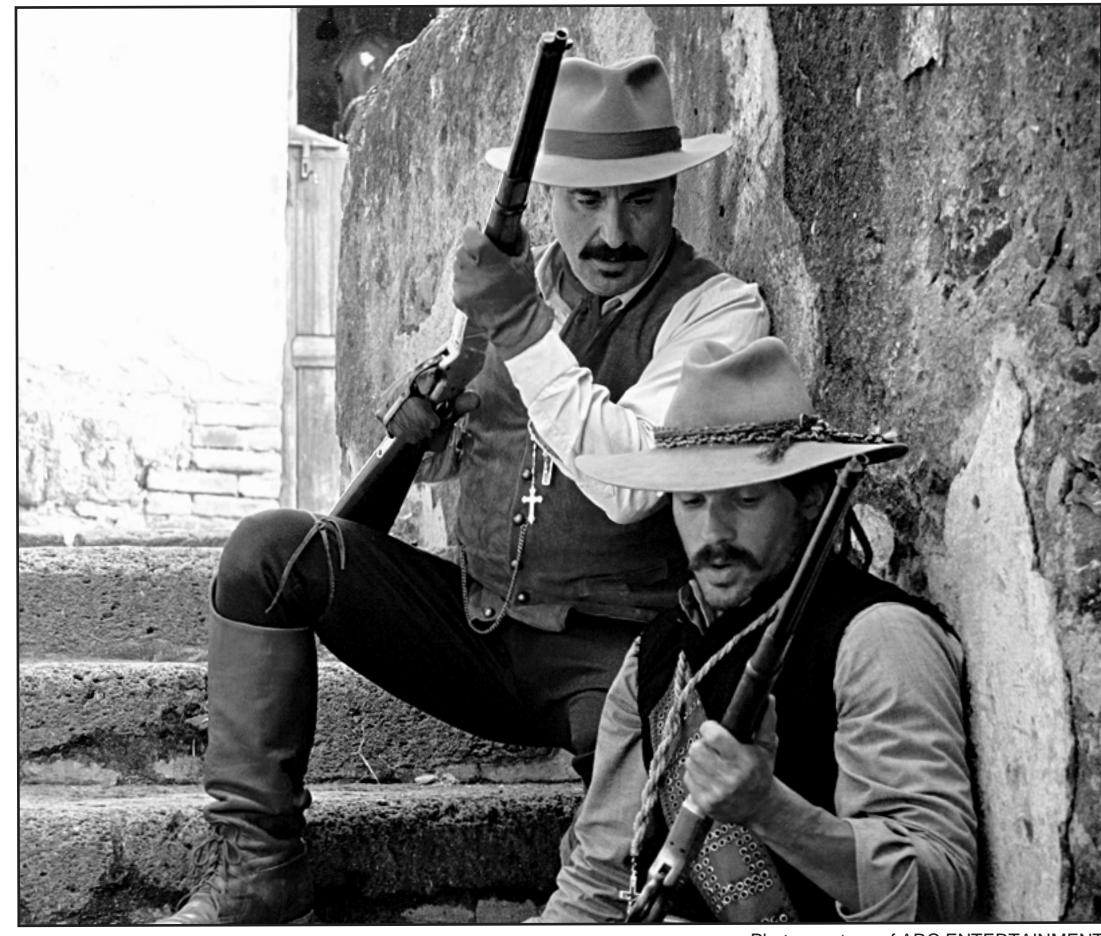
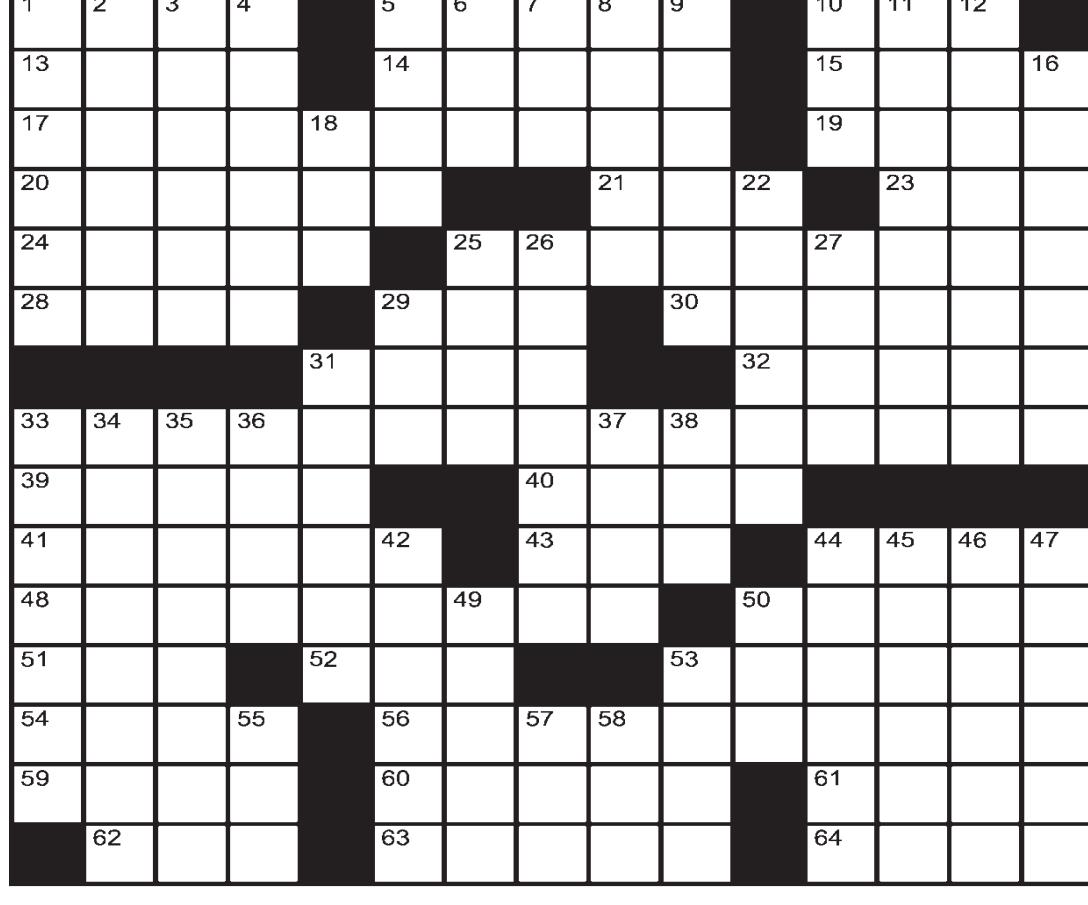


Photo courtesy of ARC ENTERTAINMENT

Andy Garcia, left, stars as Enrique Gorostiza Velarde and Oscar Isaac as Victoriano "El Catorce" Ramirez in "For Greater Glory," from Arc Entertainment.

Crossword**Across**

1. Chesterfield, e.g.
5. Kind of line
10. Synthetic thermoplastic material (acronym)
13. "Miss ___ Regrets"
14. Series of six balls bowled from one end of a cricket pitch (pl.)
15. Pink, as a steak
17. Detachment
19. Original matter prior to the Big Bang
20. Modified car for speed (2 wds)
21. Dance bit
23. "To Autumn," e.g.
24. Association of Southeast Asian Nations (acronym)
25. Professional beggar
28. Course
29. "Seinfeld" uncle
30. Setting at an oblique angle
31. Whirring sound
32. Shallow dishes mounted on a stem and foot
33. Hand sewing items (3 wds)
39. Brief stanza concluding certain forms of poetry
40. Ashtabula's lake
41. Usurps forcefully
43. Drink from a dish
44. Priestly garb
48. 45 degrees clockwise from N
50. All excited
51. "A Nightmare on ___ Street"
52. Australian runner
53. Aviator
54. Coin opening
56. Chinese characters, e.g.
59. Arid
60. Church donation
61. Same: Fr.
62. Moray, e.g.
63. Character
64. Flight data, briefly (pl.)

Down

1. Used to express lack of interest (2 wds)
2. Good-for-nothing
3. Tailor, at times
4. Religious community where Hindu holy man lives
5. 128 cubic feet
6. Egg cells
7. "What's ___?"
8. Pie chart, e.g.
9. Cockeyed
10. Be nosy
11. Assign a value to
12. Sideboard
16. Came out
18. Family head
22. Mollify
25. "Buona ___" (Italian greeting)
26. Dogwood trees, e.g.
27. Back
29. Deception
31. Cheerful
33. Quality of just coming into being
34. One registered in a class
35. For a limitless time
36. Biblical verb
37. "Dang!"
38. End
42. Arab, e.g.
44. House with steeply angled sides (hyphenated)
45. Marine gastropod with low conical shells
46. Creator god in Hindu
47. Has a hunch
49. Sit in on
50. Balloon filler
53. Long, long time
55. ___ el Amarna, Egypt
57. Addis Ababa's land: Abbr.
58. "Look here!"

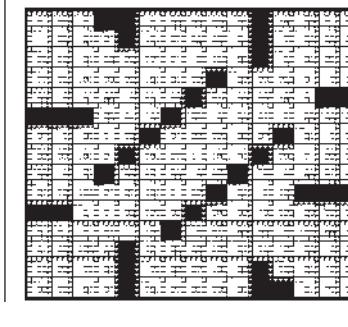
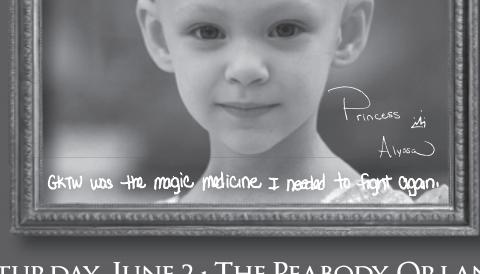
Sudoku

			3	5		8	6
1		2	8		7	9	
			4				
	1	4		9	3		8
8			2	7		4	6
					8		
			6	9		1	7
2	5			3	6		

Place a Number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row across, each column down and each 9-box square contains all of the numbers from one to nine.

Sudoku answers from last week

3	1	4	5	7	9	8	6	2
8	7	6	1	3	2	4	9	5
9	5	2	6	4	8	1	3	7
5	8	3	2	9	4	7	1	6
6	9	7	8	5	1	2	4	3
4	2	1	3	6	7	9	5	8
7	3	8	9	1	5	6	2	4
2	6	9	4	8	3	5	7	1
1	4	5	7	2	6	3	8	9

Crossword answers from last week**SUPPORT GIVE KIDS THE WORLD AND ATTEND OUR 24TH ANNUAL BLACK & WHITE GALA**

SATURDAY, JUNE 2 • THE PEABODY ORLANDO givekidsttheworld.org/gala

Give Kids The World Village is a 70-acre, nonprofit resort in Central Florida that provides weeklong, cost free vacations to children with life-threatening illnesses and their families. Thank you to our media partners: WKMG Local 6 and Magic 107.7.

OPENING, from page 1B

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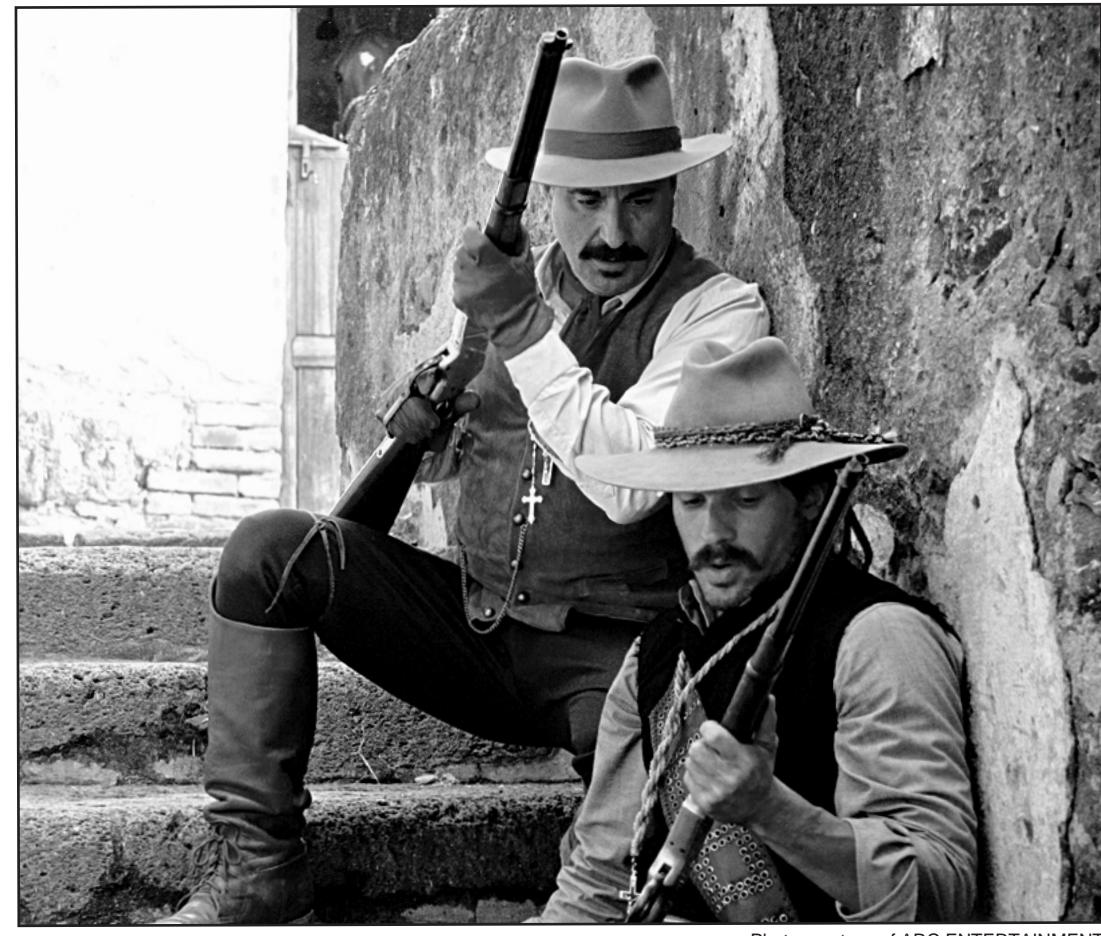


Photo courtesy of ARC ENTERTAINMENT

Andy Garcia, left, stars as Enrique Gorostiza Velarde and Oscar Isaac as Victoriano "El Catorce" Ramirez in "For Greater Glory," from Arc Entertainment.

Horoscopes

May 31, 2012

Capricorn

December 22 – January 19

Romance heats up, and you whisk away that special someone for some much needed time together, Capricorn. An office memo provides the clarification you've been seeking.

Aquarius

January 20 – February 18

Fights erupt over the silliest things all week long. Put an end to the madness with a fun outing, Aquarius. A financial risk is worth taking.

Pisces

February 19 – March 20

You're finally given the green light on a project. Go, Pisces, go! A new face brings a fresh perspective to a situation that has been going on for some time.

Aries

March 21 – April 19

The hot rays of summer beat you into submission and you finally made headway on a home improvement project. It's about time, Aries. An organization needs your help.

Taurus

April 20 – May 20

Feeling stifled, Taurus? Relax—change is near, and it will give you unlimited opportunity for advancement. A loved one has a meltdown. Be there for them.

Gemini

May 21 – June 21

You're on top of the world this week, Gemini. You know just what to say and do to bring happiness to others. A deadline is met with little effort.

Cancer

June 22 – July 22

Great eats provide a great opportunity for quality family time. You'll reconnect on many levels, Cancer. A news item sends you down a new path.

Leo

July 23 – August 22

Your demanding work schedule leaves little time for anything else these days. Poor Leo. The end is near, so cheer up. A friend returns a favor.

Virgo

August 23 – September 22

Organizational skills are put to the test with a new arrival. Think beyond the box, Virgo. A coworker requests your assistance with a challenge.

Libra

September

Corey Avenue becomes an outdoor craft gallery

By LEE CLARK ZUMPE

ST. PETE BEACH – Howard Alan Events and American Craft Endeavors, producer of some of the nation's finest juried art shows and craft festivals, will present the 19th annual St. Pete Beach Corey Area Art and Craft Festival Saturday and Sunday, June 2-3, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., on Corey Avenue east of Gulf Boulevard in downtown St. Pete Beach.

Admission is free and the event is open to the public.

This upscale event literally transforms Corey Avenue into an outdoor craft gallery. The open-air show will feature quality affordable crafts handmade in America. A full range of craft art mediums will be exhibited and shoppers will find everything from folk art, pottery and handmade jewelry to paintings, personalized gift items and scented soaps available for purchase. The event also will include a Green Market with exotic and unique plants.

Sponsored by the Corey Avenue Merchants Association, this family-friendly craft event has become a summertime tradition. The association sponsors a variety of community programs throughout the year, showcasing local and national artists and crafts.

This year, dozens of the nation's best contemporary crafters and artists will display their creations amidst Corey Avenue's shops and restaurants.

Arts and crafts collectors will find treasures priced for as little as \$3 to as much as \$3,000. Attendees will find that all of the work exhibited and available for purchase at the festival is original and handmade in America. Festival-goers can even mingle with the participating crafters.

Among those participating in this year's showcase is Lori Kay Olling, a jewelry designer based in Tampa.

Olling's work features a mix of clean, simple lines and contemporary designs. A metalsmith, Olling uses all precious metals. She has expanded her repertoire recently, becoming a lapidary and utilizing semi-precious stones in her work.

Sidney and Lee Klein create beautiful hand cut

jewelry out of coinage from countries around the world.

"We started creating cut-coin jewelry more than a quarter century ago in Sacramento, Calif.," the couple explains on their website. "We started at the local flea market, then to military bases, on to doing CB jamborees, and graduated to art and craft shows in shopping malls, traveling the United States."

While they were working the shopping mall circuit, Lee learned to solder, so she can make cufflinks and tie tacks.

"She also makes buckles, but cufflinks are her favorite to make. We are now exhibiting our beautiful cut coins in outdoor craft shows and festivals, almost always in Florida."

Linda Mayes, who specializes in creative art photography, also will take part in the festival.

Mayes was born and raised in the Ozarks of Missouri. Mayes says on her website that photography grew from being her favorite pastime into her profession.

"I have enjoyed recording the special places my husband and I visit in our travels, but continue to take most of my pictures closer to home where I now live in Venice, Florida," she says. "When I am taking pictures, I find beauty everywhere, often hidden amidst the visual chaos of our cluttered civilization."

Karen Hull of Cape Coral will be showcasing her glass jewelry at the festival.

According to her website, Hull specializes in unique dichroic glass pendants and earrings. Dichroic glass is glass containing multiple micro-layers of metal oxides, which give it dichroic optical properties.

"The main characteristic of dichroic glass is that it has a transmitted color and a completely different reflected color, as certain wavelengths of light either pass through or are reflected," Hull explains. "This causes an array of color to be displayed. Due to variations in the kiln firing process, individual results can never be predicted, so each piece of our glass jewelry is unique."

Howard Alan Events also will be hosting the fol-



Photo courtesy of HOWARD ALAN EVENTS

Shoppers browse a wide variety of handmade crafts at last year's St. Pete Beach Corey Area Craft Festival on Corey Avenue in St. Pete Beach.

lowing upcoming festivals on Florida's west coast:

• 11th annual St. Armand's Circle Art Festival – Saturday and Sunday, June 9-10, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., at St. Armand's Circle in Sarasota

• 20th anniversary Downtown Venice Craft Festival – Saturday and Sunday, June 16-17, 10 a.m. to

4 p.m., on Miami Avenue in downtown Venice

• 10th annual Downtown Dunedin Craft Festival, Saturday and Sunday, June 23-24, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., on Main Street in Dunedin.

For information about the festival, visit www.artfestival.com.

Clearwater

• PAVA exhibit, through May 31, at Ruth Eckerd Hall, 1111 McMullen Booth Road, Clearwater. On display is varied media visual art from 12 artists from the Professional Association of Visual Artists. Each artist is showing a small body of their work. A panel of their PAVA peers selected the artists. The artwork, which is available for purchase, is located in the upper East and West Galleries of the hall. The exhibit may be viewed during the hall's scheduled performances. PAVA is a not-for-profit, artist run organization. Visit www.pavaartists.org.

• Project: Shattered Silence Stained, Thursday through Friday, May 31 through June 2, 7:30 p.m., in Murray Studio Theater at Ruth Eckerd Hall, 1111 McMullen Booth Road, Clearwater. Tickets are \$12. Call 791-7400 or visit www.rutheckerdhall.com. Written by Marcia P. Hoffman, Performing Arts Institute resident teaching artist Jared O'Roark and area high school students, Project: Shattered Silence examines subjects that are usually ignored by adults. These very complex topics include teen suicide, being baker acted, eating disorders and lighter issues such as humor, achieving dreams and living up to the expectations that kids set for themselves.

• Separate Beds, by Maryjane Cruise, presented by Early Bird Dinner Theatre, through June 3, at the Italian-American Club, 200 S. McMullen Booth Road, Clearwater. Seating for performances is Thursday through Sunday, 4 p.m. Seating for matinees is Thursday and Saturday, 11 a.m. Cost is \$29.90 a person. For reservations, call 446-5898. Visit www.earlybirddinnertheatre.com. Two couples navigate through their relationships on a Caribbean cruise. One seems perfect while the other seems stormy. The truth and lies of each marriage comes to the surface as they celebrate their anniversaries at sea. Ernie and Twink attempt to put the sizzle back into their marriage while Beth and Blake attempt to save theirs.

• Kathy Griffin, Friday, June 1, 8 p.m., at Ruth Eckerd Hall, 1111 McMullen Booth Road, Clearwater. Tickets start at \$52.50. Call 791-7400 or visit www.rutheckerdhall.com. Two-time Emmy winner, NY Times bestselling author, four-time Grammy nominee, Broadway darling, 2009's GLAAD Vanguard recipient and 2011 Trevor Project Life Award honoree, Griffin will be making her fourth appearance at Ruth Eckerd Hall. She will be discussing Hollywood gossip and celebrity blunders. Like the previous three shows, which sold out in 2009 and 2010, we expect tickets to go quickly. Griffin has performed many successful stand-up specials for Bravo. The first in 2005 was called "Kathy Griffin ... Is Not Nicole Kidman" and the second in May of 2006 was called "Strong Black Woman." These were followed by "Kathy Griffin: Straight to Hell," (2008) and "Kathy Griffin: She'll Cut a Bitch" (2009) which were both nominated for an Emmy in the category Outstanding Variety, Music or Comedy Special.

• Art Trysts First Friday Open Studio, Friday, June 1, 4 to 8 p.m., at 1190 Kapp Drive, Clearwater. Attendees will enjoy a free art demonstration by guest artist Susan Hess, enjoy refreshments and meet studio artists Donna Frost, Lorraine Ulen, Lee Canalizo and Kathy Fessender. Admission is free. Visit www.arttrysts.com.

• E.T.: The Extra-Terrestrial, Saturday, June 2, 3 p.m., at Capitol Theatre, 405 Cleveland St. Tickets are \$5. Call 791-7400 or visit www.rutheckerdhall.com. Part of the Capitol Classics Family Movie Series sponsored by Tampa Bay Parenting Magazine, the screening will celebrate the 30th anniversary of this classic film. Co-produced and directed by Steven Spielberg the film stars Drew Barrymore and Henry Thomas and tells the story of Elliott (Thomas), a lonely boy who befriends an extraterrestrial who is stranded on Earth. Elliott and his siblings help the extraterrestrial return home while attempting to keep it hidden from their mother and the government. Critics have acclaimed the film as a timeless story of friendship and it consistently tops lists as one of the greatest science fiction film ever made.

• Styx, Sunday, June 3, 7:30 p.m., at Ruth Eckerd Hall, 1111 McMullen Booth Road, Clearwater. Tickets start at \$35. Call 791-7400 or visit www.rutheckerdhall.com. Styx continues to perform all over the United States in celebration of the 40th anniversary of their self-titled debut release and in support of their recently released "Regeneration,

Vol. I and II," released last fall via Eagle Rock Entertainment. In addition to the reinterpretation of 13 Styx classics and the new song, "Difference In The World," the double-disc collection also includes new versions of "High Enough" and "Coming Of Age," originally recorded by Damn Yankees, which featured Tommy Shaw, along with Ted Nugent, Night Ranger's Jack Blades and drummer Michael Cartellone. Spawning from a suburban Chicago basement in the early '70s, Styx would eventually transform into the virtual arena rock prototype by the late '70s and early '80s, due to a fondness for big rockers and soaring power ballads.

• The African Queen, Thursday, June 7, 7 p.m., at Capitol Theatre, 405 Cleveland St. Tickets are \$5. Call 791-7400 or visit www.rutheckerdhall.com. In Africa during WW1, a gin-swilling riverboat owner/captain is persuaded by a strait-laced missionary to use his boat to attack an enemy warship. The film stars Humphrey Bogart, Katharine Hepburn and Robert Morley.

• John Waite, Friday, June 8, 7:30 p.m., at Capitol Theatre, 405 Cleveland St. Tickets start at \$35. Call 791-7400 or visit www.rutheckerdhall.com. Waite, whose career spans more than three decades and who has had numerous hit singles, is touring in support of his latest solo release "Rough and Tumble." The singer/songwriter collaborated with Matchbox 20 lead guitarist/songwriter Kyle Cook to forge an

eclectic collection of brand new material. It is Waite's first solo release since 2007's "Downtown: Journey of a Heart." Inspired by British blues bands like Free, Small Faces and Humble Pie, Waite got his start as the lead singer of The Babys who, within a short time, had Top 40 hits with "Isn't It Time?" and "Every Time I Think of You." After five albums with The Babys, John Waite moved to New York to go solo during the early 1980s. His first solo album, "Ignition," boasted what is undeniably one of the all-time greatest pop/rock ballads, "Missing You." The song topped the international charts and today remains a radio staple around the globe. Waite returned to the top of the charts during a two-album tenure as front man for the pop/rock supergroup Bad English, whose No. 1 single "When I See You Smile" sparked sold-out concert tours and a succession of Billboard Hot 100 Hits.

• "Dancing at Lughnasa," by Brian Friel, presented by West Coast Players, June 8-24, at West Coast Players Theatre, 21905 U.S. 19 N., Clearwater. Performances are Friday and Saturday, 8 p.m. Matinees are Sunday, 2 p.m. Admission is \$18 for adults and \$15 for seniors and students. Call 437-2363 or visit www.wcplayers.org. Set in Ireland

See LOOKING AHEAD, page 8B

Looking ahead

Vol. I and II," released last fall via Eagle Rock Entertainment. In addition to the reinterpretation of 13 Styx classics and the new song, "Difference In The World," the double-disc collection also includes new versions of "High Enough" and "Coming Of Age," originally recorded by Damn Yankees, which featured Tommy Shaw, along with Ted Nugent, Night Ranger's Jack Blades and drummer Michael Cartellone. Spawning from a suburban Chicago basement in the early '70s, Styx would eventually transform into the virtual arena rock prototype by the late '70s and early '80s, due to a fondness for big rockers and soaring power ballads.

• The African Queen, Thursday, June 7, 7 p.m., at Capitol Theatre, 405 Cleveland St. Tickets are \$5. Call 791-7400 or visit www.rutheckerdhall.com. In Africa during WW1, a gin-swilling riverboat owner/captain is persuaded by a strait-laced missionary to use his boat to attack an enemy warship. The film stars Humphrey Bogart, Katharine Hepburn and Robert Morley.

• John Waite, Friday, June 8, 7:30 p.m., at Capitol Theatre, 405 Cleveland St. Tickets start at \$35. Call 791-7400 or visit www.rutheckerdhall.com. Waite, whose career spans more than three decades and who has had numerous hit singles, is touring in support of his latest solo release "Rough and Tumble." The singer/songwriter collaborated with Matchbox 20 lead guitarist/songwriter Kyle Cook to forge an

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