

LARGO LEADER

Crafts displayed on Corey; the musical 'Hair' hits Clearwater

Check out these and other events coming to Pinellas County this week ... Page 1B.



Volume XXXV, No. 37

www.TBNweekly.com

April 4, 2013

LARGO

Fire Employee of the Year named

Largo Fire Rescue recently named department administrative assistant Julie Barlet as the Fire Service Employee of the Year.



Julie Barlet

Barlet has worked for the agency since June 2006. She regularly volunteers and assists with most of the agency's annual events. ... Page 3A.

Investigation reveals low morale

Firefighters name several leadership problems with former fire chief

By JULIANA A. TORRES

LARGO – Firefighters and their supervisors with decades of history with Largo Fire Rescue reported in an internal investigation on the performance of former Fire Chief Mike Wallace that the morale within the department was the lowest they had ever experienced.

"A common thread throughout the information provided by staff is that morale is at an all-time low," Human Resources Director Susan Sinz concluded in her report.

Sinz acknowledges that some of the 54 employees who were interviewed for the report attribute the morale decrease to "economic conditions," including lack of pay raises, pension reforms and staff reductions. However, many listed a string of problems with leadership, starting with Wallace's management of the department.

Wallace, who was first hired to serve as Largo's fire chief in October 2007, retired from the position, effective April 1, as a result of the city's investigation into his performance. Deputy Chief Shelby Willis was named acting fire chief until a replacement is hired.

As one of his first orders of business, Willis shifted leadership roles in the department in direct response to some of the complaints raised by fire personnel. In particular, those interviewed in the investigation most frequently complained about the promotion of Joe Pennino, who served as District Chief for only a matter of months before he was promoted to chief of operations. Rank and file alike said that Pennino lacked the experience in the field to qualify for his promotion and

See INVESTIGATION, page 4A

POLICE

Bicyclist injured on Belcher Road

Traffic Homicide Investigators from the Largo Police Department began investigating a bicycle crash at the intersection of Belcher and Ulmerton roads the morning of April 2.

An adult male bicyclist was traveling westbound across Belcher Road at Ulmerton Road when he was struck by a Dodge Neon traveling southbound on Belcher Road. He was seriously injured and flown to an area hospital. ... Page 5A.

COUNTY

Unemployment drops in Pinellas

February's unemployment report is good news for Pinellas County.

Pinellas County's rate dropped 9.1 percent in February 2012 to 7.3 percent in 2013. The unemployment rate in January this year was 7.8 percent. ... Page 7A.

SCHOOLS



Volunteering in the community

Veritas Academy students Julia Smith, 18, left, and Monique Oliver, 16, clean the windows of Heron House, an assisted living facility in Largo. ... Page 11A.

VIEWPOINTS

As I See It

Don't permit free agency in high school sports, two Ex-Buccaneers stars say. ... Page 12A.



Largo's business renaissance

Finding hidden treasures

Artist couple pursues a new business venture with pirate-themed thrift shop

The following is the second part of an occasional series featuring new businesses that have opened in the Clearwater-Largo Road Community Redevelopment District. Look for more "Largo business renaissance" profiles in upcoming editions of the Largo Leader.

By JULIANA A. TORRES

LARGO – The pirate theme of Frank Miranda and Ellen Phaff's new thrift store encompasses more than the treasures they offer at reasonable prices.

Pirates of Largo, at 1780 Clearwater-Largo Road, is all about attitude, from its open garage doors to its tall cypress masts, carved by Miranda himself using only a drawknife. Pirate attitude is part of the flavor that manifests itself in palm tree-painted furniture, Jimmy Buffett blaring over the speakers, random assortments of clothing, hats and musical instruments and the colorfully decorative but undoubtedly angry wooden piranhas that Phaff is known for.

Miranda admitted that he was hesitant about the name for the shop at first, but is glad he committed to the concept.

"As people came in, they thought it was fun," he said. "It works well with our personalities."

Phaff agreed. "If something's not spelled

See PIRATES, page 4A



Photos by JULIANA A. TORRES

Artists and self-described pirates Frank Miranda and Ellen Phaff are the owners of Pirates of Largo, a new thrift store at 1780 Clearwater-Largo Road. Incorporated in the pirate-themed decor of the shop are masts Miranda carved from cypress trunks with a drawknife, shown behind them.

Welch delivers inaugural state of the county address

By SUZETTE PORTER

CLEARWATER – Commission Chair Ken Welch delivered the first-ever state of the county address Wednesday, March 27.

"Pinellas County is committed to transparent and accessible government, and this virtual state of the county message is part of an ongoing effort to share important information with you, Pinellas County citizens, on the important issues facing our community and to encourage your feedback," Welch said by way of an introduction.

He then spent nearly 18 minutes talking about the work done by the commission in the first quarter of 2013. He also outlined some of the county's biggest challenges including the budget, public transportation and the high-cost of poverty.

"The last few years have been challenging for many in our community, including your county government," Welch said. "However, I'm pleased to report to you that despite the challenges we've faced, our op-



Pinellas County Commission Chair Ken Welch delivers the first-ever state of the county address March 27.

portunities for progress are even greater, and the state of Pinellas County is strong. Moving our community forward will require vision, more collaboration and a strategic holistic approach to building a stronger community."

Welch provided an update on the strategic planning the commission has been working on for the past four years and progress toward improving de-

livery of core services. He highlighted some of the actions taken during the first quarter of 2013, including returning fluoride to the drinking water supply on March 1, approving Tampa Bay's first countywide domestic partnership registry and a resolution of intent to place a referendum on the 2014

See ADDRESS, page 4A

Largo to pass new ordinance targeting street prostitution

By JULIANA A. TORRES

LARGO – The Largo Police Department is hoping that a proposed ordinance will allow them to arrest more prostitutes working local street corners.

"We received numerous community complaints – typically in the Clearwater-Largo Road corridor – for working, street-level prostitutes," police Sgt. Michael Bruno explained to the Largo Commission April 2.

Commissioners gave their initial approval of a measure that makes certain habits and behaviors of prostitutes illegal within Largo's city limits.

Currently, investigators are bound by the standards of the state statute. That means police have two ways of making an arrest for prostitution. First, they can watch suspected prostitutes, wait for a John to pick them up, stop his vehicle and hope that someone in the car admits to exchanging money for sex.

"If we're unable to get an admission from one or both of those parties, we're really unable to take enforcement action under the state statute," Bruno said.

The second method involves an undercover police officer witnessing the solicitation firsthand.

"Most of the prostitutes that work this area have been arrested multiple times, often by us multiple times," Bruno said. "We have to convince them that we're not working with law enforcement."

To screen the potential client, prostitutes will ask an undercover officer to either touch them inappropriately or expose himself inappropriately.

"Which of course, we're not going to do," Bruno said. "That

See PROSTITUTION, page 4A

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Star Scout promotion



Photo courtesy of LARGO ELKS
Jason Grossman, left, and Ethan Smith were promoted to Star Scout during a Boy Scout court of honor ceremony at the Largo Elks Lodge March 28. Both are on paths to Eagle Scout. To be eligible for the promotion, Scouts must be active in their troop for at least four months as a First Class Scout, demonstrate Scout spirit by living the Scout Oath and Scout Law in their everyday lives, earn six merit badges – including four from the required Eagle Scout badges – and meet service and leadership requirements.

City calendar

Largo Central Park

The Largo Central Park is at 101 Central Park Drive. Within the park are Largo Cultural Center, 105 Central Park Drive, the Largo Public Library, at 120 Central Park Drive, and the historic Largo Feed Store, at 295 Central Park Drive. For information about special events, call 587-6740, ext. 5014 or visit LargoEvents.com

PawFest

LARGO – The Kiwanis Club of Largo/Mid-Pinellas will host the seventh annual PawFest on Saturday, April 6, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., at Largo Central Park.

The carnival for children and canines alike will feature a playhouse of contests and games; food and beverages from the Bark Café; the Activity Midway, showcasing obedience, skills and safety demonstrations as well as health screening and the Doggy Mall, offering accessories and services.

Area rescue groups and shelters will bring adoptable pets. The event also will see the award of Veterinarian of the Year and a demonstration from K-9 Murphy, purchased by the Kiwanis Club for the Largo Police Department.

Snapper – the PARC therapy dog whose life-saving efforts with developmentally disabled clients are described in the children's book "Hold My Paw" – will pose for pictures and "pawtograph" her book.

For more information, call 536-0412 or visit www.largokiwanis.org.

City seeks community input

LARGO – The city of Largo is encouraging citizens to get involved in their local government's priorities as city leaders plan for Largo's long-term future through either a workshop or by taking an online survey.

The Community Values Workshops are for small groups of citizens to discuss their values as a community. A continental breakfast will be provided at the third and final workshop on Thursday, April 11, 8 to 9:30 a.m., in Jenkins Room A of the library.

Those who would like to attend one of the workshops can register online at www.largo.com/values or call 587-6790. Registration is limited to the first 30 individuals for each session.

Anyone who is unable to attend a workshop but would like to share their ideas can take the online survey at www.largo.com/values. The survey takes about 10 minutes to complete. The results will be posted after May 1. Participants of the online survey will be entered into a drawing for a \$50 gift card.

The city of Largo sincerely values the input of its residents. The information they provide will guide city leaders in making decisions for the future of our community. To participate or to learn more, visit Largo.com/values or call 587-6790.

Playing! Unplugged

LARGO – The city of Largo is encouraging families to turn off the TV, video games and electronics and join the second annual Playing! Unplugged event on April 13, 2 to 7 p.m., at Largo Central Park, 101 Central Park Drive.

This free event will feature a variety of hands-on activities and play spaces throughout the park, where kids of all ages will play with cardboard boxes, fabric, buckets, ropes, paintbrushes and more. Children will engage in activities involving construction play, adventure, slackline, archery, dance and music, physical play, toddler, discovery, art and na-

ture.

Families also will enjoy live entertainment, healthy food vendors, drum circle performances and train rides aboard Largo Central Railroad's miniature trains from 2 to 5 p.m. The Tampa Bay Rays Street Team will be on site along with Boy Scouts of America who will be assisting children with tree climbing and ziplining. The event will wrap up with a campfire around the fire circle in the park.

Playing! Unplugged seeks to educate parents on the many benefits of creativity and free play, including the positive impact it can have on leading a healthy lifestyle and staying active. The city is teaming up with local businesses and medical professionals for this event.

For more information, visit Largo.com/unplugged or call 587-6740, ext. 5014.

Family History Assistance Day

LARGO – Pinellas Genealogy Society and Largo Public Library are offering "Family History Assistance Day," on Saturday, April 27, noon to 4 p.m., in the Jenkins Room on the first floor of the library.

Bring information about your family and receive free one-on-one assistance from a consultant from the society. Beginners are especially encouraged to attend and experience the process of tracing their genealogical history. Society members also will be giving tours of the library's Genealogy Center and available classes.

For more information about this Pinellas Genealogy Society event, call Bob Bryan at 595-4521 or send email to BBryan84@gmail.com.

Genealogy classes

LARGO – The Pinellas Genealogy Society offers a variety of free classes every month at Largo Public Library.

Topics in April include How to use familysearch.org, DNA Testing for Genealogy, Using Google for Genealogy and Courthouse Records.

For a complete listing with details of classes and scheduled times, visit www.flpgs.org/classes.aspx. For more information, email Bob Bryan at BBryan84@gmail.com or call 595-4521.

Largo Community Center

Largo Community Center is at 400 Alt. Keene Road. Visit LargoCommunityCenter.com or call 518-3131.

Senior driver safety course offered

LARGO –The Largo Community Center will host an AARP driver's safety six-hour course over two days on Thursday and Friday, April 4-5, 9 a.m. to noon. The cost is \$12 for AARP cardholders or \$14 for those who have no AARP card.

Weekly events

- **Square dancing:** Fridays, 7:30 to 9:45 p.m. Spend the evening dancing country-style to professional caller Allen Snell. The cost is \$6.
- **Swing dancing:** Saturdays, 7 to 11 p.m. – Enjoy an evening of dancing and socializing on a 5,600-square-foot sprung hardwood floor. Free lessons from 7 to 8 p.m., followed by a dance with music by DJ Savoy Swing. The cost is \$6 with a recreation card and \$7 without one.
- **Bay Area Singles dance:** Sundays, 6 to 10 p.m. Dress to impress, and join about 150 singles and friends of all ages to dance to an extensive music library to fit every taste. Cost is \$8.

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Fire Rescue names employee of the year

LARGO – Largo Fire Rescue recently named department administrative assistant Julie Barlet as the Fire Service Employee of the Year.

Barlet has worked for the agency since June 2006. She regularly volunteers and assists with most of the agency's annual events. Some examples of her work include her participation in the Muscular Dystrophy Association dinner dances, an open house and the Largo Citizens' Academy.

She also attends the four-day burn camp as an adult buddy.

Currently, Barlet serves on the city's Employee Recognition Committee, and she handles the Special Needs Evacuation Project for residents who require assistance

or evacuation in the time of a disaster. This project is ongoing and requires almost year-round coordination to ensure the stability of the program. Often Barlet will contact residents to ensure their needs are met and we have made the proper arrangements should they need to evacuate. This is in addition to her regular duties.

Recently, Barlet played a large role in assisting with the food preparation and food service at the funeral of Chaplain Paul Pierce. This was a large undertaking and was an appreciated service for his family and friends. In fact, for any program that Largo Fire Rescue hosts, Barlet makes all the arrangements, supplies the food, and ensures the facilities are ready for our gathering.



Julie Barlet

New paramedics



Photos courtesy of LARGO FIRE RESCUE

New paramedics, from left, Kristen Williamson, Jordan Gross and Matthew Gouge are set to join the ranks of Largo Fire Rescue. Last week, the probationary employees began a 40-hour administrative period where they toured the fire stations, got fitted for their protective equipment, toured the communication center and received an introduction to the self-contained breathing apparatuses that the agency utilizes. Their first day training within a 24-hour shift was April 2 and will continue for about a month, said department spokesman Assistant Chief Mike Handoga.

City to host student video contest

LARGO – The city of Largo is holding a "What I Love About Largo" video contest for students in kindergarten through 12th grade who live or attend school within the city.

The contest is being held in conjunction with the city's Community Values campaign, which seeks input from citizens and the business community to identify community priorities through an online survey and workshops. The city encourages contestants to be creative and have fun, using the video setting of a digital camera or their smartphones.

"During last year's community values survey and workshops, the city heard from hundreds of people who expressed a love for Largo," Assistant City Manager Henry Schubert said. "This video contest is a great way for our youth to showcase their community pride for the city of Largo. By sharing their creativity, we hope to foster community spirit and

promote Largo's unique community identity."

Video submissions must be delivered to Largo City Hall by 5 p.m. on Tuesday, April 16. Qualifying entries will be posted to the city's website for a public showcase by May 1. Entries will be evaluated on creativity, originality, message and quality.

The first place winner will receive a \$250 Amazon gift card and the runner-up will receive a \$100 Amazon gift card. Both winners will receive special recognition and a public viewing from the Mayor and city commission during a meeting in May.

All content must be shot in the city of Largo, and the resulting video must be less than five minutes in length. Entries can be simple video clips or fully-edited segments.

For full contest details and information about the Community Values survey and workshops, please visit Largo.com/values.

Around town

Second Daisy Chain event planned

LARGO – The second Daisy Chain charitable event, to benefit a family in need of financial aid, will be held April 6, 8 a.m., at 3824 Harbor Hill Drive.

Daisy Chain has been collecting garage sale and auction items to help raise money for this year's cause. All proceeds from the event will go to a family that has high medical expenses because the father lost his job and has a rare form of cancer. The family has three children.

For more information, call 776-2388.

Shred, recycle documents April 20

LARGO – The city of Largo will host another Shredfest, the free, paper shredding event where residents can bring their personal documents to be

securely shredded and recycled on Saturday, April 20, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., at 1551 Starkey Road.

"This drive-thru event makes it easy for the public to ensure their personal documents are handled properly by ProShred's mobile shredding trucks," said Marissa Segundo, Largo's recycling coordinator.

Bring up to five file boxes of paper per car to be shredded and recycled. There is no need to remove staples, tape, paper clips or rubber bands. In celebration of Earth Day, ProShred will recycle all shredded data. File boxes will be collected by the city of Largo and recycled.

"This is a winning event for residents and the environment," said Segundo. "Last Shredfest we recycled 22,800 pounds of shredded paper saving 194 trees."

For more information or directions to the event, visit LargoRecycles.com or call 587-6760.

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The Bark Café
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The Activity Midway
Obedience, skill and safety • Health screening and more!

The Doggy Mall
Accessories and services

Veterinarian of the Year Award Presentation
Look for forms at vet offices, newspapers and online to nominate your vet

K-9 Demonstration at 1:30pm
Meet Murphy!
Purchased by the Kiwanis Club for the Largo K-9 Unit

Introducing Snapper
A therapy dog from the children's book, *Hold My Paw*, her true story

Adoptables from Area Rescue Groups and Shelters

Please bring towels, blankets, sheets, dog food and other donations for our rescue dogs!

See You There!

INVESTIGATION, from page 1A

therefore did not have the respect of those whom he was promoted past.

"No one cares for Joe (Pennino) in Ops Chief ... (He) didn't earn it," District Chief Brian Brady stated in his interview.

Brady said Pennino took crews out to "train them to death" with "new things learned from YouTube." Others also cited his familiarity with technology as a positive that nonetheless did not make him a good operations chief. The role is one that has to be "earned by time in the grade," and Pennino's management style was "too abrasive," said District Chief Kevin Brennan.

"I like Joe as a person, however, you need to win people's souls as part of being a good leader," he said. "Joe Pennino does not have the respect from the troops ... Staff feel like they are training Joe on the job when he is supposed to be leading them as the Chief of Operations."

More offensive than Pennino's lack of management skills was the fact that he was promoted above leaders with years more experience – sometimes measured in decades – than he could claim.

"Why do they forgo seasoned officers and go with a nine-year employee who doesn't know history or have operational experience?" Lt. Steve Bourne questioned.

Pennino's promotion caused personnel to question Wallace's judgment, especially after he began visiting the stations, reportedly to explain why he had hired Pennino.

"Why are you explaining it?" Lt. Joe Kelly questioned. "It is because most people didn't understand why Joe was in that job because he has no experience. If you have to explain, maybe the wrong choice was made."

Willis has since moved Pennino to chief of logistics. Dave Mixson was moved to chief of operations, where he had previously served.

But the problems with the department didn't end there. Sinz noted that firefighters felt that there was increased discipline, particularly for offenses that had never been an issue. Personnel frequently referenced two incidents in particular, nicknamed "Squadgate" and "Pagergate."

"Squadgate" referenced an incident that got media attention in April 2012 when five firefighters were reprimanded with time off without pay for cheating on written tests by referencing previous versions of the test. The firefighters argued that they always had been able to reference such study material and said the sudden rule was unfair. The fire

union sided with them and repaid the firefighters for their lost wages.

Lt. Dean Chester explained in his interview that the staff had always done training together and had old tests to study from.

"Why don't we throw away the test, redo the test ... think about how the study process has always worked and assume the best for our employees," he said. "Instead, the firefighters were beaten down, drug through the newspaper."

The way it was handled was a morale killer, Chester said.

Wallace responded to the situation in part through an email that firefighters later described as condescending, self-aggrandizing and just odd – an example of his attitude toward his personnel. In the email, he explained how he served in the Israeli military at age 21 and called for his subordinates to "do the right thing."

"In 1976, I was 21 years old. I am now 56 and although I have aged, my sense of duty, honor and integrity have never wavered," the letter concluded.

"Pagergate" referred to the aftermath of new policies for the care of pagers enacted after two firefighters accidentally damaged theirs. Small stuff was being disciplined, and staff didn't understand why, Chester said.

Adding salt to that wound, staff reported that Wallace would make fun of the firefighters involved in "Pagergate" in front of their peers. He had a habit of talking poorly of staff members when they were not around and engaging in heated discussions with his subordinates at the fire stations, Sinz's report concluded.

Many of the reports, especially from those higher in leadership, included some confusion – even as far as a lament – as to why Wallace acted the way he did.

"I feel at some point, Chief Wallace may have been effective. However, his leadership at some point became ineffective with no ability to lead or influence. Based on this, Chief Wallace became vindictive toward those who questioned him and/or were no longer following him," District Chief Josh Stefancic stated.

Many of Wallace's colleagues remembered how he always had the back of his fellow firefighters as he worked his way up through the ranks at Largo Fire Rescue, before he was hired as a deputy chief in a different city. But something changed when he was hired as chief.

"I have tried to talk to Mike (Wallace). I am not sure if (he is) power hungry? Is he narcissistic? What happened? He is a very sharp, intelligent person," Brennan said. "We need strong leadership. We do not have it now."

Bunny tracks



Photo by JIM LAYFIELD

Eighteen-month-old Tia Sutton of Largo stands amid the Easter Bunny tracks on the sidewalk in front of her house March 24. Children in the Shadow Pines subdivision in Largo have been waking up Easter morning to find bunny tracks leading to their door for the last 14 years.

PIRATES, from page 1A

right, we just say, 'Oh that's OK; pirates don't know how to spell,'" she said. "And pirates don't have many rules. We like to think outside the box."

It was attitude that attracted Phaff when she first met Miranda. The two have been artists for about 30 years and regularly toured art shows – Miranda with his driftwood sculptures and Phaff with painted masks and her iconic fish.

In 2001, they had neighboring booths at the Old Island Days Art Festival in Key West. Miranda was well established in Largo and Phaff was seriously considering a permanent move from Michigan to Florida, which boasted a longer art show season.

The two hit it off. "I liked his attitude, so we got together," Phaff explained succinctly with a laugh.

The couple still travel to the same art show in Key West to celebrate their anniversary. But these days, as they drive through the state, they stop in towns along the way and look for furniture and treasures to sell in their shop.

"We find all kinds of crazy things when we go down there," Phaff said.

A new start

Pirates of Largo is two doors down from the Miranda Gallery, which Frank Miranda has kept closed since the thrift store opened in December. He's hoping to renovate the art gallery, the home of his business for more than 10 years.

"It needs a fresh coat of everything on it," he said.

The new location has better visibility and more room. The ceilings are tall, allowing the couple to "make it look a little more special," Phaff explained.

The building itself has been a house, a pub and most recently,

an auto repair shop.

"We used to get our cars fixed here," Phaff said. "We always liked the building but never considered owning it."

Pirates of Largo also gives Miranda a new business venture. After 30 years of making a living as an artist, he said he's "kind of burned out."

"It's been getting tougher and tougher to make a living on the art shows. They're expensive to do with traveling and the fees. It's gotten more competitive," Phaff explained. "People are buying less but the shows are getting bigger. So it just makes a lot of sense for us to be here."

Pirates of Largo gives the couple a new outlet for their work. Phaff often paints distressed furniture with palm trees and her signature bright colors. She said she envisions her boyfriend's work with driftwood manifesting into earthly and unique furniture.

"We're concentrating on getting this (store) up and going. And then I think I do want to get back into artwork," Miranda said. "We will be bringing some of our artwork in here also. We just haven't gotten around to it yet, there are so many other treasures."

The couple said they generally seek out artistic or decorative pieces to sell in their store, appreciating unique and handmade items as artists.

"So it's really a second time around for artwork in our store," Miranda said.

They sold out of a collection of lobster shells mounted on wood that they found in Key West, for example. Smaller items – anything from books on fish, Earnest Hemingway and art history to antique banks, old cast-iron cannons, pieces of sea glass and knives – make up a majority of the sales, even on a good day.

"I think the ... hand-painted furniture attracts people, but we're making it on lots of little things too," Phaff said.



Miranda added the store's success thus far is a reflection of their pirate-themed prices.

"That's part of the name too: finding something inexpensive and selling it inexpensively," Miranda explained. "It's not like we need to make a ton of money on just a couple of little pieces fast."

"We plan on being here for a while."

The renovated area

Miranda has the unique perspective as the owner of both a new and older business in the Clearwater-Largo Road Redevelopment District.

"I've seen it come a long way from what it was," he said. "It's on the way up, definitely."

Phaff said they have watched the redevelopment happen, from the improved landscaping to better streets. Pedestrian traffic has increased both in quality and quantity, with more families walking from Bayside Courts apartment complex and less "undesirables" populating the area, Miranda said. The addition of restaurants that encourage customers to linger in the area is a step in the right direction, they said.



Photos by JULIANA A. TORRES

rection, they said.

Miranda added that the area is getting a reputation for its collection of thrift stores and consignment shops.

"We're hearing from customers that they've been told to come to this street if they want this kind of

thing," Phaff said. "We're starting to get a lot of repeat customers."

The owners of the respective stores refer customers to one another, given that each offers a unique selection, she added.

So far, Pirates of Largo boasts an ample supply of treasure.

"We're finding that we're already starting to run out of room," Miranda admitted.

Pirates of Largo, at 1780 Clearwater-Largo Road, is open Tuesday through Sunday, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Call 518-0071.

ADDRESS, from page 1A

general election ballot for a penny sales tax to pay for public transportation improvements.

Welch said voters would decide whether to eliminate the current property tax that pays for Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority and replace it with a countywide penny sales tax. He said revenue from a sales tax would allow PSTA "to dramatically improve our transportation system, including faster, more flexible, more frequent bus service, light rail service connecting Clearwater, St. Petersburg and the Gateway area, regional connections to Tampa and other destinations, and other projects that will improve mobility in our county."

Welch then focused on the need for more collaboration between local governments and other county stakeholders to take on the more complex issues. He said an approach was needed that "moves beyond the silos of government and community services to encompass everyone – governments, nonprofits, businesses, neighborhoods, families, faith-based organizations and others" to best serve the needs.

"In a time of reduced resources, working together beyond traditional boundaries of jurisdictions not only provides a larger pool of resources but also supports a more comprehensive set of solutions to longstanding and complex problems, which have a high cost to the entire community."

Welch said the educational achievement gap, generational poverty, chronic unemployment, recidivism, substance abuse and poor health outcomes all have a tangible cost to the community.

"If we can lower those impacts through more effective services and prevention, we can lower the costs to the taxpayers, empower individuals and families to become financially independent and strengthen our community for the long term," he said.

Welch said a good example of a collaborative approach is project

Safe Harbor led by Sheriff Bob Gualtieri in partnership with the county, cities and local service providers.

Safe Harbor is a homeless services project, which provides shelter for up to 400 homeless individuals, many of whom would otherwise be housed at the county jail at a much higher cost, Welch said.

Welch then talked about the budget for fiscal year 2014, which begins Oct. 1. He outlined some of the hardships that came from six years of budget deficits. He said more than 1,700 jobs were cut and the general fund budget was reduced by 30 percent.

"In fact, the number of employees under the county administrator has been reduced by 35 percent and represents the same staffing level as it was 28 years ago in 1985. So, rest assured we are working leaner. We are working smarter. We have narrowed our services and we are doing more with less," Welch said.

Still, there is a projected \$12 million shortfall expected for 2014. Plans call for using the budget stabilization fund to make up the difference between projected revenues and expenses. Welch pointed out that the "savings account" money was one-time dollars and would not be available to help balance the budget in future years.

Welch then turned his attention to what he described as "one of the bright lights for our economy."

Welch said, "Even during the recession, Pinellas County tourism has set records for overnight visits and bed tax receipts as tourists continue to discover our world-class beaches, arts and sports venues and diverse cultural amenities. But even in this area of excellence, we must carefully invest our resources to ensure that our tourism economy continues to thrive."

In 2012, more than 5.4 million tourists visited Pinellas County, producing an economic impact of more than \$7 billion dollars."

Welch explained that the 5 percent bed tax is charged to visitors

who stay in our area hotels. Last year, the bed tax generated \$28 million – a record annual total. About 20 percent of the money goes to pay debt service on Tropicana Field – the home of the Tampa Bay Rays.

"Now, as you may know, the Rays have requested a future site for a new ballpark and potentially may request continued county support," Welch said. "While any new park is years away, the county has initiated a much-needed dialogue with the Rays and we look forward to a broader conversation and with the city of St. Petersburg and the community as a whole."

The debt service for Tropicana Field will be paid in 2015, and Welch said there is a growing list of potential project funding requests from the aquarium project in Clearwater to an Olympic BMX and spring training facilities. The extra money may be needed to pay for beach nourishment as federal and state funding is reduced.

"The needs are many and the funding source is limited," Welch said. "Like all of our investments, we must analyze the needs carefully and maximize the return on investment of bed tax dollars in the best long-term interest of our community."

Welch encouraged Pinellas County citizens to get involved. He urged them to visit the county's website, www.pinellascounty.org, for information or to interact with officials.

"Whether you would like to weigh-in on our upcoming budget, or comment on what transportation improvements you'd like to see, or simply share an idea for improving our community, your commission welcomes your thoughts and suggestions and we value your perspective," Welch said.

The state of the county message is on PCC-TV at noon, 6:30 p.m. and 10:30 p.m. on weekdays; 12:30 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. on weekends. PCC-TV is available on Bright House Networks Channel 622, Verizon Channel 44 and Knology Channel 18.

PROSTITUTION, from page 1A

typically ends our ability to enforce the state statute at that point because they will not discuss with us the necessary elements needed to make a prostitution case."

Instead, the proposed ordinance allows officers to make an arrest if they observe a suspect doing at least three of a list of behaviors associated with prostitution. These behaviors include, among others, repeatedly stopping pedestrians, repeatedly hailing drivers and gesturing to, touching or exposing private areas. The suspect must have a prior conviction or have pleaded no contest to a prostitution charge within the last two years in order for an officer to make the arrest.

Under the proposed ordinance, police also can arrest a suspect if she asks an undercover officer to expose himself or touch her inappropriately, essentially making the common screening process illegal.

Admitting his own naivety on the subject, Commission Michael Smith asked what the department was doing to convince the Johns and pimps involved in prostitution. Bruno said the department conducted separate undercover operations, usually with a female officer, to go after the other side of the problem.

"This ordinance wouldn't really do much to go after the actual pimp that benefits from prostitution," he clarified.

Smith also was concerned the ordinance would lead to the accidental arrest of someone unassociated with prostitution.

"We designed (the ordinance) that way specifically so we wouldn't have someone that's just flagging down a vehicle and confused," Bruno said.

The cities of Clearwater, St. Petersburg and Tampa enforce similar ordinances. In particular, Largo police worked with the Clearwater Police Department to observe the effectiveness of its enforcement of the rule.

Since 2008, Largo's problem oriented policing unit has made 57 arrests for prostitution.

The commission unanimously approved the first reading of the proposed ordinance. The second and final reading is scheduled for April 16.

Charter review committee chosen

The city of Largo received a total of 35 applica-

tions from residents who wanted to be a part of the charter review committee. From the applicants, commissioners ranked their top seven choices on a ballot during the April 2 meeting.

The vote resulted in the selection of seven members to the committee: John Boscarino, Patricia Edmond, Marie Etheridge, Gay Gentry, Jaksa Petrovic, Tanya Pistillo and Sue Porter.

Jose Valdes, Beverly Gatewood and Ginny Nelson were named alternates. Initially, the commission had decided to name only two alternates. However, Gatewood and Nelson twice tied in votes for the position, and commissioners agreed to resolve the matter by naming both as alternates.

The charter review committee is scheduled to first meet on April 23 at 6 p.m.

Police beat

Bicyclist injured on Belcher Road

LARGO - Traffic Homicide Investigators from the Largo Police Department began investigating a bicycle crash at the intersection of Belcher and Ulmerton roads the morning of April 2.

An adult male bicyclist was traveling westbound across Belcher Road at Ulmerton Road, headed toward the CVS, at around 7:59 a.m. On the north side of the intersection, he was struck by a Dodge Neon traveling southbound on Belcher Road, according to police.

The bicyclist was seriously injured and flown to an area hospital. The single occupant of the Dodge Neon was not injured.

The intersection of Belcher and Ulmerton roads was shut down for a couple of hours while police investigated the scene.

Weapons, police items stolen from PCSO

PINELLAS PARK - Pinellas County Sheriff's deputies assigned to the burglary and pawn unit are asking for the public's help to find a suspect who stole weapons and other police items from an unmarked vehicle in Pinellas Park.

Sometime between 5 p.m. March 11 and 7 a.m. March 12, someone burglarized an unmarked Sheriff's Office vehicle parked near 80th Avenue North and 41st Street North in Pinellas Park. The burglar gained access to the trunk and stole a Rock River Arms Rifle with magazines, a Glock-model pistol with Blackhawk paddle holster and drop-down leg holster as well as a black vest with "Sheriff" on the front and back in white letters.

The contents of the vest that were also stolen included Glock-model magazines, a tactical flashlight, a Bench Mark knife, a set of Smith and Wesson handcuffs and a radio holder. In addition, a black nylon duty belt with handcuff case, expandable baton and holder, and a magazine pouch were taken.

The suspect also stole a black tri-fold leather wallet with a silver Sheriff's star badge and two agency credentials.

Anyone with information that may assist detectives in identifying a suspect is asked to contact Detective Chris Parkins of the Burglary and Pawn Unit at 727-582-6200; or to remain anonymous and be eligible for a reward, contact Crime Stoppers at 1-800-873-TIPS.

Man charged with shooting neighbor

SEMINOLE - Pinellas County Sheriff's detectives arrested a Seminole man about 1:45 a.m. March 28 for aggravated battery with a firearm

after they say he shot his neighbor following an ongoing dispute.

According to investigators, the victim, Richard Wacker, 47, went to the home of Donald Hindes Sr. 81, about 9 p.m. March 27 to confront him regarding an ongoing neighbor dispute. When Hindes did not answer the door, Wacker left.

A short time later, Hindes left his residence in his vehicle. As Hindes was exiting the gate at the Kapok Grand subdivision at Kapok Grand Circle and DuHme Road in unincorporated Seminole, Wacker appeared from behind some bushes and began pounding on Hindes' vehicle window, detectives said. Hindes fired a shot at Wacker from within his vehicle.

Wacker was transported to Bayfront Medical Center for treatment of non-life-threatening injuries.

Hindes was arrested for aggravated battery with a firearm and transported to the Pinellas County Jail without further incident. Bond was set at \$5,000.



Donald Hindes Sr.

of "This isn't what it looks like" and "I don't want to go to jail," according to the deputies report.

Patrol deputies and robbery/homicide detectives interviewed all parties involved in the matter, including the suspect, and developed enough probable cause to arrest Baker. He was charged with one count of lewd and lascivious molestation of an elderly/disabled person. He was booked into the Pinellas County Jail. Bond was set at \$10,000.

Baker has since resigned from the ALF. He reportedly only worked there for a few months. At this time, there does not appear to be any other victims.



Joshua Baker

PCSO investigates fire at Smokin' Ciggy's

LEALMAN - Pinellas County Sheriff's detectives assigned to the arson and theft division are investigating a fire at a business in the Lealman area.

According to the sheriff's report, deputies responded to the structure fire at Smokin' Ciggy's, 5650 66th St. N., about 2:30 a.m. Monday, March 25. During the incident, the building's roof collapsed.

Damage to the building was estimated at about \$150,000. No injuries were reported. The cause of the fire is undetermined at this time. The investigation continues.

Man injured in fall from rooftop

MADEIRA BEACH - A Clearwater man was injured March 29 when he fell or jumped from the roof of a garage at John's Pass in Madeira Beach. Pinellas County sheriff's deputies responded to a call just after midnight at 177 Boardwalk Place in Madeira Beach.

According to deputies, Nicholas Voutsinas, 31, and a friend had climbed up to a restricted roof area of the parking garage (about seven stories high) to get a better view of the city. The friend decided to come down while Voutsinas remained. Deputies say by the time the friend reached the ground floor, Voutsinas was already laying in the roadway.

The fall rendered Voutsinas unconscious. He was transported by air to Bayfront Medical Center for treatment of serious injuries. He sustained multiple fractures to his face, leg and pelvis. He was reportedly in stable condition as of April 1.

Deputies say Voutsinas had alcohol in his system. They said it was unclear whether he fell or jumped. The investigation continues.

Former jail inmate arrested for perjury

CLEARWATER - A former inmate of the Pinellas County Jail was arrested April 1 for perjury after he falsely claimed detention deputies had battered him.

The suspect alleged the incident occurred at the Pinellas County Jail following his arrest for disorderly intoxication by the St. Petersburg Police Department on Oct. 7, 2012.

See POLICE BEAT, page 6A

REWARD
Seeking Burglary Suspect

Pinellas County Sheriff's Office is asking the public to help identify the suspect in the burglary of an unmarked Sheriff's Office vehicle. The suspect is a male, approximately 30-35 years old, 5'8" tall, 150 lbs, with short dark hair, wearing a black vest with "SHERIFF" on the front and back in white letters. He was seen on March 11-12, 2012, near 80th Avenue North and 41st Street North in Pinellas Park.

Whoever has information that may assist in identifying a suspect is asked to contact Detective Chris Parkins of the Burglary and Pawn Unit at 727-582-6200; or to remain anonymous and be eligible for a reward, contact Crime Stoppers at 1-800-873-TIPS.

1-800-873-TIPS

Pinellas County Sheriff's deputies are seeking information about a burglary of an unmarked vehicle in which several police items were taken including weapons. Persons with information may be eligible for a reward, call Crime Stoppers at 1-800-873-TIPS.

Child pornography lands man in jail

DUNEDIN - Pinellas County Sheriff's deputies arrested a Dunedin man about 8 a.m. March 26 for 10 counts of possession of child pornography and one count of promoting the sexual performance of a child.

According to the sheriff's report, Lawrence Lemieux, 48, confessed to downloading and sharing the child pornography using his computer.

The victims depicted in the pornographic material are prepubescent males.

Deputies arrested Lemieux after an undercover investigation that began Dec. 20, 2012. Through their investigation detectives assigned to the crimes against children unit identified a potential suspect who was sharing child pornography videos via the Internet. Detectives obtained a search warrant, which was served at the suspect's residence about 7 a.m.

Detectives said Lemieux's computer contained additional videos of prepubescent males engaging in sexual activity. Lemieux also admitted to knowledge of sharing the files via the internet.

Lemieux was booked into the Pinellas County Jail just before 9 a.m. Bond for the 11 charges totals \$60,000.



Lawrence Lemieux

Nurse's aide charged with molesting patient

LEALMAN - Pinellas Detectives arrested a nurse's aide at a Lealman assisted living facility after he inappropriately touched an elderly female patient.

According to the sheriff's report, Joshua Baker, 28, of St. Petersburg was observed by another nurse's aide on top of an elderly female patient, who was naked on a bed, about 4 p.m. Saturday, March 23.

Baker reportedly had his pants down, but was still wearing underwear, immediately got off the patient and made statements to the effect

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Public input needed to shape county's budget for new year

By SUZETTE PORTER

On Wednesday, April 10, Pinellas County officials will be gathering at St. Petersburg College in Seminole to meet with the public about the coming year's budget.

The 2014 Budget Community Forum begins with an open house in SPC's digitorium common area from 5:30 to 7 p.m. Citizens are then invited to move inside the digitorium for an eTownHall from 7 to 8 p.m.

County staff is already working on the budget for 2014. County Administrator Bob LaSala has until July to prepare a balanced budget proposal to present to Pinellas County Commissioners. The departments that report to the administrator, as well as the constitutional offices and others that are funded by county government, are currently in the process of submitting budget requests that the administrator will use to finalize his proposal, according to Budget Director Eric Naughton.

For now, many budget questions are unknown, Naughton said. The expectation is that budgets for most will remain close to the same as the current year, with some adjustments for inflation. Plans call for maintaining current levels of service as much as possible.

Naughton, who has 25 years of government experience as a finance professional, began his job in October 2012, the beginning of the current fiscal year. This is his first year to work on Pinellas County's budget preparations.

Most of his career has been in areas near his hometown, New York City, and the Long Island Region. He came to the county after serving as budget director for Nassau County New York, which has an operating budget of \$2.6 billion.

"The county is in a relatively strong fiscal position and did a great job managing the downturn in the economy," he said by email. "I admire the importance the county places on citizen input. Many places have public hearings after the budget is proposed, but here input is requested during the beginning of the budget process."

One of the reasons the county's reaches out to its

citizens is to ensure that taxpayer dollars are used to provide the best service. The county prefers to hear from the public early in the budget process, before the bulk of the work is complete, to be able to better accommodate requests.

Naughton said there are areas where the county's budget needs exceed projected revenue. Those areas include the general fund, which pays for much of the operational costs, the transportation fund, which keeps roadways in good repair, and Emergency Medical Services, an area county leaders have struggled to pay for due to continued cost increases and revenue shortfalls.

Although the county is not expected to make big cuts in services as in past years, and layoffs are not expected, commissioners still need citizens' opinions on where best to spend their money. Some budget needs are non-negotiable as they are mandates of county charter and local policy. Others are mandates from the federal and state government.

Naughton said he chose a career in public service because he wanted to "witness how policy decisions were made and receives satisfaction in knowing that the work that he does provides the basis for those decisions."

He looks forward to taking part in the county's budget making process. He hopes that his experiences will "assist Pinellas achieve even greater levels of success."

Naughton will join county commissioners and staff as they greet the public, answer questions and listen to feedback during the April 10 open house. A series of informational booths will be set up throughout the common area where citizens can learn more about county government.

Bay News 9 senior anchor Al Ruechel will moderate this year's eTownHall event in SPC's digitorium. County commissioners and the administrator will take questions from the community as they discuss the budget, strategies for the future and their vision for the community.

Residents unable to attend the live event can view the eTownHall proceedings through a webcast at www.pinellascounty.org or on PCC-TV on Bright House Channel 622, Knology Channel 18 or Verizon

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Join the conversation about the budget & strategies for the future.

www.pinellascounty.org/eTownHall

For more information, call (727) 464-4600.

Pinellas County is hosting a budget open house and eTownHall proceedings Wednesday, April 10, at St. Petersburg College in Seminole.

Channel 44. Large screen viewing areas will be set up at other SPC campuses.

Questions and comments can be submitted through the online blog at the county's website, which opens at 9 a.m. Monday, April 8. Residents also can participate during the live event via Twitter and by calling 1-888-409-5380. For more information, visit www.pinellascounty.org/etownhall.

The St. Petersburg College Seminole campus is at 9200 113th St. N. Signs will be posted leading the way to the digitorium.

Naughton said county commissioners, as the policy-making body, would take all the feedback from the public and county staff and weigh "needs and alignment with their strategic plans."

A number of work sessions and budget work sessions are scheduled in June and July, and the pub-

lic is welcome to attend. Commissioners must notify the property appraiser of proposed millage rates by Aug. 2. Truth in Millage statements will be mailed to property owners Aug. 19.

The tentative final budget should be posted on the county's website by Sept. 3. Final decisions about millage rates and budgets must be made before the budget year begins on Oct. 1. The first public hearing is scheduled on Sept. 5. The final hearing, during which millage rates and budgets will be approved, is Sept. 17.

For information about the FY 2014 budget, visit www.pinellascounty.org/budget. Click on the Submit Your Suggestions graphic to offer comments about funding of programs and services. Click on the Get Involved link on the left-side menu for more information about participating in the budget process.

POLICE, from page 5A

According to investigators with the Sheriff's administrative investigation division, Chad Everett Nikolic, 31, of St. Petersburg provided a sworn, court reported statement to the Sheriff's AID Oct. 30, 2012, in which he alleged that after being handcuffed and shackled he was left to sit in a holding cell. He stated that a detention sergeant and deputy entered the cell and committed a battery against him.



Chad Nikolic

According to investigators, while under oath, Nikolic alleged that the detention deputies picked

him up off the bench, spun him around facing the wall, bent him over and ran his head into the wall. He further stated the detention deputies grabbed him by his feet, picked him up by his feet, held his feet against the wall and held him upside down on top of his head.

An investigation was conducted into Nikolic's allegations. Another deputy testified that he was able to see the sergeant in the holding cell the entire time; and that at no time did he witness the sergeant have any physical contact with Nikolic. He further testified he never saw the detention deputy physically approach Nikolic.

A Pinellas County Jail nurse who examined Nikolic immediately after the alleged incident and two hours later also testified that she checked his head and ankles for injuries and found none.

Deputies said following his release from jail, Nikolic went to a local hospital and attempted to have a doctor diagnose him with a concussion. The doctor found no evidence of a concussion.

Through their investigation and the evidence found in this case,

deputies determined that Nikolic lied in his testimony and falsely accused the detention deputies of battery. He was charged with one count of false report of a crime and one count of perjury in an official proceeding. He was released on \$2,150 surety bond April 1.

The investigation continues.

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Tampa Bay leads in job creation; Pinellas unemployment drops

By SUZETTE PORTER

TALLAHASSEE – February’s unemployment report is good news for Pinellas County.

It’s also good news for the Tampa-St. Petersburg-Clearwater Metro Area, which led all 23 MSA’s in over the year job creation with a gain of more than 33,000 jobs. The local MSA includes Hernando, Pasco, Hillsborough and Pinellas counties.

Gov. Rick Scott announced the good news hours after the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity released February’s employment figures. Scott said Tampa-St. Petersburg-Clearwater MSA had a 2.0 percentage point decline in the unemployment rate, down to 7.4 percent, not seasonally adjusted. Since December 2010, the local MSA’s unemployment rate has dropped from 11.4 percent to 7.4 percent.

“Everything we do is geared toward job creation and today we have more proof that it’s working,” Scott said in a press release. “The cre-

ation of over 33,000 jobs in the Tampa Bay area is further proof that the steps we’re taking to create jobs and opportunities in Florida is working. Statewide we’ve created more than 290,000 private-sector jobs over the last two years, which means we’re providing hundreds of thousands of opportunities for families across the Sunshine State to achieve the American dream.”

According to Scott, the local MSA led the state in creation of jobs in three industries: education and health services, 8,600 jobs; professional and business services, 8,500 jobs; and other services, 2,000 jobs.

The unemployment rate for the MSA dropped from 9.4 percent in February 2012 to 7.4 percent for the same month in 2013. Pinellas County’s rate dropped 9.1 percent in February 2012 to 7.3 percent in 2013. The unemployment rate in January this year was 7.8 percent.

Other counties in the local MSA also report dramatic drops in unemployment compared to February 2012. Hernando dropped from 12.2 percent to 9 percent. Pasco County went from 10.8 percent to 8.2 percent. Hillsborough County reports a decline from 9 percent from 7.2 percent.

February’s report also shows an increase in the labor force for the MSA, going from 1,311,051 last year to 1,332,568. Last year, 123,691 were unemployed. This year, 99,271 were unemployed.

In Pinellas, the labor force increased from 436,453 in February 2012 to 444,403 in 2013. Last February 39,750 were unemployed and 32,352 were unemployed in February 2013.

The governor also reported good news for Tampa Bay in terms of job demands for high-wage employment.

“The Tampa-St. Petersburg-Clearwater MSA was first among the state metros in online job demand in February 2013 with 41,782 openings,” Scott said. “The metro area was also first in the state in demand for STEM occupations with 11,474 openings in February, an increase of 5.7 percent over the year.”

STEM is an acronym for science, technology, engineering and mathematics. STEM jobs are considered high wage and high skill.

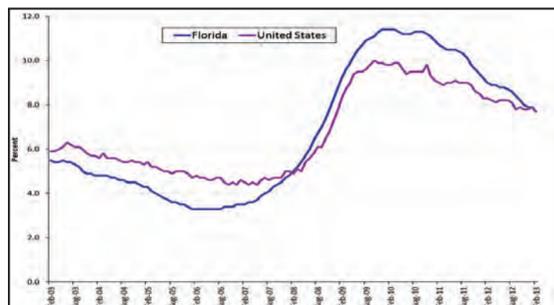
Statewide, unemployment is continuing to decrease with a not seasonally adjusted rate of 9 percent reported in February 2012 to 7.5 percent in 2013. The unemployment rate in January was 8 percent.

The United States unemployment rate in February 2012 was 8.7

percent and 8.1 percent in February of the current year. The unemployment rate in January was 8.5 percent.

Scott listed a number of positives, including an increase in annual job growth for 31 consecutive months and a rise in month-to-month job growth for 19 of the past 20 months. Florida Economic Estimating Conference estimates that more than 900,000 new jobs will be created by 2018.

“Our efforts to reduce taxes, pay down state debt and grow the economy, demonstrates our success in growing jobs for Florida families,” Scott said. “While today’s announcement is great news, we know we have more work to do to ensure every Florida family that wants a job can get one.”



This chart shows unemployment in the state compared to the nation trend from February 2003 to February 2013. It uses data from the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Local Area Unemployment Statistics Program, with the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity and Bureau of Labor Market Statistics.

Reclaimed water restrictions in place

The seasonal reclaimed water restrictions for Pinellas County reclaimed water customers began Monday, April 1, in accordance with Pinellas County Code 82-3. These reductions help avoid reclaimed water shortages during Florida’s traditional dry seasons (April to June and October to November).

From April 1 to June 30, irrigation with reclaimed water supplied by Pinellas County is limited to three days per week, based on the resident’s home address. The mandatory seasonal restrictions state:

- Watering is prohibited in the daytime between the hours of 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.
 - No reclaimed watering is permitted on Monday.
 - If your house number ends in an even number (0, 2, 4, 6, 8), water on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday.
 - If your house number ends in an odd number (1, 3, 5, 7, 9), water on Wednesday, Friday and Sunday.
 - If your property contains a mix of addresses or if an address cannot be determined, such as common areas associated with a residential subdivision, water on Wednesday, Friday, and Sunday.
- Overwatering can damage a lawn. Customers are encouraged to limit irrigation with reclaimed water to three days a week or less throughout the year. For more information, visit www.pinellascounty.org/reclaimed or call 464-4000.

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Some facts and figures about Obama care

Fifty million Americans still lack health insurance. The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act also known as ObamaCare, was signed into law on March 23, 2010.



Health matters
Dr. George Kamajian

Various aspects of ObamaCare have already been enacted, including: Regulations on insurance companies eliminating lifetime limits on coverage and requiring them to provide coverage for all applicants, at similar rates, regardless of pre-existing conditions.

Two key features of the 906-page law that will begin in 2014 are the "individual mandate" and the "employer mandate."

The individual mandate requires non-exempt persons to obtain minimum essential health insurance for themselves and their nonexempt family members, or pay a penalty when filing their income taxes. Who is exempt? If you are in jail or a member of an Indian tribe or an undocumented immigrant or if you earn less than \$9,300 as an individual or

\$18,700 as a family or on a government program such as Medicare or are covered through your employer, then the new laws will have no impact on you. If you belong to none of those groups then the clock starts ticking in 2014. Beginning in 2014 if you earn less than \$28,500 as a family and don't have insurance you must pay a penalty of \$285 or 1 percent of the family income, whichever is greater to the IRS. Penalties in the form of taxes rise every year thereafter until it reaches 2.5 percent of your income.

The employer mandate will require businesses that employ more than 50 full time employees to offer health insurance coverage or pay a penalty of \$2,000 for each uninsured worker. So far no one knows exactly how many currently employed full time workers will be reduced to part time employees. Beginning in 2014, individuals and families

purchasing health insurance on their own will be able to shop for insurance in new state- or federal-run health care "exchanges." These exchanges will provide four basic levels of coverage: bronze, silver, gold and platinum with coverage ranging from 60 percent of your medical costs to platinum which will cover 90 percent of costs. In each case, the remaining percentage is left to the insured to pay through deductibles, copayments and coinsurance. So far, no one knows exactly how much insurance plans on the exchanges will cost.

Under the new federal health care law, individuals and families for whom purchasing insurance is deemed unaffordable will be exempt from having to pay the tax penalty. Those with incomes below 138 percent of the federal poverty level will be eligible for Medicaid. And people with incomes up to 400 percent of the poverty level will receive federal subsidies to help cover the cost of acquiring health insurance.

Dr. George Kamajian II practices at 2001 Gulf Blvd., Suite 7, Indian Shores.

St. Petersburg College joins senior training program

CLEARWATER – St. Petersburg College was recently chosen to join the Plus 50 Encore Completion Program, a national effort to train 10,000 baby boomers for new jobs in health care, education and social services.

The American Association of Community Colleges sponsors the program.

"SPC will offer older adults the opportunity to obtain a college level certificate in several health care professions," said Sheila Newberry, program director for the Health Information Management programs.

The nationwide initiative is designed to assist age 50-plus adults with the opportunity to attend college and train for a new or better career.

The college is located in a community where almost a quarter of the population is currently over 50 years of age. It is well situated to provide learning opportunities and continuing education for older adults. Joining the Plus 50 Encore Completion program will greatly assist SPC in providing efficient and effective educational experiences to age 50-plus learners with various training options in the field of healthcare.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the percentage of adults over age 55 in the workforce will grow to 25 percent in 2020, up from 13 percent in 2000.

Through a grant, SPC will receive \$15,000 over three years to assist adult's ages 50 and older in completing an advanced certificate in health care. The program targets professionals already working in health who want to enhance their current credentials.

The grant program prepares older adults for careers as certified health data analysts, a job that will continue to grow as the health care industry becomes more data-driven. The certification gives practitioners the knowledge to acquire, manage, analyze, interpret and transform data into accurate, consistent and timely information.

SPC is one of 36 new colleges recently selected for the project. Since 2008, AACC and its network of Plus 50 Initiative colleges have worked with baby boomers and helped them prepare for new careers.

"Many adults age 50 and over want to train for new jobs that help others and are hiring, but they need to update their skills. Community colleges offer a supportive environment where baby boomers can train for new jobs quickly and affordably, while completing a marketable degree or certificate," said Mary Sue Vickers, director for the Plus 50 Initiative at AACC.

In addition to receiving grant funds to augment training programs, participating colleges gain access to toolkits and extensive marketing resources tailored to reach baby boomers. They'll also benefit from the advice and support of staff at other community colleges that have successfully implemented programs for older learners and understand the unique needs of the plus 50-student population.

Get more information about the Plus 50 Initiative at AACC.

Registration open for annual Turtle Trot 5K through Largo parks

LARGO – The city of Largo and the Friends of Largo Nature Parks have teamed up to host the third annual Turtle Trot 5K on April 13, 8 a.m., starting at George C. McGough Nature Park, 11901 146th St. N.

The Turtle Trot is a measured 3.1-mile flat course that will take participants through the well-kept trails and boardwalks of McGough and Bonner parks and on quiet neighborhood streets nearby.

Shirts and racing bibs will be given out on race day and running time with online re-

sults will be provided for all runners. Awards will be given to the overall male and female runners, overall master male and female and the top three finishers in each age group. Post-race refreshments and water will be available.

Raffle tickets will be available for a chance to win one of many great prizes, including local restaurant gift certificates, massage therapy gift certificates, theater tickets and more. Both parks are located on the Intra-coastal Waterway and have great board-

walks and piers for post-race relaxing. Bring the kids and feed the turtles from the observation deck.

Register at Active.com. The \$25 race fee is nonrefundable and is limited to the first 500 runners. All proceeds from the race will go toward supporting Largo Nature Parks. Registration forms can be found online at LargoNature.com, or picked up at McGough Nature Park or Bonner Park, 14444 143rd St. N.

Visit LargoNature.com or call 518-3047.

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Health briefs
Ostomy group to meet
LARGO – The Clearwater Ostomy Support Group will host its annual Ostomy Appliance Fair and Luncheon on Saturday, April 6, 11:30 a.m. to 2 p.m., at St. Paul's United Methodist Church, 1199 S. Highland Ave.
The fair will feature ostomy information and education. Attendees will have an opportunity to learn about tools and supplies to make their lives easier. The fair will boast more than 20 vendors offering information and samples of new products.
The event also will include door prizes and lunch. Ostomy nurses will be available to answer questions.
For information, call Marilyn Bossard at 391-5682.
Bon Secours to celebrate anniversary
ST. PETERSBURG – A Mass and reception celebrating the 50th anniversary of Bon Secours St. Petersburg Health System will be presented Wednesday, April 17, 5:30 p.m., on the grounds of Bon Secours Maria Manor Nursing and Rehabilitation Care Center.
Members of the public are invited to join the celebration.
Mass will be celebrated by the Rev. Robert N. Lynch, Bishop of the Catholic Diocese of St. Petersburg. A reception that presents the history of Maria Manor and the Bon Secours St. Petersburg Health System will follow the Mass.
Those interested in attending the Mass and reception should call 568-1025 or email BonSecours_St.Petersburg@bshsi.org.
FBS seeks O negative donations
The need for blood donations, especially O negative, is extremely high and Florida Blood Services, a division of OneBlood Inc., is making a critical appeal.
Due to increased blood transfusions in area hospitals, donations are needed immediately. Because donations are needed immediately, Florida Blood Services is urging blood donors to make an appointment, to walk into any branch location or mobile unit as soon as possible.
O negative blood is the universal blood type-meaning any patient can receive O negative blood regardless of the recipient's blood type. O negative is critical for trauma patients, premature babies and emergency surgeries.
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Wine Cellar Restaurant to close after sale to developer

By BOB MCCLURE

NORTH REDINGTON BEACH - The Wine Cellar Restaurant, one of Pinellas County's oldest landmarks, will close permanently on April 30.

Kai Sonnenschein, son of owners Ted and Liesel Sonnenschein, said March 29 that a deal with an undisclosed developer for the 2-acre site at 17307 Gulf Blvd. has been struck, pending a closing in 90 to 120 days.

Sonnenschein said the sales price is \$3.3 million. Due to a confidentiality agreement with the buyer, Sonnenschein said the identity of the developer and the type of development that will go on the site could not be released.

"They plan to make a public announcement when the timing is right," said Sonnenschein.

He said the deal is not with AG Development Group, which previously proposed purchasing the site to build a Sweetbay Supermarket. That deal fell through last fall when the Belgian Delhaize Group put a freeze on new development of grocery stores.

Sonnenschein said most of the restaurant's valuable antiques would be sold by auction in mid- to late-May by Bay Area Auctioneers of Pinellas Park. Liesel Sonnenschein said she and her husband

are ready to retire.

"My husband (Ted) is 79 and I'm going to be 76 soon," she said. "So, it's about time. Everything has to have an end sooner or later."

Liesel credited hard work and quality food for the restaurant's success over the years.

"I think it was hard work and striving to serve quality," she said. "I think that's a big part of it. Plus, people say they like our atmosphere."

The restaurant opened in the late 1940s as Ken's Wine House under owner Ken Conlin.

At the time, the restaurant was licensed to sell only beer and wine. So Conlin purchased the neighboring Zebra Lounge and joined the two businesses with a breezeway. The area was later enclosed and now is the same area known as "the street."

Peter Connell purchased the business in the mid-1960s and it was renamed Connell's Wine House.

In the early 1970s it was sold again and became Pearl's Wine House for a couple of years before Ted Sonnenschein partnered with former Don CeSar chef Karl Klumpp and former Bath Club manager Peter Schuckert to open the restaurant as the Wine Cellar.

Banquet room seating for 200 was added in the early 1980s, which expanded the building to 23,000 square feet.



Photo by BOB MCCLURE

The Wine Cellar Restaurant has been a landmark restaurant in Pinellas County for four decades.

Business updates

Magnifying Selections to open

ST. PETERSBURG - Magnifying Selections Inc. celebrates its grand opening Thursday, April 4, 3:30 to 6:30 p.m., at 6644 Central Ave.

Attendees will celebrate the low vision retail store opening and the introduction of the new Optelec ClearView + Speech for the visually impaired and the legally blind.

This cutting-edge product can magnify text up to 85 times and also will read printed materials out loud.

The event will include hors d'oeuvres and beverages, demos, information and a drawing for \$200. There is no cost to attend. Attendees must RSVP to be entered in the drawing.

For information, call 866-343-3395.

Plumlee announces top agent

INDIAN ROCKS BEACH - Plumlee Gulf Beach Realty recently announced its top agent for the last quarter.

Tim O'Neil was top listing and sales agent for the last quarter.

Vierling, Vorac earn awards

SEMINOLE - The Vorac Group with Realty Executives Adamo and Associates recently was recognized for an outstanding year in listings and sales.

Penny Vierling received the team buyer's specialist Gold Award for \$1.3 million in production for 2012. Caroleanne Vorac received the team listing specialist Gold Award for \$5.1 million in production for 2012 as well as the Executive Club and 100 Percent Club award from Realty Executives Regional.

Fass joins Vorac Group

SEMINOLE - Janet Fass recently joined The Vorac Group of Realty Executives, Adamo and Associates. Fass will work as the team contract-to-close coordinator.

Thorn Collection, Coldwell Banker team up with The Tams

BELLEAIR - The Thorn Collection and Coldwell Banker were the presenting sponsors at the March 10 Sundays in Belleair concert featuring The Tams

and a tribute to Motown.

More than 2,000 music lovers set up their lawn chairs and blankets, enjoyed great music and danced the evening away at Belleair's Dimmitt Community Center. The Sundays in Belleair concert series is hosted by the Belleair Parks and Recreation Department.

"I have always supported the Belleair Rec," said Martha Thorn in a press release. "They do an excellent job working with children and they provide great programs. I feel very strongly about the town of Belleair."

It wasn't the first time Thorn got to hear The Tams play live.

"The Tams played for my 40th birthday party, so I was excited about being a presenting sponsor."

Showhomes franchise earns award

At the recent Showhomes annual conference in

Nashville, Tenn., Showhomes North Pinellas/Pasco was honored with the Circle of Excellence and President's Club Awards.

Showhomes, a national home staging franchise, and its franchise partners have provided successful selling solutions for real estate professionals and homeowners in all economic market cycles for the past 26 years.

Owner Carol Ackerman was recognized with Showhomes high honors for operational excellence, customer centric focus and highest quality in products and services in home staging. Ackerman has owned Showhomes North Pinellas/Pasco since 2009.

The Tams have been entertaining audiences of all ages since they first hit the Atlanta music scene in 1962. Best known for their chart-topping hit "Be Young, Be Foolish, Be Happy," The Tams' crowd-pleasing blasts from the past had everyone on their feet during the memorable evening in Belleair.

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—Jim Crill, Bob Hope Producer

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Pinellas career education leaders awarded

LARGO – The Pinellas Education Foundation recently held its annual Career Education Breakfast event where community, business and educational leaders came together to raise funds for career education programs and initiatives in Pinellas County Schools. Cheryl Carrier, director of Ford Next Generation Learning at Ford Motor Company Fund, also announced that Pinellas County has been named a Ford NGL Community – only one of 17 communities in the nation.

This designation reflects the collaboration between Pinellas County Schools, the Pinellas Education Foundation, its business partners and community organizers that have supported the Academies of Pinellas and career education. With this recognition, Pinellas will receive:

- Ongoing guidance and technical assistance from the Ford NGL Leadership Team as Pinellas County develops its plan and reviews their progress annually.
- Become members in the Ford NGL community national network, which will allow them to learn from other Ford NGL communities and tap into their expertise through peer-to-peer mentoring, online resources, webinars, and network institutes as well as share their successful practices with other Ford NGL communities.
- Leverage the Ford NGL designation to encourage economic development for the region by demonstrating that Pinellas County is preparing students for the high-wage, high-skill jobs in the community.

Additionally, the event recognized business, educator and school leaders in several career education categories.

Joe Sleppy, a senior from Osceola Fundamental High, won the Next Generation Entrepreneurs Program, which is a year-long business competition involving high school juniors and seniors, which included

business plan training, creativity workshops and mentoring. He won for his invention involving workout equipment for amputee veterans.

"It kills me to see individuals give up on physical fitness, especially returning veterans that are learning to live with amputated limbs," Sleppy said.

That is why he developed workout equipment for veterans. One device, used for pushups, relies on airbag compression to hold an individual by their forearms to keep strain off of wrists. He will receive \$10,000 to start his business.

The 2013 Career Educator of the Year is Debra Fischer, director of finance academy at Northeast High. She won a \$2,000 classroom grant.

The Frances Stavros Career Education Champion Award was presented to Dr. Alex McKenna, who is president of McKenna Group International, Inc., which is a company providing career transition coaching and counseling to senior executives and manager. A \$2,000 scholarship to the Frances Stavros Career Education Program will be awarded to a deserving student in McKenna's honor.

The 2013 Academies of Pinellas Outstanding Achievement Awards also were announced and went to the following high schools:

- First place – Northeast High, winning \$5,000
- Second Place – Clearwater High, winning \$3,000
- Third Place – Boca Ciega High, winning \$2,000

During the breakfast reception, a showcase of student skills and programs from the Academies programs were displayed in Finance Park and Enterprise Village. The programs including the Academy of Engineering at East Lake High, the Center for Computer Technology at Countryside High, the Commercial Foods and Culinary Arts at pTEC St. Petersburg, the Center for Wellness and Medical Professions at Palm Harbor University High and the First Responders: National Guard Center for Emergency Management at Pinellas Park High.

USF St. Petersburg students win prestigious award

ST. PETERSBURG – Two USF St. Petersburg students have won prestigious Leland M. Hawes awards in Florida history, adding their names to a string of previous winners from USFSP.

Douglas Ponticos, a graduate student in the Florida Studies Program, received the prize for his paper, "Communities of Stone and Glass: Florida's Brooksville Ridge." Ponticos is a Brooksville native who was raised in Homosassa and a graduate of Lecanto High School and Florida State University. After many summers working on family farms, he cultivated a passion for gardening and food. He is finishing his thesis, "A study of the cultural history of the Brooksville Ridge." He dreams of farming and teaching on the Ridge.

Elizabeth Southard, anthropology major, received the prize for the best undergraduate paper, "The Cultural Importance of Prehistoric and Historic History of Weedon Island." Southard is a Memphis native who moved to Florida in 2003. While a student at USFSP, she developed a passion for archaeology. She spent the summer of 2012 with professors John and Kathryn Arthur in Ethiopia, studying the Gamo people. She recently helped curate the W.R. "Butch" Evans artifact collection at the Nelson Poynter Memorial Library. Evans was a beloved student in the Florida Studies Program and an avid amateur archaeologist.

Both Southard and Ponticos wrote their seminar papers in Emeritus History professor Gary Mormino's Florida history seminar. Mormino is a co-founder of the Florida studies program.

The Leland Hawes Prize honors the life work of Leland Hawes, who spent six decades as a reporter, editor and history columnist at the Tampa Tribune. Upon his retirement, the Tampa Bay History Center and the Florida Studies Center at USF Tampa inaugurated the prize to recognize student scholarship in Florida history.

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Take Stock in Children welcomes 50 students, awards scholarships

LARGO - The Pinellas Education's Take Stock in Children/Doorways program welcomed 50 students from 13 schools on March 13. The total amount for the 50 scholarships is \$620,000, and students were signed from the following schools:

- Azalea Middle
- Bay Point Middle
- Boca Ciega High
- Gibbs High
- John Hopkins Middle
- Lakewood High
- Lealman Intermediate
- Madeira Beach Fundamental
- Meadowlawn Middle
- Northeast High
- St. Petersburg Collegiate High
- St. Petersburg High
- Thurgood Marshall Fundamental Middle
- Tyrone Middle

The Take Stock in Children/Doorways program in Pinellas County is one of the most successful in the state, according to a Pinellas Education Foundation press release. According to the 2012 annual report of the Florida Prepaid College Foundation, who matches the scholarships dollar for dollar with its STARS pro-

gram, Pinellas makes up about 20 percent of the state's scholars. Broward County is second, with 9.4 percent.

"We are grateful for the support that our community gives to help these children become successful adults," said Jim Myers, Pinellas Education Foundation chairman. "Ninety-four percent of our Take Stock in Children/Doorways students graduate high school with a standard diploma."

In February, the program welcomed an additional 68 students from 30 different traditional middle and high schools across northern Pinellas County. A total amount for the 68 scholarships was \$952,000.

The Pinellas Education Foundation is an independent not-for-profit established in 1986. The Foundation's mission is to provide enhanced educational opportunities for students and educators in Pinellas County Public Schools. Well known Pinellas Education Foundation programs include: Enterprise Village, Finance Park, Take Stock in Children/Doorways Scholarships, Youth Connect and Teacher Classroom Grants.

Clearwater instructor wins national award

CLEARWATER - Leslie Eckert, CWPC, CEE, and MBA of Clearwater, recently was awarded the American Culinary Federation Southeast Region Chef Educator of the Year award at the ACF Southeast Regional Conference in Louisville, Ky. Eckert is a culinary chef instructor at The Art Institute of Tampa.

The ACF Chef Educator of the Year award, established in 1998, pays tribute to an active culinary educator whose knowledge, skills and expertise have enhanced the image of the professional chef, and who, by example, has given leadership, guidance and direction to students seek-

Volunteering in the community



Photos courtesy of VERITAS ACADEMY
At left, Nick Susie, 15, adds the finishing touches to a coat of paint of a picnic table at Heritage Village March 22. Susie and his fellow students at Veritas Academy in Largo spent the day volunteering at the Indian Rocks Travel Park, Heritage Village and the Heron House as part of the school's goal to make a difference in Pinellas County. Above, Julia Smith, 18, left, and Monique Oliver, 16, clean the windows of Heron House, an assisted living facility at 2050 East Bay Drive in Largo.

ing a career in the culinary profession. This person demonstrates the ability to help students define and develop their careers by using their skills and abilities to provide a strong foundation for their future success, according to a press release from the American Culinary Federation.

Eckert was selected from three other chef candidates nominated by colleagues for the 2013 ACF Southeast Region Chef Educator of the Year award. She will now vie for the national title against her three re-

gional counterparts at the 2013 ACF National Convention, Las Vegas, July 21 to 25. The four finalists will have 50 minutes to present a lecture and demonstration for a panel of distinguished judges on either a plated entree or dessert. The winner will be announced at the President's Grand Ball July 25.

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LETTERS

Callous disregard for working class

Editor:

The media, by introducing the man who videoed presidential candidate Mitt Romney's infamous 47 percent speech, have managed to stir the controversy anew. However, they are again guilty of focusing on the wrong element of the speech. Their constant reference to Romney's claim that the 47 percent represented people whose vote was lost to the Republican Party was hardly the central element of what we had to say.

That was merely a statement of fact. Had he simply stopped there it would not have been a problem. It was what he did next that in many ways sealed his fate. He proceeded to express his total disdain for that 47 percent unwilling to even leave the door ajar to the possibility there were any who might have fallen victim to circumstance. Worse was his reaction for bringing the subject up in the first place. The reality was that he realized this was exactly the message his wealthy, elitist audience wanted to hear.

Satisfied he was safe preaching to the choir he went on to heap scorn on the 47 percent, some of whom were at that very moment to serve his guests and himself even as they were being condemned, unable to defend themselves.

It was his callous disregard for members of the American working class, demonstrated by Romney's willingness to deliver his vituperative and derogatory attack to the accompaniment of the applause emanating from those enjoying their \$50,000 dinner that proved revolting to the American public.

This is why he, as well as the Republican Party, were rejected. It was not because he pointed out that 47 percent of the American people were getting some form of government assistance. The 47 percent knew this. They were in fact reminded of it every day of their lives because without that help they and their families would not survive. Many of them were after all people who would consider themselves fortunate if they could afford a \$5 dinner.

Robert Shaw
Madeira Beach

Speak out on city projects

Editor:

After attending the Madeira Beach meeting to review the \$9 million plus City Hall, fire station and recreation buildings project, including plans for the replacement of the present ballfields with new facilities, it was apparent the Board of Commissioners intend to approve the complete package.

I am in partial agreement, we need a new City Hall, required due to years of maintenance neglect by the city of our present City Hall, allowing for a leaky unrepaired roof for the past several years to damage electrical wiring, a circuit box, ceilings to collapse, mold to form and untreated termites to spread. The professional building people tell us the doors and windows need to be replaced and other problems were found that make repairs too costly.

Tearing down City Hall also necessitates a new fire station, which is obviously required. The big issue in my mind is the expenditure for a new multi-purpose building, a new recreation building and a \$2 million new ballfield.

We heard several nonresidents inform us a new ballfield is required, but of course it won't cost us a dime. They emphasized the need for better facilities, yet Madeira Beach not only provides for ballfields, used very little by Madeira Beach residents, but also has a recreation annual budget of \$460,000, not bad for a city of 4,200 residents.

We are told this \$9 million plus project, with a debt of \$5,370,000 can be financed through a 30-year bond issue, with payments of \$334,042 annually at 4.01 percent. The financial people also state "project's impact on city's annual operating expenses not reviewed - future discussions warranted."

The city has another \$15 million or more in other pending projects that need to be addressed and financed, such as storm water flooding, residential street re-surfacing, buried utilities and several other major projects.

If citizens feel a new \$2 million ballfield, plus two other new buildings for a total of \$4 million, should not be top priority for your property taxes - let your elected officials know it.

Marvin Merrill
Madeira Beach

Column defends fairness and inclusion

Re: "Beware of snoring Scoutmasters," Tom Germond's column, March 21

Editor:

Congratulations on your column of March 21, 2013, regarding the exclusive policy of the Boy Scouts of America.

I immediately thought of my son-in-law who is a den leader and the assistant pack leader in Santa Monica, Calif. A writer, director and actor, he is also an elected advisory board member at the Franklin Elementary School, and a devoted husband and father. He takes all of his jobs seriously, devoting many volunteer hours to Scouting.

Last year, he took the position of asserting his personal convictions of fairness and inclusion as a Scout leader. He had T-shirts for the boys. The T-shirts clearly stated, "Everyone's welcome!" When I asked if he had one to send to you, he told me that, unfortunately, he didn't have one, but will consider you an honorary member of the den.

Again, thank you for your courage in publicly expressing your convictions. It is so important that we all speak forthrightly in our own small corners of the world and defend fairness and inclusion. Our collective voices make a difference.

Your editorial will be sent to Santa Monica.
Dorlores Benjamin
Treasure Island

Conservatives take hypocritical position on gay marriage

Editor:

There has been quite a bit of fervor in the past week as the Supreme Court heard oral arguments in favor of and in opposition to several significant laws regulating gay marriage. I use the word regulate purposely because no other word better describes the role of Proposition 8 and The Defense of Marriage Act.

Regulation is the process of installing and monitoring rules, and it is a dirty word in the United States. Despite the recent re-election of President Obama, there is an undeniable force in American politics that screams for smaller government. Be it The Tea Party, The Libertarian Party, The Constitution Party or just a group of active citizens declaring "Don't Tread On Me!" there is clearly defined movement calling for less rules, less taxes, less handouts, and less government involvement in our personal lives. These are the voters who call for less regulation in every aspect of their lives ... except one. They call for the outlawing of gay marriage, a regulation of the bond of marriage.

For some reason many of these proud, stalwart, patriotic Americans oppose federal legalization of gay marriage. This is one of the most personal individual freedoms we have. It is the freedom to decide not only who to spend the rest of your life with, but it is the freedom to decide who will be your next of kin, who will be your "surviving spouse" and who will benefit from over 1,000 more protected rights. These freedom loving patrioters, with their Gadsden Flag bumper stickers, feel that the government should regulate whom we get to marry.

It is truly hypocritical for a person to espouse the conservative value of small federal government, but then support the federal government regulating such a private, personal, and financially significant aspect of our lives. These conservatives demand that one group of citizens be second-class, that one group of citizens not benefit from the freedoms enjoyed by heterosexuals.

Freedom means freedom for all, equality means equality for all. For these "small government" individuals who would pick and choose which liberties to be enjoyed by some and omitted for others, they are the ones calling for more freedom. For these individuals who demand less gun regulation, less business regulation, less overall regulation, they are the ones calling for regulation of who you can bind yourself to legally through marriage. It is a disgrace, and it does a disservice to their cause.

Cuthbert Hutton
Redington Beach

Seeking wisdom and comfort



Driver's Seat
Bob Driver

wish to God I looked like someone else," you might consult your WCL (wisdom and comfort list) and find this entry: "Shut up and shave. Get on with it."

WCL's become more important as we age. At 20 we are full of energy and smarts, so who needs extra wisdom? By 40, doubts are beginning to show. When we reach 60, we not only hear the hellhounds baying, we know most of them by name. (The best WCL's usually contain an entire section devoted to Hellhounds). Other sections might be given over to thoughts on ambition, love, money, ego, children, weight management, sex, friendship and any other topics that are important to us.

To build a workable WCL, we need not be all that inventive. We don't have to come up with brand new, never-before-uttered ideas. Very few of them exist. But there are thousands of good ones already out there, waiting for us to use, without fear of copyright infringement. Such as "avoid fast women and slow horses." The author of that excellent advice is surely long dead, following an enjoyable, if less than exciting, life.

A wisdom-and-comfort list can take the form of books that have guided us over time. For half a century my bedside copy of Dale Carnegie's "How to Stop Worrying and Start Living" has kept me sane. The meditations of

Marcus Aurelius contain pearls of attitude just as useful today as they were 2,100 years ago. Every bookstore, library and computer is a gold mine of wisdom and comfort, waiting for us to read, pick and choose.

Wisdom and reassurance are often cloaked in humor and what may appear as cynicism, but is not. I have lifted many of my WCL nuggets from Robert Byrne's masterpiece, "The 2,548 Best Things Anybody Ever Said." Here is a sampling of quotations that have imbedded themselves in my psyche over the years:

- When I begin to fault myself for not having won a Pulitzer or Nobel prize, I dial up this quote: "We can't all be heroes, because somebody has to sit on the curb and clap as they go by."
- When choosing the gang you hang out with: "A man is known by the company he avoids."
- When visiting friends and families, remember: "After three days, fish and guests stink."
- When wondering why we bother with all of those churches, temples and mosques, keep this in mind: "Religion is what keeps the poor from murdering the rich."
- When sketching the outlines of what might become your love life, here's a good point: "The most important thing in a relationship between a man and a woman is that one of them is good at taking orders."
- A Wisdom and Comfort List helps to shape how we think. And how we think is probably the most important part of our lives.

Bob Driver is a former columnist and editorial page editor for the Clearwater Sun. Send him an email at tralee71@comcast.net.



Bills bad for high school athletics

During our five years as teammates with the Tampa Bay Bucs, we forged a bond that will endure the rest of our lives. That's what happens when you dedicate yourselves to a common goal and know you can rely on the commitment and character of those around you.

Now, as Florida high school football coaches, we try to pass along this same sense of honor, fair play and sportsmanship to our young student-athletes. Unfortunately, those things are under attack in the Florida Legislature. Two bad proposals would undermine the ideals that are why we have high school athletics in the first place.

The legislation would undercut the authority of the Florida High School Athletic Association, even though the organization has spent almost 100 years as the trusted authority to protect the integrity of high school sports. This would diminish the wonderful experience of high school sports, which is now shared by 260,000 boys and girls across Florida. Worst of all, it would open the door for wholesale free agency for high school athletes.

Under the proposals (HB 1279 and SB 1164), students could easily switch schools to play for a different high school sports team. All they'd have to do is meet the athletic and academic requirements set by the schools they choose. This amounts to wholesale free agency for high school athletes, leaving the field wide open to cutthroat recruiting.

We were both in the NFL, and we understand free agency. We also understand recruiting, but that was for college. There's no place for either of these in high school foot-



As I See It
Mike Alstott
Reidel Anthony

ball. It's not what high school is all about.

The long-term effects of these bad proposals would hurt Florida communities, where fair competition and local school spirit will be crushed by ambitious high schools that want to stockpile star athletes. This would ignore what happens at the schools they raid for talent. The players left behind would certainly feel abandoned and betrayed by teammates and friends who felt they weren't good enough.

What's next? Middle school scouting combines for future high school prospects? Florida high school sports would never be the same again.

The last thing kids need is a process that invites open recruiting of high school athletes. It's hard enough for top players to keep a level head when the colleges come calling - it will be almost impossible for younger kids to resist that attention from other high schools. The idea that a kid could live in one part of town, play football for a school in another part of town and then "qualify" to play basketball at an entirely different school, is not what high school sports is supposed to be all about.

As coaches, we have to wonder how we would encourage children in such a back-

wards system, where victories and personal ambition come before character building and sportsmanship. How could we have an honest conversation with them about traditional things like playing by the rules, teamwork and fair play while coaches who can get away with manipulation, pressure and bribery are recruiting them?

We strongly object to changes that would let recruiters target impressionable young people as they finish middle school, filling their heads with dreams of championships and college scholarships. This would inflict damage on overall school spirit. When fair and friendly competition gives way to the win-at-all-costs mentality of a few high school athletic powerhouses, all notion of fair play is destroyed.

High school-aged athletes need rules, regulations and structure to guide their actions. They deserve every opportunity we can give them to succeed, but not at the expense of their values and integrity - or of a system that assures a level playing field for all. Over many years of playing football, we learned the core lessons of sportsmanship, and we will never sacrifice them for the sake of winning. That is why we believe HB 1279 and SB 1164 are bad for Florida's children. To learn more and get involved, go to www.ParentsforFair-Play.com

Mike Alstott and Reidel Anthony are former stars with the NFL's Tampa Bay Buccaneers. Alstott is now head football coach at Northside Christian High School in St. Petersburg, and Anthony coaches at Glades Central High School in Belle Glade.

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Tampa Bay
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Phone: 727-397-5563



Predicting dolphins' habits isn't easy as charting fish patterns

What's the difference between envy and jealousy? The saying, "Be the envy of all your friends" makes envy sound more attractive, or at least less negative, than the green-eyed monster.

It turns out that they're synonyms along with invidiousness and covetousness for resentful dislike at another's advantage. Consequently, I changed the opening line of this column.

I occasionally wonder if it's easier to report on our local fish than on our local dolphins.

My journalistic compatriot Capt. Tyson "Get Bent" Wallerstein is out there every week bent on getting the relative numbers and current micro-niche of local fish, which he reports to ready-and-waiting anglers up and down the coast.

My reporter's beat is our local bottlenose dolphins. What fish reports have that dolphin reports can never have is that fish reports are good for time and distance. In contrast, no matter how carefully Capt. John Heidemann and I collect dolphin numbers and current habitat preferences, they're like a dream - real only as long you're watching them - and sometimes not even that long.

Here's what I mean about fish reports being good for time and distance. One of Capt. Wallerstein's February reports advised anglers to find redfish in the "traditional places" and to find mullet with live shrimp dangled in clean water during flood currents.

Sheepshead assembling for the spring spawn meant that big juicy individuals could be found at pass bridges and jetties. The passes were good for jigging pompano on the strongest part of the tide, early morning or evening as you like. God's bongos, black drums, could be found thumping over deep seagrass flats from Dunedin to Pinellas. They all sound like such nice little predictable fish.

Ahem. In nine years and a thousand surveys for local dolphins, the closest I can come to predicting dolphin time and distance is a 7 percent chance we'll see zero or one dolphin, and we'll see more dolphins in the summer than the winter. As a rule. Other than that, all bets are off. Or on.

Here's what I mean about dolphin reports being real only as long as you're watching them. Three recent dolphin surveys conducted three days in a row produced three completely different scenarios, starting with the numbers. We saw 23 dolphins the first day, four dolphins the second day and zero dolphins the third day.



Dolphin Watch
Ann Weaver

The different numbers (23, four and zero) are examples of variability in the data, and one aim of science is to explain as much variability as possible.

It's relatively easy to explain the zero-dolphin day: heavy fog. Maybe variability is partly explained by the weather, which was as dramatically different on all three days as the dolphins themselves.

The cold winds of the first day were easily forgotten as we found five different groups scattered from John's Pass to the Narrows, either engaged in a range of hunting techniques or napping. The next day was a beautiful day of soothing warmth that yielded one-sixth the numbers of dolphins we'd seen the day before - over the same waters at the same time.

The four we found occurred as two pairs. The behavior of the first pair of young teens, Oyster and VC, is increasingly bull-like; indeed, they vanished immediately in admirable imitation of the big bulls they'll be someday.

But the other pair was teen VC's mom Valiant and brother Vidalia, and we happened upon them twice, first napping on the run and then snapping up snacks. It was the first time I'd actually seen young Mr. Vidalia with a fish. He carried around a flounder, which means I now have generational pictures of this native behavior for Vidalia, his mom Valiant and his brother VC.

So dolphins aren't completely unpredictable. Nor are fish completely predictable.

One thing dolphins do predictably, however, is raise other questions. Without suggesting fish are the working class of the marine world, why do many fish species have predictable schedules the way working people have predictable schedules?

In turn, do people in the human leisure class have less predictable schedules because they don't work? Without suggesting dolphins are the maritime leisure class - there is no leisure class in nature - what affords them the luxury of unpredictability? Is part of it the combination of their exceptional intelligence and self-awareness coupled with the relative predictability of those nice little fish?

Dr. Weaver studies wild dolphins under federal permit 16299, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Send her an email at dazled@tampabay.rr.com or visit her website www.dolphinssuperstore.com. NOAA advises anyone who sees a stranded dolphin in the Gulf of Mexico to call 877-942-5343 or 877-433-8299.



Photo by ANN WEAVER

Dolphins like Slightwin keep many secrets, including how they get away with having one of the most flexible schedules in the animal kingdom.

Simple steps to turn a yard into a bird oasis

Did you know that many of our most popular wading birds - the little blue heron, roseate spoonbill, snowy egret, tri-colored heron, reddish egret and white ibis, plus four types of salt marsh songbirds and the osprey in Monroe County - are all imperiled? It will be a very sad day indeed if any of these birds go extinct. The good news is that the situation is not hopeless. Property owners who are concerned about our feathered friends can fairly easily turn their yards into a bird oasis.

The basics for all life are food, water, space and shelter. Plants can provide both food and shelter. If you are sprucing up your yard for spring, choose native plants that were once part of the ecosystem in which you live. Before areas were cleared for development, they were often "wildlife cities," full of places for birds to nest, find food and water, and raise a family. The cumulative impact of so much land clearing is that native wildlife species are experiencing severe reductions in numbers and even potential extinctions at neighborhood, county, regional, state and national levels.

We can easily provide wildlife habitat in our yard just by planting native plants. Because native plants evolved with the animals that use them, they tend to be much better at providing the right habitat and food at the right time of year. Use as many different heights of plants as possible and pick a variety of plants that flower or fruit at different times of the year. A good list of plants for around a pond includes buttonbush, wax myrtle, red maple, tupelo, bald cypress, duck potato, pickerelweed, iris, bulrush, and fragrant water lily. Giving up just 3 feet of mowed grass for native habitat also will help to improve water quality and provide for wildlife.

The seven major ecosystems that occur in Florida are the coastal strand, sand scrub, sand hills, hardwood hammocks, Flatwoods, swamp and freshwater marsh. If you don't know which habitat fits your area, you can check with a local native plant nursery, join the Native Plant Society, visit a nearby park nature center, visit the UF/IFAS Extension Service for help, or order a helpful book at ifas-books.ifas.ufl.edu/p-180-landscaping-for-floridas-wildlife.aspx.

"The Florida-Friendly™ Landscaping Guide to Plant Selection & Landscape Design" is another excellent free book that shows sample landscapes as well as many plants and their specific requirements. It can be found under publications at watermatters.org. Favorite plants for my Pinellas County yard, which is like a Flatwoods and goes from sopping wet to bone dry, include beautyberry, myrsine, firebush, Simpson's stopper, Florida privet, blue-eyed grass, yaupon holly, fakahatchee grass and sabal palm. A simple birdbath is an easy way to provide birds with fresh water (keep mosquitoes from breeding by flushing out the water every three days).

Whenever practical, we should all forgo pesticides. Pesticide use in North America has grown to more than 1.1 billion pounds annually and about 8 percent of that is applied to yards and gardens. One lawn-care pesticide was implicated in more than 150 mass bird die-offs. Pesticides also can cause longer-term, potentially lethal effects such as eggshell thinning and neurological damage. Always try cultural, mechanical and biological control methods first (the Extension Service can give you suggestions) and use insecticidal soap, horticultural oil or Bt products instead of toxins.

Another thing we can do to protect the birds is to keep cats indoors. A new report from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Smithsonian's Migratory Bird Center estimates that this country's 150 million outdoor cats are killing up to 3.7 billion birds a year, with our pet cats averaging one kill every 17 hours. Shocking!

Bird lovers also can help by adopting a species and becoming an advocate for that species by working to protect and restore its habitat. Teach your community and school kids, or volunteer at a nature center or preserve.

For more information about gardening for birds the Pinellas County Extension Service is just a phone call or visit away. We are located at 12520 Ulmerton Road, Largo, next to the Florida Botanical Gardens and are open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. To speak with a horticulturist, you can call 727-582-2110 on Mondays, Tuesdays or Thursdays from 9 a.m. to noon and 1 to 4 p.m. You also can visit our website at www.pinellascountyextension.org.

Church to host gardening workshop
PINELLAS PARK - A gardening workshop will be presented Saturday, April 13, 9 to 11 a.m., at Good Samaritan Church, 6085 Park Blvd.

Nessie Johnson, certified in Permaculture, will demonstrate how to build Florida soil in order to grow produce. Johnson also will host a presentation on water catching on Saturday, April 27, 9 to 11 a.m., at the church. She will talk about catching water to provide the necessary moisture for gardens.

There is a suggested donation of \$20 for each session. A scholarship for at least one teenager is being offered but must be arranged prior to the first workshop. Preregistration is helpful but not required. For information, call 544-8558 or visit good-sam-church.org.

Growing Wise
Jane Morse
UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA
IFAS Extension

Florida Herb Society to meet
CLEARWATER - The Florida Herb Society will meet Tuesday, April 16, 6:30 p.m., at Clearwater Garden Club, 405 Seminole St. Bob Huttick and MaryAnn Kirk from the Seminole Community Garden will share tips on harvesting and cooking with fresh herbs. Refreshments and herbal swaps will begin at 6:30 p.m. Visitors are welcome. The first meeting is free. Cost is \$25 per year to join. Call Emily Wenzel at 365-8574 or email emily@floridaherbsociety.org.

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Tom Cato
Realty Executives - Adamo & Associates

Seminole \$280,000
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Ashleigh Masi
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Kevin O'Donnell
Century 21 Top Sales

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Sandy Hartmann
Realty Executives - Adamo & Associates

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Humane Society calendar contest opens

CLEARWATER – The Humane Society of Pinellas is seeking contestants for its 2014 Celebration of Companionship Calendar Contest.

According to a press release, the competition was "so intense"

last year that the society is kicking things off early this year.

Cost to enter the contest is \$10. To enter, visit www.mulabula.com/humanepinellas or send a pet's photograph to hsp@mulabula.com. Every photo entered is

guaranteed to appear somewhere in the calendar.

Website visitors also may vote for favorite pet pictures. Cost is \$1 per vote. The top 13 vote-getters by Sept. 22, 6 p.m., will receive a professional photo session by Rebecca Brittain and will be featured for a whole month on the cover.

This year, the winners will be the pets with the most votes, regardless of species.

Calendar sponsorships also are available. For sponsorship information, call Twila Cole at 797-7722, ext. 222, or email Twila@HumanePinellas.org.

Visit www.TBNweekly.com

Looking for a home



Reba

Reba is a 48-pound American pit bull terrier that has been with the Pinellas County Animal Services center since Valentine's Day. She is a 2-year-old medium-energy-level dog. She loves to play fetch, and this stray girl knows some basic commands, too. Bring this article to the center and adopt her for only \$25. She's spayed, up to date on shots and microchipped. Visit her at 12450 Ulmerton Road, Largo. Call 582-2600 or visit www.pinellascounty.org/animalservices/petfind.

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Smith and Wesslyn (Linnie)

Smith and Wesslyn – or Linnie for short – are a pair of the most intriguing, lovable, vocal kittens at 3.5 months old. This brother-and-sister duo are vibrant, stunning black cats looking for the best lap possible for a forever home. They seek attention and will be in splendor in a lap or a bed. They are cuddlers and would love to be carried around like a baby all day. They have incredible dispositions and will fit in perfectly wherever they go. They adore other cats and dogs. They ideally could be kept together. They are current on vaccinations, spayed and neutered, and microchipped. To adopt them, call All 'Bout Cats at 712-7773 or visit www.allboutcats.com.



Charlie

Meet Charlie, a 3-year-old hound mix. This great dog is looking to shed a few pounds, so he needs a family who can help get him active. He loves long walks and wouldn't mind sniffing around the dog park. But if you prefer a couch and a good book, Charlie would love to cuddle with you. Adopt him for \$75, which includes his neuter surgery, vaccinations, microchip and 30 days of pet insurance. Meet him at the SPCA Tampa Bay at 9099 130th Ave. N., Largo. Visit www.spcatampabay.org.

Dog training class set

LARGO – A free dog-training program will be offered Saturday, April 6, 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. Participants will learn about housetraining, loose-leash walking and dealing with challenging dog behaviors. Dogs will not be permitted at the class.

To register, call 582-2600 or visit www.pinellascounty.org/animalservices.



Kaia

Kaia is a gorgeous Siamese seal point girl with beautiful blue eyes. This young lady had a loving owner who became sick and was no longer able to care for her. Kaia would like to be the only queen in her human's castle, since she loves to give and receive attention and does not want to share it with another pet. She is very sweet and friendly and is looking for a loving forever home. She is spayed and current with her vaccinations. Call Second Chance for Strays at 535-9154 or visit www.secondchanceforstrays.com.

FAMILY PRACTICE & INTERNAL MEDICINE

Todd Clarkson, D.O.

Donald Collins, D.O.

Ronald Mall, D.O.

Roger Schwartzberg, D.O., F.A.A.I.M.

Betsy Parker, A.R.N.P.

Gail Quail, MSN, A.R.N.P.C.

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ACCREDITED BUSINESS

Fly-fishing official speaks at local fundraiser

LARGO – Philip Greenlee, president of the International Federation of Fly Fishers spoke at the Suncoast Fly Fishers's 10th annual hog roast fundraising dinner March 23.

Greenlee praised Suncoast Fly Fishers for programs teaching fly-fishing and fly-tying to young anglers and Scouts as well as to recovering military veterans through the Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing program. He spoke of the importance of supporting the federation's conservation goals and outlined its certification program for fly-casting instructors.

Suncoast Fly Fishers held its fundraiser at the new Florida Gulf Coast Center for Fishing and Interactive Museum, a 33,000-square-foot facility at 12211 Walsingham Road in Largo.

Before the dinner, Greenlee toured the center with founder and chief executive Jim Simons and Suncoast Fly Fishers President Thomas Gadacz. A major purpose of Greenlee's visit was to see a newly designed wall-sized display of images and artwork celebrating saltwater fly-fishing, a project which the federation helped fund.

The new Florida Gulf Coast fishing center actively supports fishing clubs in the St. Petersburg-Clearwater area and hosts summer youth fishing camps. Local artists decorate museum walls with historical fishing photos and artwork. More than 4,000 students will visit the center on field trips each school year. The center also hosts a pancake breakfast and open market on Saturday mornings.

Suncoast Fly Fishers, with 145 active members, is one of Florida's largest fly-fishing clubs. Members meet for professional presentations, fly-tying and fly-casting sessions on the third Thursday of each month, except December, at Walter Fuller Recreation Center in St. Petersburg. The clubs hold a fly-fishing and picnic outing on Saturdays following each meeting.

For more information, visit the Suncoast Fly Fishers' website at www.suncoastflyfishers.com, the International Federation of Fly Fishers' website at www.fedflyfishers.org or the Florida Gulf Coast Center for Fishing and Interactive Museum at www.centerforfishing.org.



Photo courtesy of SUNCOAST FLY FISHERS
Phil Greenlee, president of the International Federation of Fly Fishers, left, shakes hands with Tom Gadacz, Suncoast Fly Fishers president, in front of the display celebrating saltwater fly-fishing at the Florida Gulf Coast Center for Fishing and Interactive Museum in Largo March 23.

This week: Go early and call it early

Last week's big cool down dropped our water temperature into the upper 50s, and shut down the fishing for a few days. Warm conditions over the past week have definitely helped to get us back on track. With water temperatures now on the rise we should start to see our spring fishing turn on as we head into the next new moon phase.

With water temperatures just under 70 degrees the baitfish are beginning to show up in our near shore waters. Along with the bait come the schools of mackerel and hopefully soon some kingfish. Mackerel have been steady catches at the Skyway pier for a couple of weeks now and the bite is definitely improving. Along our beaches pelicans and terns can be seen diving just offshore. Small schools of mackerel are thrashing through the bait pods as well. Casting Gotcha plugs or trolling small silver spoons will produce good numbers of macks right now.

Inshore fishing was a bit difficult this past week and definitely over the weekend. A lot of boats on the water mean rough conditions in the afternoon. My advice is to go early and call it a day early. The fishing was off at least for me this past week. I'm choosing to blame it on the full moon; only time will tell if that's the case. The bite is sure to rebound as we approach the new moon and rising water temperatures. Clacker floats and D.O.A. shrimp combinations will produce numbers of fish by drifting the 3- or 4-foot grass flats, while free-lining small grass grunts or pilchards can produce larger trout along the shallow drop offs were the water goes from about 1 foot to 2 or 3 foot pretty quickly.

Until next week – get bent.



Fish Tales
Capt. Tyson Wellerstein

Tyson Wellerstein 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 editorial@TBNweekly.com or mail it to Tampa Bay Newspapers, 9911 Seminole Blvd., Seminole, FL 33772.

Tournament to support marine education

LARGO – The Make A Difference Fishing Tournament will be Saturday, April 6, 8 a.m. to noon, at Largo Central Park Nature Preserve, 150 Highland Ave. SE.

Register by 9:30 a.m. to be eligible for the prize drawing following the tournament. The tournament supports the nonprofit organization that helps disabled children through fishing tournaments and other programs that facilitate their involvement in marine education and recreation.

For more information, call 587-6740, ext. 5014 or visit makeadifferencefishing.org.



Summer Camp



Summer Camp
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Ends Friday, August 16

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Registration Begins April 1st

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Diversions

Things to do around Pinellas County

- Classifieds
- Events
- Movies

Leader
Section B
April 4, 2013

Visit www.TBNweekly.com



Top diversions

• **"Is He Dead?"**, by Mark Twain and David Ives, April 4-14, at Francis Wilson Playhouse, 302 Seminole St., Clearwater. Call 446-1360 or visit www.franciswilsonplayhouse.org. Performances are generally Thursday through Saturday, 8 p.m. Matinees are Saturday and Sunday, 2 p.m. Tickets for nonmusicals are \$21 for adults, \$11 for students. Tickets for musicals are \$26 for adults, \$13 for students.

• **"Over the River and Through the Woods,"** by Joe DiPietro, presented by the Players of Safety Harbor; April 5-7, at the Safety Harbor Library, 101 Second St. N., Safety Harbor. Performances will be Friday and Saturday, 8 p.m. Matinees will be Saturday and Sunday, 2 p.m. Doors will open 30 minutes prior to the show. A donation of \$10 is appreciated. For information, visit www.playersofsafetyharbor.weebly.com.

• **Military Tattoo**, Saturday, April 6, 7 p.m., at Dunedin High School, 1651 Pinehurst Road, Dunedin. The Dunedin Military Tattoo is an exhibition of marching bands, bagpipe bands, brass bands, highland dancers and more. The tradition traces its roots to military drum performances dating back to the 17th century when the British army was fighting in the Low Countries of Belgium and The Netherlands. Tickets are \$12 in advance and \$15 at the gate. Visit www.dunedinhighlandgames.com.

• **Louie Anderson**, Sunday, April 7, 2 p.m., at Ruth Eckerd Hall, 1111 McMullen Booth Road, Clearwater. Tickets are \$25 and \$35. Call 791-7400 or visit www.rutheckerdhall.com. Part of the 2012-13 Adults at Leisure Series, Anderson returns to Clearwater after his tremendous performance at The Capitol Theatre. One of the most versatile and successful comedians working today, the actor/author/stand-up comic delivers his inimitable brand of family-friendly humor and warmth on the Ruth Eckerd Hall stage for the first time in 25 years.



Photo courtesy of LOUIE ANDERSON

Louie Anderson performs April 7 at Ruth Eckerd Hall.

Looking ahead

Largo

• **Dave Somerville and The Diamonds**, part of the Celebrity Showcase Series, Thursday, April 11, 1 to 3 p.m., in the Goodman Ballroom at the Largo Community Center, 400 Alt. Keene Road. Tickets are \$14 in advance and \$15 at the door. Limited reserved seats are available. Call 518-3131.

• **Suncoast Singers**, Saturday, April 27, at Minnreg Hall, 6430 126th Ave., Largo. Doors will open at 3:30 p.m. Tickets are \$16. Call 464-7468. The program, Classics to Country, will feature favorite classics and country music. This will be an uplifting concert with a combination of nostalgic classic golden oldies, country songs and specialty numbers from many composers.

See **LOOKING AHEAD**, page 2B

Crafts on Corey

St. Pete Beach Corey area welcomes spring with annual craft festival

By **LEE CLARK ZUMPE**

ST. PETE BEACH – The 10th annual St. Pete Beach Corey Area Craft Festival will run Saturday and Sunday, April 6-7, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., on Corey Avenue and Gulf Boulevard in downtown St. Pete Beach.

The festival will feature some of the finest crafters in the country displaying and selling a wide variety of unique and affordable crafts. The event also will include a book signing by children's book author Julie Woik.

The two-day event is free and open to the public.

Participating artists and crafters will display their finest work including their newest creations and will be on site for the duration of the event.

Woik – author and creator of the successful children's book se-

ries "The Life and Times of Lilly the Lash" – will be signing copies of her book. More than just storybooks, these beautifully illustrated works of art offer boys and girls ages infant through 10 an exciting adventure, hundreds of entertaining educational activities, and important life lessons to build strong self-esteem and good character.

Presented by American Craft Envoys, the annual festival is a juried outdoor craft showcase. ACE produces some of the nation's most exciting high-end juried craft shows in many of Florida's vibrant downtown areas and popular tourist destinations including the Lauderdale by the Sea Craft Festival in Fort Lauderdale; the Holiday Craft Festival on the Ocean in Jupiter/Juno

See **CRAFTS**, page 4B



Image courtesy of JULIE WOIK

Julie Woik's children's book series feature the character Lilly the Lash. Woik will participate in the craft festival.



Photo by HELAYNE STILLINGS/AMERICAN CRAFT ENDEAVORS
Skilled crafters and artisans will display their wares at the annual St. Pete Beach Corey Area Craft Festival, set for April 6-7.



Photo courtesy of AMERICAN CRAFT ENDEAVORS

Katherine Weisinger and Jaron Reeser use real flowers and leaves in their jewelry. Their creations will be on display and available for purchase at the festival.

Ruth Eckerd Hall to present rock musical 'Hair'

CLEARWATER – Considered by many the ultimate American rock musical, "Hair" comes to the Tampa Bay area April 4-6, at Ruth Eckerd Hall, 1111 McMullen Booth Road, Clearwater.

Performances will be Thursday through Saturday, 8 p.m. There will be one matinee on Saturday, at 2 p.m. Tickets start at \$50. Call 791-7400 or visit www.rutheckerdhall.com.

This exuberant 2009 Tony Award winner for Best Musical Revival focuses on a group of young Americans searching for peace and love in a turbulent time. "Hair" boasts an extraordinary cast and unforgettable songs, including "Aquarius," "Let the Sun Shine In," "Good

Morning, Starshine" and "Easy To Be Hard."

Based upon the original 1967 rock musical with a book and lyrics by James Rado and Gerome Ragni and music by Galt MacDermot, this award-winning revival features an extraordinary and multi-cultural cast singing songs that were products of the hippie counter-culture and sexual revolution of the 1960s. The musical's enduring relevance is undeniable, its energy unbridled and its truth is unwavering. The themes and struggles in "Hair," although from another era, seem vital and applicable to modern times.

This inspiring new production of "Hair" was the event of the season in New York City and

the darling of critics when it premiered in Central Park in 2007-08, becoming a smash hit. Subsequently it was moved, due to overwhelming hype and demand, to Broadway. That run was followed by national tours.

"Hair" has had and continues to have a profound impact on audiences. The engaging audience experience all builds up to the joyous post-show celebration when the audience is invited to dance in the aisles and on stage with the performers to the anthem "Let the Sun Shine In." This production of "Hair" is directed by Diane Paulus.

See **HAIR**, page 3B

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Opening this weekend

Hollywood conjures 'Evil Dead' remake; 'Jurassic Park' returns to the big screen in 3D

Compiled by LEE CLARK ZUMPE

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

'Evil Dead'

Genre: Horror
 Cast: Jane Levy, Shiloh Fernandez, Lou Taylor Pucci, Jessica Lucas and Elizabeth Blackmore
 Director: Fede Alvarez
 Rated: R
 In the much-anticipated remake of the 1981 cult-hit horror film, five 20-something friends become holed up in a remote cabin. r
 When the group discovers a "Book of the Dead," they unwittingly summon up dormant demons living in the nearby woods, which possess the youngsters in succession until only one is left intact to fight for survival.



Photo courtesy of MAGNOLIA PICTURES

Chris Nicola, the caving enthusiast who unearthed the story recounted in "No Place on Earth," descends into a cave in Georgia. "No Place on Earth" is a Magnolia Pictures release.

swer to all of their financial woes. "The Brass Teapot" is a magical dark comedy that reminds us to be careful what we wish for.

'The Company You Keep'

Genre: Drama
 Cast: Shia LaBeouf, Robert Redford, Julie Christie, Richard Jenkins, Susan Sarandon, Stephen Root, Sam Elliott, Brendan Gleeson, Terrence Howard, Anna Kendrick and Jackie Evancho
 Director: Robert Redford
 Rated: R
 Jim Grant (Robert Redford) is a public interest lawyer and single father raising his daughter in the tranquil suburbs of Albany, New York.
 Grant's world is turned upside down, when a brash young reporter named Ben Shepard (Shia LaBeouf) exposes his true identity as a former 1970s antiwar radical

fugitive wanted for murder. After living for more than 30 years underground, Grant must now go on the run. With the FBI in hot pursuit, he sets off on a cross-country journey to track down the one person that can clear his name.

Shepard knows the significance of the national news story he has exposed and, for a journalist, this is an opportunity of a lifetime. Hell-bent on making a name for himself, he is willing to stop at nothing to capitalize on it. He digs deep into Grant's past. Despite warnings from his editor and threats from the FBI, Shepard relentlessly tracks Grant across the country.

As Grant reopens old wounds and reconnects with former members of his antiwar group, the Weather Underground, Shepard realizes something about this man is just not adding up. With the FBI closing in, Shepard uncovers the shocking secrets Grant



Photo courtesy of MAGNOLIA PICTURES



Photo by DOANE GREGORY/SONY PICTURES CLASSICS

Above, Michael Angarano and Juno Temple star in "The Brass Teapot," a Magnolia Pictures release. At left, from left, Terrence Howard stars as FBI Agent Cornelius, Anna Kendrick as Diana and Shia LaBeouf as Ben Shepard in "The Company You Keep."

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

'The Brass Teapot'

Genre: Comedy and drama
 Cast: Juno Temple, Michael Angarano, Alexis Bledel, Billy Magnussen, Alia Shawkat, Bobby Moynihan, Stephen Park and Debra Monk
 Director: Ramaa Mosley
 Rated: R
 John and Alice live in small town America - 20s, married, very much in love, and broke.
 Once voted "most likely to succeed," Alice struggles to make ends meet while her friends enjoy the good life. Her husband John, neurotic and riddled with phobias, just wants to get the bills paid. But an accident leads them to a roadside antique shop where Alice is spontaneously drawn to a mysterious brass teapot. It isn't long before they realize that this is no ordinary teapot and that perhaps they have found the an-

has been keeping for the past three decades. As Grant and Shepard come face to face in the wilderness of the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, they each must come to terms with who they really are.

'No Place on Earth'

Genre: Documentary
 Cast: Chris Nicola, Saul Stermer, Sam Stermer, Sonia Dodyk and Sima Dodyk
 Director: Janet Tobias
 Rated: PG-13
 "No Place on Earth" brings to light the untold story of 38 Ukrainian Jews who survived World War II by living in caves for 18 months, the longest-recorded sustained underground survival.
 Built upon interviews with former cave inhabitants, as well as Chris Nicola, the caving enthusiast who unearthed the story, "No Place on Earth" is an extraordinary testament to ingenuity, willpower and endurance against all odds.

'Simon Killer'

Genre: Thriller
 Cast: Brady Corbet, Mati Diop, Michael Abiteboul, Constance Rousseau, Lila Salet and Solo
 Director: Antonio Campos
 Not rated
 The follow-up to Antonio Campos' critically acclaimed "After-

school," "Simon Killer" is an erotic and psychological portrait of Simon (Brady Corbet), a well-educated, handsome and seemingly sympathetic college graduate with just a hint of something off putting enough to ignite a sense of concern.

Recently heartbroken, Simon travels to Paris to clear his head. After several days of wandering aimlessly, Simon finds himself drawn into a sex parlor and has a sexual encounter with an exotic prostitute, Victoria (Mati Diop). The chemistry builds between the two until they find themselves in a serious relationship, one that leads to blackmail, betrayal and the ultimate revelation of Simon's true nature.

'Trance'

Genre: Thriller
 Cast: James McAvoy, Vincent Cassel and Rosario Dawson
 Director: Danny Boyle
 Rated: R
 A fine art auctioneer mixed up with an underworld gang joins forces with a charismatic hypnotherapist to recover a lost painting. As boundaries between desire, reality and hypnotic suggestion begin to blur the stakes rise faster and more dangerously than any of the players could have anticipated.

For more movie news, visit www.tbnweekly.com. Click on the "Movie News & Reviews" link on the left-side menu.

HAIR, from page 1B

Paulus is artistic director of the American Repertory Theater at Harvard University. Her Broadway credentials include the A.R.T. production of "The Gershwins' Porgy and Bess," Cirque du Soleil's touring show "Amaluna," A.R.T. "Prometheus Bound," "Death and The Powers: The Robots' Opera," and "Kiss Me, Kate." She is the recipient of the 2012 Founders Award for Excellence in Directing from the Drama League.

Karole Armitage serves as choreographer. Armitage has choreographed for major dance companies throughout Europe and the United States and has directed operas for

leading European houses. Known for her collaborations with important contemporary artists - such as Jeff Koons and Brice Marden - as well as pop icons -such as Madonna and Michael Jackson - Armitage made her Broadway debut in 2008 with "Passing Strange" and recently choreographed "Amaluna" for Cirque du Soleil.

"Hair" is intended for mature audiences.

REH to present 'West Side Story'

Ruth Eckerd Hall's 2012-13 Broadway season will conclude with "West Side Story," set to run June 21-23. Performances will be Fri-

day and Saturday, 8 p.m.; and Sunday, 7 p.m. Matinees will be Saturday and Sunday, 2 p.m. Tickets start at \$50.

"West Side Story" forever changed musical theater and remains as powerful, poignant and timely as ever. From the first note to the last breath, this Tony Award-winning Best Musical soars as one of the greatest love stories of all time. The Bernstein and Sondheim score is one of Broadway's finest, featuring such classics as "Something's Coming," "Tonight," "America," "I Feel Pretty" and "Somewhere."

For information on the 2012-13 Broadway series at Ruth Eckerd Hall, call 791-7400 or visit www.rutheckerdhal.com.

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Clearwater High presents Leading Ladies to raise funds for the arts

By SUZETTE PORTER

CLEARWATER – Clearwater High School Theater Arts presents Leading Ladies, Thursday through Saturday, April 4 to 6, 7 p.m., in the auditorium, 540 S. Hercules Ave.

The production raises funds for the theater arts program and the Drama Club.

Leading Ladies is a comedy written by playwright Ken Ludwig, who also penned "Lend Me a Tenor" and "Moon Over Buffalo."

The play centers on two English Shakespearean actors, Jack and Leo, who find themselves so down on their luck that they are performing "Scenes from Shakespeare" on the Moose Lodge circuit in the Amish country of Pennsylvania, according to a play synopsis on Ludwig's website. When Jack and Leo hear that an old lady in York, Pa., is about to die and leave her fortune to her two long lost English nephews, they resolve to pass themselves off as her beloved relatives and get the cash. The trouble is, when they get to York, they find out that the relatives aren't nephews, but nieces.

Romantic entanglements abound, especially when Leo falls head-over-peticoat in love with the old lady's vivacious niece, Meg, who's engaged to the local minister. Meg knows that there's a wide world out there, but it's not until she meets "Maxine and Stephanie" that she finally gets a taste of it.

Leading Ladies, directed by Ludwig, premiered at the Alley Theatre in October 2004.

Student stars and support team

Clearwater High's show stars students Emma Barrow, Marge Bello, David DeSantis, Krenar Ndreu, Charlie Rowell, Judy Silverman and Josh Whedon.

Teacher Joy Roche is director and producer; Kelsey Timpone is stage manager; Austin Zimmerman is technical director, and Niko Lyons is in charge of lighting.

Costume designer Cheryl Abernathy is assisted by a group of "Drama-Mama's," who along with the students sew all the costumes, according to parent Jodi Silverman. The students under the direction of "Super-Dads" Jon Silverman, Ryan Thompson and Doug Barrow, make all the backdrops, props and other set needs.

About 85 students are members of Clearwater High's Drama Club and all are given the ability to participate, according to publicity about the show sent out by Silverman. Leading Ladies is the last student production for the year.

The group put on "Legally Blonde" in November 2012. Out of the 19 high schools in Pinellas County, CHS was selected to perform their student-directed One-Act play at the State competition.

Tickets sales keep arts alive

Tickets are \$10 each and available at the door beginning at 7 p.m. Concessions are available before the performance and during intermission. Soft drinks and candy, along with freshly popped Orville's Best Popcorn, are available for \$1 each.

CRAFTS, from page 1B

Beach; and the Siesta Fiesta Craft Festival in Sarasota. The group's founders personally select unique, culture-rich cities for their show locations providing a complete outdoor experience unmatched by other festivals. All crafters are hand-selected from hundreds of applicants in order to ensure a superior event featuring diverse art media and the highest quality of original handmade crafts.

In addition to original crafts handmade in America, the festival boasts 150 crafters from 30 different states, unique and affordable gift items and prices set to suit all budgets – ranging from as little as \$3 to \$3,000.

Crafts come in a vast array of artistic media, such as folk art, pottery, handmade jewelry, paintings, personalized gifts, handmade clothing, 3-D acrylic paintings, basket weaving, bead-

ed utensils, candles, ceramics, cork assemblage, fabric design, fiber quilts, fused wax and glass, hair accessories, handmade cards, leather, mosaic/wood, painted wood, plaster craft and stained glass. There also will be a green market featuring exotic plants, gourmet dips and spices.

The festival serves to support the arts, promote the Corey Avenue Merchants Association and boost the local economy. A portion of the proceeds will directly benefit the St. Pete Beach Corey Area Merchants.

Participating crafters

Following is a list of crafters expected to participate in this year's festival:

- Chris and Nancy Adamo – Jewelry
- Steve Archbold – Wood names
- Barbara Bailey – Fan blade covers
- Gissell and William Barbour – Jewelry, ear cuffs

- Ronald Bogner – Pet treats
- Mickey D. and Mike Bradham – Plastercraft
- John and Deb Branning – Clothing
- Darlene Brickett – Jewelry
- Janet Campagna – Kids' clothing
- Kathy Carnevale – Jewelry
- Walter Catts – Furniture
- Alicia Davis – Handbags
- Wayne Dubois – Jewelry
- Sundry Ferris – Jewelry and glass crystals
- Jean Raphael Fischer – Mixed media
- Segundo Gomez – Beaded jewelry
- Lori Green – Jewelry
- Lia Harmon – Jewelry
- Samuel Harrison – Painting
- Mark and Yvonne Hollingworth – Victorian jewelry
- Dan Johnson – Painting
- Sidney and Lee Klein – Coin jewelry
- Denny Knight and Sylvia Corban – Fabric
- Gilbert Lage – Jewelry
- Debra Larson – Beads and crystal jewelry
- Cynthia Linden – Mixed media
- Cecilia Lutke – Fiber
- Zack Marksz – Jewelry
- Elainea Murphy – Fused wax and glass
- Linda and Phil Olson – Dolls with clothing
- Cindy Pinyard – Ladies' accessories, scarves and slides
- Jaron Reeser – Shells, jewelry
- William Rubar – Ceramics
- Mazhar and Sabera Sardharwalla – Gold jewelry
- Robin Short – Fiber quilts
- Michelle Siggins – Jewelry
- Denise Smith – Jewelry
- Gary and Diana Snee – Dried florals
- Jeanne Storeim – Beaded utensils
- James and Avra Thomas – Jewelry
- Lora and Bob Thomas – Pottery
- Kathy Toledo – Quilts and

- bags
- John Truffa – Wood
- Miriam Valido – Green market, gourmet food
- Patti Van Tonder – Hair accessories
- Patricia Van Voorhis and Kathy Marks – Beaded utensils
- Marina Vega – Jewelry
- Nancy Walsh – Jewelry
- Jean Weidinger – Jewelry
- Katherine Weisinger – Jewelry with flowers
- Tracy White – Dog crafts
- Julie Woik – Author

Among the crafters scheduled to participate in this year's festival are Zack Marksz and Katherine Weisinger.

Marksz, a fine jewelry crafter, maintains sustainable practices by getting his silver from Hoover and Strong, which provides 100 percent recycled material. Zack's father has been a full-time professional silversmith and jewelry artisan since the late 1960s and he has been apprenticing under him for more than 10 years. He also has gleaned much of his skills from his two uncles and aunt who are also silversmiths and jewelry artisans that apprenticed under his father.

Weisinger uses real flowers and leaves in her jewelry. They are protected from fading by enriching the original color. Each petal and leaf is delicately hand-painted using lacquer, 24-karat gold and sterling silver for results that are simply stunning.

Like many of Florida's seasonal residents, Chris Adamo splits his time between his home in Cape Cod and his winter escape in Sarasota. Together with his wife Nancy, Chris creates and sells unique handcrafted jewelry. But the Adamos idea of running a business didn't include the "brick and mortar" model. Instead, they opted to sell their creations online and at local craft and artisan fairs. The result is inspired, distinctive jewelry crafted from the finest gemstones, crystals and silver.

All proceeds go toward student scholarships. Merit-based and need-based scholarships are awarded annually, which ensures that every student has the opportunity to participate in drama events.

"For less than the cost of an average movie ticket, and for far less than you'd spend on movie theater concessions, you get an evening of great entertainment and the opportunity to help aspiring young performers," Silverman writes in information about the show.

She also explains that students, parents and volunteers produce the show, and expenses must be paid from ticket sales.

"Only two things are provided by the school: the teacher and the auditorium – that's it," Silverman said. "All funding for royalties, wood, paint, hardware, costumes, wigs, make-up, lighting, the printing of programs and flyers, basically everything else comes from ticket sales, a few generous sponsors, and year-round fundraising events run by parents and students together."

The CHS Drama Booster Club, aka Masque & Gavel Inc., is 100 percent nonprofit and 100 percent volunteer operated. Every penny raised goes to help students.

"In fact, not once has a student been unable to participate, or even compete at State (competition), as CHS Drama is doing next week, due to a lack of funds," according to Silverman. "The show must go on! And it does, every year, through countless hours of hard work and dedication from the teacher, Mrs. Joy Roche, the Drama students, and a large group of parents, relatives, and friends."

For more information, call 298-1620.

sharing, honesty and respect. Each book also has free teacher lesson plans, therapy lesson plans and crafting activities. There is a free motivational board game available for download on the website. There are hidden items in each book for children to find.

A portion of the proceeds from book sales benefits a designated cause such as research into finding cures for breast cancer, lung cancer, cystic fibrosis and autism.

According to Woik, Advanced Productions and Entertainment, a company who produces and directs plays for Nickelodeon, is in the process of creating an interactive musical based on the first book in the series. The play will be called "Lilly the Lash: The Garden Gathering."

Simultaneously, Woik reports a retired 35-year executive of Paramount Pictures is working with animators in Hollywood to develop a "Lilly the Lash" educational program.

Upcoming shows

American Craft Endeavors also will be hosting the following upcoming festivals on Florida's west coast:

- 35th annual Siesta Fiesta, April 13-14, in Sarasota
 - 10th annual Downtown Sarasota Craft Fair, May 18-19, in Sarasota
 - 20th annual St. Pete Beach Corey Area Art & Craft Festival, June 1-2, in St. Pete Beach
 - 12th annual St. Armands Circle Craft Festival, June 8-9, in Sarasota
 - 21st annual Downtown Venice Craft Festival, June 15-16, in Venice
 - 11th annual Downtown Dunedin Craft Festival, June 22-23, in Dunedin
 - The Madeira Beach Craft Festival, July 6-7, in Madeira Beach
- For information, visit www.artfestival.com.

Author signing

Julie Woik also will participate in this year's festival.

Woik is the author and creator of the successful children's book series "The Life and Times of Lilly the Lash."

Designed for children age 10 and younger, the storybooks feature beautiful illustrations, entertaining educational activities and life lessons aimed at establishing strong self-esteem and building good character.

To date, Woik has completed and published the first three books in a series that will eventually boast 15 titles. The fourth book has been written and is currently in the process of being illustrated. According to Woik's website, each book teaches an important lesson, such as self-worth,

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2) End Unit, Carport, \$268
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30. Villa Sales

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new A/C, patio, boat dock. \$275K.
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1BR/1BA, \$37,500. Updated &
Remodeled, Pool, \$155/Mo. Maint.
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(727)278-1356.

35. Mobile Home Sales

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Village, 55+.** 1BR. Low lot fee,
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Home Park. Priced to sell!! All
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Pet Friendly!
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90. Income Property

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Quality Furnishings included.
Beautiful Private Courtyard. West
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135. Rentals

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1,010 Sq.Ft., 2nd Floor, Very
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Mall. 50+, Furnished. \$800/mo.
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1 Bedroom \$700/Month.
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Beautiful 2BR/2BA, 2nd Floor
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Remodeled Bathrooms. New
Porcelain Tile & Carpet. Covered
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Fully Furnished.
\$600/Month-Yearly.
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painted/carp. Small pet OK
w/deposit. Non-Smoker. \$875
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Newly Remodeled. Modern
Condo. 2BR/2BA, 1,200SF, 1st
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Resort Style Living. \$925/Month.
Available 5/1/13. (727)385-7718.

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Ground Floor, Corner Unit, W/D,
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Security. (727)798-2438.

170. Furn. Apartments

MADEIRA BEACH: 1BRs
& Efficiencys. Fully Equipped.
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175. Unfurn. Apartments

55+ COMMUNITY Now Accepting
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Aceptando Aplicaciones. Aparta-
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mitorio \$460. 2 dormitorios \$500.
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Apartments with no community
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Overlooking Non-smoking Center
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Pet Friendly, Sparkling pool.
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LARGO: VERY CLOSE TO
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PINELLAS VILLAGE
NOW ACCEPTING FAMILIES
1ST MONTH FREE!!
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Oaks Of Palm Harbor, 2351 Alder-
man Road, Palm Harbor, FL
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2013, until further notice. Heritage
Oaks of Palm Harbor will not be
taking additional applications due
to a current excessive waiting list.

S.W. LARGO: LG. 1BR/1BA,
\$500/Month. Quiet. Laundry on
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Last Month FREE!

185. Beach Rentals

FURNISHED/ UNFURNISHED
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Weekly/ Monthly/ Annual
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North Redington Beach.
Furnished. Patio with direct
Gulf view. \$875/Monthly. Includes
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sites.google.com/site/gulfshores-
partners/home

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Spacious, Clean 1, 2 & 3 bdrm Condos
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Included. Community Pool. No
Pets. Background Check.
\$800/Mo. +Security. Florida's Best
Accommodations. (727)517-9404.

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185. Beach Rentals

MADEIRA BEACH
1BR/1BA/1CG Cottage,
Immaculate, W/D Hook-up.
Rent-to-own option. 13012 Boca
Ciega Ave. Only \$750/Month.
Includes Some Utilities.
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190. Waterfront Rentals

**REDINGTON BEACH GULF
Front, Tides Beach Club.**
3BR/2BA, 4th Floor.
Completely furnished,
2 parking spaces, W/D,
cable, water. Available
May 1. \$3,200/month. One
year lease. (813)230-5885

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Condominium Residence With
Commanding Waterviews From
Every Room. Large, 2,172SF,
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Condo, Furnished/ Unfurnished,
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Fantastic Water Views, One
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195. Seasonal Rentals

SAND KEY, CLEARWATER BCH
Furnished 2BR/2BA Condos
Available 1-12 Months.
Florida Dreams RE Sales &
Rentals, Inc. (727)595-5774.

200. Vacation Rentals

**CLEARWATER BEACH/
BELLEAIR BEACH**
2700 Gulf Blvd. Gulf Front
1BR/1BA, 2nd Floor, Corner,
Overlooks Pool. Beautifully Fur-
nished, King & Pull Out Couch.
Weekly/ Monthly Flat Rate,
\$700/ \$2,500. After 4/7/13. Call
Mark, (727)449-9292 (Office).

N.C. WAYNESVILLE
Maggie Area, At Lake Junaluska.
2BR/2BA, Cabin/ Home.
Clean And Comfy. \$550/Weekly.
(727)398-2199.

210. M.H. Rentals

TEAKWOOD VILLAGE 55+
Available April 15th, 2013. Fur-
nished Doublewide, 2BR/1.5BA,
W/D, Lanai & Carport. Call For
Details (727)871-0075 or Fax
(727)532-9145

215. Efficiency Rentals

LARGO, MINUTES TO BEACH
Fully Furnished. Clean & Private.
Cable, Utilities Included.
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LARGO: SMALL Efficiency,
Clean, Furnished, Private Patio.
All Utilities w/Digital Cable,
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security. (727)584-6161.

485. Help Wanted

GROUP HOME STAFF NEEDED! Must Have High School Diploma or GED. Driver's License with Good Driving Record & Reliable Transportation. Must Be Dependable and A Team Player with 2 Years Exp. Working with Developmentally Disabled Population. Shifts Available; Week Days, Weekends & Over Nights. (727)520-3682.

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PART TIME, RETAIL SALES Experience. Nonsmoking Environment, Flexible Hours Including Weekends. CUPS Store, John's Pass Village and Shoppes on Sand Key. (727)595-0003.

485. Help Wanted

485. Help Wanted

RESIDENT AIDES. Pinecrest Place, a premier retirement community, is seeking aides to provide daily care to our AL & Memory Care residents. We are looking for enthusiastic, energetic and caring people to become a part of our team. Part-time, various shifts. Must be available to work weekends and holidays. Candidates can apply in person at 1150 8th Ave. SW, Largo, or fax resume to M. Kristall at (727)581-8409. EOE, DFWP.

ST. PETERSBURG CLEANING Company hiring part-time maids. Professional background cleaning experience required. Must have reliable vehicle. Background check. Prefer nonsmoker. (727)526-7656.

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A message from Tampa Bay Newspapers and the FTC.

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397-5563

485. Help Wanted

505. Part-time Help

LIBRARY ASSISTANT I: Perform duties in the Circulation section at the Seminole Community Library, 20 hrs/ week including some evenings/ weekends. Salary: \$10.42 to \$15.11/hr. Details, application at myseminole.com, or at City Hall, 9199- 113th Street N., Seminole, 33772. DFWP, EOE, VP. Deadline: 4/11/13.

515. Hospitality Help

HOUSEKEEPERS, SERVER, SERVER ASSISTANT Doubletree Beach Resort/ Restaurant. Apply At: 17120 Gulf Blvd. North Redington Beach (727)393-2813.

525. Medical Help

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CNAs & HHAs NEEDED. All days and hours. Live-in and Weekend availability a PLUS! Call Griswold Home Care. (727)547-7000.

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(727) 397-4600

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Flexible schedule
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C.N.A.s & H.H.A.s

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* Madeira Bch. - Indian Rks. Bch.
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600. Merchandise

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610. Computer Equipment

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640. Furniture

A BRAND NEW Queen Mattress, \$79. New In Plastic. Must Sell! Can Deliver. (727)667-8288.

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SIMMONS BEAUTYREST, king sized bed w/box springs. Like brand new, excellent condition. \$275 OBO. Tom.(727)587-7794

655. Musical Instruments

ORGAN, BALDWIN Fun Machine Complete w/buttons for instrumental rhythms, drums, clarinet, etc. \$250. (727)278-8585.

735. Office Equipment

COMPUTER EQUIPMENT FOR SALE! 4tray HP Laser Jet Printer P3015 \$400, Canon Image Class MF6540 Copier \$250, HP 640 Fax Series \$20, Oki Microline 320 9 Pin Printer w/ ribbons & labels \$20. More Available. **Dental Equipment Available!** Call (727)391-0273 or (727)366-0855 No Answer, Leave Message

HOME/OFFICE FURNITURE FOR SALE! Office Chair w/ arms/neck rest \$20, L-Shaped Wood Desk \$300, Computer Cabinet/Desk Combo \$100 and Matching Cabinet holds TV, 3 drawers. Lots of Storage Space \$80. More Office Equipment and Furniture Available. Call (727)391-0273 or (727)366-0855 No Answer, Leave Message

740. Tools & Machines

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830. Van & SUV Sales

DODGE 1999 GRAND CARAVAN Wheelchair Van, 10" Lowered Floor, Wheelchair Ramp. Call (727)644-6101.

840. Motorcycles-Scooters

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885. Autos Wanted

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Merritt, Dinnerstein to perform as part of Club Jaeb series

TAMPA – As part of the 2012-13 Club Jaeb series, Tift Merritt and Simone Dinnerstein will perform Saturday, April 6, 7:30 p.m., in Ferguson Hall, at the David A Straz Jr. Center, 1010 N. W.C. MacInnes Place, Tampa.

Tickets start at \$28.50. Call 813-229-7827 or visit www.strazcenter.org.

Pianist Simone Dinnerstein and singer-songwriter Tift Merritt joined forces to record the recently released CD "Night," a unique collaboration uniting folk, rock and classical worlds and exploring common terrain while uncovering new musical landscapes.

Dinnerstein – a Juilliard-trained classical pianist from Brooklyn – and Merritt – a singer-songwriter from North Carolina whose father taught her to play by ear – could not come from more different musical backgrounds. Still, when the two met they immediately realized that their passion for music was kindred, if not the same. While it may seem an odd pairing at first, this Grammy Award-nominated alt-country darling and a pianist known for her interpretations of Bach, Beethoven and Schubert found common musical ground.

Merritt has always resisted easy classifications, as comfortable in Nashville's Ryman Auditorium as in Paris, where she lived for a while. According to her publicist Sacks and Co., she currently lives in New York City with her husband and longtime collaborator Zeke Hutchins. She released her debut album, "Bramble Rose," in 2002 and she has since released three full-length albums and two live records. Merritt has toured throughout the United States and Europe, performing with artists including Iron & Wine, Elvis Costello and Emmylou Harris.

Merritt's 2004 release "Tambourine" was nominated for a Grammy Award for Best Country Album as well as three Americana Music Awards.

Dinnerstein initially gained an international following based upon



Photo courtesy of THE STRAZ CENTER
Simone Dinnerstein, left, and Tift Merritt perform April 6 at Tampa's Straz Center.

the remarkable success of her recording of Bach's Goldberg Variations. The New York based pianist raised the funds to record the CD which was released in 2007 on Telarc. It ranked No. 1 on the U.S. Billboard Classical Chart in its first week of sales and was named to many Best

of 2007 lists including those of The New York Times, The Los Angeles Times and The New Yorker.

According to Christina Jensen PR, Dinnerstein has released three solo efforts since then, including "The Berlin Concert" (Telarc), "Bach: A Strange Beauty" (Sony) and "Something Almost Being Said" (Sony). Like her debut, these releases also have topped the classical charts, with "Bach: A Strange Beauty" making the Billboard Top 200, which compiles the entire music industry's sales of albums in all genres. Dinnerstein was the bestselling instrumentalist of 2011 on the U.S. Billboard Classical Chart and was included in NPR's 2011 100 Favorite Songs from all genres.

Dinnerstein is a graduate of The Juilliard School where she was a student of Peter Serkin. She was a winner of the Astral Artist National Auditions, and has received the National Museum of Women in the Arts Award and the Classical Recording Foundation Award. She also studied with Solomon Mikowsky at the Manhattan School of Music and in London with Maria Curcio. She lives in Brooklyn with her husband and son.

The two artists combine their talents on "Night." "Night" presents a distinctive musical partnership uniting diverse genres such as classical, folk, and rock. A pioneering effort, their artistic exploration has led to a new melodic milieu. "Night" features original songs by Brad Mehldau and Patty Griffin, Merritt's own songs, selections by Bach and Schubert, and The Cohen Variations by Daniel Felsenfeld, based on Leonard Cohen's "Suzanne."

Now celebrating its eighth season, Club Jaeb features folk, Americana, alternative, country and other "handpicked music that matters," according to the Straz Center website. The Club Jaeb Series is presented by Merchants Association of Florida Inc.

Annual festival showcases crawdads, zydeco and Cajun cuisine

By LEE CLARK ZUMPE

PINELLAS PARK – Crawfish, crawdads, crayfish – no matter what they're called, the Cajun comfort food is in season and a celebration is required.

The 16th annual Crawfish Festival will run Friday through Sunday, April 5-7, at Cajun Café on the Bayou, 8101 Park Blvd., Pinellas Park.

Admission at the gate for adults is \$15 on Friday, \$20 on Saturday and \$20 on Sunday. Admission at the gate for children ages 3 to 14 is \$3 each day. Children 2 and younger will be admitted for free with a paying adult. Advance tickets are \$10 for Friday, \$20 for Saturday and \$20 for Sunday. A three-day pass also will be available for \$25 in advance or \$30 at the gate. For advance tickets, visit Etix.com.

As usual, the highlight of the festival will be those tasty freshwater crustaceans that look like miniature lobsters. The crawfish will be served up in authentic Cajun and Louisiana style. When in season, Cajun Café offers boiled crawfish as a dine-in special, available only as long as the supply lasts. The generous helping is served piping hot with corn on the cob, potatoes, onions and bay leaves.

Since it doesn't seem right to partake

in this uniquely Cajun experience without musical accompaniment, organizers also have lined up fitting entertainment in the form of zydeco music and dancing. The festival also will feature plenty of authentic Cajun food, fine craft ales and an art exhibit.

Cajun comfort food

Crawfish are plentiful in the swamps and marshes of south Louisiana and are considered a Cajun comfort food.

According to the website of the Louisiana Crawfish Promotion and Research Board, in addition to wild-caught crawfish – particularly from the Atchafalaya Basin – there are thousands of acres of crawfish ponds managed by farmers in the lower Gulf Coast regions that provide a consistent and readily available supply of fresh crawfish. Most crawfish are harvested between December and June, but March, April and May are the peak months when Louisiana supplies are greatest and quality is best.

The board reports that the combined annual yield ranges from 120 million to 150 million pounds of crawfish, with the total economic contribution to the Louisiana economy exceeding \$300 million annually. It is estimated that more

than 7,000 people depend directly or indirectly on the crawfish industry in Louisiana.

Crawfish are an excellent source of high-quality protein. They are low in calories, fat and saturated fat. According to the Louisiana Crawfish Promotion and Research Board, crawfish also are a good source of vitamin B12, niacin, iron, copper and selenium.

Zydeco band lineup

Zydeco evolved in the bayou country of Louisiana in the 19th century, derived from Creole musical traditions. It combines tunes of French origin with elements of Caribbean music, blues and roots music. Some of today's zydeco artists embrace modern genre components, as well, such as soul, reggae, hip-hop and ska.

Scheduled to perform at this year's Crawfish Festival are Curley Taylor & Zydeco Trouble, John Wilson & the Zydeco Houserockers, J.B.'s ZydecoZoo and Ranglegrass.

This year's tentative festival schedule is as follows:

Friday, April 5
• Gates open – 5 p.m.

- Ranglegrass – 5 to 7 p.m.
- J.B.'s ZydecoZoo – 7 to 11 p.m.
- Saturday, April 6**
- Gates open – 1 p.m.
- Ranglegrass Band – 1 to 2:30 p.m.
- J.B.'s ZydecoZoo – 2:30 to 4 p.m.
- John Wilson & the Zydeco House Rockers – 4 to 7 p.m.
- Curley Taylor & Zydeco Trouble – 7 to 11 p.m.
- Sunday, April 7**
- Gates open – 1 p.m.
- John Wilson & the Zydeco House Rockers – 1 to 4 p.m.
- Curley Taylor & Zydeco Trouble – 4 to 8 p.m.

Exhibiting artist

Susie Gyarmathy will display some of her work at Cajun Café on the Bayou during the upcoming Crawfish Festival.

Gyarmathy was born and raised in Pinellas County and her paintings depict local wildlife and beach scenes – particularly those images she remembers from her childhood.

A mixed media artist, Gyarmathy is currently concentrating on acrylic painting. She has no formal art training, but she has always been involved in some sort of creative process.

"I began painting in 2010, with a mural on my grandbaby's playroom wall, followed by a canvas painting that my oldest daughter had requested," Gyarmathy says in her artist bio on her website. "Once I picked up the brush, I didn't want to put it down. In 2011, I participated in three small art festivals, one of which was a juried fine art festival."

For more information, visit www.sandytoeswarmheart.com.

Festival information

The festival grounds are located outside Cajun Café on the Bayou, 8101 Park Blvd., Pinellas Park.

Parking is free and parking attendants will direct attendee to a parking space. Cajun Café on the Bayou prohibits bringing the following items to festival grounds:

- Alcohol of any kind
 - Glass containers
 - Coolers (large or small)
 - Animals (service animals with documents will be allowed)
 - Knives or weapons of any kind
- Additionally, no beverages may be brought into or out of the festival gates.
- For more information, visit www.cajuncafeonthebayou.com.

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8PM to Close
Ladies Drink Free

Wednesday

6-10PM Bus Stop 2 Band
8PM to Close Dollar Drinks
Beer Pong Tournament

Thursday

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2014 Budget Community Forum is presented in partnership with Pinellas County government and the Seminole campus of St. Petersburg College.

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