

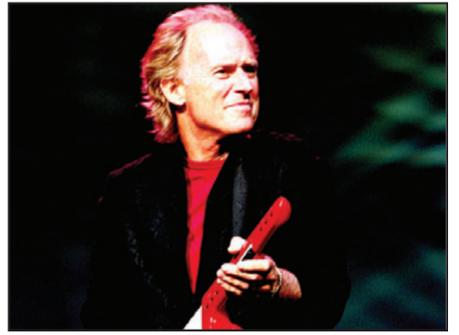
Tampa Bay Water loses appeal

Federal jury rules against utility in cracked reservoir case ... Page 11A.

LARGO LEADER

Synthpop pioneer Gary Wright to play Largo Cultural Center

Get your tickets to see 'Dream Weaver' rock musician perform this weekend ... Page 1B.



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October 3, 2013

LARGO



Get your genius on

The city of Largo's fifth annual Recycled Innovations Contest challenges "junk geniuses" to show off their repurposed rubbish to win prizes now through Thursday, Oct. 31.

Children of all ages are invited to participate in this online contest. ... Page 3A.

POLICE BEAT



Largo police gets re-accreditation

Chief Jeffrey Udestad accepted Largo Police Department's re-accreditation award with the prestigious Excelsior status during the Commission for Florida Law Enforcement Accreditation, or CFA, conference in Sarasota Sept. 25.

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BUSINESS

Businesses open

Surcee Market, PureLife Medispa and Sports Shack celebrate openings in Largo this month.

... Page 6A.

HEALTH

State insurance options plentiful

The Department of Health and Human Services announced that significant choice and lower than expected premiums are available in Florida's new Health Insurance Marketplace.

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VIEWPOINTS

Bob Driver

Serving up some restaurant tips. ... Page 10A.



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For News & Advertising

Final price for city Data Center set

Largo commissioners vote 4-2 to set cost of construction at \$2.2 million

By JULIANA A. TORRES

LARGO - Largo commissioners approved the final cost to build the hotly debated Data Center within Largo Central Park Oct. 1.

The commission authorized a guaranteed maximum price of construction at \$2,245,910 with a 4-2 vote. Billmore Construction Company will build the 3,000-square-foot building designed to house a main computer server room and data communications infrastructure. Con-

struction is projected to take 259 days, with the project substantially completed by June 18, 2014, per the amended agreement with the company.

Commissioners Curtis Holmes and Jamie Robinson voted against the measure. Mayor Pat Gerard, who has voted in favor of the construction in the past, was absent.

"I thought this was a bad idea when this was first proposed. My opinion has never changed," Holmes said.

He argued again that the servers and equipment to be housed in the Data Center could be moved to the second

floor of the city's Emergency Operations Center.

"We can do this for a fraction of \$3 million. EOC has virtually nothing in it now," he said.

He also said that given advances in technology, the information technology department likely wouldn't need a whole building to house its equipment.

"You give it a couple years, this is going to be obsolete," he said.

See LARGO, page 7A

Fairy tales in support of the arts



Radiance Med Spa employees Ali Iemolo, dressed as Snow White, and Chrissy Rosolowski, dressed as the Queen of Hearts, help Donna Gosine adjust the Mad Hatter's signature adornment during the "Once Upon a Time" gala fundraiser at the Largo Cultural Center Sept. 26. For more photos from the event, see page 6A.

Photo by JULIANA A. TORRES

Texting while driving banned

By SUZETTE PORTER

As of Oct. 1, it is illegal to text and drive on Florida's roadways.

Governor Rick Scott signed Senate Bill 52 into law May 28. It prohibits a person from manually typing or entering multiple letters, numbers, symbols or other characters into a wireless communications device. This includes text messaging, emailing and instant messaging through smart phones or other like devices.

Florida legislators enacted the new law in an attempt to improve roadway safety for motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians, according to the bill's text. The goal is to prevent crashes related to texting or emailing and driving.

The bill includes exemptions for law enforcement, fire and emergency personnel using a device in performance of their duty, and motorists reporting an emergency, criminal, or suspicious activity to law enforcement or emergency personnel.

Motorists are allowed to receive messages that are related to the operation or navigation of their vehicle; safety-related information, including emergency, traffic or weather alerts; data used primarily by the vehicle; or radio broadcasts. Motorists also can use wireless communications devices for navigation purposes. The devices can be used while a vehicle is off the roadway and not in motion.

"At any given daylight moment across America, approximately 660,000 drivers are using cell phones or manipulating electronic devices while driving, a number that has held steady since 2010," according to distraction.gov. "Engaging in visual-manual subtasks (such as reaching for a phone, dialing and texting) associated with the use of hand-held phones and other portable devices increased the risk of getting into a crash by three times.

"Sending or receiving a text

See TEXTING, page 4A

Firefighters build 'hose kids'

Mannequins from recycled hose help department raise, save money

By JULIANA A. TORRES

LARGO - Little Freddy D'Largo and his fellow fire hose mannequins are on a mission.

The kid-sized mannequins, designed and built by Largo firefighters, help teams in fire and rescue training, saving money on the purchase of expensive mannequins. The idea came to the A crew of Station 42, at Belcher Road and East Bay Drive, about a year ago, explained Lt. Warren Cargill.

"I mentioned it to the guys that we were just going to throw the hose away," Cargill said. "They asked, 'Do we have any purpose for this?'"

The hose, folded into a starfish shape and dressed with some clothes firefighters' children had outgrown, mimics the weight and shape of a real child enough to be used in various training scenarios.

"I try to implement them every time we train," Cargill said. "Whenever we're using victims, we use them."

Left out in the sun, the mannequins will absorb heat enough to show up on thermal

imaging cameras firefighters use to search out bodies in a smoky building.

"When you go into zero visibility, it's easier to find an adult than a child. Unfortunately, children tend to hide from us; they're afraid," Cargill said.

The "fire-hose kids" can stand in for purchased mannequins, saving the department thousands of dollars. The two mannequins firefighters built initially have held up in more extreme training. The firefighters at Station 42 serve as Largo's technical response team, helping in more difficult scenarios where the victim needs rescue from a trench, at a high angle, from swift water, a structural collapse or a confined space.

"They're great - we throw them under cars and buses," Cargill said. "They've been thrown in a trench, buried in dirt, thrown in the Intracoastal for search and rescue in the water. They've been around quite a bit."

Recently, the business owners of Largo's West Bay Redevelopment district got wind

See HOSE KIDS, page 6A



Photo courtesy of TANYA PISTILLO

Freddy D'Largo is one of the fire hose mannequins on sale in support of Largo Explorers and the Children's Burn Foundation.

Experts discuss flood insurance crisis during forum

By SUZETTE PORTER

SEMINOLE - It was a packed house at the Digitarium on St. Petersburg College's Seminole campus Sept. 25, as area experts talked about the effect of changing flood insurance rates.

Elected officials, insurance and real estate agents, as well as concerned citizens attended, all wanting more information on Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Act of 2012.

People who live along Pinellas County's beaches, lakefronts, bays and other waterways, as well as owners of proper-

ties in low-lying inland areas are facing a nemesis as scary as any natural disaster. Changes in federal law are forcing flood insurance policy rates to spiral out of control. In this time of recovery after a devastating recession, many are worried that this manmade disaster will create a backward slide for property values, the real estate market and tourism industry. Foreclosures could increase as people become unable to pay their mortgage due to high flood insurance rates.

Robin Sollie, president of the Tampa Bay Beaches Chamber of Commerce introduced the panel for the Sept. 25 pro-

gram, including event moderator Ron Holehouse with Holehouse Insurance in St. Petersburg. Panelists were Patty Templeton-Jones from Wright Flood of St. Petersburg, Tim Fellabaum from Banker's Insurance in St. Petersburg, Jacob Holehouse from Holehouse Insurance, Doug Swain from RE/MAX in St. Pete Beach and Pinellas County Property Appraiser Pam Dubov.

Fellabaum started the presentation with a brief explanation of Biggert-Waters, aka BW-12. He said passage of the act by Congress in 2012 was a "really important thing" because it continued

the National Flood Insurance Program for five more years. In previous years, there had been "starts and stops" in NFIP, which caused a problem for policy holders and those needing flood insurance to satisfy mortgage requirements on a new home.

BW-12 affects all the major components of the FEMA administered NFIP, including insurance rates, flood maps, grant programs and flood plain management plans.

The purpose was to make the program.

See CRISIS, page 4A

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Junk geniuses to compete for prizes, TV appearance

LARGO – The city of Largo's fifth annual Recycled Innovations Contest challenges "junk geniuses" to show off their repurposed rubbish to win prizes now through Thursday, Oct. 31.

Children of all ages are invited to participate in this online contest that challenges participants to construct useful items consisting of at least 75 percent otherwise discarded material. Innovators will be competing for prizes such as a solar-powered charger, a solar-powered backpack and a paper-recycling machine.

Largo Recycles' Facebook friends will determine the winners. Prizes will be awarded to the participants receiving the most online votes in multiple age categories.

For more information and to submit your entry form, visit LargoRecycles.com or call 586-7424. All entries must be received by Oct. 31.

Facebook voting runs from Nov. 1-12 at Facebook.com/LargoRecycles. On Friday, Nov. 15, America Recycles Day, winners will be invited to join the city of Largo's Recycling Coordinator on CBS's mid-day television program, Studio 10, to receive their prizes.



Photos courtesy of the CITY OF LARGO

Lexie Browette, 6, of Largo won the 2012 Tiny Innovator award in the city of Largo's Recycled Innovations Contest with a bracelet holder made from an old paper towel roll, painted butter container and an old gift bag, shown above left. Colleen Comey of Largo, the 2009 Ingenious Innovator winner, crafted a dry-erase marker holder out of baby formula containers mounted on a wall, shown above right.

City calendar

Largo Community Center

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

Center hosts Movies of the Silver Screen

LARGO – The Largo Community Center presents a free event, Movies of the Silver Screen on Thursday, Oct. 3, noon to 3 p.m.

Enjoy an afternoon of viewing a classic movie. Refreshments will be sold and information on the movie will be handed out.

This free event is sponsored by the Imperial Palms Apartments.

Enjoy jazz at the Community Center

LARGO – Sun Down Music Series presents "A Night of Jazz" Friday, Oct. 11, 6 to 8:30 p.m., at Largo Community Center.

Enjoy the soulful sounds of jazz as live music by Elisha "Atlas" Paris fills the back park of the Community Center. The cost is \$10 in advance or \$15 at the door.

Center hosts dinner and matinee

LARGO – Enjoy a dinner and a performance by the Deutschmeister Blas Band during the Sunday Matinee Music Program Dinner and Show on Sunday, Oct. 13, 2 to 4 p.m., at the Largo Community Center.

Tickets for dinner and the show are \$14 and must be purchased by Wednesday, Oct. 9, at the center. Tickets for just the show can be purchased at the door for \$13.

Highland Recreation Complex

Highland Recreation Complex is at 400 Highland Ave. Visit HighlandRecreation.com or call 518-3016.

Dogs invited to a day at the pool

LARGO – Soggy Doggy, the annual event opening the pool at the Highland Family Aquatic Center opens for dogs only, will be held Oct. 5, 11 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Owners are not permitted to swim during this time. Dogs shorter than 20 inches have the pool from the start until 1 p.m., and dogs taller than 21 inches take over from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m.

The cost is \$5 per dog, and owners enter free. Dress your dog for activities and contests in the theme of this year's event: Mardi gras.

The pool will be open to all dogs on Sunday, Oct. 6, noon to 3 p.m. Bring your receipt from Saturday for a \$3 discount. For more information, call 518-3016 or visit www.LargoPools.com

Complex launches Les Mills

LARGO – Join the staff at Highland Recreation Complex for new music and new Les Mills Body Pump moves, a free 90-minute class on Saturday, Oct. 5, 8 to 9:30 a.m.

There is a maximum of 40 attendees so arrive early to get fit.

City hosts outdoor movie

LARGO – Join the city of Largo for Movie in Highland Park on Saturday, Oct. 12, 5 p.m.

Bring your lawn chairs and blankets to enjoy a free movie on the Highland field. Concessions will be available for purchase.

Largo Central Park

The Largo Central Park is at 101 Central Park Drive. For information about events, call 587-6740, ext. 5014 or visit LargoEvents.com.

Halloween Spooktacular to come to Largo park

LARGO – The 19th annual Halloween Spooktacular in Largo Central Park will be held Oct. 26, noon to 6 p.m.

The free trick-or-treat trail will run until 4 p.m. Games, music, concessions and more will be offered throughout the event. Bounce houses, ropes course, a petting zoo and strolling entertainment are just a few of the activities that make this a great event for the whole family.

Wristbands go on sale beginning Oct. 1 and will cost \$5 in advance for recreation cardholders, \$6 without a card or \$7 on day of event. Wristbands are for children 14 and younger that want to participate in the activities outside of the trick or treat path. Parents do not need wristbands. Children must meet height requirements for bounce houses and rides.

Limited on-site parking will be available for \$5. Park for free and walk from Everest University and Largo Middle School.

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Panelists focus on Pinellas County's transportation plan

By SUZETTE PORTER

CLEARWATER – Four of Pinellas County's leading transportation experts fielded questions from the public during an hour-long eTownHall Tuesday, Sept. 24.

Subjects ran the gamut from traffic signals, sidewalks, trails, roadway expansions, bus service, light rail and taxes.

Sarah Ward, interim executive director of the county's Metropolitan Planning Organization, said plans were underway that consider all areas and needs countywide.

"We recognize that not one plan fits all," she said, which is the impetus behind including a full range of options for transportation throughout Pinellas.

Julie Ward-Bujalski, city of Dunedin Vice Mayor, MPO board member and PSTA board member, talked about the outreach being done as part of Greenlight Pinellas. She said a lot of public engagement had been occurring through meetings with local organizations.

Brad Miller, executive director for Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority, said he had talked to at least 100 different clubs, as had Ward-Bujalski and Jeff Danner, member of the St. Petersburg City Council, chair of the PSTA board, MPO member and the fourth panelist at the Sept. 24 eTownHall.

"People want a growing, thriving Pinellas County," Miller said. "They want what is best for the community."

He said people seem to understand the Greenlight plan and the need to invest in transit. Most of the questions he hears are about when the plan would be put into action, how it will be paid for with taxpayer money – ad valorem tax or sales tax.

Danner said people want more transportation options, instead of being forced to have to own cars, even multiple cars, to get to destinations.

Residents were able to ask the panel questions or make comments via the phone, a blog and Twitter. One person wanted to know if it was possible to take a bus to the airport on the weekend. The answer was no. However, Ward-Bujalski said part of the transportation plan included regional connections with Hillsborough, Pasco and Manatee counties and beyond.

Miller talked about the need to expand transportation services later at night. He said that currently most buses end service at 6 p.m.

"You can get to work or a baseball game (on a bus), but you can't get home," he said.

The Greenlight plans calls for most buses to run to 10 p.m. and some to continue service to 2 a.m.

"It (bus service) has to be there when people need it," he said.

He said the plan included "layers of solutions depending on needs." One example was to provide more express bus service to employment centers and parking lots where people could park and ride.

Ward talked about PSTA's new Flex Routes in north county that allowed buses to deviate off their regular routes to pick up people at their residence.

"There was a real need in that area," she said.

She said there is a great demand for service along the beaches and late night service to entertainment venues. She said people want a way to get to Pinellas County from the airport in Tampa without having to have a car.

Current plans call for a light rail system to run from Clearwater through the Gateway area to St. Petersburg and eventually on to Tampa. Ward-Bujalski said people in north county would be able to take limited stop buses to connect with rail lines.

Danner said the business community is interested in improving



Screenshot by SUZETTE PORTER

Pinellas County transportation experts answer questions during a Sept. 24 eTownHall meeting. From left are, Brad Miller, PSTA executive director; Sarah Ward, MPO interim executive director, moderator Len Ciecieszki, Julie Ward-Bujalski, city of Dunedin Vice Mayor, MPO board member and PSTA board member, and Jeff Danner, member of the St. Petersburg City Council, chair of the PSTA board, MPO member.

transportation to get their employees to work. Improved transportation would be an attraction for businesses to move to Pinellas, he said. He said transportation improvements were vital to keeping and attracting young people.

"Young people don't want to have to have a car," he said. "They want to get to entertainment venues and work without a car."

In many part of the United States, social networking revolves around transit hubs – another goal of the Greenlight plan.

"We want a network of options to get to all parts of the county," Danner said.

Len Ciecieszki, information specialist with Pinellas County Communications, moderated the MPO-sponsored event and asked the questions coming in, including one about the wisdom of spending money on light rail. Miller said the Greenlight plan is "all about creating a different type of transportation" system that could affect land use without changing the complexion of existing single-family neighborhoods.

He said over time, development around transit hubs and corridors resulted in areas where there was no need for parking lots and residents could get to where they wanted to go without having a car.

Danner said the cost to build a light rail system was estimated at between \$1.5 billion and \$1.7 billion, which would pay for the rail, improved buses service to get to the rail lines and operating costs for 30 years.

"This plan is not just about light rail," Ward-Bujalski added.

She said about 35 to 45 percent of planned spending was toward the rail with the rest going to improve bus service and other transportation options, such as trolley service, which has shown to be very successful on nights and weekends. The Greenlight plan would expand the trolley service to seven days a week, providing "a lot more access to the fun stuff you want to do."

Miller pointed out that parking was limited on the beaches and tourists were benefiting from the new PSTA beach trolley. Greenlight would expand that service as well.

"There's not a trolley everywhere in Pinellas County, but just because there's not doesn't mean you don't do it (have trolley service),"

Ward-Bujalski said of a question from someone who lives outside the area planned for light rail.

She said the beauty of the Greenlight plan is to have the "right transportation in the right areas and have it all connect."

"We're not repurposing anyone's community," Danner said. "Redevelopment will occur where it needs to in underutilized areas, near employment centers and activity centers."

He said the plan allows for about 80 percent of the county's population to have access to transportation services.

"We're looking at the uniqueness of a community and responding to it," he said.

Miller took on the question about funding. He explained that PSTA currently is funded by ad valorem taxes that bring in about 50 percent of the agency's \$60 million budget. The remainder of funding comes from fares and grants from state and federal entities. About 25 percent of costs are paid for by fares, which he said is more funding than most transit systems bring in from fares.

"No system in the world is funding entirely from fares," he said.

Pinellas County voters will have a referendum question on the November 2014 ballot asking them approve a switch from ad valorem taxes to a 1-cent sales tax to fund transportation. Miller said a penny sales tax would double the funding available from taxes, plus PSTA would still have funding from fares and grants, meaning money would be available to make big transportation improvements.

Ward answered the question about benefits to seniors by saying more money into the system would allow more services so county residents could "age in place and still get out into the community."

Miller added that statistics show that people outlive their ability to drive by about seven years. Improved transportation system would allow seniors to still get around. Ward-Bujalski pointed out that Florida and Pinellas County has a "saturation of seniors."

"Just because they can't drive doesn't mean they can't walk and get around. This would help people keep from withering away inside their homes," she said.

Ward answered the question of "how long will it take?" She said current plans look out to the year 2040 with phases of work tied to revenue streams. She said complex projects take time to complete, pointing to the U.S. 19 improvements that began in 2009 and are expected to be complete by 2014.

"Complex projects take a long time to build. We're looking at phasing as effectively as we can," she said.

Miller said Pinellas needed to make sure it had a transportation system that could serve the younger generation and their needs while preserving neighborhoods of single-family homes.

One caller asks about how the plan could improve safety for pedestrians and bicyclists.

"That's a priority throughout the county," Danner said, which he said was addressed in the transportation plan, as well as work happening now to improve safety.

Miller seems confident that the transportation plan can work in Pinellas.

"Twenty-six cities in the U.S. have a multi-modal transit system (bus and rail) and 25 of 26 are in the process of expanding," he said.

"We need to get people to their destinations with whatever mode of transportation we can provide," Danner said. "It's about where you live and what you need."

To give input on the county's transportation plan, visit tellingpinellas.com. For more information on Greenlight Pinellas, visit greenlight-pinellas.com.

Scam workshop offered

LARGO – Operation S.A.F.E., or Stop Adult Financial Exploitation, will host Be Scam Smart, a free workshop for seniors, their families and caregivers Thursday, Oct. 24, 10 to 11:30 a.m., at the Largo Community Center, 400 Alt. Keene Road.

Registration begins at 9 a.m. The workshop is designed to inform, empower and protect Florida's seniors from financial scams and fraud. Participants will learn about the psychology of a scam, how to spot fraudulent behavior, common scams that target seniors and how to fight identity theft.

The workshop, brought in partnership with the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office, is part of Florida Chief Financial Officer Jeff Atwater's On Guard for Seniors initiative.

For more information and to register, visit www.MyFloridaCFO.com/SAFE or call 877-MY-FL-CFO (693-5236).

Scam warning

CLEARWATER – Clearwater police warn the public of a new phone scam coming from a 978 Massachusetts area code. The caller identifies himself or herself as being in contact with a relative of yours who needs money immediately and that failure to wire the money will result in harm coming to the relative. Sarasota County law enforcement has been getting reports of this, so it could become a problem here as well.

Police remind the public that they should not trust anyone who calls them out of the blue like this and to not give out any money in such a situation. If you have questions about this or any other scam, call the fraud hotline at 562-4424, or if you have been the victim of a crime, call 562-4242.

TEXTING, from page 1A

takes a driver's eyes from the road for an average of 4.6 seconds, the equivalent – at 55 mph – of driving the length of an entire football field, blind."

Florida's law makes texting while driving a secondary offense, meaning law enforcement can't stop a vehicle just because a driver is observed in the unlawful use of a communications device. However, a driver can be ticketed for the offense if pulled over for another offense, such as speeding or reckless driving.

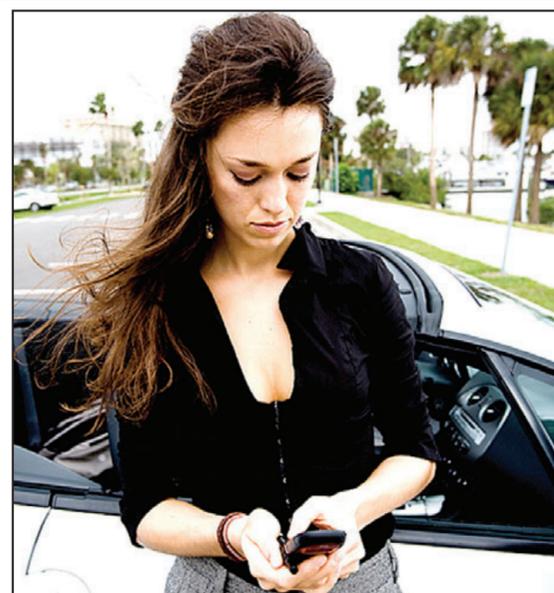
Motorists who violate the texting while driving ban will be guilty of a noncriminal traffic infraction, punishable as a nonmoving violation. A motorist who is caught disobeying the ban a second time within five years will be guilty of a noncriminal traffic violation punishable as a moving violation.

Violations of the texting and driving ban will result in points assigned to a motorist driver's license, which can be suspended when 12 points are accumulated. Unlawful use of a wireless communication device resulting in a crash costs six points. A moving violation committed in conjunction with the unlawful use of a wire communications device within a school safety zone will cost a motorist an additional two points.

If a driver is involved in a crash resulting in death or personal injury, records from a wireless device that may have been in use at the time are admissible as evidence of wrongdoing.

Distraction.gov lists several activities that could be considered driver distractions, including texting, using a cell phone or smartphone, eating, drinking, talking to passengers, grooming, reading (including maps), using a navigation system and watching a video.

"But, because text messaging requires visual, manual and cognitive attention from the driver, it is by far the most alarming distraction," the website concludes.



As long as this woman sends text messages standing beside her vehicle, she's immune from the state of Florida's new texting and driving ban that began Oct. 1.

CRISIS, from page 1A

which is deeply in debt, financially stable, Fellabaum said.

NFIP has about 5.5 million flood insurance policies in the United States. More than 2 million, or 37 percent, of those policies are in Florida. The second highest state is Texas with 600,000 policies.

Since NFIP's inception in 1968, premiums were able to keep pace with the cost of claims.

"In 2005, with Hurricane Katrina, everything changed," Fellabaum said.

Cost of claims was \$16 billion. In 2008, Hurricane Ike added \$2.6 billion. Tropical Storm Debby cost \$41 million in claims. Then in 2012, super-storm Sandy tacked on \$7 billion.

In 2012, NFIP collected \$3.5 million in premiums – not nearly enough to cover the costs of Sandy or put toward paying down the debt. Fellabaum said some are concerned that if a major storm hit this year, Congress might deny NFIP's request for additional funding.

"NFIP doesn't collect enough to pay for its losses," Templeton-Jones said.

She said prior to Katrina, NFIP had been forced to borrow money from the federal government to cover claims and had always paid it back with interest. Now, the "debt is too high to retire," Templeton-Jones said.

Everyone agrees change is needed to sustain the program.

When BW-12 first passed, everyone thought five years would give time to work on needed changes, she said. Now that the second phase of the Act is about to take place, Oct. 1, people are finding out that "affordability (of flood insurance) is a huge, huge issue."

She said an affordability study ordered by Congress had not been completed. It was recently discovered that there is not enough funding to get it done. She said many are asking that implementation of the changes be halted until the study can be done.

"This is not a Florida-only problem," Templeton-Jones said, as she urged the audience members to "reach out to legislators nationwide."

Pinellas County has more subsidized flood insurance policies than any county in the state with more than 50,000 or 35 percent of all NFIP policies. Dubov, aka the grim reaper, as she said some are calling her because she is relaying so much bad news, explained that the premium price for flood insurance could have a devastating impact on the real estate market.



Above left, Pinellas County Property Appraiser Pam Dubov tells a crowd in the Digitarium at St. Petersburg College's Seminole campus Sept. 25 that rising flood insurance costs could have a drastic effect on property values and the real estate market. Above right, Doug Swain from Preferred RE/MAX in St. Pete Beach says changes mandated by Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Act of 2012 are already having an effect on the real estate market. Swain gave several examples during the seminar.

She said countywide there are homes people have lived in for a "very long time," who have paid off their mortgage and have no flood insurance.

"They are fine today. They won't have a rate increase," she said. "But if they sell, they'll need to find a cash buyer or someone who can pay the full actuarial premium based on risk."

Many in the audience wanted to know how they find out the risk of their property. They best advice from the panel was to invest in an elevation certificate, which will be required to acquire or renew a flood insurance policy.

Ron Holehouse said an elevation certificate costs around \$150 to \$200, upwards to \$400 currently, but cautioned he had heard talk that the price could be going up due to increased demand.

A number of new property owners are being caught in a scenario that Templeton-Jones said no one anticipated. BW-12 was signed into law July 6, 2012. Every flood insurance policy written since that date is considered new, and thus will be billed at actual-risk rates beginning Oct. 1.

Fellabaum said there were 1,400 businesses and 5,200 homes purchased after July 6, 2012 in Pinellas.

"They didn't know," he said. Dubov said she had heard many scary stories about rate hikes. She said an insurance agent at a BW-12 forum in Indian Rocks Beach told her she



Photos by TERRE PORTER

had a client with a property built prior to 1972 with flood insurance rates jumping to \$71,000.

Dubov said policyholders could reduce premiums some by dropping coverage on the properties contents and increasing the deductible.

Assessing value on properties in flood zones is going to be a challenge for next year, Dubov said. She encourages residents to get an elevation certificate and bring it to the property appraisers office so an accurate assessment can be made.

She said people might be reluctant to bring in certificates if they think the elevations are too low. The point of concern is the elevation of the floor of the lowest living area. She said she has had complaints from people that if she devalues their property, it will cause them to go back underwater on their mortgages.

"Folks, I have to respond to the market," she said.

She added that the property appraisers office did not have information on individual properties within FEMA flood zones. She advised people to contact FEMA or their insurance agent.

Swain talked about the real estate market and said people were already backing out of contracts.

"They don't want to make a move," he said. "It is the fear of not knowing."

He said when information about BW-12 started coming out, he wasn't concerned.

"I thought something would be coming in the 11th hour to make it OK," he said. "This is a very scary situation."

Holehouse said no one ever imagined that the law would "retroactively change building codes to cause financial harm."

"This is a longtime problem and can't be fixed in five years," he said. "We need to slow it down, talk about it and bring some intellect to the table."

Dubov said many people believe this is a problem of rich property owners out on the beach. But, more subsidized policies are on inland properties than on the beach, she said. Of the 33,000 single-family homes in Pinellas with subsidies, more than 2,500 receive property tax exemptions as widows or widowers. Thousands more receive low income, veterans and disabled tax exemptions.

She said 20,000 of the homes were located inland and a "whole bunch" has median values under \$100,000.

"This is our whole community's problem," she said.

Tampa Bay Beaches Chamber of Commerce has taken a lead in communications efforts to the community about BW-12. For more information, visit www.tampabaybeaches.com/chamber/government_affairs.aspx. Information is also available from a link on the front page of Pinellas County's website, pinellascounty.org.

The U.S. House of Representatives has passed a bill delaying implementation of the act for one year. Legislation also is pending in the Senate.

If the Senate does not act to delay the bill, as of Oct. 1, owners with subsidized policies on property that has experienced severe or repeated flooding will see their bills increase by 25 percent annually until the rate reflects true risk. Owners of business/non-residential properties in a Special Flood Hazard Area also will see rates increase by 25 percent annually beginning Oct. 1.

In addition, higher rates will affect any property that is sold and any policy that lapses. Severe, repeated flood losses will trigger rate hikes. Higher rates also will be charged for any new policies. All policies will pay a 5 percent surcharge to fund a reserve.

Policyholders of with subsidized policies on non-primary/secondary residences in Special Flood Hazard Area received a 25 percent increase on their rates Jan. 1, 2013. Those rates also will increase until rates reflect true risk.

For more information on BW-12, visit www.fema.gov/flood-insurance-reform-act-2012.

Largo police receives second re-accreditation

SARASOTA – Chief Jeffrey Undestad accepted Largo Police Department's re-accreditation award with the prestigious Excelsior status during the Commission for Florida Law Enforcement Accreditation, or CFA, conference in Sarasota Sept. 25.

The Excelsior designation is the highest recognition available through the CFA. It is reserved for agencies that demonstrate continued excellence in law enforcement accreditation. To achieve Excelsior status, the agency must have received initial accreditation through the commission and then five successful re-accreditation assessments without conditions.

In 1999, the CFA accredited the Largo Police Department, with re-accreditation occurring every three years.

The CFA re-accreditation comes on the heels of the department's Aug. 3 re-accreditation with excellence award through the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies, or CALEA. CALEA is an internationally recognized accrediting body created in 1979 through the combined efforts of the International Association of Chiefs of Police, the National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives, the National Sheriff's Association and the Police Executive Research Forum.

The Largo Police Department has been accredited through CALEA since 1988.



Photo courtesy of the LARGO POLICE DEPARTMENT
Representing the Largo Police Department, which received a re-accreditation award with the Excelsior status from the Florida Law Enforcement Accreditation Sept. 25 are, from left, Officer Haley Sequeira, Capt. Mike Loux and Chief Jeffrey Undestad.

Four arrested in meth lab bust

SEMINOLE – Detectives assigned to the Pinellas County Sheriff's Narcotics Division in a joint effort with the Largo Police Department arrested four Seminole residents Sept. 26 in connection to a meth lab operation in a mobile home park.

Detectives served a search warrant about 10 a.m. at the La Tropical Oaks Mobile Home Park, 5101 Seminole Blvd. Lot 19 in Seminole.

While serving the search warrant, detectives found trafficking amounts of Methamphetamine inside the mobile home along with precursor products from a meth lab. With the assistance of the DEA meth lab group, those products were removed from the mobile home.

George McClelland, 44, was charged with one count of trafficking in methamphetamine and one count of possession of methamphetamine. William Sansoucie, 59, was charged with one count of unlawful possession of listed chemicals.

Michael Bice, 50, and Sheila Stout, 47, were charged with one count of trafficking in methamphetamine and one count of unlawful possession of listed chemicals.

According to detectives, the investigation began several months ago in connection to a search warrant served by the Largo Police Department at another mobile home park in October 2012. Detectives assigned to the Narcotics Division conducted surveillance in the area of La Tropical Oaks Mobile Home Park before obtaining the search warrant.

Detectives also found a dog tied to a tree in the front yard of the mobile home. The dog named "Misty" was taken into custody by the Pinellas County Animal Control.

Applications available for Pinellas Sheriff's Office Citizen Patrol

LARGO – Applications are now being accepted for the next Sheriff's Citizen Patrol and Special Events Programs Academy. This volunteering opportunity gives citizens a chance to work side by side with deputy sheriffs.

Volunteer Patrol and Special Events applicants must meet the following requirements:

- Must be a citizen of the United States and be a full-time or seasonal Pinellas County resident.
- Be at least 25 years old.
- Have a valid driver's license.
- Successfully complete a volunteer application.

- Pass a Sheriff's Office background investigation.
 - Complete a training Academy.
 - Should be available to volunteer at least 30 hours per quarter.
 - Previous law enforcement experience is not a requirement.
- "Our volunteers provide an invaluable level of service and support to this agency and our community. We invite those who are interested to apply with us for a very rewarding and important volunteering experience," said Sheriff Bob Gualtieri.

For more information call Cpl. Mantzanas with the Citizen's Volunteer Office at 727-582-6937.

Submit tips to Crime Stoppers

To report information about a crime anonymously and be eligible for an award, call Crime Stoppers of Pinellas County at 800-873-TIPS (8477) or submit a tip online at www.crimestoppersofpinellas.org.

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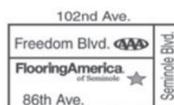
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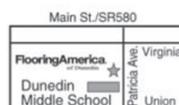


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'Fairy tale' gala supports local performing arts

By JULIANA A. TORRES

LARGO – Fairy tale characters converged on the Largo Cultural Center Sept. 28 to support local performing arts.

The Suncoast Performing Arts Foundation's 17th anniversary gala was themed "Once Upon a Time" and attracted an array of colorful costumes from the community supporters who attended. The black tie event featured dinner from The Stuffed Mushroom and Indulge Catering, a silence and live auction, dancing and, of course, a show.

Largo Cultural Center's in-house theater company, Eight O'Clock Theatre, performed the title show of the evening, "Once Upon a Time" told the story of Princess Rona, who searches for

her groom, Prince Daniel of Largothia, kidnapped by the magic-wielding antagonist Nefaria just returned from her exile to Hillsborough. Along the journey, she encounters various fairy tale characters – and their accompanying music – who try to help her in her search.

The simple plot of two-act production showed off the theater company's proficiency at musical numbers from a host of fairy-tale based shows, including Rodgers and Hammerstein's Cinderella, Into the Woods and Wicked as well as Disney musicals The Little Mermaid, Aladdin and Sleeping Beauty.

The evening also honored dedicated supporters of the Suncoast Performing Arts Foundation through the Tonne Awards.



Above, Valerie Williams, right, chats with Theresa Drake during the cocktail hour of the Suncoast Performing Arts Foundation's 17th annual fundraising gala Sept. 26.



Above, members of the Eight O'Clock Theatre perform the title show of the evening, "Once Upon a Time" featuring a collection of fairy tale musical numbers from different Broadway shows. At right, Hope and Tony Hemmer dance to live music during the gala dinner.



HOSE KIDS, from page 1A

of the idea. Tanya Pistillo of the Wandering Star Art Gallery thought the idea of repurposing fire hose was "really crafty."

"There's not a lot of funding going around for a lot of things so I stepped in and asked if there was some way, I could help them raise money," she said.

Along with creating and selling art from the recycled fire hose, Pistillo suggested the firefighters make more hose kids and put them up for "adoption" as a way of raising money for the fire department's public education fund.

The firefighters of Station 42 have made five more mannequins to be auctioned off during a reception on Saturday, Nov. 9, 6 to 10 p.m., at the Wandering Star Art Gallery, 220 West Bay Drive.

The reception, a partnership with the Downtown Largo Merchants Association and the Largo Professional Firefighters Local 2427, will feature all firefighter-related art. The proceeds will be split to benefit both the Largo Fire Explorers program and the Children's Burn Foundation.

"I'm kind of proud of my crew for coming up with this idea. It's pretty useful for us," Cargill said. "Hopefully it'll take off, with the fundraiser too."

Cargill said that the hose kids are not toys.

"They're safe, but we just want to make sure that the kids don't get a hold of them and play," he said.

He voiced enthusiasm for the union's new partner.

"I'm looking forward to doing more with the downtown business district. I think it's long overdue," he said.

The Nov. 9 reception will be held after the a Community Festival at Ulmer Park, held second Saturdays starting this month.

The first community festival, organized by the Downtown Largo Merchants Association, will be Saturday, Oct. 12, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., at Ulmer Park, 301 W. Bay Drive. The event will feature live music, food trucks, arts and crafts, games, face painting and raffle prizes. Call Tanya Pistillo at 465-8558.



Photo courtesy of TANYA PISTILLO

From left, Largo firefighters Tim Garten, John Gioareano, Cody Johnson and Joe Martins from Station 42 show off the latest fire hose kid, named Little Billy, constructed last month.

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Meet Bob Elliot RPh. He has recently joined Wize Pharmacy and has served patients in the Clearwater, Dunedin area since 1972.

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100 Women donate to Girls Inc.



Photo by JULIANA A. TORRES

Girls Incorporated of Pinellas CEO Renee McInnis, left, accepts 50 checks, each written for \$100, from 100 Women Who Care co-founders Julie Webster, center, and Brenda George Sept. 27. 100 Women Who Care, a new Pinellas County philanthropic group, ended up being key sponsors of the Girls Inc. STEM Woman of the Year Luncheon after choosing to donate to that organization during their last meeting Aug. 27. The goal of the group is to unite 100 women to donate \$100 four times a year to charities chosen through a group vote each quarter, creating an efficient and effective way for individual women to make a community impact. The next meeting will be held Tuesday, Nov. 19, at the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council in Pinellas Park. For information about how to get involved, call George at 515-1868 or Webster at 374-4854.

LARGO, from page 1A

Commissioner Robert Murray said it was important to protect the city's infrastructure. The Data Center would be 40 feet above sea level, out of the flood plain, include an emergency electric generator fuel enough for five days of operation. The building also is designed to withstand hurricane winds, featuring a cast-in-place concrete framed structure with masonry infill and a structural steel-framed roof with standing-seam metal roof panels.

"I think the Data Center is desperately needed," Murray said. "As we continue doing software upgrades and everything else as we go along, it

just continually expands. I personally don't see how it's going to decrease in size as we become more dependent (on technology) in all city functions."

The total cost of the project is \$3.1 million, which includes the design, permitting, furniture and new equipment. The Data Center will be built behind the Largo Feed Store within Largo Central Park, moved from its originally proposed location due to complaints from nearby residents.

Union agreements ratified

Largo commissioners approved

two changes to agreements with its unions Oct. 1.

First, they ratified an agreement with the Communications Workers of America Local 3179, giving a 2.5 percent pay increase to represented city employees. The agreement includes increases to the minimum and maximum pay range and adjustments to positions in fleet maintenance and recreation.

Second, the city agreed to a wage reopener with Sun Coast Police Benevolent Association, offering the same 2.5 percent pay increase. The new agreement also addresses numerous inequalities in the pay plan, using the salary saved from a recent retiree and increasing the

Around town

Kiwanis Club presents fashion show

LARGO - The Kiwanis Club of Largo/Mid-Pinellas will present its third annual Enchanted Fashion Show and Brunch Saturday, Oct. 12, 10:30 a.m., at the Bellevue Biltmore Golf Club, 1501 Indian Rocks Road in Belleair.

Tickets are \$20 advance or \$25 at the door. Enjoy the latest fall fashions presented by Karen Toutant, door prizes, local celebrity models and a fall gourmet brunch. Seating is limited.

All proceeds go to Kiwanis Club of Largo/Mid-Pinellas, serving children of the community and the world. Make checks payable to the club and send to P.O. Box 2043, Largo, FL 33779, along with a self-addressed stamped envelope to receive tickets.

For information, call Debbie Taphouse at 288-3768.

Cross-stitch event set

LARGO - The Crafty Framer, a custom framing and full service cross-stitch store, invites cross-stitchers to its next Friends All Stitchin' Together, or FAST, event on Oct. 12, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., at the store, 9204 Ulmerton Road.

Tickets are \$20 and include lunch. Enjoy lots and lots of stitching as well as goodie bags and door prizes during this quarterly event.

The October FAST also will celebrate Breast Cancer Awareness Month with a decorated bra contest. Participants can decorate a bra and wear it on the outside of their clothes. The bras will be judged for Best of the Best, Second Best and Third Best with prizes awarded.

For more information, contact Peggy Wittlake at 518-1400 or email craftyframer@aol.com.

Marching bands to compete at Largo High

LARGO - Watch the thrill of Florida marching bands at the Largo High Marching Competition Saturday, Oct. 26, 5 p.m., at the school, 410 Missouri Ave.

The cost is \$15 for adults and \$10 for students and seniors. Parking is free. The Largo High Band Boosters will sell concessions and spirit items.

Call 585-4653.

Museum hosts casino fundraiser

LARGO - The Armed Forces History Museum will present its fifth annual Las Vegas Casino Night fundraiser on Saturday, Oct. 5, 6 to 10 p.m., at 2050 34th Way N.

The event features a full dinner buffet from Orange Blossom Catering, as well as blackjack, roulette, craps, slot machines, poker, a Texas Hold 'em Tourna-

ment, silent auction, Chinese auction, prizes and more. This fundraiser benefits the museum's community outreach and youth education programs as well as the museum's mission to honorably preserve the history and memories of the military and its veterans.

Tickets are \$40 for casino and \$80 for the tournament. Visit www.armedforcesmuseum.com, or call 539-8371.

The second hearing of both amendments will be held Tuesday, Oct. 15, at Largo City Hall.

ment, silent auction, Chinese auction, prizes and more. This fundraiser benefits the museum's community outreach and youth education programs as well as the museum's mission to honorably preserve the history and memories of the military and its veterans.

Tickets are \$40 for casino and \$80 for the tournament.

Visit www.armedforcesmuseum.com, or call 539-8371.

Foster parents needed

Eckerd Community Alternatives is seeking area residents willing to take in foster children to meet the growing need for homes.

For information on becoming a foster parent, call the Eckerd Community Alternatives recruitment line at 866-233-0790.

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Business updates

Surcee Market grand opening set

LARGO – Surcee Market will host its grand opening Thursday, Oct. 10, 6 to 8 p.m., at 101 Clearwater-Largo Road N. The store features painted and re-purposed furniture for shabby chic, coastal, French country or garden designs for the home. Shoppers may come by during the day for apple cider and pumpkin dip, then return at 6 p.m. for appetizers and refreshments. There will be special discounts and door prizes throughout the day.

PureLife Medispa opening set

LARGO – PureLife Medispa Skincare and Wellness Center will celebrate its grand opening Friday, Oct. 4, 4 to 8 p.m., at 12442 Indian Rocks Road. The catered event is open to the public and will feature a bar, DJ, valet parking and free giveaways. The evening also will serve as a fundraiser for the Florida Breast Institute at Largo Medical Center in conjunction with Breast Cancer Awareness Month. For information, call 595-3400.

Sports Shack now open for lunch

LARGO – The new owners at The Sports Shack Bar and Grill, 999 Missouri Ave. S., recently announced the establishment is now open for lunch. The Sports Shack Bar and Grill is now open for lunch at 11 a.m., Monday through Saturday. The new owners also have added entertainment on the outside patio on Thursdays with karaoke and a live band Friday and Saturday. For information, call 586-5170.

Eatin' Fresh opens

CLEARWATER – RickDaddy's Foods recently opened a new store, Eatin' Fresh, at 721 Lakeview Road. The produce and fine food store carries a variety of fresh produce and retail items. Eatin' Fresh also offers a Fresh & Healthy menu available for take-out and delivery. There will be a selection of fine wines and bottled craft beer as well as a selection of local seafood. The store will celebrate with a grand opening later in the year. For information, call 239-0869 or visit www.eatinfresh.com.

Hungry Howie's raises funds for NBCF

Hungry Howie's fifth annual Love, Hope & Pizza campaign began Oct. 1. The campaign raises funds for the National Breast Cancer Foundation, which is a recipient of Charity Navigator's highest four-star rating for nine consecutive years. "The campaign means everything to me," said Tiffany Hutto in a press release. Hutto is a Hungry Howie's Distributing associate who is a one-year breast cancer survivor. "If my story inspires one woman to get a mammogram, it brings me hope." Early detection saved Hutto's life. "The key to recovery is support," Hutto said. "When I was going through my treatment, my co-workers shaved their heads to show their love and support. That meant the world." "Cancer makes you think about how much time you have left and what you want to do with it. Don't dream it's over. Don't you dare," said Andrea Adair, who is a Hungry Howie's associate and a two-time breast cancer survivor. Adair volunteers extensively and will be featured in the book about Bodies of Courage. She is passionate about sharing her story of early detection and post-mastectomy options and participates in numerous breast cancer causes including Love, Hope & Pizza. During the month of October, Hungry Howie's will go pink with large pizzas being served in pink boxes and the NBCF logo. For every story shared on Facebook, every new Facebook fan, every picture tagged #LOVEHOPEPIZZA and every large pizza purchase, Hungry Howie's will make a donation to NBCF. Supporters also may purchase \$1 Love, Hope & Pizza wristbands with all proceeds going to NBCF. Tote bags made of recycled vinyl from 2012 Love, Hope & Pizza billboards have been produced and may be purchased from G2 GreenGear with a donation being made to NBCF. "When I was diagnosed with breast cancer 33 years ago, I knew little about the disease," said Janelle Hail, NBCF Founder and CEO. "I was forced to make a decision about my health without knowing my options. Fortunately, early detection saved my life, and now thanks to the customers and employees of Hungry Howie's, we are ensuring that women across America are educated about breast cancer and don't have to face it alone." In the last four years, Hungry Howie's has raised nearly \$800,000 for breast cancer research and hopes to surpass \$1 million this year.

HCA honors firemedics

SEMINOLE – The HCA Pinellas Market recently honored two employees of Seminole Fire Rescue as members of the sixth annual HCA EMS All Star Team. Seth Morrin and Joe Rickman were recognized for exemplifying HCA's core values of service: dignity, respect, honesty, fairness, loyalty, integrity, compassion and kindness.



From left, Ron Baams, ER director at Largo Medical Center; Seth Morrin, firemedic; Joe Rickman, firemedic, and his daughter; Diane Conti, ER director at St. Petersburg General Hospital; Brenda Simpson, R.N., chief nursing officer at Largo Medical Center; and Bob Conroy, CEO St. Petersburg General Hospital.

Horse and Jockey Pub celebrates renovation

SOUTH PASADENA – A ribbon-cutting ceremony, set for Saturday, Oct. 5, noon, will celebrate the grand opening of the newly renovated Horse and Jockey British Pub, 1155 Pasadena Ave. S. The grand opening will feature two bands and "plenty of merriment" throughout the day.

Catering company celebrates 25th anniversary

PALM HARBOR – Delectables Fine Catering will celebrate its 25th anniversary with a ribbon-cutting on Saturday, Oct. 5, 4 p.m., at their facility at 969 Virginia Ave. The event will feature food and drinks. Delectables Fine Catering is a full service fine catering company that specializes in memorable wedding events, corporate gatherings and elegant parties. According to a press release, the business has been given many awards of recognition throughout the years, and continues to stay on top with recent awards. For information, email Michele Whitaker at admin@delectables.com or call 781-1200.

Campa-Flanagan completes financial planning series

BELLEAIR BLUFFS – Liza Campa-Flanagan, a certified financial planner at the office of Raymond James Financial Services Inc., 645 N. Indian Rocks Road, recently completed the Financial Planner Series for Small Business, according to Patrick Daxon, vice president of Raymond James Wealth, Retirement & Portfolio Solutions group. The Financial Planner Series is a professional development program that focuses on retirement planning, income and estate tax planning, risk management and investment options for small business owners and executives. During this series of three multi-day seminars, advisers also gain a deeper knowledge of the technical, computer and administrative aspects of their business to better serve their clients with the highest levels of professionalism and integrity. Prior to joining Raymond James in 1988, Campa-Flanagan was financial adviser with Halliburton & Associates in Clearwater.



Liza Campa-Flanagan

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Foundation receives \$25,000 for financial literacy programs

LARGO – The Pinellas Education Foundation received \$25,000 from Achieva Credit Union to support its teacher classroom grant program Sept. 24. The funds were collected from Achieva Credit Union's third Annual Box Car Rally last year. The fourth annual Box Car Rally will be Saturday, Oct. 5 in downtown Clearwater.

Funds raised from this year's event will be given next year.

At the event, 18 Pinellas County Schools teachers will be awarded up to \$2,000 to help support financial literacy in their classrooms.

The winning teachers are as follows:

- Angela Shotts of Bay Point Middle for the Money Counts project
- Lori Celli of Pinellas Park Middle for Earn and Learn Science
- Kylie Aliberto of Clearwater High for Sound Decision Making
- Stephanie Mikule of Largo Middle for Financial Literacy Before Financial Emergencies
- Casey Jones of Seminole High for Wake-Up Warhawks Coffee Cart-Student Incentives
- Ellen Meister of Sawgrass Lake Elementary for Auction in Action

- Cathy Baldock of Countryside High for Advanced Algebra with Financial Applications Projects
- Jennifer Leggio of Highland Lakes Elementary for Mrs. Leggio's Financial Literacy Boot Camp
- Stephanie Madrinan with adult education for Achieva Promising Future
- Christie Murray of Morgan Fitzgerald Middle
- Karen G. Bell of SPC/Gibbs for MOTIVATE: Math Optimizes Transitions in Vocation and Trades Everyday
- Paulette Goolsby of Lealman Intermediate for Family and Consumer Sciences Business
- Kim Lopez of Melrose Elementary for Manatee Moola
- Sarah Maslar of St. Petersburg High for Student Response System
- Jenni Blanchard Herman of Pinellas Central Elementary for F.I.S.C.A.L. – Fantastic Intelligent Students Calculating a Life of Financial Responsibility
- Suzie Lak of John M. Sexton Elementary for Lessons for the Future: The Birthday Box
- Katie Davies of Fuguitt Elementary for I am the Leader of My Own Finances
- Erin Raineri of Career Academies of Seminole/DHAEC for Meet You Halfway



Photo courtesy of the PINELLAS EDUCATION FOUNDATION

Representatives of Achieva Credit Union delivered a \$25,000 check to the Pinellas Education Foundation to support its teacher classroom grant program Sept. 24.

Student places in national essay contest

ST. PETERSBURG – A USF St. Petersburg graduate student has won third prize in a national essay contest sponsored by the Jane Austen Society of North America.

Ashlie Flannigan, who is pursuing a master of liberal studies, was honored at the society's general meeting in Minneapolis, Minn. Her essay, "The Empirical Austen: Finding Nature and Nurture in Pride and Prejudice," was entered in the graduate division and was one of more than 200 submissions. She received a \$250 scholarship and a membership in the Jane Austen Society.

The essay explores the idea of nature and nurtured traits and characteristics as witnessed among the friends and families in



Photo courtesy of USF

Professor Amy Robinson poses with Ashlie Flannigan, who placed third in a national Jane Austen essay contest.

Jane Austen's "Pride and Prejudice." It also looks at the language Austen uses to delineate the two influences on behavior and personality.

Flannigan's essay grew out of a course by Amy Robinson, visiting assistant professor of English literature, called, "Selected British

Authors: Jane Austen." It is the second time one of her students in that course has been honored in the Jane Austen Society essay contest. April Sopczach, who graduated from the English Education graduate program, placed second in the 2011 contest.

Flannigan has been a Jane Austen fan since she first read "Pride and Prejudice" as a teenager and enjoyed delving into more scholarly aspects of her work.

"I think it's what's underneath the stories, what she was trying to do as a woman," Flannigan said.

Fundraiser for Blossom School set

CLEARWATER – Montessori School for the Deaf in Clearwater is hosting the seventh annual Heart for Art fundraiser on Tuesday, Oct. 22, 6:30 p.m., at Parkshore Grill, 300 Beach Drive NE, St. Petersburg.

There will be fine French wines, exquisite food and unique art.

Seating is limited. Cost is \$79 plus tax and gratuity. To reserve a spot, call 896-9463.

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Craft Show

Large Craft Show with multiple vendors and a variety of crafts. Most vendors will be inside with some outside.

Where: Evans Hall at Chapel on the Hill
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LETTERS

The facts on transit funding proposal

Editor:

Last week a writer made some inaccurate assumptions about the transit funding change being proposed by the Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority and the Pinellas Board of County Commissioners. He claimed that using the phrase tax swap was not proper because, in his case, he would be paying more if the current PSTA property tax were replaced by a 1 percent sales tax. However, for many Pinellas County residents that funding change would mean lower taxes to support a vastly improved transit system in our community. Here are some of the facts that the letter writer omitted and people need to know:

- A 1 percent sales tax for transit would not be levied on groceries or medical costs. A complete – and long – list of exemptions can be found here: dor.myflorida.com/dor/forms/2010/dr46nt.pdf.
- The 1 percent sales tax would be capped at \$5,000 so if you were to make a large purchase such as a car, the most that could be levied is an additional \$50.
- How the tax affects people is on a case-by-case basis depending upon income, property value and spending habits. To see how it will affect your family, you can use the IRS Sales Tax Deduction Calculator found here as a guide: www.irs.gov/Individuals/Sales-Tax-Deduction-Calculator. You'll have to divide the final number by 7 (our current sales tax rate) to get your final number.
- Based on my TRIM notice, income and home value, which is right at the median home value for Clearwater (where I live), my family and I would be paying about \$24 a year more under the proposed funding change, nothing near the \$300 increase that the letter writer claims.
- The bulk of PSTA's current funding comes from the property taxes levied on Pinellas County's 434,104 parcels. Switching to a 1 percent sales tax will increase the tax base to the entire county population (approximately 921,000) PLUS the 5.4 million tourists and visitors who enjoy our wonderful community every year.

I encourage this writer and all residents of our fine County to visit www.GreenlightPinellas.com to learn the facts about the transportation plan, its funding proposal, background data, studies and potential impact on Pinellas County no matter what voters decide in 2014.

Bob Lasher

External affairs officer
Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority

Cartoon inaccurate

Editor:

I don't get the political cartoon in the Sept. 19 issue of the Beach Bee.

It seems to imply that President Obama is in the pocket of the Russian president. Why would that be? President Obama has gotten Putin's ally Assad to admit for the first time that he has chemical weapons. And the president says the U.S. retains the option to strike Assad if the Syrian reneges on his promise to allow U.N. inspectors to locate and eventually destroy the chemical weapons.

Or is Obama in Putin's pocket because the New York Times published an op-ed article by Putin? I just don't get it.

It looks like the cartoonist doesn't follow the guidelines you give for letter writers and which should be valid for all editorial content – "refrain from making unsubstantiated allegations."

Allegations along the lines of "the president is a mini-Putin" is what we've come to expect from factions who don't mind sabotaging our American government and our economy if they can just prevent Obama from being successful.

Our community deserves better. Surely you can choose more accurate cartoons and maybe something from closer to our home than Arkansas.

Arthur Herman
Belleair Beach

Republican Party supports extreme policies

Editor:

There is a pervasive belief in this country that our two major political parties are diametrically opposed in every respect. That each party is equal promotes extreme, fringe policies, thus are equally at fault when nothing gets done. This fallacy assumes that over time, the Left has moved further to the left, and that the Right has moved further to the right. The problem with this view is that the true fringe views are far more pervasive in the Republican Party than in the Democratic.

There are countless examples of politicians from the Republican party pushing fringe agendas. In particular, we can look to the recent version of the Farm Bill passed in the U.S. House of Representatives. Hoping to end the SNAP and WIC programs, conservatives slashed the "food stamp" program by \$40 billion. By the reasoning explained earlier, this would imply the Democrats are actively seeking to expand "food stamps" such that all people are given their food by the government. This reasoning assumes that the Democrats are fighting tooth and nail for the government to seize control of agricultural/food industry and equally distribute food to the populace.

Obviously, this is a ludicrous assumption. There are no Democrats demanding that all people receive equal food as distributed by the government. No progressive/left activists, commentators or politicians would support such a ridiculous and unconstitutional measure. An identical claim can be made for the Republican position on welfare, unemployment benefits, gun control and certain aspects of Social Security. Democrats do not hold the polar opposite view on any of these issues.

Supporting the welfare program is not the same as demanding the government ensure all people are given jobs (i.e. that the government be the sole employer in the nation). Supporting certain gun controls is not equivalent to demanding that all guns be confiscated from all citizens. This undeniable, yet unseen truth can be best described in a single phrase, "There is no left equivalent."

It's time for the electorate to realize that while stark differences absolutely exist between the policies of the right and the left, it is the right who have moved to the fringe. It is the Republican Party, under the influence of the Tea Party, the "religious right" and other organizations that has become the poster child for supporting politically extreme policies.

Cuthbert Hutton
Redington Beach

Don't fret about us, Vlad

Editor:

Dear Vlad,
How nice to hear from you. We certainly hope all is well with you and yours. We must admit to our surprise when you wrote, and also to the unusual candor with which you expressed not only your concern for America but also in taking issue with what you apparently view as our predilection for proclaiming ourselves to be exceptional.

There are a few things that should be cleared up before addressing your concerns. First it is a small and nowhere near representative group of American citizens that consider the nation itself to be exceptional. Most Americans would prefer to suggest it is and always has been citizens and not the nation that should be proclaimed exceptional.

As to the American nation, like all nations, we have had our good days and our bad days. We take great pride in pointing out that the good we have done for Americans and for the rest of the world far outweighs the bad. Nevertheless you can rest assured we are working diligently to get better at it.

Having said that we want to go on to point out what it is America does best. We serve as a shining beacon attracting people from all the nations of the world with the promise here they will have the freedom and the opportunity to use their talents to join the ranks of the exceptional. That nearly everyone who comes stays, serves as mute testimony to the fact we keep that promise.

It is notable that many of those of whom we speak came from your own Mother Russia. We refer to people like theoretical physicist Alexeevitch Abriskof, Aviation Pioneer Prokofief de Servesky, Choreographer George Balanchine and composers Igor Stravinski and Sergi Rachmanioff to name just a few. Perhaps this drain of exceptional people is one of the reasons there was such a dearth of political talent in Russia it became necessary to alter your Constitution so as to allow you to remain in office.

The assumption one must make in view of this action is that you were convinced the sole Russian left exceptional enough to run the Country was yourself. Conversely, largely due to the exceptionalism our system encourages, every four years we find ourselves confronted with a plethora of exceptional American talent seeking the presidency. As a result we have been able to seamlessly switch leadership for nearly 250 years.

So Vlad, all we really have to say is don't fret about us, we'll be OK. After all we always have been, without exception!

A grateful American.
Robert A. Shaw
Madeira Beach

A few tips on restaurant dining



Driver's Seat

Bob Driver

Visiting a restaurant has several steps. One of the first is to find a parking space. If you have a handicapped sticker for your car, you'll have no problem. Most restaurants have twice as many handicapped spaces as they ever need. Researchers tell us that on April 20, 1997, at a Denny's in Harrisburg, Pa., all the handicapped parking slots were filled. This is the only time in restaurant history this has happened.

Another aspect of dining out is to discover that all restaurant greeters know how to count. As you and your date enter, the greeter smiles, inspects you and says, "Two?" If you are with a party of four, he/she looks at your group and says, "Party of four?" All my life I have wanted to reply, "Yes, but we have 16 friends arriving in half an hour. They'll be roaring drunk and riding polo ponies," just to see what the greeter might say. But, coward that I am, I always remain silent and go to my designated seat.

Don't be afraid to state your choice of a table or a booth. A table seat exposes you to the stares of other diners, but it gives you a better chance to watch the TV screen instead of facing your unshaven, yawning husband for the next hour. A booth is more physically intimate, but it increases the odds of your having to listen to the Texan in the next booth regale his buddies with the story about the red-headed pole dancer in Waco, as he (the Texan) bounces his 265-pound body against the back of your seat just as you ingest the first spoonful of your clam chowder.

Next, your server will arrive with menus and an introduction. "My name is Andrew (or Elaine) and I'll be your server today. Can I offer you a drink, to start with?" If you're

hung over or have lots of money you should order a drink. It will settle your nerves, but will cost you anywhere from five to fifteen bucks. In the 1960s, when I quit drinking, you could buy a beer for a dollar and a martini for two dollars. No more. But today if you don't immediately order an alcoholic beverage, your server may disappear for 15 minutes, as he/she attends to drinking customers who will probably be bigger tipplers than pinchy-faced teetotalers (that's you.)

Studying the menu is a critical part of the restaurant adventure. The typical menu gives as many as 1,822 choices, grouped in categories that may include starters, steaks, salads, chicken, fish, pasta, vegan, seniors, Mexican, desserts, side dishes, Weight Watchers, and sushi.

The latest trend in many restaurants lets you choose two or three different entrees, instead of just one. This encourages the customer to believe that the new list price (\$16) for the selections is a bargain. It's not. It's an inflationary scam meant to screw the customer.

When two or more diners are seated, they give up their original identity such as Joe Jones and wife or the hospital luncheon group. They immediately become "you guys."

That's how almost every server in the USA refers to his/her customers. "Are you guys ready to order? I have some great recommendations for you guys." I'm not sure how the you-guys custom started, but it's harmless and quite democratic – even an all-female table of customers is known as you guys.

Another common practice is for restaurants to serve customers twice as much food as they can eat. That's because food is the smallest expense the owner will bear. If you dine out several times a week and eat everything you are served, you will die six years earlier than you otherwise might have.

It's important to be kind to your server. She (or he) is pursuing one of the toughest, lowest-paid occupations known. If your food is slow in coming, or is not prepared as well as it could be, it's seldom your server's fault. The defect is usually in the kitchen or in the office of the owner, who has hired three fewer servers than the restaurant should have. You should routinely tip the server at least 20 percent of the bill. If you are on a tight budget, skip ordering coffee or iced tea (at \$2.50 a glass) and add the savings to the tip.

Avoid noisy restaurants. If you cannot easily hear what your dinner companion is saying, you are in the wrong place. If the restaurant requires its servers to drop everything and go sing happy birthday to a customer, leave the restaurant at once and never go back.

These are only a few suggestions. If you agree with all of them, I'd be surprised.

Bob Driver is a former columnist for the Clearwater Sun. His email address is tralee71@comcast.net.



Cheney goes fishing for a Senate seat

Liz Cheney, political pundit and daughter of a former vice president, might have trouble unseating three-term GOP Sen. Mike Enzi in the Wyoming primary next year. On vacation in Casper last week, I had dinner at Bosco's, where owner Susan Bosco proudly displays signed photos of local political luminaries – including Enzi, Sen. John Barrasso, Gov. Matt Mead and Dick Cheney himself, Republicans all – but there was no head shot of Liz Cheney.

Every town has a restaurant like Bosco's, GOP strategist Liz Brimmer noted, and "it's not just about a face on the wall." Enzi has won re-election with more than 70 percent of the vote twice because he truly represents Wyoming. As for Cheney's aspirations to represent Wyoming, said Brimmer, "this is all so recent."

Cheney has had a rough ride since moving from Virginia to the Equality State last year. In August, the Casper Star-Tribune reported that Cheney improperly received a state resident fishing license. (She had lived in the state for 72 days, not the 365 consecutive days required by law.) Worse, her application wrongly claimed that she had lived in Wyoming for a decade.

"That's the kind of thing that really makes people mad," observed C.J. Box, author of a mystery series that features a Wyoming game



Debra Saunders

warden/sleuth. "That's kind of sacrosanct in Wyoming."

"You can't just make that error."

When Angus M. Thuermer Jr. of the Jackson Hole Daily reported that Cheney had to file a \$220 bond for filing a false statement, blogger Jim Romnesko reported, Cheney told a tea party gathering that the paper's staff suffered from liberal bias and "newspapers are dying, and that's not a bad thing." Strike 2.

Cheney had to walk back that quote with a Facebook posting that praised Wyoming's "hardworking objective journalists." To Box, it was a rookie Wyomingite mistake.

Her campaign rejects any notion that Cheney is new to the state. She's a fourth-generation Wyomingite, spokeswoman Celeste Colgan maintained in a statement, who split her time between Washington and Wyoming since her father was elected to Congress in

1978. The campaign positions Cheney, 47, as the "true conservative" in the race, "with the experience, values and roots" to represent Wyoming well.

I would add that Enzi, 69, doesn't own his seat for life. Others have every right to challenge him, including in the Republican primary.

But when the challenger hasn't been a full-time Wyoming resident since childhood and she owes her high profile and ability to raise campaign cash largely to her father, locals might want to remind the Cheneyes: Wyoming is an oil-and-gas state, not nepotistic MSNBC.

"Money raising has always been a problem for me," Enzi told The New York Times in July as Cheney was about to throw her cowboy hat into the ring. At the time, Enzi's campaign had a quaint \$488,000 in the bank.

Cheney can raise beaucoup bucks and turn the Wyoming primary into an ugly, big-money slugfest. In this red state, whoever wins the Republican primary wins the general election. The only way Cheney wins is by turning voters against Enzi.

"I would be surprised if it went all the way to the primary," said Box, secure in the belief that his neighbors don't want an ugly primary. "That might make people more angry."

Email Debra J. Saunders at dsaunders@schronicle.com.

What do you think?

Please type letters to the editor (or print legibly) and include your name, town of residence, phone number and signature and mail to Tampa Bay Newspapers, 9911 Seminole Blvd., Seminole, FL 33772. Emails should include town of residence and telephone and be sent to tgermond@TBNweekly.com. We will

not print the letter writer's phone number.

Here are some more guidelines for letters:

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

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

- Letters should address issues or current events. Please refrain from making unsubstantiated allegations. The newspaper will not print letters that contain slanderous or racial statements.

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Tampa Bay Water loses appeal in cracked reservoir case

By SUZETTE PORTER

The United States Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals issued its opinion Sept. 23 affirming the judgment of the trial court in the case of the cracked soil-cement at the C.W. Bill Young Regional Reservoir.

Tampa Bay Water officials announced the news the afternoon of Sept. 23.

"While the outcome of the appeal was not favorable for the people of the Tampa Bay region, the judicial system has made its decision and the agency must continue to focus its attention on the future," Tampa Bay Water said in a media statement. "Tampa Bay Water's No. 1 priority is, and always has been, its commitment to provide clean, safe drinking water to the region."

Tampa Bay Water filed a federal lawsuit in December 2008 against HDR, as well as the contractor Barnard Construction and the construction manager CDG after cracks were discovered in the reservoir's interior soil-cement lining.

Tampa Bay Water's board rejected a \$30 million settlement offer from HDR after the board's advisers estimated the agency could get as much as \$97 million if they won the lawsuit.

A federal jury ruled against Tampa Bay Water April 10, saying that HDR "did not breach its standard of care" when designing the C.W. Bill Young Regional Reservoir.

"Saying we are disappointed is an understatement," former Tampa Bay Water General Manager Gerald J. Seeber said in a press release issued after the April 10 verdict was announced. "We feel strongly that the public shouldn't have to pay twice for a fully functional reservoir. We hired HDR to design the facility. HDR certified its design and

the construction to the state, so we believe HDR is liable. We'll discuss the verdict with our board and consider our legal options, including a possible appeal."

The board decided on the appeal. Former Pinellas County Commissioner Neil Brickfield, who was on the Tampa Bay Water board at the time, said public opinion had been loud and clear that the board should not take the smaller amount. "But there's always a risk (when going to court)," he said. "This is a complicated case with a lot of opinions."

The problem and solution

The reservoir began operation in 2005 and provides water storage for Tampa Bay Water's regional system during the dry season, at which time water is pumped from the reservoir to the surface water treatment plant and then on to the customer.

Cracks were found in the flat-plate, soil-cement, erosion-control layer lining of the reservoir's interior during an inspection in December 2006. After studies and data analysis of the problem by consulting engineers, Tampa Bay Water's system engineer said in a June 2009 report that the reservoir was safe and could be fixed.

Tampa Bay Water spent the next two years looking for the right solution and the right firm to do the work. A \$162 million contract was awarded to design-builder Kiewit Infrastructure South in August 2011 to renovate the reservoir and, upon staff's recommendation, increase its storage capacity by 3 billion gallons.

Of the \$162 million, officials said \$42 million would be used to increase the storage capacity, and \$120 million was allocated to the reservoir's renovation. About \$6 billion was set aside for unforeseen costs.



Photo courtesy of TAMPA BAY WATER

When the C.W. Bill Young Regional Reservoir is operational, it can hold 15.5 billion gallons of water. The reservoir is currently closed due to repairs.

Work is scheduled to occur in two phases. Tampa Bay Water funded the \$15 million needed for the first phase through existing bond proceeds, resulting in no rate impact for customers in the near-term. The reservoir is currently closed as repairs continue.

TBW provides wholesale water to the public utility systems of Hillsborough, Pasco and Pinellas counties as well as the cities of New Port Richey, St. Petersburg and Tampa.

Briefs

Water restrictions in place through Nov. 30

Pinellas County reclaimed water seasonal restrictions began Tuesday, Oct. 1. These restrictions limit reclaimed water irrigation during authorized hours to three days per week based on house number.

The mandatory seasonal restrictions in accordance with Pinellas County Code 82-3 state:

- Watering is prohibited between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.
- No reclaimed watering is permitted on Monday.
- Even-numbered houses may water on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday.
- Odd-numbered houses may water on Wednesday, Friday and Sunday
- For properties containing a mix of addresses, or where an address cannot be determined, such as common areas associated with a residential subdivision, watering is permitted on Wednesday, Friday and Sunday.

Customers are encouraged to follow these restrictions throughout the year to promote a healthy, drought-tolerant lawn with deep roots. These restrictions are mandatory during Florida's traditional dry seasons, which are April through June and October through November. Violations of these restrictions may result in a \$193 fine.

For more information, visit www.pinellascounty.org/utilities/reclaim-irrigation.htm, or call 464-4000.

Applications available for PPLC

CLEARWATER - The Pinellas County Board of County Commissioners is accepting applications for two appointments to the Pinellas Public Library Cooperative Inc.

The PPLC is a nonprofit corporation responsible for providing library services to the unincorporated areas of Pinellas County and to those municipalities that do not have library services and improving library services to residents of the municipalities and library tax districts.

Each appointee will serve a three-year term. The cooperative's primary functions include receiving and disbursing funds from federal, state and local sources, maintaining a shared library automation system, maintaining a shared materials delivery

system and assisting member libraries in the collective purchase of library resources and services.

Applicants must be registered voters and cannot be an employee or member of any governing body of a Pinellas County library.

Interested parties should submit an application along with a brief biography or résumé outlining their eligibility to serve. Applications should include education, work experience, civic or community organization memberships and positions, any professional licenses or memberships and an explanation as to how the applicant's background applies to the responsibilities of the Pinellas Public Library Cooperative Inc.

Members of the Pinellas County Board of County Commissioners will review all applications and make their selections at the Tuesday, Oct. 22, Board of County Commissioners meeting.

All applications must be received by the close of business on Wednesday, Oct. 9. Applications are available online at www.pinellascounty.org/forms/board-app-library.htm or available through a mail or email request to committees@pinellascounty.org. Completed applications may be emailed to committees@pinellascounty.org or delivered by mail or in person to: Pinellas County Board of County Commissioners, Pinellas County Courthouse, fifth floor, 315 Court St., Clearwater, FL 33756.

More information on the Pinellas County Library Cooperative may be found at www.pplc.us/about.shtml.

Hazardous waste collection set for Oct. 5

ST. PETERSBURG - Pinellas County Solid Waste is offering another mobile hazardous waste collection on Saturday, Oct. 5, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., at Azalea Middle School, 7855 22nd Ave. N., St.

Drive up and drop off your hazardous and unwanted electronics and chemicals. Solid Waste offers this service free to county households. Businesses should arrange for drop-off and payment by calling Creative Recycling at 813-621-2319 for electronics, or EQ Florida at 813-319-3400 for chemicals.

Household electronics and chemicals - such as TVs, cell phones, computers, paints, motor oil, fertilizers and batteries - should never be dumped in the regular trash, drains, storm sewers or on the ground.

These products can be harmful to the environment and to the people handling them if they are not disposed of properly. Electronics contain useful materials that can be extracted and recycled, such as aluminum, glass and plastic. As for chemicals, the average household can accumulate as much as 100 pounds of chemicals around the home over time.

For more information on mobile collections, what to bring and what not to bring, or the permanent Household Electronics & Chemical Collection Center (HEC3), call Pinellas County Solid Waste at 464-7500 or visit www.pinellascounty.org/utilities.

First-time homebuyer program available

The holiday season is just around the corner and Pinellas County can help deck the halls with the First-Time Homebuyer Program, available to those who have never owned a home, have not owned a home in the last three years or are veterans.

The rate for the Home Key 1st Mortgage is currently at 3.75 percent and is available to qualified first-time homebuyers in Pinellas, Pasco and Polk counties. If you need help with down payment and/or closing costs, the Home Key Plus 2nd Mortgage can help with up to \$8,000.

To qualify for these programs, buyers must meet certain income requirements, have a minimum credit score of 640 and take a required homebuyer education class.

"There are many great opportunities for buyers to purchase a home," said Anthony M. Jones, executive director of the Housing Finance Authority said. "Those who have been thinking about it can take a free class and learn if this is the right time for them."

For more information, visit www.pinellascounty.org/community/hfa, or call 1-800-806-5154 or 727-464-8210.

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Local family goes beyond the call of duty

By JULIANA A. TORRES

CLEARWATER – The Whitmans have committed their lives to serving their country and community.

Clearwater residents Phil and Lauren Whitman, who have both served as St. Petersburg firefighters, gathered their family in South Carolina to celebrate the graduation of their second son, Gregory, from U.S. Marine Corps boot camp on Sept. 20.

"We were very fortunate to have all of our family at the graduation," said Lauren Whitman.

Pvt. Gregory Whitman, 18, is a 2013 Largo High School graduate and the third member of his family to join the Marines.

His brother, Gunnery Sgt. Christopher Whitman, 31, has served as a Marine for 13 years, earning a Bronze Star with Valor and a Purple Heart. A Clearwater High School graduate in 2000, Christopher currently is stationed at Camp Geiger in North Carolina, serving as an instructor to instructors of the Infantry Training Battalion.

Their brother-in-law, Lance Cpl. Jacob Faulkner, 21, graduated from Largo High School and has served three years in the



The Whitman family gathered in South Carolina Sept. 20 to celebrate Pvt. Gregory Whitman's graduation from Marine Corps boot camp. Gregory's older brother, Christopher Whitman, and brother-in-law, Jacob Faulkner, also serve in the Marines. Posing in front of the Marine Corps memorial at Paris Island recruit depot are, from left, Lance Cpl. Jacob Faulkner, 21, and his wife, Bridgett Whitman Faulkner, 21; Olivia Whitman, 14; Gunnery Sgt. Christopher Whitman, 31, his daughter, Daveny Whitman, 4, and wife Jessica Whitman, 33, Carole Whitman, 20, and Pvt. Gregory Whitman, 18.

Marines. He currently serves as a ceremonial marcher at the Marine Barracks in Washington, D.C.

Lauran Whitman said that she and her three daughters Bridgett Faulkner, 21; Carole Whitman, 20, and Olivia Whitman, 14, "are so proud of the incredible sacrifice and call to service that has been such an

important part of our family." Lauren Whitman was a firefighter/paramedic for St. Petersburg Fire and Rescue. Her husband, Lt. Phil Whitman, a 28-year veteran of the department, was the 2011 Fire Officer of the Year.

The grass isn't always greener on the other side

As parents, it is important to take time out and go on dates.

I remember the pediatrician telling my husband and me when we had our first daughter that we should go out on a date at least once a month. Over the past nine years, it has been hard to find the time with two young kids and busy schedules. It is also expensive when you have to pay for a babysitter and the date.

But we have managed to get out every once in a while, and for one of our recent outings, we went out to dinner. After dinner, we decided we would check out a local restaurant/pub that we had never been to before and have a drink. It's not too often we get to just sit, relax and talk without being interrupted by our kids.

We sat at a high-top table in the bar area and started people watching. We noticed a lot of the people at the restaurant were wearing white nametags and asking each other, "What's your number?" Some of them even came up to our table and asked us if we were POF'ers.

We had no idea what they were talking about until we asked our waitress. Somehow, we landed in the middle of a Plenty of Fish social. Plenty of Fish, we learned, is an organization to help single people meet other single people.

My husband and I continued to observe the people and noticed that it was a crowd of all different ages, ranging from people in their 30s to about 70. It was interesting to say the least to watch these people trying to get to know one another.

While we were there, we noticed two guys in their early 40s sitting in a booth. They didn't have nametags on, but they were checking out the scene. We asked them if they were part of the social. They said they came to see what it was like, but didn't want name tags just in case they didn't want to be a part of it.

We started talking to them about why they were there. One of them said he was there to help his friend find a date, but he personally didn't need help with dating. He told us several times that night that he was 6 feet, 7 inches tall and 300 pounds and that he had plenty of dates. Maybe size does matter.

Anyway, his friend's wife had died recently, and he wanted to take him out.

What was interesting was they told us they had each been married three times. They were both nice-looking and very nice guys, as far as we could tell. They said their marriage track record wasn't something they would bring up with in conversation though with the ladies.

My husband and I started talking about what it must be like these days to be single and looking for companionship. It wasn't what we had remembered from dating when we were younger in the "good ol' times." This was different. We actually were clinging to each other as we watched, commenting that this was good couples' therapy. Even the people who were a part of the social told us: "Be glad you have each other."

I know in my own life, it's hard to be a wife and mom and with all the demands of every day. I know marriage takes work, but it is such a blessing. I thank God for my husband and kids. I saw that the grass isn't always greener on the other side. What we may think is fun just may not be what it's cracked up to be.

By the way, we found out the "What's your number?" question was part of a game where everyone got a number when they registered, and they won a prize if they found the person who had their matching number.

My husband and I are glad our numbers are always the same these days.

Kadi Hendricks Tubbs, mother of two girls ages 7 and 9, lives in Seminole. Visit her blog at Mom2MomFamilyFun.blogspot.com.



Mom 2 Mom
Kadi Hendricks
Tubbs

What's Selling in Pinellas County

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Wonderful 2 bedroom, 1.5 bath, 1-car garage home located in a great Seminole neighborhood. This home is well maintained with many updates. Pride of ownership is very apparent as this lovely home has a lot to offer any buyer. Centrally located with the Pinellas Trail access 1/2 block away and near parks, beaches, shopping and much more.

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Immaculate Tara Cay townhome! This gorgeous townhome features 3 levels of functional living space. The main level offers the living room, beautifully updated kitchen, guest bedroom, full bathroom, dining area and screen enclosed balcony. The 3rd level has 2 master suites, each with their own sitting areas and private bathrooms.

Sandy Hartmann
Realty Executives - Adamo & Associates

Peace Memorial Presbyterian Church
CLEARWATER – The Church Women United Tampa Bay Area units will host a human rights program and workshop on human trafficking on Friday, Oct. 4, at Peace Memorial Presbyterian Church, 110 S. Fort Harrison Ave.
Registration will begin at 10 a.m. The program will start at 10:30 a.m., followed by a box lunch and workshop, 1 to 2 p.m. The speaker and workshop leader will be Giselle Rodriguez, state outreach coordinator for the Florida Coalition Against Human Trafficking. To make reservations for the lunch and workshop, call 734-1237.
The program and workshop are open to the public. Church Women United is a National Ecumenical Women's movement focused on issues of justice, reconciliation and peace.

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Faith briefs

St. Dunstan's Anglican Church
LARGO – The second annual Blessing of the Animals will be Saturday, Oct. 5, 10 a.m. to noon, at St. Dunstan's Anglican Church, 1270 Sunny Breeze Ave.

The community is invited to attend this event. All warm-blooded pets are welcomed and will receive an individual blessing.

It is a tradition of Anglican churches to celebrate the feast day of St. Francis of Assisi, Patron Saint of the Animals by Blessing of the Animals. St. Francis is a patron saint of Italy who lived from about 1181 to 1226 A.D. He is also credited with the creation of the Prespio or Creche (Nativity scene) using live animals in the tableau.
For more information, visit www.stdunstansanglican.org.

Hope Presbyterian Church
CLEARWATER – Vendor opportunities are available for the Clearwater Hope Fest, set for Saturday, Nov. 2, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., at Hope Presbyterian Church, 1698 S. Belcher Road.

Vendor opportunities are available for groups, individuals, craft circles and small businesses. Vendors will have an opportunity to sell handmade and unique items of interest to the general public at the event. Hosted by the church, this event will include a

vendor craft fair, silent auction put on by the church, a food truck rally, as well as other fun and games.

Vendors interested in participating can call 531-3200.

Visit www.clearwaterhopefest.weebly.com.

St. Paul's United Methodist Church

LARGO – Boy Scout Troop 468 will host a fundraiser and rummage sale Saturday, Oct. 5, 8 a.m. to 3 p.m., at St. Paul's United Methodist Church, 1199 Highland Ave.

The rummage sale will be located in and outside of the Christian Life Enrichment Center. Admission is free. For information, call 642-1843.

Peace Memorial Presbyterian Church

CLEARWATER – The Peace Memorial Concert Series will kick off Sunday, Oct. 13, 3 p.m., at Peace Memorial Presbyterian Church, 110 S. Fort Harrison Ave.

The season will start with Jazz and More, a jazz variety program featuring the Jazz Ensemble of the Tarpon Springs Leadership Conservatory for the Arts. These outstanding young musicians are from the Leadership Conservatory for the Arts in Tarpon Springs, the premiere school for Pinellas musical talent, according to the press release. Both the Jazz Ensemble and the Jazz Combo will play, as well as some of their top soloists.

The program will feature such standards as "Day by Day," "Corner Pocket" and "Bags Gone." Attendees will have an opportunity to help these young musicians reach their goal of being the lone Florida band performing in the 2013 Macy's Day Parade.

No tickets needed and seating is first come, first served. An offering will be taken, with a \$5 minimum suggested. Doors open at 2:30 p.m.

After the concert, there will be a light reception in the fellowship hall so attendees will have an opportunity to meet, greet and thank the musicians.

For information, call 446-3001 or visit www.PeaceMemorial.org.

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State insurance options plentiful

Health department announces news about insurance marketplace

The Department of Health and Human Services announced that significant choice and lower than expected premiums are available in Florida's new Health Insurance Marketplace.

A new report released Sept. 26 by HHS finds that in Florida, consumers will see increased competition in the Health Insurance Marketplace, leading to new and affordable choices for consumers.

According to the report, Florida consumers will be able to choose from an average of 102 health plans in the Marketplace. Nationally, the vast majority of consumers will have a choice of at least two different health insurance companies - usually more. Premiums nationwide also will be around 16 percent lower than originally expected - with about 95 percent of eligible uninsured who live in states with lower than expected premiums - before taking into account financial assistance.

"We are excited to see that rates in the Florida Marketplace are even lower than originally projected," said HHS Secretary Kathleen Sebelius. "In the past, consumers were too often denied or priced-out of quality health insurance options, but thanks to the Affordable Care Act consumers will be able to choose from a number of new coverage options at a price that is affordable."

The new Marketplace opened for business Oct. 1, and millions of Americans are able to shop for and purchase health insurance coverage in one place. Consumers will be able to find out whether they qualify for premium assistance and compare plans side-by-side based on pricing, quality and benefits. No one can be denied coverage because of a preexisting condition.

October 1 marked the beginning of a six-month long open enrollment period that runs through March 2014. Coverage begins as early as Jan. 1, or in as little as 100 days from Sept. 26.

The new report found that individuals in Florida have an average of 102 qualified health plan choices. Plans in the Marketplace will be categorized as either "gold," "silver," or "bronze." Young adults also will have the option of purchasing a "catastrophic" plan, increasing their number of choices.

In Florida, the average premium for the lowest-cost silver plan will be \$304 and for the lowest cost bronze plan will be \$257. The average premium nationally for the second lowest cost silver plan will be \$328

before tax credits, or 16 percent below projections based off of Congressional Budget Office estimates.

About 95 percent of uninsured people eligible for the Marketplace live in a state where their average premium is lower than projections. And states with the lowest premiums have more than twice the number of insurance companies offering plans than states with the highest premiums.

Premium and plan options are broken down by state where information is available. For example, the report shows that a 27-year old living in Florida who makes \$25,000 per year will pay \$96 per month for the lowest cost bronze plan and \$145 per month for the second lowest cost silver plan, taking into account tax credits. For a family of four in Florida with an income of \$50,000 per year, the lowest bronze plan would cost only \$104 per month.

In Tampa-St.Petersburg-Clearwater, a 27-year old who makes \$25,000 per year will pay \$113 per month for the lowest cost bronze plan and \$145 per month for the second lowest cost silver plan, taking into account tax credits. For a family of four in the local area with an income of \$50,000 per year, the lowest bronze plan would cost only \$165 per month. And Tampa-St.Petersburg-Clearwater consumers will be able to choose from among 102 qualified health plans.

The majority (around 6 out of 10) of the individuals who are uninsured today will be able to find coverage for \$100 or less per month in the Marketplace taking into account premium tax credits and Medicaid coverage.

Consumers can get help finding Marketplace coverage through a number of different resources. They can get more information through HealthCare.gov, or cuidadodesalud.gov. They can participate in an online web chat, or call 1-800-318-2596 toll free (TTY: 1-855-889-4325) to speak with a trained customer service representative with translation services available in 150 languages.

There also will be people in local communities who can provide in-person help with coverage choices. Those will include Navigators and other assisters, community health centers across the country and local libraries.

Pinellas County is finalizing plans to launch its Navigators program with more information coming in the near future.

Being responsible for your own health

When I was in physical therapy about a year ago, there was a lady on the table next to me who was grunting and groaning and huffing and puffing her way through her exercises.



Your mind matters

Dina Meitner

At one point, when it seemed to be particularly hard for her, she looked over at me and said do you know why I do this? I have to stay in shape so that my son doesn't have to take care of me. I don't want him to spend his young life that way. Then, she started huffing and puffing again.

Last week, I overheard a conversation between two ladies who were smoking. One told the other that she knew she should quit, but that she had to "die of something," and "hey, I took care of my kids so they have to take care of me," and laughed. I instantly felt bad for people I didn't know. I had images of middle-aged children with jobs, houses and families of their own. And while they were dealing with their day-to-day responsibilities and pressures of life, having to take their mother from doctor appointment to doctor appointment, from treatment to the hospital and home, planning meals and caring for her throughout the week. I felt bad for her too and wondered if she understood the gravity of her statement. I imagine she loves her children and she would not want to take time away from their lives, saddling them with years of taking care of her when it could be avoided.

It is a beautiful thing when family steps up and supports us in our old age and I believe in that. Accidents happen and we're also not responsible for things we don't know. Many families have the means and would prefer to take care of their loved ones in their golden years. That's not what I'm talking about here. I'm talking about becoming educated while you have time and before you get to that place. I'm also talking about people who know better but do it anyway. It's a new way of thinking. If you are 60 years old or younger, you are probably aware of the drawbacks of inactivity, eating bad food and indulging in alcohol, tobacco and drugs. There was a time when very little education was available but those times are behind us now. If you've chosen a sedentary life or you have a problem with food or anything in excess including smoking, drinking and/or drugging, information is available that will give you insight into your potential future. More importantly, help is available.

If you're a smoker, imagine how mentally empowering it would be to say, "I quit smoking so I don't get COPD. I won't have to carry oxygen around and my kids won't have to take care of me." How good do you think you would feel about yourself if you were pre-diabetic, and before it was too late, you could say, "I stopped eating ice cream to avoid diabetes so my husband doesn't have to spend his golden years wheeling me around from doctor to doctor?"

What's the worst thing that could happen if you decide to make today the day to start getting healthy? You're never too old to learn how to take care of yourself.

When you decide to take responsibility for your own health, you'll be on this planet a whole lot longer, you'll feel better physically and mentally and you won't be a burden to your family. You will be a more valuable member of your family and the community and it feels great to be in control. Being responsible for your own health is a win-win: you love yourself and your family. It's double happiness.

A staff member at the Bay Pines VA Hospital from 2006-2013, Dina Meitner, LCSW, is currently in private practice at 2081 Indian Rocks Road.

Briefs

HealthSouth celebrates former patients

LARGO - HealthSouth Rehabilitation Hospital of Largo hosted a Celebration Reunion Sept. 17.

The event celebrated former patients who overcame their injury or physical issues. A district representative from Congressman Bill Young's office, the vice mayor of Largo and other community dignitaries attended the event.



Dr. Richard Liles, medical director of HealthSouth Largo, takes part in the recent Celebration Reunion.

HealthSouth earns re-certifications

LARGO - The Joint Commission has again awarded HealthSouth Rehabilitation Hospital of Largo with certifications for Disease-Specific Care in hip fracture rehabilitation and stroke rehabilitation.

The Joint Commission's Gold Seal of Approval was awarded to the hospital for its compliance with the organization's national standards for healthcare quality and safety in disease-specific care.

"In achieving Joint Commission certification, HealthSouth Rehabilitation Hospital of Largo has demonstrated its commitment to the highest level of care for its patients with hip fractures," said Jean Range, M.S., TR.N., C.P.H.Q., in a press release. Range is executive director of Disease-Specific Care Certification, The Joint Commission. "Certification is a voluntary process and I commend them for successfully undertaking this challenge to elevate its standard of care and instill confidence in the community it serves."

To earn these certifications, both rehabilitation programs underwent an extensive, unannounced, on-site evaluation by a team of Joint Commission reviewers. The programs were evaluated against Joint Commission standards through an assessment of the programs' processes, the programs' ability to evaluate and improve care within its own organization, and interviews with patients and staff.

"HealthSouth Rehabilitation Hospital of Largo was recertified by The Joint Commission for the care they deliver to patients that have had strokes and hip fractures," said Tripp Smith, CEO of HealthSouth of Largo. "This recertification highlights that HealthSouth Largo has implemented evidence-based protocols and best practices to ensure stroke and hip fracture patients receive the best care possible."

Able Medical Aids to host ostomy event

LARGO - In conjunction with World Ostomy Day, a Celebration of

Ostomy Life will be presented Saturday, Oct. 5, 10 a.m. to noon, at Able Medical Aids, 1280 Missouri Ave. N.

This free meet-and-greet event will feature refreshments, testimonials from ostomates and a question-and-answer session with a WOC nurse. Attendees also will have an opportunity to see the largest ostomy supply department in Pinellas County.

For information, call Marilyn Bossard at 391-5682.

Hospital to take part in cancer study

ST. PETERSBURG - St Petersburg General Hospital will participate in a historic Cancer Prevention Study-3 (CPS-3) with the American Cancer Society.

The nationwide CPS-3 involving nearly 300,000 men and women, will be the longest cancer study ever done and will help researchers better understand the genetic, environmental and lifestyle factors that cause or prevent cancer.

St Petersburg General Hospital is accredited by the Commission on Cancer by the American College of Surgeons and encourages community members to be a part of the fight against cancer.

The hospital is encouraging the community to take advantage of this opportunity to make an impact on the lives of many. Individuals may choose to participate if they are willing to make a long-term commitment to the study, which involves completing follow-up surveys periodically over the next 20 to 30 years, are between the ages of 30 and 65 years old and have never been diagnosed with cancer.

Enrollment will take place Wednesday, Nov. 13, at the Medical Office Building adjacent to the hospital at 6450 38th Ave. N., St. Petersburg. Participants will fill out a comprehensive survey packet about health history; provide a small blood sample that will be drawn by a trained, certified phlebotomist.

Interested participants are asked to make an appointment to attend. To make an appointment, visit stpetgeneral.com/util/documents/Cancer-Prevention-Study-3-Info.pdf.

Visit the Largo Leader every day at www.TBNweekly.com

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Obituaries

SAM "CUZ" MARTIN

83, of Clearwater, Fla., passed away September 10, 2013. He was an Army veteran who served in the Korean War. He retired in 2000 and moved to Clearwater from Michigan. Mr. Martin was predeceased by his wife, Mary Ann Martin, both parents, 2 siblings and a granddaughter. He is survived by his daughter, Laura (Ron) Lubeck and son, Paul (Kathy) Martin, 4 grandchildren and 3 great-grandchildren. Arrangements were entrusted to International Cremation Services of New Port Richey, Fla.

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Fishing on the rebound after heavy rains

With a small cold front and a ton of rain behind us, the gradual transition into fall continues. Last weekend's beautiful weather was perfect for fishing either inshore or offshore. The water clarity was excellent by Saturday and the beaches were again full of life. Schools of small Spanish mackerel can be seen driving baitfish to the surface, a sight that was sure to get you excited about fishing. We live in such a fishy area.



Fish Tales
Capt. Tyson Wellerstein

Inshore fishing slowed down a bit last week most likely due to all the rain. Too much fresh water in that short of a time period will disrupt the bait patterns and in turn the predators. By the weekend it showed good signs of improvement. Redfish remain top targets. With slightly cooler water temperatures this week look for the fish to push up onto the flats as the shadow mullet schools. These fish should be plenty hungry and willing to track down a top-water plug or a gold spoon.

Offshore fishing was very good this past weekend. Gag and red grouper are abundant on hard bottom ledges in 60 to 80 feet. Standard tactics of firing up the bottom with frozen sardines or herring

then switching to frisky pinfish and grunts worked very well. One of our keys to success lately has been the willingness to move as soon as the bite slows. In these shallower depths a move of a couple hundred feet can yield more fish.

Near-shore fishing is absolutely on the verge of breaking loose, and who knows with the overnight temps in the low 70s all week this might be a good weekend to break out the stinger rigs and do some slow trolling in close. Small Spanish mackerel, a favorite food of kingfish dominate our near shore waters. Slow trolling legal sized mackerel around the schools of bait is an exciting way to fish. Many times the kingfish will skyrocket many feet into the air when they strike a slow trolled mackerel. Other good baits would include mullet, blue runners, ladyfish and shad.

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 helps buy children's life jackets

PINELLAS PARK – The second annual Fireman John Memorial Fishing Tournament Sept. 14 raised \$1,800 to help purchase life jackets for children.

With the assistance of 70 anglers and sponsors, the fishing tournament benefitted All Children's Hospital in support of Florida Safe Pools, to purchase life jackets for children with special needs as well as children found in boats not wearing life jackets.

The tournament was held in honor of retired Pinellas Park firefighter and avid fisherman John Litz. In September 2011, while fishing with a friend, Litz was thrown from the boat and drowned. He was not wearing a life jacket.

Visit www.facebook.com/FiremanJohn-FishingTournament.



Photo courtesy of TOM MERRYWEATHER
Logan Houck, 5, pictured during the Fireman John Memorial Fishing Tournament Sept. 14, took first place in the junior trout division with a 17-inch trout.

Gardening briefs

Violet society to meet

LARGO – The African Violet Society of Pinellas will meet Monday, Oct. 7, 7 p.m., at Cypress Palms, 400 Lake Ave., Largo.

The program will cover Sinningia, another violet cousin. Guests are welcome and are encouraged to bring in plants for show and tell. There will be a raffle and refreshments.

For information, call 585-5170.

Extension to offer tours

LARGO – Vegetable, herb and tropical fruit garden tours will be offered Thursday, Oct. 3, 9 to 11 a.m., at Pinellas County Extension, 12520 Ulmerton Road.

The free tours allow visitors to learn more about growing their own food as they view an eye-catching array of culinary, medicinal and aromatic herbs, trees and flowers in Extension's Florida Botanical Herb

Garden. Attendees will wander the brick paths between the Egyptian, Mediterranean, Asian and beverage plantings and learn how the featured plants can be used in the home. Guests also will learn more about the tropical fruits that do well in the Florida climate including many varieties of bananas, figs, papayas, mangoes, avocados, sugar cane and citrus as well as little-known fruits that are not usually considered by the home gardener including Jackfruit, Carambola, Buddha's Hand and Pomegranate.

The tours are recommended for adults and are limited to groups of 14 to 16 people. Advance registration is required.

To register or for information, call 582-2501 or visit www.eventbrite.com/event/6241882639/eorg.

Garden forum set

LARGO – A free community and school garden forum will be pre-

sented Saturday, Oct. 19, 10 a.m. to noon, at Pinellas County Extension, 12520 Ulmerton Road.

Urban Horticulture Extension Agent Theresa Badurek will host this quarterly forum on community or school gardening. The resources provided would be ideal for those interested in starting a community garden or those who wish to expand or improve an existing community garden. Food security will be this session's special topic.

Advance registration is required. Call 582-2501 or visit www.eventbrite.com/event/7791888749/eorg.

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Cracker Barrel 4011 Ulmerton Road Clearwater, FL 33762 10/8 at 2 p.m.	Diagnostic Clinic 1301 2nd Avenue SW Largo, FL 33770 10/8 at 2 p.m. 10/10 at 10 a.m.	Diagnostic Clinic 3131 N. McMullen Booth Rd. Clearwater, FL 33761 10/8 at 2 p.m. 10/9 at 10 a.m.	Perkins 2375 Curlew Rd. Palm Harbor, FL 34698 10/13 at 2:30 p.m.
Dunkin Donuts 1200 Pasadena Avenue S. Pasadena, FL 33707 10/9 at 2 p.m.	Perkins 2626 Gulf to Bay Blvd. Clearwater, FL 33759 10/9 at 2 p.m.	Eve's Restaurant 3150 Tampa Rd. Oldsmar, FL 34677 10/10 at 2 p.m.	Don't miss out! The Annual Election Period ends soon.

NOW TAKING RESERVATIONS! Call 877-287-8202 for seminar locations.

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Top five diversions

- **Gary Wright**, Friday, Oct. 4, 8 p.m., at Largo Cultural Center, 105 Central Park Drive, Largo. Tickets start at \$34.50. Call 587-6793 or visit largoarts.com. For more, see story at right.
- **Sounds of Soul**, Friday, Oct. 4, 7 p.m., at Seminole City Park, 7464 Ridge Road. As part of Seminole's Music in the Park series, the band will serve up a Motown tribute. Sounds of Soul is a high-energy group boasting superior vocals and slick dance moves, all powered by pure soul. Performing for audiences across the nation since 1996, the group is made up of six seasoned entertainers who have excelled as outstanding singers, dancers and songwriters. Each member has shared the national recording spotlight driven by the power of Capital Records, Big Apple Records, and R7S Records to name but a few. The show is a combination of Motown classics mixed with some of the greatest songs of all time. Sounds of Soul performs hits by artists such as The Temptations, The Four Tops, Aretha Franklin, Whitney Houston, The Supremes, Lionel Richie, Tina Turner and Barry White. The two-hour concert is the fifth of six on consecutive Friday nights at the park. Performances run 7 to 9 p.m. Admission is free to all performances. Parking, also free, is available in the park and in a larger lot west of the park between Old Oakhurst Road and the Pinellas Trail. Attendees are invited to bring chairs and blankets. Food and beverages will be available for purchase. For information, visit www.myseminole.com.
- **Charles Gounod's "Romeo & Juliet,"** presented by St. Petersburg Opera, Oct. 4-8, at the Palladium Theater at St. Petersburg College, 253 Fifth Ave. N., St. Petersburg. Performances are Friday, 7:30 p.m.; Sunday, 2 p.m.; and Tuesday, 7:30 p.m. Tickets start at \$21.50. Call 823-2040 or visit www.stpeteopera.org. Shakespeare's tale of feuding families and star crossed lovers is set to lush, sensual music by Charles Gounod. From Juliet's waltz, an ode to being young and in love with life, to the shattering conclusion in the tomb of the Capulets, the music underscores the power of passion to heal the deepest divides. A favorite since its premiere, this opera delivers a timeless tale of love, loyalty, romance, revenge, and tragedy, complete with exquisite orchestral colors, heart stirring choruses, exciting sword fights, and the sunrise balcony scene. The production stars Jeanine DeBique as Juliet, Alex Richardson as Romeo, Gabriel Preisser as Mercutio, Jennifer Panara as Stephano, Heather Witt as Gertrude, Gilad Paz as Tybalt, Nathan Whitson as Frere Laurent, and Juan Jose Ibarra as Count Capulet.
- **Cheap Trick**, Friday, Oct. 4, 8 p.m., at Ruth Eckerd Hall, 1111 McMullen Booth Road, Clearwater. Tickets start at \$39.50. Call 791-7400 or visit www.rutheckerdhall.com. Cheap Trick may be one of the most covered bands of all time. Since the 1970s, they've been blending elements of pop, punk and even metal in a way that is instantly catchy and recognizable. With timeless classics such as "I Want You to Want Me," "Surrender," and "The Flame," Cheap Trick has become a musical institution. Boasting more than 5,000 performances, 20 million records sold, 29 movie soundtracks and 40 gold and platinum recording awards, the band was honored in October 2007 by the Chicago Chapter of National Academy of Recording Arts & Sciences for their contributions to the music industry. The band has most recently performed the "Dream Police" album in its entirety along with an orchestra in select cities across the country. This innovative show also includes many other songs from the band's extensive catalog, garnering their critical acclaim after performances in venues such as the Greek Theatre in Los Angeles.
- **"William Shakespeare's Land of the Dead,"** by John Heimbuch, presented by Hat Trick Theatre, Oct. 4 through 20, in Shimberg Playhouse, at the Straz Center, 1010 N. W.C. MacInnes Place, Tampa. Performances are Thursdays through Saturdays, 8 p.m.; and Sundays, 4 p.m. Tickets start at \$23. Call 813-229-7827 or visit www.strazcenter.org. This thrilling tale is a completely true and accurate account of the 1599 plague of London. Backstage at the Globe Playhouse while "Henry V" is coming to an end, Will Kemp, a resentful clown, and Francis Bacon, a wealthy lawyer pitch an idea to Shakespeare who is trying to defend his current work. Everything comes to a halt when the costumer, Kate, is savagely bitten by a plague ridden madman. The Globe is placed on lockdown while the survivors must fight for their lives. This show is intended for mature audiences and is recommended for ages 16 and older due to violence and some profanity.

'Dream Weaver'

Synthpop pioneer Gary Wright to play Largo Cultural Center

LARGO – American rock musician Gary Wright will weave melodic dreams when he performs Friday, Oct. 4, 8 p.m., at Largo Cultural Center, 105 Central Park Drive, Largo.

Tickets start at \$34.50, plus applicable service fee. Call 587-6793 or visit largoarts.com.

Best known for his 1975 synthpop hit "Dream Weaver," Wright has recorded more than a dozen solo albums in a career that has spanned more than half a century. His biggest hit, "Dream Weaver," has been featured in many movies including "Wayne's World," "The People vs. Larry Flynt" and "Toy Story 3." Wright has continued to have success on the Billboard charts with "Love Is Alive," "Really Wanna Know You" and "Phantom Writer." In 1986, he contributed the song "Hold On to Your Vision" on the soundtrack of Sylvester Stallone's movie "Cobra." "Better By You, Better Than Me," a song written by Wright, was covered by Judas Priest on their 1978 album "Stained Class."

In recent years, Wright has been seen touring with Ringo Starr & His All Starr Band.

The 'Dream Weaver'

Wright's signature song, "Dream Weaver," appeared on the 1975 album "The Dream Weaver." It is generally considered the first synthpop hit song as all instrumentation in "Dream Weaver" was created by synthesizer, except for percussionist Jim Keltner's drums. Synthpop, defined by its primary use of synthesizers, drum machines and sequencers, had roots in electronic art music by artists such as Jean Michel Jarre, Vangelis and Tomita. By the late 1970s, an increasing number of musicians began dabbling with the sound, including Devo and The Human League. As a genre, synthpop did not achieve mainstream commercial success until the early 1980s and the introduction of the New Romantic movement associated with bands such as Duran Duran, ABC, Soft Cell and Ultravox.

"The Dream Weaver" stretched the pop music envelope by featuring the first-ever all keyboard/synthesizer band, pioneering technologies in cut-down versions of synthesizers and drum machines that revolutionized the musical instrument business and changed the sound of pop, rock and R&B forever.

In 1976, the song "Dream Weaver" hit No. 1 in the charts, and its follow-up release "Love Is Alive" climbed to No. 2. In all, "The Dream Weaver" resulted in sales of over two million albums and two million singles. In a business where even the biggest success is often written in the wind, the popular appeal of Wright's songwriting genius has endured. Wright's "Dream Weaver" has directly or indirectly inspired and influenced

See DREAM WEAVER, page 4B

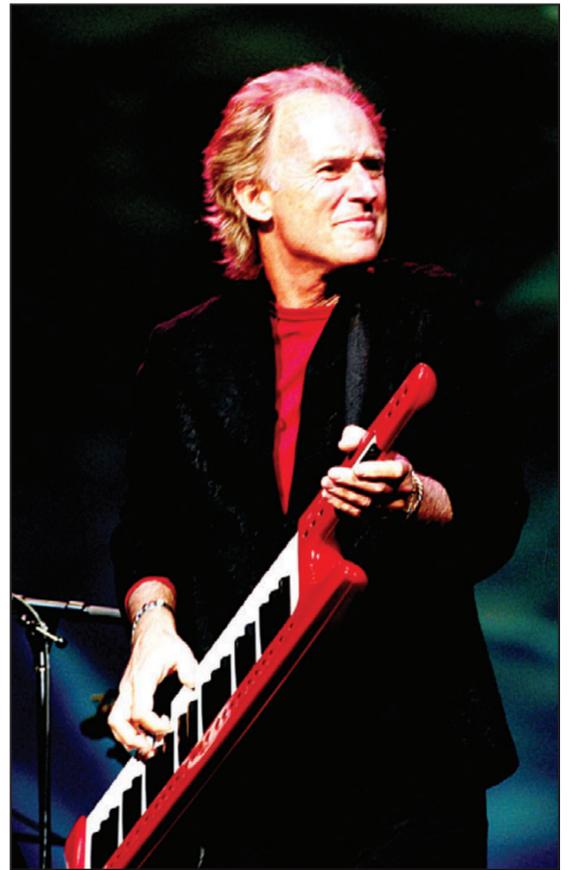


Photo courtesy of LARGO CULTURAL CENTER
Gary Wright takes the stage Oct. 4 at Largo Cultural Center.

Sounds of Soul to perform in Music in the Park

SEMINOLE – Continuing the 17th annual Music in the Park concert series, Sounds of Soul will perform Friday, Oct. 4, 7 p.m., at Seminole City Park, 7464 Ridge Road.

The band will serve up a Motown tribute. Sounds of Soul is a high-energy group boasting superior vocals and slick dance moves, all powered by pure soul. Performing for audiences across the nation since 1996, the group is made up of six seasoned entertainers who have excelled as outstanding singers, dancers and songwriters. Each member has shared the national recording spotlight driven by the power of Capital Records, Big Apple Records, and R7S Records to name but a few.

The show is a combination of Motown classics mixed with some of the greatest songs of all time. Sounds of Soul performs hits by artists such as The Temptations, The Four Tops, Aretha Franklin, Whitney Houston, The Supremes, Lionel Richie, Tina Turner and Barry White.

The two-hour concert is the fifth of six on consecutive Friday nights at the park. Performances run 7 to 9 p.m. Admission is free to all performances. Parking, also free, is available in the park and in a larger lot west of the park between Old Oakhurst Road and the Pinellas Trail. Attendees are invited to bring chairs and blankets. Food and beverages will be available for purchase.

The final performance in the series will take place Oct. 11 and will feature Rocket Man, an Elton John tribute show.

For information, visit www.myseminole.com.



Sounds of Soul takes the stage Oct. 4 at Seminole's Music in the Park concert series.

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Looking Ahead

Largo

• **Gary Wright**, Friday, Oct. 4, 8 p.m., at Largo Cultural Center, 105 Central Park Drive, Largo. Tickets start at \$34.50. Call 587-6793 or visit largoarts.com. Wright's hit song "Dream Weaver" has been featured in many movies including the "Wayne's World" feature film, "The People vs. Larry Flynt" and "Toy Story 3." Wright has continued to have success on the Billboard charts with "Really Wanna Know You" in 1981 and in 1986, he contributed the song "Hold On to Your Vision" on the soundtrack of Sylvester Stallone's movie "Cobra." "Better By You, Better Than Me," a song written by Wright, was also covered by Judas Priest on their 1978 album "Stained Class." Wright has continued to produce and create records through the decades and you may have seen him recently in 2008 and 2010 touring with Ringo Starr and His All Starr Band.

• **Fifth annual Las Vegas Casino Night**, Saturday, Oct. 5, 6 to 10 p.m., at the Armed Forces History Museum, 2050 34th Way N., Largo. Tickets are \$40 for casino and \$80 for the tournament. Call 539-8371 or visit www.armedforcesmuseum.com. The event will feature a full dinner buffet from Orange Blossom Catering, as well as blackjack, roulette, craps, slot machines, poker, a Texas Hold 'em Tournament, silent auction, Chinese auction, prizes and more. This fundraiser benefits the museum's community outreach and youth education programs as well as the museum's mission to honorably preserve the history and memories of the military and its veterans.

• **"Little Shop of Horrors,"** by Howard Ashman and Alan Menken; Oct. 10 through Nov. 3, at New Stage Theatre, inside Country Day World School, 11650 131st St. N., Largo. For performance times and ticket information, call 813-817-2585 or visit newstagelargo.org. A down-and-out skid row floral assistant becomes an overnight sensation when he discovers an exotic plant with a mysterious craving for fresh blood. Soon "Audrey II" grows into an ill-tempered, foul-mouthed, R&B-singing carnivore who offers him fame and fortune in exchange

for feeding its growing appetite, finally revealing itself to be an alien creature poised for global domination.

• **Ambrosia**, Sunday, Oct. 13, 7 p.m., at Largo Cultural Center, 105 Central Park Drive, Largo. Tickets start at \$29.50. Call 587-6793 or visit largoarts.com. Ambrosia, five-time Grammy nominee in 1970s and early 1980s, had five Top 40 hit singles including "Biggest Part of Me," "How Much I Feel" and "You're the Only Woman." Opening the show will be Twinkle Schascle and her band. Twinkle is an international singer-songwriter who released her first debut album, "Haunted By Real Life," through Warner Brothers and was produced by songwriter Patrick Leonard. The album garnered much attention on the pop and jazz charts. Her music video, "Can't Get Love With Money" was featured on VH1 where she was a guest VJ on the Top 21 countdown.

• **"La Cage aux Folles,"** with book by Harvey Fierstein and music and lyrics by Jerry Herman; presented by Eight O'Clock Theatre, Nov. 1-17, at Largo Cultural Center, 105 Central Park Drive, Largo. Performances are Thursdays through Saturdays, 8 p.m.; and Sundays, 2 p.m. Tickets are \$25.50 for adults and \$12.50 for children 19 and younger with identification. A city of Largo handling charge of \$3.50 will be added to each ticket. Call 587-6793 or visit largoarts.com. After 20 years of un-wedded bliss, Georges and Albin, two men partnered for better-or-worse get a bit of both when Georges' son (fathered during a one-night fling) announces his impending marriage to the daughter of a bigoted, right-wing politician. Further complicating the situation is the family business: Albin and Georges run a drag nightclub in St. Tropez, where Albin is the star performer Zaza. Georges reluctantly agrees to masquerade as straight when he meets the family of the bride-to-be. But Albin has other plans, with hilarious results. The production features Michael Newton-Brown as director, Emi Stefanov as music director and James Grenelle as choreographer.

• **"Freckleface Strawberry,"** presented by Stages Productions, Saturday, Nov. 9, 11 a.m., at Largo Cultural Center, 105 Central Park

Drive, Largo. Tickets are \$7.50 for adults and \$6.50 for children. Call 587-6793 or visit largoarts.com. Based on the beloved New York Times bestselling book by celebrated actress Julianne Moore, "Freckleface Strawberry" teaches kids to learn and love the skin they are in. In this beloved story, Freckleface Strawberry will do anything to get rid of her freckles - from scrubbing them with soap, to caking on makeup, and even wearing a ski mask to school. With the help of her loveable schoolmates, Freckleface learns that everyone is different - and that's what makes everyone special.

• **Roger McGuinn**, Friday, Nov. 22, 8 p.m., at Largo Cultural Center, 105 Central Park Drive, Largo. Tickets start at \$29.50. Call 587-6793 or visit largoarts.com. McGuinn, one of the founding members of The Byrds, is known as an innovator for merging folk and rock music in the 1960s. Prior to forming The Byrds, Roger toured and performed folk music with the Limelitters, Chad Mitchell Trio and Bobby Darin as a guitarist and banjo player. His music has been a staple on the music charts as well as many movie soundtracks. Some hits singles include "Turn! Turn! Turn!," "Eight Miles High" and "Mr. Tambourine Man."

• **Diane Schuur**, Sunday, Nov. 24, 7 p.m., at the Largo Cultural Center, 105 Central Park Drive, Largo. Tickets start at \$34.50. Call 587-6793 or visit largoarts.com. Schuur is a two-time Grammy winner for Best Jazz Vocal Performance - Female and has a total of five Grammy nominations to her name. She has performed at some of the world's most prestigious venues including the Carnegie Hall and the White House. She has also toured the world performing with greats such as Quincy Jones, Stan Getz, B.B. King, Dizzy Gillespie, Maynard Ferguson, Ray Charles, Joe Williams and Stevie Wonder.

Clearwater

• **"Arsenic and Old Lace,"** by Joseph Kesselring; Oct. 10-20, at Francis Wilson Playhouse, 302 Seminole St., Clearwater. Performances are Thursdays through Saturdays, 8 p.m.; and Sundays, 2 p.m. Tickets are \$21 for adults and \$11 for students. Call 446-1360 or visit www.franciswilsonplayhouse.org. The comedy revolves around the Brewster family, an eccentric, disturbed and frequently murderous bunch. Mix two spinsters with lonely old men, stir in a lethal concoction and you have the recipe for a funny plot.

• **Kellie Pickler**, Friday, Oct. 11, 8 p.m., at Ruth Eckerd Hall, 1111 McMullen Booth Road, Clearwater. Tickets start at \$29. Call 791-7400 or visit www.rutheckerdhall.com. Known for her restless small-town dream to reach for the stars of the music world, Pickler was first recognized as one of the six finalists in the fifth season of the popular reality TV show "American Idol," where it was evident to all she was a star. While on tour with Idol, she recorded her debut album, "Small Town Girl," which has gone on to sell more than 800,000 copies worldwide and produce three hit singles, "Red High Heels," "I Wonder" and "Things That Never Cross a Man's Mind," which firmly established her in the Country Music industry. Her 2008 follow-up album featured country radio hits "Don't You Know You're Beautiful," "Best Days of Your Life" and "Didn't You Know How Much I Loved You." Having established herself as not only a powerful vocalist but also a songwriter, Pickler released her third studio album, "100 Proof," with famed producer Frank Liddell and Luke Wooten. An avid supporter of the U.S. military, she has performed on six USO Tours, having most recently visited Afghanistan in December 2012.

• **Larry the Cable Guy**, Saturday, Oct. 12, 5 and 8 p.m., at Ruth Eckerd Hall, 1111 McMullen Booth Road, Clearwater. Tickets start at \$49.75. Call 791-7400 or visit www.rutheckerdhall.com. One of top comedians in the country, Larry the Cable Guy brings his latest stand-up tour to Ruth Eckerd Hall for two shows. Larry the Cable Guy is a multiplatinum recording artist, Grammy nominee, Billboard award winner and the current host of "Only in America with Larry the Cable Guy" for the History Channel. Larry's road to stardom included the Blue Collar Comedy Tour, which grossed more than \$15 million. Larry's first comedy album release "Lord, I Apologize" has reached gold status, selling more than 500,000 copies. The CD was No. 1 on the Billboard Comedy Charts for 15 weeks in a row. His DVD special "Git-R-Done" has sold more than one million copies and has been certified platinum. Reno Collier will open the show.

St. Petersburg

• **Cristian Castro**, Wednesday, Oct. 23, 7:30 p.m., at The Mahaffey Theater, 400 First St. S., St. Petersburg. Tickets start at \$29. Call 893-7832 or visit www.themahaffey.com. Castro, a perennial chart presence since the early '90s, is a Grammy Award nominated Mexican pop star and sex symbol. The son of renowned actress and singer Veronica Castro and comedian Manuel Valdes, Castro started as a child actor appearing alongside his mother on the telenovela "El Derecho de Nacer." He branched out with the release of his first album, "Agua Nueva," in 1992. His music career was launched a year later with the song, "Nunca Voy a Olvidarte" ("I Will Never Forget You") which became a No. 1 hit on the Hot Latin Tracks chart. Touring catapulted him into the limelight. Castro was nominated for Pop New Artist of the Year at the Lo Nuestro Awards (best of Latin music) in 1993 and Male Pop Artist of the Year in 1993. His biggest hit to date is "Amor Eterno," a Hot Latin Tracks topper that cracked the Billboard Hot 100 climbing all the way to No. 78 despite its Spanish-language vocals. He continues to record romantic love ballads in Spanish. Earlier this year Castro released a live album, "Primera Fila," that features well-known favorites and original songs.

• **"Fiddler on the Roof,"** through Nov. 3, at freeFall Theatre, 6099 Central Ave., St. Petersburg. Tickets range from \$16 to \$44. Call 498-5205 or visit www.freefall.com. The Tony Award-winning musical that has captured the hearts of people all over the world with its universal story of life, love and tradition will kick off freeFall Theatre Company's "Season of Outcasts." "Fiddler on the Roof" features a music by Jerry Bock and lyrics by Sheldon Harnick, with a book by Joseph Stein, based on the stories of Sholom Aleichem. One of the beloved musical scores in the history of the American theater includes "Tradition," "Matchmaker, Matchmaker," "If I Were a Rich Man," and "Sunrise,

See LOOKING AHEAD, page 8B

Crossword

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14					15				16			
17				18					19			
20				21				22				
		23	24				25					
26	27	28				29				30	31	32
33				34		35			36			
37			38	39				40		41		
42				43		44			45		46	
47					48			49		50		
		51					52					
53	54	55				56			57	58	59	60
61						62			63			
64					65				66			
67					68				69			

Across

- Indian semi-classical vocal music
- Brickbat
- Bust maker
- Cool
- Legal prefix
- Sundae topper, perhaps
- Person who interprets constitutional law strictly
- Makeup, e.g.
- "... ___ he drove out of sight"
- Enlarge
- Soon, to a bard
- Drop
- Horse's fast gait
- Outlaw
- www.yahoo.com, e.g. (acronym)
- Riot
- No longer in
- "Get ___!"
- Foul
- Brain area
- Not fulfilled
- Doozie
- "China Beach" setting
- Scenery and props in a play
- Photo equipment
- ___ nitrate
- #1 spot
- Young offspring of a dog
- "___ Ng" (They Might Be Giants song)
- Challenge for a barber
- Instruments with parabolic antennae (2 wds)
- Boosts
- 20-20, e.g.
- Dukes
- High school formal dance
- Convene
- Aegean vacation locale

Down

- Boor's lack

- ___ vera
- Tissue joining two parts of an organ
- Bad way to go?
- Astern
- Brush off
- Shoestring
- "A jealous mistress": Emerson
- Unmarried girl
- Not sanctioned by law
- "Mi chiamano Mimi," e.g.
- Medical advice, often
- Pigeon's home
- Look into again, as a cold case
- Drunk, in slang
- "___ any drop to drink": Coleridge
- Atlanta-based airline
- Masters
- "You ___ kidding!" (contraction)
- Andean animal
- Change, as a clock
- Agreeing (with)
- Except
- Swelling
- Noise and confusion
- Strict adherence to the law
- Tropical American plants with lancetlike leaves
- Beat
- Cap
- Modus operandi
- Autobiography
- About
- "That's a ___!"
- "Aquarius" musical
- Taro's edible root
- On the safe side, at sea
- ___ line (major axis of an elliptical orbit)
- Remaining after all deductions (var. spelling)
- "___ quam videri" (North Carolina's motto)
- "The Three Faces of ___"
- Ozone enemy (abbrev.)

Sudoku

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

Sudoku answers from last week

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

Crossword answers from last week

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	
14					15				16				
17					18				19				
20					21				22				
		23	24				25						
26	27	28				29				30	31	32	
33					34		35			36			
37				38	39				40		41		
42					43		44			45		46	
47						48			49		50		
		51						52					
53	54	55					56			57	58	59	60
61							62			63			
64							65			66			
67							68			69			

Horoscopes

October 3, 2013

Capricorn

December 22 - January 19

A senior's health crisis passes, and you have much to celebrate. Capricorn. Bring everyone together for some food and fun. Time is ticking on a project.

Aquarius

January 20 - February 18

Unbelievable, Aquarius. A friend bails on you again. It's not like them to be so irresponsible. Find out what is going on and do your best to get them back on track.

Pisces

February 19 - March 20

Money talks, Pisces. Don't dismiss the value of a dollar, especially as it pertains to your talents. You could always use more cash. A deadline is extended.

Aries

March 21 - April 19

Magic is in the air. Can't you feel it, Aries? Whatever you've been avoiding, now is the time to confront it and deal with it. The results will astound you.

Taurus

April 20 - May 20

Seriously, Taurus, the timing is off. Move the event to another day. A taste of the good life motivates a friend to change career paths. Be supportive.

Gemini

May 21 - June 21

Green is in, Gemini. Take a look around your home and find some ways to implement the three R's. Mother Earth and your bank account are counting on you to do your part.

Cancer

June 22 - July 22

Fitness goals are re-evaluated, and new strategies are implemented. A face from the past revives an old dream. Go for it, Cancer. A memo makes an interesting point.

Leo

July 23 - August 22

Cooler temperatures create the ideal backdrop for romantic adventures. Whisk away that special someone. Destiny calls. Do you hear it, Leo?

Virgo

August 23 - September 22

Success is a relative term. If you're happy with where you're headed, Virgo, that's all that matters. Cast away the doubts of others and get a move on.

Libra

September 23 - October 22

A situation arises at work, and the outcome is iffy at best. Do what you can to help, Libra, but don't go overboard. The planning for a special event begins.

Scorpio

October 23 - November 21

You're a hard worker, Scorpio, and your home is proof of it. There is no shame, however, in calling in a pro now and then—especially if you are in over your head.

Sagittarius

November 22 - December 21

Extreme conditions call for extreme measures, Sagittarius. Think outside of the box and make a plan of attack. You have one shot to get it right.

Opening this week

Sci-fi thriller 'Gravity' pairs Bullock, Clooney; Affleck stars in 'Runner Runner'

Compiled by LEE CLARK ZUMPE

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

'Gravity'

Genre: Science fiction and thriller
 Cast: Sandra Bullock and George Clooney
 Director: Alfonso Cuarón
 Rated: PG-13

Academy Award winners Sandra Bullock and George Clooney star in "Gravity," a heart-pounding thriller that pulls you into the infinite and unforgiving realm of deep space.

Oscar nominee Alfonso Cuarón directed the film.

Bullock plays Dr. Ryan Stone, a brilliant engineer on her first shuttle mission, with veteran astronaut Matt Kowalski (Clooney). But on a seemingly routine spacewalk, disaster strikes. The shuttle is destroyed, leaving Stone and Kowalski completely alone - tethered to nothing but each other and spiraling out into the blackness.

The deafening silence tells them they have lost any link to Earth ... and any chance for rescue. As fear turns to panic, every gulp of air eats away at what little oxygen is left.

But the only way home may be to go further out into the terrifying expanse of space.



Photo courtesy of WARNER BROS. PICTURES

Above, Sandra Bullock stars as Ryan Stone in Warner Bros. Pictures' dramatic thriller "Gravity," a Warner Bros. Pictures release. At left, online gambling tycoon Ivan Block (Ben Affleck), right, shows his protégé Richie Furst (Justin Timberlake) the ropes in "Runner Runner."

'Runner Runner'

Genre: Drama and thriller
 Cast: Justin Timberlake, Ben Affleck, Gemma Arterton and Anthony Mackie
 Director: Brad Furman
 Rated: R

Princeton grad student Richie (Justin Timberlake), believing he's been swindled, travels to Costa Rica to confront online gambling tycoon Ivan Block (Ben Affleck). Richie is seduced by Block's promise of immense wealth, until he learns the disturbing truth about his benefactor. When the FBI tries to coerce Richie to help bring down Block, Richie faces his biggest gamble ever: attempting to outmaneuver the two forces closing in on him.

Richie is chasing a new version of the American dream: easy, instant and limitless wealth. Once on the Wall Street fast track, Richie lost everything when the market crashed and is now starting over, hustling his way through graduate school. After being cheated by an online gambling site and watching his tuition money disappear, Richie flies to Costa Rica to confront the gambling legend behind the site: Ivan Block.

Block is impressed by Richie's savvy and takes the younger man under his wing, promising to show Richie the ropes. Soon thereafter, Richie falls for Block's associate - sophisticated COO Rebecca Shafran (Gemma Arterton) - and he embraces a world that sees all of his fantasies come to life. But Richie soon learns that Block is wanted for racketeering, extortion and bribery, and that FBI Special Agent Shavers (Anthony Mackie) is obsessed with bringing Block and his associates to justice. Block decides to pull up stakes and leave Richie behind as the fall guy.

With Shavers closing in, Richie must figure out a way to stay a step ahead of Block and Shavers - or risk a future behind bars.



Photo by SCOTT GARFIELD/TWENTIETH CENTURY FOX

wife (Gillian Jacobs), his mounting stress starts to trigger an insufferable gastrointestinal reaction. Out of ideas and at the end of his rope, Duncan seeks the help of a hypnotherapist (Peter Stormare), who helps him discover the root of his unusual stomach pain: a pint-sized demon living in his intestine that, triggered by excessive anxiety, forces its way out and slaughters the people who have angered him.

Out of fear that his intestinal gremlin may target its wrath on the wrong person, Duncan attempts to befriend it, naming it Milo and indulging it to keep its seemingly insatiable appetite at bay.

'Concussion'

Genre: Drama
 Cast: Robin Weigert, Maggie Siff, Johnathan Tchaikovsky, Julie Fain Lawrence, Emily Kinney and Laila Robins
 Director: Stacie Passon
 Rated: R

Abby is a 40 something, wealthy, married, lesbian housewife who - after getting smacked in the head by her son's baseball - walks around every corner of her suburban life to confront a mounting desire for something else. She takes on a new project and purchases a pied-à-terre in Manhattan. Walking around the city streets reminds Abby what it feels like to be sexy, and her pent-up libido shakes off its inhibitions. Her desire is not a take-home item for the minivan ride back home, so Abby inaugurates a double life that draws her deeply into a world of prostitution for women.

In an auspicious debut effort, director Stacie Passon draws out a pitch-perfect performance from her lead actor, Robin Weigert, as a sexy, shut-down family woman stretching to bloom again. Palpably sensual and deliciously contained, "Concussion" is a keen observation of the complicated contours of midlife crisis.

'Grace Unplugged'

Genre: Drama and music
 Cast: AJ Michalka, James Denton and Kevin Pollak
 Director: Brad J. Silverman
 Rated: PG

A talented young singer and aspiring songwriter's Christian faith

See OPENING, page 4B

'Bad Milo'

Genre: Horror and comedy
 Cast: Ken Marino, Gillian Jacobs, Patrick Warburton, Mary Kay Place, Stephen Root and Peter Stormare
 Director: Jacob Vaughn
 Rated: R

Duncan's (Ken Marino) life is a real pain.

Tormented by a manipulative, crooked boss (Patrick Warburton), a nagging mother (Mary Kay Place) with a boyfriend a third her age, a deadbeat new age dad (Stephen Root), and a sweet, yet pressuring,

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195. Seasonal Rentals
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200. Vacation Rentals
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215. Efficiency Rentals
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220. Cottage Rentals
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India.Arie

Grammy-winning R&B artist brings 'SongVersetion' tour to Palladium

ST. PETERSBURG – As part of the Ruth Eckerd Hall on the Road series, multi Grammy-winning singer/songwriter India.Arie will bring her Soulbird Presents A SongVersetion with India.Arie 2013 North American tour to the Tampa Bay area on Saturday, Oct. 12, 7:30 p.m., at the Palladium Theater at St. Petersburg College, 253 Fifth Ave. N.

Tickets start at \$45. Call 791-7400 or visit www.rutheckerdhall.com before the day of the show. On the day of the show, call 822-3590 or visit www.mypalladium.org.

The tour comes in support of India.Arie's acclaimed fifth studio album, "SongVersetion," released on Soulbird/Motown Records.

"SongVersetion," released June 25, has received rave reviews. The album is the artist's fifth No. 1 on the Billboard R&B Album Chart and fifth top 10 debut on the Billboard Top 200 Chart. It's also her first release following a self-imposed four-year hiatus.

"This is where I've been for the last four years," said the singer in a biography provided by 42 West, a public-relations firm. "I've struggled most of my career to feel comfortable with how things were, how I was treated, the politics of the music industry. I needed to pull back from the public eye to ground myself and rebuild my life and career. It's a process many of us go through: spiritual maturation, spiritual awakening, clearing out the old and starting anew."

Success, departure and return

Born in Denver and later relocating to Atlanta as a teen, India.Arie went from singing under a tree in the park to the Grammy Awards stage over the course of five years.

"Acoustic Soul," her debut album, was released in 2001. She earned seven nominations for her the double-platinum album which featured her first hit single "Video."

In 2002, India.Arie followed up the successful debut with the platinum-selling "Voyage to India." The album debuted at No. 6 on the Billboard 200 and boasted first-week sales of 109,000 copies. The album took Best R&B Album at the 2003 Grammy Awards and the single "Little Things" won "Best Urban/Alternative Performance." Another song on "Voyage to India," "Get It Together" went on to appear on several film soundtracks such as "Brown Sugar" in 2002 and "Shark Tale" in 2004.

In 2006, India.Arie released "Testimony: Vol. 1, Life & Relationship" which was followed in 2009 by the sequel "Testimony: Vol. 2, Love & Politics." The first album debuted at No. 1 on the Billboard 200; the sequel debuted at No. 3.

By this time, India.Arie had garnered 21 Grammy nominations, four Grammys and 10 million albums sold – but something was wrong.

"In 2009 I let go," said India.Arie in her biography. "I realized I had to seize the chance to make the career and life I wanted, not accepting what others wanted me to do. So I decided to retire, asking God to show me where I am supposed to be."

Music did eventually come back into her life through a series of vulnerable songs she began writing for a self-funded new project called Open Door. But three years into the project, she shelved it.

"I was confronted by the same questions," said India.Arie. "Who are you? How are you shaping the big picture of your life?"

Exhausted from writing and recording Open Door, the singer didn't feel like doing another album. But instead of waiting another three years, she took a day to pray. Six months later she finished "SongVersetion."

"That was my first glimpse of a new resilience, of stepping into my



India.Arie performs Oct. 12 at the Palladium Theater at St. Petersburg College. Photo courtesy of 42 WEST

power," she said. "It's about not having anything to prove except to simply express myself because it's who I am – not as a means to an end. Chasing that and topping that is not me. It's about being more me in both my life and career."

India.Arie recently embraced the former by expanding Soulbird, her label imprint, into a multi-faceted company housing her other entrepreneurial endeavors: jewelry, apparel, merchandise, film and TV, music and book publishing. She's also ready again for fans to hear India.Arie, the singer/songwriter.

"I wasn't ready until now," she said. "I love where things are on and offstage. I trusted my intuition through every line and note of every song on this album, following the flow. And the ease of the flow is always a sign that I am in the right place, doing the right thing. And that is all I've ever wanted. I created 'SongVersetion' from that place."

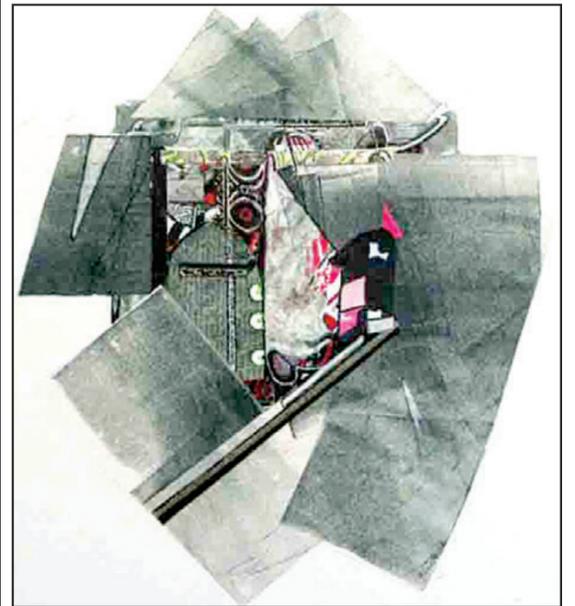
Beach Art Center to host 'Red' exhibit

INDIAN ROCKS BEACH – The Florida Artists Group, Area IV, and its board of directors will exhibit artwork in a show entitled "Red," running Oct. 4-31, at the Beach Art Center, 1515 Bay Palm Blvd., Indian Rocks Beach.

The center is open Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. The opening reception will take place Friday, Oct. 4, 6 to 8 p.m. The FLAG participants in "Red" are talented artists from Pinellas and surrounding counties. There is no charge to attend the exhibition or reception.

FLAG member Shirley Frank will teach a four-day intensive painting workshop emphasizing the development of an individual style and personal philosophy. The workshop will be presented Oct. 24-27. Cost is \$200 for members and \$225 for nonmembers. Call 596-4331 or visit www.BeachArtCenter.org.

The Florida Artists Group was incorporated in 1949, as a nonprofit organization of practicing artists whose work attained national or statewide recognition. The purpose of the group is to stimulate attainment of the highest standards of creative art within the state of Florida.



"Stone with Buttons," by Shirley Frank, is one of the works on display at the exhibit "Red" running Oct. 4-31 at the Beach Art Center.

Guild to honor philanthropist

ST. PETERSBURG – Heart of Gold, a tribute to Helen Torres, will be presented Tuesday, Oct. 15, 5 to 8 p.m., in the ballroom of The Birchwood, 340 Beach Drive.

Torres, a philanthropist and Realtor, will be the star of a gala. The event will honor her 20 years of support for the annual Pops in the Park concert, a free event which she initiated to help save the The Florida Orchestra in a time of financial difficulty and to bring classical music to a larger public audience of all ages, especially to new generations of children.

Sponsored by The Florida Orchestra Guild of St. Petersburg Inc., the event will be a cocktail reception. Individual tickets cost \$50. Patron tickets are \$150 and include two tickets and a listing in the event program. For information on purchasing individual or patron tickets or on sponsorship opportunities, call Judy Cunniff at 824-8577.

Torres' passion for the arts led her in the 1990s to support the orchestra by subsidizing the first free concert in St. Petersburg's North Straub Park, an idea she had taken to orchestra management. She committed to continuing financial support for those concerts for 20 years. Now, to accommodate huge crowds, the concerts are presented in St. Petersburg on the downtown waterfront in Vinoy Park.

The 2013 free concert in St. Petersburg is set for Saturday, Oct. 19, 7 p.m. The Tampa concert will be presented Sunday, Oct. 20, 7 p.m., in River Tower Park, 401 E. Bird St.

For information, visit www.floridaorchestra.org.

LOOKING AHEAD, from page 2B

Sunset. "Fiddler on the Roof" stars David Mann as Tevye, Meghan Colleen Moroney in the role of Golde, and Lucas Wells as Perchik.

Seminole

Rus "Rocket Man" Anderson, Friday, Oct. 11, 7 p.m., at Seminole City Park, 7464 Ridge Road, Seminole. As part of Seminole's Music in the Park series, Anderson will present his Elton John tribute show. The show will feature all live vocals and instrumentation as Rocket Man performs Elton John's greatest hits – everything from touching ballads to blazing rock songs. With exact replica costumes, Anderson gives audience members an energetic and memorable night filled with nostalgia, singing, laughing and participation. The two-hour concert will conclude this year's Music in the Park series at the park. The performance will run 7 to 9 p.m. Admission is free. Parking, also free, is available in the park and in a larger lot west of the park between Old Oakhurst Road and the Pinellas Trail. Attendees are invited to bring chairs and blankets. Food and beverages will be available for purchase. For information, visit www.myseminole.com.

Tampa

Sigur Rós, Monday, Oct. 7, 8 p.m., at the USF Sun Dome, 4202 E. Fowler Ave., Sun130, Tampa. Tickets start at \$29.50. Call 800-745-3000 or visit Ticketmaster.com. Sigur Rós is an Icelandic ambient/post-rock band from Reykjavik. The band won a record deal with the local Sugarcubes-owned record label, Bad Taste. In 1997, they released "Von," meaning "hope" and in 1998 a remix collection named "Von brigði."

Sesame Street Live: "Can't Stop Singing," Friday and Saturday, Nov. 1-2, at the USF Sun Dome, 4202 E. Fowler Ave., Sun130, Tampa. Tickets start at \$18.50. Call 800-745-3000 or visit Ticketmaster.com. Shows will be Friday, 10:30 a.m. and 6:30 p.m.; and Saturday, 10:30 a.m. and 2 p.m. When Elmo casts a spell with Abby Cadabby's magic wand, there's something in the air – and Sesame Street becomes a nonstop, all-singing, all-dancing musical montage! Grover and Baby Bear sing their highs and lows, Cookie Monster sings fast and slow, Bert and Ernie converse in song and Murray makes mouth music for all to sing along. Learn why it feels good to sing a song, but why it feels good to stop, too. What will Elmo learn about the power of musical magic? Join the conga line of fun to find out.

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