



Review: latest 'Thor' film adds thunder to the Marvel franchise

Also, 'The Greatest Christmas Villain' opens at Largo Community Center ... Page 1B.



LARGO



Holiday Lights opens to VIPs

The Florida Botanical Gardens Foundation is hosting a VIP preview of the 2013 Holiday Lights in the Gardens on Friday, Nov. 22, 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.

Guests will be the first to stroll through this year's display of more than 750,000 twinkling lights and holiday decorations while enjoying live musical entertainment and a tempting array of food and cocktails.

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CRIME BEAT

Two arrested for human trafficking

Detectives arrested two individuals Thursday, Nov. 7, in connection to human trafficking of a juvenile victim.



Wanda Ringgo

The female suspect told the 14-year-old victim that she was having a male visitor come to her home. The victim was to have sex with him and collect money from him when they were done.

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FAITH & FAMILY

Mom2Mom

Columnist worries that the lessons of bullying can be taken too far.

... Page 10A.



SCHOOLS

School program addresses bullying

Middle school can be a breeding ground for bullying, especially as kids grow into themselves. That's why community organizations have teamed up to provide the Violence Prevention Program with the Second Step curriculum to select Pinellas County schools.

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VIEWPOINTS

Debra Saunders

Lessons for GOP candidates.

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Largo to connect to Pinellas Trail

Commissioners OK new trailhead, landscaping around West Bay Drive

By JULIANA A. TORRES

LARGO - During a workshop discussion Nov. 12, Largo commissioners initially agreed with conceptual designs for a trailhead and landscape improvements that would connect the West Bay Drive downtown district to the Pinellas Trail.

The plans are a "real critical factor for the west section" of the redevelopment district, Economic Development Manager Teresa Brydon later explained.

"It shows a visible commitment to enhancing the existing infrastructure in downtown and will help tie the western boundary of the district to the eastern side that has undergone improvements," she told commissioners.

The trailhead improvements would be concentrated around Pinellas Trail overpass over West Bay Drive, but would include landscaping, street parking and pedestrian bridges over stormwater ditches as far north as Fourth Street

Northwest and as far south as Washington Avenue. The objective would be to attract pedestrians and bicyclists to and from the Pinellas Trail and Largo's redevelopment district.

"We want people to see these enhancements and be drawn to Largo's trailhead," said Christin McLachlan, city program planner. "There's not a whole lot going on right now."

The city incorporated crime prevention through environmental design principals

into the concept plan. These principals include natural surveillance through improved lighting and low-ground vegetation, attractive fencing and signage and emphasize low maintenance costs, including durable and graffiti-resistant materials as well as drought-tolerant native vegetation.

"We want this trailhead to be attractive and safe," McLachlan said.

See TRAILHEAD, page 4A

Traveling wall gives tribute to vets

By BRIAN GOFF

LARGO - Dozens of people showed up at Indian Rocks Christian School Nov. 7 to see and pay their respects to the American Veterans Traveling Tribute and kickoff a busy Veterans Days weekend at the school.

The wall is a replica of the Vietnam Veteran Memorial Wall in Washington, D.C., and contains 58,286 names of veterans who died as a result of the war in Vietnam.

Among those who arrived early was Mike Solava of Seminole. He was there with his children, 11-year-old Madison and 9-year-old Michael. He said it was important that his children see this.

"I saw the monument in Washington and I wanted to show the kids what it was all about," he said. "It is very important that they see what our family has done."

Solava located the name of his uncle, David Knox of Dalton, Ill., who was killed in Vietnam in 1968.

"History is important for us to know, because if we don't know it, we're going to repeat it," he said.

With that, they moved into the fellowship hall for the formal ceremonies opening up the wall exhibit and the weekend of tribute to veterans.

The event began with the school's high school choir singing the national anthem and "America the Beautiful."

The guest speaker was Largo resident Master Sgt. Ben Piggley, who retired after a 21-year career in the Army. He served in tours all over Europe as well as Desert Storm and in Iraq.

His was an emotional speech. He broke down several times as he related what life was like serving in the armed forces.

"When I hear about someone

See WALL, page 4A



Above, a Vietnam veteran, who identified himself only as High Noon, looks over the display surrounding the traveling wall at Indian Rocks Christian School Nov. 7. Below, Mike Solava of Seminole with his children, Madison and Michael, locate the name of his uncle who was killed in Vietnam.



Biomedical entrepreneur

Former substitute teacher runs her own business, has helped write state laws and cleans up crime scenes

By JULIANA A. TORRES

LARGO - When Theresa Drake's adopted daughters were younger, the threat to their potential boyfriends was not only the proverbial shotgun, but their mother's expertise in cleaning up crime scenes.

"Oh, don't worry about my mom's gun. She won't shoot you," they'd say. "She'll red-bag you. No body, no crime."

You wouldn't assume that the pleasant-faced grandmother walking her rescued terrier in heeled pumps had a concealed weapon under her brightly colored dress suit. Nor would you assume that the woman within questionable reach of the gas pedal to the company truck had helped write the state laws that regulate her business.

But then you would be underestimating Theresa Drake, owner of American Medical Transporters, which collects and disposes biomedical hazardous waste like needles and bodily fluids from doctor's offices and small practices. Drake founded the company in 1988, reasoning that somebody should be doing the neglected job of keeping contaminated nee-

dles from accidentally infecting unwary garbage collectors and curious children.

Drake was a substitute teacher on a class field trip at Indian Rocks Christian School when she first recognized the problem. On a trip to the county landfill to teach the children about the damaging effects of Styrofoam, she saw potentially hazardous syringes mixed in with the trash. So she asked the manager about it.

She found out that Florida was one of the last states to enact any biomedical laws.

"In 1988, it was still legal for doctors in Florida to throw their medical waste away in with their office waste," Drake explained. "It was suggested that they not throw needles away, but for the private practice, there were no rules and regulations."

Now if a syringe shows up in the trash, the whole dumpster has to be decontaminated. If it's traced back to the doctor who carelessly tossed it, fines can be up to \$7,500. But that wasn't the case when Drake decided to start up a medical waste transporting company

See ENTREPRENEUR, page 4A



Business owner Theresa Drake steps out of a truck for her company, American Medical Transporters, a company she founded to properly dispose of medical waste in 1988.

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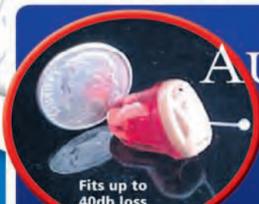
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City calendar

Largo Community Center

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

Largo presents musical comedy

LARGO – Dick Budin Productions present a new-fangled, old-fashioned, “hiss and boo” musical comedy, Friday through Sunday, Nov. 15-24, at Largo Community Center.

Tickets are \$20 for adults and \$10 for children. Performance times are 8 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays and 2 p.m. on Sundays.

“The Greatest Christmas Villain” is a musical by Richard Budin. Gateswing, president of the world’s largest toy company, plans to trick Santa and take his toys. Can he be stopped? What will happen to Christmas? Will the elves lose their jobs?

Join the campfire sing-along

LARGO – The city of Largo presents a campfire sing-along Friday, Nov. 22, 7 to 9 p.m., at the Largo Community Center.

The cost is \$3. Come sit around the campfire, make s’mores and listen to great music. Bring chairs and blankets. Refreshments will be served.

Holiday showcase scheduled

LARGO – Enjoy an afternoon of dancing and singing Largo’s Holiday Showcase Sunday, Dec. 8, 2 p.m., at the Largo Community Center.

The Tutterow Dancers, The Mcmillans, The Bates, The Indian Rocks Christian School Student Choir and the Strolling Carolers all will perform in the grand ballroom. Tickets are \$14 and can be purchased at the Largo Community Center.

Barbershop chorus seeks members

LARGO – The Florida Suncoast Barbershop Chorus is currently seeking men, women and children to participate in this year’s Christmas Spectacular Show Sunday, Dec. 15, at the Largo Community Center.

All singers must attend four rehearsals prior to the show and be prepared to sing three songs on the program. Sheet music and learning CDs will be provided at no cost. Rehearsals will be Mondays, Nov. 25, Dec. 2 and Dec. 9. All interested singers should call Lance at 410-5696. The holiday show is part of the Largo Community Center’s Sunday Matinee Music Series, featuring dinner, live entertainment and dancing.

Weekly events

• **Bridge games:** Mondays and Wednesdays, 12:30 to 4 p.m. All players are welcome to join the American Contract Bridge League-sanctioned games. The cost is \$4 with membership or \$5, with snacks included. Call Joan Waff at 895-9073.

• **Square dancing:** Fridays, 7:30 to 9:45 p.m. Spend the evening dancing country-style to professional caller Allen Snell. The cost is \$6.

• **Swing dancing:** Saturdays, 7 to 11 p.m. Enjoy an evening of dancing and socializing on a 5,600-square-foot sprung hardwood floor. Free lessons offered from 7 to 8 p.m., followed by a dance with music by DJ Savoy Swing. The cost is \$6 with a recreation card and \$7 without a recreation card.

• **Bay Area Singles and Couples Dance:** Sundays, 6 to 10 p.m. Dress to impress, and join about 150 singles and friends of all ages to dance to an extensive music library to fit every taste. Cost is \$8.

Largo Central Park

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

Create at the library’s monthly crafting event

LARGO – Attend a free evening of crafting while taking inspiration from non-fiction books at the Largo Public Library on second Wednesdays, 6 p.m., in the Jenkins Community Wing of the library.

Highland to open for Thanksgiving camps

LARGO – Largo Recreation will be offering Thanksgiving holiday camps from Nov. 25-27 at the new Highland Recreation Complex, 400 Highland Ave.

Students in kindergarten through fifth grade will be able to sign up for morning camps that run from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., afternoon camps that run from 1 to 5 p.m., or both.

Sports Fanatic camp will offer half-day programs consisting of a variety of indoor and outdoor sports and games to keep kids active. Two specialty camps will be offered as well. Super Stars camp will be offered each day, 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Activities will include gymnastics, cheerleading and dance. Campers also will get to play in PlayWorld, ExerPlay and the Play Zone.

Or, sign up for Hip Hip Hurray specialty camp, the afternoon session that runs from 1 to 5 p.m. Enjoy games, crafts and the other Highland Rec amenities.

Recreation cards and preregistration are required to participate. Supervised lunch is available for children participating in morning and afternoon camps. Call 518-3016.

Use a variety of materials to create a fun and unique project during this adult program. Families are welcome. No registration is required. All materials will be provided. Call 587-6715.

The holidays come to Largo Park

LARGO – Celebrate the holidays with a weekend of talented crafters and artists offering original and unique items Saturday, Nov. 30, 10 a.m. to 9 p.m., and Sunday, Dec. 1, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., at Largo Central Park.

The weekend will include specialty food vendors, Christmas carolers and spectacular holiday lights in the park. Santa Claus will visit, so bring the kids.

There will be lots of giveaways and raffles for cash gift cards and grand prizes. Free drawings are held three times per day. Grand prizes are at end of each day.

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The holiday are fast approaching, bringing friends and family from near and far into our homes, ready or not! Your local Budget Blinds experts are here to save the day by offering 3 useful tips on how you can make preparing your home for the holidays more enjoyable.
Tip 1 Shop For Your Home In Your Home
Decorating for the holidays can be a daunting job. With so many custom window coverings to choose from – blinds, shades, shutters, drapes and valances – it can be hard not to feel overwhelmed. That’s why we recommend scheduling a free in-home consultation with your local Budget Blinds Style Consultant. Be sure to ask about matching decorative pillows and custom bedding to spice up your guest rooms.
Tip 2 Sit Back & Relax
We know your time gets limited during the busy holiday season, so our Budget Blinds Style Consultants not only help you select the perfect window coverings for your home, they also will expertly measure and professionally install your window coverings to ensure a perfect fit. All you’ll have to do is sit back and enjoy the view along with your holiday guests!
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VIPs offered preview of Holiday Lights in the Gardens

LARGO – The Florida Botanical Gardens Foundation is hosting a VIP preview of the 2013 Holiday Lights in the Gardens on Friday, Nov. 22, 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.

Guests will be the first to stroll through this year's display of more than 750,000 twinkling lights and holiday decorations while enjoying live musical entertainment and a tempting array of food and cocktails provided by event sponsors. The rain date is Saturday, Nov. 23.

"The Foundation wants to offer guests a unique way to experience the Holiday Lights event this year while we support our fund raising mission for the Gardens," said Terry Ziegler, event coordinator for the Florida Botanical Gardens Foundation. "We look forward to seeing our most-devoted patrons and our newest supporters at this elegant and exciting event."

Space is limited. There is a requested \$50 donation per person to attend, with proceeds going to

support the Florida Botanical Gardens. Interested persons should RSVP to tmsz@tampabay.rr.com or call 582-2247 by Friday, Nov. 15.

The Holiday Lights in the Gardens will be open from Friday, Nov. 29, to Wednesday, Jan. 1, 5:30 to 9:30 p.m. A donation of \$2 per person (13 years and older) is recommended. A video of the Holiday Lights can be viewed at www.youtube.com/pcc1.

Other events scheduled during the Holiday Lights include a Florida Botanical Gardens Foundation gift and plant sale on Sunday, Dec. 8, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., and a dog parade on Sunday, Dec. 29, starting at 1 p.m.

The Florida Botanical Gardens is located at 12520 Ulmerton Road in Largo, with an alternate entrance at 12211 Walsingham Road. The gardens remain open from 7 a.m. until dusk every day, with free admission during daylight hours.

For more information, visit www.flbg.org or call 582-2100.



Photo courtesy of PINELLAS COUNTY COMMUNICATIONS

The Florida Botanical Gardens Foundation welcomes special guests to a VIP preview to the 2013 Holiday Lights in the Gardens.

Around town

Village event kicks off Farm City Week

LARGO – Pinellas County's Heritage Village, at 11909 125th St. N., will host a Farm City Day celebration on Saturday, Nov. 16, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. The free event is the kickoff for Farm City Week, celebrated nationally each year to educate citizens about agriculture and to enhance links between rural and urban dwellers.

The theme this year is "Farm Animals". Activities will include making ice cream, milking goats, feeding calves and petting 4-H animals. There will be related children's activity stations located throughout the village.

Farm City Day is sponsored by the Pinellas County Farm Bureau; Pinellas County government; the UF/IFAS Pinellas County Extension Service and the Florida Nursery, Growers and Landscape Association. Visit www.pinellascounty.org/heritage or call 582-2123.

Largo Toastmasters invite new members

LARGO – Largo Star Toastmasters Club 5933 invites new members to its weekly meeting on Wednesdays, 12:05 to 1:05 p.m., at the Young Rainey Star Center, 7887 Bryan Dairy Road No. 120 in Largo.

The club is open to all residents and workers in the Largo, Pinellas Park and Seminole areas.

A Toastmasters club provides a supportive and positive environment where members have the opportunity to develop their oral communication and leadership skills. Come watch as members present speeches, develop leadership skills by serving in various club positions and participate in Table Topics sessions in a relaxed yet structured one-hour setting.

Call John Rousseau at 488-8010 or email johnrousseau@yahoo.com.

Largo Woman's Club invites new members

LARGO – The Largo Woman's Club meets first Tuesdays, 11:30 a.m., at the Royal Palms, 300 Lake Ave.

The club's mission is to promote charitable and civic progress of the city of Largo. Its members invite new residents and any fun and caring people to attend the meetings and business lunches, which include entertainment. The monthly meetings, held September through May, are \$8 and include lunch. The Christmas party – featuring the Royal Palm Singers, a gift exchange and games – is Dec. 3.

The club was founded to build sidewalks along Bay Drive. Its next project was building the Largo Public Library. The library and the Woman's Club will be 100 years old in 2015. Call Ellen at 584-8314 or Pat at 584-0297.

TRAILHEAD, from page 1A

The planners suggested adding picnic seating, information kiosks, rock borders, integrated lighting, swing seats, fencing, a rain garden, wayfinding signs and public art to the trailhead.

"We're not trying to just be another one of the surrounding municipalities, like a Dunedin. We're trying to be the best Largo we can be," McLachlan said. "We're trying to bring in amenities that makes sense for our area."

The overpass itself also could use an upgrade, she said. The highly visible bridge over the roadway was a great place to advertise Largo's downtown with new branding. The concept design suggested upgraded fencing, repainting, decorative lighting and signage.

Around the overpass, the plans called for a gathering area, a rain garden and lots more trees and landscaping.

"What we'd like to do is really bring some activity to this space," McLachlan said.

To the north and south of the overpass, less intensive changes were needed, but city planners did recommend improving "connection points" by adding wider sidewalks and minimal improvements like a bench or a bike rack. The city would upgrade the stormwater ditch that runs alongside the trail into a bioswale. Minimal lighting and pedestrian bridges over the swale, especially in residential areas, would encourage use of the trail.

"We're not trying to promote nighttime use of the trail. We do recognize, however, if we put in improvements like bridges from residential areas, we do need to put in a small bit of lighting if only to show where

the bridges are and make it a safer area," McLachlan said.

One of the significant changes would be converting one lane of 12th Street Southwest into parallel parking, making it a one-way road. City planners said they recognized the need for parking in the area, especially if they hoped to attract more use of the trail starting from the downtown district. The area directly surrounding the trail is the county's right-of-way, and they wouldn't allow parking. Similarly, city planners said they didn't want to use up parkland for parking.

Overall, the project is projected to cost \$952,300. But the city has multiple potential funding sources, city engineer Leland Dicus said.

Most directly, the project falls within the scope of the West Bay Drive Community Redevelopment funding, and the city also intends to use some of its local option sales tax funding. Because so much of the landscaping involves planting trees, the city can tap into its tree fund to fund that part. Planners also intend to pursue transportation and stormwater grants as well as business sponsorships from the surrounding area.

Similar funding sources could be used for annual operation and maintenance costs, estimated at \$3,500 to \$6,500 per year.

The project would fall within overall plans to improve West Bay Drive between 20th Street and Clearwater-Largo Road. The city hopes to enhance the road's medians to reduce pedestrian fatalities.

"The whole corridor is one of the highest areas for crashes with pedestrians and bicycles," Dicus said.

That larger project is currently funded at \$1.67 million, but doesn't include the entire costs of the trailhead improvements, as the city hadn't completed the design until recently. City staff asked commissioners for feedback and direction for funding. Commissioners had a few legis-

tical questions, some involving details not yet worked out, but gave their unofficial consent.

City staff will prepare more detailed funding to be approved during a public hearing in April. Should the project move forward, a consultant would be hired to complete the design of the project by 2015, with construction starting in 2016.

"We're really excited," Brydon said after the presentation.

Largo to endorse Greenlight Pinellas

The commissioners also heard a presentation on the Greenlight Pinellas Plan, designed to enhance public transportation with improved bus routes and a future passenger rail in Pinellas County. A referendum to increase the sales tax by 1 cent in order to fund the project will be added to the November 2014 ballot.

The majority of the commissioners were in favor of the plan, agreeing that it would directly and positively impact the economy of Largo.

"I think it's so important that we do this in the future," Commissioner Robert Murray said. "I hope the whole thing gets together while I'm still here."

Commissioner Curtis Holmes said the commissioners ought to hear a presentation from the No Tax for Tracks group opposed to the project, before agreeing to an endorsement. Mayor Pat Gerard asked if anyone else had an interest in hearing that presentation. No one spoke up.

"OK, that won't be happening," Gerard said.

The endorsement itself will be approved in an upcoming public meeting. For more information about the countywide plan, visit greenlightpinellas.com.

WALL, from page 1A

getting killed in the service of our country. I think about a child who is going to have to grow up without a parent, or a parent who has lost a child," he said. "We have to take responsibility for those sacrifices and honor all men and women who serve."

Pigsley said there are three reasons why most people volunteer to join the armed forces and serve their country.

"The first one is that the person is patriotic and wants to make a difference," he said. "Second is that the person wants to make a life change after things haven't worked out quite the way they had hoped. And third is economic: they join to get work."

He said he joined because of a combination of reasons No. 2 and 3.

"I wanted to make a life change, and I needed a job. We're all born selfish," he said.

But he said not long after a young person joins the military, a change takes place.

"Something begins to happen quickly. It begins the first day of boot camp when you get your hair cut off, so everybody looks the same. You get a uniform, and everybody dresses the same. Then, you are told how to stand and walk and speak and even with that, you are the worst example of a soldier ever, according to your sergeant," he said laughing.

He said as a soldier, you soon learn that you as an individual will never be successful until the entire group is successful.

"You learn it isn't about you. You learn that it is service before self," he said.

Then there came a lesson on what it is like to be the family of a parent serving in the military.

Emily Speicher, a senior at Indian Rocks Christian School, told the gathering what it is like growing up with a father who is always away. Her dad is currently serving in Afghanistan.

"I miss my dad at most of the important family

events," she said. "For example, he wasn't here to help me celebrate when I got my driver's license. He wasn't here at homecoming and proms. No daughter-daddy pictures – just my mom and me. He missed all of my marching band competitions. And he's not here tonight to tear up listening to me speak. His little girl is growing up."

Speicher said she wasn't complaining, just the opposite. She quoted scripture on the importance of serving.

"If God came on this earth to serve us, then surely we should too," she said. "Service is about giving of yourself for someone else. We all have something we can give. We're all different, but you should do with what you have."

She said serving isn't always a sacrifice.

"Serving is not about me. It is about helping someone else, and there is a reward in doing that. We should look for the small everyday things where we can help and make a difference," she said.

Dave Turngren, a deacon at Indian Rocks Baptist Church, was responsible for organizing the event and bringing the wall to the school. He said he did it so the children at the school would have the opportunity to see the sacrifice and potential sacrifice of serving our country.

To that end there was a prominent display honoring two graduates of Indian Rocks Christian School who were killed while serving in Afghanistan.

Cpl. Frank Gross and Staff Sgt. Matthew Sitton were friends who were killed within a year of one another in Afghanistan. Both graduated from the school, in 2003 and 2004, respectively. Gross was killed in 2011 and Sitton in 2012. Their parents and families sat in the front row throughout the ceremonies.

The event ended with a performance by the school's Regiment band, but the final word went to Pigsley, who during his speech told of an encounter he had with a Vietnam veteran many years ago.

"My children were still very young, and I had just



Photos by BRIAN GOFF

come back from overseas," he said. "There was an event honoring all veterans at the old Tampa Stadium, so I put on my best uniform and my medals, and I went over there."

On his way to the stadium, an older man with an old green jacket confronted him. The jacket displayed his rank and other insignia indicating that he was a Vietnam veteran.

"He grabbed my hand and thanked me for my service," Pigsley said. "I hardly knew what to say, so I thanked him for his service. As we parted, I was thinking how it must have been for him coming back after the Vietnam War. I was moved by the fact that he didn't worry about how he was treated; he was worrying about how I was treated."

As Pigsley ended his speech with those words and a private, quiet moment of tears, he received a standing ovation thanking him for his service.

The wall was located in the fellowship center of First Baptist Church Indian Rocks through Veterans Day. For more information about the traveling tribute, visit www.avtt.org.

Above, dozens of people pass through the hall containing the traveling wall honoring Vietnam veterans at Indian Rocks Christian School Nov. 7. Below, Emily Speicher, a senior at Indian Rocks Christian School, speaks to her peers at the ceremony honoring veterans.



ENTREPRENEUR, from page 1A

out of her home garage.

A year later, her husband quit his job as a new car salesman to help her drive the truck.

"At first I was calling on new clients in a suit and going and picking up the waste from the clients that we had and coming home and invoicing them on a typewriter," Drake said. "Finally, it got where I couldn't do it all."

As American Medical Transporters grew, the company moved into its first warehouse. Its current address at 12345 62nd St. N. in Largo is its third location. The small company currently enjoys the distinction of being the oldest medical transport company licensed in Florida.

"A lot of men didn't want to see me succeed. So, I've proved quite a few of them wrong," Drake said. "I'm one of those that likes to succeed, especially when you're supporting two children."

And of course, Drake still thought it was important for Florida to have laws regulating the biomedical waste she was picking up and dropping up at the incinerator.

"It took quite a bit of legislation. I traveled around the state," she said. "I tried to get input from my doctors. They didn't want to give input at first. They didn't think it was going to pass."

But pass it did. Drake's was the seventh company to be licensed under the new state laws.

Most of her clients are private practice medical facilities with only a small amount of waste.

"Bigger companies don't want to deal with these \$50 accounts," she explained.

Drake still keeps a close relationship with her clients, visiting them personally if there is a problem with one of the inspections that happen either annually or once every three years.

"My clients are able to say, 'I'm with American Medical. We'll get the problem corrected right away,' because

they know I will," she said. "That's one of the reasons I haven't expanded beyond our three counties."

The cleanups

Drake is still passionate about keeping her community safe.

"We've been called many times to go clean up needles that have been found on the street, found on school grounds," she said.

American Medical Transporters regularly clean up the inside police cruisers, soiled by irate arrestees.

"Cops are not going to clean up feces or urine. They're not just going to do it. So my guys have to go out," she explained.

And once in a while, her team will be called to clean up a crime scene. These days, however, she and her two drivers only take a few cases at the call of specific victim's advocates when she knows the family don't have insurance and can't afford for the clean up.

Drake still remembers that very first crime scene. The bodies were that of a girl and the boyfriend who had killed her before turning the high-caliber weapon on himself.

"The first one was really hard," she said. "The blood was in four rooms."

She asked her two drivers how they felt about doing the cleanup. They admitted that they wouldn't know until they got there. She decided to go with them.

"I have never asked my employees to do anything I won't do. So I went. I physically went and I physically helped," she said. "You start, usually at the ceiling, and



Photo by JULIANA A. TORRES

Theresa Drake, owner of American Medical Transporters, takes a call from her office in Largo.

work your way down."

Once, an employee who worked at the incinerator that destroyed the medical waste started collecting American Medical Transporters cardboard boxes and making his own biohazard pickups. The Florida Department of Health informed Drake of their suspicions.

"I said, 'I'm going to find him. If you can't find him, I will.' It took me a week. I tracked him right to his front door," Drake explained.

The man had no place to store the waste, so he kept the boxes in his garage, and then his own home, which was filled with cats, in the dining room and in his bedroom. The media called it a "house of horrors." Drake said the cleanup took four days, a job for which the state never compensated her team.

"But I had to protect my company," she said.

Not disposable

The one job Drake won't take is the medical waste of an abortion clinic.

"I do get the calls, because usually they'll pay whatever. You can more or less set your prices with them," she said. "I know they have to have the service. But not in my trucks."

Once, Drake was called back to a Guatemalan orphanage where she regularly did missionary work and handed a cardboard box with a baby inside, only 2.5 pounds and still covered in blood.

"They said, 'Don't fall in love with her, because we

don't know if she's going to live," Drake remembered. "Too late."

She called her husband to inform him that he was a father. Angelina, who did survive, was their first daughter, born on Christmas Eve. Ten years later, the Santa Claus hired for her birthday told Drake she had a problem. Angel had asked for a baby sister.

A year later, she got her wish. Drake was preparing a baby shower for a teenage mother with the women in her church, when the girl called to say she was leaving the state. Drake made sure she had a notarized authorization, though handwritten, to at least allow her to give the 2-month-old child medical care before the mother fled.

When the mother didn't come back a year later, Drake started the adoption process. Tiffany was now as much her daughter as Angel, she said.

Unfortunately, the process cost her more than \$150,000 in legal fees and 13 years to finalize. Drake once had to travel to Texas to seek the legal means to retrieve 13-month-old Tiffany from the Air Force Base where her biological mother and boyfriend had fled with her. The state Department of Children and Families made the process very difficult for her, Drake said.

"And that's a shame, because there are so many (children) in foster care," she said.

Even her husband of 18 years couldn't take the ongoing battle, and they divorced.

"I would go through it all again for Tiffany's adoption. I would just handle it differently," she said. "People think children are disposable. They're not."

Her daughters, now 22 and 33, live out of state. Drake said she misses them and her three grandchildren. She would adopt more children even now, she said.

"To me, people have babies that don't deserve them, and there are so many people that do want them," she said. "Children don't ask to be born into this mess. They just asked to be loved."

Crime beat

Two arrested in human trafficking case

LARGO - Detectives assigned to the Special Victims Unit arrested two individuals Thursday, Nov. 7, in connection to human trafficking of a juvenile victim.

On Nov. 4, the 14-year-old victim disclosed to detectives that the female suspect arranged for her to engage in sexual activity with an adult male for money. The victim told detectives that on Oct. 25, the female suspect told her she was having a male visitor come to her home. The victim was to have sex with him and collect money from him when they were done.

Through their investigation, the two suspects were identified, as 60-year-old Wanda Ann Ringgo, aka, Wanda Ann Taylor of Largo and Mohand Rashid, 25, of St. Petersburg. On Nov. 6, a search warrant was obtained and was served at Ringgo's residence on Nov. 7.

Both suspects agreed to meet with detectives at the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office Administration Building, 10750 Ulmerton Road in Largo, Nov. 7. Rashid reportedly admitted his involvement with the allegations and was arrested and charged with one count of lewd and lascivious battery. He was released from the Pinellas County Jail Nov. 8 on \$10,000 surety bond.

Ringgo was not cooperative with detectives during the interview, according to the report from the Sheriff's Office. Ringgo was arrested and charged with one count of human trafficking involving a minor under 15 years of age. She is being held without bond in the Pinellas County Jail.



Wanda Ringgo



Mohand Rashid

second victim Nov. 7 in the Lealman area.

According to detectives, on Thursday, Nov. 7, about 6:30 p.m., the first victim was walking in the area of 38th Street North and 46th Avenue North when the suspect approached her from behind. The suspect began to yell at the victim, demanded money and implied he had a gun. The victim began to open her cell phone and the suspect fled on foot toward 29th Street North.

Two hours later, at approximately 8:30 p.m. the second victim was exiting the Oley's Food Mart, 3891 46th Ave. N. in St. Petersburg. The victim was entering her vehicle when the suspect approached her car. The suspect began to yell at the victim then swung his arm back, striking the victim in the face with what appeared to be a handgun.

The victim exited the vehicle and the suspect entered the driver's seat and began driving westbound at 46th Avenue North. The vehicle is described as a four-door Kia Rio, silver in color with a Texas license plate that reads BJG5000.

The suspect in the first incident is described as a black male, approximate age 15 to 18, 5-foot, five-inches or taller, thin build, wearing a white tank top, dark colored pants and a brimmed hat worn backwards.

The suspect in the second incident is described as a black male, approximate age 20 to 23, 5-foot, 10-inches tall, medium build, wearing a white tank top and possibly a brimmed hat.

Due to the similarities of each suspect description and the time frame of each occurrence, detectives believe the suspect in both incidents may be one and the same.

Anyone with information on these robberies is asked to contact Detective J. Loftus of the Robbery/Homicide Unit at 727-582-6200 or to remain anonymous and be eligible for a reward contact Crime Stoppers at 1-800-873-TIPS or www.crimestoppersofpinellas.org.

Surveillance video can be viewed on the Sheriff's YouTube page, youtube.be/ZaKjgw6VUJg.

Detectives arrest man for child seduction

CLEARWATER - Pinellas County Sheriff's detectives assigned to the Special Victims Unit arrested a Clearwater man about 10:39 p.m.

Wednesday, Nov. 6, for seducing via phone texting two 12-year old girls he met while working the bouncy house and inflatable slides on Clearwater Beach.

Detectives suspect there may be other victims and ask anyone with information to contact the Sheriff's Office.

According to investigators, the crime was reported to the Sheriff's Office Aug. 16, after adult relatives of one of the victims found inappropriate text messages on the girl's phone. Detectives said the messages included solicitation for nude photos as well as sexually explicit conversations.

Detectives began investigating and determined that during the latter part of this summer the girls were frequenting the bouncy house and inflatable slides on Clearwater Beach. The suspect, identified as Leonardo Lopez-Navarro, 33, befriended the girls and allowed them to go on the slides and bouncy house without paying. Detectives further determined that inappropriate physical contact took place at that location between the suspect and the victims.

On Nov. 6, detectives obtained a warrant and arrested Lopez-Navarro. During the interview, he reportedly admitted that he had shared his phone number with various juveniles. He was booked into the Pinellas County Jail where bond was set at \$100,000.

Detectives suspect there may be other victims and request that anyone with information that may assist in this investigation to call Detective Holly Tsanakalotis of the Special Victims Unit at 727-582-6200.

The Pinellas County Sheriff's Office is a member of the Central Florida Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force.



Leonardo Lopez-Navarro

PCSO seeks armed robber and carjacker

LEALMAN - Pinellas County Sheriff's Detectives assigned to the Robbery/Homicide Unit are seeking the public's assistance in locating an armed robbery and armed carjacking suspect(s) who attempted to steal a purse and money from one victim and stole a vehicle from a

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Welch delivers final 'state of the county' address for the year

By SUZETTE PORTER

Pinellas County Commission Chair Ken Welch embarked on a different way of communicating with citizens this year with a quarterly "state of the county" address made available on the county's website and YouTube.

Welch delivered his inaugural address on March 27. His second came Aug. 2. The third and final became available via the Internet Nov. 8.

Welch began his address by saying that 2013 had been a productive year.

"The county has tackled a diverse set of issues this year - from revising our Emergency Medical Services, or EMS system, to modernizing our efforts to manage stormwater and improve water quality, and addressing the growing impact of poverty on our county's productivity, potential, and taxpayer funded services."

Welch talked about the budget in all three addresses. In the final one, he focused on the work by staff to develop the current \$1.7 billion balanced budget that prioritizes public health and safety, community development, environmental sustainability, tourism development and other services, including water quality and an improved surface water management program.

Dealing with the cost of emergency management services has been a sore spot for county commissioners for the past several years. Welch talked about the ongoing work to incorporate suggestions from a study by a consulting firm, Fitch and Associates to stabilize the system while continuing quality service.

Another topic the chairman focused on during previous addresses is transportation, which is on a fast track to a Nov. 4, 2014 referendum to allow citizens to decide the best way to fund improved transit initiatives.



County Commission Chair Ken Welch delivers his inaugural "state of the county" address on March 27.

"Pinellas County and Tampa Bay lag behind every other metropolitan area when it comes to modern, efficient public transit services," Welch said in his third address. "Greenlight Pinellas will change that by funding a modern, dependable and easy to use countywide bus system and a modern local rail system connecting our downtown centers from Clearwater, Largo, Pinellas Park, the Gateway Area and St. Petersburg, with a future connection to Tampa."

Welch outlined the benefits of improved transportation including jobs and new development while preserving existing neighborhoods and green spaces.

The Pinellas County Commission began an in depth look into the economic impact of poverty and

the need for healthy communities in 2012. Staff has been working on a plan to "address these challenges in an integrated and comprehensive way," Welch said.

A recent report estimates that the impact of poverty in Pinellas is at least \$2.5 billion annually.

"The goal is to provide more effective service delivery, based on collaboration, data management and preventive services," he said. "This is a holistic, collaborative approach focused on measurable outcomes and community impact."

Healthcare is a related area staff is working to address.

"Pinellas is a great community," Welch said. "But for many of our citizens, healthcare is an ongoing challenge."

Pinellas ranks 38 out of the state's 67 counties for overall health outcomes.

"Poverty and lack of access to early preventative health care is a primary driver for our poor health outcomes ranking," he said. "We can - and must - do better, for the benefit of our citizens lacking preventive healthcare and for the Pinellas taxpayers."

Work on reducing poverty and associated issues is the focus of a Community Redevelopment area for south St. Petersburg, which officials believe could become a model for redevelopment in other pockets of poverty located in Pinellas.

"I'm excited that the commission is partnering with the city of St. Petersburg to bring new tools to this important effort," Welch said.

An area Welch didn't talk about in either of his other "state of the county" addresses was the Big-ger Waters Flood Insurance Act of 2012, which was intended to stabilize the national flood insurance program, but has resulted in unaffordable increases in flood insurance rates.

"The potential impact to our citizens, businesses

and local economy is substantial," Welch said of the new threat.

Pinellas County has the most subsidized policies in the nation, including thousands of non-water-front properties.

"Your county commission is working with community stakeholders, our legislative delegation and congressional representatives to develop sensible alternatives to stabilize the flood insurance program without having a draconian impact on our property values and economy," Welch said.

He thanked Property Appraiser Pam Dubov for her work to assess and educate others about the potential effect of flood insurance reform in Pinellas.

"This will be a priority for your county commission until an acceptable resolution is crafted," Welch said.

Welch also thanked county staff for the work done to move the county forward during his year as commission chair. He praised the "strong partnership" between the commission and the county's constitutional officers, its districts and municipalities.

"Pinellas County works well because of the collaborative spirit between our elected officials and the active participation of our citizens," Welch said. "Your participation is vital and encouraged."

Welch will continue to chair the commission through the remainder of 2013 before passing on the gavel. If the commission follows tradition, Vice Chair Karen Seel will serve at the commission's helm in 2014.

The State of the County message can be viewed at www.PinellasCounty.org and on PCC-TV at noon, 6:30 p.m. and 10:30 p.m. on weekdays, and 12:30 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. on weekends. PCC-TV is available on Bright House Networks Channel 622, Verizon Channel 44 and WOW! Channel 18.

CAMPAIGNS, from page 1A

candidate to potentially replace Congressman Bill Young," Brickfield said on his Facebook page.

However, Brickfield, who recently became executive director for the Pinellas County Sheriff's Police Athletic League, said the timing just wasn't right.

There is still time for additional candidates to decide to run in the primary. Candidate qualifying period runs from 8 a.m. Monday, Nov. 18, through noon, Tuesday, Nov. 19. The deadline to register to vote in the primary election is Dec. 16. Florida has closed primaries, so only voters registered with a po-

litical party may vote in that party's primary election. Any changes to party affiliations must be made 29 days prior to a primary election, which for the Jan. 14, 2014 election is Dec. 16.

Send news items to Largo Leader Editor Julianna Torres, Tampa Bay Newspapers, 9911 Seminole Blvd., Seminole, FL 33772. Email jtortes@TBNweekly.com. or call 397-5563, ext. 324.

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Fire displaces family of four, three cats

REDINGTON SHORES – Seminole Fire Rescue and Pinellas Suncoast Fire Rescue responded to a vehicle fire in the carport at 17729 First St. East in Redington Shores Nov. 7.

According to a report from Seminole Fire Rescue, Dawn Leonard, her daughter, Brittany, and Dawn's father, Roger Lindblade were at home at the time of the fire, about 9:20 a.m. They smelled smoke and escaped the home just as firefighters arrived on the scene. The family's three cats also got out without injury.

The cause of the fire is still under investigation, but preliminary reports indicate it could have started in the engine compartment of the Trailblazer, which was destroyed in the fire. The home sustained significant damage.



Photo by BRAD DYKENS
Seminole Fire Rescue and Pinellas Suncoast Fire Rescue respond to a mid-morning fire at a home in Redington Shores. A vehicle in the carport was destroyed and the home received significant damage.

Tellabration! storytelling event set

By TIFFANY RAZZANO

PINELLAS PARK – Storytelling isn't just for children anymore.

The Tampa Bay Storytellers Guild presents Tellabration!, an evening of family-friendly stories for grownups, at Park Station, 5851 Park Blvd., Saturday, Nov. 23, 7:30 to 9 p.m.

The event is actually part of a global movement, said Ross Tarr, storyteller and guild member. Storytellers around the world participate in Tellabration! and will be sharing their art form on the same day.

The first Tellabration took place in Connecticut in 1988, organized by J.G. Pinkerton, who created the event to preserve the art of storytelling.

"He wanted to get communities more active and telling stories," Tarr said. "The idea was to preserve

family histories so future years can understand what happened in the past."

The guild has hosted Tellabration! since the mid-'90s, originally held at the Pinellas Park Library. But this is only the second year it will take place at Park Station.

"It's a great little venue," Tarr said.

A fundraiser for the Chamber, this year's Tellabration! features 10 area storytellers, local to Pinellas County: Tarr, Deborah Frethem, Suzanne Nelson, Shari Layne, husband-and-wife tandem storytellers Maureen and Gene Belote, Geneva Nelson, Katie Adams, Sarah Harris (ASL), and a visit by Chicago-based storyteller Sandi Sylver.

Tickets are \$5 each or five tickets for \$20. There will be a silent auction. For information or to purchase tickets, visit www.pinellasparkchamber.com.

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Charges are perplexing to sanctuary founder

By BOB McCLURE

INDIAN SHORES – Suncoast Seabird Sanctuary founder Ralph Heath said last week he can't understand why he was arrested and charged with insurance fraud on Nov. 2.

Heath, 68, was arrested early Nov. 2 by Indian Shores police and booked into Pinellas County Jail on charges of worker's compensation insurance fraud, a felony. He was released about 16 hours later on his own recognizance.

According to an affidavit filed by the Florida Department of Financial Services Division of Insurance Fraud, Heath is accused of operating the Sanctuary for seven months in 2012 without workers compensation insurance for his employees. The state also charges that part of that time he operated in spite of a stop-work order from the state.

Heath said he had no knowledge of the insurance lapse and was not contacted by either an insurance broker or state officials about the matter.

"Obviously, if we knew we had lapsed on the insurance, we would have taken care of it immediately," Heath said. "This happened over a year ago. Why didn't somebody contact us (before the arrest)?"

"We had zero warning from the state," he added. "No contact, no letter and no meeting to discuss it." Heath called the insurance lapse "a total accident."

"As soon as we found out about it, we got it reinstated," he said.

The Sanctuary, which opened in 1971 and is a well-respected facility for treating injured birds, has had a rocky financial existence the past two years.

The Internal Revenue Service filed liens against the nonprofit for unpaid taxes, which Heath said

last spring were being paid back in installments. Then, two weeks ago, the owner of a warehouse on Starkey Road foreclosed on a mortgage against the Sanctuary. Heath said he is currently trying to raise "about \$770,000" to take care of the issue.

In March, the Sanctuary was forced to close its hospital when supervisor Barbara Suto left. The facility still performs triage on injured birds, much of which is done by Heath who is a long-time zoologist. Heath hopes to ultimately hire another veterinarian and reopen the hospital.

Through all of this, the Sanctuary continues to operate and pay its bills, Heath said. But Heath admits the latest obstacle is making the stream of donations slow down.

"Donations were good until we got attacked again," Heath said. "We're trying to build ourselves up and then people try to shoot us down."

Saluting our vets



Photo by BOB McCLURE

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Tampa Bay NEWSPAPERS
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Briefcase

Mobility Express relocates

LARGO - Mobility Express Largo/Clearwater recently moved its dealership to a new showroom on Ulmerton Road and will host grand opening festivities with discounts Wednesday through Saturday, Nov. 13-16, at 7910 Ulmerton Road.

The grand opening event will feature free food, fun, and radio remote broadcast on Friday with giveaways, free scooter check-ups and discounts.

"The work we do transforms the quality of life, mobility, and freedom for those we serve," said Joseph Miozza in a press release. Miozza is general manager.

Visit www.MobilityExpressClearwater.com.

Bev's Emporium to open

LARGO - Bev's Emporium will celebrate its grand opening Sunday, Nov. 17, 1 to 4 p.m., at Mission Plaza, 11313 Starkey Road.

Beverly Storms, the owner of the new business, has lived in Largo for 15 years. She is a woman veteran who wants to help artisans keep their handmade crafts alive. The event will feature snacks and giveaways.

Corey Avenue sidewalk sale set

ST. PETE BEACH - The annual Corey Avenue Fall Sidewalk Sale will run Thursday through Sunday, Nov. 14-17, on Corey Avenue just off Gulf Boulevard in downtown St. Pete Beach.

Sale hours will be Thursday through Saturday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. More than 17 merchants will be loading up the sidewalks

with sales, discounts, BOGOs and more. The event will feature live music daily.

On Sunday, the sale will continue during the weekly Corey Fresh Market, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., and will include a Pet Photo Op event.

Parking is free. For information, call 498-8778 or visit www.coreyave.com.

Allegiant announces service to Syracuse

CLEARWATER - Allegiant recently announced new nonstop jet service between Syracuse and Tampa Bay via St. Petersburg-Clearwater International Airport.

The company will offer promotional fares as low as \$75 one way.

"We are pleased to bring a new, affordable and convenient travel option to the residents of Syracuse," said Andrew C. Levy in a press release. Levy is Allegiant Travel Company president. "We are confident the Central New York community will appreciate the convenience of flying nonstop to the Tampa Bay area and the added savings of bundling their air, hotel and car rental reservation together."

The new flights will operate twice weekly between Syracuse Hancock International Airport and St. Petersburg-Clearwater International Airport year-round.

LocalShops1 makes finalist list in awards

ST. PETERSBURG - LocalShops1 has been recognized as one of only 25 finalists in a nationwide award honoring independent businesses.

Independent We Stand's Inde-

Bayou dances pink



During October, national month of breast cancer awareness month, the staff of Bayou Dance Club, 6541 102nd Ave. N., Pinellas Park, pictured above, and their students raised money for the cause. On Oct. 18, the studio held a fundraiser during which students could make a donation and receive a dance card, giving them the opportunity to dance with any of the six professionals. The contributions of over 40 individuals totaled \$1,590, which went directly to the American Cancer Society.

Year Award, or Indie, helps to recognize a locally-owned small business that has gone above and beyond to deliver great customer service and community support.

LocalShops1, a grassroots organization founded in 2008, is an active Tampa Bay area advocate for small businesses. With more than 300 business members and more than 25,000 card-carrying shopper advocates, LocalShops1 carries its mission of offering advocacy, support and education to locally owned businesses.

Tampa Bay residents are urged to help LocalShops1 make it to the Top 10 round by voting once every 24 hours through Dec. 1 online at

www.independentwestand.org/in-dies/profile.php?id=368.

The overall winner, selected from the top 10 vote-getters, will receive a package worth more than \$10,000 in cash and prizes.

"We are thrilled to have made it to the finals round, and appreciate everyone who has been voting for us," said Ester Venouziou in a press release. Venouziou is the founder of LocalShops1. "If we win, we have a lot of ideas of how we can pay it forward and help further promote small businesses in the region."

Anytime Fitness hosts canned food drive

CLEARWATER - Anytime Fitness, the 24-hour co-ed fitness club, is having a canned food drive and will be collecting canned food for the month of November in Clearwater.

All food donated will be taken to the RCS. Donations may be dropped off at the Anytime Fitness in the LaBelle Plaza at 1595 S. Highland Ave.

"The goal of this event is to help RCS maintain their inventory levels to ensure that they can serve everyone who comes to their doors equally during the busy holiday season," said Maggie Loving in a press release. Loving is owner of the Anytime Fitness and organizer of the event. "By involving our members, we show our united concern for the community that supports us. The importance of giving back is vital, and it is rewarding to make a difference for those faced with difficult times."

To participate in the food drive,

bring donations to the gym. As an added incentive, Loving will give a free Anytime Fitness 14-day Pass to each person who drops off food. Anyone who joins the gym during the month of November can bring in 10 cans of food and receive \$100 credit toward the enrollment fee or \$100 off of a one year paid in full membership. The food drive will run through Nov. 30.

For information, call 330-7664.

JD's to host Christmas tree auction

INDIAN ROCKS BEACH - A silent auction of fully decorated Christmas trees will be presented Saturday, Dec. 7, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., at JD's Restaurant and Lounge, 125 Gulf Blvd.

The trees, donated by local businesses and residents, will be each valued at more than \$300. Proceeds of the auction will benefit the Indian Rocks Beach Homeowners Association and the VFW's toy drives.

Third Thursdays at the Alley set

BELLEAIR BLUFFS - Several shops in Belleair Bluffs will take part in Third Thursdays at the Alley on Thursday, Nov. 21, 6 to 8 p.m.

Attendees will enjoy live music and free refreshments while taking advantage of extended shopping hours. Participating merchants include Petal & Vine Garden Shop & Market,

Alley Antiques, Roadside Attraction, Shabby 2 Chic, Arbor Elle, Junk in the Trunk, Mermaid's Brush and Orchid Interior, which are all located in Antique Alley, 596 Indian Rocks Road. Also participating will be Provence Art & Antiques at 2620 Jewel Road.

Many of the stores offer unique, one-of-a-kind new and repurposed items including artwork, garden and home decor, collectibles and gifts.

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SPCA donation



Husband-and-wife duo Dr. Douglas Graybill at Oakhurst Dental and Kelli Graybill of Kelli Graybill Realty collected donations for the SPCA in Largo in October. They collected more than 236 items and more than 125 pounds of dog food.

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Mom is concerned the bullying lesson can go a little too far

I don't know about your kids, but my kids - especially my fourth grader - have been inundated with the bullying topic lately.

I know it is a serious issue, but sometimes I think we can overdo something, and it can have a negative effect.

In the last month, my daughter has been a part of a week-long anti-bullying campaign, which included dress-up days, and a five-week program called Peacemakers from CASA, or Community Action Stops Abuse, where an instructor comes into the classroom for an hour a week and talks about bullying and other issues. The most recent effort was an hour-long music program called Didgeeridoo Down Under, which talked about anti-bullying.

You would think we have a bullying problem at my daughter's school, but they don't. It's just the hot topic and a buzzword right now.

I don't usually watch the evening news with my kids around, because it's usually about violence and things I don't want my young kids to hear about. But the other day I had it on, and there was that horrible story about the little 12-year-old girl who committed suicide because of being bullied at school.

My 9-year-old daughter stopped what she was doing. Somehow, she heard the reporter say the word "suicide" and knew about that story. I asked her how she knew about it. I have never talked about it, and I really didn't want her knowing about something like that, because I thought she was too young.



Mom 2 Mom
Kadi Hendricks
Tubbs

She said they talked about it at school in her Peacemakers class. I was kind of surprised and asked her what was talked about. To my dismay, I was shocked and mad at what my daughter told me happened in this class.

My daughter told me the Peacemaker instructor talked about bullying, and in her presentation, there was a fake person made out of paper that she wanted the kids to come up to and say something mean and then rip off part of the paper. Most of the kids in my daughter's class did not want to say anything mean, but the Peacemaker instructor said she strongly encouraged them to come up and do it. She said they had a choice, but pretty much pressured them into doing it.

My daughter was one of those kids who didn't want to do it, but ended up going up to the paper person and telling it she didn't like its new haircut. Most kids ended up saying something mean even though they didn't want to. There were two kids that absolutely didn't want to do it. At the end of the presentation, the instructor told those two kids they were the only ones who weren't bullies. She gave them a reward, and the others had to write apology notes to the paper person.

My daughter told me she felt terrible. She said she only did it because she felt like the instructor was a teacher, and she had to listen to her.

The instructor then asked the students how they thought this made the paper doll feel when it was bullied. My daughter said the answers the

kids gave were "sad," "mad," "angry," "upset" and "wanted to run away." The instructor said there was one more answer they were missing.

This is where the word suicide came up. Something I don't think kids in fourth grade need to know. A message that was meant to be good, in this instance, was not.

I ended up calling the organization that presented the program, and they told me the lesson might have been presented wrong by the instructor. I talked to the principal of my daughter's school who said she would talk to the presenter and by no means should fourth graders be taught about the word suicide or influenced to do something they didn't feel was right.

This was an opportunity for me as a parent to talk to my kids about what had gone on in school. I told both of my daughters that if ever they don't feel something is right, they don't have to do it, even if it is a teacher, instructor or an adult telling them to do something.

As far as the word suicide, I talked to my fourth grader about it, even though I think she was too young to know about that just yet.

My advice to all parents is to communicate with your kids. Ask them about their day, about their friends and what's going on in their lives. There are serious topics that need to be addressed with our kids in and out of school. We need to be careful, though, in how we address these issues.

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

Worship calendar

Anona United Methodist Church

LARGO - The annual church bazaar will take place Friday, Nov. 15, 5 to 8 p.m.; and Saturday, Nov 16, 8:30 a.m. to 2:30

p.m., at Anona United Methodist Church, 13233 Indian Rocks Road.

Available for purchase will be a variety of items, such as books, games, toys, linens, household goods, collectibles, Christmas decorations, jewelry, some hunting and fishing equipment and some furniture.

For information, call 595-2581.

Pasadena Community Church

ST. PETERSBURG - The Southern Home Companion will be presented Sunday, Dec. 15, 7 p.m., at Pasadena Community Church, 227 70th St. S.

This community concert will feature Christmas folk songs and spirituals performed by the Chancel Choir, Children's Choir and instrumentalists, base, guitar and steel drum with narration of the Christmas story. A free will offering will be received.

For information, call 381-2499.

Good Samaritan Church

PINELLAS PARK - A drum circle will be part of the worship service Sunday, Nov. 17, 10:30 a.m., at Good Samaritan Church, 6085 Park Blvd.

Facilitated by Joel Jadus, empowerment drumming is a healing and unifying experience that positively impacts participants, the community and the universe, according to the press release. "It is a group affirmation in time with universal rhythm to let go and release old habitual patterns that limit us and set positive intentions and commitments to God and to eternal truth," the release reads.

All are welcome to attend this creative worship experience. Good Samaritan Church is affiliated with United Presbyterian Church and The United Church of Christ. For information, visit www.goodsam-church.org.

First Baptist Church of Pinellas Park

PINELLAS PARK - The choir will present its Christmas musical Sunday, Dec. 15, 10:30 a.m., at First Baptist Church of Pinellas Park, 5495 Park Blvd.

The public is invited to attend. There is no admission charge.

For information, call 546-5748.

Chapel On The Hill United Church of Christ

SEMINOLE - Beginning Sunday, Nov. 17, a new early bird Sunday service will be presented from 8 to 9 a.m., at Chapel On The Hill United Church of Christ, 12601 Park Blvd.

Jeff Belyea, the new youth director at the church, will facilitate the nontraditional early bird service. Belyea was a pastor of an interfaith, interdenominational fellowship in Maine for several years before moving to the St. Petersburg area with his wife, Susan, in 2005.

According to the press release, Belyea's early bird service is "for the young and young at heart." Belyea will kick off the service asking attendees "Do you want to dance?"

Instead of pews, there is a dance floor and tables. The serv-

ice will feature singing and dancing as servers from the youth group and the young at heart from the congregation bring free coffee, juice and donuts. Attendees also can order a breakfast sandwich for \$2.

A centerpiece card will list "What's Happening On The Hill." There will be no collection plate, only a donation jar that looks like a cookie jar sitting next to the cookies. There will be a friendly greeting and an introduction to the "take home" sermon, but no sermon per se. It's printed on each week's take-home piece.

"It's a celebration of song and dance," Belyea said in the press release. "Our mission is nothing less than new generation revival."

For information, call 391-2919 or visit www.coth.org.

Connect2Christ Church

SEMINOLE - Connect2Christ Church (C2C Church) will open soon at its new location in the former Regions Bank building, 9398 Oakhurst Road.

According to a press release, church volunteers and professionals have worked hard to re-fashion the former bank into a welcoming, safe and comfortable space for everyone. There is a children's room for Bible study, crafts and movies, as well as a nursery. New paint, inside and out, new carpet, landscaping and a new sign confirm that Connect2Christ Church will soon be ready to open its doors wide to welcome our members and the community.

C2C's music group SPAN performs lively and inspired Christian music. SPAN has been seen performing in various community events such as the Pow Wow parade and carnival and the Easter sunrise service at Seminole City Park. Together with members of the congregation, SPAN brings music and hot food to homeless families at Pinellas Hope.

For more information, visit www.C2CChurch.com.

Granny's Attic



Photo courtesy of LAKE SEMINOLE PRESBYTERIAN
Andrea Gregor buys a craft item from Caitie Walker. Caitie, 11, is a local entrepreneur who has started her own business, Caitie's Colorful Creations.

First Christian Church of Seminole

SEMINOLE - Worship artist, songwriter and author, Dennis Jernigan, will perform in concert on Saturday, Nov. 17, 6 p.m., at First Christian Church of Seminole, 13272 Park Blvd.

The community-wide praise and worship event is free to the public. Love offerings will be accepted.

Nicknamed by a pastor as "America's lead worshiper," the songs of Dennis Jernigan, such as "You Are My All in All," "Nobody Fills My Heart Like Jesus," "Thank You" and "We Will Worship the Lamb of Glory" are sung literally all over the world. Routinely, multiple songs from Jernigan rank in the Top 100 on the Church Copyright Licensing charts for the most performed songs in churches.

Jernigan has released more than 25 full-length CDs, multiple songbooks and folios, and has authored more than five books including his two most recent "What Every Boy Should Know, What Every Man Wishes His Dad Had Told Him" and "Daily Devotions for Kingdom Seekers."

His newest CD, "Here in Your Presence - Dennis Jernigan Live from San Antonio," is available now at retail outlets.

For information, call 393-2136.

Oakhurst United Methodist Church

SEMINOLE - GriefShare Surviving the Holidays will be presented Wednesday, Nov. 20, 6 to 7:30 p.m., in Room 13, at Oakhurst United Methodist Church, 13400 Park Blvd.

The Holiday season is fast approaching, and some may experience a jumble of emotions that they have yet to sort out. Facing a holiday after the death of a loved one can be more difficult than friends and even family members may realize. The GriefShare Surviving the Holidays' video, discussion group and devotional material will be presented to help survivors survive the holidays, and to find strength, healing and tools to move forward in their daily walk through the deep pain of grief.

To register or for information, call 391-4769.

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Every Life has a Story

With November upon us, we enjoy the beautiful fall colors, trips to fruit stands to shop for our favorite apples, and then most importantly, the Thanksgiving holiday, with warm thoughts of spending this day with family and friends. On Thanksgiving Day, many of us are reminded of the blessings of our families and the many treasured memories that will always be part of our lives. We look forward to this day of sharing a wonderful meal and visiting with family, creating yet another great memory. Yet there are those in our senior population, who may not look forward to this day for a number of reasons. They may live alone with families in other states, unable to come for a visit or often many seniors are not physically able to travel away from home. It can be a lonely time with feelings that no one in their world views them as valuable or worth listening to.

Take a moment and reflect on what you may possibly do to fully express the meaning of Thanksgiving throughout the year. Can you think of a way to free-up a couple of hours each week so that you can give that time to someone you know who is in need of company? Everyone has a story and the longer you live, the more stories you have to share. Invite a senior you know who lives alone to your table on this special holiday. Listen to their stories and know in your heart that they will go home thankful for the memory you helped create for them.

The true meaning of Thanksgiving should not end after a prayer or a few shared moments of thanks. Thanksgiving consists of two special words, "thanks" and "giving". Thanksgiving 2014, let us all try to set some time aside for a senior who could use our attention. The joy and the caring you provide will leave a lasting touch on a heart yearning for someone to take an interest in them, and listen to their "stories" as each of us has a life story. Pull up a chair and just listen, then feel fulfilled with the gift you have given.

"For every beauty there is an eye somewhere to see it.
For every truth there is an ear somewhere to hear it.
For every love there is a heart somewhere to receive it."
~Ivan Panin



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The psychology of life without walls: inside a dolphin fight

Something very rare happened at sea the other day. Three big bottlenose dolphins had a big fight. In every way, it was a glaring example of the psychology of life lived without walls.

It was two against one: N and Riptab against DD2. DD2's alliance partner BB was not there. This was most unusual, but whether the pair took advantage of it to fight the single bull is unknown. If so, it did not appear to work.



Dolphin Watch
Ann Weaver

We first saw them in the distance. Thought the situation was desperate, the vista was beautiful. The sea glittered like a field of diamonds. It created a shimmering Las Vegas stage curtain against which the dolphins suddenly exhibited their most sensational aerial behavior: One dolphin leaps wildly into the sky to avoid a second one lunging out of the water beneath it, trying to ram it.

We rushed over but were too late. DD2 had rocketed away to the east, leaving N and his buddy Riptab to mill around and surf a passing wave. Such behavior was out of place for the tension of the moment, and was an example of displacement behavior. In the same way, I might be really mad at you so I safely attack a sandwich.

The seas quieted, but the moment would not last. Bottlenose dolphins fight in rounds like professional boxers; either they get winded quickly or just back off to catch their breath. But their fights are on-again-off-again. It is often hard to tell when the fight is over.

It is not hard to tell when the conflict starts again. Round two began when DD2 rocketed back from his point of retrieval; we glimpsed something large and gray shooting past underwater. He could have stayed away but did not. The seas erupted in another round of conflict.

Like most fights, Round two was mostly underwater. But you could occasionally see the dolphins circling each other, trying to arch over each other, or rolling in the water onto their backs or sides. The latter appeared to be efforts to make contact with another dolphin only with their back rather than the less impervious belly region. When N rolled and pressed against Riptab to squash DD2 between them, DD2 squirted out only to whirl around and continue circling them, vying for position.

It was really surprising to see N and Riptab rush away. They left together at speed, using the classic skim behavior in which the dolphin creates a rooster off either side of the body in its haste. This time, it was DD2 who came and milled around the boat as we watched his two rivals become distant silhouettes in the diamond field. Then DD2 vanished and we awaited Round three.

It was not long in coming. Curiously, N and Riptab had sprinted into the distance, turned around, came back and launched into Round three. They had acted the same way DD2 acted before Round two. Another wild bout of circling, arching and rolling commenced.

Conflict is a fact of life. It is not comfortable. But there is one nice thing about it: Conflict is rare, in its natural state anyway. Constant or predictable conflict is indicative of a destructive situation that must be resolved and is not normal conflict.

Because conflict is rare in the natural state, it is hard to study. Many scientists study animal conflict because people are too self-conscious to be studied; they change their behavior when scientists start taking notes! Official studies of animal conflict also are hard because you can never tell what the animals are fighting about. The best you



Photo by ANN WEAVER

Bottlenose dolphin bull Riptab lurches out of the water and reveals a deep cut in his face, while his alliance partner N (dorsal fin visible on the right) starts a roll that will sandwich and squash their opponent DD2 between them.

can do is try to figure out the context in which conflict takes place. Today, this was not possible to do.

The study of dolphin conflict is especially difficult because it is very hard to tell when dolphins are fighting. Fighting creates lots of splashing. The problem is that other happier behaviors, which are just as active like zesty sex and play, also create lots of splashing. All that splashing obliterates the details.

I actually once devoted two years of my life to studying conflict among 13 captive bottlenose dolphins to inform field biologists so they could recognize conflict at sea and differentiate it from those other happier behaviors. I did not know at the time that I would be the field biologist that my study would inform.

The feature that best identifies dolphin conflict is the tail whip. The tail whip looks like a dolphin doing a headstand with the back half of his body out of the water and vertical. Clear of the water, the tail is then punched wildly sideways at anyone who is near. DD2, N and Riptab only did fake tail whips like a guy who clenches his fist without throwing the punch.

But that did not stop Round 3 from happening. It ended when N and Riptab rushed away again as before, skimming to the south as fast as they could. Again, DD2 swung by the boat and submerged like dolphins do.

We waited for Round 4. But the dolphins were totally gone and we never saw them again.

In a life without walls, they could take their fight wherever it led them. And they did.

Dr. Weaver studies wild dolphins under federal permit 16299, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Send her an email at annstats54@gmail.com or visit her website www.goodnaturestatistics.com. NOAA advises anyone who sees a stranded dolphin in the Gulf of Mexico to call 877-942-5343 or 877-433-8299.

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Gardening briefs

Weedon to host rainwater harvesting workshop

ST. PETERSBURG - A rainwater harvesting workshop will be presented Saturday, Nov. 16, 10 to 11:30 a.m., at Weedon Island Preserve, 1800 Weedon Drive NE.

Attendees will learn how to capture rainwater in this workshop, then save that water in a recycled plastic drum to be used later in landscapes. Each attendee will receive instructions and reference booklet, and will have the option of purchasing a rain barrel. The program is best for ages 10 and older.

Registration is required. Rain barrels available for purchase at time of registration. Call 453-6500 or visit www.weedonislandpreserve.org.

FHS to meet

CLEARWATER - The Florida Herb Society will meet Tuesday, Nov. 19, 6:30 p.m., at the Clearwater Garden Club, 405 Seminole St.

Attendees will make herbal vinegars. Participants should bring fresh herbs and pretty containers that you'd wish to fill.

The meeting will include refreshments and herbal swaps. Visitors are welcome.

The goal of the FHS is to educate members and the general public in the growing and preservation of herbs for use in culinary, medicinal and decorative purposes.

The first meeting is free. Cost is \$25 a year to join FHS.

Call Emily Wenzel at 365-8574 or email emily@floridaherbsociety.org.

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Pets of the week



Phoebe

Phoebe is just 7 months old and has extraordinary calico colors that will get even richer as she grows older. Her emerald eyes are intoxicating, and she has the outstanding and unique personality that comes with being a polydactyl. Phoebe is a little shy at first but quickly comes around. She loves her belly rubs and adores human attention. She has a great appetite and is built like a bulldog. She is fully vaccinated, tested for FeLV and FIV, spayed and microchipped. Call All 'Bout Cats, Inc. at 712-7773 or visit www.allboutcats.org.



Vincent

Vincent is a handsome, black-and-tan, medium-haired tabby Main Coon. He has mesmerizing green eyes and is looking for a new home. This adult fellow loves to be a part of everything that's going on. He helps with computer chores by putting his chin and pay on the keyboard whenever his foster mom is working. He craves attention and being petted. He is fine with sharing his home with other cats and dogs, and he has been neutered, tested for diseases, current on his shots and microchipped. To meet this great guy, call Save Our Strays at 481-52622. Visit www.saveourstraysinc.com.



Daisy

Daisy is a 5-month-old, spunky bulldog/Australian cattle dog mix who would love to have a family to play with. Will you be her forever playmate? Adopt Daisy at the Humane Society of Pinellas at 3040 S.R. 590 in Clearwater. Call 797-7722 or visit www.humanesocietyofpinellas.org.



Buddy

Meet Buddy, a 6-year-old basset hound/lab mix. Don't let this little guy's face fool you - Buddy has lots of energy for long walks and a few rounds of fetch. He is part of the SPCA's Golden Paw Senior Pet Program, and he hopes to find a forever home. A loving family with older children where he could be the one-and-only dog would be the best match for Buddy. This housetrained pup is neutered, vaccinated, microchipped and comes with free 30 days of pet insurance. Adopt him for \$50 at the SPCA, 9099 130th Ave. N., Largo. Call 586-3591 or visit www.spcatampabay.org.

Bentley

Bentley is a 4.5-year-old, 12-pound male Min Pin mix. He gets along great with dogs and cats, and he walks well on a leash. He'd prefer a home without children, though. Bentley is neutered, vaccinated and microchipped. To learn more about him and other adoptable pets, visit Pet Pal Animal Shelter at 405 22nd St. S., St. Petersburg, call 328-7738 or visit www.petpalanimalshelter.com.

How to care for your senior pet

When our pets reach the age of 7, they have moved into their "golden years." On the average, age 7 equates to 55-65 human years. Our pets' bodies and organs begin aging at a more rapid rate once they become a "senior at 7."

What does this mean for your pet? As he or she ages, we can see signs at home that clue us in to decreasing function of his or her body systems. Drinking more water, and in turn urinating more, can be our only sign of diabetes, kidney insufficiency/failure, or endocrine (hormone) disease. Reluctance to exercise may be the result of arthritis or heart disease. Changes in appetite, vomiting, diarrhea, coughing, and sneezing can be indicative of various disease processes that involve the liver, kid-

Speaking of Pets

Dr. Heather Manfredi, D.V.M.



neys, heart and lungs. Many of these changes happen over time and are sometimes difficult to recognize because we see our pets everyday. Identifying these signs early and bringing your pet in for a physical exam leads to a greater chance of early diagnosis and treatment.

Most of our pets have been generally healthy in their younger years and have never needed a full biochemical profile, complete blood count (CBC), thyroid hormone level, urinalysis, electrocardiogram, radiographs, or any other diagnostic procedure - apart from yearly heartworm testing and intestinal parasite screening. The physical exam performed yearly can provide a great deal of information; however, without the benefit of biochemical profiles and other diagnostic tests, it is difficult to assess how well the internal organs are functioning.

In many cases, performing these tests alert us to problems that are just beginning - and early diagnosis leads to early treatment. Early detection, and early treatment, can extend your

pet's longevity and quality of life.

The American Veterinary Medical Association and the Animal Hospital of Dunedin recommends yearly screening of your senior pet. Your veterinarian will make recommendations for your pet according to the physical exam findings. At the Animal Hospital of Dunedin, our goal for our patients in their "golden years" is to prolong life with quality.

Dr. Heather Manfredi, D.V.M., is a veterinarian at the Animal Hospital of Dunedin. She earned her B.S. from Florida State University and her DVM from the University of Florida. With roots in Pinellas, she returned to live and work in Dunedin after spending some time in Interlachen, Fla. and in Kansas City, Mo.

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Clowning around

Meet Teddy Bear, a 10-year-old miniature Yorkie on the left, and Gracie Lou, a 2-year-old cairn terrier. They had a blast dressing up for Halloween, and they are this month's Pet of the Month winners. Their human mommy and daddy are Linda and Bob Kubilius of Clearwater Beach. They rescued Gracie Lou from a bad situation when she was 4 months old. She was very sick with kennel cough and underweight, and Linda nursed her back to health. Now, these sweet little clowns love to join their parents for walks on the beach. They are always playing, and if there is not a toy nearby, then they love when their mom throws their special "flipper floppies" to them. They also have their own lounge chairs because Teddy Bear is too small to jump up onto the couch. For being only 8 pounds, Teddy Bear can sure snore and is always waking up the rest of the family. However, they are healthy pups, with their favorite treats being blueberries, bananas and carrots. As the Pet of the Month winners, they won a \$25 gift certificate to either Largo Feed or Park Feed in Pinellas Park, but they have kindly donated their prize to the Humane Society of Pinellas. Send your pet photos to Alexandra Lundahl at alundahl@TBNweekly.com.

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For years, Florida has relied on tourism as a major source of revenue, but in order for the state to continue economic growth, it must invest in other key industries as well.



Dominic M. Calabro

The Florida Legislature has recognized the importance of an efficient logistics network to job creation, retention, and the recruitment of companies from other states and around the globe by increasing investment in Florida ports and other infrastructures. These improved facilities have enhanced Florida's global competitiveness, provided jobs to thousands of Floridians and improved our international trade and tourism. Investments in Florida's infrastructure also provide a steady stream of local, state, and federal government revenues.

Florida is home to 15 seaports that handle about 40 percent of total U.S. exports, welcome the largest number of cruise passengers in the world, and employ more than 680,000 Floridians. These jobs generate \$26.1 billion in personal income, produce \$96.6 billion in direct business revenue, and contribute to more than \$2.4 billion in local and state taxes.

The direct economic impact of ports will be even greater if Florida capitalizes on opportunities for growth. The growing population in Florida and in the southeast mega-regions, the latter which currently account for more than one-third of the U.S. population, is expected to increase the demand for goods entering Florida. Growth of international markets will add to that demand, especially those located in the Latin American region. Trade with Latin America and the Caribbean is of utmost importance for Florida, as seven of its top 10 trading partners have been from this region in recent years.

Florida should expect higher seaport traffic in the coming years, if and only if the right investments are made in order to maintain seaport competitiveness. While several of our ports are already expanding and improving their facilities, it is important for Florida seaports and logistics centers to work together toward a statewide development vision rather than a local or regional one. A statewide vision would avoid connectivity issues, redundancies, and inefficiencies in the system. Several reports have called for this vision, including The Florida Department of Transportation 2060 Transportation Plan and the Florida Chamber Foundation's Florida Trade and Logistics Study.

While Florida has the chance to benefit from changing international landscapes and further domestic investment, we should be aware of how other states are developing their seaports and intermodal systems. This is particularly true for states in the southeastern region that have successfully increased their exports at a high growth rate for the past years. For example, Louisiana is currently experiencing increases that may well position them at a higher ranking than Florida in the near future.

The Florida seaport industry continues to grow, as shown by the increase in sea and coastal transportation jobs since the end of the recession. In order to maintain this growth and help Florida remain a world trade hub, policy makers should continue to appropriate the necessary resources to this industry, as our ports' ability to efficiently handle freight will determine if Florida will take a larger share of both domestic and international trade, however, doing so will require the right investment and careful planning.

While looking for opportunities to further diversify Florida's economy and make the Sunshine State a better place to live, work and play, state leaders should continue to support Florida ports.

Dominic M. Calabro is President and Chief Executive Officer of Florida TaxWatch, a statewide, nonprofit, nonpartisan government watchdog and research institute for taxpayers.

Other views

The Lakeland Ledger – Nov. 7

Medicaid Expansion: Florida should fill health gap

Florida is losing \$55 billion in federal funding over 10 years because of its failure to expand Medicaid. The money would have covered the entire cost of the expansion for three years and 90 percent subsequently.

Conservative lawmakers were worried about having to pay more later, so they decided that no one gets covered by the expansion now. At least 21 states have taken the money, including several with Republican-controlled statehouses.

The politics that have led to the state's failure to act will prove costly to its citizens and hospitals.

The solution is for Florida to do the math and swallow the extreme, anti-Washington ideology – and accept the \$55 billion in federal funding to expand Medicaid.

The Miami Herald – Nov. 9

Florida governor's race: All signs point to rough ride ahead

Almost as soon as former Gov. Charlie Crist made his expected announcement last week that he intends to run for his old seat in 2014, negative ads against him started popping up on television.

Welcome to Election Year 2014. It's going to be a rough and mud-spattered ride.

By now, most voters are resigned to the sad reality that negative campaigns are a driving force in most races.

This time around it's starting far earlier than usual, with the promise of lots more to come.

Florida Today – Nov. 8

Hazing and other NFL failures

Not long ago, NFL coaches routinely rushed injured players back onto the field before they were ready. Coaches also ran their teams like despots, with their ears closed to player concerns.

Nowadays, things are a bit different. Sensitive to its image and the possibility of litigation, the league requires teams to treat injuries, particularly concussions, much more seriously. And coaching styles have evolved away from the General Patton-like model.

But if coaches have changed with the times, the locker rooms they rule haven't changed much since players wore leather helmets. The mess in Miami, where Dolphins tackle Jonathan Martin left the team after being subjected to epithets and other abuse from fellow offensive lineman Richie Incognito, exposes how destructive outdated player rituals can be.

What do you think?

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- Please keep letters to editor to 700 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.
- Please do not use profanity.
- We do not publish poetry or songs in letters to the editor.
- Each writer may submit one letter per month.
- We can't return letters to the editor.

What to expect in the firearms war

The all-out conflict between the gun lobby and its opponents is well underway. It's unlikely we'll see an end to it in our lifetimes. Here's what we may look forward to in years to come.

WASHINGTON, D.C. – June 20, 2012. The National Rifle Association today announced complete control of almost half of Congress.

An NRA spokesman said, "We now can state that forty-four of the Senate's 100 members and 238 of U.S. representatives have pledged their absolute support for all NRA policies and goals. This will guarantee that no new gun-control laws will be adopted during the current session of Congress, and that several existing anti-NRA laws will be repealed."

The spokesman added, "The loyalty of these pro-NRA legislators was obtained without a single bribe being extended or accepted by these gallant Second Amendment defenders. We simply made them an offer they couldn't refuse. If they agreed to become a willing servant of the NRA, we would give them our full backing for the remainder of their political lives. If, on the other hand, they chose to remain independent, we would oppose them with a level of enthusiasm that would make them wish they had been born in Bangladesh. This arrangement – now referred to as the Bangladesh Deal – almost always brings the Congresspersons around to our way of thinking."

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Feb. 14, 2018. The Pew Research Center says that most Americans fully expect there will be at least one shooting incident per week at a college, public school or shopping mall.

"It seems to have become part of the American Way of Life," said Lillian Armstrong, a Pew vice president. "We view this attitude as nei-



Driver's Seat
Bob Driver

ther pessimistic or optimistic. During the past decade or so, shootings in public places have become so common that anyone with a grain of sense has concluded that most citizens are in danger the moment they open their front door and step outside."

Ms. Armstrong said, "What's disturbing is the fact that millions of Americans no longer are greatly disturbed by all the gunfire and death that surround us. Our media studies show that, unless the shooting occurs within a two-mile radius of their homes, the average citizen spends less than seven seconds viewing a TV report or reading a news account of the gunfire, before passing on to other news items. Like cellphones or football, shootings have become an accepted part of our culture."

"One interviewee summed up Americans' feelings with this remark: 'What do you expect, when most people you pass on the street are carrying at least one weapon? A firearm is much like your sex drive: use it or lose it.'" Ms. Armstrong said.

EUGENE, Ore. – Sept. 22, 2016. A sixth-grade student at the Lincoln Elementary School has been expelled for using the word "rifle" in an essay written for a composition class.

The school's principal, Todd Farmhorst, told local news media that the expulsion of the boy – identified only as Joey – was an expression of

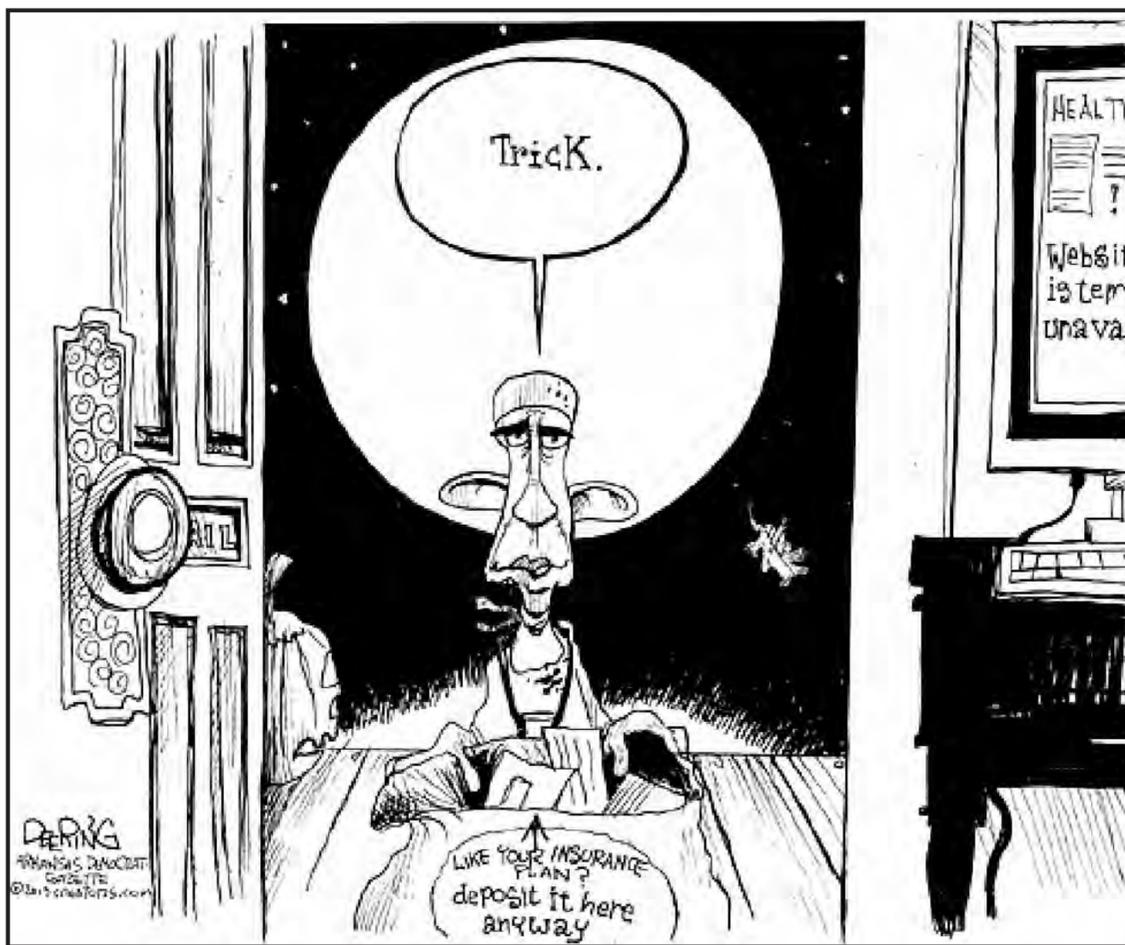
the school's zero-tolerance policy with regard to firearms. "Other schools may pussy-foot around when it comes to guns, but Lincoln Elementary is not one of them," he said.

He added, "We began by prohibiting the possession of any sort of weapon by students. Later we added pencils and pens to the list, along with perfume or cologne that might be sprayed into a victim's face during an attack. Our next step was to cleanse our school's library of all books with the words "gun," "bomb," "shoot," "stab," or "pistol" in a book's title. Students were forbidden to use those and other incendiary terms in their daily speech while attending classes. Finally, we cracked down on any written materials that contained words referring to guns, explosives or violence of any kind."

The principal said, "Joey's essay told about a hunting trip his father had taken ten years ago. He could have used a synonym for 'rifle,' but he chose not to. Now he must pay the price. If I could, I would expel any student who even thought about guns."

An unexpected result of Principal Farmhorst's actions was a false report that a serial killer carrying six kinds of firearms and an assortment of hand grenades had invaded the school. Police from Eugene and five nearby communities surrounded the school, ordered a lockdown, and summoned attack helicopters to the scene. Before the mistaken report was cleared up, the noise and confusion had "scared the school children out of a year's growth," according to one parent, who added, "But it was worth it, to keep our kiddies safe from these gun nuts."

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



Lessons from New Jersey, Virginia

What do Tuesday's resounding re-election of Republican Chris Christie as governor of Democrat-friendly New Jersey and the excruciating defeat of tea party stalwart and gubernatorial wannabe Ken Cuccinelli in once reliably Republican Virginia say about Republican chances of retaking the White House in 2016?

Christie won by 22 points after bad-mouthing the federal government shutdown, which these days makes him a moderate. Now some pundits are wondering out loud whether Christie is the 2016 front-runner.

In losing to oily Democrat Terry McAuliffe, Cuccinelli drove another nail in the tea party coffin.

I wouldn't declare Christie the GOP front-runner. As Ethics and Public Policy Center senior fellow Henry Olsen opined, Christie has a unique outside appeal that works in New Jersey but will not necessarily "translate to the national stage."

But sometimes the conventional wisdom is right. Here are the lessons I take away from the voters' verdicts:

– The tea party strategy of bucking the party establishment is a loser.

Cuccinelli supporters are venting against the GOP establishment for not giving more money to their man when polls showed that McAuliffe's lead was dwindling because of the glitch-rich Obamacare rollout. "Knowing that Christie was going to win that race without their help, why would they not help Cuccinelli more?" Tea Party Express head Amy Kremer complained to The Washington Times.

She has a point, but she ignores the laws of cause and effect. In maneuvering the nomina-



Debra Saunders

tion process from a primary election to a convention, the Richmond Times-Dispatch wrote in a biting "none-of-the-above" endorsement, Cuccinelli engaged in an "expression of raw power (that) would have delighted satchems of Tammany Hall. Virginia does not welcome an in-your-face governor."

Tea partiers boast that the GOP cannot win without them. But guess what. They cannot win without the establishment, either.

– Successful candidates appeal to those outside their base.

During his acceptance speech, Christie boasted that he won because he campaigned outside the GOP base. He talked about the need to listen to voters – a novel concept.

In his concession speech, Cuccinelli talked to dead people. "We fought for the principles that were first articulated for the whole world by Virginians," Cuccinelli told his supporters. He mentioned George Washington, Thomas Jefferson and James Madison.

"We're New Jersey," Christie said. "We fight," but for what's important.

Cuccinelli? He told his supporters, "We home-school."

– There is a right way and a wrong way to oppose abortion rights.

"To talk to all America, you have to start with the proposition that we are happy that women have a different role in life" and control over their bodies, Olsen noted.

"We are a pro-life party," Virginia Lt. Gov. Bill Bolling told The New York Times, "but if we're going to be the party of fetal ultrasounds, we're going to have a problem."

Christie opposes abortion rights. He vetoed Planned Parenthood funding more than once. The difference is that Christie talks as if he knows governing is his most important mission.

– There are two kinds of Republicans: those who think Democrats are the big problem with Washington and those who blame other Republicans.

– From opposing corners, Cuccinelli and Christie fall into the latter category.

Cuccinelli's tea party shut down the federal government in a failed effort to defund Obamacare. That stunt boomeranged – and cost Cuccinelli votes from angry families of furloughed federal workers.

"Sometimes I feel like our party cares more about winning the argument than they care about winning elections," Christie told CNN. He's right. The shutdown was a bust. But if Christie wants to win in 2016, he shouldn't lecture the base. If lectures won elections, Cuccinelli would be governor-elect.

Email Debra J. Saunders at dsaunders@sfchronicle.com. To find out more about Debra J. Saunders and read features by other Creators Syndicate writers and cartoonists, visit the Creators Syndicate Web page at www.creators.com.

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Middle school program to address, diminish bullying

This is the second of a two-part series on bullying.

By ALEXANDRA LUNDAHL

CLEARWATER – Middle school can be a breeding ground for bullying, especially as kids grow into themselves, hit puberty and are trying to navigate the awkward space between childhood and the teen years. That's why the Juvenile Welfare Board, Pinellas County Schools and Gulf Coast Jewish Family Community Services have teamed up to provide the Violence Prevention Program with the Second Step curriculum to select Pinellas County schools.

"We identified 10 middle schools based on the level of special needs students, the disciplinary referral rates, in- and out-of-school suspension rates, academic performance and those kind of criterion," said Rod Cyr, senior contract manager with the Juvenile Welfare Board.

These schools are Oak Grove Middle School in Clearwater, Tarpon Middle, Dunedin Highland Middle, Largo Middle, Pinellas Park Middle, Morgan Fitzgerald Middle in Largo, and Meadowlawn, Azalea, Tyrone, and John Hopkins Middle Schools in St. Petersburg. The JWB issued a request for proposals in 2002 and Gulf Coast Jewish Family Community Services won the bid. JFCS provides a prevention specialist that is assigned to each of the 10 schools, delivering Second Step curriculum to sixth graders.

The curriculum consists of 15 50-minute lessons that focus on violence prevention including bullying using tools such as workbooks, videos, role-playing and exercises in conflict resolution.



Above, Oak Grove Middle School sixth-graders Quinton Leveutte, left, and Zani Hannah act out a skit in their violence prevention class that addresses different points of view. At right, Jan Dice, prevention specialist with Gulfcoast Family Jewish Community Services, teaches the class about bullying.



Photos by ALEXANDRA LUNDAHL

"The purpose of the program is to reduce in- and out-of-school suspensions, disciplinary referrals – particularly those referrals that center around aggression and antisocial and disruptive behaviors," Cyr said. "The program consists of three major components. There's a classroom component and then a small skill-building group component and then there's the in-service training for school personnel."

Last school year, a total of 3,301 sixth-graders received the curriculum, which the prevention specialist delivers once a week or every other week through one of their regular classes. At Oak Grove Middle, it's during their social studies class. Jan Dice is the

prevention specialist at Oak Grove. She said the lessons start with empathy and communication and working on socialization and being able to work in a group with other people. Empathy is huge, she said, and it's important that kids can grasp the concept.

The program discusses different aspects of empathy and communication for the first five weeks, including working in groups, discussing friends and allies, considering different perspectives, disagreeing respectfully and being assertive. Then the class directly discusses bullying prevention for two weeks, including how to recognize a bully and how bystanders can help the situation. Next it discusses emotions for two weeks, including strategies to calm down, followed by two weeks of problem solving skills. The program concludes with four lessons about substance abuse.

The program is interactive, so the kids actively participate in the lessons, including a lot of role-playing. Nancy Friedman, director of the JFCS, said that the program gets the kids engaged by experimenting and being involved instead of just sitting and listening. Pam Hole, school guidance counselor at Oak Grove, said that the role-playing especially helps.

Fran Bradshaw, social studies teacher for sixth-grade at Oak Grove agreed that sixth-grade is perfect for these kinds of lessons and the means of delivery.

"I make it clear that they're teaching each other," Dice said. "This is more effective than me teaching or Miss Bradford because it's kids teaching kids."

Another interactive aspect is a corresponding poster contest the kids do each fall, drawing posters to illustrate problems like bullying and substance abuse.

Hole said that bullying can be a problem in any middle school,

but she thinks the prevention program in sixth-grade helps a lot. It's important to have a program like that in place, she said, because bullying reaches its peak in middle school.

"I'm not sure they understand the consequences of bullying, but it increases in middle school and then kind of goes away again in high school," Hole said.

To help stem this and other problems, Oak Grove assigns a guidance counselor to each grade, and that counselor stays with the same group of students, so the counselor assigned to the sixth-graders this year will therefore be next year's seventh-grade counselor and so forth.

"So we have a good relationship with our kids, and they'll come tell me immediately if something is going on," Hole said. "Whereas the person being bullied won't necessarily, but others tell me what they see."

Bradford said that this and also having the prevention specialist is helpful because it gives other people students can confide in.

"The students are not as threatened by reporting to Jan if there is an incident or something that happened as they might be to school personnel," Bradford said. "I think they feel safe."

The program seems to be working. The data shows that.

"We administer pre- and post-assessments to the students, and those assessments determine change in students' perceptions as it relates to physical or verbal aggression, their perception of social exclusion, and their perception of social and emotional conflicts," Cyr said. "And we're able to measure change in that perception from the beginning of training to the end, and on average it's about 81 to 95 percent of the students that are showing a positive change."

Students are already taking

away important lessons from the program. Quinton Leveutte, 11, and Zani Hannah, 12, both of Clearwater and sixth-graders at Oak Grove are both in Bradford's social studies class. In one of Dice's recent violence prevention lessons, Leveutte and Hannah acted out a role-playing skit.

"(We're learning) how to be kind to others and help prevent bullying," Leveutte said.

In a previous lesson, Leveutte said they learned how to imagine being in another person's shoes.

"(I'm learning) not to dwell on things that happened a long time ago," Hannah added.

So far, all the lessons they had been learning focused on some form of empathy, and both boys agreed that it is an important thing to learn.

"Because maybe when you get older you can have it and carry it on," Hannah said.

"Empathy also can help you make friends," Leveutte added. "Like if you help them, they might get to know you and you might end up being friends."

For most students, these larger classes are sufficient in giving them the skills they need. But for those students who may need more intensive help, there are small groups available, whether it's to deal with aggression and bullying problems or to work on being assertive and confident.

These small, skill building groups meet for six weeks during one class period and typically consist of six or seven students who share a similar problem or area they need to work on, Cyr said.

"It might be emotional management, it might be anger management, it might be that they've gotten into a conflict with a teacher or another classmate," Cyr said. "So they all have a similar issue that they're trying to deal with. And it's all voluntary... Most do participate."

For those with behavioral issues, sometimes they are given the choice between suspension and participating in the small group sessions, and usually the student and parent agree that the group is the better option.

"I've sat in on some of the groups, and they're usually the ones sitting in the back of the room with their arms crossed," Cyr said. "They're under duress at first. But you visit it later, after three or four weeks, and then they're like okay, it works."

Friedman said that it's important that parents know that the groups are not just for the challenging students.

"We're really talking about strengthening communication skills," Friedman said. "They're

skills probably a lot of our parents and grown-ups could use."

Dice added that many of the parents she has talked to said they wished they had a program like this when they were younger.

Sometimes the kids are picked on at home, Friedman said. Other times they have low self-esteem or maybe they are overweight themselves or are short and therefore pick on others to try to steer any negative attention away from themselves, Hole said.

Friedman said that part of the talent of the staff is how good they are at forming these groups.

"Because you have all different levels of need," Friedman said. "That's why I say this is a prevention program. So you have students who are maybe a little bit quieter, taking a little more time to get their thoughts together."

One wouldn't want to put those students in with a bunch of more talkative, self-confident students because the first student could get overshadowed.

"The dynamic has to be right," Friedman said. "So one group can work on being more assertive and getting better communication skills" while another could work on aggression issues or something else.

Each student in the small groups privately come up with a personal goal with Dice, and each week the group does a goal check. They rate their progress on a scale from 1 to 10 and say where they think they are on that scale each week. Then the group talks about the lesson of the week and ways they can start incorporating that lesson into their lives.

The great thing about these groups, Friedman said, is that they often can prevent negative situations in the future.

"They give people tools to settle differences without getting physical, without getting verbally aggressive," Friedman said.

The final component of the Violence Prevention Program is that the prevention specialist provides information, training and in-services to school personnel about bullying and the other issues the program touches on.

"Typically, they'll work with 400 to 500 school personnel during in-service training and will share information that the teacher can use in the classroom to help de-escalate a situation or deal with a particular problem or at least identify that they're here in the school and here to help them," Cyr said. "So if Rod is disruptive in your class, invite him to my small-group skill building class and I'll work with him and see if we can help."

This training also teaches the faculty and staff some of the key words and concepts that are used and discussed in the program, and they are encouraged to use the terminology with their students. That way the entire school is using the same language and these concepts continue to be reinforced, Cyr said.

The teachers and counselors at Oak Grove agreed that all of them work hard to use these words and to enforce these lessons whenever possible with their students.

"I think (it helps) because everyone is speaking the same language," Friedman said.

For the rare instances where bullying continues despite other attempts of intervention, it can be referred to the state attorney. Hole said she has done that a few times, but usually just the threat of it causes the students to back off.

All the components together are having a positive effect at Oak Grove and throughout the participating schools. Last school year, a total of 1,336 students participated in the small group sessions at the 10 participating middle schools, Cyr said. The small groups also do pre- and post-assessments that deal with their understanding of conflict resolution, he said.

"In the last year, 97 percent of the students increased their understanding of conflict resolution and personal relations," Cyr said.

Additionally, about 75 percent of the students from the small-groups had no in- or out-of-school suspensions during the school year after participating in the group, which is excellent, considering that at some of these schools, the likelihood of this group of students to have suspensions is upward of 50 percent.

In addition to the statistics, there are the personal stories that show that it's working. Just that day, Dice said one of the boys in her assertiveness group volunteered to participate in one of the role-playing skits. In another case, Friedman said that she sat in on a small group once and a girl told a story about how she and her friends witnessed a bully walk by and knock a boy's books and papers out of his hands.

"(After) the bully left, the boy's papers were still flying, and they ran down and they picked up all the papers and helped him," Friedman said. "And what struck me was she said, 'I felt like Superman.' They felt they came to the rescue, they were allies. They were so empowered – you could see it on her face."

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PPHS parents, students fight to keep SRO

By TIFFANY RAZZANO

PINELLAS PARK – Dozens gathered at a Nov. 5 protest outside Pinellas Park High School in a fight to keep School Resource Officer Harold Behar on the job.

Behar is set to be rotated to a new assignment at the end of the school year. According to the Pinellas Park Police Department this rotation is part of a department protocol that rotates officers after five years on one assignment.

But a group of parents, students and staff have stepped up to ask Chief Dorene Thomas to reconsider Behar's move.

"Not only does he have the respect of the parents and faculty, but the students as well," said Elise Crepeau, whose daughter attends PPHS and turned to Behar for assistance when being bullied. "He helps them make better choices."

Behar goes above and beyond what's expected of him in order to forge connections with students," Crepeau said. "Everyone from good students to rebellious students with troubled pasts."

Crepeau is behind the effort to keep Behar at PPHS. She circulated an online petition that now has more than 150 signatures and organized the protest.

Scores of comments on the petition, as well as a Facebook page created for the protest, show how beloved Behar is in the PPHS community.

One grandmother, Judy Davis, wrote about the impact Behar's mentorship had on her two grandsons, who had behavioral issues and were required to attend special classes.

"If you want a success story, I can give you one," she wrote. Her grandsons no longer need to attend these special classes and achieved mostly As and Bs.

"Officer Behar is loved and respected by the students and is a necessity there. Please, please reconsider moving him. He is someone they look up to and feel they can go to if needed," Davis wrote. "Pinellas Park students would suffer terribly with his removal. In a day and time

where young people are so impressionable and literally have little respect for police, he is your guy to turn that around."

Former PPHS student Megan Drumm wrote on the petition that "it would be a tragedy to see him go."

"During my time at PPHS, Officer Behar made everyone feel welcome and safe," she wrote. "He takes his job very seriously while being able to hold strong relationships with his students."

Behar is overwhelmed by the support.

"It's unbelievable," he said. "I'm honored."

While the most important aspect of his job is ensuring the safety of all students and faculty on campus, Behar said he also participates in various student events, including driver's safety classes and a 9/11 memorial ceremony. At the heart of his work is the connection he forges with students, he said.

"Respect is not given, it's earned," he said.

Behar worked for the New York City Police Department from 2000 to 2004, before moving to New Port Richey. He enjoyed his time as an SRO in New York City and when he joined the PPHS, he indicated he would like to take on a similar role in Pinellas Park. He spent one year as SRO at Morgan Fitzgerald Middle School before moving to the high school. His five-year rotation as SRO has already been extended by one year.

Crepeau said that removing him from the school "would be detrimental to the students."

Chief Thomas said that so far no decision has been made regarding Behar's fate at PPHS.

"We have to determine what is in the best interest of all parties involved," she said.

Behar said he "understands and respects the Chief's decision," no matter what it is. But he indicated that he would prefer to stay at PPHS.

The petition can be found at www.ipetitions.com/petition/keep-officer-behar.



Photo courtesy of THE PINELLAS PARK POLICE DEPARTMENT
Parents, students and staff at Pinellas Park High School wants Pinellas Park Police Chief Dorene Thomas to reconsider reassigning School Resource Officer Harold Behar in June.

School notes

Workshop on entrepreneurship set

ST. PETERSBURG – A workshop on entrepreneurship after 50 will be presented Friday and Saturday, Dec. 6-7, at Eckerd College's Lewis House Executive Education Center, 4200 54th Ave. S.

The workshop, "Don't Retire from Your Life: Explore Encore Entrepreneurship and Renew, Reimagine and Unleash You," will be conducted by a team of nationally recognized thought leaders on senior entrepreneurship.

It is estimated that 70 percent of all baby boomers expect to work in some capacity after they retire, indicating the nation has a significant pool of aging human capital that will be exploring an entrepreneurial third age.

While media attention on entrepreneurial activity in the United States has been focused on millennial generation, 20-something techies, the reality is that more than 40 percent of all start-ups in America are by adults over 45 years of age.

The cost to attend the work-

shop is \$349. There is no minimum required education level to participate.

Led by Cheryl Kiser, executive director of Babson College's Social Innovation Lab, and Elizabeth Isele, the co-founder and CEO of SeniorEntrepreneurshipWorks.com, the two-day eProvStudio workshop will introduce participants to Entrepreneurial Thought & Action, a dynamic methodology created by and taught daily at Babson College, the top-ranked school in the world in entrepreneurship education.

For information and to register for the event, call 864-8827 or visit www.eckerd.edu/ldi.

LHS reunion set

ST. PETERSBURG – Alumni of Lakewood High School's graduating classes from 1967 through 1972 are invited to the LHS Big Six Reunion. For information, visit www.LHSBig6Reunion.com.

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Kathie Erwin, assistant professor and associate coordinator of MA counseling programs at Liberty University, received the Regent University Faculty Award for Excellence in Teaching from university Chancellor Pat Robertson. Erwin is a longtime resident of Harbor Bluffs and active in Bluffs Business Association.

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Cold front will change the game

Another week down in our fall season and another cold front behind us. We've really been fortunate this fall season. We have had a steady cool down rather than the dramatic shock that we had the past two years. With that said it's looking like this week's front might be packing a bigger punch, with overnight lows getting down around 50 degrees, we can expect some big changes.



Fish Tales
Capt. Tyson Wallerstein

around here. Just because there are few places to seek protection on a wind blocked shoreline.

Fish are not happy in dirty, muddy water. Even if you fish a spot that you've had great success at recently, but now the water is dirty, don't stay there long if you're not getting any bites. Those fish are probably still there or somewhere nearby but there most likely not going to bite too good until it cleans up again.

Email Tyson Wallerstein at capt.tyson@hotmail.com.

A combination of high winds and plummeting water temperatures will most likely be enough to push dwindling bait stocks out of the area. Looking on the bright side, however, everything eats a live shrimp. Free-living live select shrimp over grass areas with good current flow can yield a wide variety of species. Although select sized shrimp may cost a bit more they are well worth it. Not only do they cast farther; they are quicker than the smaller shrimp, allowing them a better chance at escaping predation from the droves of pinfish.

Pinfish and grass grunts are another great bait option, especially when the pilchards disappear. Small pinfish can easily be chummed up and cast-netted in the shallows and work great for redfish and trout. Use them under a cork when trying to keep them out of the grass when fishing for trout and trim their tails and free-line them when searching for redfish.

As cold fronts become more numerous we're going to have days when conditions are just not acceptable for fishing. When the wind howls strait out of the north directly following a passing cold front, the Intra-coastal Waterway can get pretty dirty. Most people will agree that a north wind is the hardest to fish

Teams to compete at Disney

CLEARWATER - Several local youth soccer teams will compete along with 293 elite soccer teams from across the country at ESPN Wide World of Sports Complex at Walt Disney World.

The following teams participate in the Disney Junior Soccer Showcase, presented by AS Roma, Friday, Nov. 29 through Sunday, Dec. 1: Chargers SC CLW 01/02 Red, a U12 team from Clearwater; Chargers SC CLW 00/01 Elite, a U13 team from Clearwater; Chargers SC CLW 99/00 Elite, a U14 team from Clearwater; Chargers SC CLW 99/00 Premier, a U14 team from Dunedin; Celtic FC Florida 01 - Hales, a U13 team from Largo; Chargers SC CLW B00-01 Elite, a U13 team from Safety Harbor and Tampa Bay United Premier 99, a U14 team.

The event provides younger athletes a chance to experience the same tournament organization as the original Disney Soccer Showcase.

A homecoming win



The Clearwater Central Catholic High Marauder Caanan Brown (13) leads his team onto the field in their 2013 homecoming game. The school faced off against the Anclote High Sharks during their homecoming game on Nov. 8. It was the Marauders' last game of the regular season, which they won 37-14. CCC finished with an 8-2 record and will host Fort Myers Bishop Verot Nov. 15 in the Class 3A playoffs. Anclote finished the regular season 6-4 and will host Tarpon Springs in the first round of the Class 5A playoffs. At right, the 2013 Clearwater Central Catholic Marauder Homecoming King, Anthony Walker and queen Erin Cullinane.



Photos by BRAD RICHARDSON

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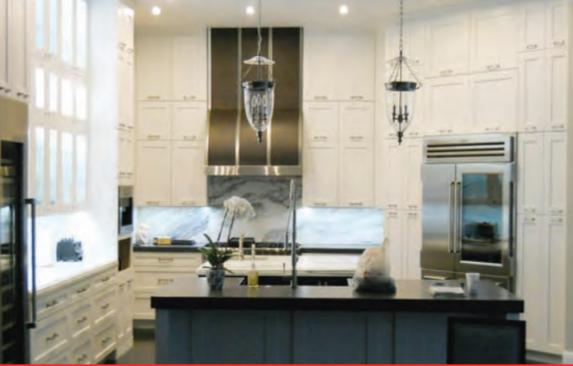


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Top five diversions

• **Joe Bonamassa**, Friday, Nov. 15, 8 p.m.; and Saturday, Nov. 16, 8 p.m., at Ruth Eckerd Hall, 1111 McMullen Booth Road, Clearwater. Tickets start at \$85. Call 791-7400 or visit www.rutheckerd.com. Bonamassa is quickly approaching his 25th year as a professional musician. He continues to blaze a remarkably versatile artistic trail and amass an authentic, innovative and soulful body of work. His latest tour will stop at Ruth Eckerd Hall for two shows on Nov. 15 and 16. Already considered one of the world's greatest guitar players, he is also evolving into a charismatic blues-rock star and singer-songwriter of stylistic depth and emotional resonance. His ability to connect with live concert audiences is transformational, and his latest project, the live acoustic two-disc CD/DVD/Blu-ray "Joe Bonamassa: An Acoustic Evening at the Vienna Opera House" captures the magnetism and maturity Bonamassa showcases as an artist.



Photo courtesy of WME
Joe Bonamassa plays at Ruth Eckerd Hall Nov. 15-16.

• **"The Greatest Christmas Villain,"** a musical by Richard Budin, Nov. 15-24, at Largo Community Center, 400 Alt. Keene Road, Largo. Tickets are \$20 for adults or \$10 for children. Performance times are Friday and Saturday, 8 p.m. Matinees are Sunday, 2 p.m. Gateswing, president of the world's largest toy company, plans to trick Santa and take his toys. Can he be stopped? What will happen to Christmas? Will the elves lose their jobs? For more information and to purchase tickets, call 518-3131.

• **Bret Michaels**, Friday, Nov. 15, 8 p.m., at The Palladium at St. Petersburg College, 253 Fifth Ave. N., St. Petersburg. Tickets start at \$59. Call 791-7400 or visit www.rutheckerd.com. Michaels has turned his passion for music into a multi-faceted brand that encompasses record-breaking touring sales, Reality TV stardom, legendary songs that have sold over 32 million records, product endorsements as well as being a devoted philanthropist, all supported and followed by three generations of loyal fans. Rising to fame as the front man of Poison, one of rock's most iconic and enduring bands, he helped define the rock and roll scene on the Sunset Strip. Their massive success includes selling more than 30 million records worldwide and numerous hit singles. Equally as successful, Bret's solo career has charted its own course with multiple solo albums. His album, "Custom Built," topped the charts, reaching No. 1 on Billboard's Hard Rock list. His new CD, "Bret Michaels: Good Songs and

See TOP FIVE, page 2B

Library hosts holiday art show

LARGO - The Greater Largo Library Foundation will host an inaugural Holiday Art Show and Sale on Saturdays, Dec. 1, 14 and 21, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., at the library, 120 Central Park Drive.

Painters, jewelry artists, potters, woodcrafters and many other artists will be participating in this fundraiser.

Confirmed artists include potters Joel and Barbara Ott of Clearwater; woodcrafters John and Fran Britt of Pinellas Park; Largo painters Marge Giroux, Phyllis Murphy and Barbara Connelly; jewelry artists Tanya Pistillo of Largo and Gillian Mosvold; photographer Michelle McCracken and volunteers from Keyline Newsletter Kyoko Japan Relief Fund, making Japanese ornaments made out of eggs.

For more information or to participate as an artist, call the foundation at 586-7398.



Chris Hemsworth, left, stars as Thor and Anthony Hopkins as Odin in "Thor: The Dark World."

Photos courtesy of MARVEL STUDIOS

Movie review

'Thor: The Dark World' adds thunder to Marvel's expanding film franchise

By the bristling beard of Odin, the Disney/Marvel machine is truly starting to hone its movie-making skills.

With ample action and strong performances, "Thor: The Dark World" successfully blends mythology and science fiction to craft a visually spectacular, deliciously entertaining entry in the Marvel Cinematic Universe.

Perhaps a little less pretentious than its predecessor, "Thor: The Dark World" benefits from a goofy sense of humor that helps soften the grim aspects of its unnecessarily complicated plot. Actually, the pivotal conflict is rather simple: The Dark Elf Malekith isn't fond of any form of radiance and wants his neighbors to turn off their porch lights, permanently. And that means ALL of his neighbors, throughout the nine regions of the Asgardian dimension, including Midgard, the Earthly plane of existence.

The film opens with a Tolkienesque prologue covering the backstory of how Bor, the father of Odin, managed to stop Malekith from destroying the universe with the Aether untold eons ago during the Convergence, a rare alignment of the Nine Realms. After defeating Malekith, Bor hides the weapon. Malekith and a few of his henchmen slip away and go into hiding.

Fast forward to the present day. Astrophysicist Jane Foster's intern Darcy Lewis discovers an abandoned factory where the laws of physics seem to be breaking down. While exploring the site, Foster accidentally stumbles into another dimension where she is infected by the Aether, which, apparently, causes Malekith's alarm clock to start buzzing annoyingly.

The vengeful Malekith awakens and threatens to reclaim the Aether and plunge the universe into darkness. The awkward exposition ends there and the pace picks up dramatically as the bad guys attack Asgard. From that point on, "Thor: The Dark World" is all action, character interplay and well-placed humor.

Chris Hemsworth and Tom Hiddleston excel in their performances. Hemsworth's Thor is heroic and larger-than-life, as is required. The character is a bit of a brooding, idealistic lunkhead at times, and Hemsworth manages to counterbalance Thor's Shakespearian melan-



Reel Time
Lee Clark Zumpe



Natalie Portman portrays Jane Foster and Chris Hemsworth stars as Thor in "Thor: The Dark World."

choly with charisma a snarky sense of humor.

Hiddleston, meanwhile, continues to be a scene-stealer. His Loki is devilishly deceitful. Hiddleston does a wonderful job stacking of layers of false personas for Loki so it's never quite clear whether the face he is showing is genuine or just another façade.

Natalie Portman's portrayal of Jane Foster is somewhat disappointing. She fails to stand out as Thor's inspiration for wanting to protect Earth and she is less effective at relating to the other characters. Her mentor, Erik Selvig, is played once again by Stellan Skarsgård. Skarsgård provides some of that comedic relief in his performance.

See REVIEW, page 3B

Dr. Syeda Rizvi Welcomes Dr. Mairaj Uddin

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Medicine



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- Ed & Karen Smith

111413

Looking Ahead

Largo

- **"La Cage aux Folles,"** with book by Harvey Fierstein and music and lyrics by Jerry Herman; presented by Eight O'Clock Theatre, through Nov. 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.
- **Farm City Day,** Saturday, Nov. 16, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., at Heritage Village, 11909 125th St. N., Largo. Sponsored by the Pinellas County Farm Bureau, this serves as the kickoff event for Farm City Week, celebrated nationally each year during the week leading up to Thanksgiving. It was created to educate citizens about agriculture and to enhance links between rural and urban dwellers. Hands-on activities will include making butter and ice cream at the dairy barn, milking goats, petting chickens and bunnies, and agriculturally themed arts and crafts. This year's theme will be "Farm Animal." Call 727-582-2123 for further information.
- **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.
- **Chinese Golden Dragon Acrobats,** Sunday, Dec. 1, 2 and 7 p.m., at Largo Cultural Center, 105 Central Park Drive, Largo. Tickets start at \$24.50. Call 587-6793 or visit largoarts.com. The Golden Dragon Acrobats represent the best of a time-honored tradition that began more than 25 centuries ago. This amazing group combines award-winning acrobatics, traditional dance, spectacular costumes, ancient and contemporary music and theatrical techniques to present a show of breathtaking skill and spellbinding beauty.
- **"Holiday Party of One,"** by Alison Burns with musical arrangements by Stan Collins; Dec. 5-20, 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. This Tampa Bay holiday traditional finds a home at New Stage Theatre after its highly acclaimed run in 2012. Written by local talents Alison Burns and Karla Hartley, this hilarious holiday treat follows three over-worked, out of touch, people as they, once again, get caught up in the mad rush of the holidays - that is until Lucky, a Christmas elf, comes to the rescue. The second half of the evening is a unique cabaret of holi-

day favorites. This production is fun for the whole family.

- **A Russian Christmas performed by the State Choir of Russia,** Tuesday, Dec. 17, 7 p.m., at the Largo Cultural Center, 105 Central Park Drive, Largo. Tickets start at \$29.50. Call 587-6793 or visit largoarts.com. Celebrate the holiday season with this unique cultural experience. This company of 45 singers was founded from the merger of the USSR State Chamber Choir and State Symphony Orchestra of the USSR. Music critics have praised this spectacular group and rave of the flawless vocal technique and crystal-clear, precise intonation.

Clearwater

- **"Sugar Babies,"** by Ralph G. Allen and Harry Rigby, with music by Jimmy McHugh and lyrics by Dorothy Fields and Al Dubin; through Nov. 24, at Francis Wilson Playhouse, 302 Seminole St., Clearwater. Performances are Thursdays through Saturdays, 8 p.m.; and Sundays, 2 p.m. Tickets are \$26 for adults and \$13 for students. Call 446-1360 or visit www.franciswilsonplayhouse.org. This show boasts a riotously funny, nostalgic trip to burlesque: chorus girls, tap dancing, fan dancing and double and quadruple takes. Song numbers include "I Can't Give You Anything But Love Baby" and "Don't Blame Me." A sizeable Broadway show, "Sugar Babies" is glitzy, fabulous, fun with a very patriotic finale.
- **The Suncoast Dixieland Jazz Classic,** Friday through Sunday, Nov. 22-24, at Sheraton Sand Key Resort, 1160 Gulf Blvd., Clearwater; and Marriott Suites on Sand Key, 1201 Gulf Blvd., Clearwater. The annual event will feature bands such as Bill Allred's Classic Jazz Band, Wally's Warehouse Waifs, Cornet Chop Suey, High Sierra, Dave Bennett and the Memphis Boys, Jubilee Jazz, Midiri Brothers, Red Garter Jazz, Tom Rigney and Flambeau and many more. A weekend badge costs \$100. Daily badges for Friday and Sunday are \$40. Daily badges for Saturday are \$50. Call Bette Marnell at 536-0064 or visit www.jazzclassic.net.
- **Dave Koz and Friends Christmas Tour 2013,** Saturday, Nov. 30, 8 p.m., at Ruth Eckerd Hall, 1111 McMullen Booth Road, Clearwater. Tickets start at \$35. Call 791-7400 or visit www.rutheckerdhall.com. Dave Koz and Friends Christmas Tour 2013 is an uplifting, high-energy show the whole family will love. Get into the holiday spirit as some of music's biggest names jam on fresh, lively arrangements of seasonal favorites, led by multi-Grammy nominee and saxophonist extraordinaire Dave Koz. Joining Koz this year are Japanese born pianist/composer/producer Keiko Matsui, who has shared the stage with everyone from Stevie Wonder to Miles Davis; world-renowned singer Oleta Adams, who first came to prominence when Tears for Fears asked her to appear on their "The Seeds of Love" album and who has released eight acclaimed CDs of her own, crossing effortlessly between R&B, jazz, popular and gospel music; and Jonathan Butler, who was the first black artist played on white stations in his native South Africa and has since earned accolades in the R&B, contemporary jazz and gospel fields.

Gulfport

- **USA Dance,** Monday, Nov. 26, 7 to 10:15 p.m., at Gulfport Casino, 5500 Shore Blvd., Gulfport. Admission is \$7 and includes a dance workshop, professional and amateur exhibitions, dance hosts and snacks. For information, call 397-5754.

Madeira Beach

- **Madeira Beach Thanksgiving Weekend Craft Festival,** Saturday

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							50	51		
52	53									54	55			56	57
58									59						
60														62	
63														65	

Across

1. "___ for the poor"
5. Three, they say
10. Increase, with "up"
14. Acquire
15. Hindu queen
16. "Frasier" actress Gilpin
17. Wedding permit (2 wds)
20. Acts of gliding on runners
21. ___ than hen's teeth
22. "Yadda, yadda, yadda" (abbrev.)
23. Prefix with magnetic
24. "The ___ Daba Honeymoon"
26. Way, way off
29. ___ of the Unknowns
31. "My boy"
32. Bow
35. Mosque V.I.P.
37. Attribution of human emotions to inanimate objects
40. Ancient colonnade
41. Forever, poetically
42. "___ any drop to drink": Coleridge
43. Pie perch
45. Gift on "The Bachelor"
46. Chain letters?
47. At hand
50. CD follower
52. Even smaller
54. Base of a triangular truss for a pitched roof (2 wds)
58. Mutual reliance
60. Absolute worst
61. "Don't get any funny ___!"
62. "Let it stand"
63. Bad day for Caesar
64. Gave out
65. "___ quam videri" (North Carolina's motto)

Down

1. Kind of dealer
2. Pipe problem
3. Beheaded queen of France
4. Nautical pole
5. Mountain goat's perch
6. Threadbare clothing
7. "___ moment"
8. People of Wales
9. Prepare for winter takeoff
10. Whale lubricant (2 wds)
11. Decalogue (2 wds)
12. European language
13. Dock
18. As a precaution (2 wds)
19. Links rental
23. Lacey openwork in a Gothic window
24. Dangerous biters
25. Marina sights
27. Destiny
28. Came down
30. Breakfast sizzler
33. ___-American
34. Staffs
36. "___ Breckinridge"
38. Robust good health
39. Looked lecherously
44. Animal house
48. Made over
49. Ornamental embroidery
51. Corpulent
52. Conical tent (var. spelling)
53. "Idylls of the King" character
54. Blue hue
55. Acad.
56. Air force heroes
57. Allocate, with "out"
59. ___ green

Sudoku

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

Sudoku answers from last week

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

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

Horoscopes

November 14, 2013

Capricorn

December 22 - January 19

Time to count your blessings, Capricorn. You have many. A charge is reduced, and a lesson is learned. A memo makes objectives crystal clear.

Aquarius

January 20 - February 18

Courage comes when you need it most. Bravo, Aquarius! A trip gets underway, and many good times are in store. A phone call boosts confidence.

Pisces

February 19 - March 20

Keep the faith, Pisces. Your loved one will come through. A financial mistake is uncovered in the nick of time. Romance picks up, and passion burns bright.

Aries

March 21 - April 19

Gratitude can be hard to come by at home, but not this week, Aries. Many thanks come your way for the smallest of efforts. A wise friend slips up. Be forgiving.

Taurus

April 20 - May 20

You're not one to question the loyalty of a friend, but come on, Taurus. Are they as deserving as you think they are? Be honest. A deadline is moved up.

Gemini

May 21 - June 21

Convenience outweighs all. Take the easy road and clear the path for more family time, Gemini. An announcement at work takes everyone by surprise.

Cancer

June 22 - July 22

Fool you are not, Cancer, but your foolish pride is getting in the way of success. Admit your need for help, accept offers of help, and the pace will pick up.

Leo

July 23 - August 22

A scheduling conflict turns out to be a blessing in disguise. Old friends and new make a special occasion joyous. Make sure you return the favor, Leo.

Virgo

August 23 - September 22

Paltry efforts on the part of a friend are no reason to complain, Virgo. Show your appreciation for what they did do, and next time, they might do more.

Libra

September 23 - October 22

Acceptance grows for an idea. It's now or never, Libra. Good friends postpone an event. Relax. The new date promises to be bigger and better.

Scorpio

October 23 - November 21

Run, Scorpio, run. A friend is looking for assistance, and they are zeroing in on you. You have neither the resources nor the time, so don't take the bait.

Sagittarius

November 22 - December 21

Memories are made at a feast, and the camera is put to the test. Enjoy yourself, Sagittarius. You're about to get busier than you have been in some time.



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Opening this weekend

Malcolm Lee directs 'The Best Man Holiday,' sequel to 1999's film

Compiled by LEE CLARK ZUMPE

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

'The Best Man Holiday'

Genre: Comedy
 Cast: Morris Chestnut, Taye Diggs, Regina Hall, Terrence Howard, Sanaa Lathan, Nia Long, Harold Perrineau, Monica Calhoun and Melissa De Sousa
 Director: Malcolm D. Lee
 Rated: R

After nearly 15 years apart, Morris Chestnut, Taye Diggs, Regina Hall, Terrence Howard, Sanaa Lathan, Nia Long, Harold Perrineau, Monica Calhoun and Melissa De Sousa reprise their career-launching roles in "The Best Man Holiday," the long-awaited next chapter to the film that ushered in a new era of comedy.

When the college friends finally reunite over the Christmas holidays, they will discover just how easy it is for long-forgotten rivalries and romances to be ignited.

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

'12-12-12'

Genre: Documentary
 Cast: Bruce Springsteen, Billy Joel, Alicia Keys, Paul McCartney, Dave Grohl, Roger Waters, Eddie Vedder, Chris Martin and Michael Stipe
 Rated: R

On December 12, 2012, some of entertainment's most iconic names came together at Madison Square Garden for a historic concert to benefit the victims of Hurricane Sandy.

"12-12-12" captures the unprecedented gathering of talent who turned up on stage and behind the scenes to raise more than \$50 million in one night for the Robin Hood Hurricane Sandy Relief Fund to support organizations helping victims in New York, New Jersey and Connecticut.

The evening's Emmy Award-nominated telecast included performances by some of the music industry's legendary acts: Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band, Billy Joel, Alicia Keys, Paul McCartney, Dave Grohl, Roger Waters, Eddie Vedder, Chris Martin, Michael Stipe, Adam Sandler, Eric Clapton, Jon Bon Jovi, The Rolling Stones, The Who, Kanye West and included involvement from entertainment and media elite such as Billy Crystal, Susan Sarandon, Paul Shaffer, Brian Williams, Kristen Stewart, Jon Stewart, Chelsea Clinton, Jimmy Fallon, Stephen Colbert, Sean Combs, Olivia Wilde, Steve Buscemi, Chris Rock, Seth Meyers, Jake Gyllenhaal, Blake Lively, Katie Holmes, Jason



Above, from left, Monica Calhoun stars as Mia, Melissa de Sousa as Shelby and Nia Long as Jordan in "The Best Man Holiday," the long-awaited next chapter to the film that ushered in a new era of comedy. Below, Johannes Zeiler stars as Faust.



Sudekis, Jamie Foxx, Quentin Tarantino, and Christoph Waltz on this historic night.

'Faust'

Genre: Drama
 Cast: Johannes Zeiler, Anton Adasinskiy, Isolda Dychauk and Hannah Schygulla
 Director: Alexander Sokurov
 Not rated

Winner of the 2011 Venice International Film Festival's Golden Lion, "Faust" is acclaimed director Alexander Sokurov's latest film, a hallucinatory re-imagining of Goethe's masterpiece set in the early 19th century. The story of "Faust" is one of the most popular in western literature.

Using elaborate camera movements, a dense soundscape, intricate production design and spectacular locations, "Faust" conjures up a unique and phantasmagoric vision of the Faustian legend. Faust (Johannes Zeiler) is a man in search of the ideals of the Enlightenment, but becomes

obsessed with the lovely Margarete (Isolda Dychauk) and eventually sells his soul to the Devil (Anton Adasinskiy), also known as the Moneylender, so that he may possess her. Comic, cosmic, painterly and stunningly beautiful scenes abound as the Devil takes Faust on a strange, unforgettable journey that ends in Hell itself.

'Nebraska'

Genre: Drama
 Cast: Bruce Dern, Will Forte, Stacy Keach, June Squibb and Bob Odenkirk
 Director: Alexander Payne
 Rated: R

After receiving a sweepstakes letter in the mail, a cantankerous father (Bruce Dern) thinks he's struck it rich, and wrangles his son (Will Forte) into taking a road trip to claim the fortune.

Shot in black and white across four states, Nebraska tells the stories of family life in the heartland of America.

'Sunlight Jr.'

Genre: Drama
 Cast: Naomi Watts, Matt Dillon, Norman Reedus and Tess Harper
 Director: Laurie Collyer
 Not rated

"Sunlight Jr." spotlights the story of hard-working convenience store clerk Melissa (Naomi Watts) and her disabled boyfriend, Richie (Matt Dillon), who are trapped in a generational cycle of poverty.

Their luck may be changing when they learn that Melissa has become pregnant. But as soon as she loses her job and they get evicted from the motel they live in, their joy vanishes. Through this adversity, the couple realizes that they can never lose everything as long as they have each other.

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

Gypsy Stage Repertory presents 'The Book of Liz'

By TIFFANY RAZZANO

Gypsy Stage Repertory Company presents the following performances of 'The Book of Liz':

- Friday and Saturday, Nov. 15 and 16, 8 p.m., at the Silver Meteor Gallery, 2213, E. Sixth Ave., Tampa
- Friday, Nov. 22, 8 p.m., and Saturday, Nov. 23, 2 p.m., at the SAFI Space, 1714 CR1, Suite 2, Dunedin

This off-beat comedy, written by the Sedaris siblings - author David and his sister actor and comedienne Amy - is "uber over the top," said director Lil Barcaski, "and really, really funny."

Farcical in nature and driven by the Sedaris' signature quirky humor, "The Book of Liz" tells the story of Sister Elizabeth Donderstock (Brianna Larson), a cheese-ball making member of the Squeamish, a vaguely Amish sect. She's used to being pushed around by Rev. Tollhouse (Zackhary Meyers, who stepped up to take on the role just two weeks before performances began), but the bullying gets worse when Brother Nathaniel Brightbee (Jordan Harner) arrives at Clusterhaven and demands she fork over her famous cheese ball recipe, which sustains the existence of their religious community.

Feeling frustrated and unappreciated, Liz decides to leave her cloistered home and enter the real world. Along the way she dons a peanut costume, befriends a Ukrainian couple with Cockney accents (Tamara Spiri and Ricky Jones) and finds a job at Plymouth Crock Restaurant, which is run by recovering alcoholics.

And while the play is funny, the message is just as important, Barcaski said.

"This play, with all its silliness, reminds us that it may be better to improve things where you are than run away to that always perfect place, the other side of the fence, where the theoretical grass is greener," she wrote in the playbill. "And maybe more importantly, to be kind and respectful of the people we love, lest we lose them."

The show's first performance in Tampa Bay was in Largo. For more information about Gypsy Stage, visit www.gypsstage.com.



Brianna Larson (Liz) wears the roadside promotional peanut costume as Tamara Spiri (Oxona) coaches her.

REVIEW, from page 1B

capturing the good-hearted eccentric perfectly.

Malekith is played by Christopher Eccleston, best known as ninth incarnation of Doctor Who. Eccleston is barely recognizable beneath the makeup, but he is to be commended for not making the antagonist overly megalomaniacal. Malekith is vengeful, but single-minded. The character doesn't seem concerned about racking up a large body count - he's mainly interested in one specific objective. Eccleston confines the character's malevolence to his primary goals.

Other standouts in the film include Idris Elba as Heimdall, Anthony Hopkins as Odin, Rene Russo as Frigga and, surprisingly, Kat Dennings as Darcy Lewis.

Chris O'Dowd, best known as Roy Trenchman on the comedy "The IT Crowd," has a small but perfectly fitting role.

Taking a cue from "The Avengers," director Alan Taylor thankfully realized that a successful superhero film can't rely solely on action and good casting. While the story is important, it isn't the key ingredient: It is the way the characters interact within the story. Taylor manages to imbue the tale with glimpses of romance, camaraderie, familial affection and humor, making the scenes between bombastic clashes equally compelling.

Not to worry, though: The story spins inexorably toward a Greenwich showdown that is pure popcorn-munching spectacle. It's an epic brawl that would have looked perfect on the pages of "Journey Into Mystery" back in the early 1960s, when Thor was still evolving under the custodianship of co-creators Stan Lee, Larry Lieber and Jack Kirby. Back then, fans of the series could hardly wait for the next issue.

"Thor: The Dark World" will leave audiences just as eager to see the next installment in the Marvel Cinematic Universe.

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Festival of Trees kicks off the holidays

By ALEXANDRA LUNDAHL

CLEARWATER – The holiday season is already upon us, and one great way to kick it off is the 29th annual Festival of Trees in Clearwater, benefitting UPARC.

The three-day event is set for Friday, Nov. 22 through Sunday, Nov. 24 at the Long Center, 1501 N. Belcher Road. Hours that it will be open to the public are Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Saturday, 9 a.m. to 8 p.m., with Santa arriving at 10 a.m.; and Sunday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. General admission is \$5, and kids age 10 and younger are free. Friday is senior day, where it is buy one ticket, get one free. This year's theme is Santa's Workshop, and in keeping with the theme, there will be a in for people to bring unwrapped presents for Toys for Tots. If people donate a toy, then their admission will be free.

Friday, Nov. 22 is also the Premiere Night Gala, which begins at 7 p.m., and tickets cost \$75. Junior tickets for people age 30 and younger cost \$50. Tickets are available either online at www.uparc-foundation.org or even at the door. Premiere Night includes live music, dancing, and food from the following local restaurants: E&E Steakout Grill, En Garde Catering, Bon Appétit, Island Way Grill, Marlin Darlin, Salt Rock Grill, Salt Rock Tavern, Clear Sky Beachside Café, and Rumba Island Bar & Grill. Additionally, there will be two kinds of auctions. The live auction features numerous exciting prizes, including a Clearwater dolphin statue painted by UPARC's developmentally disabled clients. Other auction items include an experience for a child to be an honorary batboy or batgirl for the Tampa Bay Rays, and also a trip to Miami that includes a ride on the Goodyear blimp.

The festival will have more than 100 trees and wreaths that members of the public, local businesses and organizations have donated, said Madison Hauenstein, development and communications coordinator for the UPARC Foundation. Some of the themes of the trees include "North Pole Christmas"; "Hark the Champ-angel"; "Christmas Peace"; "A Candy Cane Christmas"; "Signs of City Elves," which is by the city of Clearwater and its mayor; "Sandy Beach" by the Clearwater Beach Chamber of Commerce; "The Old Red, White and Blue" by MacDill Air Force Base families and personnel; and many others.

On Saturday and Sunday, there will be a milk-and-cookie bar with Santa and live entertainment throughout the day.

Not only is Festival of Trees a fun, family event, all of the proceeds benefit a good cause.

"One hundred percent of our proceeds stay here at the UPARC Foundation and go to UPARC to serve their programs," Hauenstein said. "We serve about 300 people with developmental disabilities at three different day programs. One being at the Long Center in Clearwater. That's our biggest facility. One is in Tarpon Springs and we have an art studio in Safety Harbor called Harborside Studios, and we also run 19 group homes. So many of our consumers who receive services from us during the day also live in some of our group homes where they receive 24-hour care from UPARC."

The day centers consist of many opportunities and activities. At some of them, they receive piecemeal jobs from businesses in the communities where UPARC clients can come and work on the projects and earn an hourly wage. There are also development enrichment classes and activities for when UPARC clients "retire," which is often around 45 years old when they start to slow down a little, Hauenstein said. Then they can participate in numerous outings in the community, classroom activities, crafts, physical activities and other opportunities.

The art studio is another service offered to all ages. "We have our art studio where they can grow and be enriched



Photo by ALEXANDRA LUNDAHL

The Clearwater Marine Aquarium decorated their "Winter and Friends" tree in 2012 with huge, poufy ribbon and stuffed animals of Winter the dolphin, sea turtles, octopi, fish and other sea friends at the Festival of Trees in Clearwater.

through art, through clay, through painting," Hauenstein said. "They have a gallery where they can sell their art and 50 percent of the proceeds they keep for themselves, and the other half goes back to the studio to purchase supplies."

The total UPARC budget is about \$13 million, and it gets much of its funding through state and federal grants and the UPARC Foundation. Fundraising is also key, and each year it sets a goal of raising about \$100,000 from the Festival of Trees.

This year, UPARC has something else to celebrate in addition to the start of the holidays and the funds raised.

"This year for the Premiere Night, we're celebrating UPARC's 50th anniversary," Hauenstein said. "It's 50 years of service to people with developmental disabilities, and it's pretty incredible that it's been around as long as this and never discontinued services and has changed the lives of a lot of people."

The executive director of UPARC will receive an award on Premiere night in addition to the rest of the festivities.

Fifth annual Sanding Ovations event set

TREASURE ISLAND – All it takes is a pile of sand, some buckets of water and lots of imagination to build a masterpiece – at least for 10 master sculptors who return to Treasure Island for the fifth annual Sanding Ovations Masters Cup Sand Sculpture Competition and Music Festival Nov. 20-24.

The top four sculptures and a "people's choice" sculpture will be awarded more than \$12,000 in cash prizes.

The masterful exhibition of sand sculpting talent at the world-class level is the big appeal, supplemented by the giant sponsor sculpture created by Treasure Island's Meredith Corson and Dan Doubleday of Sanding Ovations professional sand sculptors. The popular event also includes a beach food court, an arts and crafts marketplace and three days of live music on the beach behind the Bilmar Beach Resort.

When sculpting is done for the day and the sun sets, the stage lights go up when Sanding Ovations welcomes the hottest band in the bay, the Black Honkeys to the Bud Light Lime-a-Rita Stage at 8 p.m. on Friday. Opening for the Honkeys are the breakout band of the year, the ukulele funk of Applebutter Express, playing at 6 p.m.

Saturday, the biggest day of the event, includes fireworks on the beach at 10 p.m., the Masters Cup awards presentation at 7 p.m. and an all-out party starting at 3 p.m. with Treasure Island's bluegrass rockers Cornfused.

The always-popular Rocket Man Show, starring Rus Anderson as Elton John, is back by popular demand this year. "Elton" plays Saturday night at 8.

Beach goers can kick back Sunday beginning at noon with WMNF's Pete Gallagher and the Florida Folk Show, followed by the eclectic funk of rising stars Come Back Alice at 2:30 p.m., and wrap up Sunday with rockin' blues from the always-great Sarasota Slim at 4 p.m.

Sanding Ovations Week kicks off with a party for the sculptors at the Crystal Sands Ballroom at the Bilmar Beach Resort, 10650 Gulf Blvd. in Treasure Island, on Wednesday, Nov. 20, 7 p.m. Admission is \$5 and includes a spread of tasty hors d'oeuvres from Sloppy Joe's Restaurant, along with an assortment of beers from Great Bay Distributors. Tickets are available at the door.

This year's lineup of sculptors includes reigning champ Jonathan "Jobi" Bouchard of Montreal, along with Benjamin Probanza of Acapulco, Mexico, whose surreal sculpture "Fusion" took top honor in the 2010 competition.

Treasure Island's Dan Doubleday, a Sanding Ovations first-place winner from 2009, is back and 2011 winner Jan Selen of the Netherlands is back after a year of new baby duties. Rusty Croft, one of the Travel Channel's newest personalities, is back for his fifth year.

Dan Belcher, the third-place winner in 2011, makes his fourth visit and critter-trapper Chris Guinto and Marianne van den Broek breeze in from Key West to do some creature sculpting. Sue McGrew, quite possibly the world's youngest professional sand sculptor, comes in from Tacoma, Wash., for her second year. Newcomer Elianne in her Veld of the Netherlands brings a serious challenge for the \$12,000 prize money with her breathtaking detailed sculptures. Sanding Ovations is a City of Treasure Island Parks and Recreation Department event, sponsored in part by Bud Light Lime-a-Rita, and is free and open to the public.

Parking is available at 110th Avenue and Gulf Boulevard for \$15 or \$10 at Treasure Island Park at 104th Avenue.

For additional details, visit www.mytreasureisland.org or call 547-4575, ext. 237.

MFA to host conversation with Still Holiday art show runs through Jan. 8

ST. PETERSBURG – A conversation with Christopher Still will be presented Tuesday, Nov. 19, 6:30 p.m., at the Museum of Fine Arts, 255 Beach Drive NE.

This Collectors Circle Lecture, sponsored by Northern Trust, is free and open to the public.

Still is a quintessential Florida artist, as he paints about the state he loves. The conversation will offer a rare glimpse into his inspiration and work.

A native of the Tampa Bay area, Still received a full scholarship through a national competition to attend the prestigious Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts in Philadelphia, where he received his bachelor's degree in fine arts. While there, he was recognized for outstanding accomplishment in painting and received the Pennsylvania Governor's Award for fine art. He also took courses in human anatomy at Jefferson Medical School and completed an apprenticeship in Florence, Italy.

Still returned to Tampa Bay in 1986 and has a studio in Tarpon Springs. He is represented in the collections of the Smithsonian Institution, The John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art, the Florida Governor's Mansion, and the Polk Museum of Art, among others. His painting, "Orchids" (1991), which seems to burst from the frame, is part of the MFA collection. His work has been part of exhibitions at museums around the state and across the country.

His commissions have encompassed paintings for St. Petersburg City Hall, 10 murals for Florida's House of Representatives, and the official portrait of legendary Gov. Lawton Chiles. He also created a large-scale painting and sculpture for the Tampa International Airport and the 25th anniversary painting for Ruth Eckerd Hall. In 2010, he was inducted into the Florida Artists Hall of Fame at 49, the youngest ever to receive this distinction.

Call 896-2667 or visit www.fine-arts.org.

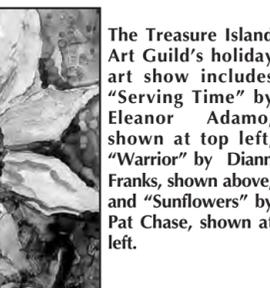
By LUBA ROBINSON

TREASURE ISLAND – Treasure Island Art Guild members have opened their holiday Community Center show featuring Eleanor Adamo, Pat Chase, Diann Franks, Mary Marsh and Kathryn Vanasse. The show runs through Jan. 8.

Numerous awards, workshops, and teaching experience give us accomplished artist Adamo, whose fine art treats us to watercolors "Serving Time," a masterful application of reflections, and "Buttercup," one of her many visits with a tree climbing friend. Mixed media "Maya," overseer of King Tut's treasure and a glowing "Aged in Oak" give us harmonious palettes of color.

Chase, a commercial artist and teacher, tries to infuse her art with "the sheer exhilaration of the journey." Working with ink on canvas, she brings us aboard with "Sunflowers," washed in a dazzling display of saturated hues. Her sensitivity to color and technique spills into "Sunshine on a Stem" and "The Blaze of Trumpets." Composition complements form in "Angel Trumpet."

A people person and music lover, primarily self-taught artist Franks, with banjo and sketchbook in hand, gleans inspiration for her work from the art of living.



The Treasure Island Art Guild's holiday art show includes "Serving Time" by Eleanor Adamo, shown at top left, "Warrior" by Diann Franks, shown above, and "Sunflowers" by Pat Chase, shown at left.

Her work shines in acrylics "Memories," a once upon a time entrance into the Cole Brothers Circus, and "Cabin in the Gardens." A pen and ink sketch of Lawrence Olivier in "The Legend" and a striking pastel "Warrior"

showcase her versatility.

Award winning pastel portrait artist Marsh attempts to capture that "illusive spirit" which breathes life into her work, as in a glowing "Lady with a Fan," after the French Impressionist Renoir. With subtle strokes, she creates a comely, daydreaming "Nicole." "Young Man" reflects layers of prismatic hues. Vibrant complements spark the mood of "Fed Up in D.C.?"

Acrylic artist Vanasse, who teaches our Bay Pines Center veterans, gives us with a limited palette, a thought provoking "The Door." Strong values and dynamic composition energize "Tampa Bay Lights" in contrast to "Fisherman," a placid scene filled with soft transparent layers of color. A unique textured effect, combining forest debris with acrylics, adds to the chill of a winter "Forest."

The Treasure Island Community Center is located on 106th Avenue just east of Gulf Boulevard.

Call 547-4575 for hours of operation.

Online calendar of events

Read about upcoming community, entertainment and live music events throughout Pinellas County by visiting: www.TBNweekly.com. Look for links to the online calendars in the left column.

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265. Commercial Rentals

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MISCELLANEOUS

301. Clinical Study

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175. Unfurnished Apts.

505. Part-Time Help

435. Adult Care & Svcs.

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 Redington Shores
 From 174th Ave. E. to 183rd Terrace W.
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 November 15th & 16th
 8 a.m.
 NO EARLY BIRDS

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FRI-SAT, NOV. 15TH-16TH.
 Fri. 8am-2:30pm, Sat. 8am-Noon. Connect 2 Christ Church, 9398 Oakhurst Rd, Seminole. Many, Many Christmas Items. Household Goods, Kitchen Wares, Furniture, Clothing & More. All Proceeds To Benefit Church Sprinkler System.

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 Association Semi-Annual Sale! Friday & Saturday, 8AM-5PM, Sunday, 8AM-Noon. Across From Bay Pines Va Hosp. 47th-57th Ave. & 97th-100th Way.

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 Multi-Family. Drum Set, Cedar Chest, Schwinn Bike, LPs and More!
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CHURCH SALE
FRI-SAT, NOV. 15TH-16TH.
 Fri. 8am-2:30pm, Sat. 8am-Noon. Connect 2 Christ Church, 9398 Oakhurst Rd, Seminole. Many, Many Christmas Items. Household Goods, Kitchen Wares, Furniture, Clothing & More. All Proceeds To Benefit Church Sprinkler System.

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WCP lampoons musical theater with 'Musical of Musicals'

It was a surprise to see West Coast Players include a musical on its 2013-14 season schedule.

It isn't the first time West Coast Players has staged a musical, but it isn't something the theater is necessarily known for doing on a regular basis. WCP is known for taking chances, though – and for bringing to the stage productions that are at times bold, often unconventional and sometimes a bit cheeky.



Curtain Call
Lee Clark Zumpe

"The Musical of Musicals (The Musical!)" fits that last descriptor perfectly and, as such, is a perfect fit for WCP.

The show runs through Nov. 24 at West Coast Players, 21905 U.S. 19 N., Clearwater. Performances are Fridays and Saturdays, 8 p.m.; and Sundays, 2 p.m. Tickets are \$20. Call 437-2363 or visit www.wcplayers.org.

Be forewarned: There's little spectacle in "The Musical of Musicals (The Musical!)" – instead, it's all about melodic parodies. The stage is sparsely adorned with only rudimentary props. The recurring melodramatic plot is drolly simplistic.

The show is a clever concoction written by composer Eric Rockwell and lyricist Joanne Bogart. The two take to task some of the true titans of musical theater, lampooning their signature styles. Their targets include Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein, Stephen Sondheim, Jerry Herman, Andrew Lloyd Webber and John Kander and Fred Ebb.

"Back in 2005, I saw this show in New York in a tiny off-Broadway theater," writes director Domenic Bisesti in his message to the audience. "Having grown up loving musicals, all the references and one-liners made a night full of memories and recollections. I hope that we are recreating the magic I felt all those years ago."

Bisesti and his fine cast do more than just evoke memories. WCP's production of "The Musical of Musicals (The Musical!)" is wildly entertaining, full of zany characters and affectionate satire.

"The Musical of Musicals (The Musical!)" is divided into five mini-musicals, each revolving around the same story but boasting a different musical style. The story is about a young woman – the ingénue – who can't pay her rent. The villain is a dastardly landlord. There's a hero, of course, as well as a matron – an older woman who offers advice of varying value to the leading lady.

Amy Dobbert plays the ingénue. Dobbert recently won a STAR Award for Favorite Actress in Musical for her performance in Eight O'Clock Theatre's production of "Forbidden Broadway," another show that lampoons Broadway's greatest mu-



Photos courtesy of ROSALYN SAVEL/WEST COAST PLAYERS
Above, from left, Amy Dobbert, Dave Russell, Susan Jones Williams and Domenic Bisesti star in West Coast Players production of "The Musical of Musicals (The Musical!)," running through Nov. 24. Pictured at right, are actors in the production, from left, Bisesti, Russell, Jones Williams, Brian Chunn and Dobbert.



sical legends. In this production, she is just as enjoyable and effective. In her role, Dobbert has a wide array of personalities to portray, from the unsophisticated June in "Corn," in the style of Rodgers and Hammerstein, to the wicked Juny in "Speakeasy," in the style of Kander and Ebb.

The matron is portrayed by Susan Jones Williams. Williams has apparently been away from the stage for some time. She pursued a full time career as a vocalist, raised a family and sang at the Wine Celler for 16 years. In this production of "The Musical of Musicals (The Musical!)," she gives little doubt that she still has what it takes to make it in theater.

Brian Chunn does a great job depicting the multiple faces of the story's hero. In "Corn," he is hysterically goofy as Big Willy and blissfully brooding in "A Little Complex," in the style of Stephen Sondheim.

Dave Russell's villain is consistently naughty, ranging from devious to criminally insane depending upon the sequence. Russell serves up a hilariously twisted phantom of the opera and a thoroughly naughty –

and multilingual – cabaret master of ceremonies in "Speakeasy."

Bisesti is omnipresent, acting as narrator. He's particularly playful with his cast (and with Eriene LeGendre, the show's musical director and pianist), which is a constant reminder that the "The Musical of Musical (The Musical!)" exists to poke fun at the genre as well as those who perpetuate it. The final number, "Done," even sends up the audience to some degree.

Even though it's a parody, the show is demanding: The cast proves its versatility crafting different aspects of the archetypes. Each member possesses spot-on comic timing. As vocalists, they all do a marvelous job.

The wonderfully overstated characters and inspired comical lyrics simultaneously satirize and pay homage to Broadway's musical icons. Granted, those not familiar with the source material may not get all the references – but "The Musical of Musicals (The Musical)" is still witty enough with its discordant puns and comical caricatures to induce plenty of laughs. The show is delectable silliness and classy spoof – a fun treat featuring some very talented individuals.

LOOKING AHEAD, from page 2B

and Sunday, Nov. 30 through Dec. 1, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., on Madeira Way between Gulf Boulevard and 150th Avenue, Madeira Beach. American Craft Endeavors will host this festival, now in its second year. Madeira Way will be lined with fine crafters from all areas, displaying their works for sale at this community festival. Attendees will find a wide variety of ceramics, jewelry, stained glass, metal works and much more. Admission is free.

Pinellas Park

• **ArtZ Fair.** Saturday, Nov. 23, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., at Mainlands, Unit 1 Clubhouse, 9650 Mainlands Blvd., Pinellas Park. Admission is free. Call Jeanne at 569-0626 or Dawn at 498-7605. Sponsored by Women and Arts & Craft Clubs of Mainlands Unit 1, the fair will offer local artisans the opportunity to display and sell their everyday and holiday handmade accessories, clothing and household decor wares. The event will feature hourly basket raffles, food and a bake sale. A consignment wall art section will be included.

St. Petersburg

• **Craig Ferguson.** Monday, Nov. 18, 7:30 p.m., at the Palladium at St. Petersburg College, 253 Fifth Ave. N., St. Petersburg. Tickets start at \$55. Call 791-7400 or visit www.rutheckerdhall.com. Star of "The Late Late Show," Craig Ferguson brings his latest comedy tour to The Palladium. Ferguson was born in Glasgow, Scotland. He got his start in the entertainment industry as a drummer for some of

the worst punk bands in the UK. Too wimpy to be in punk rock, he started acting. He played Drew Carey's boss, Nigel Wick, in "The Drew Carey Show" from 1996 to 2003. Ferguson has also become a huge success on the North American comedy circuit. He performs all over the country and has sold out Carnegie Hall and Radio City Music Hall.

• **Mix 100.7's Acoustic Christmas** show, Friday, Dec. 13, 6:30 p.m., at The Mahaffey Theater, 400 First St. S., St. Petersburg. Tickets start at \$41.50. Call 893-7832 or visit themahaffey.com. Pop singer-songwriter Colbie Caillat will join the Goo Goo Dolls, The Fray, ZZ Ward and Michael Franti for the holiday show. Caillat, who was rejected twice by American Idol and became first known to fans through MySpace, debuted in 2007 with *Coco*, which included hit singles "Bubbly" and "Realize." A year later, she won a Grammy for "Lucky," a duet with Jason Mraz. In 2009, she was named *Billboard* magazine's 94th best-selling music artist of the 2000-2009 decade. Caillat has sold more than six million albums worldwide and more than 10 million singles. The Goo Goo Dolls made their mark 20 years ago and recently released their latest album, "Magnetic." Renowned for their commercially successful 1998 single "Iris," the band has released nine albums, had 14 top ten singles on various charts and sold more than 10 million albums worldwide. "Iris" was ranked No. 1 on *Billboard*'s "Top 100 Pop Songs 1992-2012" chart last October. Magnetic has 11 news songs from the celebratory single "Rebel Beat" to the love-rediscovery ballad "Slow It Down" to the blue-collar anthem "Keep the Car Running." Band members are primary singer, songwriter and guitarist John Rzeznik, bassist Robby Takas and

drummer Mike Malinin. The Fray, a rock band from Denver, achieved national success with their debut album, "How to Save a Life," in 2005. The single, "Over My Head (Cable Car)," became a Top 10 hit in the United States, and the release of their second single, "How to Save a Life," brought them worldwide fame. The song charted in the top three of the *Billboard* Hot 100 and was a top five single in Australia, Canada, Ireland, Italy, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom.

St. Pete Beach

• **19th annual St. Pete Beach Corey Area Craft Festival.** Saturday and Sunday, Dec. 7-8, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., on Corey Avenue in downtown St. Pete Beach. The show will feature a wide variety of crafts such as finely handcrafted jewelry and pet and spa products. Visit www.artfestival.com.

Tampa

• **Trans-Siberian Orchestra.** Sunday, Dec. 1, 3 and 7:30 p.m., at Tampa Bay Times Forum, 401 Channelside Drive, Tampa. Tickets start at \$32.75. Call 813-301-2500 or visit www.tampabaytimesforum.com. TSO will celebrate their first 15 years of touring with an encore and final performance of their multi-platinum rock opera, "The Lost Christmas Eve." TSO, whose phenomena has grown year after year, has played over 1,500 shows for more than 10 million fans in the past 15 years, and quietly became one of the world's biggest arena rock acts. The unprecedented fan driven growth is a testament to TSO founder Paul O'Neill's vision of "Rock Theater," the perfect amalgamation of Broadway storytelling with the spectacle of rock, delighting

audiences of all ages year after year.

Tarpon Springs

• **The Rhythm Kings Dance Orchestra.** Thursday, Nov. 21, at Heritage Museum, 100 Beekman Lane. Limited reserved seating tickets are \$18 for adults and \$15 for members and students. General admission tickets are \$12. Free dance lessons will be offered at 6 p.m. The dance will run from 7 to 10 p.m. The Rhythm Kings Dance Orchestra plays third Thursdays, serving up the best dance music from the 1920s and '30s. Attendees will enjoy authentic dance band music and fox trot, waltz, Charleston, lindy, tango or just sit back and listen. The event will include a dance contest with awards. Call 942-5605 or visit TarponArts.org.

• **The 23rd annual Thanksgiving Art and Craft Festival.** sponsored by the Tarpon Springs Chamber of Commerce, Saturday and Sunday, Nov. 30 through Dec. 1, at 111 E. Tarpon Ave., Tarpon Springs. The outdoor showcase has been a holiday favorite for more than 22 years, and has always been presented during Thanksgiving weekend. With the holidays right around the corner, this is the perfect opportunity for locals and visitors alike to shop small business for their gift giving needs. Historic Tarpon Springs, listed on the National Register of Historic Places, is widely recognized as a spirited arts destination. The weekend's event will feature the original works of new and upcoming talent as well as established artists and crafters. There is something for everyone here – from folk art, earthenware, and paintings, to wearable art, body products and personalized gifts. For information, visit www.SIKPromotions.com.

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