

Busy part of hurricane season to come

Current months statistically more active ... Page 12A.



'Dolphin Tale' sequel hits the big screen, locally and nationwide

Also, check out the 14th annual I Like It HOT! Festival in Largo this weekend ... Page 1B.

LARGO LEADER

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September 11, 2014

LARGO City director is next APWA president

Brian Usher, director of Public Works for the city of Largo, was recently elected president-elect of the American Public Works Association, or APWA, for the 2014-2015 year.



Brian Usher

... Page 3A.

AROUND TOWN Largo Rotary hosts car show

The Rotary Club of Largo presents the second annual 'Cruisin the Park' Car Show and Craft Beer event Sunday, Sept. 14, noon to 3 p.m., in Largo Central Park.



... Page 5A.

HEALTH Caregiver Spa Afternoon set

A Caregiver Spa Afternoon will be presented Thursday, Sept. 18, 2 to 4 p.m., at Princeton Village of Largo, 333 16th Ave. SE.

... Page 6A.

BUSINESS



First Whole Foods to open in Pinellas

Health-conscious and quality food lovers alike can look forward to the first Whole Foods Market opening at the Westfield Countryside Mall on Wednesday, Sept. 24.

... Page 9A.

COUNTY Commission asks ALFs be a priority

Pinellas County Commissioners have denied two of three rezoning requests from assisted living facilities so far in 2014.

... Page 10A.

VIEWPOINTS Tom Germond

Amendments run amok.

... Page 11A.



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City passes tentative FY15 budget

Largo's next budget includes additional staff for police and IT departments

By JULIANA A. TORRES

LARGO - The city of Largo will spend \$817,000 more in property tax revenue in fiscal year 2015, which starts Oct. 1, as compared to the current year, funding an additional police officer, two school resource officers, additional IT personnel and other part-time positions.

The new police officer is one of two unfunded positions in the police department. During the first budget hearing Sept. 4, Commissioner Curtis Holmes proposed adding in the second unfunded position to the budget,

at the cost of \$75,000 for salary and benefits. The addition to the budget would bring the general fund's available fund balance - essentially savings for citywide emergencies - to 9.8 percent of total expenditures, below the recommended 10 percent minimum.

"In my professional opinion, I would think that would be unacceptable," said Amy Davis, manager for the city's office of management and budget.

Holmes' proposal failed without support from the other commissioners.

"I'm having a problem here - not that I don't love the

police. But we are giving them one police officer," Commissioner Harriet Crozier said. "I think it's a bigger discussion."

During a budget workshop Aug. 8, commissioners requested a more comprehensive work session discussion on personnel levels and priorities for increasing staff. As much as police officers are important, the fire department, streets division, public works and the sanitation division also are part of the public safety city

See BUDGET, page 4A

New weekly farmer's market opens in Largo Central Park

By JULIANA A. TORRES

LARGO - The inaugural Sunset Market in Largo Central Park lived up to its name Sept. 5.

"The weather held out for us, and we had a beautiful sunset at the Sunset Market," said market organizer Jennifer McCafferty.

Forty-three vendors participated in the first weekly market. McCafferty said she expected about 50 vendors for

the second market Friday, Sept. 12, but will keep to no more than 60 as the market grows.

"I think it went well for our first one," she said. "Everybody had a good time, including eating. We ate a lot."

The market will run every Friday through May, 3 to 7 p.m., in parking lot No. 1 of Largo Central Park, at southwest corner of

See MARKET, page 4A



Above, Pat King and Larry Novak thump a few melons at the inaugural Sunset Market at Largo Central Park Sept. 5. At left, Oliver Klinstiver, 3, of Largo samples some raw honey.

Photos by JIM LAYFIELD

Red tide bloom moves closer to Pinellas

By SUZETTE PORTER

Fish kills at Honeymoon Island and respiratory irritation at Anclote Key, Honeymoon Island and Three Rook Island are signs that a red tide bloom is moving closer to Pinellas County.

"The bloom is within six miles, if not closer," Alina Corcoran, a researcher at the Florida Fish and Wildlife Institute in St. Petersburg, confirmed Sept. 5.

Reports of dead fish washing ashore on Honeymoon Island started coming in over the Labor Day weekend. Brandon Basino, spokesman for the Fish and Wildlife Research Institute in St. Petersburg, said an estimated 100 or so fish were found along the beach. But, most of the dead fish were species that live in deeper water, leaving researchers to believe that they may have died offshore and then washed onshore due to winds and waves.

However, if dead fish are being washed ashore, so is the red tide, Corcoran added.

Fish kills have been occurring offshore in the bloom area due to low oxygen in bottom waters for weeks, according to recent red tide reports from the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission. Satellite photos from the Optical

Oceanography Laboratory at the University of South Florida show that the bloom has moved to about 5 to 15 miles offshore northern Pinellas.

FWC has been monitoring the large patchy bloom in the northeast Gulf of Mexico since July. Early on, scientists thought it would move rather quickly, Corcoran said.

"But the currents slowed it down, and it has been creeping south and toward shore for the last two months," she said.

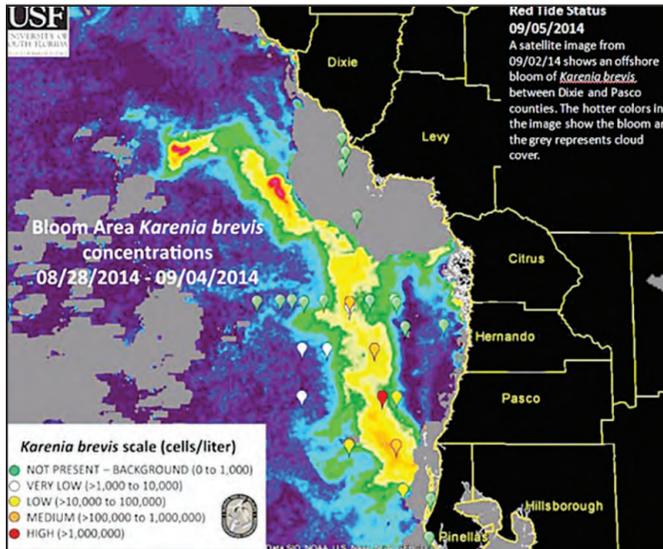
The surface bloom now stretches offshore from Dixie County all the way to northern Pinellas. And it is likely to continue moving closer to Pinellas, Corcoran said.

How soon is still unknown. The latest forecast from the Collaboration for Prediction of Red Tides shows little movement of the bloom for the next three days. Three days is the maximum forecast time available to researchers for red tide, Corcoran explained. Movement is mostly dependent on winds and currents.

"It is hard to predict where it might go," Corcoran said.

Corcoran explained that Pinellas is a little more vulnerable than other counties.

"The shoreline is closer to the bloom because Pinellas County sticks out (into



A Sept. 2 satellite photo from the Optical Oceanography Laboratory at the University of South Florida shows that the red tide bloom is about 5 to 15 miles offshore northern Pinellas. The hotter colors represent areas of red tide. Cloud cover is shown in gray.

Photo courtesy FWC

the Gulf of Mexico)," she said.

She added that because the bloom is patchy, some county beaches might escape its effects. However, she also said there is a "decent chance" the bloom will affect the others.

Research is ongoing to try to develop

better models to predict behavior of a bloom based on how the red tide organism interacts with the water column, the effect of nutrients, sunlight, rain and other factors, Corcoran said.

See RED TIDE, page 4A

County's plan for feral cats coming in November

By SUZETTE PORTER

CLEARWATER - Animal rights activists will have to wait a little bit longer to find out how much support Pinellas County will lend toward their mission to trap, neuter, vaccinate and return free-roaming cats.

Maureen Freaney, Animal Services bureau director, updated county commissioners during an Aug. 19 meeting about work ongoing with nonprofit organizations and concerned citizens on the feral cat problem. She expects that staff will be ready to present a proposed ordinance that would support a pilot program for TNVR by November.

Animal Services has been working with MEOW Now since September 2013. MEOW stands for Managing and Ending Overpopulation Wisely. The group's mission is to "humanely reduce the community cat population," using TNVR, along with caregiver support and advocacy.

SPCA Tampa Bay and Humane Society of Pinellas also have been involved in the planning for the pilot program.

In 2013, county commissioners asked staff to work with interested parties to develop the pilot program based on an approved business plan from Meow Now and ordinance revisions necessary to support the program.

Freaney said in an Aug. 18 memo to the commission that county staff had worked with the stakeholders on

what "we believe is a fair ordinance proposal for piloting TNVR in Pinellas County."

"The focus has been to strike a balance between public health, public safety and the requirements of state law," Freaney said. "The ultimate goal is to educate the community and reduce the number of free-roaming cats in Pinellas County."

She listed areas of "general agreement" between Meow Now, SPCA Tampa Bay and the Humane Society of Pinellas on 11 issues.

1. Budget and sustainable funding sources

See FERAL, page 4A

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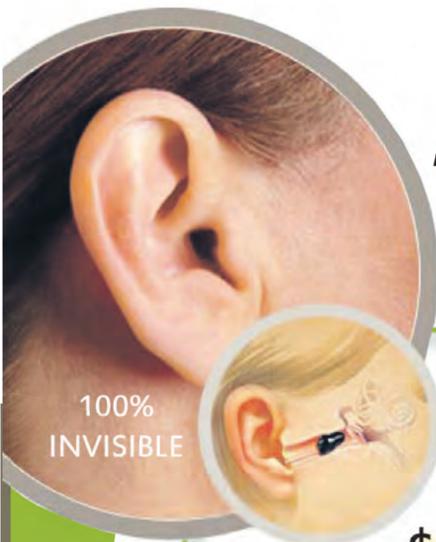
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Kiwanis donate to children, theater

LARGO – The Kiwanis Club of Largo/Mid-Pinellas gave two donations – \$500 to the Suncoast Voices For Children and \$250 to the West Coast Players – during its meeting Sept. 5.

The **Suncoast Voices for Children** provides financial assistance and community resources for abused and neglected children in the foster care system of Pinellas and Pasco counties.

The organization provides beds, cribs, playpens, school supplies, clothing and more to help each child feel cared for and provide motivation to overcome the obstacles of foster care so they can succeed in life. For more information about the group, visit www.suncoastchildren.org.

West Coast Players, a community theater group founded in 1994, received the \$250 donation to help remodel their lobby in their new 100-seat location at 21905 U.S. 19 in Clearwater. They are in rehearsals for "Monkey, Monkey Bottle of Beer, How Many Monkeys Have We Here?" which will run from Sept. 19 to Oct. 5.

The group is looking for volunteers to usher, sell concessions and operate the box office. Volunteers will receive free training and free admission to the shows. For more information, call 437-2363, or visit www.wcplayers.com.

Kiwanis is a worldwide service organization founded in 1915 and dedicated to improving the lives of children through local Kiwanis clubs.

The Largo Kiwanis Club is accepting new members and meets twice a month: for a breakfast on first Fridays, 7:30 to 8:30 a.m., at Royal Palms, 200 Lake Ave. NE, in Largo and for dinner on second Thursdays, 6:30 to 7:30 p.m., at Roosterfish Grill, 776 Missouri Ave., also in Largo.

For more information, call Bruce Blazej at 536-0412 or visit www.facebook.com/KiwanisClubLargo.



Photos courtesy of LARGO KIWANIS
Above, Carol Conaway, president of Suncoast Voices For Children, receives a \$500 donation from Kiwanis club President Bruce Blazej Sept. 5. Below, Janice Creneti of West Coast Players receives a \$250 donation from Blazej.



Largo's Brian Usher chosen as American Public Works Association president-elect

LARGO – Brian Usher, director of Public Works for the city of Largo, was recently elected president-elect of the American Public Works Association, or APWA, for the 2014-2015 year.

The association's approximately 29,000 members elected Usher. He will lead with APWA's new president, Larry Stevens; immediate past president, Edward A. Gottko and other public works professionals on the 17-member board of directors.

He will assume the presidency of APWA in 2015-2016.

As director, Usher is responsible for the management of five operating divisions within the Public Works Department. Together, these activities account for services on more than 250 miles of street, solid waste operations serving the city's 78,000 residents and more than 500 city-owned vehicles, including police and fire apparatus. Additionally, the department is responsible for the repair and maintenance of 34 facilities with a total area just over 500,000 square feet.

Prior to his position in Largo, Usher served as director of Public Works and Engineering in Zion,

Illinois. Usher has been actively involved in all facets of public works for more than 37 years, beginning as a water division laborer. Through his career, he rose through the ranks into leadership and management positions.



Brian Usher

Usher has been an active 32-year member of APWA, serving in numerous leadership roles at both the local and national levels. He served as an officer with the Chicago Metro APWA Chapter. He served on the APWA national Emergency Management Committee for six years starting in 2002 and chaired the committee from 2003 to 2004. He also chaired APWA's Homeland Security

Task Force and the Engineering and Technology Committee, each for one year. He has served as the APWA Director-at-Large, Fleet & Facilities Management and also served as a member of APWA's Finance Committee.

Usher was named APWA's Professional Manager of the Year – Emergency Management in 2010, and was named one of APWA's Top Ten Public Works Leaders of the Year in 2005.

The American Public Works Association is a not-for-profit, international organization of more than 28,600 members involved in the field of public works. Visit www.apwa.net.

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Largo to offer lien reduction program for new property owners

By JULIANA A. TORRES

LARGO – Largo commissioners spoke in favor of a program Aug. 9 that would allow the city to forgive liens against a rundown or abandoned property after a new owner fixes it up.

The new program would mirror the city of St. Petersburg's successful code lien release program. City administration would be allowed to work with the new owner to correct ongoing code enforcement violations and bring the property up to the city's standards. In exchange, the city's Code Enforcement Board would reduce the fines levied against the property in lieu of a \$250 administrative fee.

The commissioners were in support of the idea, which they had proposed implementing in a previous work session.

"I think if the whole point is to bring the property in compliance in the first place and not rack up fines that we've probably never collected, then I think it's a great idea. It's a great incentive," Mayor Pat Gerard said. "Somebody can get a deal on a place and ... rather than paying fines, put their money in improving the property, which is the end result that you want anyway."

Commissioner Woody Brown said he spoke at length with a member

of the Code Enforcement Board who favored the idea. Currently, the board will be asked to forgive liens prior to the sale of a property because the purchase is contingent on the removal of excessive liens. But the board has to trust the new owner.

"They don't have any assurance that it's going to remain in compliance or anything is going to be done to the house," Brown explained. "This program does have that assurance."

In the new program, the city would release its liens against the property after the work required has been completed and inspected.

Per the commissioners' consent, the city's community development department will determine the parameters the program for approval at an upcoming meeting.

During the Aug. 9 work session, the commissioners also considered improvements to First Avenue in conjunction with a concept plan for Largo High School. The improvements to the high school will require the city to grant the Pinellas County School Board more right-of-way along First Avenue to move sewer and stormwater infrastructure.

Along with finding that the concept plan for Largo High met pedestrian connectivity standards for the West Bay Drive redevelopment district, commissioners defined how they wanted First Avenue to be

improved. They told city staff they preferred the road remain narrow and paved with brick to keep the road from becoming a more frequently used thoroughfare. They did not see a need for on-street parking, given the business use in the area, but asked the city to poll the businesses for their opinions on design improvements.

They also were in favor of adding decorative lighting to make the street more pedestrian-friendly, as it will be a connection between the high school and Largo Central Park.

Corrections

In the Sept. 4 story "Commission delays salary increases," the Largo Leader incorrectly stated Commissioner Woody Brown's stance on increasing commissioners' salaries. Brown voted in favor of delaying the decision, but did not voice his opinion on the matter.

In the Aug. 28 story "Badminton at Highland Rec.," the Largo Leader incorrectly identified 13-year-old badminton player Toma Schmitt. He is the son of Bianca Schmitt of Largo.

BUDGET, from page 1A

provides, said Commissioner Robert Murray.

"I think there's a problem when we start drawing lines between departments. We work together for a service to the citizens as a complete public entity," he said.

Holmes argued, however, that the ratio of officers to Largo residents was low compared to other surrounding communities, partially due to police department decreases during the recession.

"Right now, we're almost at the bottom of the heap. We're that short. This is the department that's taken the biggest hit on this," Holmes said.

Commissioner Jamie Robinson said he was leery of letting the available fund balance drop below 10 percent, exactly because it gave the city some financial leeway to weather situations like the recession.

"We wouldn't be in the situation we're in today if

we didn't have a fund balance that was well above 10 percent," he said.

The tentative budget passed with a 6-1 vote, with Holmes dissenting.

Along with the extra police officer, the current budget includes two additional full-time school resource officers to work the 12 hours that the charter school Gulf Coast Academy is open – the funding for which is almost entirely reimbursed by the School Board – and a part time police property and evidence technician.

The proposed budget also funds two additional people in the growing IT department: a new network administrator and an administrator for the the building department's new online development review software, part of the city's business-friendly initiative. Also added to the IT department will be a new web and marketing specialist, hired halfway through the year to implement the city's new web-

site, the software for which will be funded in fiscal year 2016.

Added part-time positions include a planning tech to help with annexations and a library security guard. The city also will supplement personnel hours to allow McGough Nature Park to be open longer by making a part-time position full-time and to add back a box office coordinator position at Largo Cultural Center, offset in part by reducing another position in that department.

The budget also includes a 3 percent pay raise for city employees.

Commissioners agreed to establish the city's property tax rate at 5.19 mills, or \$5.19 per \$1,000 in taxable value, as was advertised in the Truth in Millage notice sent to Largo residents last month. The rate is slightly lower than it was last year, but – due to increased property values, new construction and annexations into the city – will still allow the

city to collect 5 percent more in revenue over the current year.

The total tax bill for a typical home in Largo worth \$115,000 would increase \$14.57 more than last year, said Davis. Largo's taxes account for \$7.50 of that increase.

Commissioners also established four future goals for the budget next year during the August budget workshop. They would like to rebuild the available fund balance to at least 15 percent, increase public safety staffing to accommodate annexations and new development, reopen the library on Sundays and add more IT staff if needed.

During the workshop, commissioners also added \$10,000 to the holiday light display funding as well as \$7,500 for the city's Fourth of July event.

The final hearing on the budget and tax rate will be Tuesday, Sept. 16, 6 p.m. at Largo City Hall, 201 Highland Ave.

MARKET, from page 1A

East Bay and Central Park drives. Vendors will offer vegetables, fruits, raw local honey, herbal teas and wild-caught seafood as well as organic body products, essential oils, arts and crafts.

McCafferty said she thought rain in the surrounding areas kept greater crowds away for the inaugural market, though it didn't rain on the market itself. Vendors were pleased with the Largo location, she added.

"We got a lot of 'walk-in' traffic," McCafferty said. "A lot of the people said, 'We saw the tents coming down from East Bay.'"

The market Sept. 5 included acoustic guitar music from chef and Largo local Rocco Antonelli of Island Breeze Soups. Also in attendance was Engine 53 Pizza, a Seminole company that cooks pizza in a brick oven right inside a 1964 fire truck. The engine was booked for the rest of the month, but will return in October.

McCafferty said that with the good feedback she received, she expects the market to continue to grow.

"We're really looking forward to this Friday," she said.

The featured nonprofit for the Sept. 19 market will be Florida Boxer Rescue, based in St. Petersburg. McCafferty hadn't selected a nonprofit for the Sept. 12 market yet.

For more information, contact Jennifer McCafferty at 813-846-1316 or jennifer@jens-market.com.



Photo by JIM LAYFIELD



Photo courtesy of JENNIFER MCCAFFERTY

Above, Rick Siegel of Engine 53 Pizza, based in Seminole, cooks pizza in a brick oven inside a 1964 fire truck during the market Sept. 5. At left, Ann Marie DeLisle of Largo thumbs through some original photographs by Bob Bachman during the market.

RED TIDE, from page 1A

Corcoran explained that dealing with red tide was a difficult challenge. Trying to disperse the bloom would cause it to release its toxins, making a bigger problem. Other potential solutions also have been found lacking. More funding is needed for red tide research, she said.

Congressman David Jolly is working on that. He wrote a letter Aug. 28 to the administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Kathryn Sullivan asking for more resources to fight the current red tide outbreak.

He related his concern about the outbreak and asked Sullivan for details on NOAA's plan to mitigate current and future red tide events.

"Pinellas County is home to a large and diverse economy that is based on the marine environment," Jolly said in his letter. "The last major red tide bloom in 2005 had significant impact on our fisheries, the marine recreation industry, the local tourism industry and the quality of life of all Pinellas County residents. The current bloom has the potential to affect our economy in much the same way as the 2005 event."

Jolly took a boat ride to look for red tide in the Gulf of Mexico Sept. 4 on the Gulfstream II, a charter-fishing vessel.

"The great news is we did not see any red tide, but we must continue to push for expanded research so we can learn if there are ways to better monitor blooms and better predict where they are going once they form," Jolly said via email on Friday. "My intent as we begin this next budget cycle is to work very hard and make a very aggressive push for additional research dollars for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration."

As of Friday night, NOAA had not responded to Jolly's letter, said Preston Rudie, Jolly's communications director.

About red tide

There are many species of red tide. But only one, *Karenia brevis*, Florida red tide, produces brevetoxins, which is the cause of respiratory irritation, fish kills and other problems, Corcoran said. *K. brevis* is found almost exclusively in the Gulf of Mexico from Mexico to Florida, according to information found on the Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission's website, myfwc.com/research/redtide.

K. brevis is a single-celled organism belonging to a group of algae called dinoflagellates. Large concentrations of these cells can discolor water red to brown. It is a naturally occurring alga. References are found in Spanish explorer's logs dating back to the 1400s, Corcoran said. Red tide was documented in the southern Gulf of Mexico as far

back as the 1700s and along Florida's Gulf coast in the 1840s.

The brevetoxins can affect the central nervous system of fish and other vertebrates, causing these animals to die, FWC says. Wave action causes the release of the toxins into the air, which leads to respiratory irritation.

It's common to find *K. brevis* in local waters at background concentrations, less than 1,000 cells per liter, Corcoran said. At very low concentrations, 1,000 to 10,000 cells per liter, respiratory irritation is possible and officials could choose to shutdown shellfish harvesting. At low concentrations, 10,000 to 100,000 cells per liter, respiratory irritation is more probable and fish kills are likely. As concentrations increase, so does the probability of fish kills, respiratory irritation and other problems, such as the death of other marine animals.

Each species of red tide has its own threshold of when concentration levels are considered a bloom. For *K. brevis*, it is about 5,000 cells per liter, Corcoran said. Bloom concentrations have been found offshore between Citrus and Pinellas counties in surface and bottom waters.

FWC's Sept. 5 report shows one water sample collected 7.3 miles west of Anclote Key with medium concentrations of *K. brevis*. A sample taken from surface waters 19 miles west of Anclote Key had low concentrations, as did a sample taken 6.7 miles west of Clearwater Beach. A fourth sample taken from bottom waters 19 miles west of Anclote Keys showed very low concentrations.

Background concentrations were found in a sample taken along-shore/inshore at Clearwater Pass. *K. brevis* was not found in samples from Redington Pier, Mullet Key or Boca Ciega Bay.

Water samples are collected weekly. Another full report is expected Sept. 12.

Public safety

"As red tide blooms approach coastal areas, breaking waves can cause their toxins to become mixed with airborne sea spray," according to information at the Florida Department of Health's website, www.floridahealth.gov. "People in coastal areas can experience varying degrees of eye, nose, and throat irritation. When a person leaves an area with a red tide, symptoms usually go away. People with severe or chronic respiratory conditions such as asthma or chronic lung disease are cautioned to avoid areas with active red tides."

Symptoms of breathing red tide toxins include coughing, sneezing and teary eyes. The health department says wearing a particle filter mask and the use of over-the-counter antihistamines may lessen the effects. Toxins are less prevalent when the wind is blowing offshore.



Photo courtesy of DAVID JOLLY

Congressman David Jolly, left, talks with Capt. Brad Gorst, who operates a charter fishing boat called Gulfstream II. Gorst took Jolly on a boat ride into the Gulf of Mexico to look for red tide Sept. 4.

People who believe they are suffering from the effects of red tide can call the Florida Poison Information Center's toll free hotline at 1-800-222-1222. It is staffed 24/7 by medical professionals. If symptoms are severe, the health department urges the public to call their local doctor.

The health department also cautions the public not to eat shellfish, such as clams, oyster and coquinas harvested from areas with active red tide blooms. These shellfish are filter feeders that can concentrate the toxins. Eating contaminated shellfish can cause food poisoning, known as Neurotoxic Shellfish Poisoning.

"Scallops can be consumed if only the scallop muscle is eaten," the health department says. "Scallop stew, using the whole animal including guts, should not be eaten. Seafood, also commonly called shellfish such as crabs, shrimp, and lobster can be eaten because they do not concentrate the toxin."

Finfish caught live and healthy can be eaten if filleted. Do not eat or allow pets to eat dead or distressed fish that may have been affected by red tide.

Fish kills should be reported to FWC by calling 1-800-636-0511.

FERAL, from page 1A

2. Insurance and liability provisions
3. Policies and procedures to ensure protection of public lands, parks, beaches, schools and wildlife areas
4. Efforts to ensure respect for private property rights
5. Methodology to ensure friendly stray cats and all kittens are immediately separated from colonies or the outdoors for adoption or return to owner
6. Efforts to promote importance of keeping cats indoors
7. The need for community caregivers to provide certain necessities on a regular and ongoing basis, including but not limited to proper nutrition and medical care
8. Standard requirements regarding food and water and not allowing a community cat to suffer
9. Community cat code exemptions regarding stray feeding, abandonment, at large and licensing provisions
10. Required submittal of an annual detailed business plan to the director of Animal Services
11. Importance of statistical data

Freaney also pointed out two areas where "overall agreement" could not be reached.

1. The requirement that all owned cats as well as community cats must be currently vaccinated

2. The requirement that any community caregiver must register and receiving training from a qualified TNVR organization to be eligible for privileges and exemptions under the new TNVR pilot provisions.

"Due to these differences, it appears that the organization Meow Now will not utilize the proposed ordinance," Freaney writes in her memo. "However,

SPCA Tampa Bay and the Humane Society of Pinellas will be submitting a joint plan."

Freaney added that staff would continue to work with Meow Now to address its concerns.

Martha Boden, CEO of SPCA of Tampa Bay, said in a letter to Freaney that Meow Now was concerned that the "structured approach to TNVR," contained in the proposed ordinance written by county staff, "would intimidate current caregivers."

"We look forward to partnering with you and the PCAS staff to implement the first TNVR program in Pinellas County," Boden said. "Our hope is to demonstrate to all those who care about community cats, including our Meow Now colleagues, that the proposed ordinance is a good first step toward more effective, humane community cat care."

Freaney explained that finding the balance between caring for cats and following state law was difficult. State law requires that all dogs and cats be vaccinated for rabies by 4 months of age.

"It's an issue of public health," Freaney said.

She said the first dose of rabies vaccine administered when cats were trapped would last one year. When they are trapped the second time and re-vaccinated, that shot will last three years. She said the caregiver would be responsible to trap and pay for vaccinations, as well as provide food and water.

Animal rights activist and former Seminole Council member Dan Hester, who serves as secretary on the Meow Now board, told commissioners that there are 100,000 to 150,000 free-roaming cats in the county, per statistics provided by Animal Services.

"We as a community euthanized 7,000 cats last year," he said.

He said the proposed ordinance to support the TNVR pilot program had been "over-engineered."



Screenshot by SUZETTE PORTER

Animal rights activist and former Seminole Council member Dan Hester, who serves as secretary on the Meow Now board, talks to Pinellas County Commissioners Aug. 19 about why a proposed ordinance will not help people wanting to participate in a program to trap, neuter, vaccinate and return free-roaming cats.

He said studies had shown that a one-time rabies vaccination lasted six years. He said the county needed to "be real" and not expect cats to be vaccinated every year.

"To require that in an ordinance is just ridiculous," he said, adding that it just sends cat caregivers underground.

Commissioner Norm Roche agreed with Hester that the proposed ordinance was over-engineered.

"They've BSed this out of operation and function," he said.

He also agreed with Hester that the nonprofit should not have to have an approved business plan to provide a service to the county.

"It's time to make a change, under-engineer,

make it simple," he said.

"I've been sitting here longer than you have and I agree completely," said Commissioner Susan Latvala. "When I was first elected, I was visited by animal rights activists. I don't believe we can write an ordinance and be legal (with state law)."

"A community group wants to spend their time, energy and money, why in the world would we say no? It doesn't make sense. We work so hard to make it (the ordinance) legal, but it's not going to be. It's a problem. No one likes the killing. If people want to do something, let them. Let Animal Services do what they do to keep the public safe."

Commissioner Janet Long concurred, saying the commission should "err on the side of caution and let the people do this and move on."

Hester said the current ordinance makes it illegal to feed cats or wildlife in general, including squirrels and ducks.

Freaney said a balance was needed. "We're trying to find a legal way to do this," she said. "Two nonprofits are ready to go."

Hester said it had been over 30 years since a cat had transmitted rabies to a human being in the United States.

"It is not an issue in cats," he said.

Freaney reminded the commission that Animal Services was started in the United States because rabies was out of control.

Stacie Wadsworth, Animal Services veterinarian, also reminded commissioners that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that cats, dog and ferrets be vaccinated and re-vaccinated against rabies.

"It's a public safety issue. We're responsible," she said.

Around town

Rotary hosts car show

LARGO – The Rotary Club of Largo presents the second annual 'Cruisin the Park' Car Show and Craft Beer event Sunday, Sept. 14, noon to 3 p.m., in Largo Central Park, 101 Central Park Drive.



The Rotary Club of Largo will host second annual 'Cruisin the Park' Car Show and Craft Beer event Sunday, Sept. 14.

Along with the car show, the event will include food, drinks, specialty vendors and four kinds of craft beer from Barley Mow Brewing Company. A bounce house will be open to children.

Registration for the car show is \$20 on the day of the show and is open to classic and custom cars and trucks. A total of 85 trophies will be awarded.

Net proceeds will help children attend Rotary's Camp Florida, a 21-acre nonprofit camp that caters to children with special needs and challenges.

For more information and a registration form, visit www.largorotary.com.

Register for Mother Son Messy Madness

LARGO – Registration has opened for the city of Largo's third annual Mother Son Messy Madness Saturday, Sept. 20, 6 to 8 p.m., at the Highland Recreation Complex, 400 Highland Ave.

The special night is just for moms and sons ages 5 to 13. This year's theme is "Down on the Farm." Dinner, dessert and messy, high-energy games, for moms and sons, are all included. Bring towels, as Largo Fire Rescue will be on site with a fire truck to help spray participants clean after the activities.

The cost is \$25 per couple and \$8 for each additional son. Spaces are limited. Register at Highland Recreation Complex; the deadline is Friday, Sept. 12.

For more information, visit the Special Events page at HighlandRecreation.com or call 518-3016.

Sign up for Daddy-Daughter dance

LARGO – The Largo Community Center will host the 37th annual Daddy Daughter Date Night Satur-

day, Sept. 20, 5 to 8 p.m., at 400 Alt. Keene Road.

This year's theme is "Fiesta, Fiesta." Fathers and daughters of all ages will enjoy a night of dinner, dancing and games. Girls will be able to design maracas and try their hand at a piñata.

This year, the event will cost less: only \$39 per couple and \$12 for each additional daughter. Tickets for this event are now on sale and can be purchased at any of the city's recreation facilities.

For more information, visit LargoEvents.com or call 587-6740, ext. 5014.

Paint at the Community Center

LARGO – Enjoy the beautiful park setting at the Largo Community Center or spend a fun evening with friends in the art room while creating your very own masterpiece.

The center will host a Mimosa Morning Saturday, Sept. 20, 10 a.m., and a Painting Party Thursday, Sept. 25, 6:30 p.m., at 400 Alt. Keene Road. The cost is \$40 for residents and \$50 for nonresidents. It includes a 16-by-20-inch canvas, all paints and supplies and up to two mimosas or beer and wine, soda or water.

Call 581-3131.

Suncoast Performing Arts Foundation to host gala fundraiser

LARGO – The Suncoast Performing Arts Foundation will present "Dream Makers," the 18th annual fundraiser gala for the Largo Cultural Center, on Saturday, Sept. 27, 6 p.m., at Largo Cultural Center, 105 Central Park Drive.

The gala will feature a cocktail reception, full course dinner, entertainment, silent auctions and dancing.

Tickets are \$125 a person. For information or to purchase tickets, call 587-6793 or visit LargoArts.com.

SPAF is passionate about meeting the need for arts education in the community and proceeds from this event go directly to the organization's mission. The Largo Cultural Center – with financial assistance from SPAF – provides experiences, which cuts across cultural, social, ethnic, age, educational and economic barriers.

For sponsorship opportunities, call Steven Rodriguez at 593-2000 or email Steven@SWRandAssociates.com.

Police beat

Cell phone store robbers arrested

PINELLAS COUNTY Sheriff's detectives arrested two men Friday night in connection with five armed robberies in less than a week at local cell phone stores.

The men were arrested shortly after robbing the Metro PCS store at 11881 Seminole Blvd. in Largo about 6:45 p.m. Sept. 5.

The men also are accused of robbing the Metro PCS store at 3665 East Bay Drive in unincorporated Largo on Sept. 4, the Metro PCS store, 6581 102nd Ave. in Pinellas Park on Sept. 2, as well as the Metro PCS, 7700 U.S. 19 N. in Pinellas Park and the Metro PCS Store, 1363 Main Street in Dunedin, on Aug. 30.

The sheriff's office released videos showing three of the previous armed robberies, which can be viewed at www.TBNweekly.com.

According to the sheriff's report on the most recent robbery, Bernard Woods, 56, of Clearwater, entered the Largo store, produced a handgun and demanded money. He then left the store with an undisclosed amount of cash. Woods fled the scene in a vehicle with Joshua JnMarie, 19.

The get-away vehicle was spotted by patrol deputies in the area of Ulmerton and Seminole boulevards. Deputies stopped the vehicle and the men were taken into custody.

Woods was charged with two counts of robbery with a deadly weapon and three counts of principal armed robbery with a firearm. Bond was set at \$315,000. JnMarie was charged with seven counts of robbery with a deadly weapon. His bond was set at \$150,000 per charge – in excess of \$1 million.

According to their booking reports, JnMarie lives at the same address as Woods on Garden Avenue in Clearwater.

Man arrested for armed burglary

PINELLAS PARK – Pinellas Park police arrested a Clearwater man Sept. 2 and charged him with armed burglary, resisting arrest without violence and felon in possession of a firearm.

According to the police report, a call came in about 2:19 p.m. Tuesday about a suspicious person in the 4300 block of 83rd Avenue North in Pinellas Park.

Numerous officers responded to the scene and found that the man was still inside the residence. Police said the man attempted to flee on several occasions, but each time he was challenged by police, he refused to exit and retreated inside the home.

Police sent in a K-9 Unit, and Christopher M. Tierney, 25, immediately surrendered. Police said Tierney ransacked the home and armed himself with a handgun during the burglary.

Tierney is a convicted felon. He was released from prison Feb. 2, 2012, after serving 18 months for burglary. Tierney was booked into the Pinellas County Jail. Bond was set at \$60,150.

Bicyclist hit by car dies at hospital

CLEARWATER – A Clearwater man died at a local hospital Sept. 4 from injuries suffered when his bicycle was hit by a car just before midnight on State Road 686 near 58th Street North in Clearwater.

According to a report from the Florida Highway Patrol, Kyle Schlittenhart, 42, was riding a bicycle northbound along the sidewalk on 58th Street North approaching State Road 686 about 11:56 p.m. Sept. 3. The bicycle had no lights and Schlittenhart was wearing dark clothing.

Eddie James Mitchell Jr., 48, of Tampa was traveling eastbound in the inside lane of State Road 686 approaching 58th Street North. Troopers say Schlittenhart failed to stop for the crosswalk signal or yield right-of-way and traveled into the direct path of Mitchell's vehicle, colliding with it. Schlittenhart was transported to Northside Hospital where he later died.



Bernard Woods



Joshua JnMarie



Christopher Tierney

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Health calendar

Caregiver Spa Afternoon set

LARGO – A Caregiver Spa Afternoon will be presented Thursday, Sept. 18, 2 to 4 p.m., at Princeton Village of Largo, 333 16th Ave. SE. Attendees will be pampered with a free massage, mini makeover, and a mini manicure. The afternoon also includes a glass of champagne, chocolate covered strawberries and other delectable delights. Linda Burhans with Harmony Home Health will be presenting How To Help Yourself So You Can Help Your Loved One. Burhans works for Harmony Home Health and is a caregiver advocate and author of "Good Night & God Bless."

Reservations are required by Sept. 15. To RSVP, call 588-0020.

Tobacco Free Coalition meets quarterly

LARGO – The Tobacco Free Coalition will meet Tuesdays, Nov. 4, Feb. 3 and May 5, 3 p.m., at Mid County Health Center, 8751 Ulmerton Road. The meetings are free. The Tobacco Free Coalition of Pinellas County meets quarterly on first Tuesdays. The public is invited to attend. Members promote tobacco-free environments for a healthier community. For information, visit tobaccofreepinellas.wordpress.com.

Alzheimer's Association Walk set

CLEARWATER – The Alzheimer's Association Walk to End Alzheimer's will be Saturday, Oct. 25, 9 a.m., at Bright House Field, 601 Old Coachman Road, Clearwater.

The Alzheimer's Association Walk to End Alzheimer's is the nation's largest event to raise awareness and funds for Alzheimer's care, support and research. Participants will complete a 2-mile walk and will learn about Alzheimer's disease, advocacy opportunities, clinical trial enrollment, and support programs and services. Registration will begin at 9 a.m. and the walk will kick off at 10 a.m. For more information, call Tiffany Kane at 578-2558, email walk@alzflgulf.org or visit alz.org/walk.

BayCare to host health seminars

CLEARWATER – BayCare health experts will host several health seminars in October focusing on weight loss surgery, urology and breast cancer. The monthly seminars are free to the public and held at BayCare's various Morton Plant Mease facilities and community centers around Pinellas County. To preregister for a health seminar, call 953-6877 or visit www.BayCareEvents.org. Following is a list of upcoming seminars:

- Weight Loss Surgery Information – Thursday, Oct. 2, 5:30 p.m., at Mease Dunedin Hospital, Physicians Office Building, 646 Virginia St., Suite 600, Dunedin. Surgeon Richard Gordon, M.D., will go over weight loss surgery options.
- New Frontiers in Urology – Friday, Oct. 3, noon, at Mease Countryside Hospital, 3231 McMullen-Booth Road, Meeting Rooms 1-5, Safety Harbor. Urologist Paul Arnold, M.D., will discuss the use of lasers to treat urologic issues.
- Breast Cancer Panel – Tuesday, Oct. 14, noon, at the Cheek-Powell Heart and Vascular Pavilion, Meeting Rooms A and B, Second Floor, 455 Pinellas St., Clearwater. Medical, surgical, and radiation oncologists

will discuss the latest news and treatments for breast cancer, followed by a Q&A session. Panelists include Peter Blumencranz, M.D., surgical oncology; Vijaya Gadiyaram, M.D., hematology/oncology; Ben Yan, M.D., hematology/oncology; and Hiral Shah, M.D., radiation oncology.

- Essential Tremor and Parkinson's Options – Wednesday, Oct. 15, noon, at the Aging Well Center at The Long Center, Grand Room, 1501 N. Belcher Road, Clearwater. Neurologist Michael Andriola, M.D., and neurosurgeon Dean Gobo, M.D., will talk about deep brain stimulation for the treatment of essential tremor and Parkinson's disease.
- PAP Mask-fitting Workshop – Wednesday, Oct. 15, 6 p.m., at Mease Countryside Hospital, Meeting Rooms 1-3, 3231 McMullen-Booth Road, Safety Harbor. During this screening event, positive airway pressure (PAP) device users can bring their equipment to be inspected and refitted by trained respiratory therapists, equipment distributors, and manufacturers. The latest PAP machines, masks, and other interface devices will be on display.
- Sleep Well – Wednesday, Oct. 22, noon, at the Aging Well Center at The Long Center, Grand Room, 1501 N. Belcher Rd., Clearwater. Attendees will learn from pulmonologist Lisa Whims-Squires, D.O., what quality sleep is and how it can help individuals avoid diabetes, depression, and heart problems.
- Breast Cancer Basics – Wednesday, Oct. 22, 12:30 p.m., at YMCA of the Suncoast, Teen Room, 1005 S Highland Ave., Clearwater. Nurse practitioner Jola Baginski will host this discussion about breast cancer detection and treatment. Sandwiches and other light fare will be provided.

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Briefcase

WingHouse unveils swimsuit calendar

LARGO – Summer may be ending, but the bikinis are here to stay all year-round – and that's because Ker's WingHouse Bar & Grill is unveiling its 20th annual WingHouse Girls Swimsuit Calendar.

"We are incredibly excited about this year's WingHouse Girls Swimsuit Calendar and think it's one of the best we've produced to date," said Crawford Ker in a press release. Ker is CEO and founder of Ker's WingHouse Bar & Grill. "It's hard to believe we're celebrating our 20th anniversary of both the calendar and the restaurant, but it makes this year's calendar very special to me and our loyal customers."

The calendar is now available at all 24 WingHouse locations throughout Florida, with the offering of a \$5 dine-in coupon to purchasers.

The WingHouse Girls are the foundation of the brand. They have served as ambassadors for the past 20-years, and their role continues to be essential in creating fun and memorable experiences for customers.

Founded by the National Football League's Dallas Cowboys and Denver Broncos alumni Crawford Ker, the first WingHouse opened in Largo in 1994.

Gallery grand opening slated

CLEARWATER – Gallery 1356, at 1356 S. Fort Harrison, Clearwater, will celebrate its grand opening with a reception open to the public on Thursday, Sept. 18, 6 to 9 p.m.

Part of the Tampa Bay Sculpture Center and Creative Studios, Gallery 1356 will feature recent works from artists with studios located there.

"We're proud to house studios of some of the best of the best artists in Pinellas County," said J. Harrison Smith in a press release. Smith is a sculptor and owner of the complex. "Our award-winning artists have regional, national and in some cases, international recognition. Beginning collectors and experienced aficionados will be pleased to know that great art is right here in Tampa Bay."

Artists' works to be shown at the opening will include J. Harrison Smith, sculptor; June Harben, oils and pastels of local landscapes and florals; Lisbeth Graham, painting, collage and sculpture; Sylvia Shanan, oils, pastels and portraits; and Liz Smith, linoprints and decorative arts. Sharon Drenner, art concierge and consultant, is also affiliated with the group. Future plans for the gallery include ongoing openings, parties, demonstrations, classes, workshops and drop-by

evenings of art, music and fun.

Contact Smith at 458-4206 or jharrisonsmith.sculptor@gmail.com.

Curves hosts open house week

SEMINOLE – Curves International Inc., a chain of fitness centers for women, recently announced that participating Curves will host an open house the week of Sept. 15-20, and new members can receive 30 days free with enrollment fee, in addition to a free workout. Some restrictions apply.

The open house week provides women with the opportunity to check out their local "all new" Curves and take some important "me time" for themselves.

During the open house week, new members will have the opportunity to work out for free on the Curves circuit, including experiencing Curves Workouts with Jillian Michaels, which are full body workouts that change each month. Those who join that day will receive 30 days free on their membership. In addition, participating Curves locations will offer free health assessments, healthy snacks and other raffles and giveaways in celebration of the open house.

Curves of Seminole, at 8992 Seminole Blvd., Seminole, will be offering activities including a blood drive on Sept. 19, as well as vendor displays and door prize drawings.

For information, call 320-9737. Visit www.curves.com.

PACE seeks donations of gowns, dresses

PINELLAS PARK – PACE Center for Girls Inc. is asking community members to clean out their closets and donate any unwanted, gently-used gowns, dresses and jeans.

Items donated to PACE will be re-sold at their inaugural Denim & Dresses Second Chance Treasure Sale on Saturday, Sept. 20, 9 a.m., at the PACE Center for Girls, 4000 Gateway Center Blvd., Suite 400, Pinellas Park.

Donations of dresses, gowns and jeans only may be taken to any Sun Country Cleaners location in Pinellas County or to the PACE Center for Girls. All clothes donated will generate funding to continue the center's work, expand their reach, advocate for changes in public policy and increase the evidence base of what works to help all girls.

The PACE Denim & Dresses Second Chance Treasure Sale is sponsored by Sun County Cleaners, Keller Williams Realty, The Beth

Dillinger Foundation, Publix, and the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office. All gowns are \$20; all dresses are \$10, and all jeans are \$5.

PACE prevents girls from entering the costly juvenile justice system and reduces the significant long-term costs associated with teen pregnancy, substance abuse, dropping out of school, unemployment and long-term economic dependency.

Contact Carla Mattem at 456-1566 or carla.mattem@pacecenter.org.

Bank to host business, personal growth event

CLEARWATER – PNC Bank will sponsor a business and personal growth book signing event and mixer on Thursday, Oct. 9, 5:30 to 6:30 p.m., at PNC Bank, 2498 Gulf-to-Bay Blvd., Clearwater.

Ginger Marks, author of "The Complete Library of Entrepreneurial Wisdom," will be on hand for signing opportunities. Her books are available online and local bookstores. A few copies will be available for purchase at the event. Attendees will have an opportunity to meet Marks and to speak with financial professionals about business and personal growth potential.

Refreshments will be served. For information, call 565-2130.

Taste of Dunedin set

DUNEDIN – Dunedin's Downtown Merchants Association will present Taste of Dunedin on Sunday, Sept. 14, 1 to 5 p.m.

In addition to some delicious offerings prepared by the famed Dunedin restaurants, this year's event will include live music in Pioneer Park throughout the afternoon and arts and crafts booths and demonstrations along Main Street in Dunedin.

Everyone who purchases tickets for Taste of Dunedin, either in Pioneer Park on the day of the event or online at www.DunedinRestaurantWeek.com, will have an opportunity to register to win prizes.

Proceeds from the event will help DDMA produce future events during 2014. Taste of Dunedin will be a fitting kickoff to Dunedin Restaurant Week, which will begin on Sept. 14 and continue the culinary celebration through the following Sunday. Participating Dunedin restaurants will offer special foods and drinks as they seek to win this year's Platinum Plate Awards for Best Food, Best Chef and Best Event Promoter during Dunedin Restaurant Week.

For information, visit www.DunedinRestaurantWeek.com.

A graphic with a beach background. Two women are walking on the left, one carrying a large box. In the center, a wooden sign reads "Support These Local Businesses". Below the sign, a black box says "SHOP LOCAL".

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Whole Foods to open location in Clearwater, the first in Pinellas

By ALEXANDRA LUNDAHL

CLEARWATER – Health-conscious and quality food lovers alike can look forward to the first Whole Foods Market opening at the Westfield Countryside Mall on Wednesday, Sept. 24. The grand opening is set for 9 a.m., where city officials and the Florida regional and state Whole Foods leadership will take part in the official “bread breaking” event.

Other perks coming to the grand opening include mystery gift cards for the first 500 people through the door. Most of the cards will range from \$5 to \$50, but one lucky recipient will get one for \$500, said Mariah Fairweather, marketing and community relations team leader for Whole Foods Market.

This will be the first Whole Foods Market in Pinellas County and is about 38,000 square feet. The other two in the Tampa Bay area are located in South Tampa and in Carrollwood. Each store is unique, and the Clearwater one will have a beach theme, from the color scheme to the decorations, Fairweather said. There will be bird motifs, seashell accents and even little surfboards in the frozen food aisle, she said.

The store is located in what once was the bottom floor of Sears and is attached to the mall but is a separate entity.

Whole Foods is more than just groceries she said, and is also a place to gather and socialize.

“Whole Foods Market, yes we are a grocery store, but we are also a destination,” Fairweather said. “You can find all of your specialty items, we’re going to have a wine and beer bar, a juice bar, a coffee bar, a prepared foods area, so going back to that sense of community. We’re a grocery store but it’s also a meeting area. We’re located in a great area next to the mall.”

The beer bar will include more than 400 beers, and the wine bar will have more than 750 wines, she said.

There will be everything from regular grocery items to specialty things like vegan cheese, gluten-

free pasta and cupcakes.

“We want to give the community a unique experience when they come into our store,” Fairweather said. “When they’re browsing our shelves, some of the products may seem unfamiliar, but they can trust that everything in our store is natural and organic. There’s no artificial colorings or artificial preservatives. They can feel safe picking up any products on our shelves.”

Additionally, there is no high fructose corn syrup added to any of the products they sell, she said.

“Almost everyone knows someone with a special diet or an allergen, and sometimes it can be difficult for those people to go into a grocery store and find the kinds of products that they need and the products that they want,” Fairweather said. “You can come into Whole Foods Market and find it. And I personally feel that people are becoming more aware of what they are putting into their bodies, so we provide that relief so you don’t have to look at every single label.”

Whole Foods has just hired 200 workers who are currently undergoing training in preparation for the store’s opening. Fairweather is also reaching out to the community, including not-for-profits in order to build up relationships and partnerships.

“Whole Foods Market hosts various community giving programs, so we host a 5 percent day four times a year where a percent of our net sales go to a not-for-profit,” Fairweather said. “We also have the Donate Your Dime program where we encourage our shoppers to bring in reusable bags, and 10 cents will either be taken off of their total per bag or they also can donate that to charity as well. And we have four different recipients for that as well. So right now we’re meeting different organizations and gauging their interest in those programs.”

Whole Foods is participating in beach cleanups with Keep Pinellas Beautiful, Fairweather said.

“Whole Foods Market is more than just a grocery store,” Fairweather said. “Yes, we sell products and quality products, but we also want to serve our local and our global communities. So we don’t want to just



Photo by ALEXANDRA LUNDAHL

Whole Foods Market is set to open to the public on Wednesday, Sept. 24.

be this building in Clearwater. We have more than 200 members, all with different personalities and passions, and all of us are going to be living in the community, so we want to show that our store is also a part of our community. So we give back to those programs, we give back through volunteer efforts.”

Fairweather thinks it is a win/win for both the mall and for Whole Foods because the mall and all of the stores in it are fabulous, she said, and then Whole Foods Market will bring in even more shoppers as well for the store and the mall. People have been known to drive as long as 30 to 60 minutes to

shop at Whole Foods, she said, which will benefit the mall as well.

Shoppers will have additional unique resources at Whole Foods, such as a healthy eating specialist who can help guide customers if they are interested in eating more healthy or are starting a new diet, for instance. The store also will offer various classes, from all-star sampling events, which feature samples from every department, to kids’ events and cooking classes. The calendar of events will be printed in the store, on the store’s Facebook page and at www.wholefoodsmarket.com/stores/Clearwater.

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Commission says yes and no to ALF rezoning requests

By SUZETTE PORTER

CLEARWATER – Pinellas County Commissioners have denied two of three rezoning requests from assisted living facilities so far in 2014. Commissioner Susan Latvala wants to make sure changes in the works by the county's planning department include the need for ALF facilities in the future.

The first denial occurred Feb. 25 when commissioners said no to a request for a zoning and land use change on 3.36 acres on East Lake Road. The property owner wanted to build a 68-bed ALF and even agreed to a condition that an ALF be the only allowable use of the site to assuage neighbor's concerns.

Commissioners denied another request Aug. 19 for a zoning and land use change by an existing

ALF, Oak Tree Manor, to allow for an expansion onto an adjacent parcel of land on Park Boulevard in Seminole.

Several owners of neighboring properties protested the change. Most were concerned that a bigger facility would detract from the residential nature of the area. Others talked about parking.

The rezoning request included a variance, reducing the required number of parking spaces from 71 to 20. Staff acknowledged that the ALF had an agreement with the Winn-Dixie store across the street for overflow parking. But, the neighbors said that agreement wasn't real, and they questioned the safety of visitors and staff crossing Park Boulevard to get to the ALF.

There was history involved with the property, including previous protests by the neighbors to previ-

ous requests. In 1996, the Board of Adjustment approved a 20-bed assisted living facility. In 2004, the owner requested an increase to 24 beds. A zoning change was approved in 2007 to allow a 34-bed facility. In 2012, commissioners approved a zoning change, allowing bed capacity of 39. A parking variance reduced the required number of spaces from 39 to nine.

If commissioners had approved the Aug. 19 request, the facility could have increased its bed capacity to a maximum of 71 beds.

A third zoning request, also presented Aug. 19, garnered the commission's unanimous approval. Ivy Ridge Assisted Living Facility, 7179 40th Ave. N. in unincorporated St. Petersburg, requested a land use change to allow an increase in beds from 58 to 78 and a parking variance for 38 spaces

where 78 are required.

Unlike the two requests that were denied, nothing new was needed, as Ivy Ridge plans to increase its beds without an expansion to its existing building.

During the discussion at all three public hearings, some talked about a need for more ALFs, especially in the future. Others said plenty of beds were available in existing facilities.

"No one wants them in their neighborhood," said Commissioner Susan Latvala. "They are residential. We'll be in big trouble if we don't allow them."

Pinellas County is currently working on changes to its land use map and other planning documents.

Latvala urged staff to consider ALFs as they pen the new codes. She suggested scheduling a discussion about them in the near future.

"We're all going to need one," she said.

Briefly

More chickens test positive for SLEV

Pinellas County Mosquito Control confirmed positive results for St. Louis encephalitis in three sentinel chickens on Sept. 3. Two chickens were located at Walsingham Park in Seminole and one chicken was located at Sawgrass Lake Park in St. Petersburg.

Since the beginning of the year, Pinellas County Mosquito Control has received 20 confirmed positive results for St. Louis encephalitis in sentinel chickens – nine positive results in Cross Bayou, seven positive results at Walsingham Park in Seminole, three positive results in Sawgrass Lake Park in St. Petersburg and one positive result in Lake Maggiore Park in St. Petersburg.

Sentinel chickens serve as an early-warning detection system for some mosquito-borne diseases and can signal the fact that mosquitoes carrying the diseases are present in the area. There are

eight locations in the county where chickens are kept and tested weekly.

Mosquito Control technicians are aggressively treating known breeding areas by ground and by air, as well as responding to requests from residents. Additional fogging is ongoing in these areas.

The public is urged to be diligent in ridding their properties of standing water to prevent mosquitoes from breeding. Mosquitoes can breed in as little as one quarter inch of standing water, so residents are advised remove all standing water from their property.

More information on controlling mosquitoes can be found at www.pinellascounty.org/mosquito. Call Pinellas County Mosquito Control at 464-7503.

Funds help county control vegetation

The Pinellas County Parks and Conservation Resources Department recently purchased a new mulching mower head for vegetation control with assistance from the Florida Urban and Community Forestry Grant Program.

The specialized mowing head will be attached to a small tractor to control vegetation in limited



Photo courtesy of PINELLAS COUNTY COMMUNICATIONS

Pinellas County's new mulching mower head will help control vegetation in limited spaces.

spaces such as trails and sensitive ecological areas at county parks and preserves. Controlling the vegetation will help maintain these areas and reduce the risk of wildfires. The device will also be used to remove non-native plants, prepare sites for prescribed burns and respond to brush fires.

The Parks and Conservation Resources Department received matching funds of \$15,000 from the grant program to aid in the purchase of the mowing head. Grant funds were made available to help with urban and community forestry programs throughout the state through the Florida Forest Service as part of the U.S. For-

est Service Urban and Community Forestry Matching Grant Program.

In the 2015 fiscal year, Pinellas County Parks and Conservation Resources is also planning to begin contracting for assistance from larger land management resources that will aid in the maintenance and restoration of large tracts of land and improve the wildlife and plant habitats at parks and preserves.

Visit www.pinellascounty.org/parks or call 582-2100.

Water flowing into reservoir again

Tampa Bay Water is once again storing water in the region's water savings account, the C.W. Bill Young Regional Reservoir.

Since July 25, 2014, an average of 147 million gallons of water has flowed into the reservoir daily and approximately 5 billion gallons has been banked.

The reservoir has been undergoing a renovation since 2012 and is nearly complete. The renovation was done from the bottom up, so refilling could begin while construction around the top of the facility was finished.

Tampa Bay Water has been authorized to fill the facility to about half of its 15.5-billion gal-



Photo courtesy of TBW

Water is flowing again into the C.W. Bill Young Regional Reservoir.

lon capacity. Once construction is completed, which is scheduled for the end of 2014, Tampa Bay Water will be able to fill the reservoir to capacity.

When full, the reservoir holds enough water to fill Raymond James Stadium more than 33 times. Water that is stored during wet times is used during dry times.

Reservoir water is treated at the Tampa Bay Regional Surface Water Treatment Plant, blended with other treated supplies like groundwater and desalinated seawater. The water is then distributed to local governments for use by their customers.

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Is the president too cautious on the Islamic State?

President Barack Obama slipped up recently when he told reporters, "We don't have a strategy yet" to dispatch the Islamic State. These things happen. On "Meet the Press" on Sunday, Sen. Dianne Feinstein, D-Calif., dished out a mild but fitting response to the president's remarks. "He's very cautious," she said. "Maybe in this instance too cautious."



Debra Saunders

On Wednesday in Estonia, the president tried to present a more muscular foreign policy as he stated that the administration has been "putting forward a strategy" for the Islamic State. Thing is, it's a long-term proposition.

"Our objective is clear, and that is to degrade and destroy (the Islamic State) so that it's no longer a threat not just to Iraq but also the region and to the United States," quoth Obama.

The good news: You won't hear the president dismissing the Islamic State as a "JV" team as he did in January.

As Feinstein observed on Sunday, two days before American journalist Steven Sotloff's grisly beheading, "I think it's a major varsity team. ... I see nothing that compares with its viciousness."

To me, the president's real problem is not caution; it's concentration. While the Islamic State has been at war with Syria, Iraq and the United States, Obama has been at war with an actual JV team, Republicans in Congress.

That's the enemy who wakes up Obama at 4 a.m. Obama may have been slow to act in the Middle East, but when it comes to beating Republicans in November, you can bet Obama has had a strategy all along.

War isn't really in this administration's vocabulary. Foreign policy aide Ben Rhodes famously referred to the NATO campaign against the late Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi as "kinetic military action."

I don't envy the president. He won the White House with the promise to end U.S. military involvement in Iraq. Now the beheading of two American journalists has inflamed the public against radical Islam, even if voters do not want to see U.S. boots on the ground. The provocations, however, will not subside. An Islamic State spokesman boasted, "We will raise the flag of Allah in the White House."

If only the Islamic State were all talk. Alas, its swift military sweep into Iraq reveals the handiwork not of terrorist hotheads but of seasoned martial tacticians.

In July, Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel warned that the Islamic State presents a "clear and imminent threat" to the United States. It doesn't matter what Obama wants; he has no choice but to go after this looming threat.

So he might as well - and I never thought I'd say this - start talking like Vice President Joe Biden, who did not mince words when he promised an ugly end for the Islamic State. Quoth the veep: "We will follow them to the gates of hell until they are brought to justice."

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

LETTERS

Anti-American, Christianophobia beliefs

Editor:

I see that Tampa Bay Newspapers editors have been duped into one of the Internet's oldest tricks, and they have allowed that trick to be played on the rest of us. That trick is "trolling."

The writer from Clearwater who wrote "Bullets and bombs are the gifts of the United States" is clearly "trolling."

What the writer is looking for is outrage at his obvious anti-American, Christianophobia beliefs. That outrage fuels his ego.

All I can say is that I am available 24/7 to give him a ride to Tampa International on his trip out of the U.S.A., although Homeland Security may want first dibs.

Carl Muller
Indian Rocks Beach

All this for hitting a ball

Editor:

Last week I attended a professional baseball game. There were many rows in front me cheering on a famous baseball player while wearing his jersey. This was disgusting. The man made more than \$150 million in his short 18-year career and owns a \$30 million mansion in Florida. All this for hitting a ball.

What about our teachers and our scientists who alter the lives of mankind. Society should be buying jerseys with famous teachers or famous scientists on them. The mentality of sports fans only boggle my mind.

Why do famous athletes think they could walk on water? While they're making millions and feeling like a deity, many millions are going hungry and families cannot survive. What must our modern society do to promote a focus on the importance of knowledge? Think about a world in which the poor are middle class and a child is not hungry. Now that paints a pretty picture in my mind.

Gary Neal
Clearwater

What do you think?

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

Here are some more guidelines for letters:

- Letters are printed on a first-come, first-served basis. They may be edited to correct grammar, spelling and factual errors. They also may be edited for clarity.
- Please keep letters to editor to 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.
- Please allow two weeks from the time you submitted your letter for it to be published before inquiring as to its status.
- We won't print anonymous letters.
- We won't print letters that are submitted merely to promote a business.
- Thank you letters are accepted.

About the cartoonist

John Deering is chief editorial cartoonist for the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, the state's largest newspaper. Winner of the National Press Foundation's 1997 Berryman Award, Deering also gained top honors in the 1994 national John Fischetti Cartoon Competition and was the seven-time winner of the Arkansas Press Association's Best Editorial Cartoonist award. Born in 1956 in Little Rock, Deering has been drawing since his childhood fascination with science fiction and dinosaurs. He and his wife, Kathy, have a daughter and two sons, and live in Little Rock. He still draws dinosaurs.

The many noises of the workplace

A few days ago I was watching the U.S. Open tennis matches, and listening to the grunts, groans and screams that some of the players emitted each time they struck the ball. Most of the yips and eeks came from the female players; the men, when they made any noise at all, tended to grunt.

In the old days (during the McKinley administration), did tennis players make such noises? I don't think so. I believe the sound effects began around the 1990s, or maybe earlier. Monica Seles was one of the pioneers of vocal tennis, although others have rivaled her decibel-levels.

Research has shown that, for tennis players, noise-making has its benefits. The grunts hit the ball harder, but without increasing their heart rate. Their opponents were slightly less successful at returning the ball. You'd think these findings would increase the number of yippers, and perhaps they have. Still, many tennis players make very little noise when they wallop the ball.

Do professional golfers grunt audibly as they tee off and send the ball 250 yards down the fairway? I don't know of many, or any. But they should be entitled to do so. Whacking a golf ball can be just as strenuous as hitting a tennis ball, don't you think? What many golfers do is curse the ball, after they hit it. I learned that when, as a boy, I caddied. "Stay out of the rough, you s.o.b.!" was a typical outburst, as a ball headed for a grove of pine trees. Caddies were forbidden to react to a golfer's travail, but sometimes that was impossible. One day my golfer - a stern, intense dentist - cried out "You hookin' whore!" as his tee shot took a left turn into an adjoining county. I almost collapsed with



Driver's Seat
Bob Driver

laughter, and was of course banned from caddying for the next few weeks.

The most interesting sounds and comments must surely come from professional football players. When a 325-pound linebacker slams his shoulder into the rib cage of a ball carrier moving at 40 mph, the pain is substantial for both players. But we seldom hear their cries of agony, or their grudging expressions of admiration: "Oo, that was a good one, Bukowski. Your mother watching us in her prison cell must be proud of you." The National Football League and the TV industry don't want us to hear the taunting and trash talk.

To hear really foul speech on TV, we can turn to cop shows in which 20 heavily-armed SWAT team officers crash into a tenement home and shout, "On the #!#!# floor! Show your #!#!#! hands!" Then the cops race through the rooms shouting either "Drop the %&!@#! gun!" or "Clear!" From all this I must assume that criminals surrender more quickly when they hear police use obscenities.

Lumberjacks shout "TIMMM-BERRR!" to warn bystanders that a huge tree is about to come crashing to the ground. "Fire in the hole!" is what we hear when demolition workers are about to set off an explosion that will

shake loose a major granite cliff in Vermont. Occasionally, "Fire in the hole" are the last words to fall on the ears of a deaf hiker who strolls by.

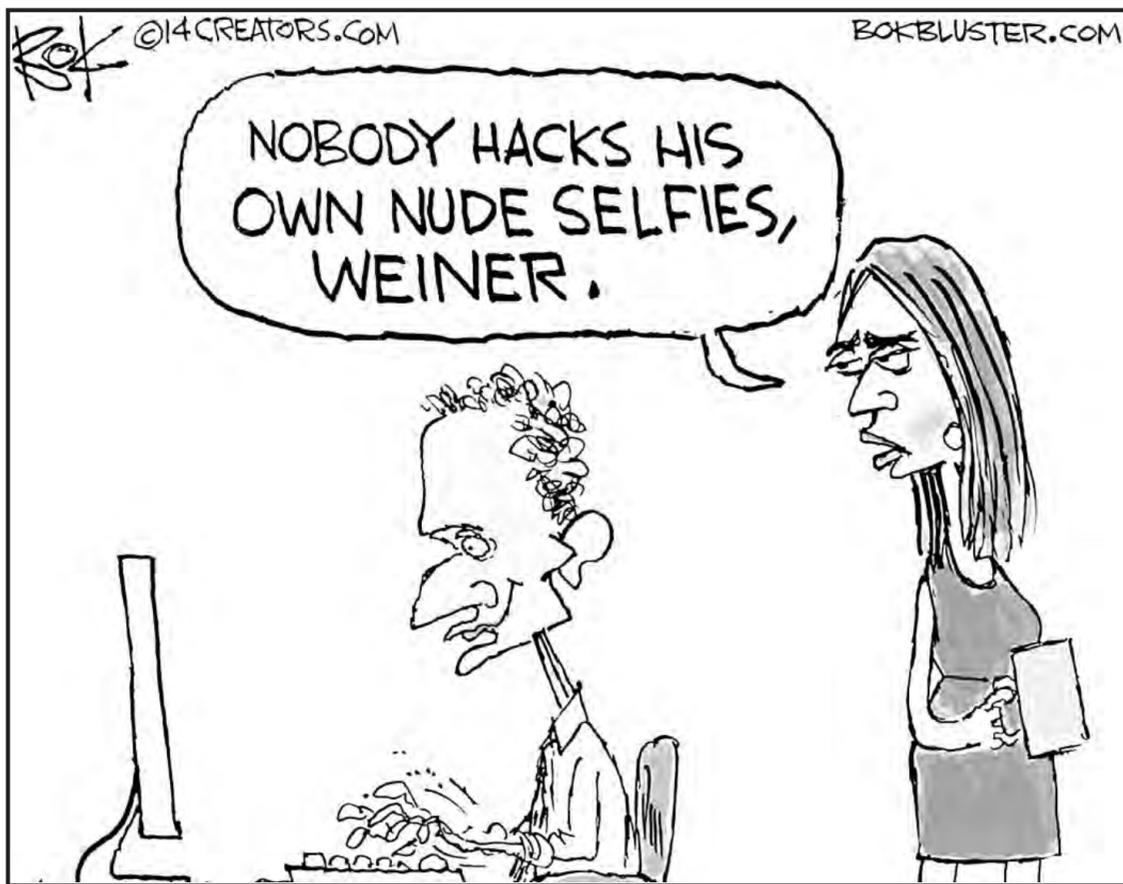
Years ago, major league baseball players kept up a steady stream of chatter and pep talk during a game. With their yakkety-yak, they encouraged the pitcher and directed disparaging remarks at the batters. This custom has faded. Now the players keep quiet, focus on the game, and think of their mega-million-dollar contracts.

A movie director's most frequent comments might include "Quiet on the set! Lights! Camera! Action! Marlon, stop slurring your words." A judge: "Next case. You're out of order! Have you reached a verdict? Case dismissed. Bail is set at \$6 million."

From what I hear, auctioneers invent their own sounds as they try to coax the customers into raising the bid on the item for sale. A typical chant might go like this: "Now let's go 40 I hear 40 40 dibble did 45 year 45 do I hear a 45 gonna be 50 but here we go 45 there it is 45 lordy 45 weedle needle dibble tryin' 50 ..."

When he has to, a man can stay alive just by stringing three or four words together and repeating them at the right time. I once heard Florida State head football coach Bobby Bowden tell this story (which may or may not have been completely true): "When my daddy came over here from the old country, he didn't know a word of English. But he quickly learned three words that served him well. They were 'Stick 'em up!'"

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



Amendments and tax-cut madness

I don't have time to count how many words there are in Florida's Constitution.

Sorry, I couldn't find that information online, either.

My concern is that if legislators, governors and special interests keep trying to doctor our Constitution with amendments, it might become as bloated as Alabama's, which at 340,136 words is called the longest constitution in the world.

Now comes Gov. Scott with a proposed \$1 billion in tax cuts and a constitutional amendment to prevent property tax increases on homesteaded property if a home's value stays the same or decreases.

Here we go again. Concocted by the Legislature, an amendment that was approved by voters in 2008 left local governments in the state reeling as they agonized in the midst of a recession over how to balance their budgets.

Among its provisions "the Portability of Save Our Homes" Amendment increased the homestead exemption by exempting assessed property value between \$50,000 and \$75,000, except on school taxes.

In 2014, according to state officials, the total effect statewide of the additional homestead exemption alone from that amendment in 2008 equates to more than an \$80 billion decrease in assessed property values.

Have lost count of all the city budget sessions I have sat through since 2008, especially in Largo, at which city officials heard passionate arguments from their constituents in discussions about cutting park hours, events, reducing staffing, freezing raises, mandating furloughs and revising priorities.

The amendment along with economic impacts such as plummeting property values



Tom Germond

"definitely did a number on the cities," forcing the local governments to reduce services, said Amber Hughes, a lobbyist for the Florida League of Cities.

"Since 2008, we probably had 12 or 15 property tax constitutional amendments that have gone before the voters. That's a lot, especially given when you overlap what happened with the housing market in Florida," she said.

From my experience, drastic tax cut measures leads to divisiveness in local governments, as leaders argue over how to rob Peter to pay Paul without infuriating voters.

Sure, city and counties can raise their tax rates to generate more revenue, but they shouldn't have to bear the burden of the Legislature's or the governor's kowtowing to special interests or tax-cut madness. Home rule is all but forgotten in Florida.

For decades, lawmakers and others have come up with a cart full of constitutional amendments, such as class-size reduction measures to tax caps, anti-smoking regulations, anti-abortion maneuvers, protection for pregnant pigs and the repeal of bans on public dollars for religious funding.

Eleven measures were on the 2012 ballot. All but two failed. Another 35 failed to make the ballot, with names such as "Trust in Government Amendment" and "The Personhood

Amendment."

Let's don't become Alabama. I wish we could be more like Vermont. The Green Mountain State's constitution has about 8,295 words - and actually addresses the framework of government instead of the whims of special interests that should be handled through the legislative process.

Alabama's constitution is so cumbersome that at least one history professor said a few years ago he wants to scrap it.

I would like to see a show of hands for the number of voters who have read a proposed state constitutional amendment on the ballot and have said to themselves, "Huh?" Despite the best efforts of the media and other entities to educate voters, the purpose of the amendments often is lost on them.

Whenever I see tax-cut amendments being proposed, I get so riled that I would like to propose a ballot measure myself: "Limit the Lunacy of Our Lawmakers Amendment."

It would get rid of about half of our legislators. How about a constitutional amendment that called for a unicameral Legislature? Fewer lawmakers, fewer bad ideas. Unfortunately, special interests, no doubt, would kill the amendment.

I long for the day when the Florida Legislature, the governor and special interests refrain from coming up with convoluted ballot measures that make a mockery of sound fiscal planning, local governments' home rule and the framework of the state's constitution.

Could it happen? Yeah, I know. And pregnant pigs could fly, too.

Tom Germond is executive editor of Tampa Bay Newspapers. Email tgermond@TBNweekly.com.

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Busiest part of this year's hurricane season still to come

By SUZETTE PORTER

Since hurricane season began in the Atlantic basin, four named tropical storms have formed and three have strengthened into hurricanes, but the busiest part of the season is just getting started.

Statistically, the majority of the activity in a typical season happens in the second half, according to a media release from Pinellas County Communications. Since the hurricane record began in 1855, nearly 55 percent of all tropical storms and hurricanes formed during the months of September and October.

"Strong and destructive storms such as 2012's Hurricane Sandy, 2005's Wilma and the 1921 Tampa Bay Hurricane all made landfall in October, serving as a reminder to stay prepared," county officials said.

For more information, visit the National Hurricane Center's climatology website www.nhc.noaa.gov/climo.

Pinellas County is producing its eSeries: Prepare to Survive, which are 15-minute programs offering an in-depth look into specific disaster preparedness topics, including insurance, preparing pets and building codes.

The September edition features a discussion with Emergency Management director Sally Bishop about the county's new Public Safety Building. The show is available on PCC-TV, on YouTube at www.youtube.com/PCCTV1 and at www.pinellascounty.org/eseries. Hurricane season continues through Nov. 30.

Season summary and outlook

Hurricane Arthur was the first to form in 2014 and traveled along the east coast of the United States over the July 4 holiday, strengthening into a Category 2 hurricane before it made landfall on the Outer Banks of North Carolina July 4 with wind gusts of more than 100 mph.

Next up was Hurricane Bertha, which started as a tropical depression Aug. 1. Bertha posed no threat to land, staying well off the U.S. coast before moving out over the open waters of the Atlantic. Hurricane Cristobal formed Aug. 28. Although it remained well off the U.S. coast, it did create heavy surf to beaches along the Atlantic coast just in time for the Labor Day weekend.

The last to form thus far this year was Tropical Storm Dolly, a short-lived system that developed on Labor Day, Sept. 1, and made landfall along the coast of Mexico Sept. 3.

NOAA's Climate Prediction Center updated its hurricane season Outlook Aug. 7. The new outlook, which included hurricanes Arthur and Bertha, predicts a 70 percent chance of the following ranges: seven to 12 named storms (top winds of 39 mph or higher); three to six hurricanes (top winds of 74 mph or higher), of which zero to two could become major hurricanes (Category 3, 4, 5; winds of at least 111 mph). These ranges are below the 30-year seasonal average of 12 named storms, six hurricanes and three major hurricanes. The initial outlook in May predicted eight to 13 named storms, three to six hurricanes and one to two major hurricanes.

For more information about how to prepare for hurricanes, visit www.pinellascounty.org/emergency to find evacuation levels, learn about storm dangers and discover how to create a personal disaster plan.

Additional information can be found in the hurricane guide at www.TBNweekly.com.

Volunteers needed for Cross Bayou cleanup

For 10 years, Pinellas County volunteers have hauled hundreds of pounds of waste from Cross Bayou and Joe's Creek. In the March 22 cleanup, more than 70 participants removed over 2,000 pounds of debris from the two waterways.

On Saturday, Sept. 20, volunteers and sponsors have an opportunity to participate in the cleanup of Cross Bayou and Joe's Creek waterways, which flow in the areas of Seminole, Pinellas Park, Lealman and St. Petersburg.

Businesses also contribute to the success of the cleanup effort by taking advantage of various sponsorships to lend their support and help get the word out to citizens.

The result of an ongoing part-

nership between Pinellas County Department of Environment and Infrastructure and Keep Pinellas Beautiful, the cleanup of Cross Bayou and Joe's Creek is a decade-long tradition of helping to keep Pinellas waterways beautiful and heightening public awareness of the importance of the environment in Pinellas County.

Volunteers are needed to clean up the land around the waterways and/or clean up the waterways. Those wanting to help on the water should bring their own watercraft, or borrow a canoe or kayak (provided on a first come, first served basis). Participants working on the water will be required to wear life jackets. Those borrowing a canoe or kayak will be provided life jackets.

The meeting point is the Pinellas County property at the intersection of 70th Avenue North and 78th Street North near the Wagon Wheel Flea Market on Park Boulevard in Pinellas Park.

Check-in begins at 8 a.m., with trash collection taking place from 8:30 to 11 a.m. After the refuse has been disposed of and the recyclables sorted, there will be lunch and a free raffle drawing.

Volunteers should wear comfortable clothing, closed-toe shoes, a hat and sunscreen, and bring a chair or towel to sit on. Trash grabbers, bags, gloves and drinking water will be provided. A water truck will also be available for volunteers to clean their watercrafts after the cleanup.

The registration deadline is Wednesday, Sept. 17. Registration is required. Visit www.pinellascounty.org/volserv/events.htm.

Sponsorship opportunities for local businesses are available and can include donated items for the volunteer appreciation raffle. Sponsors with exhibition spaces are allowed to set-up their space starting at 7:30 a.m. The deadline for submitting for sponsorship is also Sept. 17.

For more information or to become a sponsor, call 464-4605 or email arivera@pinellascounty.org. Checks for sponsorship should be made payable to the Pinellas County Board of County Commissioners.

Community projects receive national recognition

Two housing developments in Pinellas County have been recognized in celebration of the 40th anniversary of the Community Development Block Grant Program.

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development has selected Magnolia Court Apartments and Harborside Studios to be highlighted in their multimedia promotions.

Magnolia Court Apartments is located in East Lealman and provides affordable housing to area residents.

"It is very gratifying to receive this kind of recognition for the Magnolia Court Apartments," said John Carr, executive director of Contemporary Housing Alternatives of Florida. "We will continue to strive to maintain these high standards in future endeavors."

Harborside Studios, located in Safety Harbor, provides a safe environment for developmentally disabled individuals to pursue artistic talents.

"The essence of Harborside Studios provides the opportunity for



Magnolia Court Apartments in East Lealman

the community to see individuals with developmental issues as creative artists and negate any preconceived notions of persons with disabilities," said Sheldon Hershman, executive director of UPARC. "We are fortunate that our collaboration with Pinellas County government made it possible."

The Community Development Block Grant Program receives

funds under Title I of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974. These funds can be used to address critical community needs including housing repairs, housing counseling, down payment assistance for first-time homebuyers, neighborhood improvements, and more.

Additional information is available online at www.hud.gov.

Pinellas County Housing Authority wins state award

ORLANDO – For the second time in three years, the Pinellas County Housing Authority, or PCHA, was honored as Housing Authority of the Year by the Florida Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials at its annual conference in Orlando.

The award recognizes PCHA for providing outstanding affordable housing in Florida.

"We are overjoyed to have received this award and thankful to all of our partners who made it possible. It is truly an honor to be

recognized for something that we love to do," said Executive Director Debra Johnson.

The association's core mission is providing professional development for public, assisted and other affordable housing in the state of Florida by offering a network for increased communication and education, as well as supporting legislation for the improvement and development of affordable housing and economic opportunities. FAHRO membership includes more than 200

housing agencies, community development agencies, and associate members who work together to ensure that all of Florida's citizens have clean, safe, and sanitary housing.

"Pinellas County Housing Authority has become a model HA; all housing authorities can benefit from exposure to the programs and excellence demonstrated by them," stated Barbara Inman, CEO of Habitat for Humanity of Florida in her letter of recommendation.

The PCHA provides housing opportunities for nearly 8,500 county individuals by utilizing public and private funding. PCHA's focus is on providing affordable housing through the development, ownership, and management of properties and administration of rental subsidies.

"PCHA has a creative and committed board and staff that are always willing to work with community partners to create new opportunities for affordable housing to become a reality," said Pat Weber, Tarpon Springs Housing Authority executive director.

Joseph Triolo, PCHA board chairman said he was excited and proud to be a part of the organization.

"We are delighted and honored to receive this award. This recognition is the result of a focus on providing the best possible affordable housing," he stated.

The Pinellas County Housing Authority is based at 11479 Ulmerton Road in Largo. For more information, visit www.pinellashousing.com.

Manatees rescued

CLEARWATER – The Clearwater Marine Aquarium and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission recently successfully rescued a mother manatee and her dependent in Clearwater after a joint effort. Concerned citizens who saw a distressed manatee swimming in Allen Creek initially reported the incident to FWC.

A team of more than a dozen rescuers found that both of the adult's flippers were entangled in rope from a crab net, and the left fin was deeply embedded. Staff also rescued the dependent young calf, which did not have any visible injuries but seemed underweight. Both manatees were taken to Tampa's Lowry Park Zoo, where they are receiving treatment. Once recovered, both manatees will be released back into the wild.



Photo courtesy of FWC
A team of CMA and FWC staff recently helped rescue a baby manatee and its mother from Allen Creek in Clearwater. Activities were conducted under USFWS permit #MA770191.



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New special equipment means school needs fundraising help

By BRIAN GOFF

CLEARWATER – The entire student population of Paul B. Stephens School in Clearwater, all 220 students, are special needs students. All have some sort of physical or mental disability, which means they require special help to learn.

The majority of the students at the school are autistic, and teaching those children often requires special equipment, which though necessary is expensive. That's where Vera Sheremeta, an Occupational Therapist at the school, comes in. She has been out in the community telling all who will listen about why the equipment is needed.

"Most of our children are non-verbal or have limited communication skills," she said. "When they experience a frustration, they can be aggressive toward themselves or toward others, so we have to find ways to calm them down."

Explaining that every child is different, Sheremeta says that they have to find the calming method that relates to each particular child.

"Some are sensitive to noise, others are sensitive to touch, they don't like to be hugged, some don't like having shoes on, or a particular type of clothing. Then something will set them off and that's when they react," she said. Ileana Liss is a physical therapist at the school. She explains some of the methods that are used to calm the students.

"Rocking – we have swings that will help; some nice touching by a particular texture of a fabric," she said. "Above all, we have to give them a few minutes to cool down."

"I have to choose when to intervene," said Sheremeta. "Their anger might just be an overload of something that happened 10 minutes ago. Sometimes they just need a break; we have to figure out what the need is for that child."

To help find the need and to help address it is what the new equipment is all about. It is going to be installed in the new multi-sensory room. Helping autistic children is all about the senses – touch, taste, smell and so on.

"This stuff is expensive," said Sheremeta. "It includes a wireless controller, a wireless receiver, giant interactive lights and what amounts to a big fish tank with



Photo by BRIAN GOFF

This group of teachers and therapists are the ones who will be working in the new sensory room at Paul B. Stephens School in Clearwater. From left are Suzanne Gentry, Mary Jo Ferretti, Karen Brown, Vera Sheremeta, Pam Evans, Darlene Guckenberger, Kari McCullough, Eva Sawyer, Ileana Liss, and Cate Waller.

the lights changing color according to the student's requirement."

It is all about getting the student involved in his or her own learning by having a cause and effect system in place. Push this button and the light turns green, push that one and it turns red.

Many of the students at Paul B. Stephens School have been in the mainstream schools with all types of other students. In most cases, their needs were so big it was determined that they needed the extra help they get at Paul B. Stephens. There, they are able to learn in a friendlier environment.

"We can see our progress," Sheremeta said. "If they need more help in reading or writing, we zero in and help them. We have to find a way to teach them."

"A lot of them get frustrated with the curriculum at the other schools," she said. "Here, each student is tested with our ULS, Unique Learning System, which helps rate the kids and that helps us better meet their needs. We do science here for example. It might not look like the science class in another school, but our students are being exposed to it."

Liss says in her 20 years as a physical therapist at the school, she has seen much progress.

"It is a lot of fun in there," she said. "I think the kids are happy, especially when they can relate and communicate some affection. They are very affectionate kids, even though their progress might not be as quick. Being here is just like any school. We have PE, we have swimming, and we have a work force."

Sheremeta has been at the school for 29 years. She says

there is progress made in learning every day of the week.

"I get a lot of pleasure out of seeing the progress the students make," she said. "I'm interested in teaching them how to care for themselves; how to calm themselves down and I get excited when the students make progress. I don't look for the big leap, just the little progress; you just have to be patient."

Sheremeta got a "grant" for nearly \$4,700 from the Pinellas County School District; Liss got a "grant" for \$700. That money will be used to buy the new equipment. But it still has to be collected. In this case, "grant" doesn't mean the money is in hand. In the Pinellas School System, it means that Sheremeta and Liss have the green light to raise those amounts of money themselves.

According to the school's website, the project was successfully funded as of Aug. 23, in part through donorschoose.org.

OMS celebrates anniversary Sept. 12

By TIFFANY RAZZANO

SEMINOLE – On Sept. 5, Brenda Dannewitz, Osceola Middle School's longtime chorus teacher, and several other teachers sorted through items in the school's time capsule – old T-shirts with the OMS' original insignia, decades-old copies of the school newspaper Chief's Chatter, a locker organizer made by a woodworking student.

"We looked through things and laughed at things and talked about hairdos and music," Dannewitz said. "It was a lot of fun."

These items, many of which date back to 1984, will be on display in the library for the school's 30th anniversary Friday, Sept. 12. Students will have a chance to peruse the artifacts during the day. At night, parents, former staff members and the community will also be able to experience the nostalgia; the items will remain on display for that evening's fourth annual Taste of OMS, which runs from 6 to 8 p.m.

Part 30th anniversary celebration, part fundraiser for the National Junior Honor Society's February trip to Washington, D.C., the event will feature food from nearly 30 area restaurants, including the Clubhouse Restaurant, Seminole Family Restaurant and Guppy's on the Beach.

The school tries to observe all of the big anniversary dates, Dannewitz said – 10, 20, 25 years. During each celebration, staff pulls out the time capsule, which was originally buried in 1984 and dug up in 1994, and adds new mementos to it at each anniversary.

Dannewitz recalls the early, exciting years of OMS. She was one of the first teachers hired, and only four of the original staff members remain, many having retired in recent years, she said.

"It's been a great place to be, a fabulous place to be," she said. "It's been a great ride."

She was hired while the building was still under construction. She was interviewed by the founding principal, Dr. Robert Jackson, at Osceola High School next door in a supply closet he'd been provided to use



Photo courtesy of BRENDA DANNEWITZ

From left, Marcia West, Brenda Dannewitz, Gerald Popejoy and Brent Dunn are the four remaining original staff members at Osceola Middle School, which turns 30 this year. "The four of us have been here since the dawn of time," Dannewitz said. The school will celebrate its anniversary at the fourth annual Taste of OMS on Friday, Sept. 12.

as an office until OMS was built.

When OMS opened its doors in 1984, it had about 800 students, Dannewitz said, and pulled students from nearby schools.

"The population was huge then in the 80s," she said. "There was a big population. Seminole Middle (School) was pretty overcrowded. Pinellas Park Middle was overcrowded and so was Largo (Middle School)."

Today, the school has around 1,200 students.

Tickets to the Taste of OMS are \$5 for students and past or present OMS employees, and \$8 for adults if bought prior to the event. All tickets are \$10 at the door. Only 400 tickets are available.

In addition to food from area restaurants, the event will feature games, science and art displays, and live music. Several OMS teachers, the school's pep band, and local act Those Guys will perform.

There will also be a special presentation commemorating the school's 30 years at 7 p.m., as well as a reception for past and current staff members in the library.

Girls Inc. Father Daughter Ball set

PINELLAS PARK – The Girls Inc. of Pinellas Father Daughter Ball takes place Saturday, Sept. 13, 6 to 9 p.m., at the Kapok Pavilion Grand Ballroom, 923 McMullen Booth Road, Clearwater.

This event is an annual highlight for the Pinellas Park-based nonprofit. The girls get dressed up in their finest outfits and accompany their dads to a gala dinner and dance.

The Father Daughter Ball is open to all girls 5 to 17 and their dads or significant other adult male in their lives. Tickets are \$99 per couple and \$49 per additional girl. For more information, call 544-6230 or visit www.girlsinc-pinellas.org/event-824671 to purchase tickets.

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FOWI wins Duke Community Grant

ST. PETERSBURG – The Friends of Weedon Island Inc. received a Duke Community Grant for \$7,500 to support environmental education and cultural activities at the Weedon Island Preserve.

FOWI will use the funds to develop conservation and cultural programming for students enrolled in Pinellas County elementary schools receiving Title I financial assistance. Field trips to the Weedon Island Preserve Cultural and Natural History Center will include on-site environmental, conservation, cultural, and history educational programs that are consistent with the Florida State Common Core Curriculum Standards for first through fifth grade students.

"The Friends of Weedon Island is thrilled to receive this Community Grant," said Lindsay Cross, president of FOWI. "It will enable us to share the beauty and wonder of Weedon Island with Pinellas County students that otherwise would not have the opportunity to visit the preserve. We hope this will help instill a greater sense of community and environmental stewardship in these students."

Redfishing gets better as fall approaches

Redfish numbers are increasing after each big moon phase. More and more reds can be targeted on the shallow grass flats throughout the county.

Last week's full moon gave us two good tidal stages in which to target redfish.

Early morning low tides will help to condense redfish and many other predatory fish on the outer edge of the grass flats. Dipping terns along with schools of mullet will help to locate good water. Live chumming with pilchards will get any fish in the area looking for something to eat. Otherwise a top-water plug will draw strikes from just about anything lurking off the edge.

Mid-morning incoming tides will have the schools of redfish hanging near mangrove shoreline points as they await the flood stage of the tide that will allow them to push way back into the mangrove root system, where they can feed as well as cool off. Approach each point with ease and caution. Redfish will often give you some sort of sign. Usually, it will be a flash or a noticeable push of water. Work the schools with gold spoons and soft plastic jigs on an eighth ounce head.

Late summer offers us the opportunity to target fish that can often be larger than the angler pursuing them. Big sharks and tarpon are a big part of what Florida fishing is all about. Whether you're fishing day or night these bruisers can often be found roaming the same waters. Deep backwater holes along the Intracoastal Waterway as well as many spots inside of Tampa Bay are holding some nice tarpon and plenty of bull sharks. Large cut



Fish Tales
Capt. Tyson Wallerstein

baits such as mullet or mackerel fished on the bottom will attract both species.

Offshore the Spanish mackerel bite has been excellent around jetties and near shore artificial reefs. Live chumming with pilchards will help to get the fish into a feeding frenzy. Plenty of whitebait can be cast-netted along the beach swash channel. Be sure to use a quarter inch mesh cast net to help prevent against Christmas tree-ing your net. Also keeping a fresh chum block out will only help sustain the bite.

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



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Sandy Hartmann
Adamo Realty Executives

Largo

\$200,000

4 Bedrooms 2 Baths

SOLD



Remodeled, beautiful split and open floor plan. New paint inside and out with new paneled interior doors, light fixtures, and blinds. All new flooring/carpeting throughout, new wood cabinets and appliances in kitchen, and new vanities in bathrooms. Indoor laundry and screened in porch.

Caroleanne Vorac
Adamo & Associates

Belleair Bluffs

\$2,650,000

5 Bedrooms 5½ Baths

SOLD



Furnished and decorated, this property is completely turnkey. The downstairs of this all-inclusive home features: media room with bar and pool table, living room with 22-foot tray ceiling, formal dining room, 300-bottle wine cellar, family room with gas fireplace, kitchen with 6-burner Viking range, 3-car garage, and lanai with full-bath access.

Kerryn Ellson
Coastal Properties Group

Clearwater

\$395,000

2 Bedrooms 2 Baths

SOLD



Rare direct Gulf front! This corner unit boasts impressive views, including Caladesi and Honeymoon Island, and views over the Intracoastal. The open design offers water views from the office area, dining space, kitchen and bedroom. The balcony which provides another living area is protected with storm shutters.

Tom & Vivian Smith
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Pets of the week



Sugar
Meet Sugar, a 1.5-year-old kitty who is as sweet as her name. She is very affectionate and is quite the acrobat. She will suddenly jump on your shoulders as if that is her passenger seat for the day. Maybe she should get a pink helmet? She is spayed, vaccinated and microchipped. Visit her at Pet Pal Animal Shelter, 405 22nd St. S., St. Petersburg. Call 328-7738.



Benson
If you're looking for a big, cuddly boy, look no further. Benson is going to be big, and at 9 months old, he sports striking silver tabby markings and a personality that is all sweetness. He loves cats, dogs and children and would make a perfect companion to anyone. He loves belly rubs and playing. His siblings Brighton and Jersey are also available. He is fully vaccinated, tested for FeLV and FIV, neutered and microchipped. Contact All 'Bout Cats Inc. at 712-7773.



Snickers
Snickers is a lovable terrier mix who adores love. He is 4 years old and weighs 11 pounds. He's smart, playful, and inquisitive. He's a bundle of energy, so an active family would be best. He's recovering from heartworm and is in the Foster to Adopt program. Medical expenses will be paid for by his rescue until he is heartworm negative. Snickers loves toys, and his friends at Canine Estates say his housetraining is "a work in progress." He is up to date on vaccinations, is neutered and ready for his forever home. To meet him, call 412-0558.



Mary
Meet Mary, a shy little Welsh corgi/Pembroke mix. She is 5 years old and has had a rough time lately. She needs a loving home, which preferably would be with adults or a family with older children, due to her shyness. However, Mary still loves her walks and playtime. Are you the perfect family for this sweet girl? Meet her at the Pinellas County Humane Society, 3040 S.R. 590, Clearwater, or call 797-7722.



Joey
Meet Joey, a tuxedo kitten with gold eyes. At 4 months old, he has been raised in a foster home with his siblings. He loves to play and have fun. This cute guy loves attention and is very sociable. Two of his brothers, Jasper and Jason, are also looking for forever homes. Consider adopting a pair! They are fully vetted and microchipped and ready for an attentive family. Call Save Our Strays at 545-1116.



Miss Pretty
Miss Pretty is a friendly 3.5-year-old pit bull mix. This abandoned mommy is affectionate and loves walks and can't wait to walk through her new neighborhood with her forever family. Bring this article to Pinellas County Animal Services and adopt her for \$7. Throughout September on Saturdays, all dogs age 4 months or older are \$7, or \$25 for puppies younger than 4 months old. For the rest of the month, there will be other reduced price adoptions. Visit 12450 Ulmerton Road, Largo, or call 582-2600.



Darla
Meet Darla, a gorgeous 3-year-old medium haired cat. She can be shy but warms up quickly. Once she knows you, she will reward your petting with purrs. Meet Darla at Friends of Strays at 2911 47th St. N., St. Petersburg. Call 522-6566.



Penny
Penny is a beautiful 4-year-old tabby girl. She is so sweet, enjoys a good belly rub and will spend time on your lap getting acquainted. She lived with an elderly couple who moved into an assisted living facility and could not take Penny with them. She is OK with other cats but is afraid of dogs. Adopt her at the Suncoast Animal League in Palm Harbor. Call 786-1330.

Behavior tips for dealing with canine anxiety

Dog training comes in all shapes and sizes, with everyone having their own ideas and ways of getting their desired results. I have been fortunate enough to meet and learn from many different types of trainers with experience in an assortment of backgrounds. Having spent time working with all types of dogs in a variety of disciplines, including pet training, service work, search and rescue, detection, police protection, and competitive training, I know that you have to have an open mind and take every chance to learn from others. Even if you do not completely agree with that person's techniques, you can use their life experiences to grow. Every dog is different, therefore whether you are an owner, trainer, groomer, or veterinarian you must have an array of options available so you can find what works best for each individual pet and a trusting relationship can be built.

As a new trainer to the area, one of the most common problems local pet owners seek advice for is storm anxiety. As we all know, the storms here are frequent, quick, and involve a lot of sharp sounds and flashes. Whether your dog runs and hides, shakes, or clings to you, we all just wish that we



could make him or her calm down and relax. There are medications as well as other tools, like the thunder shirt, that help to minimize these symptoms. What we need to focus on, in order to really help our dogs feel better, is getting to the root of the problem. Training paired with the other tools listed above work best for reducing the fear as well as the symptomatic behaviors associated with it.

Unless you get lucky and have a stormy season through your puppy's imprinting window, which only lasts about seven weeks, most dogs do not get desensitized to the changes that come along with our Florida storms. Except for the barometric pressure changes that happen, we are able to work them through all other "scary" characteristics of a storm by using several different training techniques.

Even when it is not storming, we want to work on slowly decreasing their sensitivity to both the sound and light, while also teaching them not to panic when they are unsure about any new changes. This process must be done in a specific way, involving small, progressive steps, as to not accidentally increase their fear. There also are a lot of techniques we can do during the storms to avoid accidentally nurturing their fear. As humans, our first reaction when we see that our dogs are nervous is to try to reassure them by petting, holding, and talking to them. Unfortunately, our dogs cannot tell the difference between us showing them affection as praise and when we show them affection to try and comfort them. What they see and think when we try to reassure them that everything is OK is us petting and praising them for being scared and nervous. As you could imagine, this accidental encouragement of their fear just adds to their confusion and makes their insecurity increase even more. Instead, it is better to keep them as busy as possible with other activities like training, walking, or games to keep their minds and bodies occupied. Refraining from any holding

or petting when they are nervous helps to discourage that feeling of fear and helps them work through their symptoms faster. Using these few examples as well as other training techniques, you can drastically reduce their anxiety and help them to feel at ease.

Whatever role we play in a dog's life, our first concern should be their happiness. We want a dog that is both physically and mentally happy and healthy. By learning more about how our dogs interpret what we do, as well as the ways they think and communicate their emotions, we will be able to better provide all that they need to live happy healthy lives with us.

For more helpful behavior or training advice regarding this topic or others, please contact Jordan at Oakhurst Veterinary Hospital. Also, be sure to ask about our limited time offer of a FREE behavior consultation, where you can come in for a one on one meeting to ask any questions and discuss your personal goals that you would like to reach with your dog.

Jordan Hayes is a behavior consultant and trainer at Oakhurst Veterinary Hospital in Seminole, Fla. Call 391-9784.

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Lending a paw



Little Bear the Pomeranian service dog is September's Pet of the Month photo contest winner. He lives with his human mom, Maryellen Nealy, Pomeranian sister Sherry, American Eskimo cousin Angel, two cats, and a whole host of guinea pigs in Clearwater. After reading an article about someone who trained their dog to alert them to their asthma attacks, Nealy thought her smart, loving little guy could be trained, too, and he now stands up and barks when his mama has an attack. Little Bear now also monitors her breathing at night, and if she is wheezing, he dive bombs her with his front paws, licks her, whines and then barks if the previous attempts to wake her were unsuccessful. Mom and pup also volunteer at a church and the Clearwater Marine Aquarium, and people from all over the world have had their picture taken with him. Little Bear loves everyone, and he is the most loving and smartest rescue dog Nealy has ever met. Little Bear has won a \$25 gift certificate to Largo Feed and Garden Supply, either in Largo or Pinellas Park. Send your pet photos to Alexandra Lundahl at alundahl@TBNweekly.com.

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Diversions

Events • Movies • Classifieds

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Top five diversions

• **"Black Comedy,"** by Peter Shaffer, Sept. 12-28, at St. Petersburg City Theatre, 4025 31st St. S., St. Petersburg. Tickets are \$22 for adults and \$10 for students. Performances are Fridays and Saturdays, 8 p.m.; and Sundays, 2 p.m. Call 866-1973 or visit www.spacitytheatre.org.

• **"Doubt, A Parable,"** by John Patrick Shanley, through Sept. 14, at Tarpon Springs Cultural Center, 101 S. Pinellas Ave., Tarpon Springs. Tickets are \$16 for adults and \$14 for members and students. Opening night seats are \$10. Performances will be Thursdays through Saturdays, 8 p.m.; and Sundays, 2 p.m. Call 942-5605 or visit www.tarponarts.org. The play is directed by Nick Abounader. In this brilliant and powerful drama, Sister Aloysius, a Bronx school principal, takes matters into her own hands when she suspects the young Father Flynn of improper relations with one of the male students. Recently seen on film with Philip Seymour Hoffman and Meryl Streep, this play is a must see. Cast includes Father Flynn, played by Michael Shurtz, Sister Aloysius (Jeannine Hinkel), Sister James (Michelle Procida), and Mrs. Muller (D. Cole).

• **Music in the Park,** Friday, Sept. 12, 7 to 9 p.m., at Seminole City Park, 7464 Ridge Road, Seminole. Admission is free. For information, visit www.myseminole.com. Performing will be Charlie Souza and the New Tropics.

• **Classic Albums Live performs "Purple Rain" by Prince;** Sunday, Sept. 14, 7:30 p.m., at the Capitol Theatre, 405 Cleveland St., Clearwater. Tickets start at \$35. Call 791-7400 or visit www.atthecap.com. Released in 1984, "Purple Rain" made Prince a superstar. "Purple Rain" is regularly ranked among the best albums in music history. Anything but a cover band, like a symphony orchestra performing the works of Mozart, Classic Albums Live forgoes the gimmickry of costumes and impersonations, putting the music first. These world-class musicians tackle iconic music, concentrating solely on re-creating it as you remember it from the original recording. The attention to detail is staggering - every sound from the album is re-created live on stage by world-class musicians assembled for each album presentation.

See TOP FIVE, page 8B



Photo by WILSON WEBB/ALCON ENTERTAINMENT

From left, Cozi Zuehlsdorff stars as Hazel Haskett, Harry Connick Jr. as Dr. Clay Haskett and Morgan Freeman as Dr. Cameron McCarthy in Alcon Entertainment's family adventure "Dolphin Tale 2," a Warner Bros. Pictures release.

Opening this weekend

'Dolphin Tale' sequel hits the big screen; Hardy, Rapace star in 'The Drop'

Compiled by LEE CLARK ZUMPE

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

'Dolphin Tale 2'

Genre: Adventure and family
Cast: Harry Connick Jr., Morgan Freeman, Kris Kristofferson, Ashley Judd, Nathan Gamble, Cozi Zuehlsdorff and Bethany Hamilton
Director: Charles Martin Smith
Rated: PG

Warner Bros. Pictures and Alcon Entertainment's "Dolphin Tale 2" continues the story of the brave dolphin Winter, whose miraculous rescue and rehabilitation - thanks to the invention of a groundbreaking prosthetic tail - made her a symbol of perseverance to people around the world and inspired the 2011 family hit movie "Dolphin Tale."

Several years have passed since young Sawyer Nelson (Gamble) and the dedicated team at the Clearwater Marine Aquarium (CMA), headed by Dr. Clay Haskett (Connick Jr.), rescued Winter, a young dolphin who lost her tail after being entangled in a crab trap. With the help of Dr. Cameron McCarthy (Freeman), who developed a unique prosthetic tail for Winter, they saved her life against all odds. In turn, she helped save the aquarium - as people came from far and wide to see the courageous dolphin firsthand, enabling CMA to greatly expand their mission to "rescue, rehabilitate and, when possible, release" injured animals.

Yet their fight is not over. Winter's surrogate mother, the elderly dolphin Panama, passes away, leaving Winter alone and grieving, unwilling to engage with anyone, even her best friend, Sawyer. However, the loss of Panama may have even greater repercussions for CMA. The USDA warns Clay they will have to move Winter from the aquarium because regulations require these social creatures to be paired. If they don't find a female companion for her - one that she accepts - CMA will lose their beloved Winter.

But as time runs out, there may still be Hope ...



Photo courtesy of FOX SEARCHLIGHT

Tom Hardy stars as Bob and Noomi Rapace as Nadia in "The Drop."

'The Drop'

Genre: Drama
Cast: Tom Hardy, Noomi Rapace, James Gandolfini, Matthias Schoenaerts, John Ortiz, Ann Dowd and James Frecheville
Director: Michael R. Roskam
Rated: R

"The Drop" is a new crime drama from Michael R. Roskam, the Academy Award nominated director of "Bullhead."

Based on a screenplay from Dennis Lehane, "The Drop" follows lonely bartender Bob Saginowski (Tom Hardy) through a covert scheme of

See OPENING, page 4B

Feel the heat at annual spicy food festival

LARGO - The 14th annual I Like It HOT! Festival, Florida's largest spicy food festival, will be held Saturday, Sept. 13, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday, Sept. 14, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Minnreg Hall, 6340 126th Ave. N., Largo.



The event will feature hot and fiery foods to sample and purchase as well as hundreds of pepper plants. Admission is \$5. Children 12 and younger are free. Parking is free.

The event will include several competitions throughout the weekend. The **Pepper-Eating Contest** will be Saturday, Sept. 13, 2 p.m. Participants should sign up before 1:30 p.m.

The **Amateur Hot Sauce Competition** will be Saturday, Sept. 13, 3 p.m. Participants should bring at least 16 ounces of their sauce and sign up before noon. The **Amateur Salsa Competition** will be held Sunday, Sept. 14, 3 p.m. Participants should bring 32 ounces of their best salsa and sign up before noon for the contest.

Participants in the **Hula Hoop Competition** should sign up by 1:30 p.m. on Sunday, Sept. 14. The competition will start at 1 p.m. The **Lolly Lick-A-Thon** will be the same day at 2 p.m. with signups before 1:30 p.m.

Festival attendees are invited to vote for their favorite vendors in the **Hot & Spicy Vendor Competition** on both days of the event. Votes must be in by 2 p.m. Winners will be announced at 3 p.m. Call 423-8433 or visit www.ilikeithotfestival.com.

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Looking ahead

Largo

• **Duncan Sheik.** Saturday, Sept. 20, 8 p.m., at Largo Cultural Center, 105 Central Park Drive, Largo. Tickets start at \$19.50. Call 587-6793 or visit largoarts.com. This Grammy and Tony winning artist is most noted for his 1996 debut "Barely Breathing," which topped the Adult Top 40 charts, reached the Top 20 on Adult Contemporary radio and remained on the Billboard Hot 100 for a record-setting 55 straight weeks. Sheik's Grammy and Tony awards came in 2007 and 2008 for Best Orchestration, Best Original Score and Best Musical Show Album with "Spring Awakening." His latest theater project is "American Psycho," directed by Rupert Goold, which debuted to a sold out run in 2013.

• **Zebra.** Sept. 25, 7:30 p.m., at Largo Cultural Center, 105 Central Park Drive, Largo. Tickets start at \$24.50. Call 587-6793 or visit largoarts.com. In 1982 Zebra's self-titled debut album went platinum and was the fastest selling debut album in Atlantic Records' history outselling other Atlantic artists such as Led Zeppelin, Yes and AC/DC. A total of five music videos aired on MTV and gave the band combined album sales of nearly 2 million worldwide with "Who's Behind the Door?", "Tell Me What You Want," "Wait Until the Summer's Gone," "Bears" and "One More Chance." Zebra has been inducted into the Louisiana Music Hall of Fame and is acknowledged as Louisiana's No. 1 Rock and Roll band by the Louisiana Music Commission. The band also was inducted into the Long Island Music Hall of Fame on October of 2012. The concert will feature all three original members for a one-night-only performance in Largo.

• **Train weekend.** Saturday and Sunday, Oct. 4-5, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., at Largo Central Park, 101 Central Park Drive, Largo. There is no cost to participate, but donations are accepted. For information, call 587-6740, ext. 5014.

• **Peace of Woodstock.** Saturday, Oct. 4, 8 p.m., at Largo Cultural Center, 105 Central Park Drive, Largo. Tickets start at \$24.50. Call 587-6793 or visit largoarts.com.

• **The 10 O'clock Band.** Sunday, Oct. 5, 2 p.m., at Largo Cultural Center, 105 Central Park Drive. Tickets are \$24.50. Call 587-6793.

• **"Hamlet,"** by Shakespeare. Oct. 10 through Nov. 2, at New Stage Theatre and Conservatory, 11650 131st St. N., Largo. Performances will be Thursdays, 7 p.m.; Fridays and Saturdays, 8 p.m.; and Sundays, 3 p.m. Tickets are \$30. Call 813-817-2585 or visit newstagelargo.org. Starring Chris Jackson as Hamlet, New Stage Theatre and Conservatory's production of one of theater's most iconic works – "Hamlet" – will be presented through an adaptation inspired from Laurence Olivier's famous film, and will feature seven transformational actors.

• **Island Blast: An Evening of Good Vibes.** Saturday, Oct. 11, 7:30 p.m., at Largo Cultural Center, 105 Central Park Drive, Largo. Tickets start at \$5. Call 587-6793 or visit largoarts.com.

• **Simon and Garfunkel Retrospective.** Sunday, Oct. 12, 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.

Clearwater

• **"Greater Tuna,"** by Joe Sears, Jaston Williams, and Ed Howard; through Oct. 19, at the Early Bird Dinner Theatre, 13355 49th St. N., Clearwater. Matinees are Thursday and Saturday, 11 a.m. Evening performances are Saturday and Sunday, 4 p.m. Cost is \$32 for dinner and the show. Call 446-5898 or visit www.earlybirddinnertheatre.com. In this wonderful and hilarious satire of life in small town Texas, the people who live in this all-to-nosy community are certainly unforgettable.

• **The '70s Movie Series.** Friday, Sept. 19, 7 p.m., at the Capitol Theatre, 405 Cleveland St., Clearwater. Tickets are \$7. Call 791-7400 or visit www.atthecap.com. The double feature will include "Grease" and "American Graffiti."

• **Jenny McCarthy.** Saturday, Sept. 20, 8 p.m., at the Capitol Theatre, 405 Cleveland St., Clearwater. Tickets start at \$62.75. Call 791-7400 or visit www.atthecap.com. With the help of a hilarious, all-female

slate of stand-up comedians including Tammy Pescatelli, Jenny McCarthy takes an outrageous look at life as a contemporary woman: from single motherhood to casual sex. McCarthy's honesty, humility and humor have enabled her to transcend the boundaries of her roles as comedian, actress, host and New York Times bestselling author. Her unique ability to articulate the unspoken words of thousands of mothers and fathers across the world was recognized immediately. This show contains adult content and is suitable for mature audiences only.

• **"Overboard,"** Friday, Sept. 26, 7:30 p.m., at the Capitol Theatre, 405 Cleveland St., Clearwater. Tickets are \$1. Call 791-7400 or visit www.atthecap.com.

• **The '70s Movie Series.** Saturday, Sept. 27, 7 p.m., at the Capitol Theatre, 405 Cleveland St., Clearwater. Tickets are \$7. Call 791-7400 or visit www.atthecap.com. The double feature will include "Rocky" and "Rocky 2."

• **David Gray.** Monday, Sept. 29, 8 p.m., at Ruth Eckerd Hall, 1111 McMullen Booth Road, Clearwater. Tickets start at \$43.25. Call 791-7400 or visit www.rutheckerdhall.com. Gray has established himself as one of the U.K.'s leading music artists both at home and overseas. Gray's commercial success is also backed up by a critical consensus and countless accolades. His 2009 release "Draw The Line" was met with critical praise and garnered the artist a series of high profile television appearances as well as two sold-out tours of the U.S. "Foundling," Gray's ninth studio album picked up where "Draw The Line" left off and created a new chapter of lush soulful songs that found the artist returning to his folk music roots.

• **Nicki Bluhm and The Gramblers.** Tuesday, Sept. 30, 8 p.m., at Capitol Theatre, 405 Cleveland St., Clearwater. Tickets start at \$22. Call 791-7400 or visit www.atthecap.com. Nicki Bluhm and the Gramblers made a needle's-eye leap onto the national music circuit in 2012, bringing with them a refreshing sound, spirited stage show and well-spring of good vibes, along with a turntable and milk crates stocked with their favorite vintage vinyl for backstage sustenance. The "Van Sessions" videos, where the band performs cover songs in a tour van while driving between gigs, went from a mostly unknown oddity shared among fans to a surprise viral hit in March 2012 with their cover of the Hall & Oates song "I Can't Go For That (No Can Do)." Now, the San Francisco-based band and its striking front woman with a girl-next-door demeanor step out with Nicki Bluhm and the Gramblers, a luminous, heartfelt patchwork of California folk-rock, brisk Americana and show-stopping soul, punctuated with fresh four-part harmonies, crisp rock guitar and Bluhm's soaring nuanced vocals that some critics say remind them of Linda Ronstadt. Their latest album, released on Little Sur, includes the single "Little Too Late," a fun and funky punch of soulful rock with an anthemic quality to the lyrics that quickly made the song a fan favorite at live shows in the month's prior to the album's release. Also released in advance of the album, "Ravenous" marks a departure for the band as Bluhm flirts with her dark side, urged on by haunting echoes of classic Fleetwood Mac. Other tracks on the album include "Till I'm Blue," "Deep Water" and "Check Your Head," a collaboration with family friend Steve Poltz. Daryl Hance will open the show.

Gulfport

• **USA Dance.** Monday, Sept. 29, 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

• The second annual **Mad Beach Bike Fest.** Sunday, Sept. 14, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., along Madeira Way. Presented by Monthly Madness on Mad Beach and Full Throttle Magazine, the event will showcase motorcycle enthusiasts who will be showing off their classic, antique, new and customized motorcycles from all eras. Food vendors and others offering bike-related gear will be on hand. Proceeds will benefit the city's 9/11 Memorial Fund. Activities throughout the day will include a Bikini Bike Wash from noon to 2 p.m.; a Bikini Contest at 1 p.m., as well as a 50/50 drawing and live auction.

Pinellas Park

• **Laurel and Hardy Film Festival.** Saturday, Sept. 13, 2 to 4 p.m., at Barbara S. Ponce Public Library, 7770 52nd St., Pinellas Park. Admission is free. For information, call 541-0719.

• **Bobby Tess and the Dixie Chaps.** Thursday, Sept. 18, 7 to 9:30 p.m., at Banquet Masters, 8100 Park Blvd., Pinellas Park. Sponsored by the Suncoast Dixieland Jazz Society, admission is \$10 for adults. Members of the military and students will be admitted for free. Call 522-6877.

St. Petersburg

• **"One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest,"** by Dale Wasserman, adapted from the novel by Ken Kesey; through Sept. 14, at FreeFall Theatre, 6099 Central Ave., St. Petersburg. Performances are Thursday, 7 p.m.; and Friday and Saturday, 8 p.m. Matinees are Saturday and Sunday, 2 p.m. Call 498-5205 or visit www.freefalltheatre.com.

• **St. Pete Oktoberfest.** Saturday, Sept. 20, 1 to 10 p.m., at the 2800 block of Central Avenue, St. Petersburg. The St. Pete Oktoberfest returns to the Grand Central District as an all-day, family-friendly event. The event will serve as a fundraiser for the Grand Central District Association, a 501c3 non-profit organization. St. Pete Oktoberfest will include a lineup of entertainment featuring local favorites Have Gun, Will Travel, authentic German food, arts and crafts vendors, a kids' area, a series of Oktoberfest-themed games and beer. There is no admission to attend and free parking is available throughout the Grand Central District and surrounding area.

• **Helios Jazz Orchestra with Whitney James.** Tuesday, Sept. 30, 7:30 p.m., at The Palladium, 253 Fifth Ave. N., St. Petersburg. Admission is \$15. Visit www.mypalladium.org or call 822-3590. Singer Whitney James joins the Helios Jazz Orchestra in a special jazz big band concert at the Palladium Side Door venue. James' 2010 debut CD "The Nature of Love" spent 16 weeks on the national jazz charts and received critical acclaim from U.S. and international jazz press. In 2012, she was chosen as one of the top twelve rising stars in the world of jazz and was featured on Marian McCParland's "Piano Jazz Rising Stars" on NPR. The 18-piece Helios Jazz Orchestra, directed by David Manson, has been featured on the Clearwater Jazz Holiday, Ybor Jazz Festival and St. Petersburg Jazz Festival.

Seminole

• **Music in the Park.** Friday, Sept. 19, 7 to 9 p.m., at Seminole City Park, 7464 Ridge Road, Seminole. Admission is free. For information, visit www.myseminole.com. Performing will be Charlie Morris Band.

Tampa

• **Jay Mohr.** Saturday, Sept. 20, 7:30 p.m., at the David A. Straz Jr. Center for the Performing Arts, 1010 N. W.C. MacInnes Place, Tampa. Tickets start at \$36.50. Call 813-229-7827 or 800-955-1045, or visit www.strazcenter.org. Mischievous marvel Jay Mohr's breakout role as a sleazy sports agent in "Jerry Maguire" introduced the world to this multi-talented funnyman who now splits time between acting and running his popular sports talk show. In this engagement, Mohr returns to his roots bringing his A game in an evening of stand up sure to prove why Comedy Central named Mohr one of the 100 greatest stand up comics of all time.

Crossword

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		11	12	13	14	
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Across

- Subsistence salary (2 wds)
- "God's Little ___"
- Against U.S. interests
- Julie __, "Big Brother" host
- Rascality
- Abound
- Elephant's weight, maybe
- Choppers, so to speak
- Jungle climber
- Regrets
- Kind of approval from federal agency (acronym)
- Appoints summarily
- Gauge
- Transistor radios, shortened
- Strong sexual desire, var. spelling
- Existence
- "... ___ he drove out of sight"
- A fisherman may spin one
- "Buona ___" (Italian greeting)
- Fraternity letters
- Bait
- Gastric woe
- Enumeration follower (2 wds)
- Crackers
- Person serving time
- "Casablanca" pianist
- Cutlass, e.g.
- Contemptuous look
- Trounces
- Away
- ___-friendly
- British breed of large draft animal (2 wds)
- Double-decker checker
- Device regulating indoor air moisture
- "... or ___!"
- Earthquakes' origins

Down

- Occurring every five years
- Utilizing a group's own staff or resources (hyphenated)
- Most conceited
- International Monetary Fund (acronym)
- Remaining after all deductions (var. spelling)
- Deep mental anguish (pl.)
- Entertained, in a way
- Film material
- Cut
- "Star Trek" rank: Abbr.
- Director's cry
- Inexpensive item
- Come in again
- All together
- Lengthy period of time (2 wds)
- The Amish, e.g.
- Punish, in a way
- Destroy
- Acclivity
- Den denizen
- Bad look
- "Not to mention ..."
- Button-like, carved figure on kimono sash
- Part of a place setting
- Mesh window insertions
- Very thinly sliced raw fish
- Energy value of food
- Consumer (2 wds)
- Those who repose for a while
- Arise
- Hold back
- Containing trivalent gold
- Trounce
- Climb
- "___ Cried" (1962 Jay and the Americans hit)
- "How ___ Has the Banshee Cried" (Thomas Moore poem)

Sudoku

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

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

Sudoku

answers from last week

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

Crossword

answers from last week

C	A	T	E	G	A	T	S	M	O	T	H	S					
A	L	O	E	V	B	R	A	T	E	C	H	I	E				
B	A	T	T	E	N	E	D	A	L	T	E	R	N				
R	E	A	D	L	E	A	S	E	D								
T	E	S	T	A	T	E	L	E	V	E	R	S					
C	A	C	T	U	S		S	A	I	Y	S	O					
T	A	B	L	E	R		K	E	T	C	H		P	U	P		
P	L	A	T	E	A	U		H	O	R	M	O	N	E			
S	E	T		T	U	R	G	E		T	E	O	S	I	N		
T	R	E	S	T		A	C	T	O	R		A	D	R	I	F	T
T	R	I	S	T		C	H	O		A	P	L	E	N	T		
T	R	I	C	E	C	A	P			T	R	A	C	E			
T	A	T	E	R	S		P	R	O	M	I	S	E	E			
C	L	I	N	G		L	I	T	E	R	A	R					
H	A	S	T	E		T	E	S	T	R	A	N	G	E			

Horoscopes

September 11, 2014

Capricorn

December 22 - January 19
Agitation increases with shorter deadlines. Take in a fun activity after work to blow off some steam, Capricorn. A dinner date brings about positive results.

Aquarius

January 20 - February 18
Someone's wish is your command, Aquarius. Pull out all the stops to see the project through. A last-minute shopping trip uncovers a real bargain.

Pisces

February 19 - March 20
Conservation is key to keeping your budget intact. Look for ways to reduce, reuse and recycle, Pisces. A cherished memento would make a great gift for someone.

Aries

March 21 - April 19
Cooler temperatures inspire a big fall cleanup. Grab your family to help, Aries. A secret is revealed and causes quite a stir. Relax. It will blow over soon.

Taurus

April 20 - May 20
Cunning you are not, but cunning you must be to figure out a solution to a problem that has been brewing for some time. A mentor has some advice. Listen, Taurus.

Gemini

May 21 - June 21
Fall activities breathe new life into old routines. Enjoy, Gemini. Clutter reigns king at home, but not for long. A cause could use your surplus.

Cancer

June 22 - July 22
Dreams of old are revived. Go, Cancer, go! A financial endeavor proves challenging but not impossible. A professional offers a hand.

Leo

July 23 - August 22
Trust does not come easily, Leo. Keep that in mind when considering breaking the trust of a loved one. A phone call settles a nagging issue.

Virgo

August 23 - September 22
Greed takes over a family event, and wants get mixed up with needs. Take a moment to assess the situation before you play peacemaker, Virgo.

Libra

September 23 - October 22
Impulse buys wreak havoc on the budget. Returns will help, but they won't fix the problem, Libra. A meeting brings about a change in protocol.

Scorpio

October 23 - November 21
Adventures await, Scorpio. Don't say no. A tasty treat inspires experimentation in the kitchen. A youngster has an important question.

Sagittarius

November 22 - December 21
Stick to it, Sagittarius. Whatever is asked of you this week, give it your all, and you will come out smiling. A gift is an unexpected surprise.

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Experience Hendrix

All-star ensemble of extraordinary guitarists to pay homage to Jimi Hendrix

RCLEARWATER – Are you experienced?

That's the question asked by a 25-year-old electric guitar pioneer on the title track of his 1967 album "Are You Experienced." Widely recognized as one of the most creative and influential musicians of the 20th century, Jimi Hendrix died only a few short years later.

The Experience Hendrix Tour will pay tribute to Hendrix's memory and his innovative musical style when it visits the Tampa Bay area Saturday, Sept. 20, 8 p.m., at Ruth Eckerd Hall, 1111 McMullen Booth Road, Clearwater.

Tickets start at \$49.50. Call 791-7400 or visit www.rutheckerdhall.com. The concert will feature Buddy Guy, Jonny Lang, Zakk Wylde and Kenny Wayne Shepherd among other gifted guitarists.

Jimi Hendrix

Jimi Hendrix was born Johnny Allen Hendrix in 1942. His interest in music developed early. His influences included many of the major recording artists of the era, including B.B. King, Muddy Waters, Howlin' Wolf, Buddy Holly, and Robert Johnson.

In 1961, Hendrix enlisted in the U.S. Army and became a paratrooper. He was discharged, however, due to an injury he received during a parachute jump. At this point, he began working as a session guitarist.

According to the biography on the official Jimi Hendrix website, by the end of 1965, he had played with several marquee acts, including Ike and Tina Turner, Sam Cooke, the Isley Brothers, and Little Richard. He formed his first band Jimmy James and the Blue Flames in 1966 when he relocated to New York City's Greenwich Village. It was here Hendrix met Animals' bassist Chas Chandler. Chandler was impressed with his performance and signed Hendrix to an agreement that would have him move to London to form a new band: The Jimi Hendrix Experience.

"Hey Joe," the band's first single, spent 10 weeks on the UK charts, topping out at spot No. 6 in early 1967. The debut single was quickly followed by the release of a full-length album "Are You Experienced," a psychedelic musical compilation featuring anthems of a generation. "Are You Experienced" has remained one of the most popular rock albums of all time, featuring tracks like "Purple Haze," "The Wind Cries Mary," "Foxey Lady," "Fire," and "Are You Experienced?"

The Jimi Hendrix Experience followed up the success of the debut album with "Axis: Bold as



Photo by PIPER FERGUSON/CONCORD MUSIC GROUP
Above, Jonny Lang joins the lineup of the Experience Hendrix Tour when it visits Ruth Eckerd Hall Sept. 20. At right, Kenny Wayne Shepherd is one of the gifted guitarists scheduled to perform.

Love" in 1967. The band's final album, released in 1968, was "Electric Ladyland."

After The Jimi Hendrix Experience disbanded, Hendrix released a live album – "Band of Gypsys" – in 1970. The songs were recorded in January of that year at Fillmore East in New York City with Billy Cox on bass and Buddy Miles on drums. Tragically, Hendrix died about six months after the album was released.

Several studio albums – including "The Cry of Love" (1971), "Rainbow Bridge" (1972), "War Heroes" (1972) and "Loose Ends" (1974) – were released posthumously.

The Experience Hendrix Tour

In the wake of a wildly successful 25-date national excursion this past March and April, the Experience Hendrix Tour has launched another trek across the United States. The Experience Hendrix Tour has been paying homage to the musical genius of Jimi Hendrix for more than a decade, bringing together a diverse, all-star aggregation of extraordinary guitarists including multiple Grammy-winning Kennedy Center honoree Buddy Guy, Jonny Lang and Kenny Wayne Shepherd. All of the aforementioned are returning for the forthcoming edition of the Experience Hendrix Tour as are Black Crowes guitarist Rich Robinson, Zakk Wylde, Eric Johnson, Doyle Bramhall II, Eric Gales, and Stevie Ray Vaughan & Double Trouble's Chris Layton. As always, the legendary Billy Cox, bassist for both the Jimi Hendrix Experience and Band of Gypsys, who has anchored each Experience Hendrix Tour since its inception in 2000,

is on board.

"Obviously, I'm a fan of everybody that's on [the Experience Hendrix Tour] because they can all throw down like it's nobody's business," said Zakk Wylde in a press release promoting the show. Wylde's work with Ozzy Osbourne earned him a legion of devoted fans worldwide.

Wylde, a lifelong admirer of Hendrix, was new to the Experience Hendrix Tour this past spring and immediately immersed himself in its famed collaborative spirit, lending piano to Eric Johnson's rendition of "Are You Experienced?" while shredding Hendrix's "Purple Haze" and "I Don't Live Today" to the delight of sold out houses across the country.

The tour evokes the era when artists treated each performance as a unique interaction with their audience. Hendrix called this his "electric church." The Experience Hendrix Tour fully embraces this approach, presenting multiple opportunities for performers and audiences to witness unique collaborations among the participating artists, and will highlight these artists performing their favorite Hendrix signature songs including "Little Wing," "Fire," "Purple Haze" and "Voodoo Child (Slight Return)."

"I wanted to honor his memory playing his songs for this tour," said Grammy Award-winning singer/guitarist Jonny Lang about his relationship to the legacy of Hendrix. "The thing we can all do is just be ourselves and let the natural interpretation of his songs take over."

As in years past, Fender Guitars and Dunlop Manufacturing, whose gear is an integral part of the tour's backline, sponsor the



Photo by MARK SELIGER/CONCORD MUSIC GROUP

Experience Hendrix Tour together with Axe Heaven, IK Multimedia and Hal Leonard.

Billy Cox's relationship with Hendrix dates back to the early 1960s when the two met while serving in the U.S. Army's 101st Airborne Division. The two bonded over their love of music and would later work together backing R&B acts on the "chitlin' circuit." They reunited when Cox was recruited to be part of Hendrix's Band of Gypsys as well as the ultimate iteration of the Jimi

Hendrix Experience, performing at such landmark festivals as Woodstock and the Isle of Wight.

"It's as much of a thrill for me to play Jimi's music for audiences now as it was in the early 1960s," said Cox. "The Experience Hendrix Tour shows you how timeless this music really is."

"My brother was a musical visionary whose impact transcends his lifespan," said Janie Hendrix, president and CEO of Experience Hendrix LLC. "He often spoke of the concept of 'Electric Church,'

using music to connect directly with people. The Experience Hendrix Tour, now in its ninth incarnation, is testimony to the fact that Jim continues to connect musicians and audiences, crossing generational and cultural boundaries."

She said that it was a continuing mission to do everything possible to celebrate what Jimi Hendrix has given to the world and to keep his music in the forefront.

"The wonderful musicians on this tour express their love for him in ways that are a direct reflection of the gift he's given us," she said.

Poetry and Prose

There's Always Hope

I wandered o'er the mountainside
Where rocks lay all around,
Within a tiny crevice there
A little tree I found.
"You may as well give up" said I
"Your chances here are few;
Against such odds you try in vain
Life was not fair to you."

The years rolled by & once again
I wandered through that land;
And in that crevice, I beheld
A tree both tall and grand.
And as I closer drew, I saw
The rocks were pushed aside.
The crevice, once so very small,
Was many inches wide.
"Should've known," I whispered
"That God, who made the seed,
Would put within its tiny form
The strength for every need."

Should we then doubt His care,
Who cares so for a tree?
Won't He give us daily strength
To be what we should be?

Poems of Dawn

"Trust in the LORD with all thine heart...lean not unto thine own understanding." Proverbs 3:5

Contributor:

"Joy Cometh in the Morning"

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The desert is more than shifting, whispering sands

By THOMAS MICHALSKI

Everyone knows that Las Vegas and Reno are in Nevada.

Most visitors to the Silver State rarely travel beyond the casinos, the entertainment bastions and the state's legal houses of ill repute where licensed prostitutes are schooled in the erotic traditions of making both males and females smile from ear to ear.

I recently spent nearly a month in Nevada and never once lost a dime to a slot machine or blackjack table. Gambling is for fools who dream about winning big and rarely ever do. The chips are always stacked against the poor disillusioned souls who sometimes lose their life savings to the one-armed bandits or felt-covered green tables. The house always wins.

During one visit to the gold mining town of Dalton, about 20 miles from Carson City, I traveled about digging for dinosaur fossils, taking multitudes of photographs and keeping a wary eye out for rattlesnakes, Gila monsters and tarantulas.

The desert is also home to wildcats, bears, strange squirrels, kangaroo rats and assorted other critters.

I was curious about Nevada's offerings, but stayed away from the state-regulated houses of prostitution with such endearing names as Pussy-cat Ranch, Sharon's Brothel & Bar, the Alien Cathouse, Bunny Ranch and other infamous sex palaces that are legal in eight Nevada counties.

The red light houses ... named so because railroad workers once hung their signal lanterns from the porches in case they were needed to work ... offer "quickies" and all night encounters, charged appropriately.

Brothels have existed in Nevada since the mid 1800s, but licensed only since 1971 when businessman/sex merchant Joe Conforte convinced Storey County politicians to pass an ordinance allowing legal and licensed brothels. His notorious Mustang Ranch near Reno was staffed with medically approved girls between the ages of 18 and 35. The going rate is between \$100 and \$500 per encounter, plus tips.

During my Nevada stopover I sought out some of the locals who offered their own perspective on the Nevada lifestyle. Edward "Little Hawk" Allen, 67, a part Cherokee Indian and Scotsman, is a former Army Ranger who paid his dues during the Vietnam War. He later logged more than 3 million miles behind the wheel of an 18-wheeler hauling everything from food to explosives through all of the lower 48



Above, Steve Payton of Dayton, Nevada displays some of the colorful stones he has collected from the desert. At right, they don't call Nevada's Route 50 the "Loneliest Highway in America" for nothing. It is so desolated that motorists are urged to carry drinking water and other emergency supplies.



states and most of Canada.

"I knew the owner of the old Mustang Ranch," Allen said. "When the Internal Revenue Service closed the ranch Joe Conforte and his wife, Sally, moved to Brazil where they remain to this day."

When John Wayne was filming "The Shootist" in Carson City back in the 1970s, Allen went to see him.

"I wasn't exactly a fan of his, I was more of an admirer," Allen said. "He was an ordinary Joe, just like you and me, really down to earth."

Allen is quick to point out that the so-called wild horses that are so common in the desert and even on the outskirts of towns and cities really aren't wild at all.

"The real wild mustangs are a thing of the past," he said. "Most of the horses you see today were once owned by people who could no longer afford the cost of hay and grain."

A bale of hay that must be trucked in can cost as much as \$25 and more. So the steeds were and still are set free to live off the land.

Like Allen, Steve Payton lives in Dayton with his wife, Patty. Born and raised in southern California's Mojave Desert, Payton is a former Marine and Vietnam veteran. He worked in the circus industry for

years before finally settling down in the high desert. "There are just so many things in Nevada beyond the casinos," Payton said. "It's a place of living history. I was born in the desert and I'll die in the desert. I couldn't live anywhere else."

Payton now runs a motor home park on Route 50. Life magazine in 1986 christened it the "Loneliest Highway in America" due to its remoteness and total lack of civilization. It crosses seven mountain ranges ... Clan Alpine, Fairview Peak and the Desatoya and Shoshone Mountains among them ... with elevations of more than 7,000 feet. The highway also snakes into valleys and dry lake beds with spectacular views.

Payton loves Nevada and its near removal from modern civilization as we know it. One of his hobbies is collecting fossils and ancient Indian artifacts, such as weapons, pottery and even woven baskets he discovered in caves. He knows where Jurassic Era dinosaur remnants are stored by Mother Nature, where lush tropical lakes once existed, and where early inhabitants lived off the land.

Probe his mind and he will tell you about ghost towns that existed during the gold and silver rush days.

"Most people would be surprised at what's out

there," he said of the arid region.

Payton knows the desert's secrets and regularly travels dirt roads that lead to clandestine dry beds, fissures, canyons ... and to some of the most beautiful terrain that nature has to offer.

Payton and his wife have traveled all over the United States before settling down in rural Nevada. He's opinionated and political correctness to him is as foreign as a real live T-Rex.

"Sure, I have opinions, and I'm entitled to them," he said.

Payton's love affair with the desert shows as he talks about it.

"During the day and night you can hear the sounds of insects, animals and birds," he said. "But as the sun rises early in the morning there is no sound. The quiet is deafening. When the sun is finally at its fullest the sounds of the desert return. It's like magic."

And that's why people like Steve Payton and Edward "Little Hawk" Allen are in love with the shifting, whispering sands. It's a very beautiful and very mysterious place with its own unique stunning landscape, history, legends and secrets.

Thomas Michalski is a retired Tampa Bay Newspapers editor. Email him at thomasamski@yahoo.com.

OPENING, from page 1B

funneling cash to local gangsters - "money drops" - in the underworld of Brooklyn bars. Under the heavy hand of his employer and cousin Marv (James Gandolfini), Bob finds himself at the center of a robbery gone awry and entwined in an investigation that digs deep into the neighborhood's past where friends, families, and foes all work together to make a living - no matter the cost.

'No Good Deed'

Genre: Thriller
Cast: Idris Elba, Taraji P. Henson, Leslie Bibb, Kate del Castillo and Henry Simmons
Director: Sam Miller
Rated: PG-13

Terri (Taraji P. Henson) is a devoted wife and mother of two, living an ideal suburban life in Atlanta when Colin (Idris Elba), a charming but dangerous escaped convict, shows up at her door claiming car trouble. Terri offers her phone to help him but soon learns that no good deed goes unpunished as she finds herself fighting for survival when he invades her home and terrorizes her family.

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

'My Old Lady'

Genre: Drama



Photo by QUANTRELL COLBERT/SONY PICTURES

Cast: Kevin Kline, Kristin Scott Thomas and Maggie Smith
Director: Israel Horowitz
Not rated
Mathias Gold (Kevin Kline) is a down-on-his-luck New Yorker who inherits a Parisian apartment from

his estranged father. But when he arrives in France to sell the vast domicile, he's shocked to discover a live-in tenant who is not prepared to budge. His apartment is a viager - an ancient French real estate system with complex rules pertaining to its resale - and the feisty Englishwoman Mathilde Girard (Maggie Smith), who has lived in the apartment with her daughter Chloé (Kristin Scott Thomas) for many years, can by contract collect monthly payments from Mathias until her death.

With no place to go, Mathias strikes a tentative lodging arrangement with Mathilde, instantly clashing with suspicious, lovelorn Chloé over his private dealings with a rapacious property developer, who wants to purchase the apartment. An uneasy détente settles in as the quarreling Mathias and Chloé come to discover a common ground of childhood pain and neglect. As they draw increasingly closer, Mathilde unveils a complex labyrinth of secrets that unites the trio in unexpected ways.

With its unique blend of comedy, drama and ultimately romance, "My Old Lady" marks the directorial debut of internationally celebrated playwright Israel Horowitz, adapting his own hit play. Filmed on location in a ravishing Paris of quiet back streets and familiar locales, "My Old Lady" is a touching romantic drama about inheritance and past secrets coming home to roost, featuring an all-star cast working together at the height of their powers.

'At the Devil's Door'

Genre: Thriller
Cast: Naya Rivera, Catalina Sandino Moreno, Ashley Rickards, Wyatt Russell and Ava Acres
Director: Nicholas McCarthy
Not rated

When ambitious young real estate agent Leigh is asked to sell a house with a checkered past, she crosses paths with a disturbed girl whom she learns is the runaway daughter of the couple selling the property. When Leigh tries to intervene and help her, she becomes entangled with a supernatural force that soon pulls Leigh's artist sister Vera into



Photo courtesy of COHEN MEDIA GROUP

Above, Kevin Kline and Maggie Smith star in "My Old Lady." At left, Terry (Taraji P. Henson) talks to her husband Jeffrey (Henry Simmons) in Screen Gems' "No Good Deed."

its web - and has sinister plans for both of them.

'Honeymoon'

Genre: Drama and thriller
Cast: Rose Leslie, Harry Treadaway, Ben Huber and Hanna Brown
Director: Leigh Janiak
Rated: R

Young newlyweds Paul (Harry Treadaway) and Bea (Rose Leslie) travel to remote lake country for their honeymoon, where the promise of private romance awaits them.

Shortly after arriving, Paul finds Bea wandering and disoriented in the middle of the night. As she becomes more distant and her behavior increasingly peculiar, Paul begins to suspect something more sinister than sleepwalking took place in the woods.

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



Photo courtesy of MAGNET RELEASING

Rose Leslie and Harry Treadaway star in "Honeymoon," a Magnet release.

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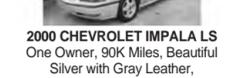
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Music in the Park features Charlie Souza

By LEE CLARK ZUMPE

SEMINOLE – The second concert in city's annual Music in the Park series will feature a performance by Charlie Souza and the New Tropics on Friday, Sept. 12.

The concerts are presented at Seminole City Park, 7464 Ridge Road, Seminole. The music will run 7 to 9 p.m. Admission is free.

Food and beverages will be available for purchase at the event. Attendees are encouraged to bring chairs and blankets.

For information, call 391-8345 or visit www.myseminole.com.

Souza has worked and performed with some of the top names in the music industry, including Tom Petty and Gregg Allman. In the 1960s, he was part of The Tropics, one of the most popular pop-rock bands in the Southeastern United States. The band recorded "Time," their first single, in 1968.

Souza, along with Tropics' co-founder Buddy Pendergrass, played

in the psychedelic/glam rock band White Witch in the early 1970s. He also has toured and recorded with the New Rascals, featuring Rock and Roll Hall of Fame's Dino Danelli and Gene Cornish with Bill Pascale of Vanilla Fudge.

The rock and roll veteran released his solo albums "Live Your Dream" and "9 Ball in the Corner Pocket" on Souzaphone Records. His song "Carry Me Back to St. Petersburg" was selected as the city song for St. Petersburg, earning almost 13,000 votes in an online competition.

Souza (bass and vocals) is joined by Todd Plant (vocals and guitar), Mike Conway (drums and vocals) and Jaybo Key (guitar and vocals).

The Tropics have a new release out of all of the original recordings on a vinyl LP available in Europe on Guerssen Records. The album, "As Time's Gone," is distributed in the United States by Forced Exposure.

This week's concert is sponsored by One Hour Air Conditioning and Heating.



A vinyl LP compilation featuring all of the original recordings by Charlie Souza's band The Tropics is available through Forced Exposure. Souza will bring The New Tropics to Seminole City Park Sept. 12 for the Music in the Park series.

Local authors to share apocalypse stories

ST. PETERSBURG – The end is near, or at least a few local writers seem to think so.

Find out what kind of demise they think is in store for the world at Wordier Than Thou's Oct. 1 literary event, "Doomsayers: local authors predict the end of the world," at The Studio@620, 620 First Ave. S., St. Petersburg. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. Readings begin at 7 p.m.

Readers include John Henry Fleming, Jeff Strand, Heather Jones, Cole Bellamy, Lynne Hansen, Juliana A. Torres, David Z. Morris and Edward P. Morgan III.

Entry is \$5 at the door. A portion of the proceeds will be donated to the Edible Peace Patch.

There will also be an "opportunity drawing" with a chance to win books by our readers and other prizes.

Wordier Than Thou is a Tampa Bay-area literary arts organization that organizes monthly storytelling and prose open mics, themed readings, writing groups, workshops and more; hosts a bi-weekly radio show on www.lifeimprovementradio.com; and publishes a literary journal featuring local authors. Wordier Than Thou is also organizing the first annual Florida Bookstore Day, a statewide event celebrating independent bookstores and local writers, set for Saturday, Nov. 15.

For more information, visit www.wordierthanthou.com or email Tiffany Razzano at wordierthanthou@gmail.com.

A&E news

'Scott & Patti Show' seeks contributions via Kickstarter

ST. PETERSBURG – Those who have seen "The Scott & Patti Show" at an area venue know that this entertaining production is a campy extravaganza.

Currently, Tampa Bay's favorite mother-and-son cabaret act is seeking some financial support to reach the next level.

Local performers Matthew McGee and Scott Daniel created "The Scott & Patti Show" as an homage to famous family entertainment teams like The Osmonds, The Judds and Joan & Melissa Rivers. The production has sold out numerous local venues. Scott and Patti recently headlined at St. Pete Pride.

McGee and Daniel are now looking to expand their brand. To do so, they launched a Kickstarter campaign. Donations must be made before the Kickstarter campaign ends Thursday, Sept. 18, at 12:11 p.m.

To make a donation, visit www.kickstarter.com/projects/1388342960/the-scott-and-patti-show.

According to the Kickstarter page, McGee and Daniel are "traveling from venue to venue with inconsistent sound equipment." The two often have to run the sound themselves while performing the show. The performers hope to invest in a touring sound system that is easy to set up and operate. Funds raised on Kickstarter also will go toward materials Daniel uses to design and create all of the costumes and wigs used in "The Scott & Patti Show."

To thank their supporters, McGee and Daniel are offering some persuasive incentives. According to the Kickstarter page, backers who contribute \$50 will get a signed Scott & Patti T-shirt while those contributing \$100 will get the T-shirt and two complimentary tickets to a Tampa Bay area "The Scott



Scott Daniel, left, and Matthew McGee star in "The Scott & Patti Show," a campy extravaganza that plays a venues throughout the Tampa Bay area.

& Patti Show" performance.

"The Scott & Patti Show" will be appearing throughout the Tampa Bay area in the coming months. To learn more about this offbeat show – described as "Vegas meets RuPaul's Drag Race" by McGee – visit www.facebook.com/SandPshow.

Studio@620 to present 2014 Studio Honors event

ST. PETERSBURG – The Studio@620 will present this year's Studio Honors Saturday, Nov. 1, 6:20 p.m., at the historic Coliseum, 535 4th Ave. N., St. Petersburg.

The Studio Honors program will recognize five couples in celebration of its 10th anniversary. The Magic of Community will feature an evening of arts, culinary tastes and community.

The community honors program began in 2009 as the Social Justice Pioneer Awards and in 2011 was

renamed Studio Honors. In 2012, the Ola Mae Jones Emerging Artist Award was established honoring studio co-founder and director Bob Devin Jones' mother who passed in 2011 and was a profound influence on his life. These honorees have been volunteers or artists at the studio and the award includes a monetary stipend for the emerging young artist's artistic endeavors and/or college expenses.

This year's Studio Honors will be dedicated to Dave and Astrid Ellis.

The 2014 Honorees include Susan Beers Betzer and Peter Betzer; David Warner and Larry Biddle; Nancy Bryant and Kenneth Bryant; Peter Meinke and Jeanne Meinke; and Richard Rice and Mimi Rice.

The Ola Mae Jones Emerging Artist Award will go to Cassidy Mae Routh.

Routh was one of the Studio@620's first volunteers beginning when she was 11 years old, earning her Florida Bright Futures Academic Scholarship volunteering for the Studio@620 and the former Studio Annex. Additionally, she was a summer camp student in the Sunscreen Film Camp at the Studio@620 for two years and then as an intern/production manager for two years. She received a Judge's Choice award at the studio's first Member's Art Show in 2012, earning an exhibition at the studio.

Routh is entering her senior year at Florida State University in the Bachelor of Fine Arts program, with an English minor. She graduated from St. Petersburg High School's IB program.

The Studio@620 is a nonprofit arts venue located at 620 First Ave. S., St. Petersburg. For information, visit www.studio620.org or call 895-6620.

SPAFW to kick off Sept. 15

ST. PETERSBURG – St. Pete Art & Fashion Week will kick off with an opening night party Monday, Sept. 15, at Moscatos, 475 Central Ave. N., St. Petersburg.

SPAFW is an annual series of art and runway fashion shows presented in St. Petersburg. The event includes several boutique events throughout the week and finishes with a runway fashion show. SPAFW will run Sept. 15-20 at different locations throughout St. Petersburg.

In addition to the opening night party, there will be a unique event at the Raw Studio on Wednesday, Sept. 17, as Disconnected will explore a three-dimensional artistic view of the true differences between real and cyber, materialism and earthiness, beauty and imperfection and being connected – or not. On Friday, Sept. 19, SPAFW will move to the Duncan McClellan Gallery for Art Inspired, an exclusive look at works from local artists. Finally, there will be a Runway Show on Saturday Sept. 20, at One Progress Plaza, featuring fashions by Chateau De Curb Gear, Helen Gerro, Boutique La Rochelle, Cerulane Blu and Purabell House of Fashion.

A full schedule of events is available online at www.StPeteArtandFashionWeek.com. Cost of admission to the individual events vary.

This year, organizers of the St. Pete Art & Fashion Week have named the Warehouse Arts District as a beneficiary. The Warehouse Arts District Association is ready to launch an innovative plan to expand and preserve a growing artists' colony within an industrial warehouse district in St. Petersburg. The nonprofit association has signed a contract to buy the former Ace Recycling Compound, a collection of six warehouses and offices at the corner of 22nd Street South and Fifth Avenue South. The approximately 50,000 square feet would be developed as the Warehouse Arts Enclave, offering working space for artists working in all media from painting to metal work and sculpture. Association members hope to raise \$350,000 by Nov. 1 and have a closing date on the deal by mid December.

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.

TOP FIVE, from page 1B

• **Erasure**, Sunday, Sept. 14, 7:30 p.m., at The Mahaffey Theater, 400 First St. S., St. Petersburg. Tickets start at \$29. Call 893-7832 or visit www.themahaffey.com. The award-winning songwriting duo of Vince Clarke and Andy Bell unleashed on the world a succession of both influential and chart-topping pop anthems of the '80s, '90s through to today. Songs like "A Little Respect," "Sometimes," "Victim Of Love," "Ship Of Fools," "Blue Savannah," "Star" and "Chains Of Love" ensured a formidable presence on the singles charts complemented by five consecutive No. 1 albums (including The Innocents, Wild! and Chorus) and the beginning of the worldwide Abba revival, "Abba-esque." The band's newest album, "The Violet Flame," will be released fall 2014.



Photo courtesy of THE MAHAFFEY THEATER. Erasure plays Sept. 14 at The Mahaffey Theater.

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