

Master Plan defeated, supporters undaunted

by **Patty Brant**
Immokalee Bulletin

CRA Executive Director Penny Phillippi is disappointed that the Collier County Commission did not pass the Immokalee Master Plan, but is already starting to pick up the pieces.

By a vote of 3-0, the long awaited Immokalee Master Plan was defeated at the Tuesday, Dec. 13,

county commission meeting. It had already been approved by the Florida Department of Community Affairs and other agencies. Commissioners Jim Coletta, Donna Fiala and Fred Coyle all voted in favor of the plan. Commissioner Georgia Hiller voted against it and Commissioner Tom Henning abstained, stating he owns property in Immokalee.

For the past ten years, the plan to lead Immokalee into the future has been in the making, utilizing input from numerous residents.

That may be the hardest part for Ms. Phillippi to accept. "I see so many people who worked so long to make this happen . . . people crying . . . citizens angry and upset. They poured so much into the process. It's disappointing," she said.

The commissioners did not provide any insight into the specific problems with the plan except that there were "land use issues." Ms. Phillippi said some involved density and rezoning.

She said they tried to make a commercial and residential "blueprint for the future" and make it all compatible and tried to make everyone's land more valuable.

The next step will be for the CRA Advisory Committee to meet Dec. 21 and try to map out a strategy.

Although she said the rebuff was a "staggering blow" to many of those who worked so hard on the project, Ms. Phillippi said, professionally, she is ready to pick it up again, rewrite it and go on.

She expects the process to take another 18 months.

Christmas Around the World another success

Our Christmas around the World Parade and Gala committee would like to thank the entire community of Immokalee, including all schools, churches, all our VIP's, all organizations, Seminole Casino of Immokalee, our local Sheriff Office and the Eastern Collier Chamber of Commerce for participating in our beautiful Parade and Gala on December 10, 2011.

Don't forget our outstanding community leaders Grand Parade Marshal (Rev. Rick Heers) and Co-Parade Marshal (Annie Alvarez).

This year's Parade and Gala Theme "Going Greener for the Environment" was extremely visual throughout the entire Parade and Gala. This was the best Parade and Gala ever!

See Page 2 for information about how to contact the newspaper.

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Float Competition are as follows:

Non-Profit Entries:

1. First Place Float Winner: Pinecrest Elementary School
2. Second Place float Winner: Guadalupe Family Center
- 3 Third Place Float Winner: ITeCh and The Immokalee Foundation
4. Best all Around Float Winner: Immokalee Community School (RCMA)

Commercial Entries:

1. First Place Float Winner: Immokalee Water and Sewer
2. Second, Place Float Winner: Collier County Mosquito Control
3. Third. Place Float winner: Collier County 4-H

Honorable mentions

Eden Park Elementary, Lake Trafford Elementary, Village Oaks Elementary and Highland Elementary and Mr. Kraft with his "Hitch Wagon" driving the Harvest Festival Queens.

See **Success** — Page 2



Submitted photos

Winners, All

TOP: Christmas Around the World Director Cherryle Thomas presented the fourth place trophy for non-profit entries in the Christmas Around the World parade to RCMA Charter School Principal Jim McDevitt and Maria Hernandez.

BELOW: Pinecrest Assistant Principal Christine Gray accepted the first place trophy for non-profit entries in the 2011 Christmas Around the World parade from Director Cherryle Thomas.



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Submitted photos

Guadalupe Center Director of Programs Megan McCarthy gladly accepted the trophy for second place in the non-profit category for the 2011 Christmas Around the World parade.

County precinct consolidation approved

Naples, FL – The Collier County Supervisor of Elections Office received approval from the Department of Justice on its precinct consolidation proposal. The new precinct and polling site changes will reduce the 94 current precincts with 82 polling sites to 62 precincts and 60 polling sites. The approved change will be implemented prior to the January 31, 2012 Presidential Preference Primary.

To eliminate confusion, new voter information cards will be mailed to all registered Collier County voters. The information card will indicate the voter's precinct number, polling location and other essential voting information. Registered voters may also visit www.CollierVotes.com <<http://www.CollierVotes.com>> for information.

The model for voting has significantly

changed over the past ten years. Fewer and fewer voters are voting on Election Day while Absentee/Mail ballot and Early Voting has steadily increased. In view of this changing trend, modifying processes will generate greater efficiencies and improve the overall service to Collier County voters.

According to Jennifer J. Edwards, Supervisor of Elections, "the decision to consolidate precincts concurrent with redistricting, an outcome of the 2010 census, will result in better utilization and more efficient use of resources to all three methods of voting (Absentee/Mail ballot, Early Voting and Election Day). Ultimately, this decision will provide a greater quality of service."

For information, visit the Web site at www.CollierVotes.com <[## Success](http://www.col-</p>
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Continued From Page 1

Winners of the Recycled Fashion Dress Costume:

1. First place Winner: Savanna Marie
2. Second Place Winner: Melinda Manzano
3. Third. Place Winner: Ariel Garcia

Winner of the Jitterbug Dance Contest

1. First. Place Winner: Judy and Bob Brill
The Christmas committee and our Florida House of Representative (Matt Hudson) could not make a determination on the best written essays for this year's theme.

The committee unanimously voted that all the essays had good ideas and content. Matt Hudson will deliver all the essays to Tallahassee, Florida for display.

Thanks again for your loyal support of this event.

Cherryle Thomas, Chair of Event

Holiday spirit helps Eden Park families

by Joe Landon

I'd like to share a story with you, a story that illustrates the character traits of kindness, charity and compassion – and it all started with caring children.

A few months ago, staff at Immokalee's Eden Park Elementary School noticed that some students were taking home extra food packets provided free-of-charge by the school's Homeless Liaison, doing so on Fridays especially. Eden Park Principal Linda Salazar spoke with some parent volunteers at the school and got to the bottom of it – the students just wanted to help mom and dad.

Many Immokalee parents work in the town's agriculture fields where harvest delays have caused a shortage of work. Kids – they're quite observant – noticed mom

and dad were home more often instead of at work. No work, of course, means things can get pretty tough at home.

So, the students took it upon themselves to help by taking extra food packets home, making sure their families had something to eat.

The mystery of the extra food packets was solved, but the resulting kindness and charity snowballed into a multi-state display of compassion. Stemming from her students' caring for others, and to help the school's families in need, Principal Salazar and her husband bought 2,000 pounds of pinto beans from Nebraska through a family friend.

Hearing the story, the friend stepped up to match the Salazar's donation – asking a Nebraska farmer for a total of 4,000 pounds of beans to be shipped to Immokalee.

Let's put this in perspective for a second here. The typical small bag of beans you would get at the store weighs about one pound. The farmer learned the story behind the mass shipment and donated a

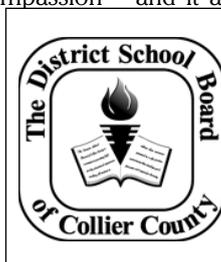
portion of the total cost. Additional donations have also been received to be used to buy a large amount of rice, completing the staple food for many Immokalee families – rice and beans.

Through the kindness and charity of others, more than 500 Eden Park Elementary School families will receive a generous supply of rice and beans next week – just in time for the holidays!

And it all started with the simple love and caring that our students have for others and for their families. It makes us realize that school isn't just about reading, writing and arithmetic.

It's also about community – a community in which teachers, staff and school administrators care about all aspects of a child's life, not just the learning piece which we'd expect.

So, it's a good story – with as happy an ending as possible for some folks in need.



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A kids' party, with much at stake

IMMOKALEE – Book giveaways by Reading is Fundamental are always festive. All children, even infants, get to choose a book and keep it forever. Their parents share the joy. Literacy gets a boost.

But when RIF arrives next Monday at the Immokalee Community Migrant Head Start Center, the specter of budget cuts will loom in the background.

Earlier this year, Congress eliminated RIF's entire \$24.8 million allocation from the federal budget. After dispensing 380 million free books over the last 45 years, RIF is fighting to sustain itself.

Organizers of the Immokalee event are expecting a special guest, Diana McGee, the Fort Myers-based Regional Director for U.S. Sen. Bill Nelson. They hope McGee will speak up for RIF to her boss.

"We love RIF," said Barbara Mainster, RCMA's Executive Director. "Reading and education have always been the best tools for children to learn their way out of poverty. Our kids are so inspired when they go home with their new books."

RIF's funding was eliminated at a time when financially strapped local governments have curtailed public library hours, and 16 million American children are living in poverty, the highest number in two decades.

The Immokalee-based RCMA operates 74 child care centers in 21 Florida counties, and has helped distribute thousands of RIF books to RCMA children every year. RCMA's matching funds for RIF books – more than \$28,000 statewide – have been provided during the last three years by Lipman (formerly Six L's Packing Co.).

"It's momentous for these little children," said Jaime Weisinger, a Lipman director who handles the company's charitable ventures.

"If they love reading, they'll love learning. They're likelier to succeed in school and life. That's why we support it."

Make a red ribbon promise to drive responsibly

You can let everyone know that you're driving responsibly this holiday season.

Avow Hospice and the Collier County Sheriff's Office are offering free red ribbons that you can tie to your car's rear-view mirror. The ribbons carry the words "Red Ribbon Promise" and represent your pledge not to drive impaired.

The holidays are traditionally a time for fun and celebration, but it's important to remember that driving impaired can have devastating consequences. If you're attending a party or event, use a designated driver or call a cab if you plan to consume alcohol. If you are hosting a party this holiday season, remind your guests to plan ahead and designate a sober driver, always offer alcohol-free beverages and plenty to eat during the event, and make sure all of your guests leave with a sober driver.

"By displaying one of these ribbons you are not only making a pledge, you are reminding other motorists on the road that driving impaired is dangerous," said Sheriff Kevin Rambosk.

Lavigne Ann Kirkpatrick of Avow Hospice said she hopes the ribbons help keep Collier County roads safe over the holiday season.

"The holiday season is the time we are reminded of how precious our family, friends and life are," Kirkpatrick said. "Keeping what is precious to us safe is always important, but especially during the holidays. Let's keep Collier safe for all."

Red ribbons are available through Jan. 2 at CCSO headquarters, 3319 U.S. 41 E., Building J., all six CCSO substations and at Avow Hospice, 1095 Whippoorwill Lane, North Naples.

Edison State College trustees to meet December 16

The Edison State College District Board of Trustees will hold a special meeting at 10 a.m. Friday, Dec. 16, in the AA Building, Room 177 on the Lee Campus. Rooms with video conference are available on each of the Edison State College Campuses or Center as follows:

Charlotte Campus – O-11
Collier Campus – J-10

Hendry/Glades Center – A-110

Public comments welcome. Each speaker will be allotted up to two minutes of speaking time. All who wish to participate in the public comment are required to fill out and turn in a Request to Speak Form at least 15 minutes prior to the start of the meeting. The agenda is posted at <http://www.edison.edu/district/board/meetings.php>

Letter to the Editor

Doctor's Orders

What would be the right prescription to save America today, as it lies hemorrhaging jobs?

The two doctors designated to save her can't agree on the standard of care. One doctor wants to administer a transfusion, while the other wants to stimulate the heart to increase circulation.

In the meantime, to the patient's detriment, both doctors have agreed to use the blood thinner called Free Trade, a snake oil, which has been peddled by powerful lobbyists during the past decade.

Sadly, the cure for America today, seems to lie in an old generic, compounded concoction not available since 1980, prior to the Reagan Administration.

Juan Puerto, M.D.

Purchase on life safely

Tired of driving from one crowded parking lot to the next, standing in long lines at the cash registers and fighting over that last Nintendo 3DS on the shelf with five other desperate parents?

Thanks to the World Wide Web, the bulk of your shopping can be done online. You can even have your orders gift wrapped. With the added convenience of shopping online, you need to know how to protect your bank account and identity.

Here are some good pointers to help keep your personal information safe:

Use companies you know.

When making purchases online, make sure the Web site you are using is secured with "https://www..." in the URL and make certain the padlock symbol is on the bottom of your browser.

Read the company's privacy statement carefully. Will they sell your personal information to other companies?

Trust your instincts. If something doesn't seem right, then it probably isn't.

Limit the amount of personal information

you give out and print all online receipts.

Consider obtaining a credit card that you use only when shopping online to easily keep track of all your purchases.

If possible, call in your order.

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Letter to the editor

Attorney moving on

I want to thank all my clients, friends, and colleagues for their support, and for the trust you have given me during the past years that I worked at Legal Aid in both Naples and Immokalee.

Now that I am moving forward on my own, I appreciate having the opportunity and privilege of continuing to help the people of our community in Naples and Immokalee!

I will be focusing on Family Law and Housing Law issues. Family Law consists not only of divorce (dissolution or marriage), but also such issues as custody, visitation (parents and grandparents), child support collection and modification, and dependency issues.

On the Housing Law front, I will be handling all issues relating to landlord/tenant law, including evictions, housing discrimination, HUD issues, etc. I will also continue to engage in Foreclosure Defense. Let's keep our families in their homes!

Your opinion is important to us! Let us know what topics you would like to see on our Facebook page. Remember to follow us on Facebook and LinkedIn.

We wish you all a Happy Holidays and a Happy New Year 2012 filled with health and prosperity!

Les deseamos a todos unas Felices Pasquas y Feliz Año 2012 lleno de salud y prosperidad!

Albert Batista
Attorney at Law

Migrant students receive free dental care

For the sixteenth year, the Collier County Public Schools (CCPS) Federal and State Grants Office, in conjunction with the Professional Golf Association (PGA) and the Franklin Templeton Shootout, arranged for 117 migrant students to receive free dental care at the PGA Tour's Christina's Smile Children's Dental Clinic earlier this week (December 5-7). Volunteer dentists and hygienists from around Southwest Florida provided treatment at the clinic to these pre-selected students with severe dental needs. Migrant home-school liaisons transported the students to the clinic, located in the old PACE warehouse on Pine Ridge Road, next to Home Depot, in Naples.

In 1989, after treating many disadvantaged children in his dental practice in Austin, Texas for seventeen years, Dr. Richard R. Garza founded this program to impact more children in less time. He developed a relationship with the Senior PGA Tour to help draw attention to the plight of children all across the United States. The mission of the program is to deliver quality, comprehensive, charitable dental care to children in need who reside in communities that host a PGA TOUR and Champions Tour tournament.

To learn more, please contact Oscar Olguin at 377-3332 or Flavia Mansberger at 377-0584. For more information about the Christina's Smile Children's Dental Clinic, visit www.csmile.com.



Submitted photo

Students line up for their turn in the chair.



BOTTOM PHOTO: Volunteer dentists and hygienists provide treatment to selected students with severe dental needs.

Community Briefs

Designers' Boutique

The Women's Shelter's Designers' Boutique returns with more vendors and new days!

The Shelter for Abused Women & Children's Designers' Boutique, part of the 2012 Mending Broken Hearts with Hope Luncheon, is set for Monday and Tuesday, February 20 and 21, 2012, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., at The Ritz-Carlton, Naples, 280 Vanderbilt Beach Road.

Held in the Plaza Ballroom and the Artisan Room, this year's Designers' Boutique moves to Monday and Tuesday, and features 32 vendors including some 'favorites' from previous years - Anita Ford Collection, Nina McLemore Collection, Melanie White Designs, The Romantic Room, Trillion, A Wreath of Wishes - as well as new vendors such as Fancy's Folly, Queen Bee Studio, ThRedHeads, Valerie Louthan and more!

Admission to the Designers' Boutique is free; \$5 valet parking on Monday, or complimentary valet parking with a Ritz-Carlton retail or food and beverage purchase.

The Boutique is one component of The Shelter's Tuesday, February 21, 2012, Mending Broken Hearts with Hope Luncheon featuring Dr. Jackson Katz as keynote speaker and including a general reception, Silent Auction, Drawing/Raffle and the luncheon.

Tickets for the 12th annual Mending Broken Hearts with Hope Luncheon are \$350/person; \$1,500/Patron; sponsorships available.

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Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year

From all of us at the
Immokalee Bulletin

We would like to thank you for all your support throughout the year, and look forward to serving you in the New Year.

We'd also like to let you know we will be **CLOSED** Mon., December 26, 2011 & Mon., January 2, 2012

This means all advertising will need to be to us by:
Fri., December 23 at 3 pm for the 12/29/11 issue
and
Fri., December 30 at 3 pm for the 01/05/12 issue

Thank you again,
Patty, Barbara and Dale

UF to study ways to prevent underage drinking

CCSO News

GAINESVILLE, Fla. - The University of Florida's Institute for Child Health Policy in partnership with Cherokee Nation Behavioral Health Services has received a \$4.7 million grant from the National Institutes of Health to study ways to prevent underage drinking.

The study, led by Kelli Komro, Ph.D., will focus on American Indian and other youth living in rural, high-risk and underserved communities. The results could influence efforts to prevent underage drinking across the U.S.

"We're excited to be working together and in close collaboration with schools, families and other community-based organizations to develop and implement what we hope to be a very powerful set of community-based strategies to prevent alcohol and drug use among young people living in northeastern Oklahoma," said Komro, associate director of ICHP and a professor of health outcomes and policy in the UF College of Medicine.

The five-year study will take place in an area of Oklahoma that suffers from high poverty rates and substantial health disparities.

Komro says the study will focus on preventing alcohol-related problems in young people, either before they start or before they become worse in adolescence and adulthood.

"The teenage years represent a time of risk and opportunity," Komro said. "We know that early onset of alcohol use is as-

sociated with many negative consequences during adolescence and into adulthood. Therefore, we feel this prevention project is very important for all youth living in the participating communities, including both Cherokee and other teens."

This study is unique in that it focuses specifically on American Indians, a group that Komro says is often underrepresented in clinical and community research.

"This project and our partnership offer an important opportunity to create, implement and evaluate a new, integrated community-based prevention strategy for, and with, such underrepresented populations," Komro said.

B.J. Boyd, Ph.D., director of Cherokee Nation Behavioral Health Services and co-principal investigator on the project, said he is grateful to be working with the University of Florida in this partnership effort and said this is a large step forward for Cherokee Nation and its health services division.

"With this project we are doing the research. We are putting what has been done to the scientific test and establishing valid statistics for prevention efforts," Boyd said. "The Cherokee Nation has worked many years on prevention efforts, and it will be great now to partner and examine those efforts to share with others."

Although the trial takes place in Oklahoma, Komro said the results will have broader implications for the country as a whole.

"The goal of our collaboration is to prevent the negative consequences of alcohol

and drug use among teens," she said. "If we attain such success, we are optimistic that the project will be a model for other communities around the country."

The study builds on the results of years of research and will use tested techniques geared toward spurring change in schools and communities. Researchers will work with multiple segments of the community, including teens, teachers, coaches, parents, merchants and others. The trial will use a combination of community environmental change and simple, brief interventions to help adults identify and intervene if a teen is having problems. It's a whole community approach - changing the norms around teen drinking and encouraging adults to take action to prevent problems.

"This project represents a special opportunity. The National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism funds large-scale community prevention trials such as this only once a decade, and also typically funds only one team from a nationwide competition. We now are excited to further advance both the science of what works, and the health of real-world communities," said Alexander Wagenaar, Ph.D., a co-investigator and a professor of health outcomes and policy in the UF College of Medicine.

The study will include all high school students within selected towns. The results will be measured regularly over a four-year period. The project will end in June 2016.

2011 holiday safety video

The Collier County Sheriff's Office has released its annual holiday safety video.

"This tradition has become our annual gift to the community," said Sheriff Kevin Rambosk. "It's our way of thanking the public for their support while offering them reminders of ways they can help us keep Collier County a great place and a safe place."

Video messaging is one the many ways CCSO employs technology to communicate with the community at no cost. The agency produces a monthly TV show called "On Scene" that airs on CCSO's Internet TV channel, www.ccsotv.com as well as the county's cable channel (Comcast 97) and the school district's Education Channel (Comcast 99).

Office provides gifts for kids

Thanks to the generosity of Collier County Sheriff's Office members and the community, the sixth-annual "Celebrate With A Star" program was tremendous success.

CCSO collected enough gifts to fill more than three pickup trucks for deserving children assigned to the 20th Judicial Circuit Guardian ad Litem program in partnership with the Voices for Kids of Southwest Florida (VFK) agency.

CCSO gives special thanks to all who contributed to "Celebrate With A Star" and wishes everyone a happy and safe holiday season



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*1 year lease
@ \$100/mo reduction
Must be farm or grove labor employed
2Br/1Ba, 3Br/1Ba Apartments
Starting at \$500 plus utilities.
Social/Education Services Offered:
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Collier County has the following board openings

The Collier County Code Enforcement Board has four terms expiring on February 14, 2012. This seven-member board, plus two alternate members, is composed of, but not limited to, individuals representing the occupations of architect, businessman, engineer, general contractor, subcontractor and realtor and are considered, in part, on the basis of experience or interest in the areas of the codes and ordinances to be enforced. Members are required to file a Form 1 Statement of Financial Interest each year with the Supervisor of Elections. Terms are three years.

The County Government Productivity Committee has six vacancies with terms expiring on February 4, 2012. This committee is composed of 11 members, with the vice chair of the Board of County Commis-

sioners serving in a liaison capacity. The members are appointed by resolution of the Board of County Commissioners for a two-year term and must be permanent residents and electors of Collier County. Committee members are required to possess special expertise and experience related to managing large organizations, and must be balanced in representing the views of the community. The committee reviews the efficiency of departments of County Government under the jurisdiction of the Board of County Commissioners.

The Hispanic Affairs Advisory Committee has two vacancies for terms to expire June 25, 2015. This nine-member board identifies and evaluates problems unique to the Hispanic community, reviews and recommends ways to ensure open com-

munication between minorities and Collier County Government and provides periodic reports to the Board of County Commissioners. Terms are four years.

The Land Acquisition Advisory Committee has two terms expiring on February 11, 2012. This nine-member committee was created by Ordinance No. 2002-63 and their primary responsibility is to recommend to the BCC an Active Properties Acquisition List with qualified purchase recommendations of environmentally sensitive lands consistent with the goals of the Conservation Collier Land Acquisition Program. Membership of the committee shall comprise broad and balanced representation including environmental and conservation interests, agricultural and business interests, educational interests, and general civic and citizen inter-

ests within the County.

Residents interested in applying for advisory committee positions can also obtain an application by calling 252-8097 or from www.colliergov.net. Please forward to the attention of Ian Mitchell, Executive Manager, Board of County Commissioners, 3299 Tamiami Trail East, Suite 303, Naples, Florida 34112-5746, and FAX to 252-6406. The deadline for acceptance of applications is December 28, 2011.

Celebration of Reading Student Writing Contest

BONITA SPRINGS, Fla. (Dec. 9, 2011) – Volunteer USA Foundation and best-selling children’s author Jeff Kinney announced an entertaining writing contest open to students in southwest Florida. Kinney is well-known for his “Diary of a Wimpy Kid” book series, which combines funny stories about growing up with doodles and cartoons.

“The greatest thing about Kinney’s books is that they make kids laugh – from the crazy situations his characters get involved with to his silly illustrations – he is hands down a favorite among young readers,” said Liza McFadden, president of Volunteer USA Foundation. “We are thrilled this hugely popular children’s author will be on hand in 2012 to celebrate our talented young writers in

Southwest Florida and help us reward their talent and imagination.”

In Kinney’s recently released book, “Diary of a Wimpy Kid: Cabin Fever” beloved character Greg Heffley is in trouble. When the authorities begin closing in, a surprise blizzard hits and Greg is trapped indoors with his family, causing even more chaos. In the Celebration of Reading writing contest, students in Lee, Charlotte, Collier, Hendry and Glades counties, grades 4 to 7, are invited to participate and create a funny story involving Florida’s very own storm season of hurricanes, tornadoes and tropical storms. The short-story contest involves simple illustrations or a comic strip based on the “storm watch” theme.

“As a resident of New England, I’ve weathered a number of storms that have turned my life upside down for days or even weeks. I’ve found that the best way to get through a tough situation is with a positive attitude and a good sense of humor. I’m very excited to read the contestants’ essays on the ‘storm watch’ theme and see how they inject humor into their work,” said Kinney.

Contest winners accompanied by their parents will be recognized at a VIP breakfast, sponsored by Brown & Brown Public Risk Insurance Agency, to kickoff Volunteer USA Foundation’s 12th Celebration of Reading. The annual literacy event will take place Friday, Feb. 17, 2012 at the Hyatt Regency Coconut Point Resort & Spa and is hosted

by former Gov. Jeb Bush, Mrs. Barbara Bush and members of the Bush family to support successful family literacy programs in the southeast U.S. The students will be Kinney’s guests of honor at the Celebration of Reading breakfast and have the opportunity to visit with the author and share their winning submissions.

Entries must be submitted electronically to Contest@VolunteerUSAFund.org or post-marked no later than the Wednesday, Jan.

18, 2012 to: Volunteer USA Foundation, Attn: COR 2012 Writing Contest, 516 North Adams Street, Tallahassee, Fla. 32301.

Fifteen winners will be selected based on their writing and imagination. Winners will be listed at www.volunteerusafoundation.org and schools will be notified on Jan. 27, 2012 in conjunction with Celebrate Literacy Week, Florida.

For more information, call Volunteer USA Foundation at 850-562-5300.

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Cynthia's Cleaning Company opens

by **Patty Brant**
Immokalee Bulletin

What's better than clean? Everybody loves nice, neat, clean-smelling surroundings and that's how lifelong Immokalee resident Cynthia Clinton sees it, too.

In fact, she has just opened her own business, Cynthia's Cleaning Company, providing cleaning service for residential and commercial accounts.

Cleaning may be a chore to many people, but to Cynthia it's her passion.

She has raised her own five children and also her sister's two children. They're all grown now, but several are helping her out in the business. After years as a single mother struggling with various types of jobs, including working in a school cafeteria and after school programs, Cynthia realized that a cleaning service was her calling.

When she decided to start her cleaning service she said she wanted to make sure it was done right so she took classes at the Immokalee Business Development Center's Entrepreneur School.

As a result, she has a good foundation for a successful business. She is currently finishing her business plan to put the finishing touch on her entrepreneur class.

She said she loves Immokalee - there are good people here; strong people and she hopes to be able to give back to her community in some way.

"Things weren't easy, but it's worth it.



Immokalee Bulletin/Patty Brant
Cynthia Clinton.

Christ has given me the strength to keep pressing," she explains, adding that she is grateful for all those who have encouraged

her. "We live and learn," she said, "life has taught me a lot."

Cynthia commends the staff at the CRA for helping her get through the class. In the beginning, she said she felt like she couldn't do it. She needed to energize herself, but she couldn't see it in herself. When she met Maria Capita, Immokalee Business Development Center Manager at CRA, Maria referred her to the Entrepreneur class where she learned the discipline she needed to achieve her goal. Now, she feels strong enough to bridge the hurdles in front of her. Now, she believes in herself and has a new goal - to never stop learning.

She also wants to thank the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA), for what they have done for her. "They took my past," she explains, "and gave me a future."

She hopes people will give her a chance because, she said, "I will go beyond their cleaning needs." Excited about her new venture, Cynthia wants to run her business as long as she can. Eventually, she hopes to pass her business - her passion - on to her children and she hopes to give something back to Immokalee.

Cynthia hopes anyone who needs a cleaning service will give her a call at 239-465-7022. As Cynthia said, "We want to keep you clean!"

Local scholarships available

Are you a woman in need of financial assistance for college tuition?

Greater Naples AAUW Charitable Foundation, Inc. is now accepting applications for local scholarship candidates. Tuition scholarships are awarded to eligible women seeking an associate or a baccalaureate degree.

Candidate eligibility requirements:

- Women 21 years of age or older
- Currently accepted or enrolled in a program of study at an accredited college or university
- Resident of Collier or Southern Lee County
- Demonstrated need for financial assistance

- A satisfactory academic record

- Previous Recipients May Apply

Students may access our Web site - www.aauwgnb.org - where they can get information on qualifications and download an application in MS-WORD format. For additional information, please call: Rose DiBiasi, Chair, Greater Naples AAUW Local Scholarship Committee. Call 239-254-1371 or email: rosed7172@gmail.com. Recipients will be notified no later than March 19, 2012.

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