

A Look Back at 2012

January 5, 2012

Immokalee's Liesa Priddy was appointed to the Florida Wildlife Conservation Commission on December 22 by Governor Rick Scott. She would take her seat January 6 and will remain in that position until January 6, 2017. Her appointment is contingent on confirmation by the Florida Senate.

Mariela Vega, IHS student and Guadalupe Center volunteer was one of four Florida youths who received a \$5,000 Sun Life Rising Star scholarship. They were honored at a Dolphins vs Bills game in Miami.

February 9, 2012

Interim Immokalee Fire Chief Rita Greenberg was pleased with the voters' sizable approval of the Jan. 31, local referendum to provide additional funding for her department. The additional tax revenue would begin with the new fiscal year in October, but it promised the entire department relief from the overwhelming financial constraints of the previous year.

New Chamber President Bernardo Barnhart began leading the chamber into the future as he revisited the things that made Immokalee a great hometown.

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

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Student, Guadalupe Center in spotlight



Submitted photos
The Dolphins and Sun Life Financial recognized Candace Perez of Immokalee High School along with three other outstanding South Florida students and local nonprofit organizations at a special on-field pre-game presentation at Sun Life Stadium prior to the Dolphins' showdown against the Jacksonville Jaguars. Pictured from left: John Hak, Sun Life Financial Regional Sales Mgr., Candace Perez, Kim Heald, Sun Life Financial Voluntary Practice Leader and Mike Shunney, Sun Life Financial Sr. Vice President/General Mgr.

There were stars on the field at Sun Life Stadium recently, but this time it wasn't the players that garnered all the recognition. Instead it was four outstanding South Florida students and nonprofit organizations, as they were each honored by the Miami Dolphins and Sun Life Financial at a special on-field ceremony as part of the Sun Life Rising Star Awards program.

Immokalee High School's Candace Perez, was recognized as one of four high school seniors with the Sun Life Rising Star scholarship onfield during a Miami Dolphins game December 16. Sun Life also honored Guadalupe Center, where Candace volunteers.

Born in Naples to a migrant mother, Candace struggled with leaning English. In the second grade she began an after school program. Meghan McCarthy con-

nected with Candace and got her involved with the? Tutor Corps at Immokalee High School - a way to share her opportunities with others.

This \$5,000 Sun Life scholarship will help her along her path to success. After graduating from college, Candace sees her future in social work or sociology, back home in Immokalee, using her talent and hard-earned knowledge to help other kids like herself. She looks forward to giving others what she received.

After earning her education, she wants to come back to Immokalee. She wants to be a link to opportunity for other kids like herself.

Candace is the second IHS student to win the Sun Life scholarship. Candace is following last

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Holiday cheer thanks to chamber

The Immokalee Chamber of Commerce's Director of Marketing-Danny Campos gave an early Christmas wish to the boys and girls of Immokalee. Through Danny's networking, he found Hector & Teresa Fontella owners of DMV Re-built, Co. and their team from the East coast to give the Immokalee Chamber of Commerce over 1,500 brand new toys for Christmas distribution. Our Chamber partnered with several other local organizations in Immokalee and produced "Operation Toy Drive 2012" to distribute in the parking facilities of the Florida Community Bank on Saturday,

Dec. 15, 2012.

"Operation Toy Drive 2012" was a huge success, because we have many organizations, friends, and families, who were willing to help out those less fortunate" said Chamber Director Danny Campos. "Seeing the smiles on all of the children's faces, brings great joy to myself and many of our volunteers. This is basically the mission of this Toy Drive. Even in

See Toy — Page 2



Submitted photo
Long lines of happy and expectant kids waited patiently for their turn at the December 15 Operation Toy Drive 2012.

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Spotlight

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year's Sun Life recipient, Mariela Vega.

In September, Sun Life Financial awarded a total of \$220,000 in grants and scholarships to four community organizations, American Association of Caregiving Youth, The Guadalupe Center, HANDY and Women of Tomorrow as well as an exemplary student nominated by each: Immokalee High School's Candace Perez, Boca Raton Community High School's Sephora Dubreuzé, Pompano Beach High School's Kimi Farrington and Cooper City High School's Ashira Vantrees.

In addition to their on-field recognition, the honorees were also treated to a special breakfast reception hosted by Dolphins CEO Mike Dee and Sun Life Senior Vice President and General Manager, Employee Benefits Group Mike Shunney.

The Sun Life Rising Star Awards program recognizes nonprofits that redress low high school graduation rates and honors outstanding students who have overcome significant obstacles to succeed. The program also promotes financial literacy as a means to achieve life-long financial wellness and stability. Each winning organization received a \$50,000 grant and selected an exemplary student they work with to receive a \$5,000 college scholarship. Since the program's inception, Sun Life has granted nearly \$3 million to 54 students and 47 nonprofit organizations across the country. This year, Sun Life expanded the program to seven cities from five in 2011, and awarded grants and

scholarships to students and nonprofits in Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Houston, Philadelphia, Phoenix and South Florida. The Sun Life Rising Star Awards program is the education cornerstone program of the Miami Dolphins Foundation.

"These remarkable students and organizations are true rising stars and we are thrilled to have them join us here today as we celebrate their outstanding achievements," said Miami Dolphins Chief Executive Officer Mike Dee. "Rewarding students and organizations who are committed to giving back to their communities is precisely what we had in mind when we partnered with Sun Life and selected the Sun Life Rising Star Awards as the cornerstone educational program of the Dolphins Foundation."

A ten-person judging panel comprised of South Florida's foremost athletes, education and community leaders, philanthropists, financial advisors, city officials and local activists selected the winning organizations. The judging panel included: Miami Dolphins star players Davone Bess and Mike Pouncey; Champion Services Group President and CEO James Champion; Consortium of Florida Education Foundations President Mary Chance; local philanthropist Ada Cole; Florida College System Foundation President Judy Green; Corporate Benefit Advisors, LLC CEO Heather Leck; Sun Sentinel "Society Scene" Publisher Stacy Ostrau; Sapoznik Insurance & Associates Founder, President and CEO Rachel Sapoznik; and City of Miami Protocol Officer Dr. Wallis Tinnie. For more information on the Sun Life Rising Star Awards visit www.sunliferisingstar.com.

Toy

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the mist of several tragedies happening in our area and around the country, we provided a huge event that for at least a little bit, 550 families and their approximately 1500 children could spend a day with their loved ones and not worry about things at home, work or school.

The Chamber of Commerce would like to "Thank" all of the volunteers and organizers for making "Operation Toy Drive 2012" a day to remember.

David Dawson, Director of our Winn Dixie Store in Immokalee for furnishing all the Hot dogs and Hamburgers with the condiments, Carmen Soto, Owner of 5 Star Party Rentals for the piñatas, Juan Viduarri & Freddy Maldonado from Bloodline Ink in Immokalee for their wonderful job in the face painting area, Letti McConnell from the Print Shop for the invitations and printing, Cristina Perez

& Maria Rodriguez from Immokalee Code Enforcement for traffic control and supervising the H.S. Security Guard for dealing with crowd control, Tasha Radford for maintaining the Arts & Crafts tables, along with the Immokalee High School Beta Club, the students of the Immokalee Foundation, to the Grill Masters: Erik Flores, Joe Boney & Juan Saldana, for the tasty burgers and hot dog, Mandy & Mayra Campos, Mariela Peña, Bernardo Barnhart & the 2012 Harvest Festival Jr. Queen Azariah Howard for their help before and after the event.

A big "Thank you" to, the Miracle II Program, Immokalee Readers, Immokalee Non-Profit Housing & Immokalee Community School Site Directors & Staff, Fred N. Thomas Jr. for taking all the attached photos. Last but not least Hector and Teresa Fontella and their team of helpers for providing the children of Immokalee all these wonderful gifts.

Year

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February 16, 2012

An overflow crowd of local people and dignitaries were present for the dedication of the New Bethune Educational Center, built on the site of the original Bethune School which was built in 1956. The school was named after Mary Jane McLeod Bethune, a gifted civil rights leader who dedicated her life to the welfare and education of African/American students.

February 23, 2012

Everglades historian Cesar Becerra, was collecting stories and old photos documenting the lumber industry in southwest Florida, including the important logging ventures in the Immokalee area. His labors included two summers interviewing 40 loggers, along with ferreting out old photos and documents. He was converting them into print, PDF and audio versions to be included in Florida International University's Project Everglades Digital Library.

March 1, 2012

At age 92, Mildred Sherrod was anxious to share her family's story. She had recently moved to the Sterling House in LeHigh Acres, an assisted living facility but returned to the family's old homestead, the Roberts Ranch, to provide a tour for some of her new friends at the home. The ranch is now a museum showcasing the old way of life.

Robert Roberts and his wife, Henri Cordell Roberts, brought their family which included six of their children, to Immokalee from Wauchula, some 100 miles, in 1914 by oxcart with the idea of expanding their herd of cattle. They began on their 40-acre homestead. Their success is itself history. At one time the Red Cattle Company was one of the top ranches in the state.

March 8, 2012

Supporters of the Immokalee Area Master Plan were pleased at the Collier County Commission's adoption of a measure that would keep that plan alive. The Feb. 28 Collier County Commission meeting showed a commitment by the board members to at least continue to look for a way to make the

long-awaited document a reality.

In December 2011 the plan was defeated, but got an extension from the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, thanks to Commissioner Jim Coletta, The new deadline for local adoption of the Master Plan would be in September.

Aquatic plants were experiencing a dramatic recovery to provide important and expansive habitat for wildlife. Largemouth bass were reproducing and wildlife was thriving on the 1,600-acre Lake Trafford in Southwest Florida.

A year after the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) and its partners completed a major restoration effort on the popular lake in Collier County, scientists were porting burgeoning signs of success.

March 15, 2012

The concept is one that members of the Sanibel Bike Club has taken to heart. The Sanibel Bike Club gave away its 600th bike March 9. The group delivered two trailers loaded with bikes to the RCMA Community School for distribution. One hundred reconditioned bicycles - 83 adult bikes, 17 children, seven jogging strollers and one three-wheeler 11 trail bikes - were snatched up almost as fast as they could be unloaded. In addition, the group brought 39 new and used bicycle helmets.

March 22, 2012

A company called Growth Design Corporation showed interest in Immokalee as one of five possible sites for an organic agriculture-renewable energy project. The chosen site would refashion waste into recycled materials or energy, such as methane gas or electricity.

March 29, 2012

The University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Services (IFAS) station at Immokalee is on the cutting edge of agricultural science was working on a new crop for the area - peaches.

Collier County Sheriff's Office detectives investigating a homicide after a man was found dead in Immokalee.

Juan Flores Monroy, 24, was discovered on the side of a dirt road in the 200 block of Wells Street by a passing motorist. The Collier County Medical Examiner's Office determined the manner of death to be homicide.



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Career Corner

Commuting

by Matt Kindermann

For many LaBelle residents looking for work, the daily commute is a big factor in considering whether or not to take a job. One interesting annual report that is published by the Census Bureau is the regional commuting patterns that track where people work in respect to their residence. The information is tracked regionally, meaning our area includes Glades, Hendry, Lee, Charlotte and Collier counties. Interestingly, about 76,000 workers commute into our region from outside counties, with a majority coming from Miami-Dade, Sarasota and Broward.



Matt Kindermann

The highest concentrations of commuters work along the I-75 corridor in Naples, Estero, Ft Myers, and Punta Gorda. One exception is Immokalee, where a majority of workers are commuters. Of course, not all workers commute far from their homes. Ironically, very few workers commute into Cape Coral, Iona-MacGregor, or LaBelle, indicating that our respective labor force consists of mostly local residents. In fact, almost 40% of Lee County residents work in Lee County, which is an above average ratio compared to the 6% of Charlotte County residents that work in Charlotte

County.

Commuting patterns can be very beneficial to businesses in order to map and forecast where prospective customers travel, especially for businesses in the retail or hospitality industries. You might think that placing fast food establishments, gas stations and hotels along the interstate is common sense, but location selection is a very involved step in the strategic business plan.

For instance, we can see that there are more commuters working in the Big Cypress Reservation than there are in Moore Haven, meaning more people working in Moore Haven live there verse the Reservation. New ventures can possibly capitalize on this commuting pattern by locating food establishments targeting the lunch crowd, or providing services that one would use "on the way home" such as dry cleaning or pharmacy, depending on local customer demographics. To see the commuting patterns of our region, go to www.floridajobs.org/labor-market-information, click on Products and Services, then GIS Mapping Reports.

Southwest Florida Works is the regional state workforce board for Hendry, Glades, Charlotte, Lee and Collier counties. For job search assistance or employer support, speak with an employment representative nearest you by going to www.swflworks.org and click on "Locations."

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Entrepreneur school

So you think you want to start a business? Sign up now for the IBDC Entrepreneur school. This six-week course is designed to provide an approach for thinking through the development of a new business idea or the growth of an existing small business. Tuesday, Jan. 22. 6-7 p.m. No charge Pre-registration is required.

All workshops will be conducted at the Immokalee Business Development Center, 1320 N. 15th Street. Call 239-867-4121 or go to www.Immokalee.Biz for more information.

Hudson appointed chair Health Care Appropriations Subcommittee

Tallahassee – State Representative Matt Hudson (R), House District 80, was appointed as Chairman of the Health Care Appropriations Subcommittee by Speaker Will Weatherford. "I am honored by the confidence the Speaker has place in me and I am committed to working hard to help address the pressing issues facing our state," said Representative Hudson.

Additionally, Chairman Hudson has been appointed as Vice Chair to the Select Com-

mittee on PPACA (Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act) He will also serve on the Appropriations Committee, the Economic Development & Tourism Subcommittee and the Joint Legislative Budget Committee.

"I am looking forward to addressing the opportunities facing our County and State. These committee assignments will be advantageous to Hendry County and House District 80", stated Representative Hudson.

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Diana Ramirez, with her snowflake.

Submitted photo/Andy Spaulding

Snowflakes in the face of tragedy

by Andy Spaulding
Immokalee Child Care

The world was stunned on Friday, December 14, 2012, as a gunman violently took the lives of God's most innocent, at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Connecticut. Some saw it as a signal of the end of the world. Others stood in shock and bewilderment as to how such a travesty could take place. No one could comprehend the reasoning of the incident. There was simply nothing anyone could do but shed tears for a reality that is unfathomable.

Parents and teachers from all parts of the country still attempt to find ways for their children to process what happened. The why, how and 'if only' are beyond us all.

In an attempt to show support for the families and the community affected, the National Parent Teacher Association has started a project to help them, as well as the teachers of Sandy Hook Elementary School. They are asking people to make unique snowflakes. The PTA wants the students to be greeted by a winter wonderland when they return to their new school, which will be in a new building.

Andrew Spaulding, Assistant Director of the Immokalee Child Care Center, a not-for-profit early childhood education center in the rural farming community of Immokalee, felt the need to have the children at his center participate in making "snowflakes."

"All I could think of is that is that no one ever knows what tomorrow will bring," Spaulding says.

Valarie Bostic, the agency's Executive Director whole-heartedly agrees. "I cried when this happened," says Bostic. "I thought about the families whose lives have been affected. I thought of the parents who instead of wrapping gifts were burying their most prized possession. I thought of the teachers and staff who laid down their lives for those children. At Immokalee Child Care Center we incorporate character development into our program. Encouraging children to be compassionate and empathic is important. We must teach our children these core values because we all know the children are our future."

The Immokalee Child Care Center is a 501-C-3 agency that provides safe, affordable, quality early childcare and early childhood education to children from low-income and migrant families in the Immokalee area. "We are not going into detail of the incident and what happened with the children in Sandy Hook," Spaulding says. "We simply told our children about someone who is sad and that these snowflakes will make them feel better and that we should do everything we can to always make others feel better."

For more information on the Immokalee Child Care Center, please call 239-657-4130 or e-mail Immokaleechild@aol.com.

Students First

by Maribel DeArmas

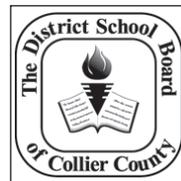
It all came down to the last five minutes of the game – the Class 5A State Championship high school football game. The Immokalee High School (IHS) Indians were down 14 points against their opponents, the Amos P. Godby High School Cougars from Leon County. Two hard fought touchdowns later, the Indians – with no time left on the clock – were in position to tie the game and force overtime, but an unfortunate kick situation resulted in a point shy upset. The final score Godby-21 vs. Immokalee-20. Sure, it was certainly not the winning results we were looking for, but in the end, the Immokalee community and really all of Collier County should be nothing but beaming with pride for the team's magnificent accomplishments. On the field, the entire team played with heart and passion throughout the season, and especially during this final game. But, I want to take some time to share with you a little of what happened off the field during the Indians' trip to Orlando – a trip that truly ended up being a once-in-a-lifetime experience and a wonderful holiday gift for all who participated.

I touched base with IHS principal, Dr. Mary Murray, who shared some heartfelt stories about their time in Orlando – stories that have nothing to do with first downs, long passes, or punts. It all started the night after the big game. The entire team was treated to a tailgate dinner hosted by former NFL running back and onetime IHS Indian Edgerrin James. The guys were really excited to spend time with an IHS

hero and one of his NFL buddies, former Redskins running back Clinton Portis. And then, a big secret was revealed! You see, the team was surprised with a visit to Disney's Magic Kingdom the day after. So many of the kids had never had the opportunity to visit Disney World – in fact, most didn't even believe they were actually going until they arrived at the magical gates. It was smiles, laughter, and overall happiness the entire time they were there. Imagine eight linemen in one Splash Mountain log flume. Now that's not something you get to see every day! At the end of their visit, one young man told Dr. Murray, "When I was a kid, I'd see this place on TV and I didn't think it was real. Ya know – like it was just a picture somebody made. Places like this just don't exist in real life. Thanks for bringing us."

So, while the run to State finals and the actual Championship game are experiences the Indians will never forget, the memories they now have go well beyond the field. In Dr. Murray's proud words: "In a season filled with injury, adversity, and incredible expectations, we couldn't be more proud of our team. Our guys pulled together as a family and fought hard to reach their goal, falling just a little bit short of their ultimate goal of a State Championship."

Our team represented their school, families, community, and themselves with honor and should be proud to be just the second IHS football team to reach a State Championship game. We wish the seniors well on the next chapter of their journey and look forward to another season of success from another very talented team of Indians next year."



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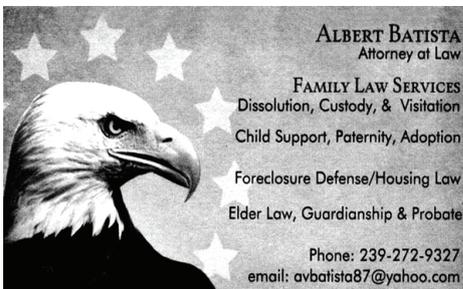
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Submitted photos

Winn-Dixie magic

Christmas around the World Parade and Gala hosted a Drawing or Coloring Contest with our local Winn Dixie Store. Pictures below show the students eye view of what our local Winn Dixie looks like to them. Several schools placed 1st, 2nd & 3rd Place in the Drawing Contest and Winn Dixie will reward them with Pizza, Cupcakes or a Cookie Party. We would like to thank David Dawson, Director of our local Winn Dixie Store for the generous support he has given our community with projects that are safe, fun and educational.



Season's Greetings with wildfire prevention

The Florida Forest Service wants to remind everyone to enjoy the winter holidays with safety in mind. Holiday wildfire safety begins the first day as your family searches for the perfect Christmas tree. Holiday wildfire safety ends with the carefully planned disposal of the tree at the end of the holiday season.

Christmas tree fires are more likely to cause a house fire; a wildfire can result from the flames. Richie Bamlet, Senior Forester and Certified Arborist with the Florida Forest Service wants to provide families with a few tips on protecting yourself, your home and your property. One of the first things you can do to prevent Christmas tree fires is to pick the right tree.

"When choosing a Christmas tree, it is important to buy a fresh tree," Richie says. "Cut an inch off the bottom or ask the vendor to do it for you. This new cut will allow water to be taken up. Put your tree in water as soon as you get home and be sure to top-up daily."

According to Melissa Yunas, Wildfire Mitigation Specialist Florida Forest Service "Get to know the burn laws in your area before your strike that match. It is unsafe and illegal to burn wrapping paper and gift boxes. Consider recycling instead of burning your Christmas trees in order to reduce the chances of sparking a wildfire." Christmas trees may be ground up for mulch or used to help stabilize sand dunes, build structure for fish in a lake

or pond or provide shelter for birds and other wildlife. Contact your local Solid Waste Authority for recycling information.

If you decide to burn your Christmas tree, here are a few outdoor burning tips:

- Never leave a fire unattended, and make sure it is out before you leave
- Keep a shovel and water hose handy
- Don't burn on windy days or when the humidity is below 35%
- Your fire must be contained to an 8 foot diameter pile or non-combustible barrel and must be at least 25 feet from forests, 25 feet from your house, 50 feet from a paved public road and 150 feet from other occupied buildings

- If your fire escapes, you may be held liable for suppression costs and damage to the property of others.

- Burning yard waste does not require an authorization from the Florida Forest Service, but you should check with your local city, county or Florida Forest Service officials to see if there are any restrictions in your area

For additional fire prevention tips, burning rules and regulations contact your local Florida Forest Service office (Vero Beach 772-778-5085; Port St. Lucie 772-468-3915; Stuart 772-221-4045; Okeechobee 863-462-5160; Sebring 863-655-6407; Palmdale 863-674-4000). Please visit our website at www.floridaforestservice.com

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Employment Full Time

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Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission has a job opening for a Technician at Okaloacoochee Slough WMA in Hendry County. For more information and to apply go to <https://peoplefirst.myflorida.com> (click on South, then on Search and under Keywords enter "77901964" then click Search) Deadline to apply is December 8th.



For more listings, go to www.newszip.com

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Some 800 and 900 telephone numbers may require an extra charge, as well as long distance toll costs. We will do our best to alert our reader of these charges in the ads, but occasionally we may not be aware of the charges. Therefore, if you call a number out of your area, use caution.

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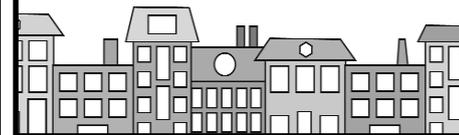
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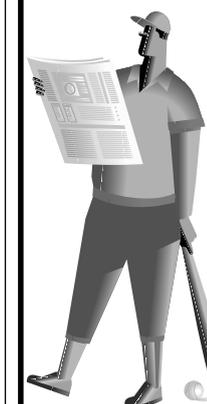
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David Lawrence Center welcomes new adult staff psychiatrist

Naples, FL – The David Lawrence Center, Collier County’s only comprehensive, not-for-profit mental health and substance abuse treatment facility serving children, adults and families, is pleased to announce the appointment of board certified adult and geriatric psychiatrist and author Scott Haltzman, MD as a full time Staff Psychiatrist in Adult Outpatient Medical Services.

Haltzman earned his bachelor’s degree in Biology and English from Brown University and his medical degree from Brown University Medical School. He completed his residency in psychiatry at Yale University School of Medicine and the Yale-New Haven Hospital Psychiatric Outpatient Department where he was the Chief Resident.

Haltzman recently relocated to Naples from Rhode Island and brings with him more than 15 years of experience in teaching, psychiatric consulting, direct patient care, psychotherapy, marriage education and couples therapy. He had participated in practice management in a variety of treatment settings including private practice, community mental health, addiction treatment centers, medical centers and hospitals.

His teaching experience includes serving as a Clinical Assistant Professor in the Department of Psychiatry and Human Behavior at Brown University Medical School, and as Hospital Director of Residency Training at the Veterans Administration Medical Center. His management experience includes serving as Chief Consultation/Liaison Psychiatry and Chief of Outpatient Psychiatry Services



Submitted photo
Scott Haltzman, MD.

at the Veterans Administration Medical Center, Chief of Psychiatry and Medical Services and Medical Director at the Northern Rhode Island Mental Health Center, Medical Director at NRI Community Services, Inc., and Lead Psychiatrist at Stanley Street Treatment and Resources. His hospital experience includes having served as an Inpatient Psychiatrist at Landmark Medical Center, Butler Hospital, St. Joseph’s Hospital and Zambano Hospital.

Haltzman is the author/co-author of numerous books, articles and scholarly re-

search in psychiatry and pharmacology, particularly in his specialty of marriage, family and committed relationships. His research focuses on seeking out data to better help understand the relationship patterns of husbands and wives, and the techniques individuals use to advance the institution of marriage. He is the founder and editor of DrScott.com and 365Reasons.com and the author of The Secrets of Happily Married Men, The Secrets of Happily Married Women, and The Secrets of Happy Families. His newest book, The Secrets of Surviving Infidelity is due for publication in June, 2013.

Haltzman has gained international recognition for his work in support of marriage and husbands including having received the 1997 Exemplary Psychiatrist Award from the National Alliance on Mental Illness, the 1999 Janssen Clinical Scholar Award and being named a 2003 Distinguished Fellow of the American Psychiatric Association. He has shared his expertise in the field of relationships nationally and locally with a variety of print, radio and television media outlets. He has had appearances on nationally syndicated television programs such as the Today Show, 20/20, the Rachel Ray Show and Good Morning America. He has also been quoted nationally in TIME Magazine, Redbook, Glamour, Parenting Magazine, Cosmopolitan and Men’s Health, the New York Times, Washington Post, Los Angeles Times, Chicago Tribune. He is a frequent lecturer on topics related to the field of psychiatry.

Haltzman is fluent in Spanish and Eng-

lish.

David Lawrence Center is the Southwest Florida-based, not-for-profit leading provider of behavioral health solutions dedicated to inspiring and creating life-changing wellness for every individual. The Center provides innovative, comprehensive inpatient, outpatient, residential and community based prevention and treatment services for the one in four local children and adults who experience mental health, emotional, psychological and substance abuse challenges. David Lawrence Center has eight locations in Collier County and touches the lives of more than 30,000 people each year. For more information about David Lawrence Center call 239-455-8500 or visit www.DavidLawrenceCenter.org

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Collier Family Farms debuts in Ave Maria

NAPLES, FL., -- December 13, 2012 – Barron Collier’s legacy remains vibrant and visible in many areas of Collier County today including real estate development, mineral management, hospitality and tourism, and agriculture. Fourth generation Collier family members are keen on getting back to their roots, so to speak, and are looking to the land in their newest company, Collier Family Farms.

Collier Family Farms is located on 12 acres in eastern Collier County, within the development of Ave Maria. With a focus on locally-grown, pesticide-free, non-GMO produce and citrus, Collier Family Farms will offer a variety of fruits and vegetables for sale. Elvie Engle, 40-year farming veteran and Lara Collier, great-granddaughter of Barron Collier Sr., have been working for months preparing the land and planting seeds from the country’s most reputable seed houses in anticipation of a January opening of the on-site farm store and U-Pick.

“We are a transitional organic farm,” states Elvie Engle, manager of farm operations for Collier Family Farms. “While we are practicing organic farming methods now and have been from the beginning we will most likely receive our USDA Organic accreditation by summer 2013.” Collier Family Farms is incorporating alternative growing methods including hydro-stackers, a vertical gardening system which increases fruit and vegetable yield while conserving space and



Submitted photo
Elvie Engle and Lara Collier, Collier Family Farms.

water. Strawberry and leafy green plants are anticipated as the first plants to grow in the hydro stackers.

A public U-Pick and farm stand are expected to open at the site in January. “Being able to work and harvest the land that my great-grandfather acquired is very fulfilling,” comments Lara Collier, assistant manager of

farm operations, “but the best part is sharing this experience with the local community.” Visitors will be allowed to pick a variety of products cucumbers, squash, eggplants, tomatoes, okra, carrots, herbs and more or simply select from the day’s best offering in the farm stand. This season, Collier Family Farms expects to sell peppers, leafy greens, cucumbers, tomatoes, eggplant, squash, onions, strawberries, and locally grown citrus.

Collier Family Farms is located at 5321 Ave Maria Boulevard in Ave Maria. For more information, please visit www.collierfamilyfarms.com and their Facebook page, or call 239-398-4157.



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