

IMMOKALEE BULLETIN

Serving Immokalee, Ave Maria and Eastern Collier County

Vol. 47 No. 26

Thursday, June 26, 2014

Quality on Tap Report available

The availability of the 2013 Quality on Tap Report has been mailed to all of our customers. This report shows the results of our water quality monitoring for the period from January through December 2013. Additional copies will be available at the Immokalee Chamber of Commerce, 1300 N. 15th St. STE 2, Immokalee Branch Library at 417 North 1st St., and in the IWSD office at 1020 Sanitation Rd, Immokalee. Copies are also available for download from our website: (www.iw-sd.com) in both English and Spanish.

La disponibilidad de La Calidad de 2013 en Informe de Grifo ha enviado a todos nuestros clientes. Este informe muestra los resultados de nuestra escucha de calidad de agua para el período de Enero al Diciembre de 2013. Las copias adicionales están disponibles en la Immokalee Chamber of Commerce, 1300 N 15th St. Ste 2, en la Biblioteca de Immokalee, en 417 1a Calle del Norte, y en la oficina IWSD en 1020 Sanitation Rd, Immokalee. Copias también están disponibles para su descarga desde nuestra página Web: (www.iw-sd.com) en Inglés y Español.

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

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Immokalee High School students extend knowledge of their world

Waterside Shops, a Gulf Coast shopping and dining destination, recently hosted The Immokalee Foundation students during a recent Career Day.

Twenty TIF students were able to meet with management specific to the retail industry, tour the property and learn about the variety of job opportunities available in a retail setting.

Job shadowing departments included security, facilities, housekeeping, construction, maintenance, landscaping, retail and fashion, marketing, guest services and marketing.

The Immokalee Foundation provides a range of education programs that focus on building pathways to success through college and post-secondary preparation and support, mentoring and tutoring, opportunities for broadening experiences and life skills development leading to economic independence.

To learn more about TIF or partnership opportunities, call 239-430-9122 or visit www.immokaleefoundation.org

Career Day



TOP: Amy Montez, Miranda Herrera, Gerardo Lug, Nyla Reyna, Chris Ortiz, with Operations Manger Hal Kaelin.

BOTTOM: Regine Francois, Mari Delgado, Technie Fabian, Junette Derosier with Security Manager Tom Smith.



Get birth certificates at tax office

The Collier County Tax Collector's Office in Immokalee is reaching out to the community with another service.

Now Immokalee residents can obtain a certified Florida birth certificate at the Tax Collector's Office, 106 South First Street, in the Government Center.

With the proper documentation, in only takes a few minutes.

You will need identification: a Driver's License, Florida ID card or passport. Complete the application process, which takes about ten minutes, and pay the \$13 - that's all it takes.

In addition to getting your

driver's license, license plates and paying your property tax this service just provides another option for residents instead of going to the health department to obtain a birth certificate.

The Driver's License office is open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m.-5 p.m.

Nominate industry award

NAPLES, FL (June 23, 2014) – The Partnership for Collier's Future Economy™, an affiliate of The Greater Naples Chamber of Commerce, is now accepting nominations for the 2014 Excellence in Industry Awards™.

The awards recognize corporate and individual excellence in Collier County, and are given in the following six categories: Business Expansion,

The Chairman's Award, Company to Watch, Heart of the Community, Pillar Award and Young Professional of the Year.

Any company doing business in Collier County is eligible to apply. The Chairman's Award is awarded by the Chairman of the Board, not open for nominations.

Nominations may be submitted by the companies themselves, their clients, their vendors and/or other individuals.

To submit a nomination and learn more about the award categories, click here: <http://onfa.st/11YbNfs>.

All nominations must be received by 5:00 pm EST August 1, 2014.

The title sponsor is Physicians Regional Healthcare System.

The winners of this year's Excellence in Industry Awards are selected by a secret judging panel and announced at a ceremony at the Hilton Naples, 5111 Tamiami Trail North, on Friday, September 12, 2014 from 11:00 am – 1:30 pm.

Sponsorship opportunities are available. Contact Kristi Bartlett, Vice President of Business Development, at (239) 403-2914 or kristi@napleschamber.org.



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To Submit News

The Immokalee Bulletin welcomes submissions from its readers. Opinions, calendar items, story ideas and photographs are welcome. Call (239) 657-6000 to reach our newsroom. The deadline for all news items is 11 a.m. on Monday prior to the following Thursday's publication.

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Our Purpose...

The Caloosa Belle is published by Independent Newspapers of Florida. Independent is owned by a unique trust that enables this newspaper to pursue a mission of journalistic service to the citizens of the community. Since no dividends are paid, the company is able to thrive on profit margins below industry standards. All after-tax surpluses are reinvested in Independent's mission of journalistic service, commitment to the ideals of the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, and support of the community's deliberation of public issues.

We Pledge...

- To operate this newspaper as a public trust
- To help our community become a better place to live and work, through our dedication to conscientious journalism.
- To provide the information citizens need to make their own intelligent decisions about public issues.
- To report the news with honesty, accuracy, purposeful neutrality, fairness, objectivity, fearlessness and compassion.
- To use our opinion pages to facilitate community debate, not to dominate it with our own opinions.
- To disclose our own conflicts of interest or potential conflicts to our readers.
- To correct our errors and to give each correction the prominence it deserves.
- To provide a right to reply to those we write about.
- To treat people with courtesy, respect and compassion.

Masthead photo courtesy of Waddy Thompson
www.facebook.com/waddyphotos

Community Briefs

Rally for Relay

The American Cancer Society is rallying committee participation for the the 2015 Relay For Life. Relay events based out of Naples, Golden Gate, Immokalee, and Bonita/Estero will join to host the 2015 Committee Rally starting at 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, June 26, at Arthrex Corporate Headquarters in Naples. Whether you work or live in any of these communities, you're invited to attend and learn how you can be a part of making a difference by helping to plan and participate a Relay for Life event.

To RSVP or to learn more, please contact Katherine Fox via email at Katherine.Fox@cancer.org.

Dems plan meeting

The Democratic Club of Immokalee will meet on Tuesday, July 1, at 6:45 p.m., at Mi Ranchito, 710 W. Main Street, Immokalee, FL 34142, (239) 657-1766. The club will be discussing the 2014 elections from governor to school board, and other topics concerning Immokalee. The meetings are open to all.

Register for School board candidate forum

Monday, August 11, 2014 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 PM EST. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. in the Naples Daily News Community Room, 1100 Immokalee Rd., Naples. Program: 6:45-8:30 p.m.

Contact Lisa Church The Education Foundation of Collier County 239-643-4755. Moderated conversation-style forum, employing Connect Now conversation guidelines, that will provide an opportunity for the community to become better informed as they prepare to make their choices for School Board. Space is limited; pre-registration required.

Revival

Everyone is invited to enjoy the music, singing, the message of the Word of God from June 29-July 6 at the tent revival, 410

Colorado Ave. For all information, call Rev. J.C.Paul 239-503-5135 or 239-657-7668. We just can't wait to welcome you.

Christmas Around the World

Christmas around the World Parade and Gala Event is the second largest Winter Event in Southwest Florida. The event is DECEMBER 13, 2014 at 5:30 p.m. (Christmas Parade is directly across from The Seminole Casino of Immokalee) and immediately after the parade. "The Snow Gala" begins at the Aquatic Park @ 505 Escambia Street.

In August, the Immokalee Chamber of Commerce's Christmas Committee will announce the Christmas Parade theme and have the entire Christmas Event Packages ready to come to you.

If you need additional information on the above, please contact Cherryle Thomas @ 239-657-0080 or Mariela Romero @ 239-658-0704.

Summer fun

Kids! Get ready for the summer programs at Immokalee South Park, at 418 School Dr.:

Movie night August 8; \$5.00

Daddy and me dance.

School aged dances.

We also have space available for rent.

For more information and upcoming events feel free to call us at 239-252-IMSP(4677).

Register for Pop Warner

Apply with the Immokalee Seminoles Pop Warner league for Cheer and Football players ages 5-15 for the upcoming season. If you would like to register your child you can pick up an application at the Print Shop, 1390 North 15th Street Suite 300 (across the Florida Community Bank) or go online at www.ImmokaleeSeminoles.com.

Register Monday, Wednesday, and Friday at the Print Shop from 5:30-7:30 p.m.

Wildlife Commission discusses future of Florida black bear

Beginning tonight in Sunrise (Broward County) the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) will be holding three meetings to hear public comment on black bear management in South Florida. All meetings will run from 6:30-8 p.m.

Sunrise, June 25 - Sunrise Civic Center Ballroom, 10610 W. Oakland Park Blvd.

Naples, June 26 - Collier County IFAS Extension Office, 14700 Immokalee Rd.

Lehigh Acres, July 1 - East County Regional Library, 881 Gunnery Rd.

With only an estimated 700 bears in our region - and with development threatening the small amount of habitat which remains, South Florida Wildlands Association (SFWA) has made the following recommendations to its supporters. All statements below can be attributed to Matthew Schwartz, Executive Director of South Florida Wildlands Association.

1. No black bear hunting. Following the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission's (FWC) removal of the Florida black bear from Florida's Imperiled Species List in 2012, there are no longer any legal restrictions which would keep Florida's bears from being hunted.

2. Restrict new development in South Florida's black bear habitat. In addition to over 400,000 acres recently leased out by Collier Resources for oil drilling and seismic testing (virtually all of it in black bear habitat), many new projects are being proposed locally which will dramatically alter the habitat available to the species if they go through. Those include FPL's new Hendry County "Clean Energy Center" (if built - it would be one of the largest fossil fuel plants in the country) and Collier Enterprises' massive "Town of Big Cypress" just west of the Florida Panther National Wildlife Refuge

Letter to the Editor

Dear Community Partners,

It is the time of year again for Lipman's annual backpack giveaway. Not only do we plan on providing much needed backpacks and school supplies to needy kids right here in Immokalee but we also offer a unique event in which we hope to showcase some of our community's service providers.

Along with all of our agricultural partners, we were able to raise enough money to give away 1,200 backpacks filled with essential school supplies on August 2nd from 10 a.m.-1 p.m. at the Immokalee Sports Complex on Escambia Street. In the past we have hosted as many as 25 not-for-profit service providers, such as the Harry Chapin Food Bank, Habitat For Humanity, the Florida St. Medical Clinic, and many more from the area to raise awareness of the services available to folks right here in town. We also plan to feature free food, prizes, entertainment, and ultimately, a fully stocked backpack for each child.

It should be a great event but we need your help too. There are a number of ways you can participate, including:

- Bring a table and tent and set up a kid-friendly exhibit featuring your organization
- Provide some volunteers to help us on the morning of the event
- Donate some goods or services for the families that are getting their kids ready to go back-to-school

This should all go a long way to getting the kids in Immokalee the tools they need to get ahead so please join us at this community event. If you can participate or would like more information, please contact me at 239.657.4421.

Thank you,
Jaime Weisinger
315 E. New Market Road
Immokalee, FL 34142
Office: 239.657.4421
Cell: 239.898.9315
jaime.weisinger@lipmanproduce.com
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(same vicinity as the "Golden Gate" oil well). And although at the time of the de-listing the FWC promised us "consultation" whenever new projects were proposed for bear habitat, they famously sent a "no comment" letter to the Department of Environmental Protection when asked to consult on the oil well proposed next to the Panther Refuge.

3. Bears are highly intelligent animals and will naturally stay away from humans. However, like us, they are omnivores and will eat just about anything. And like us, sometimes their stomachs will overcome their good sense.

We need stiff fines and penalties for anyone caught feeding bears. You're not doing them any favors feeding them human food. Also bear-proof garbage containers need to be obligatory for existing residences in bear country.

PICO United Florida Provides Legal Services, Tools to Immigrants Upon Newly Announced DACA Renewal

Orlando, FL. - Yesterday marked the two year anniversary of the day President Obama announced the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program. Since 2012, DACA has allowed undocumented immigrants who arrived in the United States as children temporary protection from deportation. Under the protection of DACA, driven, aspiring Americans have been granted the ability to pursue an education, continue working, and fully contribute to the country they know as home.

DACA status is granted for a two-year period, which means a large number of recipients are currently reapplying for deferred action. PICO United Florida is working alongside advocates with United We Dream and Own the Dream to ensure that young, undocumented immigrants and their families have all the information they need to renew their status.

"My dream has always been to attend college and earn a degree and when I heard that DACA had been announced by the president on the news I knew that my life had changed, I knew there was hope for my dreams." Said Oscar Hernandez, DACA recipient and leader with PICO United Florida in Orlando. "I decided to help in the DACA

clinics to help out a friend but then I realized that many other people deserve the opportunity that I have. I also noticed that some people in my community, who I knew qualified, had not applied. Most of them had not applied because they did not have enough information and some of them didn't even know they qualified. After seeing this I knew I had to help inform my community."

"Organizing a DACA clinic is hard work," Hernandez continued, "but I love the satisfaction of the people we help. They feel hopeful and look forward to the future. Some might say it's just a piece of paper, but to a DACA recipient like myself, it's a new opportunity, a new life, a life out of the shadows."

The success of DACA is a real-world example of the positive impact of administrative relief for the undocumented community. Now, advocates are urging President Obama to provide protection to the parents, older siblings, and other family members of DACA recipients so they too can come out of the shadows.

Tomorrow evening, experts will host a deferred action legal clinic to help inform the community about DACA renewal and other important issues around deferred action

Lipman acquires Produce Exchange

IMMOKALEE, Fla. (June 17, 2014) – Lipman, North America's largest field tomato grower, has acquired The Produce Exchange (TPE), a leading grower and distributor of quality produce. With operations in Washington, California and Arizona, TPE joins Lipman's national network of farming, packing, processing and repacking.

"We are thrilled to welcome The Produce Exchange team to Lipman," said Kent Shoemaker, CEO of Lipman. "We are confident that their close-to-the-customer services, in addition to their West Coast supply in tomatoes and vegetables, will enhance Lipman's ability to create more success with our customers."

With this acquisition, Lipman is able to expand its geographic foot print and increase its depth in supply in both vegetables and tomatoes; including both open field and protected agriculture. TPE brings unique varieties of fresh produce that will now be offered to Lipman customers. With four locations along the West Coast, TPE will ensure Lipman's customers receive excellent produce year-round.

"Joining the Lipman family of companies is exciting for all of us at The Produce Exchange," said Sam Jones, Jr., TPE's President. "We look forward to using Lipman's national farming and repacking network to give our customers access to the acre."

Jones, employed by TPE since 1980, will maintain his leadership role.

"Lipman and The Produce Exchange have a lot in common and it is summed up best by TPE's mission statement: The relentless creation of extraordinary successes together with our partners," Shoemaker said. "Strategically, our values are in alignment,

our facilities and farms complement one another, and our seasoned people together bring experience that will give our customers what they need to be successful."

About Lipman

Based in Immokalee, Fla., Lipman is the largest field tomato grower in North America, providing dependable year-round fresh produce through an integrated network of research and development, farming, processing, repacking and procurement solutions. Farms in Florida, South Carolina, Virginia, Maryland, California and Mexico – totaling tens of thousands of acres – allow for Lipman's geographic diversity and ability to grow and ship fresh produce 365 days a year. For more information, visit www.lipmanproduce.com.

BoCC challenging FDEP on drilling

(Naples, Fla.) – At Tuesday's Board of County Commission (BCC) meeting, Commissioners decided to move forward with challenging the Florida Department of Environmental Protection's (FDEP) Consent Order with a Texas-based company exploring oil drilling in Collier County.

Chairman Tom Henning placed an agenda item on the June 10, 2014 agenda to reconsider the BCC's earlier May 13 decision to challenge the Consent Order between FDEP and Texas-based Dan A. Hughes Company due to a lack of communication with the Board of County Commissioners. Dan A. Hughes is exploring for oil on Barron Collier lands at the Collier-Hogan Well.

Chairman Henning said if the Commission had decided at Tuesday's meeting to reconsider challenging the FDEP Consent Order it would have established a means of communication, allowed for review of FDEP information and allowed the County to vet potential misinformation that has been circulating throughout the community.

On May 28, Chairman Henning met with the then FDEP Deputy Secretary Jeff Littlejohn who agreed to have FDEP officials meet with the Board of County Commissioners. Subsequently, Littlejohn resigned from his position with FDEP on June 6, and FDEP appointed Cliff Wilson as Deputy Secretary. Wilson spoke with Chairman Henning on June 9 advising that FDEP did not wish to participate in a public BCC Oil Exploration Workshop which the Chairman had requested to allow for FDEP to answer Collier County Commissioners' concerns in a public forum.

"After meeting with Mr. Littlejohn I felt FDEP was on the right track to meet with us and address our concerns, but the newly appointed Deputy Secretary has made it clear FDEP officials do not in fact wish to participate in an open forum and prefers private meetings in Tallahassee where Collier County residents would not be able to participate. This goes against everything all of us on the Board of County Commissioners stand for and that is an open public dialogue to learn what needs to be learned and take action where it needs to be taken," said Chairman Tom Henning, District 3.

Without the commitment from FDEP to participate in an oil workshop with the BCC on June 17 as proposed by the County, the filing deadline to challenge the Consent Order which is June 13, warrants the BCC to

instead move forward with challenging the FDEP Consent Order.

"At this point, we simply have not been provided with enough information directly from FDEP to answer any of our concerns or the community's, and I'm extremely disappointed in the leadership at the Florida Department of Environmental Protection," said Chairman Henning.

For more information, contact Camden Smith by emailing CamdenSmith@collier.gov or by calling (239) 252-8605.

In response to continued uproar from citizens, environmental organizations, and elected officials, Herschel Vinyard, Secretary of the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), has written a letter to the Dan A. Hughes Company requiring the company to hold a series of public meetings to answer all questions regarding current and future drilling operations in Collier County. According to Secretary Vinyard's letter, "there is a lack of clarity on your activities, and we strongly believe that citizens have a right to hear about your current and proposed plans for energy operations within the county."

"Our organization is delighted at this turn of events," said Matthew Schwartz, Executive Director of South Florida Wildlands Association. "When these applications became known just over a year ago, the DEP's attitude seemed to be - 'Nothing trumps mineral rights.' The fact that DEP is now acknowledging our concerns - and the concerns of citizens in Southwest Florida and beyond - is a huge step in the right direction."

Schwartz had filed a lawsuit "pro se" against the Dan A. Hughes Company's proposed oil well next to the Florida Panther National Wildlife Refuge and South Florida Wildlands Association has recently filed another suit against a different company - Tocala LLC - and their plan to conduct seismic testing for oil on over 100,000 acres of land north of the panther refuge.

"Just about all the lands leased are in primary or secondary Florida Panther habitat", Schwartz said. "It's impossible for us to assess the full impacts of their operations on panthers and other wildlife unless we have a complete map of the lease and all locations where drilling will take place. That's also essential for the state and federal wildlife agencies to make their assessment."

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Kids take to becoming fit

Children at Immokalee Child Care Center are becoming fit for life through a cutting edge preschool fitness and wellness program called "FIT START."

FIT START is an enhancement to the current learning enrichment program called START. (Science, Technology, Arts and Reading Together.) START is a curriculum created by Immokalee Child Care Center designed to enhance the overall educational experiences of the children by incorporating science, technology, the arts and reading into the curriculum through hands on methods. The theory behind the program is to promote literacy and language through a dynamic, interactive curriculum that incorporates science, technology, art and the dramatic arts together around a literary theme.

The FIT START preschool fitness and wellness curriculum is designed to incorporate preschool exercises and preschool fitness activities such as aerobics, dance, stretching, gymnastics, sports, gross motor skills and balance. Children exercise and learn about overall health, wellness, anatomy, nutrition, healthy food choices and exercise. With this program, the Center's early childhood teachers help prevent childhood obesity and provide preschool fitness education for our preschoolers. This program also helps foster self-esteem and positive associations with exercise, healthy eating, as well as, prevent



Submitted photo

These little ones were enjoying themselves.

childhood obesity, diabetes, heart disease risk factors and other diseases. Recent studies have also linked fitness and increased brain cognition in young children.

The children are taught in a non-competitive, goal oriented environment that will enhance a child's education, as well as incorporate healthy eating and lifestyle habits.

David Lawrence Center Awarded grant for Single Mothers in Need

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 receipt of a \$10,000 grant from the Community Trust Fund of The League Club, Inc. for the Motivational Support Specialists (MSS) program.

The David Lawrence Center's MSS program coordinates with the child welfare system to engage and support substance involved child welfare families in appropriate treatment and recovery. The overall goal is to improve both substance abuse treatment and child welfare outcomes. More specifically, the goals are to protect and ensure the safety of the involved children; remediate the consequences of substance abuse on families involved in or at risk of being involved in protective supervision; and create a plan for family reunification and recovery support.

The women served by the MSS program are typically single mothers who, often due to circumstances beyond their control, find themselves becoming psychologically/legally unfit to care for their children. Worn down by the lack of finances, social support systems, and coping skills, the psychological strains begin to unravel their ability to care for themselves and consequently effectively parent. To cope, they begin to self-medicate leading to substance abuse and/or other destructive behavior. The need for immediate, intervening psychological services upon the first detection of possible unfitness is paramount.

The grant will serve as treatment scholarships for 20 single mothers in need of immediate remedial psychological services. These treatment scholarships will effectively protect and ensure the safety of their children; present and remediate the consequences of substance abuse on their families, reduce the risk of being involved in protective supervision; and plan for permanency of intact families by placing them solidly on a path of recovery.

Scott Burgess, David Lawrence Center CEO, states, "We are very grateful for The League Club's continued, unwavering support of our mission and for their dedication to ensuring family wellness. These programs are of great benefit to children and families in real-time and serve to break the cycle of these challenges for future generations as well."

About The League Club

The League Club, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) organization of women in Southwest Florida strengthening communities through fellowship, education, volunteerism and philanthropy.

About David Lawrence Center

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. David Lawrence Center has eight locations in Collier County and touches the lives of more than 40,000 people each year. For more information about David Lawrence Center call 239-455-8500 or visit www.DavidLawrenceCenter.org.

Boys & Girls Club of Collier County launches 2014 summer program

NAPLES, Fla. (June 10, 2014) – In partnership with the Naples Children & Education Foundation, founders of the Naples Winter Wine Festival - the Boys & Girls Club of Collier County recently began the 2014 summer program at its Main Campus, 7500 Davis Boulevard, as well as Immokalee site locations.

The summer program will run through Aug. 1 and is open Monday through Friday 7:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. Each day, Club members receive breakfast, lunch and a snack that support the Club's initiative of healthy lifestyles. Activities include but are not limited to swimming, arts and crafts, reading, dance and music, sports and field trips, and are available to youth ages six to 18.

"Summer is an important time for children and teens to be involved in fun and educational activities. The 'summer brain drain' is affecting youth of all ages, where they lose knowledge by not being engaged during the summer months. Clubs provide a refuge for youth during critical out-of-school hours. Our summer program is accessible for the entire community and we offer scholarships for those who qualify," said Paul Schultz, Vice President of Operations at the Boys & Girls Club of Collier County.

The Naples Children & Education Foun-

ation (NCEF) is committed to supporting charitable programs that improve the physical, emotional and educational lives of underprivileged and at-risk children in Collier County. Its primary fundraiser, the Naples Winter Wine Festival, is the largest global event of its kind, and has raised in excess of \$123 million in its first 14 years for annual grants to 42 beneficiary organizations and seven strategic initiatives.

The Boys & Girls Club of Collier County (BGCC) is a non-profit, youth development organization, which annually serves 3,000 of the most at-risk children and teens in Collier County. The Club provides a safe, positive place where local youth can acquire: academic success, good character and citizenship, and healthy lifestyles. The Boys & Girls Club is dedicated to its mission, which is to enable all young people, especially those who need us most, to reach their full potential as productive, caring, responsible citizens. To learn more about the Boys & Girls Club of Collier County or to arrange a tour, call 239-325-1700 or visit www.bgccc.com.

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Florida Linen Services
Is currently seeking a part time **Engineer**. We are looking for motivated individuals to repair commercial laundry equipment. We offer year round employment.

Anyone interested should apply at **140 Tradeport Pkwy, Immokalee, FL 34142** or Fax Resume to **239-657-9493**.

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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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Public Notices

Public Notice

PUBLIC NOTICE
The Coalition of Florida Farmworkers Organization (COFFO) has scheduled a Community meeting on Tuesday, **July 3rd 2014** at 214 A South 1st Street, Immokalee, Florida 34142. From 5:30 to 6:30pm. The purpose of the meeting is to select one representative to represent the low income Community on the agency's Board of Directors.
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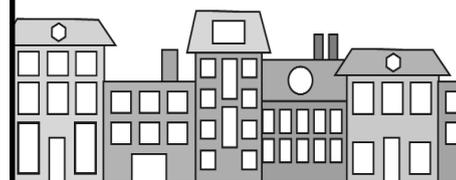


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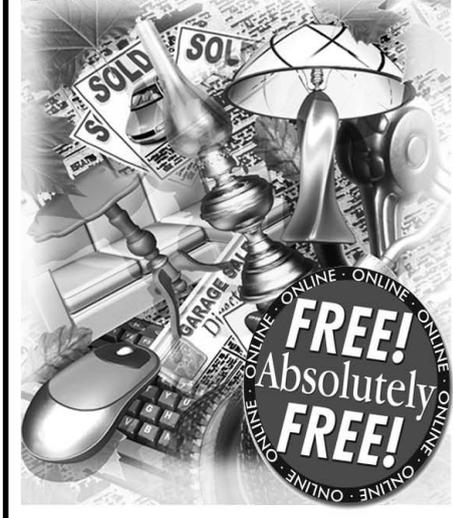
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Dealing with the loss of eyesight is the challenge faced by LaBelle woman

by **Patty Brant Caloosa Belle**

It's impossible to overestimate your eyesight. Every day we all go through life relying on what our eyes tell us. But what if you couldn't rely on your eyes any more? How would you take care of your child? How would you work? Or even get to work? How would you take care of yourself? How would you do the thousands of things you do now without even thinking about them?

Maria Fundora is in the unbelievable position of having to deal with the prospect of losing her sight. Diagnosed with keratoconus, a degenerative disease caused by a weakened cornea, she knows she will ultimately become blind.

Maria has lived in the LaBelle area for eight years. She works for the Collier County Public Schools in Immokalee. She has previously worked for the Southwest Florida Workforce Development Board, Harry Chapin Food Bank distributing food in LaBelle and taking Medicaid applications. She also worked with Lucy's Angels. Trying to keep it together, she has also worked as a substitute

at West Glades School.

Maria has a 22-year-old daughter in Okeechobee and a 10-year-old son who is involved with the LaBelle Little League and All Stars.

This eye condition has her completely frustrated. Her left eye is blurred and everything she sees is crooked. She is relying on her right eye, using hard contact lenses she's not supposed to, just so she can see well enough to navigate.

She's been going to Bascom Palmer Eye Institute for two years, but her condition only gets worse. This single mother was told she needs a cornea transplant and is already legally blind in one eye as her vision continues to worsen. Nothing Bascom Palmer has done has helped her condition, Maria said. Their only answer is for her to have a cornea transplant.

But Maria is adamantly opposed to this invasive procedure and, through her research, has found that a doctor in California may have a cure for her - Dr. Brian Boxer Wachler at the Boxer Wachler Vision Institute. However, the procedure is considered

preventative and therefore not covered by insurance.

Maria has a CD sent by Boxer Wachler outlining the various procedures, who is a viable candidate for them and other particulars. Maria feels any of four might be helpful for her.

She said the procedures may be able to stop the progression of the disease, but cannot reverse it.

She is desperate to find the money for the treatment, which she must have before they will treat her. So Maria is reaching out to the community for help.

The past few years have been tough for her. Her house was in foreclosure but she recently signed a modified loan so she could keep it. Now she doesn't even see how she will be able to keep her job if she loses her eyesight.

She has no credit. She has received a \$7,100 grant to pay for the Holcomb C3r treatment that should stop the progression of the disease but doesn't know how she will pay for any other procedures or transportation. Insurance may reimburse her for some ex-



penses. She's not sure at this time what procedure she may be a candidate for, but \$23,000 is a minimum.

Maria is getting her final records together and had her last test Saturday. She has an ap-

pointment for July 23-24 in California and must have the money at that time. If she doesn't, there won't be another opening until September - and that will be too late.

United Way is looking for ways to help and Maria is even thinking about raffling her vehicle because, she said, at this point "it's not a priority."

An account has been set up at First Bank of Clewiston in the name of Fundora Fund if you would like to make a donation.

Tobacco Free Collier to host Summer Art Contest for local youth

An art contest, sponsored by Tobacco Free Collier, is providing Collier youth an opportunity to express how they feel about the tobacco industry's deceptive ways of targeting youth to become replacement tobacco users.

Submissions are being accepted from June 9 until July 17. Tobacco Free Collier staff are working with summer camps to involve local youth, and are anticipating at least 1,000 entries from 10 different camps. Any child/teen can get involved by calling 239-252-2672 for a contest entry form.

Tobacco use remains the leading preventable cause of death and disease in the world. For decades, tobacco companies have been directly targeting our youth in order to gain life long users at a young age; knowing that 9 of 10 regular smokers try their first cigarette before the age of 18 Tobacco Industry documents have shown companies are not only aware of this fact, but specifically target advertising practices towards youth. Tobacco companies have also designed flavored tobacco products with kids in mind; using flavors that are especially attractive to youth such as strawberry, chocolate, cherry and vanilla. In Florida, 1 in 7 kids between the ages of 11 and 17 have tried flavored tobacco. Studies have shown that these practices are effective, as many youth erroneously believe flavored tobacco products are less harmful than their non-flavored counterparts.

This year's contest themes are as follows:

- Grades K-3 will be encouraged to depict why smoking is harmful.
- Grades 4-8 will illustrate how tobacco advertising targets youth.
- Grades 9-12 will also illustrate how tobacco advertising targets youth.

Three winners will be selected from each age group, and first place winners will have their artwork printed in the Naples Daily

News.

ABOUT TOBACCO FREE COLLIER

Tobacco Free Collier is a diverse community partnership that develops and promotes policies which reduce the use and effects of tobacco in Collier County. To find out more about our local partnership, or to get involved, call us at 252-6852.

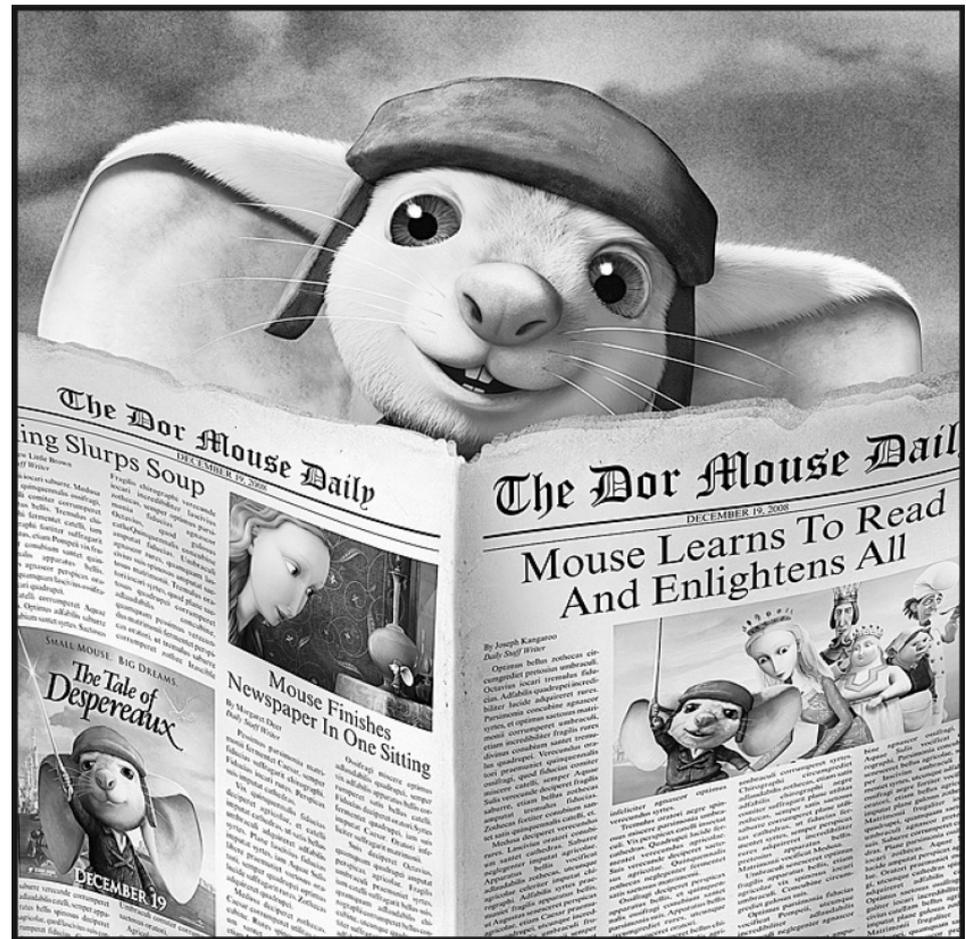
ABOUT TOBACCO FREE FLORIDA

Tobacco Free Florida is a statewide cessation and prevention campaign funded by Florida's tobacco settlement fund. Tobacco Free Florida is managed by the Florida Department of Health, specifically the Bureau of Tobacco Free Florida.

SMOKING CESSATION

Smokers and smokeless tobacco users interested in quitting are encouraged to use one of the 3 Free & Easy Ways to Quit. To learn about Tobacco Free Florida and the state's free cessation resources, visit www.tobaccofreeflorida.com or follow the campaign on Facebook at www.facebook.com/TobaccoFreeFlorida or Twitter at www.twitter.com/tobaccofreefla.

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family. From thrilling airboat tours fun for the whole family to a deck out on the lake perfect for catching Bass, Crappie, Bluegill, Shellcraker, and Catfish. The Marina also offers boat rentals and has two boat ramps; one on the property and one at Ann Olesky Park. Be sure to stop by the covered deck and see the different kinds of wildlife animals on display. You'll encounter parrots, snakes, baby alligators and turtles. Or enjoy the picnic tables under the shady trees at Ann Olesky Park and take in the beautiful views around you.



For more information, stop by and visit Ski Olesky @ 6001 Lake Trafford Rd or call today (239) 657-2214

If you would like to be featured in the Chamber page as a sponsor for 6 weeks of advertisement to begin on July 17th 2014 through September 4th 2014 for the low price of \$90.00 please contact Mariela Romero at the Chamber Office on Friday's at (239) 657-3237 m_romero12@comcast.net

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