



REMINDER:
The Observer News and M&M Printing offices will be **CLOSED** Friday, Dec. 24 and Friday, Jan. 31.

SECTION B



Read about Warren Resen's travels to Seminole County in central Florida on page 1B



Christmas is a great time to fellowship and give praise. See many church events on pages 5-7B



Still looking for that special electronic gift? Check out Giftable Gadgets on page 12B

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PERMIT NO. 8

December 16, 2010
Volume 54
Number 47
2 Sections

THE OBSERVER NEWS

www.ObserverNews.net

Community rallies for Dawn MacCalla

Ruskin founding principles on display this Christmas season

By MELODY JAMESON
mj@observernews.net

RUSKIN – This community may be set on a 21st century course, but its 100-year-old roots remain its steering principles.

Founded a century ago on the concept of communal sharing for the general welfare advanced by its namesake, English social critic John Ruskin, the settlement dedicated to education and the “commongood” through the years has rallied regularly to uphold its own.

Christmas, 2010, is no exception – even if the gifts include a new comode and the plumbing to install it.

The story actually began to unfold with a tragedy on local streets four years ago come January. Twenty-four-year-old Angelique Aguilar died in a crushing vehicle accident. She left six small children including an infant, all under the age of nine, but no husband. The burden of caring for, raising, and channeling the energies of six growing youngsters fell to her mother, Dawn MacCalla, herself still raising another daughter.

Nonetheless, MacCalla shoehorned the half dozen grandchildren into her little three-bedroom ranch near East Shell Point Road, determined to create a new family lifestyle. Together, they established routines ranging from use of the one bathroom in the home to attending school and finishing homework to earning a living for the new eight-member unit.

See COMMUNITY RALLIES, page 7

Community to weigh in on south side opening to U.S. 301

By MELODY JAMESON
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SUN CITY CENTER – Should free-flowing, two-way, non-emergency vehicular traffic be allowed between South Pebble Beach Boulevard and U.S. 301?

If so, who is going to pay for the necessary improvements?

Would such a new connection between the south side of the community and the widened U.S. highway encourage shortcutting through it by non-residents or open the figurative door to increased crime within it?

These questions and more are to be aired during a town hall meeting scheduled for 7 PM, Thursday, January 20, in Community Hall, South Pebble Beach.

The issues have been raised time and again since development of the south side of the community was undertaken more than two decades back. Opponents stand firm

See PROPOSED OPENING, page 17



PENNY FLETCHER PHOTO

Richard Nickeson, Russ Foti and Carolyn Wight (from front) man the Sun City Center Computer Room helping guests and drop-ins like Bill Neville (far back) learn new things on the computer. The Computer Room is open to all residents of Sun City Center and Kings Point, not just to members.

Computer Club offers help so you can stay in touch

By PENNY FLETCHER
penny@observernews.net

The first computer I worked on appeared in my newsroom in the mid 1980s. I remember its screen was a huge blue blinking light with white letters on it. If you didn't put your cursor in the right place before you saved, everything you'd written just disappeared. It was manufactured by Compugraphic Corporation, which had made its mark in phototype-setting equipment two decades before.

See COMPUTER CLUB, page 10



The Christmas season is alive and well near the town docks of Beaufort, North Carolina.

Cool change

Part six of an Observer News feature series

By MITCH TRAPHAGEN
mitch@observernews.net

If there's one thing in my life that's missing, it's the time that I spend alone sailing on the cool and bright clear waters.

I can hear the wind howling and moaning outside; but being tucked into a protected basin in Southport, North Carolina, I can hardly feel it. The boat rocks now and again and all of the boats in this marina are dancing around, as if anxious about the weather. But there are no large waves here — there is peace.

I haven't watched television or seen the nightly news in weeks. Being alone, I had no one to converse with so I talked to God. Early on, I would begin with a whine — “Please God...” — but then realized that my conversations should begin with thanks because I had so much to be thankful for. It was something I tried to remember as the conversations continued.

Taking a miss on the nightly televised news had an interesting effect. Without the constant bombardment of bad news, I began to see the good in things. I began to see anew that people are not inherently evil. We are all just bundles of thoughts and



MITCH TRAPHAGEN PHOTOS

This isn't how I imagined sailing to be when I first bought a boat. Heading south, I was bundled up wearing at least four layers of clothing to protect myself against the cold weather.

nerves; a messed up species trying to learn a thing or two as we tumble through this circus called life. All of us, rich and poor, lucky and cursed, are just trying to get by — although some have means and ideals more noble than others. Then again, that which is considered noble is a matter of perspective. Noble to a rich

See COOL CHANGE, page 13

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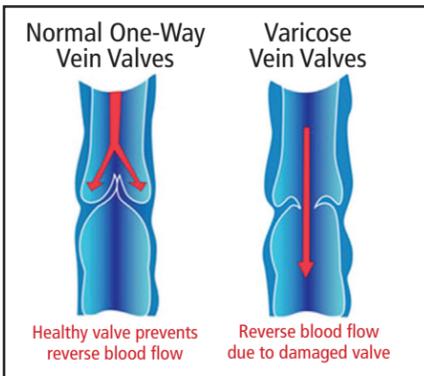
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Our free consultation will be your first step to pain-free legs.

The signs of varicose veins aren't always obvious. Even if you don't see veins on the surface of your legs, there's a good chance your discomfort is a symptom of vein disease. Half of all men and women over 50 are affected by a vein problem. And without intervention, the problem will only get worse. Fortunately, the solution is a simple one.

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All veins have valves. Healthy valves keep blood flowing only upward and support the weight of the column of blood. When



these valves are broken, blood pools below. This congestion and increased pressure result in discomfort and cause fluid to build up and leak from the deeper capillaries. The result – gradual and continuous deterioration of your legs over the years. Both visible and hidden varicose veins are dangerous – they increase your risk of blood clots. Most varicose veins are hidden. Tired, painful legs are a symptom that something is wrong.

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Kim Truett, BS, Vascular Technology (Oregon Institute of Technology)

You, Me, and Business

By: Dana Dittmar, Executive Director
SCC Chamber News

There is so much to do when the year nears its end. Not just the annual holiday festivities, shopping, visiting, and sharing. I'm talking



You, Me & Business

By Dana Dittmar

about all the administrative chores that surround the flipping of the calendar from one number to the next.

There are year-end financials to tally and new account ledgers to set up. We take all the file folders that hold the 2010 revenues and expenditures and carefully move them to the drawer in the storeroom. Then we create all new folders to receive new data as it comes in. Personally, I keep my checkbook ledger on the computer in an Excel spreadsheet my husband created. It automatically calculates how much we spent during the year in any given category, making it easy come tax time. Now is when I copy and paste the formulas into a new spreadsheet so it's ready to go on January 1. I also revisit the household budget to see if I need to tweak what goes into savings or pay off an old bill.

There are also calendars to pur-

chase and not the kind with kittens or nature scenes. Here at the Chamber we need the Month-at-a-Glance and the daily sheets so we know when and where we are supposed to be. We map out all of the monthly Coffees, Member Luncheons and after-hours Business Card Exchanges, as well as any ribbon cuttings and speaking engagements for the entire new year.

The Chamber will also elect three new people to our Board of Directors this week. That means three new files, orientations, and nametags to order. The new Board members won't really start to work until next month, but we want them to be prepared.

In some ways, the first week of January will look exactly the same as the last week of December. We'll have the same hours, the same mission, and the same daily job to do. Visitors will come in the door, phones will ring, and emails will arrive on our computers. But somehow, it's as if we had a spring cleaning a few months early and we have fresh new tools to work with. It's a new start. It's a new year!

I can't wait to start writing in that brand new calendar with all my colored pens!

Century 21 Beggins Enterprises welcomes Len and Joan Terrell

Century 21 Beggins Enterprises is pleased to announce Len and Joan Terrell have joined the firm as sales associates. Len and Joan will specialize in Residential property sales in the Sun City Center area.

"We are thrilled to have Len and Joan join our team," said Craig Beggins of Century 21 Beggins Enterprises. "It's an exciting time to be with the Century 21 System as we increase our market presence in Tampa Bay."

Len is a native of Thomasville, NC and graduate of UNC School of Business Administration, Chapel Hill, NC. He served 20 years in the North Carolina National Guard, rising to the rank of Captain. Len is an accomplished marketing manager with a lifetime career in newspaper sales and marketing. He recently retired from Sun Coast Media Group, Charlotte Harbor, FL. A Florida resident for 23 years, he started in real estate sales in 2006. He and his wife, Joan, reside in Kings Point, Sun City Center.

Joan hails from Cincinnati, OH and has lived on Florida's west coast for 36 years. A graduate of Edgecliff/Xavier University in Cincinnati, she now resides in Kings Point, Sun City Center. She served as a secondary level school teacher for 12 years followed by a career in newspaper advertising sales and marketing with Sun Coast Media Group, from which she recently retired. New as a licensed realtor, she has been a real estate administrative sales assistant to her husband since 2006.



Holiday shopping at Nearly New Shop

Holiday shopping just got better at the Nearly New Shop in Sun City Center. Located behind the Save-A-Lot store in the SCC Plaza, the Shop is now providing gift certificates for purchase. Staffed by over 50 dedicated volunteers, all proceeds from the Nearly New Shop are returned to the community through scholarships and other grants through the Interfaith Council. You can purchase the certificates during shop hours, Wednesdays and Saturdays, from 8 am-noon. Nearly New will close for the holidays on Saturday, Dec. 19 and will re-open on Wednesday, Jan. 5.



Mobility Express ribbon cutting

The Sun City Center Area Chamber of Commerce held a ribbon cutting for the new location of Mobility Express in Ruskin on Dec. 4. The store, which sells scooters, wheelchairs, and walkers, recently moved into its new address at 729 Cypress Village Blvd., which previously housed Wachovia Bank.

Correction

The number for the Ruskin sheriff's office was recently printed incorrectly. The correct number is (813) 247-0455

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What goal do you seek from work?

As a professional speaker and seminar leader, I have spent a great deal of time on the road. I learned early, however, that my reason for



Positive Talk

By William Hodges

working was to finance my life away from work; work was simply a means to an end. That end is a well-balanced life.

A colleague I once met in the Chicago airport began telling me about the places he had been and the places he was going. It seemed to me that he had allowed his career to become his life to the exclusion of all else. I asked about his family and he said they were doing fine. His daughter had just graduated from grade school, and he did feel bad that he had to miss the graduation so he could speak to a group in Iowa. He glowed when he told me about his son who had the lead in his school play, but again he was forced to miss the event because of a contract in a distant city. He then hurried to tell me that his wife was there and that his son had told him it really wasn't a big deal he couldn't make it. If you believe his son really didn't care, I have a bridge that I want to sell to you.

Recognize you are not working for money, but rather the things that money will buy. Is having a huge home in the best neighborhood, driving the most expensive car, and belonging to the best club in town worth selling your life? How much time with your family are you sacrificing to build your bank account? Will the memory of those dollars outweigh the lost memories of watching your children play in the school concert, score on the football field, be a beanstalk in the second grade play, or proudly accept their diplomas from high school. I don't think so.

Look at your priorities now. What is really important to you—the love and respect of your children or the adoration of your business associates? Ten years from now you will probably not remember the names of half of those associates. But I can tell you now that when your child comes to you and says, "I want you to know that I really appreciate your being there for me," it will mean more than any big deal that you have ever closed.

J. M. Barrie, a Scottish playwright, said, "God gave us our memories so that we might have roses in December." Be sure that the memories you will have in your old age are those of smiling young faces, not just of hard-earned and easily spent dollars. Even if those dollars are still with you, they will never be able to bring back what you lost because once the years are gone, no amount of money can buy them back.

"Hodges is a nationally recognized speaker, trainer and syndicated columnist. He also hosts an interview-format television program, *Spotlight on Government*, on the Tampa Bay Community Network which airs Mondays at 8 p.m. and Wednesdays at 7:30 p.m. (Bright House channel 950, Verizon channel 30). The shows can also be viewed at www.hodgesvideos.com. Phone: 813-633-1523. Email: bill@billhodges.com Website: www.billhodges.com"

Rotary goes shopping

Members of the Rotary Club of SouthShore-Ruskin provided two basketloads of food items, personal care products and a check for \$250 to the South Hillsborough Community Cupboard, Inc.

This program, a non-government funded organization established by the late Sammie Zipperer, founder of Zipperer's Funeral Home in 1979, provides emergency food items to those individuals who do not meet the requirements of government assisted programs.

Accepting the items was Dee Fridella, Manager of Health and Social Services, South Shore Community Resource Center, 201 14th Avenue SW, Ruskin.

They went shopping at the Sweetbay Supermarket in Ruskin to help fill the pantry of the South Hillsborough Community Cupboard, Inc. of much needed food supplies.

The pantry is located at the Hillsborough's County's South Shore Community Resource Center at 201 14th Avenue S.E. in Ruskin. The pantry provides desperately needed assistance to those individ-



Left to right: George Barber, club member; Dee Fridella, manager; Jennifer McCall, club President; and Richard Berg, president-elect.

uals and families who do not meet the requirements of other government provided assistance. Basic food items and personal care products are provided on a one-time basis to those in need.

Assisting the shoppers in determining the best buys was Sonny Thompson, Sweetbay Manager. After much deliberation, two shopping carts of groceries and personal items were purchased.

South Bay Hospital announces opening of the New Center for Joint and Spine Care

South Bay Hospital is set to open its newest program, the Center for Joint and Spine Care at the Grand Opening Celebration on Saturday, Dec. 18. Community members are invited to take a tour of the new private patient rooms beginning at 11 am through 2 pm. Physicians and staff will be available to answer questions concerning the Center while attendees enjoy refreshments. Reservations can be made by calling Consult-A-Nurse at 1-877-442-7366.

The new Center for Joint and Spine Care offers:

- Full service orthopedic and

South Bay Hospital Center for Joint & Spine Care

- Experienced orthopedic and spine surgeons
- Nurses certified in Orthopedics (National Association of Orthopedic Nurses)
- Pre-operative education classes

"We are proud of our new Center," says Sharon Roush, Chief Executive Officer for South Bay Hospital. "With our dedicated staff

and evidence-based best practices, we hope to significantly improve the outcomes of our Center for Joint and Spine Care patients."

If you would like more information on South Bay Hospital's Center for Joint and Spine Care, call Sherell Bennett at 813-634-0172.

Christmas Party

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210 Woodland Estates S.W.
Ruskin, FL 33570
813-645-3111
Fax: 813-645-4118
www.ObserverNews.net
Published Every Thursday
by M&M Printing Co., Inc. 645-4048

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For current rates and circulation information visit our website at www.ObserverNews.net

CLASSIFIED / CIRCULATION:
Beverly Kay.....Classified / Circulation
beverly@observernews.net

PRODUCTION:
Chere Simmons....Graphic Arts / Layout
chere@observernews.net
Sue Sloan.....Composition / Layout
sue@observernews.net

The views expressed by our writers are not necessarily shared by The Observer News, SCC Observer, The Riverview Current or M&M Printing Co., Inc.

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Eagles Set Their Weekly Activities

The Ruskin Eagles, FOE, located at 1205 1st St. S.W. has scheduled the following weekly activities.



The FOE Aerie meet at 7 p.m. the 1st and 3rd Thursday of the month. The Ladies' Auxiliary meets at 7 p.m. on the 2nd and 4th Thursday. Eagle Riders meet the 2nd Sunday of the month at 11 a.m.

All events and activities of the Eagles Club are supported by the members and members' guests.

Thursday, December 16— Bar Games at 3 p.m.

Friday, December 17 — Feather Your Nest Game at 6 p.m.

Saturday, December 18 — Steak Dinner at 5 p.m. Music by Charles Burns from 6:30 to 10:30 p.m.

Sunday, December 19 — Feather Your Nest Game at 6 p.m.

Monday, December 20 — Bingo at 6 p.m. Food available.

Tuesday, December 21 — Bar Poker at 6 p.m.

Wednesday, December 22 — Wings and Things at 5 p.m. COME ON DOWN AND TRY THEM!!!

For more information, call the club at 645-2922.

Lennard and Spoto join "I Feel the Need to Read"

Freedom High School's 'I Feel the Need to Read' program has expanded to Lennard and Spoto High Schools, and officially kicked off Dec. 3.

Spoto High School recently sent 53 students to Frost, Ippolito, and Clair Mel Elementary Schools. The high school students will read the book 'Read All About It' and do literacy activities with all of the second grade classes at each school. The second grade classrooms will get a copy of the book to keep and each student will receive a goodie bag.

Spoto's project is sponsored by Ms. Bisa Phillips, a reading teacher and sponsor of the Spoto Girls Circle Club. The members of the club are the majority of the readers and they donated their own money to buy the books and materials for the goodie bags. Student athletes will also serve as readers.

Lennard High School has already distributed books to students in 14 classes at Wimauma Elementary School. They have visited twice with different groups of students each time. Students visited Wimauma Elementary on Dec. 8 to give out 40 books, adding to the approximately 80 books distributed so far. Lennard's reading coaches, Ashlee Sutter and Tracy Stanley, are leading the program.



East Bay Watch

by Michael Cooper

Driving Dangerously

East Bay High School had the privilege of hosting and participating in a distracted driving program for teens last Thursday. East Bay was chosen based on the school's reputation of its Driver Education Program that attempts to instill responsibility in licensed teen drivers. Emphasis is on potential consequences of students' actions and the importance of making good decisions. This learning experience is a product of the national foundation 'Safe Teen Driver.'

The organization was founded by Bruce Murakami following the death of his wife and daughter in 1998. The crash occurred when a teen driver chose to street race at 90 mph down one of Tampa's busiest roads.

Mr. Murakami speaks all across the nation talking to teens. East Bay was the first public school that Mr. Murakami spoke to in 1999 and has made numerous visits since. East Bay Driver Education teachers Sean Washington and Mike Shirley have worked with Mr. Murakami and 'Safe Teen Driver' at various locations, most recently at the Anderson Race Track in Palmetto.

Channel 10 News visited the school to report on the training. The segment 'The Great Hang Up' will air Saturday, Dec. 18 at 8 p.m. On the driving test range, East Bay students were filmed driving while texting, talking on cell phones and other distractions such as multiple passengers. Channel 10 interviewed the students following their driver training experience. Make sure to gather your family and watch this hour-long documentary. Then discuss the responsibilities of driving and the danger seemingly simple distractions can cause. The documentary will be eye opening and it may just save the life of a loved one.

For more information on 'Safe Teen Driver' and Bruce Murakami's story, visit www.safeteendriver.org.



Left to right: Dave Braun and Mary Ann Keckler of the Haley House; and Dennis Antle, Commandant of Marine Corps League, Detachment #1226.

Poker run proceeds benefit Haley House

The Riverview Detachment of the Marine Corps League presented a \$5500 check to the Haley House Fund, whose mission is to provide support to military families in need during rehabilitation of loved ones away from home, at their monthly meeting held Dec. 7. The funds were raised during the Fourth Annual Poker Run for the Haley House held on Nov. 6, and sponsored by the Detachment and the Legion Riders of American Legion Post 148.

Public Notice

The annual meeting of the Ruskin Community Development Foundation Inc. (501.c3) will be held at 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, Dec. 16 at Camp Bayou Outdoor Learning Center, 4202 24th St. SE, Ruskin.

For more information, call (813) 641-8545.

**SUPPORT
OUR TROOPS!!**

Ruskin VFW Post #6287

Ruskin VFW Post #6287, 5120 U.S. 41 N. has listed the following weekly activities. Meetings are: American Legion on 1st Wednesday each month; VFW and LAVFW on the 2nd Wednesday each month; and MAVFW on the 3rd Thursday each month.



Thursday, December 16— Bar Bingo at 6 p.m. Men's Auxiliary Meeting at 7 p.m.

Friday, December 17— Fish Fry from 4:30 to 7 p.m. Music by George Raab from 7 to 11 p.m.

Saturday, December 18 — Hall Rented. Turkey Shoot at 1:30 p.m.

Sunday, December 19— Kids' Christmas Party at 10 a.m. Music by Bert & Sassy from 4 to 8 p.m. Adult Christmas Party from 4 to 8 p.m.

Monday, December 20— Taco Night from 5 to 7 p.m. Crew Games in Lounge at 6:30 p.m.

Tuesday, December 21 — Games in Lounge from 4 to 5 p.m. Kitchen opens at 4:30 p.m. Bingo at 6 p.m.

Wednesday, December 22 — Open.

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Either way, the coffee is on us. For a free consultation, please contact us and let us know if you prefer milk or cream.

Together we'll go far



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Blue Christmas

Blue crabs are absolutely beautiful. On a recent trip south to Sanibel Island, I came face to claw with a cool blue crab hanging out on the beach. It seemed as though this crustacean should have been in hiding due to the fact that the delicacy of blue crab meat was listed on every menu on the island. After staring and taking photos of my shelled friend, I decided to look



Saturation Point

By Karey Burek

up some facts about this particular crab species. The coloration of the shell mesmerized me; it was a combination of sapphire blue and ruby red melded together creating shades of purples.

These crabs are avid swimmers, having three sets of legs for walking and the last set shaped into almost paddle form, allowing for impressive mobility in the water. And unlike most crab species that run the beaches for food at night, this crustacean does most of its moving during the day. According to some websites, the blue crab can run 15.5 mph! Not bad for a creature the size of a small dinner plate.

The blue crab goes through its growing pains in estuaries, remaining there until it's a juvenile. There is an abundant harvest of this particular crab species once grow to an adult age. It can be found on menus locally in Florida and nationally. However, the concern of overfishing species is always on top of my list when it comes to fishing and the blue crab is no different. Because of its ability to keep the clam, muscle and oyster population in check, removing the blue crab from areas has the possibility of changing the ecology and habitat of environments that many species rely on.



The blue crab is a crustacean found in the waters of the western Atlantic Ocean, the Pacific coast of Central America and the Gulf of Mexico.



Ruskin Elementary's Terrific Kids

The following students exhibited the trait of fairness and received the Terrific Kid honor for November: David Portillo, Yadiel Davila, Isaiah Meza, Ryan Maya, Gabriel Rodriguez, Yadir Espindola, Leonardo Barrera, Trevor Almand, Brianna Conklin, Elaine Vergara, Jennifer Hernandez, Nailea Portillo, Jesus Sifuentes, Alexis Mosley, Tanya Simms, David Caro, Bianca Sanchez, Ivonne Calixtro Vazquez, William Morales, Alexis Gonzales, Neftali Huante -Zapata, Damaris Monrail, Citlaly Ramos Rodriguez, Elsa Perez- Leon, Desiree Varela, Matthew Balderas, Barry Slenker, Ramon Calero, Luis Galvan, Emma Brewer, Alice Mondragon, Crystal Vasquez, Emma Nevarez, Lauren Robledo, Tamesis Islas, Savannah Bazemore, Haven Crisp, Jessenya Baltazar, Jose Zamora, Laura Martinez, Alex Garza, Lizbeth Ramirez, Anthony Robertson, Chris Padilla, Gregoria Basave, Franklin Cevallos. Ruskin principal: Lisa Amos, Guidance Counselor: Megan Harvey, Our Kiwanis Members: Joe Nargolwala, Dee Wilcox, and Charlene Wirick. Students not present for picture: Christian Guzman, Jhalyn Eskridge, Crystal Mejia, Ashlyn Moser, Araceli Carrera, Faith Carter, Lauren Robledo, Keely Reynolds, Luis Palma- Cruz, and Robert Gonzalez.



Caloosa C.C. BG's Men's Group winners

10/26

1. Birnbaum, Kendall, Montgomery, Brubaker -24
2. Kemmeling, Harkins, Olyarnyk Brown -22
3. McGoldrick, Tarantino, Taney, Fortier -21
- 4.) McDougall, Wilson, Krajewski, Cleary -15

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Community rallies

■ Continued from page 1

With the concrete block structure encompassing about 1,200 square feet of living space on a small lot, one of the early objectives was enclosing the single-car carport to produce another bedroom for some of the five boys.

Life, though, is not as simple as finding another room. Long interested in patient care and emergency medical services, MacCalla was employed at Freedom Plaza – until about three years ago when a newspaper article about the obstacles confronting a single parent trying to guide seven children into successful adulthood struck a sour note with

her supervisor at the retirement center. As some residents there asked how they could help, MacCalla was accused of soliciting assistance from the generally affluent retiree population. She was discharged, protesting, but let go without warning. Looking back, the 51-year-old grandmother is not bitter. She did as she always has done; picked herself up and moved on. After all, there were seven youngsters depending on her.

Then, there was another auto accident. Trying to get the various kids to their various locations one morning, her light SUV was broadsided near Interchange and Shell Point,

toppling the vehicle onto its side. It was totaled, but the family climbed out with only cuts and bruises. The youthful other driver was charged, two insurance companies dickered and MacCalla received a settlement sufficient to obtain a van for the family.

Over the years, MacCalla has tried to pursue her personal dream to become accredited in medical services. She's earned state-licensed EMT status and is a Certified Nursing Assistant. "Helping other people" is what life is all about, she asserts firmly, as she speaks gently of the quadriplegic she has been caring for on an assignment from the home health care agency where she's currently employed.

However, between shepherding seven children through typical childhood trials and earning enough money to keep food on the table, one objective she has not been able to pursue is upkeep of the little house that shelters the brood.

Enter Natalie Castillo, another East Ruskin resident. Years ago, MacCalla helped raise her husband, Robert Castillo, now a young husband and father who also is a pest control technician. Last month, over the Thanksgiving weekend, Castillo visited MacCalla and the expanded family, tipped off about an infestation of roaches in the home.

Castillo sprayed the property, adjacent to a retention pond, to eradicate the roach population and plans to return for a second treatment, his wife said this week. But Natalie Castillo went home that weekend, convinced she had to help MacCalla in a more concrete manner. "On Friday, I didn't know what I was going to do and on Monday I just started making telephone calls," she added.

She reached Ruskin business people and community churches. They began to respond, Ruskin fashion. Early this week, Destiny Church

delivered and installed a new refrigerator to replace the junker MacCalla had been trying to get by with. Home Depot said it would provide a new toilet to replace the only commode in the home which is unstable and holding up a cracked tank, if someone could be found to install it. A local plumber, who said he's giving not taking credit, immediately offered installation at no charge.

Melvin's Heating & Air Conditioning hustled over to repair the aging combination central AC unit so that the home will be heated this winter. And, Wild Bill's Furniture is assessing furnishing needs, new mattresses, another bed, perhaps a new couch, Castillo said.

Donna Budd, a Hillsborough County community resource deputy, has promised several especially chosen Christmas gifts for each child through her Deputies Darlin' program.

And, Castillo did not overlook MacCalla herself. The Southshore Day Spa in Apollo Beach wanted to be sure MacCalla could have a new haircut for the holidays and produced the appropriate gift certificate. Plus, Crystal's Nails provided a gift certificate covering both a manicure and a pedicure.

Meanwhile, Castillo, nearing her seventh month of pregnancy, still is working the phones. She's looking for clothing and shoes for five boys ranging in age from eight to 12 as well as for a 12-year-old girl and for the baby, a girl now four years old.

In addition, Home Depot, for its part, is not done yet. Store Manager Tommy Kanatzar told *The Observer* early this week his staff is reaching out to the many vendors supplying products to the home care warehouse, seeking those among them who can contribute any help in rehabilitating the MacCalla house. The effort, he suggested, will continue into the new year.

Such help would be so appreciated, MacCalla said as she acknowledged the numerous problems in the home now about 30 years old and designed for perhaps four or five persons but instead housing seven active youngsters and one adult. Limited to expertise with duct tape, pliers and screwdriver, MacCalla admits she not handy enough to repair the collapsing sink vanity in the bathroom or to stop the drafts from a couple of broken windows or to build dressers and enough closets to accommodate everyone's clothing.

She has, though, applied several times — for a home do-over with producers of the ABC Network's popular *Extreme Home Makeover* program. There's been no feedback, to date, she said.

No matter. The really important things are humming along. The children all are healthy, well-mannered, doing well in school, growing straight and tall in all ways. Their house may be crowded, inconvenient, in disrepair, but Castillo talks of the mutual respect and affection that abounds within its walls.

Then, too, a grandmother had her very first manicure and pedicure the other day, using the nail salon's gift certificate while her quadriplegic patient is hospitalized and she has no work. "You know what I enjoyed most," she asked giddily as she recounted the new experience. "That massaging chair you sit in for the pedicure. I just didn't want to get up."

Asked what else might be on her personal Christmas list, MacCalla quickly sobers, though, replying without hesitation: "All I want is for the kids to have a happy Christmas; to be able to say they had a good Christmas." For that she will be so grateful, she added.

A good many folks aim to see her Christmas wish fulfilled, and more Ruskin style.

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Medicare's preventive services are about to get better

Dear Savvy Senior

I've heard that Medicare will soon be offering seniors free health screenings. What can you tell me about this?

The Savvy Senior

By Jim Miller

Searching Senior

Dear Searching

It's true! Starting Jan. 1, 2011, as part of the new health care reform law, everyone with Original Medicare will have access to many important preventive health services, and most of them won't cost you a cent. Here's what you should know.

No Cost-Sharing

Over the years, Medicare has covered a number of preventive health screenings like mammograms and colonoscopies with varying levels of cost-sharing (that includes deductibles, coinsurance or copayments). Cost-sharing for preventive services typically means that you, the beneficiary, pay 20 percent of the cost of the service (Medicare picks up the other 80 percent), after you've met your \$155 Part B deductible.

But starting next month, Medicare beneficiaries will no longer have to pay any out-of-pocket costs for most preventive services, including annual wellness visits which are being added to the program to help keep you healthy. Here's a breakdown of the different preventive services that Medicare will soon be offering that will be completely free.

Wellness Visits

In addition to the one-time Welcome to Medicare physical (which new beneficiaries can get but only within their first year of enrollment in Part B), free annual wellness visits with your physician will now be available. These visits will give your doctor the opportunity to develop and maintain an ongoing personalized prevention plan for improving your health. Each exam will include body and blood pressure measurements, a review your medical history including any medications you're taking and care you may be receiving from other health care providers,

an assessment of your cognitive condition, and establish an appropriate screening schedule for the next five to 10 years.

Health Screenings

In addition to the wellness visits, here's a list of the free health screenings and vaccinations Medicare will be offering its beneficiaries in 2011, along with the eligibility requirements you'll need to meet to get them.

- Breast cancer screening: Yearly mammograms will be offered to women age 40 and older with Medicare.
- Colorectal cancer screening: This includes the flexible sigmoidoscopy or colonoscopy for all beneficiaries age 50 or older.
- Cervical cancer screening: Pap smear and pelvic exams are available every two years, or once a year for those at high risk.
- Cardiovascular screenings: Free blood test to check cholesterol, lipid and triglyceride levels are offered every five years to all Medicare recipients.
- Diabetes: Twice a year screening for those at risk.
- Medical nutrition therapy: Available to help people manage diabetes or kidney disease.
- Prostate cancer screening: A digital rectal exam and PSA blood test is available to all male beneficiaries age 50 and older every year. You pay nothing for the PSA test, but you'll have to pay 20 percent for the doc-

tor's visit.

- Bone mass measurements: This osteoporosis test is available every two years to those at risk, or more often if medically necessary.
- Abdominal aortic aneurysm screening: To check for bulging blood vessels, this test is available to men ages 65 to 75 who have ever smoked.
- HIV screening: Available to those who are at increased risk or who ask for the test.
- Vaccinations: An annual flu shot, a vaccination against pneumococcal pneumonia and the hepatitis B vaccine are all free to all beneficiaries.

For more details on Medicare's preventive services and their eligibility requirements, see your "Medicare & You 2011" booklet that you received in the mail in October. Or you can read it online at medicare.gov.

Medicare Advantage

If you have Medicare Advantage you need to know that the health care reform law did not require these plans to provide free preventive services. However, most Advantage plans already offer Medicare-covered preventive services without cost-sharing. You'll need to check your plan to find out your specific coverage.

Send your senior questions to: Savvy Senior, P.O. Box 5443, Norman, OK 73070, or visit www.savvysenior.org. Jim Miller is a contributor to the NBC Today show and author of "The Savvy Senior" books.

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Sam is a fantastic lab puppy. He was found wandering alone and brought to the shelter. He has all of the typical traits of the breed. Sam is intelligent, athletic, eager to please, highly active, and outgoing. Because he is still a puppy, he bounces off the walls with excitement when you come to visit him. He would do best in an active home with someone who would be committed to taking him to puppy training. Sam will return the favor with endless love and loyalty. Sam has been neutered, microchipped, and brought current on his shots.



MILO

Milo is an orange domestic medium hair mix. He was brought to the shelter filthy, sick, and underweight. Even in that condition, Milo was a real trooper. Now that he is feeling better, he desires gentle affection and many treats! Milo has been neutered, microchipped, and brought up-to-date on his shots.



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DJs dress for theme of every event

SOUTH COUNTY — The saying “Dress for Success” takes on a whole new meaning when you’re talking about Larry and Darlene Meadows.



Over Coffee
By Penny Fletcher
penny@observernews.net

When this couple hires on to DJ a gig, they go all out. You can count on them to come fully costumed and carrying props for any occasion.

Some things they don’t have to carry anymore, however, include their hundred-pound box of CDs and sound equipment.

“Larry has put 20,000 songs on computer,” Darlene said. “He’s simplified everything.”

Darlene has been a disc jockey and line dance instructor for most

of her life. She and her late husband Ron performed together, beginning in Chicago in 1971.

“She worked an event three days after he died,” Larry said. “She’s a real trooper. She put his hat right up on the stage and did everything herself.”

As it turned out, there were 16 events booked during the 30 days immediately following Ron’s death and Darlene went through with every one of them.

“I needed to work,” she explained. “And it was good for me.”

Larry and Darlene met at Thunderbird Lanes in Ruskin when she was president of a bowling league. They knew right away they had a lot in common. Both of them teach line dance, and Larry’s computer savvy fit right in with Darlene’s DJ work.

The former general contractor says he’s had a lot of experience working with computer programs and math. After he retired at 55, he delved into computer programming.

“Before Larry put everything on computer, I was carrying huge boxes of CDs and equipment,” Darlene said. “They were very heavy, and loading and unloading them from the car was very time consuming. Besides, they took up

a lot of room in the house.”

Larry spent six months converting everything to computer. He checked out a lot of DJ programs on line and uploaded music popular in every decade from 1900 to 2010.

“If you can’t dance to it, she (Darlene) usually rejects it,” he said.

The couple takes on gigs all over Florida, mostly in places around the South County area.

They’ll be at the New Year’s Eve dance in Kings Point Borini Theater, and plan to DJ every Wednesday evening in 2011 at the Sun City Center Dance Club. They’re also set to DJ for a Valentine wedding.

It won’t be their first Valentine’s Day wedding. Their own wedding was a Valentine’s Day surprise almost four years ago.

“Only about 30 of the 250 people there knew (in advance) we were actually getting married that night,” Darlene said. “Our children and grandchildren and some friends who helped us set up knew, but everybody else just thought Larry was going to propose some time during the night on stage.”

The red and white theme of Valentine’s Day was everywhere. They had told people to come as brides, and all kinds of brides were represented.

“I wanted to be sure all my line dance classes were there,” she said. “One woman came as a pregnant bride, and then there were the seven brides (from the biblical account).”

Everyone paid for tickets to what they thought was a Valentine’s Day dance.

Then at intermission, Darlene disappeared and changed from her Valentine’s Day clothes into her bridal gown and her daughter rolled out a red carpet. “People still thought it was so Larry could propose,” she said.

But instead of a proposal, the couple said “I do,” as the Rev. Harry Benter read their vows.

After the wedding, they went right back to work as DJs for the party.

They’ve dressed as hippies and zombies and a lot of other things and keep their costumes ready for any occasion.

“We’re constantly adding costumes and props,” Darlene said.

The couple recently won the costume contest at a German Fasching party.

“We’re not shy,” Larry said. “Even if we’re on vacation and there’s a chance to get up on a stage, we usually do it.”

When they’re not working as dance teachers or disc jockeys or setting up for parties, they visit their (combined) seven children and travel to various parts of the globe.

They also like trying new things, like zip lining 500-feet in the air in the Dominican Republic. (And they have a photograph to back that up!)

The couple lives in the Kings Point community of Sun City Center and may be reached at (813) 633-7173.



Darlene and Larry took First Place when dressed for a German Fasching celebration. Their authentic clothing is now part of their costume closet, ready for use when hired to DJ a German-style event.



Darlene and Larry Meadows take their jobs as disc jockeys seriously, dressing and bringing props for each themed occasion.

PENNY FLETCHER PHOTO



When hired as DJs for a '70s theme, they came dressed appropriately.

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Computer club

■ Continued from page 1

Skipping completely over the word processing machines used in many offices in the period between the popularity of typewriters and computers, I went directly from a manual Royal typewriter to “computers by Compugraphic.”

The experience led me to believe I hated computers, and would never become accustomed to them.

Then the company I worked for switched to an Apple II GS. This type of computer required you to type in long code numbers every time you wanted to change type size or font. By today’s standards, it was horrific.

When I was nearing 40 — yes, a whole 25 years ago — I enrolled in an evening class at East Bay High School to learn the latest technology, which was then the drop-down menu. I’ll never forget the pride I felt that I had mastered something before it entered the newsroom where I worked!

I’m bringing this up now because many people my age and older still swear they’ll never learn to use a computer. They think the switch is too difficult. Better to write letters and use the telephone and take 35mm photos directly from the camera to a lab.

I’ve heard this quite a bit lately,



Mark Morris shows off one of the club’s scanners used to help people in the community.

especially in Sun City Center where free help is available almost every day.

Unfortunately, those who won’t try working on a computer don’t have the daily opportunities to say “hi” or chat with friends and family that those on line have instantaneously. That means it’s easy to lose touch with younger family members, especially if they live far away. Email and social networks are the present and future modes of connectivity, and people who don’t learn them are missing out on daily opportunities to stay in touch.

Residents of Sun City Center and Kings Point have an unusual opportunity. They don’t have to enroll in a night class at a high school or community college. They can go, without charge, to the Sun City Center Computer Club in the atrium building on N. Pebble Beach Boulevard.

Entering the Computer Room the other day and seeing all the services the club provides to eligible residents I wished I’d had the opportunity to learn from tutors like that.

The Computer Club, more than 800 members strong, is an active one. It meets the first Wednesday of each month in the Florida Room (also in the atrium) at 7:30 p.m.

But between meeting dates, there are several special interest groups, including Genealogy, Quicken and Photography that meet just to work (and play) in a specific area.

The Computer Club’s president, Ilona Merritt, puts out a very professional monthly newsletter called *The Journal*, letting more than 2,500 people on their mailing list know what’s going on and when.

What interested me most when I went into the Computer Room last

week was how the room monitors assist the walk-ins that pass through every day.

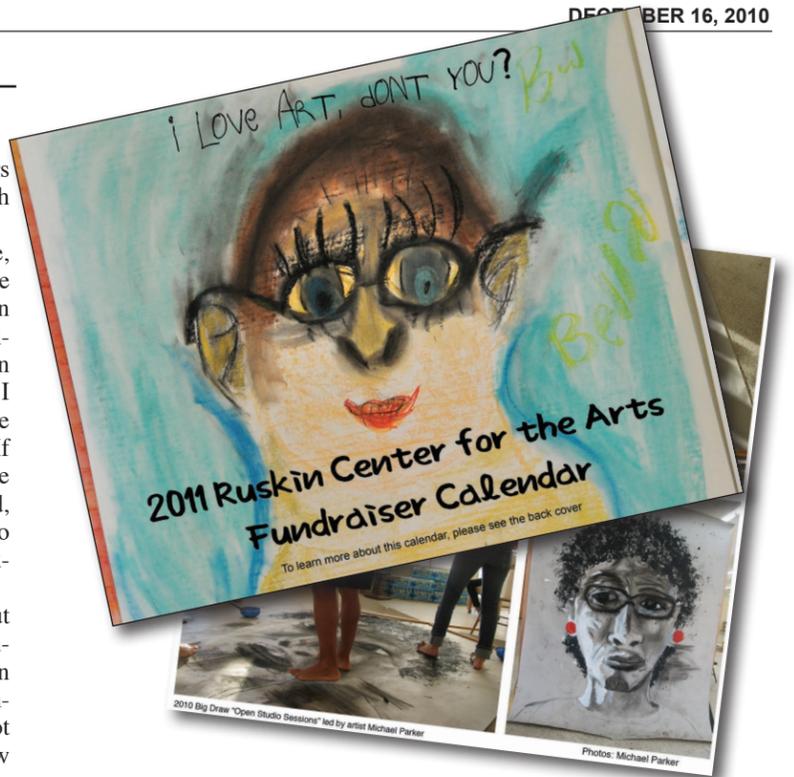
Incoming President Bob Wehrle, who has been serving as both vice president and director of education during the past year, says the monitors and class instructors take on problems ranging from “How do I turn on my new computer?” to the most complicated programming. If the person asked doesn’t know the answer to the question that’s asked, he or she can usually point you to someone with a specific area of expertise.

The reason I chose to write about the Computer Club now is to encourage those who haven’t taken the leap from paper and pen to computer connectivity to do so — if not for the holidays then in the New Year.

The people in the Computer Room can show you how to email family and friends, stay connected via social networks and easily share photographs with the click of a mouse.

Even those who still fear using a computer themselves can stop by the Computer Room and ask for the monitor to help scan a 35mm photograph, send a holiday greeting, set up an email account to chat with people in other states, or to work on projects like memoir writing, which the monitors say is a very popular use of their tools.

To find out more about this helpful club any of the 25,000 residents of Sun City Center or Kings Point may drop by the Computer Room weekday afternoons between noon and 5 p.m. or attend the next meeting in the Florida Room Jan. 5 at 7:30 p.m. Those of you already on line may email thecomputerclub@juno.com or check out its Web site at <http://sccccomputerclub.org>.



Timely gift offered by SouthShore Arts Council

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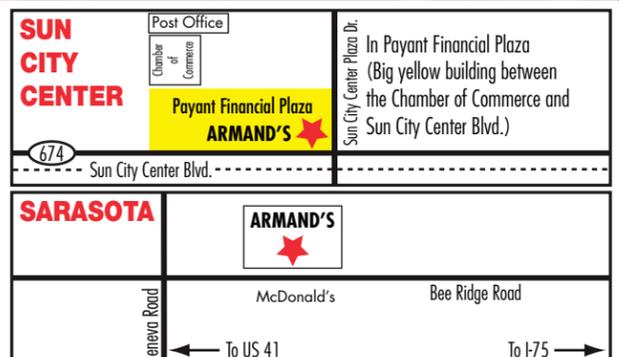
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Cool change

■ Continued from page 1

man may be criminal to a poor man. And vice versa.

There's lots of those friendly people, showing me ways to go and I never want to lose your inspiration.

The sail from Belhaven to Oriental, down rivers, canals and across the wide expanse of Albemarle Sound, was beautiful. I saw four sails on the horizon and knew that as long as there was another ship at sea, as a sailor I was not alone. Along the way I passed a pretty little sailboat named *La Dulcinea* with a young couple on board. The woman aboard waved with great cheer as I passed — so much so that it, along with her smile, warmed my heart. Perhaps they are headed off on their first adventure together. Or maybe she was just happy to see another boat that was almost as slow as their boat.

Oriental felt like an oasis. For the first time in days, my cell phone worked, as did the MiFi device that I use to connect my computers to the Internet. The marina was charming, complete with a tiki bar and an on-site restaurant. The small town boasted numerous locally-owned restaurants, a coffee shop and a marine consignment store that made me a child again, in a toy store at Christmas. In every aisle, I reached out to grab something exclaiming, "Ooh, I've been looking for that!"

I picked up emails from the peo-

ple I had met in Belhaven; people who had helped to protect my boat and my psyche through a storm last week. They are all off setting their own courses but remain in my heart.

Now that my life is so pre-arranged I know that it's time for a cool change.

Late in the evening, a taxi driver from New Bern dropped my wife Michelle off at the marina. She arrived just ahead of a cold front. I had assumed the pace would pick up dramatically with both of us on board, so the next morning we left for Beaufort, a short 24-mile sail away. And in Beaufort we stayed. By our fifth day in that pleasant coastal village, the wind was still howling out of the north with gusts to 24 knots and the temperature had fallen to 22 degrees, making for a wind chill near the single digits. As much as we wanted to get south, losing our own digits to frostbite didn't hold much appeal. The marina courtesy car became our temporary lifeline to the supplies in town; the warm cabin of the boat became our refuge.

Before this trip, I had never stayed at a marina that offered a courtesy car. But every marina I've stayed in since leaving the lower Chesapeake has offered one. The cars are in various conditions: an old Buick Roadmaster station wagon on which the back gate wouldn't close, a nice minivan with a digital dash display,

a beat-up Chevy Caprice without working seat belts or handles to roll down the windows, and a newer model Ford in which everything, most importantly the heat, works.

Getting into a courtesy car is somewhat like entering a time warp. Time accelerates rapidly once the keys are handed over. If you are allowed an hour or 90 minutes, it goes by in seconds. Despite our best intentions to return the car early, we were often late, thanks to the courtesy-car-time-warp. Fortunately, few cruisers are still this far north so when we called the marina to explain that we were caught in an odd acceleration of time, we were told not to worry, no one was waiting for the car.

My outlook has changed in the weeks that I've been gone; in the weeks I've been alone. Now having Michelle on board has enhanced everything. Suddenly the adventures are shared and the laughter and worry is mutual. I still talk to God, although now less overtly and more in my head. There is no need to scare Michelle into thinking I'd gone insane and am now talking to myself. Still, I wondered if she could see the change.

On this journey I've come to realize that there are no small blessings. In the course I have chosen, I can see that everything works like puzzle pieces into something much bigger. The momentary frustration of a delay could mean avoiding some-



MITCH TRAPHAGEN PHOTO

The ICW runs through Camp Lejeune in North Carolina. The Marines occasionally close the waterway during exercises using live ammunition. We motored through quietly, hearing large booms as we sailed past the camp boundary.

thing unpleasant down the road. A fortuitous gust of wind to speed me along could mean arriving in port before a storm. I don't believe God changes nature or the world for me — my hope for wind may run counter to someone else's hope for calm, after all. But I do believe His breath occasionally fills my sails without

affecting anyone else.

I am acutely aware of my fortune in making such a journey. Life is short and meant to be lived; but bills still need to be paid, groceries purchased, and responsibilities met. Yet somehow it seems we've lost ourselves in a sea of iPods and Nikes. I am suddenly filled with gratitude that I have everything I need: my wife, my ship and a course set for my home in Florida. It is an awareness that I too rarely have on land.

The temperature was in the low 20s when we left the comfort of the Town Creek Marina. At a nearby slip, a water faucet had been allowed to drip, freezing a stream of water from the nozzle to the dock. For the best possible protection against the cold I was wearing: a long sleeve t-shirt, a long-sleeve denim shirt, a heavy sweater, polypropylene long underwear, jeans, two pairs of wool socks, a stocking cap, a scarf, and a heavy winter coat with my foul weather jacket over top. Inside my

See COOL CHANGE, page 19

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It is amazing that after the oil spill and cooler weather, nests of sea turtles have increased. It could be of the great protection that they receive in Florida. Those who live on the beaches cannot turn outdoor lights on during turtle nestings. We have loggerheads, green turtles and leatherbacks. A crew of people watch over the nests until they hatch. When not supervised, the area is taped like a crime scene with yellow tape and you could be arrested if you damage the nests.

Were you fishing this week? We had an invasion of amberjacks. Schools of this fish circled our waterways with great force. Birds were in their wake eating all of the smaller fish that they were scattering as they ploughed through our waterways. Average weight of this fish is 18 lbs. The largest on record is 138 lbs. 8 oz. They feed entirely on small fish and are not considered an excellent table food. Some bleed this fish and then smoke it.

An effort to bring oysters back to our Bay waters has been the work of many volunteers who have placed oyster domes along the seawalls. The domes are made of concrete, with small holes, to attract bait fish, and a solid rough surface for oysters to attach and grow. This is the best time of the year to place the domes as the oysters are looking for a place to settle when it gets cold. Tampa Bay Watch will place 500 domes along the Bayshore wall in Tampa this week.

Many in this area have gone hunting in the past few weeks. With the holidays so near, and many with wild turkey, and deer, I looked up some new recipes for you to try.

Some tell me that wild game is the ultimate gourmet food. There are those who say that wild game and fish are natural foods, a must for those watching their health and eating habits.

Venison in the old days referred to any game, not just deer, such as moose, elk and antelope.

Most hunters dress their own meat, as a city butcher may be afraid of the law codes. Many make hamburgers out a portion of the meat. To flavor your hamburgers, try a cup of white wine to four good size burgers. Add salt and pepper, along with chopped onion and parsley before you grill. The wine could be mixed with a stick of melted butter for a fantastic flavor.

Venison stew is made with three or four lbs. of cubed meat; a cup of red wine; salt and pepper to taste; a variety of vegetables (any that you have on hand). Cook slowly for about an hour. Some of the hunters tell me that they add a half cup of vinegar to their stew to take the wild taste away.

I was told to cook the saddle of venison, as you would a standing rib roast. At first, I was in the dark, as to what the saddle of venison meant. I now know, a rib roast.

If you bag a bear, would you eat it? Those that go bear hunting do cook them. A braised bear roast will take about two to three hours to cook. Again pour on the wine with garlic cloves, thyme, chicken or veal stock, corn oil braised with salt and pepper to taste.

Often ginger or oranges are used with roasted ducks. Other water birds, turkey, quail or dove, are

seasoned with garlic and onions. One can cook these birds, as you would a chicken, but the season differs. You can stuff these birds also for baking.

If your table is graced with fish this holiday season, I hope you have a big redfish on your table stuffed with crab dressing.

Flounder is a low calorie fish. It has lean white meat and is great grilled, broiled, baked or fried.

Cold weather has brought a

variety of fish into our waterways. From landside to offshore, fishing has been the best this week.

Permit, flounder, trout, redfish, Spanish mackerel, and sheepshead, to name a few have been caught in our bay waters this week.

Our waterways are crowded with boats, as our winter visitors have arrived, so be careful, kind and show them around.

Aleta Jonie Maschek is a member of Florida Outdoor Press.



Fish Tales
By Jonie Maschek

Instead of buying a toddler bed

Instead of buying a toddler or new bed, put your child's crib mattress inside a small tent. At 3½ years old, my son was ready to get out of his crib. He was standing on the top rail side, so using the toddler bed conversion was not a safe option.

I loved the boat bed at Kids Pottery Barn, but was looking around for a less expensive option. As a temporary solution, I set up a two-man backpacking tent and put his mattress inside. He is able to have his toys and 'living room' in there too. The cost for a cool and safe preschooler bed? Nothing. Do note that I do not zip up the side door for safety reasons.

EMS

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I almost forgot about Christmas

I've been so focused on the day-to-day job of sailing a neglected boat south to Florida that I forgot all about Christmas. I have yet to wish anyone a Merry Christmas or even the politically correct and sanitized version of it: Happy Holidays.

Speaking of which, I have to wonder if someone of a different faith would truly be offended if I wished him, or her, a Merry Christmas. I certainly wouldn't be offended if someone wished me a Happy Hanukkah or a Happy Kwanzaa or even a Merry Festivus. In truth, I'd be honored. That would mean they wished me happiness for something that was important to them. You just can't get more honest than that.

Being aboard this boat, with my focus on the route, weather and water, I have been completely insulated from the marketing of the holiday. I've seen no television commercials. I haven't been in a shopping mall since... well, let's just say people were probably wishing each other a Happy Memorial Day or whatever is politically correct for that holiday the last time I was in one.

What is most interesting is that, despite missing the marketing blitz (and the commercials from Ernest and Julio Gallo, which I shameless-

ly admit do strike some chords in my heart); I have witnessed more acts of goodwill towards men than I can count. I have learned repeatedly over the past several weeks that if you approach people with goodwill in your heart, you will see the goodwill in theirs. Of course, that doesn't apply to those who lack goodwill entirely; but those people are usually pretty easy to spot.

Over the years, it seems that Christmas has gone out of control. I've read numerous articles from social scientists that have said the silver lining in the economic recession is that a lack of money (or the unwillingness to part with it) will have a beneficial impact on society by helping us return to what is important in life.

Growing up, Christmas was magical to me and I loved everything about it. I loved the popcorn balls my mom would die red and green with food coloring and the table filled with baked treats. I loved the Christmas tree, the ornaments and the snow outside. Of course, I also loved the presents. In the 1960s and 1970s, the marketing of Christmas hadn't yet become the science that it is today. In our family we would get one "big" present and one or two smaller gifts. I distinctly remember the year my "big" present appeared

under the tree; suspiciously in the shape of an electric train set I had no doubt mercilessly reminded my parents that I wanted. That year, I simply couldn't wait for Christmas Eve to confirm my suspicions. Over the course of the days leading up to the big event of opening presents, I carefully (at least as carefully as a ten-year-old boy could) opened the corner of the wrapping to see that, yes, it was indeed a train set. Still, the surprise wasn't lost to me as I couldn't wait to tear off the rest of the wrapping. In the end, that train set provided not just a single day of joy in opening it, it provided years of joy in building it up from a blank 8x4 piece of plywood my dad later brought home from the lumber store. With everything so disposable today, I wonder if children still get to experience that same long-lasting joy? There really should be nothing disposable about Christmas.

Now in retrospect, with the exception of that train set, I can see that I loved the presents more when they were wrapped and piled under the tree. Once they were opened, I felt a certain sadness that somehow the magic was fading away for another full year. Of course, it never really did fade away. I grew up in a happy home with a loving family and that in itself is magic.

In my 15th year, the presents under the tree suddenly took on less importance. I couldn't possibly



PHOTO COURTESY OF PAMELA TRAPHAGEN

With me in his lap, my brother Mike above, and sisters Pam and Paula gathered around, my dad reads us a Christmas story. The legacy he built in our family endures ever stronger even 32 years after his passing.

tell you what my "big" gift was then. My dad had passed away earlier that year. I don't remember us moping around in sadness, but he was missed in ways that none of us could begin to describe. I do remember that my mom did her best to fill in the gaps that he so effortlessly filled during that holiday. I also remember that, in his absence, the love in our family started to become clearer and more visible. To me, that is among his most remarkable legacies.

In the years since, I have spent only one Christmas away from home. In 1999, Michelle and I huddled inside our little boat anchored off Staniel Cay in the Bahamas and celebrated together, away from our

families. It was most traditional in the sense that there were no shopping malls on that small island. What I purchased for Michelle had been hand-made by someone living just across the water.

My dad's legacy has only grown and become stronger over the years. I have watched my brother become the man my dad would have been had he lived. I have watched my mom smile, despite knowing that my dad has never for a moment left her heart in the 32 years that he has been gone. I have watched my sisters become women that I love dearly and admire greatly. I am proud of my family and Christmas serves as a vivid reminder that despite having passed away, my dad never really left us. The love that he and my mom created has only grown.

Regardless of your beliefs, I wish you a very Merry Christmas. In that, I am wishing you, from the bottom of my heart, faith and love and happiness. This holiday is a reminder that it is there for us all year long.

South Bay Hospital nursing staff receives certification

Ten South Bay Hospital nursing employees recently earned their Orthopedic Nurses Certification from the Orthopedic Nurses Certification Board (ONCB).

In November, Star Berning, RN; Anne Correia, RN; Amanda Johnson, RN; Yvonne Manosky, RN; James Seidlack, RN; and Crischel Tan, RN, received this specialty nursing certification. Surgical Services staff members Anne Brooks, RN, has been certified for over 10 years, and Chris Burke, RN, and Janet Taylor, RN, received their certification in 2009. These Nurses will be instrumental in providing care of patients in the new Joint and Spine Care Center opening on the 18th of this month.

To be eligible for the ONC examination, one must be licensed as an RN and have 1,000 hours of work experience as an RN in orthopedic nursing practice within the past three years. Testing material covers degenerative diseases, orthopedic traumas, sports injuries and neuromuscular/pediatrics/congenital problems.

"We are proud of the achievement of our Nurses," says Sharon Roush, CEO for South Bay Hospital. "This certification means that they have demonstrated the proficiency in orthopedic nursing and can significantly improve the outcomes of our Center for Joint and Spine Care patients."

For information on South Bay Hospital's Center for Joint and Spine Care, call Sherell Bennett at 813-634-0172.



Observations
By Mitch Traphagen
mitch@observernews.net



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Penance Service
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 15TH
7:00 p.m. English and Español

Christmas Schedule
THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD • FRIDAY, DEC. 24TH
3:30 p.m. Choral Singing
4:00 p.m. Mass
6:30 p.m. Children's Choir
7:00 p.m. Family Mass
9:00 p.m. Misa en Español
11:30 p.m. Choral Singing - Mass to follow

SATURDAY, DEC. 25TH (No Evening Mass)
8:00 a.m., 10:00 a.m., 12:00 p.m. Mass (All English)

Feast of the Holy Family
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 26TH
8:00 a.m., 10:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Mass
12:30 p.m. Misa en Español

NEW YEAR'S EVE • FRIDAY, DECEMBER 31ST
8:00 a.m. Daily Mass - Adoration of the Eucharist
5:00 p.m. Vigil Mass - Adoration of the Eucharist
7:30 p.m. Misa en Español

NEW YEAR'S DAY • SATURDAY, JANUARY 1ST
Feast of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God (not a Holy Day obligation)
10:00 a.m. Mass
Feast of the Epiphany
5:00 p.m. Vigil Mass



RUSKIN Moose Lodge #813 WEEKLY EVENTS

The Ruskin Moose Lodge #813 is located at 1212 E. Shell Point Road, Ruskin • (813) 645-5919s

| | | |
|-------------------|-----------------------|---|
| Friday, Dec. 17 | 7-11 p.m. | Charlie Burns |
| Saturday, Dec. 18 | 4-7 p.m. 7-11 p.m. | Moose Legion Dinner Karaoke with Kim Mullins |
| Friday, Dec. 24 | 7-11 p.m. | Candlelight Vigil |
| Saturday, Dec. 31 | | New Year's Eve Party with Taylor and Taylor |
| Every Wednesday | 5-7 p.m. | Spaghetti Dinner -- new and delicious |
| Every Thursday | 5-7 p.m. | Wings (except Thanksgiving) |
| Every Friday | 5-7 p.m. | Fish Fry (except Christmas) Live music |
| Every Saturday | 7-11 p.m. | Karaoke by Kim |

All events are open to qualified Moose members and guests.



AB Woman's Club makes Christmas brighter

Christmas will be much brighter for two Apollo Beach families who will open presents selected especially for them by members of the Apollo Beach Woman's Club.

ABWC members purchased gifts of clothes, shoes and toys for the two families, one with four children at Apollo Beach Elementary School, and the other with eight children at Doby Elementary, also located in Apollo Beach.

The Christmas giving effort was led by Barbara Lamneck and Rosemary Kolodziejczak, who co-chair community service activities for the more than 170 ABWC members.

One of the families has four children, two in elementary and two in high school; the other family includes eight children. There are three pre-school age while the other ages are 6, 7, 9, 13 and 16.

More than 70 packages were wrapped and delivered to the December ABWC meeting. In addition, some members contributed gifts of cash, which were used to purchase a bicycle for one boy and supermarket gift certificates for the two families.

"I was so impressed by the lovely gifts that came in for the families; they are going to have such a nice Christmas," Kolodziejczak said.

"I can't get over what our members have done. It is amazing," added Lamneck.

Guidance counselors at each of the elementary schools selected the two families for the Christmas service project based on need.



JM Doyle

Left to right: Rosemary Kolodziejczak and Barbara Lamneck, community service co-chairs of the Apollo Beach Woman's Club, accept gift donations from members who contributed to the ABWC's Christmas gift drive for two Apollo Beach families.

Many of the children have so little that they concentrated their Christmas gift lists given to ABWC members on clothing rather than toys.

This is the latest community service project sponsored by the ABWC. In November, member Sonja Davidson coordinated a bake sale that raised over \$1,000 to be used for college scholarships for graduating Apollo Beach high school seniors.

The club's largest fund-raising effort will be held Wednesday, March 9, at the The Renaissance Club, 2121 S. Pebble Beach Blvd. in Sun City Center. The show will feature a trunk show by Accessories and More of Sarasota with clothing items available for purchase that day.

The event will also include a silent auction, vendor tables and luncheon. Tickets are \$30 and can be purchased by calling Karen

Benedict at (813) 645-9229.

The club's next meeting will be held at 11:30 a.m. on Wednesday, Jan. 12 at the Summerfield Crossing Golf Club in Riverview. Helen Arnold of Southeastern Guide Dogs will present a program on the invaluable assistance the dogs provide to armed service veterans. Luncheon tickets are \$16.

ABWC is open to all women in the Apollo Beach community. In addition to meeting each month, the club offers special interest activities sponsored by the Book, Bridge, Culture and Garden clubs.

Dues are \$20 annually and can be sent to Judy Peck, vice-president/membership at 6639 Cambridge Park Drive, Apollo Beach, FL 33572.

For membership information or information regarding any of the club's activities, contact Peck at (813) 746-1072 or by e-mail: judypeck@tampabay.rr.com.

Annual meeting tonight

The annual meeting for the Ruskin Community Development Foundation, Inc. will be at 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, Dec. 16 at the Camp Bayou Outdoor Learning Center, 4202 24th St. SE in Ruskin.

For more information, call (813) 641-8545.

Riverview Memorial VFW Post #8108

7504 Riverview Dr.
(813) 671-9845

MEETINGS

Men's Auxiliary -- First Thursday at 7 p.m.

Ladies' Auxiliary -- Second Tuesday at 7 p.m.

Post -- Second Thursday at 7:30 p.m.

MEALS

Wednesday Spaghetti Dinner from 5 to 7 p.m.

Friday Fish Fry from 5 to 7 p.m.

Sunday Breakfast from 9 a.m. to noon

ENTERTAINMENT

Friday, Dec. 17 -- Galvin O at 8 p.m.

Saturday, Dec. 18 -- Post Christmas Party at 8 p.m.

Saturday, Dec. 25 -- Dinner at 3 p.m. Bring dish.

Friday, Dec. 31 -- New Year's Eve Party.

CANTEEN HAPPENINGS

Bar Bingo on Monday at 6:30 p.m.

Bar Poker with Lori on Wednesdays at 1 p.m.

Fire in the Hole on Saturdays at 1 p.m.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Thank you for help to the needy

Dear Editor,

During the Thanksgiving holiday, I went to visit the MacCalla family (she helped raised my husband), and I saw a great need. Dawn MacCalla is a single grandmother and is raising a daughter of her own and six grandchildren from her late daughter Angelica Aguilar whom passed away almost four years ago. My heart broke to see their home in need of so many repairs, and Dawn MacCalla works very hard to keep a roof over their heads and food on the table.

After my visit, I started thinking very hard of what I could possibly do to help them. I thought and knew in my heart that there must be someone out there whom could help me help them. So I began making phone calls through the Ruskin community (Apollo Beach, Sun City Center), and I was very excited and thankful to all the companies, agencies, and organizations whom said 'yes,' and were willing

to help, and whom made contributions to help a family in need in our community.

So I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone in the Ruskin community and surrounding areas whom took the time to answer my calls and whom were so willing to help a family in need. I am happy to know that even though we are a small community there are many people with big hearts, caring minds, and so willing to help others. Every effort and contribution is greatly appreciated from the MacCalla family and myself. Thank you all for your time, efforts, and contributions. May

God bless each and every one of you.

MacCalla family and
Natalie Castillo, Ruskin

IN UNIFORM



XAVIER RICHARDSON

Navy Seaman Apprentice Xavier M. Richardson, son of Heather J. Harris of Riverview and Joseph N. Richardson, of Durham, recently completed U.S. Navy basic training at Recruit Training Command, Great Lakes, IL.

During the eight-week program, Richardson completed a variety of training which included classroom study and practical instruction on naval customs, first aid, firefighting, water safety and survival, and shipboard and aircraft safety. An emphasis was also placed on physical fitness.

The capstone event of boot camp is 'Battle Stations.' This exercise gives recruits the skills and confidence they need to succeed in the fleet. 'Battle Stations' is designed to galvanize the basic warrior attributes of sacrifice, dedication, teamwork and endurance in each recruit through the practical application of basic Navy skills and the core values of Honor, Courage and Commitment. Its distinctly 'Navy' flavor was designed to take into account what it means to be a Sailor.

Richardson is a 2008 graduate of East Bay High School of Gibsonton.



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Proposed opening onto U.S. 301

■ Continued from page 1

for maintenance of the existing construction roadway as an emergency ingress-egress only while proponents point to the fact such an opening to the community from the federal highway appears on the community's early site plans.

And the matter surfaced again a few months ago when Minto Communities, the new developer, petitioned Hillsborough County for approval of a change to the guiding site development plan which would restrict the locked entrance near the highway to emergency uses only.

At the time the petition was drafted, it was Minto's understanding this was the will of a majority of the community, Bill Bullock, regional vice president, told *The Observer* this week. The developer had received several letters from residents, he added, expressing concerns that if the opening became unrestricted the results would include increased truck traffic on South Pebble Beach, a rise in opportunistic crime as access to the community was more easily gained and use of South Pebble Beach as a shortcut by drivers coming from the west heading to areas along U.S. 301 south of S.R. 674 as well as in reverse by drivers headed toward Ruskin but wishing to avoid traffic controls in the U.S. 301/S.R. 674 intersection.

Added to these factors was the traffic analysis conducted by former developer WCI when Minto was considering purchase of WCI property which showed that from a traffic management perspective such an ingress-egress would not be required at build-out density, Bullock said.

Consequently, Minto, being a "go ahead and get it done" kind of company inclined to "close open-ended items," moved to set the emergency only designation of the U.S. 301

entrance in the site plan, the executive noted. The company, however, subsequently withdrew its petition to modify the development plan in this manner.

Unlike the Minto letter writers, Paul Courter, a 10-year resident on Platinum Drive, embraces the unrestricted south side opening to U.S. 301 as an enhancement of the quality of life here. It would represent a convenience for those headed north to shopping around the S.R. 674 intersection or south to the Ellenton-Bradenton-Sarasota areas, he said. Plus, when he bought his home, the plat maps he examined showed the U.S. 301 entrance which was a consideration in the purchase, he indicated.

In addition, Courter noted "I don't want to be locked in" in the case of any natural disaster such as a direct-strike hurricane. "It (the currently restricted opening) feels like a wall blocking me," he said, "I want to be able to come and go."

As for the increased crime potential, Courter said he doesn't believe there's any more in SCC than in other similar communities, adding "there is no way to insulate yourself completely." Moreover, if a natural disaster such as a hurricane were to strike, he said he doesn't believe opening the gate to the highway would be authority's first priority.

Another south sider, Paul Wheat, strongly supports maintaining the existing construction track to U.S. 301 for use by the community at large on an emergency basis only. One big reason is money. "Exactly who," Wheat, a former SCC CA president, asks rhetorically, "is going to pay" for all of the improvements necessary to create an acceptable ingress-egress at the point the construction road reaches the federal highway?

In the foreseeable future, U.S.

301 is going to be widened from the current two lanes at that point to four lanes and the roadway may become an even more heavily used alternative to I-75, he indicated. A free-flowing entrance into SCC at that point would require additional turning lanes plus either traffic controlling signage or lighted signalization. Such expense would be on top of the costs of finishing the roadway inside SCC and adding whatever else might be necessary for basic traffic safety on the internal road.

Wheat said he has seen no signs that either the SCC Community Association or Minto or ClubLink, new owner of the community's golf courses which also has an ownership interest in the property around the ingress-egress site, would be comfortable assuming the level of outlay that would be required.

Ed Barnes, current SCC CA president recently elected to a second term as a director as well as a south side homeowner, said this week he is taking no position, either pro or con, on any of the issues related to the ingress-egress beyond his conviction that it is up to the CA membership to make the final decision.

Following the January 20 town hall meeting, he said he expects a CA election on an open-or-close-to-U.S. 301 referendum to be conducted in early to mid-February.

Both Minto executives and representatives from the Hillsborough County Sheriff's office have been invited to the town hall meeting and both have indicated intentions to take part in the discussions. The HCSO historically has not favored any unrestricted opening to the community on the south side based on public safety concerns. Minto, Bullock indicated, is interested in the community's sentiment on the issues.

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Corr Elementary Terrific Kids

These Terrific Kids kept a positive attitude throughout November: 5th grade – Destini Washington, Elijah Mills, Savannah Filiplik, Cierra Kenney, Cielo Trejo, Irineo Abeja; 4th grade – Lillia Romero, Lilly Atwood, Abigail Streetman, William Beltran, Sarah Meneley, Andrew Gordon, Victor Rodriguez; 3rd grade – Michel Arteaga-Garcia, Caleb Walker, Genesis Rodriguez, Julissa Hernandez, Ashley Rivera, Isaul Negrete, David Strawter, Maria Nava; 2nd grade – Caleb Hall, Crystal Pink, Hannah Cooksey, Sean Joiner, Chloe Masters, Trenton Glenn, Rachelle DiFilippo, Jacob Vega; 1st grade – Beyone Plaisir, Kyle Urta, Carissa Martin, Dalani Nowling, Lorena Araujo, Bradley Lacey; Kindergarten – Nathan Jobe, Yasmine Orhanli, Henry Michaels, Jasenia Rasgado, Gabriela Rivera, Moises Ventura, Sterling Washington, Jose Jimenez, Bulmaro Martinez; Pre-K – Braylen Calloway, Ethan Lancaster.



Bronson announces results of annual scanner survey

TALLAHASSEE — Florida Agriculture and Consumer Services Commissioner Charles H. Bronson is urging consumers to check their receipts before they leave a store this holiday season. A sweep of store scanners by his Division of Standards shows most of them are correct but mistakes can be made.

Every year, Bronson conducts a pre-holiday scanner survey. This year inspectors with the Bureau of Weights and Measures visited 52 stores in 24 cities and towns to determine scanner accuracy. A total of 2,989 items were scanned

during the annual inspection.

Of the 2,989 items scanned, 54 (1.8 percent) scanned at a different price than the lowest advertised or posted prices. Of those errors, 28 were overcharges and 26 were undercharge errors. Four stores inspected during the sweep were found to have excessive overcharges and face administrative sanctions ranging from warning letters to fines of up to \$5,000 for repeat violations. Stores that fail to meet the 98 percent standard due to excessive undercharge errors are inspected more frequently until the acceptable accuracy is met.

The state's adopted requirement for acceptable accuracy is 98 percent, which is the national standard as established by the National Conference on Weights and Measures. All items found in error must be corrected immediately or an off sale notice is issued.

While the survey found that scanning errors are relatively uncommon, mistakes do occur. It means that consumers need to be aware of the price that they should be charged, Bronson said.

"The important thing is to know the price of the item that you're buying, make sure that's what you're charged at the checkout line and keep receipts," Bronson said. "If there is any discrepancy, bring it to the attention of store personnel."

Bronson's Division of Standards tests checkout scanners, as well as scales and other devices used for products sold by weight or measure. Consumers who believe that they have been overcharged, or who detect problems with a store's scales, are encouraged to call the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services at 1-800-HELP FLA (435-7352).

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THE OBSERVER NEWS

The Hope Fund receives a grant from the Community Foundation of Greater Sun City Center

The Board of the Hope Fund for Children is pleased to announce that a grant of \$4,000 has been received from the Community Foundation of Greater Sun City Center to aid in financing the Daily Snack Program for the children who attend the after-school programs at Bethune Park in Wimau. When the children arrive at the park at the end of their regular school day, they are treated to healthy snacks, such as fruit or crackers, and drinks.

The Community Foundation of SCC serves South Hillsborough County and was formed in 1992 as an affiliate of the Tampa Bay Community Foundation. The pur-

pose of the Foundation is to make lives better through grants to the arts, human services, technology, education, and community development. It has relationships with over 100 non-profit organizations in the Tampa Bay area, for which they administer endowments. The grant to the Hope Fund came from the 'Hadley and Helen Hill Fund.'

The Hope Fund, an all volunteer, non-profit organization, thanks the Community Foundation for its generous grant and applauds the Foundation's commitment to bettering the lives of the citizens of South Hillsborough County.

Along with the snack program, the Hope Fund sponsors other

programs for the children at Bethune Park. The various activities include mentoring and tutoring, a running program, a reading program, field trips, a computer lab, sex and education programs for older children.

The Fund also runs a summer program for the kids. The summer activities include: bowling, roller skating and miniature golf, a visit to Lowry Park Zoo, the Tampa Bay Rays, and Lithia Springs. All of these programs greatly enhance the lives of the children, and the kids have a place to learn and grow in a safe, nurturing environment while their parents work.

However, because Bethune Park

is part of the Hillsborough Recreation Department, the programs are not without a fee. The Hope Fund is not part of the Recreation Dept., but provides scholarships for those children whose families cannot afford the cost. The fees have increased significantly because of tax cuts.

Volunteers usually spend an hour a week with the children. All the children speak English. To volunteer or donate (all donations are tax deductible), or to find out more about the Hope Fund, call Carla Miles at 634-4268 or visit the Funds website at www.the-hope-fund.org.

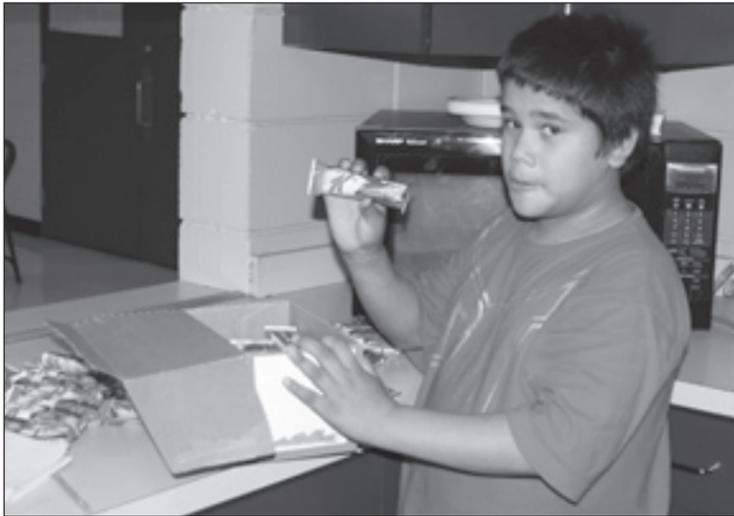
It's what's on the inside that counts

Sun Towers Retirement Community has had a face lift on the outside, but what's more important are the new additions inside. With an extensive history of skilled nursing in Sun Terrace, it was a natural progression to provide Extended Congregate Care services (ECC) to Sun City Center residents along with Memory Care services. What are these designations and how do they affect our community? Extended Congregate Care (ECC) enables Sun Towers to provide care for those individuals who would otherwise not qualify for assisted living due to a higher level of care requirement. An example would be the individual with diabetes who needs their sugar levels monitored and are unable to do the Accu-chek tests and insulin injections due to low vision or arthritis. In an assisted living setting, that service would not be allowed and another agency would be called in adding to the cost of care.

Sun Towers has also seen the need for additional Memory Care in our community. The Johnnie Byrd Alzheimer's Institute at USF has been consulted and contractors and architects have been enlisted to open a "cutting edge" Memory Care community within Sun Towers that should open in early 2011.

Sun Towers has added Steve Oelfke as the new administrator of the Independent, Assisted Living, ECC and Memory Care component of Sun Towers.

Be on the look out for additional changes as Sun Towers and Sun Terrace continue to improve to serve the seniors in our great community!



Kevin Johnson preparing the snacks.



Lesley Alcantara preparing drinks for all the children as part of the after-school snack program at Bethune Park.

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Downtown Swansboro, North Carolina.

MITCH TRAPHAGEN PHOTOS

Cool change

■ Continued from page 13

gloves were chemical hand warmers; inside my shoes were chemical foot warmers. Despite all of that, I was as cold as I could ever remember being — even with all of my years growing up in Minnesota. As the morning progressed, the wind slacked off and during lulls, the conditions felt pleasant in comparison. The sun was shining down making an effort at warmth, but then a gust of wind would instantly blow all warmth away.

Despite the cold, we began to see reminders of our life in Florida. I almost felt sorry for the palm trees in the Beaufort marina shrouded in ice and cold weather. In the harbor, we motored through a large school of dolphins and no doubt, our propeller interrupted their breakfast buffet of fish. Continuing south, as we



Throughout this journey I have been focused intensely only on the single day and in the process have nearly forgotten that it is almost Christmas. Above, Michelle poses with Santa and Elvis in Swansboro, North Carolina. Santa served as a reminder of the season.

passed inlets to the ocean, dolphins would abound, frequently swimming next to the boat. I have a feeling they know they are magical and that they enjoy giving us a few moments of entertainment. I am certain they are empathetic creatures that know their presence is calming.

We sailed only a short distance to the town of Swansboro where we walked through the historic village to the small shopping district. With the temperature struggling to reach the mid-30s, few tourists could be found. Most shops were open but some appeared to bow to the inevitable — that not many customers would come in such cold weather. A handful of tourists could be seen, looking at brochures and maps, standing close to the heat offered by their waiting cars. It must be difficult to be a shop owner in this town. It is a quaint and beautiful place, yet it is unlikely to be high on anyone's to-do list when the weather is cold.

Upon our early morning departure, we could hear distant booms from the live firing range at Camp Lejeune 15 miles down the Intra-coastal Waterway. The ICW runs directly through the camp and the Marines occasionally close the waterway for exercises. Patrol boats and signs keep boats out of the danger zone, at those times the only option is to circle until the exercises are complete. We hoped to squeeze through during a lull in the firing. The camp provides an information line for boaters and we were told there would be exercises that day but could not be told when. We were told the patrol boats would provide further information upon our arrival. The flashing red lights were unlit as we approached the warning sign at the start of the firing range and there were no patrol boats in sight. We quietly motored through the camp, seeing the occasional bombed-out tanks and trucks from previous exercises along the way. Just as we sailed out of the camp, we heard the deep and powerful booms begin again.

Well I was born in the sign of water and it's there that I feel my best.

All of my focus is on a single day. I think in abstract terms about where I'd like to end up by the weekend or where to be for Christmas; but I can only think in detail of today. In the ICW, that means focusing on the next 40 or 50 miles. Now the focus is on staying in the relatively narrow waterway and worrying about whatever currents may (but hopefully will not) oppose us and slow us down. The focus is on being somewhere safe and protected for the next cold front that is forecasted to usher in strong winds and record-cold temperatures.

Because of that focus, I have completely forgotten that it is nearly Christmas. I love Christmas, even the crowds in the stores. There is

a feeling I get from it with people out buying or doing things for others. For a moment, I felt sorry for myself that I was missing it, until I realized that I'm not missing out on the spirit of the season. I realized that spirit is alive and well all year long for those who look for it. When you stop expecting the worst in everything and everyone, the good that is inherent shines through.

Deep Pointe Marina in Southport, North Carolina, met every quality I was seeking for a safe and protected harbor in a storm: a basin that is protected from the wind in every direction. The marina is new and has perhaps been stung by the burst of the housing bubble. But despite the public's lack of appetite for buying more and bigger things, the finishing touches are being completed. Rob Gandy, the harbor master, scrambled to ensure the showers in the newly built restrooms worked upon our arrival. He told us the marina didn't yet have a courtesy car but we were free to use his personal car. That the marina is nearly full in a slow economic climate is certainly a testament to his commitment and concern for those who live in and visit this marina.

From a boat across the dock, a couple we had not met knocked on *Shadow Marie* to invite us to Christmas dinner. They have a reservation at the one restaurant that will be open in town and have rented an apartment for the month of December. We don't even know their names but they were looking out for the two strangers who came to their marina, inviting us to their home for the holiday.

It's kind of a special feeling, out on the sea alone. Staring at the full moon like a lover.

When the weather cooperates, our next port of call will be in Florida after a three-day sail south in the Atlantic. Finding the proper weather is more important in the ocean than in the relatively protected confines of the ICW. Years ago, Michelle and I spent days at sea alone, adapting to the rhythms of life far away from the sight of land. It is a special, indescribable feeling to see the water, the sky, and the stars as our boat sails onward towards home. But now, I am fully aware that we are never alone as long as another ship plies the seas and waterways. Nor are any of the crews of those boats alone. It is up to us to carry forward the generosity and care we have received from so many others on this journey. It is something we will do willfully and gladly. God doesn't change the world to suit our individual needs and wants. He changes us.

(Song lyrics from "Cool Change" written by Glenn Shorrock and performed by the Little River Band)



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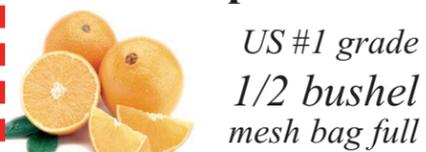
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SEMINOLE COUNTY

the other Florida

■ By WARREN RESEN,
Florida Outdoor Writers
Assoc. member

It took a trek to the jungles of Panama for me to learn what the world's image of Florida is really like.

Stopping for a rest in a local village, a young boy approached our group and asked, in Spanish, where we lived. I answered "En la Florida." His reply was, "Oh, la casa de Mickey Mouse." I don't think that needs translation. Unfortunately, this image is also prevalent in most of this county. Thankfully, there is more to Florida than "The Mouse."

Long before Disney, Florida was a kindlier, gentler, less crowded place. However the dollars brought in by the Magic Kingdom and the employment it provides contributes greatly to the economic engine that drives the economy of the state.

For an average family of four, the cash outlay during a week's visit to The Magic Kingdom can represent a major portion of their disposable yearly income. Fortunately, there are places where visitors and residents can still visit in Florida that will not break the bank.

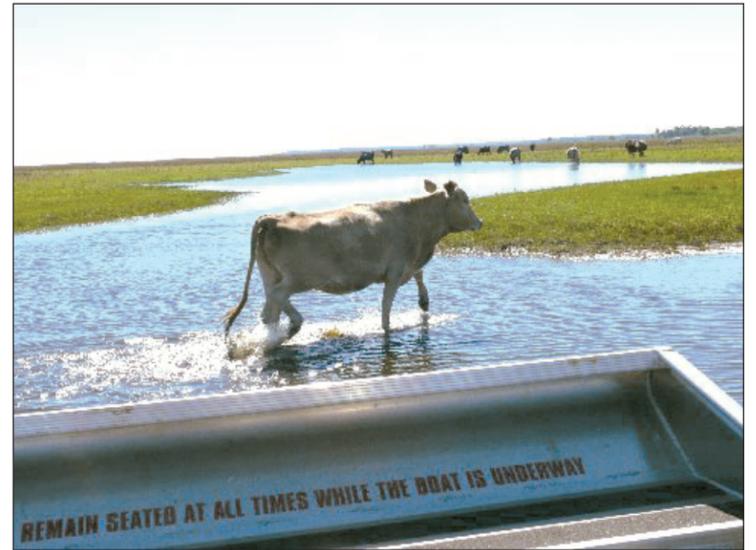
In Central Florida, about a half-hour northwest of Orlando is Seminole County, long considered to be just a bedroom community to its more glamorous sister. It has been a place so laid back, I think it safe to say that most Floridian's couldn't locate it on a map. And yet there it sits, almost dead center in the state and home to some of Florida's remaining natural beauty.

Seminole County boasts that it is "the epitome of extraordinary natural beauty." Yes it can claim that distinction, but the county has also kept and restored the historic charm of its older communities and has places to stay and dine that are generally much more reasonable on the wallet, at perhaps one-third the price of the better known, more heavily frequented tourist hot spots to the south.

Nature starts at Wekiwa River State Park with its 6,900 wild acres and crystal clear spring fed river. The park offers a myriad of outdoor activities and nature experiences and it probably looks the same as when Timucuan Indians inhabited the area.

A little bit of history here. It comes as a surprise to most people when they learn that the Seminoles were not the original Native Americans in Florida. They were the last Native Americans to arrive, long after all of the other original tribes had disappeared from the peninsula.

My introduction to Seminole County started with an unusual airboat tour, not through swamps, but cow pastures and to a zoo offering a challenging ropes course. Then came a delightful luncheon



Danger, cows crossing.

cruise on the St. Johns River where the movement of wildlife was real, not computer controlled. Finally, I ended with a stroll through Sanford, a charming city most Floridians associate only with the Auto Train. And there was more.

I've been on many airboat rides over the years, but this trip with Capt. Bruce of Central Florida Airboat Tours was unique. Instead of the usual showy maneuver of cutting through cattails, we skimmed across the northern end of Lake Jesup and roared through flooded pastures as cows scampered to get out of our way. At one point we left the water and came to rest on a 1,000 year old Indian shell mound, sitting high above the surrounding fiends, to a enjoy panoramic view and a picture taking session. And yes, we did see 'gators, turtles and birds.

Taking off from land on an airboat and returning to water was an equally unique experience, possibly akin to a plane leaving an aircraft carrier, but in a much smaller way of course.

Capt. Bruce operates out of C.S. Lee Park west of Sanford. Information about his schedule and offerings is available at centralfloridaairboatstours.com.

You've most likely been to a zoo before, but I don't think you have ever seen anything like the Central Florida Zoo in the Sanford area. Yes, they have all of the requisite animals, but they also have the ZOOM Air Adventure Park. I've never experienced anything like it.

The courses were designed to blend with the environment. You swing, climb, balance, and zip from tree to tree and get a bird's-eye view of the zoo as you travel over logs, through barrels, across rope bridges, nets, and suspended disks and finish up with a series of long zip lines. There are courses for adults and children. The degree of difficulty was surprising, at times challenging, and it is something you do all by yourself. There are no cars taking you through the motions with computer generated backgrounds.

Go to the Central Florida Zoo and Botanical Gardens web site (www.centralfloridazoo.org) to

view videos of this unique experience.

If you are comfortable only on concrete, then a visit to Historic Downtown Sanford, along the St. Johns River, should be on your short list. This city is known by many only as the Auto Train Depot. But there's a lot more to it than that. The historic buildings have been restored to their old grandeur and charming antique shops, art galleries, boutiques, restaurants, sidewalk cafes and museums line the main street.

A lunch or dinner cruise on the Rivership Romance from downtown Sanford into the St Johns River, which flows north into Jacksonville and then into the Atlantic Ocean, is a delightful and relaxing change of pace. This three deck 100 foot long ship, whose keel was laid almost 70 years ago, has been refitted for comfortable cruising, dining and entertainment. Sitting on one of the open decks and listening to the narration about the area's history and environment, after just having finished a delicious lunch is delightful. The ship has a fascinating history about which you will learn by taking the cruise. Their web site is www.rivershipromance.com.

Accommodations are all over the place, literally, from basic motels to upscale offerings in Lake Mary. They offer the visitor a wide range of prices and choices. Don't be confused though when some hotels include Orlando in their name or location. That's just a marketing gimmick to give you an idea of geographical location and latch on to their famous neighbor's reputation. Then there are the addresses, many of which can be equally confusing. International Parkway in Lake Mary is not to be confused with International Drive in Orlando.

Of course, every type of restaurant known to man is within easy driving distance, without the traffic and crowds of nearby Orlando. You are familiar with the nation chains and what they offer. But when traveling, it's always fun to try local offerings for a change of pace. My feeling is that if you only frequent the chains, why travel? You might as well stay home.



JEANNE O'CONNOR PHOTOS
Top, this airboat is parked on top of a 1,000 year old Indian mound.

Above, the Rivership Romance prepares to embark for a dinner cruise.

Zip lines are all the rage.

Right, a trip to Central Florida Zoo is a must when visiting Seminole County.





"My family's been fishing for eight generations. It's just a way of life. That's why we've got to get this cleaned up."

*Pete Floyd
Commercial Fisherman,
Pascagoula, Mississippi*

Making This Right

- Beaches
- Claims
- Cleanup
- Economic Investment**
- Environmental Restoration**
- Health and Safety
- Wildlife

When the spill hit, a lot of people said it would be the end. BP said they would try to make this right. But how was an energy company going to help a fisherman?

Putting People to Work

The first thing they did was rent my boat and hire me to help with the cleanup. They made up my losses so I could pay my bills. And they worked with all kinds of people here from fishermen and shrimpers to restaurant owners. It helped us keep our businesses open. And it helped us make ends meet so we could support our families.

Staying for the Long Haul

When they capped the well in July and finally killed it, we were all relieved. But would BP stick around? Well, they did. The beaches are clean and we're back on the water fishing so things are getting a whole lot better. They are still here and have said they will keep working for as long as it takes.

Getting Back to Normal

BP asked me to share my story with you to keep you informed. If you still need help, please call 1-866-448-5816 or go to bp.com. If you're wondering what you can do, well – the next time you're shopping, buy a little Gulf seafood. There is none finer.

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floridagulfresponse.com



The Spirit of Christmas

It was a magical, marvelous time again when the excitement of Christmas hung in the air and the count down to Christmas morning heralded every dawn beginning December 1. Although I could handily recite the number of days left, I preferred to cross them off the calendar with a fat red cray-

on. Christmas was always a mystical time of the year for me. I loved writing the list to Santa, making cookies for him and seeing him at Macys. I especially loved the flurry of the season. Finding the right gifts for everyone was a wondrous task; however wrapping them was often a challenge.

When I was nine, quite suddenly and with little provocation, I began to question how Santa could do it all. Even with my limited study of science and geography, it put Santa in a questionable scenario. As much as I tried to think otherwise, logic and reason made Santa's trip with flying reindeer seem improbable. Had I found out the truth about Santa?

When I raised my suspicions to others, I got vague, ethereal answers or no answers at all. Why the mystery, and why the guarded answers? Was Santa real or a fairy tale? Finally, my mother said, "There's always been a Santa and there will always be one for as long as you believe in the Spirit of Christmas."

Over the years I've come to know the true Spirit of Christmas. It is the very essence of the giving and receiving of love. Every generation is given the opportunity to believe in Santa. What a wondrous adventure to capture delightful memories; And for as long as we believe, the Spirit of Christmas will forever live in each of us.



Whit N' Whimsey

By Nancy Porter-Thal

Boaters lookout for manatees on the move

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) cautions boaters in the greater Tampa Bay area to be on the lookout for manatees moving into warm-water refuges. Manatees are moving from shallow-water feeding areas into the Tampa Electric Company (TECO) discharge canal. Boaters should slow down and strictly obey posted speed restrictions in manatee-protection zones.

FWC law enforcement officers have increased patrols and are strictly enforcing manatee-protection-zone speed limits to aid the animals during this period when they are most vulnerable to vessel strikes.

To avoid striking manatees, vessel operators should wear polarized sunglasses to help them spot the creatures in the water, and watch for the large, tell-tale circular slicks on the surface of the water (manatee footprints) that indicate the presence of manatees.

If you would like more information on Florida's manatees, visit MyFWC.com/Manatee or call the FWC's regional office in Lakeland at (863) 648-3200. To report a dead or distressed manatee, call the FWC's Wildlife Alert Hotline at 888-404-FWCC (3922).



Director Rita Hughes and accompanist Judy Schafer acknowledge a standing ovation following 'A Christmas Concert' which was recently presented by The Women's Chorus of Sun City Center.

Spring concert rehearsals beginning

Rehearsals for The Women's Chorus of SCC spring concert begin on Thursday, Jan. 13 from 9 to 11 a.m. at St. Andrew Presbyterian Church, 1239 Del Webb W., Sun City Center. All women from Sun City Center, Kings Point and surrounding communities are welcome.

Freezing temperatures increase wildfire risk

A cold front moving through the state caused temperatures to dip below the freezing mark in many areas and is increasing the potential for wildfires.

"These low temperatures create dead and dry vegetation that allow wildfires to start and burn easily," said Commissioner of Agriculture and Consumer Services Charles Bronson. "A lack of the typical tropical moisture usually seen during hurricane season has left Florida drier than normal in spite of recent rainfall. These frosts and freezes will make a bad situation worse," Bronson said.

Recently, Commissioner Bronson stated that his Division of Forestry is expecting wildfire activity during 2011 to be higher than normal due to the strong La Nina weather conditions currently in place. Similar conditions in the past have been associated with Florida's five most active wildfire years.

"This cold front could lead to increased wildfire activity sooner than expected," Bronson said. "I would urge all residents to do everything possible to increase the probability that their home will

survive a wildfire."

Bronson urges everyone to concentrate on the three most important areas of their home:

1. Roof and gutters -- should be free of all vegetation and debris.
2. Around the sides of the house -- keep the area clean and landscape the area using plants with low flammability; keep organic mulch, especially pine straw, moist.

3. Within 30 feet of the house -- keep the area mowed, watered within current local water management guidelines, and keep all debris and brush picked up.

"It's important for everyone to remember that almost 80 percent of all wildfires in Florida are caused by humans. Wildfires that don't start can't injure residents or damage structures. Be careful when using anything that involves fire or high heat, or that can cause a spark to ignite nearby brush. With your help, we can avoid a wildfire disaster in Florida."

For more information on things you can do to lower the wildfire risk around your home and community or how to prevent wildfires, visit <http://www.fl-dof.com>.

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Program/Event Highlights Week of December 19 to 25

All HCPLC Libraries Close at 6 p.m on
Monday, Dec. 20 • Tuesday, Dec. 21 • Wednesday, Dec. 22

Internet: Introduction

Monday, Dec. 20 • 2 to 3 p.m.

Introduction to the Internet and related terminology. Basic mouse and keyboarding skills are recommended. Registration in person required no earlier than one hour prior to the start of the program. Free event is provided by the Friends of the SouthShore Regional Library.

Internet: Searching Techniques

Monday, Dec. 20 • 3:15 to 4:15 p.m.

Learn how to use search engines to find information and tips for evaluating what you find. Basic mouse and keyboarding skills are recommended. Registration in person required no earlier than one hour prior to the start of the program. Free event is provided by the Friends of the SouthShore Regional Library.

Deaf and Hearing Connection Telephone Distribution

Wednesday, Dec. 22 • 1 to 3 p.m.

Presented by Florida Telecommunications Relay, Inc. (FTRI) ~ FTRI provides free specialized equipment and training to qualified Florida residents who are deaf, hard of hearing or speech impaired. The equipment enables them to place and receive phone calls.

All HCPLC Libraries Closed:
Thursday, Dec. 23 through Saturday, Dec. 25

Interested in joining Friends of the South Shore library, visit the Book Sale Room at the Library for a membership application. For any additional information, visit www.southshorefriends.com. SouthShore Regional Library is located at 15816 Beth Shields Way (off 19th Avenue between U.S. 301 and I-75). (813) 273-3652.

Cold weather may lead to fish kills

As temperatures drop in Florida, the number of cold-related fish kills is likely to increase. Chilly winter temperatures can lead to fish die-offs in Florida's marine habitats, rivers and lakes.

The good news is that these events are natural occurrences and typically do not cause permanent damage to the ecosystem or to fish populations. In some cases they are even beneficial, in that they help limit the spread of invasive, exotic species.

Fish kills are often caused by sudden temperature fluctuations or by extended periods of extreme temperatures. Such kills can occur any time of the year in Florida, but they are most common in winter, when air temperatures drop. Although water stays relatively warm for awhile after the air cools, extended cold snaps can cause water temperatures in inland water bodies and estuaries to drop. The cold may kill fish outright by cold stress or weaken them so that they are more susceptible to disease. Another phenomenon, called lake-turnover, may occur when suddenly cooled surface water sinks and mixes with deeper, oxygen-poor water. This can cause fish to suffocate, often leading them to gulp at the surface before they die.

Warm-water species, including popular game fish like snook, are particularly vulnerable to cold temperatures. Exotic species such as butterfly peacock bass, tilapia, and sucker-mouth catfish are also especially susceptible to cold weather.

Fish affected by the cold may

appear lethargic and may be seen at the surface where the water may be warmer from the sun. All recreational regulations still apply to fish impacted by the cold temperatures, even if they appear to be dead or dying.

It is important for Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission scientists to keep track of the location and extent of fish kills in natural lakes and estuaries, to see if there are problems developing in an ecosystem that might require investigation or restorative measures. Although it is not necessary to report fish kills in private ponds, FWC scientists can assist the public by providing information about cold-weather fish kills in these water bodies. Residents can report fish kills in natural water bodies to the FWC at <http://research.MyFWC.com/fishkill/submit.asp> or call the FWC Fish Kill Hotline at 800-636-0511.

For more information on fish kills, visit <http://research.MyFWC.com> and select 'Fish and Wildlife Health' under the 'Explore' section.

Ruskin Woman's Aglow to meet

Ruskin Woman's Aglow will take place from 9:30 a.m. to noon on Saturday, Jan. 8 at 1234 Fairway Greens Dr. in Kings Point, SCC.

Their guest will be Christina Lee, songwriter, worship leader, and speaker. Bring a friend.

For more information, call 633-9613 or email glorc@aol.com.

Fisher House manager to address MOAA

Paula Welenc, who manages the Fisher House located at James A. Haley Veterans Hospital, will be the featured speaker at the Sun City Center Chapter of the Military Officers Association of America luncheon to be held at 11 a.m. on Wednesday, Jan. 5 in the Florida Room in the Sun City Center North Side Atrium Building.

Reservations (\$14) should be made by calling 1-877-332-3016 no later than the Sunday prior to the Wednesday meeting.

Paula joined the staff of the hospital specifically to develop their Fisher House program and open the house, which accepted its first guests in July of 2007.

The Fisher House program is a unique private-public partnership that supports America's military in their time of need. The program recognizes the special sacrifices of men and women in uniform and the hardships of military service by meeting a humanitarian need beyond that normally provided by the Departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs.

Because members of the military and their families are stationed worldwide and must often travel great distances for specialized medical care, Fisher House Foundation donates 'comfort homes,' built on the grounds of major military and VA medical centers. These homes enable family members to be close to a loved one at the most stressful times -- during the hospitalization for an unexpected illness, disease, or injury.

Tips for protecting water pipelines in freezing weather

As we enter the winter season, some areas of Hillsborough County may experience low temperatures that can cause water pipelines to freeze and burst. This can create tremendous damage and leave property owners with costly repair bills.

Here are some tips from Hillsborough County's Water Resource Division:

- Protect pipes, especially if they are exposed or the house or building insulation is insufficient. Look for where the water service enters the structure, and use an old blanket or material available from a home improvement store to insulate exposed piping.

- Homes and buildings with crawl spaces are particularly susceptible to wind and freezing temperatures, so outdoor pipes should be protected from the elements.

- Secure water meter covers so the meter and surrounding pipes are not exposed.

- Insulate or cover exposed back-flow prevention devices on fire lines and irrigation systems.

- Disconnect any outside water hoses from spigots, as water trapped inside can freeze and crack the hose.

If piping does freeze, be patient. It doesn't mean your water service has been turned off. Wait a few hours for temperatures to warm and the pipes to thaw. Never use an open flame to thaw out a pipe.

If a pipe does burst, turn off the water supply by using the home's shut-off valve, typically located under a sink or just outside the structure. If you are unable to shut off the water and are a County water customer, immediately call Customer Service at (813) 272-6680, or after regular business hours at (813) 744-5600.

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Wednesday Service..... 5:00 p.m.

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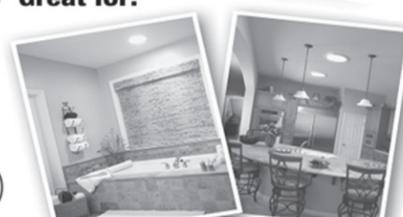
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From Bobby

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Decorating the tree are (L-R): Mary Ware, Bill Reeves, Irene Banning, Paula Conners, and Bonnie Reeves.

Church members decorate for Christmas

Trinity Baptist Church members gathered recently to help put up Christmas decorations. As in the past, the many people helping out resulted in decorating the entire church, inside and out, in just a few hours. For more information on the church, call 634-4228.

Riverview UMC presents Christmas Cantata

Riverview United Methodist Church is pleased to present their annual Christmas Cantata at 10:45 a.m. on Sunday, Dec. 19. A buffet lunch will immediately follow the service. Meat will be provided and they are asking everyone to bring vegetables, salads and desserts. The theme is 'Christmas Past, Christmas Present and Christmas Future.'

Christmas Cantata- Dec. 19 at 10:45 a.m.

Christmas Eve Services- Dec. 24 at 6 p.m.

Communion and Candlelight- Dec. 24 at 11pm

Everyone is welcome. There is no charge to attend these events. The church is located at 8002 U.S. Hwy. 301 S., Riverview, FL. Visit www.riverviewflumc.org for more information.

Christmas benefit concert planned

United Community Church Scholarship Committee is sponsoring a Christmas Benefit Concert on Friday, Dec. 17, at 7pm in the United Community Church at 1501 La Jolla Ave.

The Master of Ceremonies will be well-known baritone singer about town, Bill Barker. Supporting Bill will be tenor, Troy Coman; tenor, Al Spatola; and alto, Jo Winslow. They will be accompanied by Robert Winslow on keyboard and Michael James on percussion. Tickets are \$8 and may be purchased from any of the performers, at the church during the week in the front office, following the morning worship service on Sundays, or at the door the night of the performance. For more information, call Bill Barker at 634-6001 or Scholarship Chair, Jo Prater at 633-7168.

SCC Unitarian Universalist plan program

The SCC Unitarian Universalist Fellowship will have no programs on Dec. 16 or 23.

On Dec. 30 the Sun City Center Unitarian Universalist Fellowship presents Jen Hancock with 'The Pursuit of Happiness: A Humanist

Mandate.' Coffee and conversation start at 7 p.m. in the Beth Israel Social Hall at 1115 Del Webb East, Sun City Center, with the program beginning at 7:30 p.m. Visitors are welcome. For more information, call (813) 633- 2349.

Breakfast with Santa

Join breakfast with Santa from 9 to 11 a.m. on Saturday, Dec. 18 at South Shore United Methodist Church, 11525 Big Bend Rd., Riverview.

There will be crafts, a story corner, and picture spot with Santa. Children ages 2 to 11 are invited. The cost is \$3; age 12 and up is \$5.

For more information, call 677-9482 or visit www.southshoreumc.com.

Redeemer Lutheran presents Christmas Cantata

The Redeemer Lutheran Church of Sun City Center is presenting a Christmas Cantata entitled 'A Song is Born' at 4 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 18; and at 9:30 a.m. on Sunday, Dec. 19.

The true music of Christmas is the music of grace, rich with hope and harmonized with peace. This is a cantata of praise 'shouted' by the angels and a canticle of light presented by the dancing stars of night. It is the music of kings and the serenades of shepherds.

Musical Director is Sandy Gundacker and narration is by Bob Schoenfelder.



Community Christmas celebration planned

A Community Christmas celebration will be held at 7 p.m. on Sunday, Dec. 19 at East Bay High School Auditorium. Come one, come all to celebrate the season.

This event is sponsored by South Shore United Methodist Church. For more information, call 677-9482 or visit www.southshoreumc.com.

Shop kid stress free

On Dec. 21 and 22 South Bay Church, 13498 US Highway 301 S, in Riverview, will be having a Mother's Day Out so moms can go shopping stress free. The times are 9 am till 2 pm for \$25 or 9 till 5pm for \$35 each day. Sign up at the Welcome Center or call 813-677-0721 to register.

Area Places of Worship

CALVARY LUTHERAN CHURCH
 Sunday Worship: Blended 8:00 a.m.
 Contemporary 9:40 a.m.
 Traditional 11:15 a.m.
 Nursery Provided
Pastor Jack R. Palzer
 5309 U.S. Highway 41 North • Apollo Beach
 (across from MiraBay) www.calvalrylutheranchurch.net 645-1305

St. John the Divine Episcopal Church
Growing by Faith from Generation to Generation
Rev. Tracy H. Wider - Church Office 813-645-1521
 SUNDAY SERVICES: 9 am - Contemporary Service and Sunday School
 at West Campus, S.R. 674 and 9th Street SE, Ruskin
 8 am - Traditional Service and 11 am Holy Communion with Choir at East Campus
 at 1015 Del Webb Blvd., SCC
 All Worship Services with Holy Communion and Healing Holy Oil

Ruskin United Methodist Church
 First Street & 4th Ave. NW, Ruskin (Behind Suntrust Bank)
ALL ARE WELCOME TO COME AND WORSHIP WITH US:
 SUNDAY MORNINGS: (Nov.-April) 8:30 a.m. Day Care Available
 Rev. John M. Bartha and all year) 10:45 a.m. Mon. - Fri.
 Phone: 645-1241 Sunday School 9:30 a.m. 6 a.m. - 6 p.m.
 call 645-6198

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 701 Valley Forge Blvd., Sun City Center, FL 33573-5354
Rev. Dr. Peter Stiller, Pastor • 634-1292
 Saturday Worship: 4:00 p.m.
 Sunday Worship: 9:30 a.m.
 Holy Communion....First & Third Sunday • Bible Class...Thursday 10 am, Guests Welcome

First Church of Christ, Scientist
 Ruskin - Sun City Center
 204 Second St. N.W., Ruskin, Florida 33570
(813) 645-6102
 Sunday Service • Sunday School 10 a.m.
 Wednesday Testimony Meeting 5 p.m.
 Reading Room Wednesday 4-4:45 p.m. & Saturday 9 a.m.-1 p.m.
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Friendship Baptist Church
Rance Good, Pastor (Southern Baptist)
 1511 El Rancho Dr.
 Sun City Center, FL 33573
 Phone/Fax: 813-633-5950
 WEEKLY SERVICES:
 Sunday 9 a.m. Bible Study
 11 a.m. Bible Study
 10 a.m. & 6 p.m. Worship
 Wednesday 6 p.m. Prayer Meeting/Bible Study

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of SCC
Meets in the Social Hall of the Beth Israel Synagogue
 1115 E. Del Webb Blvd.
Thursdays, 7:00 PM - Call 633-0396
 We often give to others advice we need ourselves. ROY D. PHILIPS

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 Sunday School (all ages)..... 9:30 a.m.
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 Sunday Evening Worship 6:00 p.m.
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North River Church of Christ
 — Non-Instrumental —
13885 U.S. Hwy 301 South
 (Just South of the Manatee County Line)
 Minister: Howard Johnson
 Services: Sunday 10:00am, 11:00am & 6:00pm
 Wednesday 7:00pm
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 Home 813-754-1776

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 Traditional Worship Service
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 *Morning Worship 10:30 A.M.
 Sunday Evening 6:00 P.M.
 Mid-Week (Wed.) 7:00 P.M.
 Malcolm S. Clements, Pastor
 813-677-1301

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 1611 First St. SW • Ruskin, FL • 645-7607
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 SERVICES: Sunday.....9:30 & 10:30 a.m.; 6:00 p.m.
 Wednesday.....7:00 p.m.

Prince of Peace Catholic Church
 702 Valley Forge Blvd., SCC, FL 33573
 Phone: 634-2328 • Fax: 633-6670
www.popcc.org
Masses:
 Sunday..... 8:00 a.m., 10:00 a.m., Noon
 Saturday Vigil 4:00 and 6:00 p.m.
 Daily.....8:00 a.m.
Confessions:
 Mon.-Fri. 7:30 a.m. and Sat. 8:30 a.m. and 3 p.m.

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 Evening Service.....6:00 p.m.
 Wednesday Night Service.....7:00 p.m.
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10:55 a.m.
Southside Baptist Church
 Pastor Dan E. Collis • www.ss bapt.com
 4208 U.S. Hwy. 41 S • Sun City, FL 33586 • 813-645-4085
 4 miles south of College Ave (SR 674)

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Sunday School9:30 a.m.
Sunday Morning Worship10:55 a.m.
Sunday Evening Service.....6:00 p.m.
Wednesday Evening Service7:00 p.m.
Thursday Morning Prayer.....10:00 a.m.

Dan Collis, Pastor
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Word and salvation
in Jesus Christ

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Worship Services:
Saturday..... 4:00 p.m. - Creason Hall (Traditional Service)
Sunday.....8:15 a.m. in Sanctuary (Traditional Service)
9:30 a.m. - Creason Hall (The Oasis)
10:55 a.m. - Sanctuary (Traditional with Chancel Choir)
Fellowship time on Sunday Mornings between 10:15 & 11 a.m. in Creason Hall

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Communion First Sunday of Each Month PASTOR: DR. WARREN LANGER

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Meet friends in Fellowship Hall after the Service.
Refreshments served.

1239 Del Webb Blvd. West Phone: 813-634-1252
Sun City Center, FL 33573 For Information visit:
Church is Handicap accessible www.standrewatccc.org

Saint Anne Catholic Church



Fr. John McEvoy
Pastor
813-645-1714
SaintAnneRuskin.org

U.S. Hwy. 41 • 106 11th Ave. NE • Ruskin
SouthShore: Apollo Beach, Ruskin, Sun City and S. Gibsonton

MASSES

Saturday Vigil Mass 5:00 p.m.
Sunday Mass..... 8:00 a.m., 10:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.
Holy Days Contact Parish Office for Schedule
Daily Monday thru Friday 8:00 a.m.
Español Domingo - 12:30 p.m.; Miercoles 7:30 p.m.
Confession..... Wednesday 6:45 p.m.; Saturday 3:45 p.m.
Nursery Available for 10:00 a.m. Mass

He was in the world and the world was
created through him, but the world
didn't know him - John 1:10

Obituaries



Gail R. McCord

Gail R. McCord, 77, of Boiling Springs, died Thursday, December 9, 2010 at Holy Spirit Hospital, Camp Hill. She was born on Sunday, June 11, 1933, in Carlisle, and was a daughter of the late John Steele and Gayle (Group) Berry and Raymond Berry. She was the widow of Edward P. McCord, who died Aug. 1, 1994.

Gail was a 1951 graduate of Carlisle High School and was a veteran of the Women's Army Corps, having served

during the Korean War. She retired in 1996 as a supply system analyst with the New Cumberland Army Depot after more than 25 years of service. Gail was a longtime active member of the Florida World Organization of China Painters, Inc.

She is survived by three sons; Richard P. Looney, Jr. (and wife, Carol) of Boiling Springs, Stephen Looney (and wife, Paula Caron) of Grantham, NH and Michael J. Looney (and wife, Barbara Brunzell) of Saint Paul, MN, a daughter; Patricia A. Looney of Bel Air, MD, a brother; John Steel of Carlisle, a sister; Alpheretta Highlands also of Carlisle, 14 grandchildren, 19 great-grandchildren and several nieces and nephews.

Memorial services to celebrate Gail's life will be held at 2:00 p.m. on Thursday, December 16, 2010 at Ewing Brothers Funeral Home, 630 S. Hanover St., Carlisle, with Pastor Vincent Rife officiating. Burial will be private. Visitation will be on Thursday from 1:00 p.m. until time of the services. Memorial contributions may be made to the Humane Society of Harrisburg Area Inc., 7790 Grayson Rd., Harrisburg, PA 17111. Visit www.Since1853.com to send condolences.



Christmas Cantata continues tradition

The United Community Church, 1501 La Jolla Ave, Sun City Center Chancel Choir is preparing for their Christmas Cantata "Night of the Father's Love" by Pepper Choplin. The cantata will be performed during the Sunday Worship service at 10 am on Sunday Dec. 19. The members of the choir will be augmented by friends and neighbors in the performance. The community is welcome to attend this holiday event.

Free Christmas event

Disciples of Christ Christian Fellowship located at 7732 Gibsonton Drive is hosting a free Christmas Party at 6 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 18. There will be food, music, entertainment, and the judging of a men only cake baking contest. All are welcome. For more information or directions to the church call 813-677-8600.

Celebrate Christmas

Christmas Eve
Friday, December 24 • 3:00, 6:00 & 9:00 p.m.
Carols, lessons, prayers, candle lighting, special music, children's talk and candlelight service.

Christmas Day
Sat., December 25 • 10:00 a.m.
This service will celebrate the birth of Jesus with carols, lessons, special music and the Eucharist.

Calvary Lutheran Church
5309 U.S. Hwy. 41 N.
between Apollo Beach and Ruskin
across from Mira Bay
813-645-1305
www.calvarylutheranchurch.net
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Sunday 9:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Located at the **United Methodist Church**
1210 Del Webb W. • Sun City Center, FL
813-633-8695

Live Nativity scheduled

The Youth Group of Ruskin United Methodist Church will present, for the 5th year, their Live Nativity program. The youth portray the characters depicting the birth of Christ and the program includes live animals, donkeys, sheep and goats, that children can pet and feed after the presentation.

The program is free and will be presented at 6 p.m. and 7 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 18, on the church property, 105 - 4th Ave. NW in Ruskin. The Men's and Ladies' groups of the church will provide hot chocolate, coffee and snacks to people attending the performances.

Children will receive candy canes and the opportunity to have their parents take photos of them and the animals.

Youth participating this year will include: Loren Livingston, Brandon Cusic, Dylan Strickland, Zack Blocher, Jake Lewis, Emily Anderson, Makayla Gephart, Eva Bigelow, Cole Alter, Drew Gill, Zack Williamson, Dennis Yelito, Joe Mitchell and Jett Yoho.

Bring your children and see the story of the birth of Christ.

For more information, call (813) 645-1241.



CCW held Christmas party

The Council of Catholic Women (CCW) of Prince of Peace Catholic Church held its annual Christmas Party on Dec. 1 at Conesa Hall.

The party featured a catered lunch from Bella Cucina and entertainment from the Pelican Players.

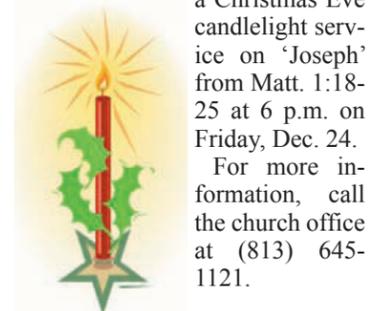
At the event checks were distributed to the following groups: Prince of Peace Catholic Church, the scholarship program at Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Church, LifePath Hospice, the Prison Ministry, RCMA, and The Mary & Martha House. Every spring the CCW holds an annual fashion show, where profits go to help fund these groups as well as others.

The CCW is open to women of Prince of Peace Church. The group meets the first Wednesday of the month from October through April.

Christmas Eve candlelight service

Northside Baptist Church, 301 U.S. Hwy. 41 N., Ruskin will hold a Christmas Eve candlelight service on 'Joseph' from Matt. 1:18-25 at 6 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 24.

For more information, call the church office at (813) 645-1121.





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MERCHANDISE 300

310 GARAGE/YARD SALE

Big big yard sale. Friday & Saturday, 8am-3pm. 3015 39th Ave., SE, Ruskin. 95 Buick Roadmaster, health & fitness items, household items, arts & crafts, kid clothes & items, Christmas & collectibles, books, toys, puzzles & games, kitchen dining tables & chairs, dressers.

Almost New Thrift Store. 10008 Indiana St., Gibsonton (1 block off US 41, 1 block north Gibsonton Dr.) Wednesday thru Saturday, 9am-3pm. Clothing, furniture, lots misc. Ministry First Baptist Gibsonton. 813-671-0036 to donate

Moving in sale. Friday & Saturday, Dec. 17 & 18, 8am-2pm. 828 Oakmont Ave. SCC. King size comforters, sweeper, Christmas tree, lots of misc.

St. Vincent de Paul Thrift Store

New Winter Hours:
M-F 9 to 5:30 • Sat 9 to 4:30

SENIOR MONDAYS are back!

Most items discounted including Clothing, Accessories, Collectibles, Art, Books, and some Furniture.

Donations Needed Please call (813) 645-5255

1311 3rd St. NE • Ruskin (Behind St. Anne Church & Next to Kennco Mfg.)

310 GARAGE /YARD SALE

Rain or shine. Huge garage sale. 905 El Rancho Dr. SCC. Friday & Saturday, 8am-3pm. Bedroom set, sofa & love seat, kitchen, Christmas items, toys. To much too list. Lots of treasures.

We Have Moved Downstairs

Come see our new shop. Above The Rest. 1/2 price sale. Plus many gifts for Christmas. Men come in Thursday for free wrapping, coffee & cookies. 139 S. Pebble Beach Blvd., SCC.

Garage sale. Furniture, household items, books, & lots of misc. 11027 Mc Mullen Loop, Riverview. Saturday, Dec. 18, 8am-2pm.

Calvary's Angel Attic Thrift Store
Wed., Fri. & Sat. 9 a.m. - Noon
Movies & Music Sale
DVD, VHS, CD Buy 1, Get 1 FREE
Also 'Secret Sale'
1424 E. College Ave. • Ruskin 813-641-7790
Ministry of Calvary Lutheran Church

Multi family yard sale. Saturday, Dec 18, 8am-2pm. Lots of clothes, household items. 1110 US 41. Casa Don Juan Restaurant.

Content of house at 2014 East View Dr., SCC. Kings size bed & mattress, like new. Side by side solid oak chest a drawer, 3 pc bookshelf, including some antiques & vintages items, overstuffed lanai furniture. Friday & Saturday, 8:30-1pm.

Giant Moving Sale

Friday 12/17 & Saturday 12/18, 8am-2pm. Everything must go. Houseware, Christmas items, golf cart w / chrome wheel, crafts, stain-glass supplies & much more. 306 Thornhill Place, St. Andrews, SCC.

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Moving sale. King size bedroom set, dining room set, bureau, desk. 211 Rickenbacker Dr., SCC. Thursday, Friday, 8am-noon

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1809 El Rancho, SCC. 2 family sale. Dec. 17 & 18, 8am-? Engine hoist, stand, tools, steel ramps, parts, manuals, small freezer, misc. household

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3. Who was the star of the movie titled White Christmas?
4. Which Christmas carol did Jimmy Boyd make famous when he was just 12 years old?
5. Which country was the first to use the tradition of Christmas trees?
6. What did the American Ralph E. Morris invent?
7. The Christmas Island in the Pacific Ocean is fairly popular. Where's the other Christmas Island?

1 The Grinch, 2. Charles Dickens, 3. Bing Crosby, 4 I Saw Momma Kissing Santa Claus, 5. Germany, 6. Christmas lights, 7. Indian Ocean

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GIFTABLE GADGETS



Stocking Stuffers under \$50

- Keep her iPod touch protected in style with an iPod touch case from Kate Spade New York. Molded from premium silicone, it protects from bumps and scratches while showing off a bright splash of trendy color. (www.store.apple.com)
- Get moving with the light weight Gosmart Pocket Pedometer from Omron. It counts strides, measures distance, estimates calories burned and can store up to a week's worth of information. It has an activity tracker that monitors specific exercises for a set time, and comes in purple, yellow, pink and black. (www.gosmartpedometers.com)
- Make his smart phone smarter with add-on lenses for the iPhone. USBFever sells a wide-angle lens, a 2X telephoto lens and a fish-eye lens that attach with a simple magnetic ring. (www.usbfever.com)

A handy holiday gift guide

FAMILY FEATURES

Chances are, someone you're shopping for has some kind of gadget on their wish list. If you're not sure where to get started, this gift guide will help you find just the right thing for that special someone.

Urban Dwellers

Those living in small apartments or the big city could use some gadget-friendly help as they go about their day.

■ **Smarter Sound:** Have a quieter commute or just tune out the neighbors with Phiaton Noise Cancelling Earphones PS 20 NC. The in-ear headset has noise blocking technology that maximizes the quality of music from their MP3 players while minimizing outside interference. The lightweight earphones use one AAA battery and come with inline volume control and a choice of silicone earbuds. (www.phiaton.com)

■ **Stay Connected:** A recent National Health Interview Survey showed that nearly two-thirds of adults who shared an apartment or house with unrelated roommates reported having only mobile phones, making that group the most likely to be completely wireless and struggling with dropped or missed calls. To help with cell phone signal issues, the roommate friendly zBoost-METRO Cell

Phone Signal Booster, from Wi-Ex, works with multiple users and multiple carriers simultaneously. Its antenna mounts to a window and comes with everything they need to cover 1,500 square feet. (www.wi-ex.com)

Gadget Grands

Keep the grandparents up to speed with easy-to-use technology that keeps them connected to the family.

■ **Picture This:** Upgrade their family photo collection with a

Bluetooth Enabled Digital Picture Frame from Portable USA. It has a 10.4-inch LCD display with 640 x 480 resolution. You can upload new pictures from your phone. In addition to showing pictures, it will play videos, music and text. It has a USB connector and 2 memory card slots in addition to 256MB of internal memory, and comes with two wood frames. (www.amazon.com)

■ **Get Face Time:** If their computer doesn't have a built-in video camera, the compact Microsoft LifeCam VX-500 is ideal. It has a 1.3 megapixel sensor that shoots VGA video and captures twice as much light as other devices, for a much clearer picture. It has a flexible base that lets them adjust the angle, and a built-in mic. It's optimized for Windows Live Messenger, but also works with Skype, AIM and Yahoo Messenger. It comes in three fun colors. (www.store.microsoft.com)

On-the-Go Joes

Travel junkies and vacationing families need gadgets that will stand up to the rigors of being on

the road.

■ **Extreme Video:** Whether it's on a bicycle's handlebars or strapped to a surfboard, the ATC9K All-Terrain Video Camera from Oregon Scientific can take a hit. It's a durable, shock-resistant unit that captures 5-megapixel stills as well as 1080p HD video. It also has a G-Sensor that tracks measurements for speed, hang time, angle of movement and other motion stats, and a laser pointer that lets them line the camera up with whatever they want to shoot. (www2.oregonscientific.com)

■ **Waterproof Reading:** Keep their Kindle dry with the M-Edge Guardian Waterproof Case. It will float on the water's surface for hands-free reading. Its custom-molded interior and mounting pads give cushioned support, and it also has flexible sealed cutouts so they can access the controls. As an extra security measure, there's a ring at the bottom of the case so it can be strapped to a lanyard or belt. (www.medgestore.com)

iWorkers

The number of people working from their homes seems to grow every day. Get your iWorker set up right with these gadgets.

■ **Consistent Coverage:** Cell phones are essential communication tools for teleworkers, and when

they don't get signal, it makes work even more work. The zBoost-SOHO Dual Band Cell Phone Signal Booster supports multiple phones simultaneously and gives them the coverage they need to work through the whole house (up to 3,500 sq ft; including aircards, EDGE and 3G Technology). (www.wi-ex.com)

■ **Charge It:** Keep all the essential office gadgets charged up with Energizer's Inductive Charging Station. With two large inductive charging zones that don't require locking the device into a particular position, your iWorker can just set their phone (and two other devices) down and it will get charged up. It has a USB port to allow users to charge additional devices such as cameras or GPS units. (www.target.com)

■ **Custom Caffeine:** No office would be complete without a coffeemaker. The AeroPress Coffee and Espresso Maker from Aerobie lets anyone brew American style or Espresso style coffees for use in lattes or cappuccinos. It has a total-immersion system that mixes water and grounds at a moderate temperature, then gentle air pressure pushes the mix into a micro-filter, resulting in a smooth, rich brew in just 30 seconds. Visit www.aerobie.com to find a retailer near you.



Photo courtesy of zBoost