



Happy Thanksgiving

from

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The runaways among us

South Hillsborough is home to some, an escape for others.

■ By MITCH TRAPHAGEN
mitch@observernews.net

On a cold Thanksgiving night in Norfolk, Virginia, John helped me tie off my sailboat and run the electrical cable — much needed for the electric blanket I hoped to soon be tucked into. He was at Rebel Marina, a family-owned establishment that took me in that night at no charge since it was Thanksgiving. John was waiting for the winds to die down enough to lower his mast. He was headed south, but the mast was too tall to fit under the numerous 65-foot, fixed bridges of the Intracoastal Waterway (ICW).

He didn't really want to travel down the ICW, his preference was to go offshore, out into the Atlantic Ocean. Along with his wife, he has been sailing most of his life, and his large sailboat was imminently capable of handling most of what the ocean could throw at him and he was knowledgeable enough to avoid the rest. John is an experienced sailor who has seen much in his travels around the world. But his wife was having health problems, and the oft-feared Cape Hatteras lie between Norfolk and warmer weather to the south. With his wife recuperating, he knew he would need help so he tried to find a captain to hire for the passage. But winter had arrived and winds were forecast to reach 60 miles per hour around Cape Hatteras — no captain was interested in making the trip; money meant nothing in light of those conditions.

John was disappointed, but he waited until the yard employees returned to work after the holiday, had his mast lowered and then traveled down the inland waterway to a point south of the dreaded cape where he again raised his mast and set out into the ocean. Sometime later I ran into him again in Titusville, Florida, none the worse for the wear.

John had the utmost respect for the conditions that Cape Hatteras could present at that time of year, but none of the fear held by the captains he tried to hire. He knew it would be uncomfortable at best, but he also knew he could do it. What was most remarkable was that John is 83 years old. At 35 years his junior, I've never even considered such a feat.

John has spent much of his life running away to sea. In past generations, thoughts of escaping the real world meant running away with the circus. But while it now seems the entire world has become a circus, dreams of running away are still in vogue, but the destinations have changed. People today use recreational vehicles, sailboats and

See **RUNAWAYS AMONG US**, page 11



MITCH TRAPHAGEN PHOTO

Cruisers on Volleyball Beach at George Town, Bahamas. As children, people dreamed about running away with the circus. Now that the entire world is a circus, some are running away to sea.

Whatever happened about...

■ By MELODY JAMESON
mj@observernews.net

...Prison Closing

Threatened with closure just six months ago, the Hillsborough Correctional Institution (HCI) on C.R. 672 near Balm now is in expansion mode.

New classes and activities, additional mentors, plus a growing volunteer corps all have developed in recent months, according to Nancy Williams, a long-time SCC volunteer and advocate for Florida's only faith-based prison for women. Added to the activities rosters are training in such subjects as employability, inspirational studies, art expression and pickleball, she said, as 125 new volunteers completed the September orientation and 85 mentors underwent training in preparation for service in one-on-one guidance.



See **WHATEVER HAPPENED**, page 19

SCC residents get first look at possible future community concept



MELODY JAMESON PHOTO

After listening carefully to descriptions of the prospective new construction aimed at giving their Central Campus a refreshed and appealing appearance, SCC residents studied architectural renderings prepared by the SOL Design Studio in Tampa. Here a couple examine closely a rendering of the proposed Multi-Use Building that would house all Community Association functions as well as the SCC Information Center and the Security Patrol headquarters. The one-story structure features an eye-catching modernistic front elevation matching the facade of the proposed Entertainment Building.

■ By MELODY JAMESON
mj@observernews.net

SUN CITY CENTER — Aiming for a polished image appealing to new buyers while serving interests of current residents, community leaders here have unveiled a multi-faceted \$3 million project as part of long range planning.

The currently proposed construction, centered in the second of a three-phase plan looking ahead at least two decades, was introduced to some 400 residents during a community town hall session last week. Focused on two new buildings featuring the clean lines and futuristic facades reminiscent of designs by the late Frank Lloyd Wright, the building program was greeted with generally favorable reviews from the assembled retirees.

They variously described the proposals as “a great plan” and deemed them “excellent,” said they were “impressed with the drawings” and complimented the CA board members for “an outstanding job.”

Over ensuing days, however, some have raised questions and voiced cautions, concerned about the costs related to a prospective \$2.4 million loan to be repaid over 10 years with revenue accruing from the so-called “transfer fees” paid by all buyers making first-time home purchases in the community.

Members of the SCC Community Association will be weighing in on aspects of the proposed capital improvements

See **SCC UPDATING PROJECT**, page 3

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MITCH TRAPHAGEN PHOTOS

Black Friday comes early

To the glee of some and the dismay of others, Black Friday, the day after Thanksgiving that is considered to be the traditional start of the Christmas shopping season, is ramping up this year with most major stores in the Bay area opening at midnight on Friday, Nov. 25. Previously, most stores opened during the early morning hours, thus allowing their employees a full Thanksgiving holiday. The earlier openings ensure that some employees will be called to duty during the wholly American holiday known for time spent with family and friends, a move that has spurred some protest across the nation. According to Reuters, one group presented Target Stores with 190,000 signatures protesting the midnight opening of their stores. Most Walmart stores will be open even earlier, with special pricing in the toy departments beginning at 10 p.m. Thursday night. To avoid confusion, next year's Black Friday will be scheduled to take place on May 18, 2012. Just kidding. Maybe.



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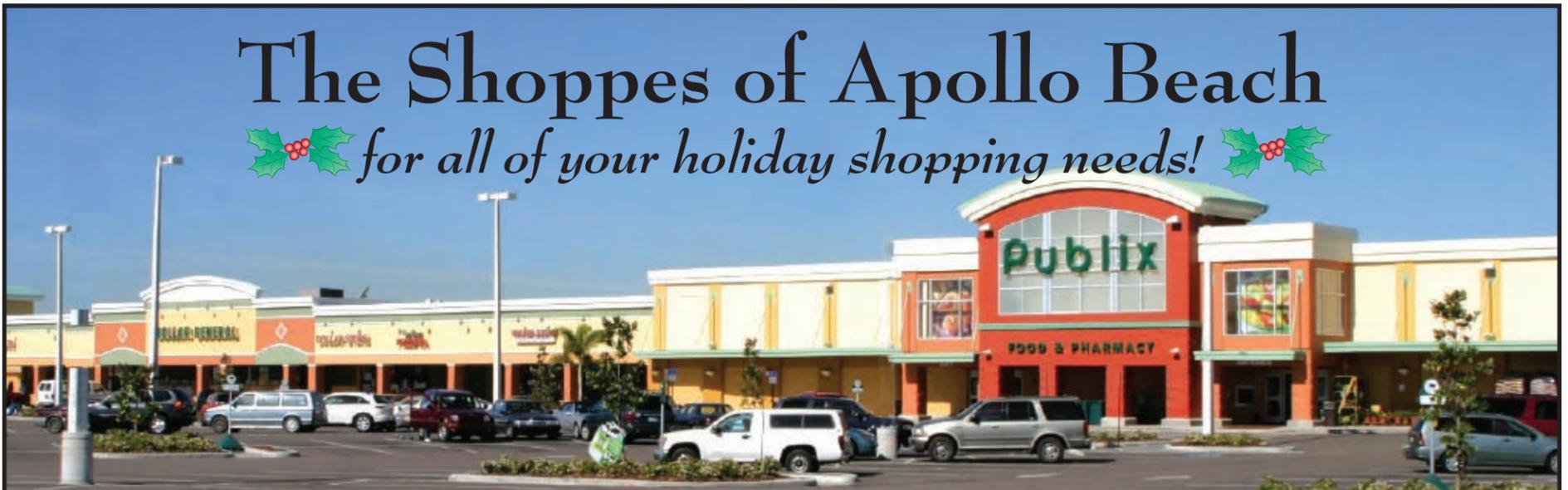
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SCC updating project unveiled

■ Continued from page 1

program with their votes, beginning in December. The phase two construction project and its proposed financing also could be a factor in the upcoming election of three directors to the CA board.

The long range planning, perhaps a first in the community's 50-year history, calls for an initial phase slated to begin next month. The outdoor pool is scheduled to close December 1 as work begins on its enhancement, on updating pool rest rooms and on an outdoor spa, said Bob Black, CA vice president. This project is expected to be completed with placement of new pool furniture in six weeks to two months.

And the final phase, yet to be outlined, is foreseen as taking place many years in the future. It could deal with pinpointing additional recreational areas such as a 37-acre undeveloped piece west of Del Webb Blvd. and the now idle North Lakes Golf Course, along with a new theater, a new library, added Atrium parking and enhancements to Community Hall.

Meanwhile, the plan's second stage involves a major overhaul of the community's Central Campus on its north side. It proposes a multi-use building to house CA offices as well as headquarters of the community's famed Security Patrol and to be located where those facilities currently exist on North Pebble Beach Boulevard. at Cherry Hills Drive.

As designed by SOL Design Studio in Tampa, an architectural firm engaged by CA leaders, the one-story structure features a cantilevered roof over a glass-enclosed lobby as an eye-catching element of its front elevation. From a utility standpoint, the building would provide expanded space

for the various CA functions now crowded into cramped offices, incorporate the community information center and face Cherry Hills Drive.

The second new construction proposed for the Central Campus make-over is an entertainment building envisioned to the north of the office complex, located approximately where the most northern section of the lawn bowling greens now exist. Facing Pebble Beach, its front elevation features a similarly cantilevered roof over the glassed entrance, bookending the western portion of the campus with aesthetically coordinated buildings. This campus addition, CA President Ed Barnes noted, would be designed to take bookings now turned away from the heavily used South Campus Community Hall and the Atrium's Florida Room due to lack of open dates.

Both the CA offices and the Security Patrol headquarters would be temporarily relocated to trailers during an estimated eight-month construction period.

Yet another portion of the prospective campus overhaul involves construction of a café and wine bar in the existing plaza area between the Rollins Theater building and the Atrium, east of the outdoor pool. Identified as a priority during a survey of resident interests earlier this year, CA director Martin Hurwitz noted the café and sports bar offering light food and beverage service is seen as an informal community gathering place providing both indoor and outdoor seating easily accessible after events in the Atrium or theater presentations or a swim in one of the pools. It is likely such a facility would be operated by an outside

vendor.

It is the fiscal aspects of the second phase construction that are generating debate. A "pay-as-you-go" approach might be initiated in seven or eight years, board directors estimated. Facilities that can be used in the near future would require financing.

In order to break ground for the new buildings by the end of 2012, a bank loan of \$2.4 million would be needed to supplement about \$600,000 taken from the existing capital fund where \$1,200 from each house sold to an incoming resident currently accumulates. The capital fund is expected to show a balance of \$1 million by the end of 2011, and if used as part of the 2012 construction would leave \$400,000 remaining as a financial cushion.

Moreover, if CA members were to support a by-laws change increasing the per-house assessment to incoming residents by \$300 to \$1,500, both the capital fund balance and the retained cushion would be greater.

CA directors have estimated that the full loan amount, repaid over 10 years at five percent interest, would require annual debt service – both payment on principal and interest – of \$305,450. A calculation using the lowest average number of homes resold each year – 240, indicates the amount of money produced each year at \$1,500 per home sold would be \$360,000 – more than enough to cover such an annual debt service. However, if the community does not support the by-laws change and the per-house fee remains at \$1,200, the annual amount produced would be \$288,000, or, theoretically, about \$13,500 short of the debt service minimum.



MELODY JAMESON PHOTO

Sun City Center's Community Association directors received both kudos and questions after they took turns presenting components of the proposed Central Campus make-over as part of their long-term planning. Here, Director Martin Hurwitz (center) responds to a query with details of the cafe and wine bar as Directors Ann Marie Leblanc (left) and Chuck Collett (right) listen. The CA board wants membership support to borrow \$2.4 million to get the new construction underway in 2012.

Assuming the estimated annual debt service is correct and relying on all the other variables as estimated, over a 10 year span the \$2.4 million loan would be repaid in the amount of \$3,054,500, putting the cost of borrowing the money at \$654,500.

The loan would not be a mortgage because no real property would be used as collateral, Black said. Rather, it would be the projected income of the resold home fees accumulating in the capital fund that would be pledged as collateral for the loan, he added – "that, and the full faith of Sun City Center."

It's not the numbers, though, but the very existence of indebtedness that has led some residents to

promise a "no" vote. Dave Brown, a long-time community advocate, told The Observer this week he opposes any debt for any reason and cannot support debt financing. Brown agreed the CA needs more space to function competently and to meet various resident requirements, but questioned the reasoning for a Central Campus café, for example. Pointing to construction in recent years of the arts and crafts building on Cherry Hills Drive and the fitness center adjacent to the Atrium without incurring debt, he suggested the same approach for any other improvements to campus facilities.

See SCC UPDATE PROJECT, page 19

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POSITIVE TALK

Perservance Wins the Day

Perseverance has been defined as: the steady persistence in adhering to a course of action, belief or purpose; steadfastness. Yes, it is that—but it is so much more. It is probably one of the single most important factors in achieving any goal. Rudyard Kipling speaks to this trait of perseverance in his epic poem IF when he says,



Positive Talk
By William Hodges

“If you can force your heart and nerve and sinew

To serve your turn long after they are gone,

And so hold on when there is nothing in you

Accept the Will which says to them: ‘Hold on!’

Yours is the earth and everything that’s in it,

And—which is more—you’ll be a Man, my son!”

If you have not read Kipling, and especially if you have not read Kipling to the children in your life, you owe it to yourself and to them to read this powerful poem. Although I’ve quoted only one small section, all of the lines speak to the importance of perseverance and maintaining your course.

Think of the great projects throughout the history of mankind that would not have come to fruition if someone had not persevered. The Panama Canal could well have been a French project, which would have changed the entire course of history. The French failed to persevere in their attempt to build the canal; but under the guidance of President Theodore Roosevelt, a man known for his perseverance, the project went

ahead under the control of the United States. Against great odds, the canal was completed in 1914, reducing the sea distance from the U.S. East Coast to the West Coast by more than 5,000 miles.

That is just one example of perseverance. If the British Lion had not persevered during the dark days of 1937-1940, an entirely different chapter of world history might have been written. Had those brave people not held on through shot and shell, there would have been no England from which the United States could stage thousand-plane raids.

But perseverance does not always create a history-shaping event. It can be as meaningful as an 84-year-old woman working hard to get a college degree. It can be a scientist toiling in a laboratory year after year to create a miracle of medicine. Perseverance can even be a virtue ascribed to the men and women who go to work every day and shoulder the responsibility of supporting their families.

Perseverance is indeed a powerful force, but we must be able to determine when it is good to persevere and when we are just being stubborn. It makes a difference. I remember hearing of this conversation between two people on radios at sea. It went like this. Captain: “Please alter your course 10 degrees to the south.” Response: “Suggest you alter your course 10 degrees to the north.” Captain: “This is a Navy ship. Alter your course 10 degrees to the south!”

Response: “Say again. Suggest you alter your course 10 degrees to the north.” Captain: “This is the commander of a fully armed U.S. Navy warship. ALTER YOUR COURSE NOW!” Response: “This is a lighthouse. Your call.”

In most cases, it’s your call. Being stupidly stubborn is one thing, but persisting in the things you believe to be right is entirely another.

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: 813-641-0816. Email: bill@billhodges.com Website: www.billhodges.com



The Rose Boutique announces holiday hours

The Rose Boutique located at 100 East Shell Point Road will be open from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Friday, Nov. 25; and from 9 a.m. to noon on Saturday, Nov. 26 Thanksgiving weekend for your shopping convenience. Take advantage of this Shoppportunity to get a head start on your holiday shopping.



The Boutique features new and name brand clothing and accessories as well as holiday items and gifts.

The Thrift Store located at 1009 1st Street S.W. in Ruskin will be closed on Friday, Nov. 25 and reopen for regular hours 8 a.m. to noon on Saturday, Nov. 26. The Christmas Shop is open for all your Holiday needs.

The Administrative office will be closed on Thursday and Friday and will resume regular hours on Monday, Nov. 28. The Mary & Martha House Inc. is a shelter for women and children in crisis, and supports 2 emergency shelters as well as transitional housing in South Hillsborough County.

For more information on volunteering or to make a donation, call (813) 645-7874.

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DECEMBER EVENTS

December 3
SCC Holiday Walk on CA Central Campus. N. Pebble Beach. \$5 breakfast from 7 a.m. to noon in Florida Room. On-site arts and crafts clubs, including Model Railroad, open from 9 a.m. to noon. **Open to public.**
Info: Ann-Marie Leblanc 633-3500

December 4
A sparkling holiday production of The Nutcracker by the Dance Alive National Ballet. Be entranced by the beauty of the Sugar Plum Fairy and her dazzling court. CA Community Hall, S. Pebble Beach. 2:30 p.m. **Open to public.**
Tickets and info: Judy Schings 642-2001

December 10
Holiday Golf Cart Parade 10:30 a.m. Parade route: staging at N. Pebble Beach parking lot north of CA Central Campus, east on Lajolla, right on Cherry Hills, ending at the Campus gazebo area where all are invited to enjoy free hot chocolate and cookies. **Open to public.**
Dolores Whitfield 633-3500

December 11
Holiday Extravaganza by the Sarasota Concert Band. CA Community Hall, S. Pebble Beach at 2 p.m.
Tickets and info: Judy Schings 642-2001.

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November marks the 5th Anniversary of SouthShore Regional Library

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All HCPLC Libraries Closed on November 24 & 25

Baby Time

Monday, Nov. 28 • 1:35 to 1:55 p.m.

For children ages 0-18 months and their caregivers ~ Early literacy begins at birth. Bond with your baby through stories, bouncy rhymes and songs in this 20-minute lapsit program that introduces early literacy skills and encourages language development.

Toddler Time

Tuesday, Nov. 29 • 10:05 to 10:25 a.m. and 10:35 to 10:55 a.m.

For children ages 18-36 months and their caregivers. Stories, finger-plays, songs and interactive activities make up this fun 20-minute program that highlights early literacy skills and encourages reading readiness.

Story Time

Tuesday, Nov. 29 • 11 to 11:30 a.m.

For children ages 3-5 and their caregivers ~ Stories, action rhymes, songs and interactive activities make up this engaging 30-minute program that highlights early literacy skills, and encourages reading readiness and social interaction.

Baby Time

Tuesday, Nov. 29 • 11:35 to 11:55 a.m.

S.A.A.

Baby Time

Wednesday, Nov. 30 • 10:05 to 10:25 a.m.

S.A.A.

Toddler Time

Wednesday, Nov. 30 • 10:35 to 10:55 a.m.

S.A.A.

Story Time

Wednesday, Nov. 30 • 11 to 11:30 a.m.

S.A.A.



Local farmer honored

At the annual Farm City Week Luncheon hosted by the Kiwanis Club of Bradenton, William Lee "Buck" Strickland was named the 2011 Agriculturist of the year and inducted into the Manatee County's Agriculture Hall of Fame at the luncheon held on Nov. 15.

Check out the Summerfield Holiday Craft Market

The Summerfield Community will be hosting their 3rd annual Holiday Craft Market from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 3 at the Summerfield Community Center, 13011 Summerfield Blvd. in Riverview.

The day will be filled with activities for everyone. Over forty crafters and vendors will have Christmas and gift items for sale.

Story time for the little ones is being held in Santa's workshop at 11:30 a.m. Visit Santa from noon to 2 p.m.

Marine Corp representatives will be on hand to accept new, unwrapped toys for Toys for Tots. A Toys for Tots charity bake sale is being sponsored by the Summerfield Ladies' Club. Attendance prizes will be given throughout the day.

For more information, call the Community Center at (813) 671-2005 or email summerfieldsocial@gmail.com.

ABWC keeps busy during holidays

The December meeting of the Apollo Beach Woman's Club will feature the East Bay High School Choral group, "The Sounds of Time," performing a medley of holiday music. ABWC meetings are at Little Harbor in Ruskin, beginning at 11:30 a.m. on the second Wednesday of each month September through May.

The Club's next membership meeting will be held on Wednesday, Dec. 14. The cost of the luncheon is \$16. If interested in finding out more about the club, join them at one of their luncheons as a guest by calling Pam Scott, Vice President of Membership Meetings, at (813) 260-3963. All reservations and monies must be received by Scott on or before the Friday prior to the meeting.

As a fundraiser the ABWC is selling Village Inn pie certificates for \$10 each. They are available by calling Pam Kerstetter at (813) 645-2425 or Nancy Vance at (813) 645-4295. In addition, the Village Inn is sponsoring a night in which 10 percent of the proceeds will be given to the Apollo Beach Woman's Club scholarship program. The second night will be from 5 to 8 p.m. on Tuesday, Dec. 20.

Christmas is approaching and the ABWC also is selling 6" Poinsettias pots for \$5 apiece with 8" and 10" pots available at various prices. To order, call Sylvia Gordon at (813) 641-8793.

For membership information, call Sharon Vasquez at (813) 641-0763 or e-mail: sharonvasquez47@yahoo.com. ABWC dues are \$20 annually and can be sent to Vasquez, 913 Golf Island Dr., Apollo Beach 33572.



ABWC members celebrate the end of the Civil War 150 years ago at their membership meeting in November. Standing, from left: Dr. Michael Deeb, author and Civil War historian; Dottie Clark, Daughter of the Confederacy; Pat Raimondo, sang patriotic songs and recited the Gettysburg Address; and Seel Lundy, Book Club Chairman and Program Coordinator.

Eagles Set Their Weekly Activities

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

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

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.

Thursday, Nov. 24 -- Thanksgiving. Members and members' guests are invited to dinner at the club at 2 p.m. Enjoy turkey and everything that goes with it. Bar Games at 1 p.m.

Friday, Nov. 25 — Feather Your Nest Game at 6 p.m. Pulled Pork Sandwiches are being served.

Saturday, Nov. 26 — Fish Fry by Becky at 5 p.m. Music by Tony John at 6:30 p.m.

Sunday, Nov. 27 — Feather Your Nest Game at 6 p.m.

Monday, Nov. 28 — Bingo at 6 p.m.

Tuesday, Nov. 29 — Come on down and socialize.

Wednesday, Nov. 30 — Wings and Things at 5 p.m. OH SO GOOD! Bar Games at 6 p.m.

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



IN UNIFORM



Carlos Carrionsantiago

Air National Guard Airman Carlos T. Carrionsantiago graduated from basic military training at Lackland Air Force Base, San Antonio, TX.

The airman completed an intensive, eight-week program that included training in military discipline and studies, Air Force core values, physical fitness, and basic warfare principles and skills.

Airmen who complete basic training earn four credits toward an associate in applied science degree through the Community College of the Air Force.

Carrionsantiago earned distinction as an honor graduate.

He is the son of Carlos Carri-colon of Culebra, Puerto Rico, and Magaly Alverio of Kings Lake Drive, Gibsonton, FL.

He is a 2006 graduate of Antonio R. Barcelo High School, Culebra.

Evan C. Wagner

Air Force Airman Evan C. Wagner graduated from basic military training at Lackland Air Force Base, San Antonio, TX.

The airman completed an intensive, eight-week program that included training in military discipline and studies, Air Force core values, physical fitness, and basic warfare principles and skills.

Airmen who complete basic training earn four credits toward an associate in applied science degree through the Community College of the Air Force.

Wagner is the son of Mason and Holly Wagner of Lake Vista Drive, Gibsonton.

He is a 2010 graduate of East Bay High School, Gibsonton.

Anthony Roa

Major General Patrick A. Murphy, the Adjutant General for the State of New York, announces the promotion of members of the NY Army National Guard in recognition of their capability for additional responsibility and leadership.

Anthony Roa from Riverview, FL serving with the Joint Force Headquarters is promoted to the rank of Master Sgt.

Army National Guard promotions are based on overall performance, attitude, leadership ability, and development potential.

These promotions additionally recognize the best qualified Soldiers and attract and retain the highest caliber Citizen Soldiers for a career in the New York Army National Guard.

Apollo Beach lighted boat parade and chili cook-off

The Tampa Sailing Squadron of Apollo Beach will be hosting its annual Christmas Lighted Boat Parade on Saturday, Dec. 10. Anyone interested in decorating their boats and joining this Parade must register at the Tampa Sailing Squadron, 1250 Apollo Beach Blvd., Apollo Beach. Registration and Skippers Meeting will be at 9 a.m. on Saturday morning, Dec. 10.

The Parade will conclude with refreshments and their famous chili cook-off immediately after the boats return to the Club. At this time, prizes and awards will be presented to the winners.

All information on the Parade route, time, and meeting location will be addressed at the Registration meeting on Saturday morning.

For more information, call Hugh Moore at 731-9409.

THE SAVVY SENIOR

Tips and resources for long-distance caregivers

Dear Savvy Senior,

What kinds of help are available to long-distance caregivers? My mother has gotten very forgetful in her old age and has fallen a few times over the past year, but is determined to stay living in her own house. How can I help her from 700 miles away?

Worried Daughter



The Savvy Senior

By Jim Miller

Dear Worried,

In today's mobile society, caring for an elderly parent from afar has become increasingly common. In fact, the National Institute of Health estimates that there are around 7 million Americans who are long-distance caregivers today. Here are some tips and resources that can help you.

Weigh Your Options

When it comes to monitoring and caring of an aging parent that lives far away, you have a couple options. You can hire a professional to oversee your parent. Or you can coordinate the care yourself by assembling a network of neighbors, friends, medical specialist, drivers, housekeepers and other helpers.

In either case, you may want to start by having your mom get a geriatric assessment. This is a professional evaluation to identify her needs and a suggested plan to manage her care. To find a professional who does this, contact your mom's doctor or visit the National Association of Professional Geriatric Care Managers website at caremanager.org.

Once you get an assessment you'll need to decide how to proceed. If you decide to hire a geriatric care manager he or she can set up and manage all aspects of care, and monitor your mom's ongoing needs. And if her health deteriorates they can determine if assisted living or a nursing home is the best option and find a suitable facility. Care managers charge hourly rates for these services ranging between \$75 and \$150 per hour, and it's not covered by Medicare.

Do It Yourself

If, however, you don't want or

can't afford to use a care manager, here are some things you can do yourself to help you manage her care.

- Assemble a care team: Put together a network of people (nearby friends or family, neighbors, clergy, mail carrier, etc.) who can check in on your mom regularly. And be sure they have your contact information so they can call you if need be.

- Find local resources: Most communities offer a range of free or subsidized services that provide seniors with basic needs such as home delivered meals, transportation, senior companion services and more. To find out what's available, contact the Area Agency on Aging in your mom's community. Call 800-677-1116 for contact information.

- Get a handle on finances: If your mom needs help with her financial chores, arrange for direct deposit of her Social Security and other pension checks (see godirect.org), and set up automatic payments for her utilities and other routine bills. Or, consider hiring a professional daily money manager (they charge between \$25 and \$100 per hour) who can do it for her. See aadmm.com or call 877-326-5991 to locate one.

- Use technology: For about \$1 a day, rent your mom a personal emergency response system. This is a small pendant-style "SOS" button that she wears that would allow her to call for help if she fell. These are available through companies like lifelinesys.com and lifelalert.com. Or, check out home monitoring systems at grandcare.com or closebynetwork.com.

- Hire home help: Depending on her needs, you may need to hire a home-care provider that can help with homemaking chores,

personal care or medical issues. Costs vary from around \$12 to \$30 per hour. To find home-care assistance, call your mom's doctor's office, the discharge planner at her local hospital or see medicare.gov/hhcompare.

- Seek financial assistance: Visit benefitscheckup.org to look for programs that may help your mom pay for drugs, health care, utilities and other expenses.

Savvy tip: Call the National Institute on Aging at 800-222-2225 and order their free booklet "So Far Away: Twenty Questions for Long-Distance Caregivers."

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

Meet at The Alley in Riverview

The South Shore Senior Singles group, a ministry of the Sun City Center United Methodist Church (SSUMC), will meet from 3:30 to 5:15 p.m. on Sunday, Nov. 27 at The Alley in Riverview for open bowling, then meet at Ruby Tuesdays in Gibsonton at 5:30 p.m. for dinner afterward. If you do not bowl, join them for dinner. This activity is scheduled for the fourth Sunday of each month.

For more information, or to make a reservation, call Patti at (813) 634-7171, or Jim at (813) 938-4835.

Other events scheduled include a meeting at 5 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 10 at the Alpha House in Apollo Beach for dinner, music and dancing by Thor Stevens. Stevens is scheduled to play on Saturdays. Starting in January, they will be meeting at the Alpha House twice a month on a Saturday. Dates will be announced soon. A special Christmas party will be held in December.

The South Shore Senior Singles group was organized for those age 50+, for all the South Shore area, to provide a non-threatening atmosphere for singles to meet and have fun.



Free spay or neuter feral cats for certain South Shore zip codes

You've seen them in your neighborhood, colonies of stray cats surviving on garbage, seeking shelter under cars and bushes, and running scared from anyone who approaches. Some are emaciated, ill or injured and their numbers keep increasing. These "community" cats, some who were born in the wild and some who have been abandoned and reverted to a wild state, fight a daily battle to survive and those that are captured and brought to animal control facilities are euthanized.



In Hillsborough County, the Humane Society of Tampa Bay (HSTB) has saved countless lives through their Trap/Neuter and Return (TNR) program. Now, through a generous grant of \$20,000 from the Community Foundation of Greater Sun City Center, TNR is coming to Sun City Center. The grant will allow HSTB to provide free sterilization of 500 feral cats in zip codes 33598, 33573, 33572 and 33570.

TNR is the only proven method of humanely managing feral and stray cats while at the same time reducing their numbers. With TNR, cats are trapped, sterilized, vaccinated, ear-tipped (the international symbol for sterilization) and returned to their colony where a caretaker provides them with food and water and monitors their health. Because fixed cats no longer reproduce, the number of cats in the colony will gradually diminish through natural attrition. More information about the TNR program at the Humane Society of Tampa Bay and information about how to coordinate services for feral cats can be found at humanesocietytampa.org or by calling (813) 625-0910.

Car show to brighten local kids' Christmas

The Sun City Center Roamin' Oldies Car Club will present a special car show on Thursday, Dec. 1 to brighten the holidays with gifts for area children who might otherwise go without.

The Christmas show will be held in conjunction with the regular monthly Roamin' Oldies cruise-in, from 6 to 9 p.m. on the first Thursday of every month at Mama Iguana's Restaurant in the Apollo Beach Winn-Dixie Plaza on U.S. 41. The event is free to both entrants and spectators, and the public is welcome.

The event is sponsored by Thompson's Auto Parts and Mama Iguana's Restaurant.

For more information call Chet at (813) 842-1511.

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Like it used to be

I think the pace of change accelerates with each passing day — and much of that change isn't for the better. The cost of food is going up while the portions go down (yeah, those new 20 packs of diet soda sure are cute, and so is the price, which is the same as what a 24-pack used to be), the price of gas is frightening, the employment picture is nerve-wracking and politicians say one thing and do another. Oh wait, that last one isn't a change. They've always done that.



Observations
By Mitch Traphagen
mitch@observernews.net

Regardless, I wonder how long this can continue. Last week I had to ship a small package, normally not a big deal, but when I saw the price, I was tempted to ask if they offered financing. Money, money, money — it's flying out of my wallet at a record pace but going in at the same old plodding pace that it always has. Well, like the politicians, at least some things never change. So, I have that going for me.

Actually, there are a lot of things that haven't changed, and I've been surprised the past few weeks to find a couple of them.

A while ago my wife told me her watch needed a new battery. That

shouldn't be a problem, but the last time I needed a new watch battery I went to buy one at a ginormous superstore. After walking the miles of aisles to the jewelry counter, I was told I could buy the battery, but they would not put it in, despite having the necessary tools to do so. OK, fine, could I borrow the tool for a moment?

I swear to you the woman growled at me in response. She then eyed me for a while as though I were a potential terrorist, intent on using the little watch tool to blow up the store. She very reluctantly handed over the tool (only after I paid for the battery, of course) and then watched me like a hawk. There was no doubt in my mind that if I chose that moment to go insane and run willy-nilly through the store brandishing the little watch tool, I would be shot dead before I managed to get two steps away from the jewelry counter. To her, this was an Extremely Serious Matter of Homeland Security.

In other words, that my wife now needed a new watch battery was a big problem.

I gathered up her watch and one

of my watches that also had a dead battery (I was prepared to abandon it) and slowly drove off, preparing myself for the interrogation of a lifetime at the hands of a jewelry

counter clerk employed by an enormous and soulless corporation. But before I even managed to get out of Ruskin, I saw the sign on U.S. 41: "Watch batteries \$5".

I was sure there had to be a catch, but since I was already prepared to be bound, gagged and beaten on this quest, I figured I had nothing to lose. That's when I met Bob Henshaw at Bob's Jewelry Repair.

Bob's store is small and somewhat hidden. I had no idea it was even there until I noticed the watch battery sign. I tentatively set the two dead watches down on the counter and sheepishly asked if it would be possible to get two new watch batteries. I might have even winced a little.

"Sure, no problem," Bob replied. He then put on some magnifying glasses and gently set the watches down on a workbench with a bright light, much like a miniature operating table for wristwatches.

Michelle's watch was a gift and is somewhat unusual. Bob apparently recognized that because he took his time with it. He first tested the old battery and then he looked around with his magnifying glasses to ensure that all was OK.

After 15 or 20 minutes, I was getting worried. Yes, I knew the watch batteries were five bucks, but what was the service going to run? There was no word on how much the examination and the time spent on the miniature wristwatch operating table was going to cost.

"That will be ten dollars," he said as he handed me my watch, after polishing them both with a fine cloth. "Well, a little more with tax."

Wow. I felt honored to be in the presence of an honest and hard-working man. Judging by the headlines today, I'm quite certain it was a rare privilege.

"I try to do business the right way," he said.

He did and I'll be back.

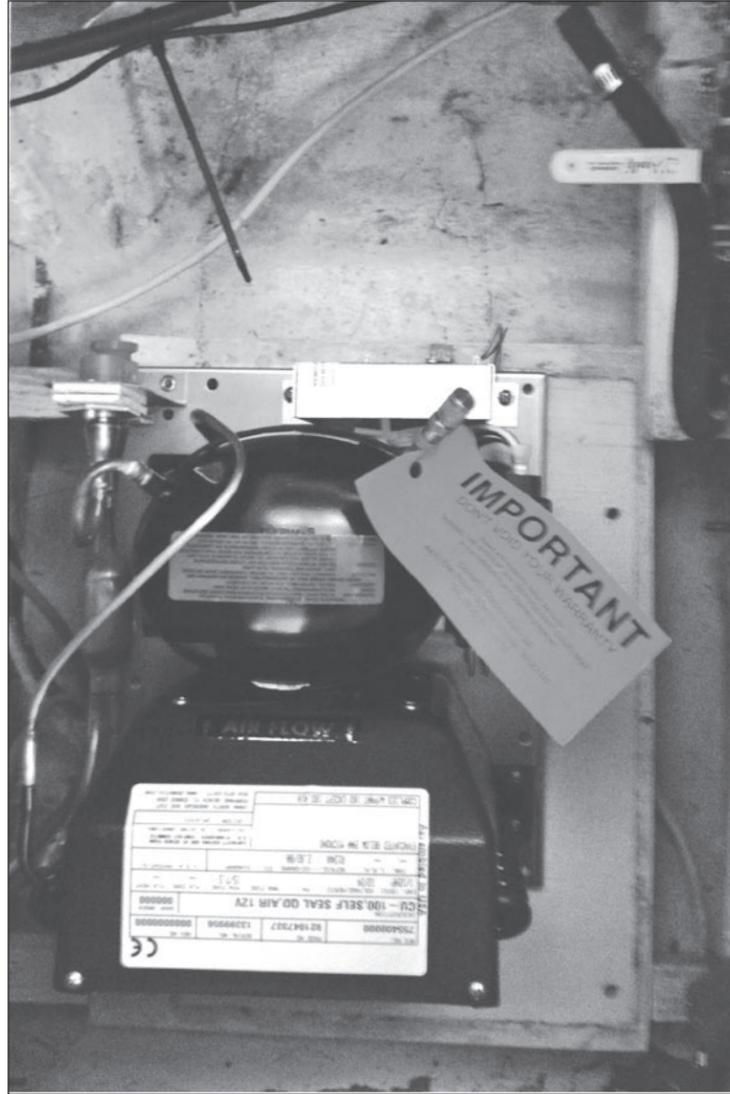
There is nothing cheap about boats, and boat stuff is certainly not a refuge from the prices that seem to be increasing on everything in life. That's why I developed a nervous tic when the ancient refrigeration on my boat started to make an ominous noise.

There is no upside to an ominous noise when it comes to refrigeration on a small sailboat. If I had to replace it, for roughly the cost of a really nice household refrigerator that probably has an HD television screen and would even talk to me, I would get a box of parts that I had to assemble myself. On the other hand, I felt certain that hiring someone to take a look at it would be an experience straight out of the tenth circle of Hell that even Dante Alighieri was afraid to write about. Despite that, I opted to try at least the latter in the hope that a miracle would happen and I would once again enjoy making ice cubes on board.

That's when I met Capt. Jack Lathbury, owner of Clear Horizon Marine. I called him to look at the ancient, rusted beast that was buried under a berth, hoping that he had a magic wand in his toolkit.

The first indication that I was perhaps wrong about hiring a repairman was that he showed up early — in fact, he had to wait for us to arrive. He carried his tools aboard and courteously listened to me babble about how I could make it run by just standing on one foot, uttering an incantation while simultaneously flipping a switch and then giving it a hard whack with a hammer. He spent a good bit of time checking out each component, looking for some ray of hope before declaring that it was indeed dead.

See **OBSERVATIONS**, page 19



MITCH TRAPHAGEN PHOTO

The tag on the outrageously expensive boat refrigeration compressor says, "Important." I'll tell you what's important: having ice cubes when you want them.

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Back and knee treatment discussed

South Bay Hospital will host free Dine with the Doctor seminars featuring information on treatment options for those suffering from knee and back pain.

Dr. Robert Maddalon, Orthopedic Surgeon, will facilitate an information session titled "Treatments for Knee Arthritis" at noon on Tuesday, Nov. 29. Dr. Maddalon is on staff at South Bay Hospital, is board certified and specializes in joint replacement and arthroscopic surgery.

Dr. Larry Fishman, Neurosurgeon, will facilitate an information session titled "Treatment Options for Back Pain" at 1 p.m. on Wednesday, Dec. 7. Dr. Fishman is on staff at South Bay Hospital, is board certified and specializes in kyphoplasty and minimally invasive spine surgery.

For more information, or to make a reservation for the free seminars, call 1-888-685-1595.

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Cello-Piano duo presents concert



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SCOTT KLUKSDAHL

St. Andrew Presbyterian Church, 1239 Del Webb Blvd. W., Sun City Center, presents their third Fine Arts Concert of the season at 3 p.m. on Sunday, Dec. 4.

The featured artists will be cellist Scott Kluksdahl accompanied by pianist Noreen Cassidy-Polera. Kluksdahl is Cello and Chamber Music Professor at the University of South Florida. Cassidy-Polera will join him from New York. she has collaborated with leading soloists including Yo-Yo Ma and won the accompanying prize at the Eighth International Tchaikovsky Competition in Moscow. The church is excited and pleased to be able to introduce this dynamic duo to their concert supporters. Don't miss this performance!

Tickets 'at the door' are \$9. Season tickets for the last four concerts are \$35 and are available at the concert or church reception desk. For more information, call (813) 642-8125 or (813) 634-1252.

You, Me, and Business

By: Dana Dittmar, Executive Director

SCC Chamber News

In all of the challenges I have faced in the past year as executive director of the Chamber, the most difficult was last week when I stood before a classroom of third graders and tried – in vain – to explain to them what we do. Forget trying to get the potholes fixed in the road out front. THIS was a true challenge!

It was the Great American Teach In, and teacher Peggy Creasy asked me to come and make a presentation to her class. It was a wonderful idea, very similar to the old Career Day we used to have in high school. Local business people get about a half an hour to talk about their chosen field and encourage these innocent, open minds.

Due to a scheduling issue, I was the last presenter of the day to these precocious, energetic 8-year-olds. I had my talk prepared, but I was no match for the other business leaders who preceded me.

I came behind the exciting Mr. Frank, the former stage manager for every big performing name in the world. He had traveled the globe and done exciting things! He knew famous people!

Then there was Ms. Carol, who was an ER nurse. She saw blood and vomit and cool things like that!

The worst act to follow was just before mine. My Husband was asked to come and talk about all the cars he restores and paints! To add an insult to my injury, I was

asked to bring the Clown Car for the "show and tell" aspect of his presentation! The kids got to go outside and have their picture taken with it, wiggling and squirming and jockeying for the best possible position in the photo.

Once the photo op was done, we piled back into the classroom and it was my turn to inspire. When I said the words "Chamber of Commerce" it was clear they pictured a building that resembled something out of a Harry Potter movie, large and gothic with dark halls and eerie shadows.



You, Me & Business

By Dana Dittmar

I tried to explain how we help support our local businesses and promote them whenever we can.

"Do you use math where you work?" Of course! I have to establish an annual budget and make sure we earn enough money to

pay all of our bills.

"Do you use reading and writing?" Yes, I write a weekly column and read local business journals so I stay current with what is going on in the community.

"Can your husband paint a Lamborghini?" So much for educating them on workforce partnerships and the power of networking.

In the end, I had a residual "coolness" factor just for owning the Clown Car and being married to Mr. Kevin. But I doubt any one of those kids wants to grow up to run a Chamber of Commerce.

Too bad. I think it's the greatest job in the world! With no blood or vomit to clean up!

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November marks the 5th Anniversary of SouthShore Regional Library

Join them to celebrate with over 70 programs. Adult program highlights this week include:

All HCPLC Libraries Closed on Thursday, Nov. 24 & 25

Internet: Safe Browsing and Malicious Software
Tuesday, Nov. 29 • 12:15 to 2:30 p.m.

Learn how to surf the Internet while avoiding common scams and pitfalls that can compromise your security. Learn about different types of malicious software, how they get on the personal computer, how to remove them, and precautions to take when using the internet. Registration is available one hour prior to the beginning of the program.

SouthShore Needle People
Wednesday, Nov. 30 • 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Join other needle people to share techniques, tips and experiences about knitting and other fiber and fabric crafts. Beginners are welcome! Bring a project and ask us questions!

Teen/Adult Handmade Paper Ornaments
Wednesday, Nov. 30 • 6:30 to 8 p.m.

Join art instructor Minnette Webster for this creative and fun art class. You will leave class with some finished paper ornaments. Limit 20. Registration required at either the Library Information Desk or by calling 273-3652. Free event is funded by the Friends of the SouthShore Regional Library

A Call to all Adult Fiber Artists for The Crawford Gallery
Thursday, Dec. 1 • All Day

The John Crawford Advisory Board is looking for 2012 Fiber Artists (quilting, weaving and handmade paper) for a group fiber show in March/April 2012 in the Crawford Gallery at SouthShore Regional Library. Applications are available at the Information Desk at SouthShore Regional Library. Applications are due Dec. 1, 2011. Questions? Call Laurie Burhop at 273-3652.

Ask-A-Health-Care-Professional Discussion
Friday, Dec. 2 • 1 to 2 p.m.

Join them as a health care professional shares information on Medicare and Home Health Care. A question-and-answer session will follow.

Great Books Discussion Group
Saturday, Dec. 3 • 10:30 a.m. to noon

Join a moderated discussion of John Updike's classic work, *Rabbit, Run*.

TRIPS WORTH TAKING

Central Florida landmarks make winter day-trips a must!

■ By WARREN RESEN - IFWTWA & NATJA; Photos by JEANNE O'CONNOR

It started during the Great Depression, born of a mother's need to feed her family. For decades, Chalet Suzanne was a stopping place for the rich and famous and became synonymous with Lake Wales, Florida.

But just what is Chalet Suzanne and what has kept it going through good times and bad? Is it a motel, a bed and breakfast, a restaurant or a throwback to another era? It is all these things and more.

Built in 1931 and remodeled in 2008, Chalet Suzanne has been characterized as "a gracious oasis amidst the tumult of Central Florida attractions."

Chalet Suzanne is not a boxy look-alike chain motel. In fact building exteriors appear to have been pulled from the pages of an illustrated children's story book. Each of its 26 rooms is different and furnished with antiques.

People have been returning here for more than 80 years bringing

their children and grandchildren. It is a place where remembrances of earlier, less hurried times can be recaptured. The list of celebrity guests who visited during its glory days is impressive, their autographed photos on display in the restaurant.

From its earliest days, the outstanding food and dining experience at Chalet Suzanne received top reviews from critics and guests. Initially it was the famous Duncan Hines who featured Chalet Suzanne in his books about wonderful places to stay and dine in Florida. *Gourmet Magazine* called the food "glorious" and went on to rave about the unique five dining room levels where "every corner glows with antiques..." and many more honors have been earned through the years.

The pièce de résistance of dining at Chalet Suzanne is their five course gourmet dinner. An entire article can be devoted to this

event so go to their web page and experience for yourself the treat that awaits guests.

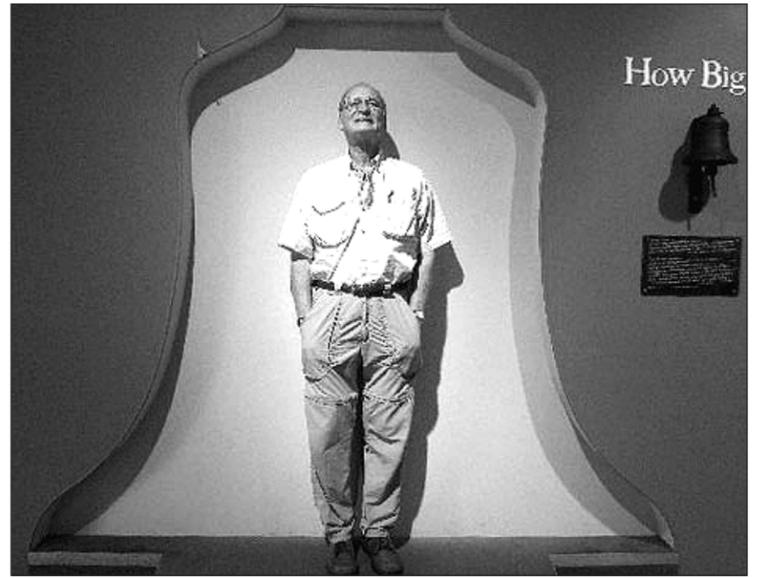
Dining in the old world elegance of Chalet Suzanne's multi-level dining room is in itself a unique experience. When it opened for business in the 1930s, the world of fast food had not been invented and it still does not exist here.

Food is prepared to order. Diners can easily converse without being disturbed. The only background noise is the sound of muted classical music. The wait staff is unobtrusive and ever watchful. This is truly dining, not eating.

Recognizing today's economic climate, changes have been made to Chalet Suzanne's menu. Gourmet food is still the main feature, but now there are a la carte selections. A children's menu is also offered for all meals. But whatever your choice, an overnight stay or dining, Chalet Suzanne is a wonderful change of pace in today's hectic world.

Guests at Chalet Suzanne can stroll through the property's 100 acres, swim in a generous size pool overlooking their lake where kayaks are available, or take a tour of the on-site soup canning facility. Many other delightful surprises await guests and these can be found on their web page as well.

Ask Eric Hinshaw, third generation owner, to describe Chalet Suzanne and he would tell you that the property is "Quirky." He goes on to say, "Please don't come to the Chalet Suzanne expecting a plastic-perfect theme park. If real, living history and personal service as well as distinctive, fairly priced and award-winning fare are important to you then give us a second look."



The author stands within an outline of the 22,000 pound bell that chimes in Bok Tower.

While at Chalet Suzanne, a visit to nearby Bok Tower Gardens is highly recommended. The opening of this National Historic Landmark predates Chalet Suzanne by only a few years. You might say they grew up together.

In 1929, Edward Bok gifted this 50 acre garden to the public. It was

reported that approximately 50,000 people showed up on opening day. Today the gardens with their mature trees and well manicured grounds are even lovelier than they were back then. Shaded paths meander through lush gardens in what Mr. Bok called, "a place of beauty, serenity and peace."

Victoria water lilies, native to the Amazon River where they can grow into five foot pads, fill some of the garden's reflecting pools. Seasonal bursts of colorful flowers from azaleas, camellias and magnolias are shaded by thousands of towering palms, oaks and pines making a visit here a delight to the eye and senses.

Situated on the highest point in Florida at 298 feet above sea level, the centerpiece of the gardens is the soaring 205-foot marble and



Victoria water lilies in a reflecting pond.

See TRIPS WORTH TAKING, page 14



One of five dining rooms at the Chalet Suzanne.



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RUSKIN Moose Lodge #813 UPCOMING EVENTS

The Ruskin Moose Lodge #813 is located at 1212 E. Shell Point Road, Ruskin • (813) 645-5919
www.lodge813.moosepages.org

WEEKLY EVENTS

Every Wednesday	5-7 p.m.	'Best Spaghetti in Ruskin'
Every Thursday	5-7 p.m.	Wings
Every Friday	5-7 p.m.	Fish Fry (baked, beer batter or fried)
	7-11 p.m.	Live Music
Every Saturday	11 a.m.	Turkey Shoot
	2 p.m.	Horseshoes
	7-11 p.m.	Karaoke with Kim

UPCOMING EVENTS

Friday, Nov. 25	7-11 p.m.	Top Shelf
Saturday, Nov. 26	7-11 p.m.	Karaoke with Kim
Friday, Dec. 2	7-11 p.m.	Charlie Burns
Saturday, Dec. 3	7-11 p.m.	Karaoke with Kim
Friday, Dec. 9	7-11 p.m.	Randy McNeilly
Saturday, Dec. 10	5-7 p.m.	Steak Dinner
	7-11 p.m.	Karaoke with Kim
Friday, Dec. 16	7-11 p.m.	Double Barrell
Saturday, Dec. 17	5-11 p.m.	Christmas Dinner and Show
Friday, Dec. 23	7-11 p.m.	Caribbean Cowboys
Saturday, Dec. 24		Christmas Eve Vigil with Kim Mullins
Friday, Dec. 30	7-11 p.m.	Rolling River Band
Saturday, Dec. 31		New Year Eve Dinner and Dance with Rolling River Band

All events are open to qualified Moose members and guests.

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

CANTEEN HAPPENINGS

Bar Bingo 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.



Rosa Orona of Lowe's plants mums along the sidewalk in front of the RCMA Plant City Child Development Center.

In a single morning, a childcare center is beautified

Lowe's employees, with help from grateful parents, transformed the grounds of the Plant City Child Development Center from bare to beautiful Saturday morning.

As part of the home improvement chain's "Lowe's Hero" program, the Plant City store marshaled 15 volunteers and a truckload of \$1,200 in plants and other supplies for the project. They were joined by nine fathers of children who attend the childcare center, operated by Redlands Christian Migrant Association.

"What a transformation!" said Christina Dragustinovis, the center's coordinator. "All the yellow and red and purple flowers show

off what a happy place this is. The children are going to love it."

The center serves 60 children, all from families that migrate for farm work. In recent weeks, those families have begun returning for the winter from northern states. Dragustinovis planned to welcome the children back for the season.

By midday Saturday, the volunteers had:

- Installed new flower beds around two sides of the childcare center
- Created a small vegetable garden on the playground.
- Built a wooden fence around the center's Dumpster.

"This was our kind of project," said Rosa Orona, the store's Human Resource Manager, and organizer of the event. "We did good work, for a good organization. It was a nice day."



Gibsonton Elementary's Terrific Kids are Respectful

The following students were outstanding examples of what it means to be Respectful: Andrea Garza-Flores, Quentin Black, Samuel Franks, Savannah Woodham, Jovana Hernandez, Carlos Trejo, Victor Hernandez, Savannah Boddie, Kazim Moore, Stephen Guerra, Eveontah Young, Angelica Sifuentes, Jocelyn Rivera, Timothy Tucker, Hailey Gillette, Alejandro Sanjuan, Cristina Martinez-Gonzalez, Luis Gomez, Mckenna Newell, Lilly Lommer, Luz Romones, Jocelyn Hinojoza, Priscilla Castillo, Evette Velasquez, Emily Rubio Vazquez, Christal Hernandez, Camden Abbott, Emmanuel Urgell, Evelyn Cruz-Castillo, Diana Foster, Joshua Oyuela, Mariah Jaurequi, Jose Roque, and Tayla Wood.



Congratulations to Gibsonton Elementary's Terrific Kids

The following students were outstanding examples of what it means to be Enthusiastic. Matthew Pesina-Garcia, Gabriella Hare, Ty'Jay Brown, Aileen Rojas, Andrea Garza-Flores, Andrew Guerrero, Amir McNeil, Javona Berry, Abimael Estevo, Erica Benitez, Alex Caez, Zachary Bryant, Angel Valdez, Hailey Aguilar, Judith Perez, Victoria New, Julian Abrams, Albert Rodriguez, Bella Watson, Priscilla Rodriguez-Riveira, Rolando Martinez-Hernandez, Payton Browning, Kelly Pineda, Nicole Nguyen, Esveidy Munoz, Eric Rojas, Zyaier Thomas, Haley Knox, Tucker Gillet, Samantha Ehlers, Lindsey Dewolf, Kody Nguyen, Rolando Reyes-Rodriguez, Fernando O'Campo, and Estefany Mendoza.

Apply for a grant

The Stephen Bufton Memorial Educational Fund of The American Business Women's Association Scholarship announces guidelines. The maximum grant amount for each student is \$1,500 per year, plus \$500 incentive if student and chapter/network complete process by March 1, 2012. All student applications and all supporting documents must be received online by Jan. 31, 2012 which is the deadline for submissions in order for the local ABWA chapter to complete process by March 1.

Each grant awarded is for one academic year and is not automatically renewable. Recipients may apply for funding in subsequent years as long as they meet eligibility requirements. Funds awarded may be used only for tuition, books and fees. In the event that the applicant receives full funding of tuition, the funds must be returned to SBMEF.

The SBMEF Board of Trustees serves as the selection board for awarding all grants. Check for grants awarded are made payable to the educational institution and the applicant jointly. Outright grants are not to be repaid. Candidate eligibility requirements are for a woman who is:

- U.S. citizen seeking a baccalaureate degree or higher.
- At least at the sophomore level in college (completed 45 credit hours or more) applying for funds to be used when 60 or more credit hours have been completed.
- Attending a college or university in the United States authorized to confer degrees at least at the baccalaureate level.
- Maintaining a minimum cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 2.5 or better on a 4.0 scale.

Procedures/Checklist: Applications will be completed online and will include the following: An online application, biographical information regarding educational goals and academic achievements, three (3) professional letters of recommendation and an official current transcript. If you meet the above criteria, e-mail Deb Adams and request to apply for the grant at Deb.adams@micorp.com.

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, Nov. 24 — Thanksgiving Dinner from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Member are free; donation for guests.

Friday, Nov. 25 — Music by Karaoke Kid from 7 to 11 p.m.

Saturday, Nov. 26 — Turkey Shoot at 1:30 p.m. Music by Karaoke Kid from 7 to 11 p.m. Queen of Hearts.

Sunday, Nov. 27 — Fire in the Hole from 1 to 4 p.m. Music by Bert & Sassy from 5 to 9 p.m.

Monday, Nov. 28 — Dart League at 7 p.m.

Tuesday, Nov. 29 — Games in Lounge from 1 to 5 p.m. Kitchen opens at 4:30 p.m. until first break. Bingo at 6 p.m.

The runaways among us

■ Continued from page 1

trawlers to venture off to paradise — whatever paradise means for them.

Bruce Hoskins is the manager of the West Marine store in Apollo Beach. West Marine is the leading source for all things involving boats, and Hoskins has seen the dreamers and the doers in his eight years with the company.

“There are people escaping,” Hoskins said. “They just want to get away from everything. They sell their house, they sell their cars, and they put it all into the boat.”

He has also noticed that age is not a factor. As John demonstrates, there is no age limit to running away. It is done by both the young and old, but it is the old that most frequently have the resources to do it.

“I’ve seen people in their 80’s buying a sailboat, getting it fixed up and taking off,” he said. “We have a girl who works here, she’s an avid sailor. She’s 22 years old, just got married, and they are looking for a boat. I suspect within a couple of years, they’ll be gone cruising.”

Right now thousands of boats are passing through Florida on their way from somewhere to somewhere else. Some will spend the winter in the Sunshine State; others will sail off to the Bahamas, the Caribbean or beyond. In almost all cases, family and friends are left behind, wondering what would compel someone to leave the comforts of home and 24-hour superstores to live on a small boat. Yet in all likelihood, perhaps some of those friends and relatives wish they could do it, too.

Walking into the West Marine store in Apollo Beach and seeing Julie Stocksdale is an instant day-brightener. Her smile and cheery disposition is infectious. In many ways, she is a reflection of her boss, Bruce Hoskins, and of the philosophy of the company itself. Hoskins knows that she will leave her job at some point to hop on a sailboat and head out towards the horizon.

“Like many West employees I work here for a number of reasons,” Stocksdale said. “One is simply to be around boating and boating equipment. The second is for the employee discount and the third is the lenient policies towards taking time off to go cruising. I work part-time — I actually share a job with my husband. We can take off for three months in the spring to go cruising, and then we take off a couple of weeks here and there throughout the year.”

And then she returns to her job. While many companies would be opposed to employees taking off in such a manner, for West Marine it is an advantage — their employees become experts in

boating. According to Hoskins, the company has recently started a program in which some cruising employees are asked to take new equipment with them to test out.

Stocksdale appreciates the good fortune in her life. Last year, she and her husband, John (not related to the John in Norfolk) took three months to sail the Florida Keys aboard their sailboat, *Jolie*. This year, they hope to sail up to Georgia. With an elderly mother living in Florida, they currently feel unable to venture into the Bahamas and beyond, but someday they will. Yet Stocksdale takes nothing for granted. Whether at work or running off to sea, she appreciates each day. Her dreams began years ago, even before she spent years living aboard and cruising with her first husband.

“When my previous husband died, I had this dream — the two of us had spent years building a path to that dream,” she said. “When he died, I thought that dream died with him. That was very hard because then I didn’t have a dream anymore. And then, I met my husband and finding someone who shared that dream was an answer to my prayers. I meet a lot of people who wish they had a partner who shared their dreams, whatever they are. I feel very, very fortunate.”

Before he passed away, her previous husband asked her to marry again — and as soon as possible.

“I met my husband working in this store — I met him in the plumbing aisle,” she said with a laugh. “Every single day I wake up and I’m grateful for the day.”

Both Hoskins and Stocksdale see people coming into the store at various stages in their dreams. Some keep working on the boat with plans for “someday” and never manage to leave; others buy the bare essentials and sail off. And Stocksdale is enthusiastic for all of them.

“I want to grab them, hold them and say, ‘Sit down, let me tell you about what a wonderful life you have in store for you!’” she said with a laugh. “They want to get out of the store and I want to share everything with them.”

The Seven Seas Cruising Association is composed of people much like Stocksdale.

“We are for dreamers, doers and done-ers,” said SSCA association director Judi Mkam. “And the done-ers help the dreamers.”

Mkam estimates that roughly 60 percent of the membership of 7,000 people are at least part-time active cruisers. Thus many are the dreamers, sailors at heart with plans for the future, or even those who may never step foot on a boat but enjoy dreaming about it.

Through the SSCA they can enjoy the camaraderie of those who have done it by reading the monthly published bulletin and by attending meetings, called GAMs, held throughout the year.

“Unlike other sailing clubs, we offer camaraderie with sailors helping sailors,” she said.

Florida is the center of the universe for many of those cruisers,

either as a destination or as a jumping off point for the siren song of the Bahamas and Caribbean. Each year thousands of boats arrive, beginning in the fall, only to reverse their tracks in the spring. You don’t need to own a boat to enjoy the atmosphere — just head to a local marina or drive down U.S. Highway 41 to Regatta Pointe Marina for a cool beverage or a latte

at the Riverfront Cafe Waterfront Deck to watch the runaways in their natural environment (often with sandpaper or paint brushes in hand).

“Go small, go simple, go now” are the words of Lin and Larry Pardey, two of sailing’s most famous authors. Running off to join the circus may have been a childhood

See **RUNAWAYS**, page 13

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Carnival glass collection on display at museum

PALMETTO — The Palmetto Historical Park and Manatee County Agricultural Museum are hosting an exhibit of vintage Carnival Glass through March 2012. Carnival Glass is pressed glass that has an iridescent coating, first produced in 1907 and continues to be made today in limited quantities. Carnival Glass received its name because it was used as prizes at carnivals and fairs and manufacturers could make it cheaply enough for this purpose. It was also available for purchase just like any other household goods. This exhibit is available for viewing courtesy of the Tampa Bay Carnival Glass Club.

The address of the park and museum is 515 10th Ave. West, Palmetto. Admission is free, though donations are encouraged. Operating hours are Tuesday through Friday and the first and third Saturday of the month from 10 a.m. to noon and 1 to 4 p.m. For more information, call 941-721-2034.



'Toys for Tots' drop-off location

Weichert Realtors® - SouthShore has once again been recruited by the U.S. Marine Corps as a local "Toys for Tots" drop-off location in this year's holiday drive. The agency is sponsoring the campaign through Dec. 10 when all the presents collected will be delivered to the Ruskin VFW for distribution by the Marines. The presents are principally donated to children in need throughout the SouthShore area. Prior to Dec. 10 people throughout the community can bring new, unwrapped toys to the office at 237 Apollo Beach Boulevard in Apollo Beach.

Broker/Owner Colin Howgill recommends that while people shop for toys for little children, sports equipment and games will make the season brighter for teenagers as well.

The primary goal of the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve Toys for Tots Program is to deliver a new toy at Christmas, along with a message of hope to needy youngsters. The popular program was launched in 1948, and by conclusion of the 2010 campaign, more than 16.7 million toys had been distributed to nearly 7.2 million children.

If anyone needs more information or assistance in getting their toys to the agency, the office can be reached at 813-649-1002.

South Shore Young Professionals to meet

SSYPA After Hours

Casual networking with like-minded young professionals in your community is the purpose of South Shore Young Professionals. Their meeting is from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 6 at the Green Iguana on 6264 Winthrop Town Center, Riverview.

Free for members, \$5 for guests or, bring a new, unwrapped toy for their Toys for Tots Holiday Drive for Free Admission.

Holiday Lunch at Acropolis

Lunch from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Wednesday, Dec. 14 at the Acropolis Greek Taverna on 6108 Winthrop Town Center, Riverview is \$11.

Remember to bring a new, unwrapped toy for their Toys for Tots Holiday Drive.

To learn more about SSYPA, visit www.ssypa.com or call 813-234-5944.

Enjoy a village Christmas artwalk

At the Village of the Arts, just south of downtown Bradenton on either Friday, Dec. 2, 6-9:30 p.m. and or Saturday Dec. 3, 11 a.m.-4 p.m. stroll the quaint streets of the Village of the Arts during this magical holiday artwalk. Strolling musicians, vintage holiday decorations, quilts and toys on display, sweet treats in the Village cafes, a holiday tea room and storytelling, Santa and more. Visit more than two dozen galleries, studios and shops and enjoy the festive atmosphere of restored 1920's and 1930's homes decorated for the holidays. Annual lighting of the Village is at 6 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 2. Free admission.

For more information call 941-747-8056 or visit www.villageofthearts.com.



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Runaways

■ Continued from page 11

dream for some, but running off to sea is an adult reality for many others. And everyone has their own definition of running away. The person you see in a grocery store, or the smiling and cheerful employee at West Marine, may be among the runaways. For some, running away may mean sailing to the Caribbean

or crossing an ocean, for others it may mean spending a few weeks at Little Harbor Resort in Ruskin or Land's End Marina in Apollo Beach. The point, for them, is to act on those dreams and make them come true.

"I think a lot of people just want to get away," Hoskins said.

The door at the store kept chiming

as customers walked in, each on a mission, following a passion as no one without a passion would throw money into a boat. Perhaps someday they'll go cruising. Perhaps someday they'll run away to sea, guided by the wind, waves and their dreams.

Further information about the Seven Seas Cruising Association is available at www.scca.org.

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West Marine Apollo Beach store manager Bruce Hoskins with employee / cruiser Julie Stocksdales.



Boat at anchor off Volleyball Beach in George Town, Bahamas.

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Trips worth taking

■ Continued from page 9

coquina Singing Tower Carillon. The 60 bell structure houses bells ranging in weight from 16 pounds to nearly 24,000 pounds and music from these bells fills the gardens

every 30 minutes. Concerts are featured daily at 1 and 3 p.m. and special events are held throughout the year.

A trip to this area of Central Florida is something out of the

ordinary. A stay at Chalet Suzanne and a walk through Bok Tower Gardens will send you home refreshed, not frazzled.

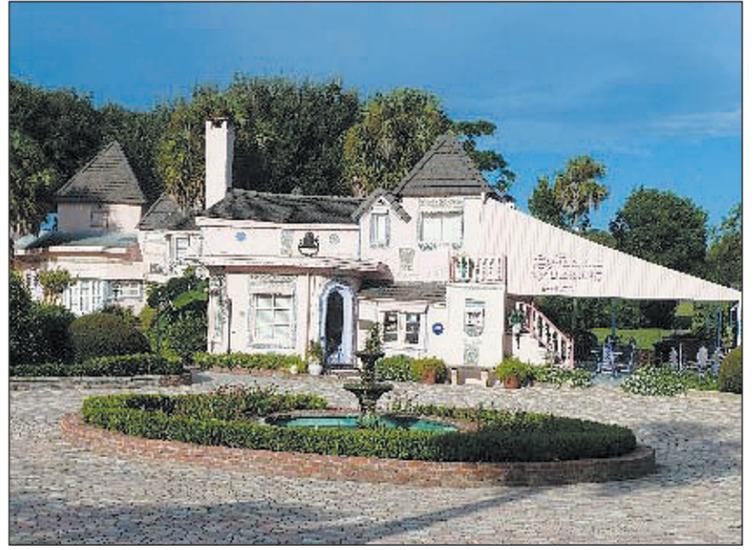
Over the years Lake Wales became a backwater to those glitzy tourist attractions of Orlando to the north. But with the opening of LEGOLAND® to the west of this city and only minutes from Chalet Suzanne, change is coming.

Only time will tell what affect this change will have on the slower paced life style of Lake Wales.

On a map of Florida, Lake Wales can be found at the intersections of Routes 60 and 27.



Bok Tower and its beautiful gardens is located in Lake Wales, FL.



Chalet Suzanne in Lake Wales, Florida.

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- Thurs., Dec. 1 • 10-11 a.m. • Medicare 101 - Unravel the Myths and Realities of Medicare Coverage!** Amy O'Rourke, founder and President of The Cameron Group, a professional Geriatric Care Management firm, will explain the coverage offered by Medicare Choice Plans and which is best for you.
- Tues., Dec. 6 • 2:30-4 p.m. • Congestive Heart Failure "CHF" Support Group.** Join facilitator Shayne Kull, MSR, from Hometown Homecare as she introduces you to cutting edge resources. This group is exclusively for those living with heart failure, their families and caregivers.
- Wed., Dec. 7 • 10-11 a.m. • Therapeutic Tai Chi** Every Wednesday. Increases strength and balance.
- Thurs., Dec. 8 • 10-11 a.m. • Learn How to Avoid Common Mistakes with Life Insurance.** Steven Paich, MetLife Financial Service Representative will discuss how insurance investment products can stabilize your income in a low interest rate environment and avoid problems for your family. These investment vehicles are an option to stabilize income, protect from market volatility, and/or guarantee income for life!
- Thurs., Dec. 8 • 2:30-4 p.m. • Edmond Dubreuil MSW, RCSWI,** mental health professional facilitates this support group for those suffering from depression, loss or grief or are the caregiver of someone facing those issues. Supported by South Shore Coalition on Mental Health & Aging and The United Methodist Church of Sun City Center.



Tues., Dec. 13 • 2-3:30 p.m. • Holiday Soiree and Dance! Enjoy holiday music while sipping champagne and sharing hors d'oeuvres. The dance floor is ready for you! Enjoy entertainment provided by our very own SunTowers "DJ Dave" as he plays dance songs by request from yesteryear. Don't miss the party and **RSVP today!**

Tues., Dec. 13 • 2:30-4 p.m. • COPD Support Group. Joy Barlaan, ARNP and Jan Whitaker, LPN from Ace Homecare have over 50 combined years of experience and will be facilitators. The available resources are endless!

RSVP
2 days prior to event to...

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Ruskin Elementary PTA/SouthShore Regional Friends of the Library present

Festival of Trees

Dec. 10

3-8 p.m.

SouthShore Regional Library
15816 Beth Shields Way
Ruskin

Trees on display
Nov. 30 - Dec. 10

Join us for

FOOD - Pizza, Hot Dogs, Chips, Drinks, Assorted Pastries, Kona Ice Hawaiian Ices

ENTERTAINMENT - Tampa Bay Martial Arts, Progress Village H.S. Quartet, Mullins Trio, Carol Singing

SILENT AUCTION for Christmas trees. Final bids by 7:30 p.m., Dec. 10

RAFFLES - Baskets and jewelry

FREE ADMISSION • FREE PARKING

Children must be accompanied by an adult

Proceeds from this event will help pay for Ruskin Elementary student field trips and Friends of the Library programs

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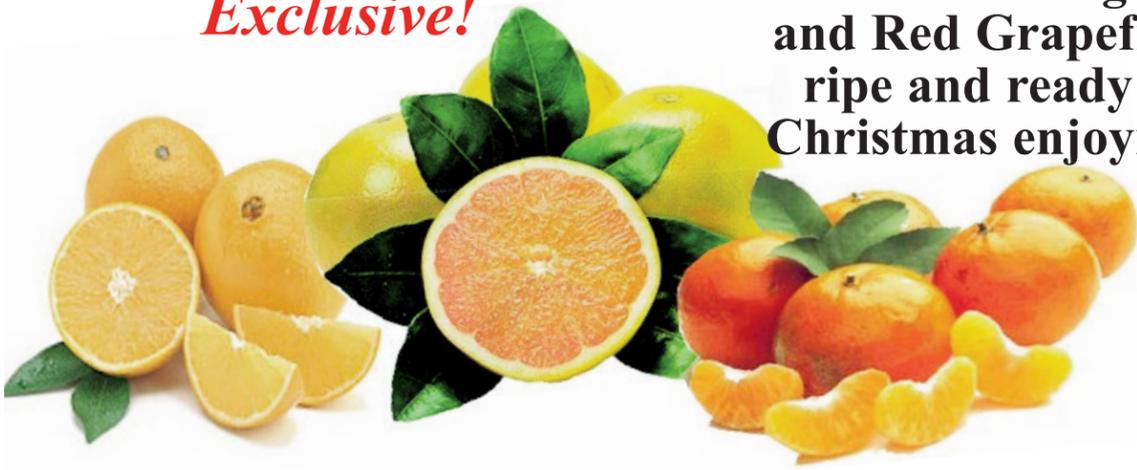
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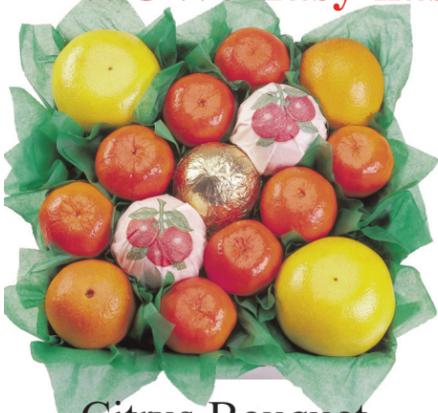
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Travel for about 3 miles to Universal-Stephens Road. (Riverside Club sign on the left corner)

Turn LEFT and drive about 1/4 mile to Stephens Road.

Turn RIGHT onto Stephen Road.

Travel 2 miles. Dooley Groves is on the left. www.dooleygroves.com/directions.htm



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Weekly Events

Wednesday
 Chef's Choice Dinners
 from 5:30 to 7 p.m.
 Cover-Your-Moose
 Bar Games at 7 p.m.

Thursday
 Tacos/Burgers from 5 to 7 p.m.
 Draw Darts at 7:30 p.m.

Friday
 Steak/Fish Dinners
 5 to 7:30 p.m.
 Karaoke 7:30 p.m.

Saturday
 Various Lodge Events
 Watch the Calendar

Sunday
 Beer Specials
 Wings 6 @ \$3 from 3 to 6 p.m.
 Bar Games from 3 to 6 p.m.
 Free Pool

Upcoming Events

November 26
 Dinner and Entertainment
 Watch for details

December 10
 Breakfast with Santa
 Signup sheet in the Lobby

December 17
 Fire & Sherriff Dept. Apprecia-
 tion Dinner

November 2 & 3 2012
 Cozy Get-Away Weekend for 2
 Bilmar Resort @ Treasure Is-
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 tickets are \$5 each. drawing held
 Apr. 6, 2012 @ 7 p.m.



Back Row, L to R: Roy Gardner, Jamarcus Hall, Alexi Diaz, Arthur Godwin, Justin Guerra, Nakya Westbrook, Elexa Crisp, Isabel Sanchez, Isabel Diaz, Adam Smolker, Chuck Stieb, ER
 Front Row: Jesus Martinez, George Hud Cox, Delani Crisp, Dwayne Wilson

South Hillsborough Elks Lodge 2672 sponsored Hoop Shoot Program

The South Hillsborough Elks Lodge 2672 had over 800 youngsters participate in their annual Hoop Shoot Program this year. The Lodge finals were held at Ruskin Christian School with over 21 young men and women participating. The contestants were treated to a breakfast treat and after the program were treated to lunch. Roy Gardner was Chairman.

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FISH TALES

Fish the canals this time of year

For our winter visitors I will repeat the mileage entrance to Tampa Bay. It is 4.5 miles between Mullet Key on the north and Anna Maria Key on the south. Egmont Channel is the main deep water ship channel.

We are getting a great mix of fish now that the weather has turned slightly cooler. Cooler fronts are moving into the area with water temperatures starting to fall bringing flounder swimming into deeper waters.

Cobia are showing up in the flats. Trout are teeming in the grassy shallows, and sheepshead are in large schools.

Around the bait shops and boat ramps, 'Fish Tales' are being told of sheepshead so large that one could feed a family of four on just one. It seems that most catches of sheepshead that I have seen this week are much larger than any I have seen in past years.

With cooler mornings and the time change anglers are fishing in early mornings and making great catches.

Fish the canals this time of the year, as you will find that many of the fish have migrated there for protection from the winds.

It is not easy to keep track of the king mackerel. You might find them in the south one day and then in the west the next. This migrating fish keeps on the move.

They are spotty in our area now, but they are out there. It is said, that when you find a bait school, the kings are close by feeding. I heard one group of anglers who said that they were going hunting today. I asked them how as they were in their boat, and of course, I finally caught on that they were hunting for none other than the king...king mackerel that is.

Redfish are moving into the rivers and under docks. There are also reports of them in the canals. Reds are still a restricted fish, one per person per day of legal size, not less than 18 inches or more than 27 inches.

I heard a grumble from a person who moved here for the weather, but he was leaving because he didn't like saltwater fishing. What... this area has plenty of freshwater fishing. Sir: our Little Manatee River has great freshwater fishing, so go under the I-75 bridge and start freshwater fishing. Might be better than those mountain streams where you came from.

You also can fish the upper waters of the Alafia river, and many lakes around this area with Lake Parrish to the south of us. Many of our parks have freshwater fishing, not to mention Lake Okeechobee, the bass capital of the world.

Many of our anglers are retirees. They now have time to fish. But, some have been watching those television shows where the anglers catch a big fish every time and can't understand why they cannot make a catch each time they cast out.

Others are recalling their childhood days and remember Huckleberry Finn, recalling all the fun he had catching those sun fish from a hometown pond. Many were business men and this is the first time in their lives that they have been fishing. For years they have seen all of the beautiful big fish catches made in Florida. They have visions of catching one of these monsters on their first cast.

I suggest that for your first trip out take a charter. The captain will teach you all about fishing, or go with a person who knows our waterways.

I hope you have included fish as some part of your Thanksgiving dinner, have a blessed, healthy, happy day.

Aleta Jonie Maschek is a member of Florida Outdoor Press.



Fish Tales
 By Jonie Maschek

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A child's Christmas spirit, in an envelope

In Immokalee, Saray drew a wreath of oranges. In Homestead, Veronica drew a Christmas tree of tomatoes. In Wimauma, Marlene drew Rudolph.

Now, the painstaking artistry of these and dozens of other children has been converted into Christmas cards, for sale to the public in a fundraiser to benefit the children of Redlands Christian Migrant Association.

RCMA operates childcare centers, charter schools and after-school programs for children of the rural poor in 21 Florida counties. Money raised through its Christmas cards is matched 16:1 through a state grant that funds many of its 74 childcare centers. So a \$30 order of Christmas cards qualifies RCMA for \$480 in state funds.

"Usually, a child's best art gets displayed on a refrigerator," said Barbara Mainster, RCMA's executive director. "But here, it's printed and sold! The kids get intense."

A minimum \$15 order contains 10 cards and envelopes. The front of each card bears the holiday art; the back contains a photo and paragraph about the child artist.

An order of at least 100 cards, for \$150, entitles the buyer to choose an exclusive card, unavailable to anyone else.

They must be ordered by Dec. 15. An online order form is at www.rcma.org/holidaycards. When completed, it can be faxed to RCMA at (239) 658-3593, or mailed to Judy Brill at RCMA, 402 W. Main St., Immokalee or you can call Judy at 1-800-282-6540 or (239) 289-6822 or judy@rcma.org.

Orders of exclusive cards must be placed by phone to Sonia Tighe at (813) 975-8377 or via email to sonia.tighe@ffva.com.

Imagine That!

Lawrence R. MacAlister has two paintings hanging in "Imagine That," a juried art exhibit mounted by ArtCenter Manatee in Bradenton. MacAlister, a native of Massachusetts, started painting as a youth, taking classes at the Worcester Art Museum. Following his studies at MIT, art became more of an avocation, but he continued painting, exhibiting at galleries in California and New England. Currently, he has paintings on display at Bella Cucina Italian Ristorante and at Superior Bank. MacAlister and his wife Carol moved to Sun City Center in July 2010 from Asheville, NC. He is a member of the SCC Art Club.

"Imagine That" will run until Dec. 2. ArtCenter Manatee is located at 209 9th St. W, Bradenton.

County parking garage offers first hour free parking

Hillsborough County's County Center Public Parking Garage at 319 N. Pierce St., in downtown Tampa, offers the first hour of parking free of charge! In addition, payment can now be made with credit and debit cards.

The County Center Public Parking Garage opens at 7 a.m. for daily parking. Drivers will take a ticket as they enter the garage at the Jackson Street gate, and pay by credit, debit or cash as they leave. Parking in this garage is free for the first hour, and costs just 80 cents per half hour after that. There is no maximum allotted time for parking.

"We've made these changes to offer greater convenience to residents coming downtown to receive services at County Center," said County Administrator, Mike Merrill. "This is one of the many efforts Hillsborough County is making to improve the way we do business and better serve our residents."

The County Center Public Parking Garage will accept VISA, MasterCard, American Express and Discover credit and debit cards. Debit cards will be processed as credit transactions.

For more information call Douglas Taylor, Hillsborough County Facilities Management Services Department, at (813) 276-2533.

Ruskin Heritage and Tomato Festival returns

It's been a year and a half since the last Ruskin Tomato Festival, but the festival is back again at a new time of year when cooler temperatures and a supply of local tomatoes complements this fun and friendly event.

Ruskin Heritage and Tomato Festival 10 a.m.-5 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday, Dec. 3-4 at E.G. Simmons County Park, 19th Ave NW, Ruskin. Admission will be \$5 per person, children under 12 are free.

This year, there will be some new faces, entertainers and activities but as always, lots of things to do. A variety of craft and commercial vendors will be ready to help you find some unique holiday treasures for gift-giving, home decoration and other special events.

There will be rides and games for the kids, plus a 'build-it' workshop with Team Home Depot SCC. Camp Bayou will have nature activities with fun and educational hands-on fun.

Hungry? There are plenty of food items to select including fried green tomatoes, turkey legs, frog legs, hot dogs, hamburgers, or just grab a quick treat of ice cream, ices or donuts. New this year is the option of purchasing beer at the festival, as well as the ever-popular soda, water and ice tea. There will also be free slices of tomato offered to delight your palate, while supplies last.



SCC Holiday Walk Expected to Draw 100s

Ann-Marie Leblanc, who is chairing the Dec. 3 Breakfast and Holiday Walk, expects this year's open-to-the-public event to be extra special. It's part of Sun City Center's year-long 50th Anniversary Celebration that started in May.

Craft rooms on the CA Central Campus (N. Pebble Beach Blvd.) will be open from 9 a.m. to noon for shoppers and admirers of club members' creations. The Model Railroad Club will offer junior engineer certificates to youngsters who visit and play with the trains. A DJ will be helping create the holiday mood with music at the bandstand.

Visitors are encouraged to enjoy a \$5 breakfast in the Florida Room that starts at 7 a.m. and runs for the duration of the Walk. Breakfast consists of pancakes, eggs, sausage, toast, juice and bottomless cups of coffee. There will be chairs set up in the Atrium for people waiting or socializing prior to breakfast.

This will be the fourth Holiday Walk that has attracted hundreds to the CA Central Campus. Proceeds from craft sales benefit the club activities. Any profit from the breakfast will be added to the SCC 2012 July 4th Fireworks Fund.

Nutcracker tickets on sale now

Don't miss out on Brandon Ballet's beautiful production of the classical holiday ballet, The Nutcracker. Enjoy lavish costumes, and scenery, a joyous score by Tchaikovsky, and exhilarating choreography.

The venue will be Spoto Auditorium, 8538 Eagle Palm Dr., Riverview on Dec. 10 at 2 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. and also on Dec. 11 at 2 p.m. and 5:30 p.m. Ticket prices are adult \$25, child 18 and under \$15 and Senior 55 and older \$20. For more information call 813-684-4282 email dance@brandonballet.org or visit www.brandonballet.org

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PET TIP: This holiday season, keep in mind some of the potential dangers for your pets: Festive plants, holiday trees, light strands, tree water, ornaments, decoration hooks, tinsel, ribbons, burning candles and styrofoam.

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Observations

Like it used to be

■ Continued from page 7

Now Jack had no real motivation to make things easy on me. He didn't sell the refrigeration, he was only there to try to repair it, and he probably knew full well that we'd happily keep feeding him large denomination bills in the boundless optimism that he could fix it, thus sparing us the horrific shock of buying the aforementioned box of outrageously expensive parts. But he didn't do that. In fact, he didn't even charge us the full rate he quoted to make the boat call. Given that we kept him waiting, I'm certain what he ended up charging us didn't cover his time, let alone the gas money to get to the boat. Once again, I found myself honored to be in the presence of an honest man.

It turns out that even in a rapidly changing world, some things are just as they used to be, and honesty certainly hasn't gone out of fashion. Jack Lathbury and Bob Henshaw showed me that.

And speaking of honest, I need to share a little with you all — just for the record. When I mention people or businesses in the articles I write, I gain nothing from it but a good story. Certainly, whether a person or company advertises in the Observer plays no role. In this case, Bob had no idea who I was, and I'm not entirely certain he'll ever see these words. Jack did recognize me, but I am quite certain that he'll be surprised to see his name in print (hopefully not unpleasantly so). Both are honest men not because of a story, but because that's who they are. And they are not advertisers, just decent people I felt fortunate to meet.

And on that note, I have a small favor to ask of those who may visit the Fish House on Shell Point Road in the coming days or weeks (c'mon — you know you will). A while back, I wrote an article that included the Fish House (non-advertisers, by the way) and ran a photo of Shirley Steele — she works there and is a very special person. I later asked if she was OK with the photo of her that ran with the story and she jokingly said that no one asked her for an autograph. So here's the favor: could someone ask her for an autograph? No, I

don't have the sway to suggest it will earn you a discount, but it will probably earn a smile from Shirley (that's worth more, anyway) and it will definitely earn my gratitude (that's worth what you make of it).

SCC updating project

■ Continued from page 3

Cal Kimura takes issue with several aspects of second phase proposal, concerned that the full story is not being told. Despite statements by SOL architect Carlos Molnar that the jutting roofs of the two proposed new buildings will withstand hurricane level winds, Kimura doubts their structural integrity. A 200 mph wind — a category five hurricane — “and they're going to fly away,” he said. Kimura also voiced concern that the shuffleboard players were not advised their Central Campus courts would have to be moved to the South Campus to make room for any new construction. Leaders, he added, “should be honest with people.” And when it comes to money, he labeled as “bogus” CA suggestions that the new buildings would not result in added costs passed on to residents. More space will require more maintenance and it's likely to be covered by dues increases in years ahead, he asserted.

Albert Clark, like Kimura, objects to the new building design, but for a different reason. The styling is so “1948,” he said, adding that the new buildings do not coordinate with any others on the campus. The retro look is “just a way to spend money,” he asserted. Regarding other aspects, Clark questioned whether serving alcohol near the outdoor pool as proposed for the new café “is a good idea,” suggested that “Security Patrol does not need a fancy building” or to be “showy” and wondered whether outdoor events such as the annual Fun Fest could be produced on the new

patio in the midst of the abundant new landscaping planned.

On the other hand, Clark agreed that the CA offices “are in bad shape” and that costs of borrowing money are less now, along with the costs of construction in a depressed economy. The objective is not to spend money “just to be spending it,” he added, the objective is “to invest without throwing money” at the problem.

Clark, Kimura and Brown all share sentiments with two of the five candidates currently seeking election to three seats on the CA board. Both Rob King and Paul Sasville, newcomers to the annual election process, have expressed reluctance to incur debt in the present uncertain economy, while Al Alderman and Jane Keegan, sitting first term directors, along with Howie Griffin, a former director, are solidly in favor of the proposed facelift and related financing.

Deadline for the election balloting, as well as voting up or down on a dues increase to \$263 annually, is Dec. 7 and 8. CA members also have been voting using an absentee ballot provided in their monthly CA newsletter.

A week later, on Dec. 15, residents will choose by voting whether to increase the “transfer fee” to \$1,500 per house sold to a newcomer. Their last opportunity to support or reject the Central Campus proposals in whatever form they have taken by that time will come February 13 and 14, 2012, when CA members will decide the shape of their valentine to their community.

Copyright 2011 Melody Jameson



Architect Carlos Molnar

testifying about the institution's extraordinary performance before a Florida Senate committee. The prison's recidivism rate is among lowest in the state.

Hillsborough County commissioners in June raised the population cap, paving the way for additional selected female inmates to join the 274 women currently housed at the facility. At present, two squads of inmates work 10-hour days during the week performing tasks in public places that save tax dollars,

Williams said, and a third squad is being formed.

... Operation Med Cabinet

Thursday, December 1, has been earmarked for another collection of outdated, unneeded or otherwise useless medications, conducted in the South County by Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office personnel.

The periodic sweep up of drugs to keep them out of public systems will be held between 9 AM and 12:01 PM at the Sun City Center Community Hall on South Pebble Beach Boulevard, said Deputy Chris Girard. Any South County resident can drop off medical chemical compounds at that location during those hours.

The collection program is provided to prevent disposal of drugs in wastewater and solid waste systems, aiming to eliminate possible environmental harm, Girard said. The accumulated medications are burned under HCSO supervision.

... TA Show Biz

Rezoning

Professional planners on the county level this month toured the Tropical Acres area of South Hillsborough twice, checking out 39 parcels involved in a rezoning application from both the proponents' and opponents' perspectives.

On November 17, Brian Grady, Joe Moreda, and

Isabelle Albert, planners in Hillsborough's Development Services Department, along with David Hay of The Planning Commission, inspected both TA and Gibsonton properties owned by show business operators following the carnival circuit around the country each year, according to Kristy Deaton, a South Pointe resident opposed to the rezoning. Residents in several subdivisions around TA have objected to the proposed rezoning for a



number of reasons.

The same group, with the addition of Melissa Zornita from The Planning Commission, saw the TA community

homesites through the eyes of the applicants on November 9, guided by their consultant, Realtor Richard Bennett. The show business operators are seeking rezoning overlays on the various parcels scattered across the community in order to make legal their customary accommodation of workers, animals and large equipment at their homes during their off season.

Albert said this week the planners find all information useful as they prepare their recommendations for the first public hearing on the matter scheduled December 12.

... Balm Post Office

Proposed closure of the 100-year-old post office at Balm remains under review, according to Enola Rice, US Postal Service spokesperson in Tampa.

The small but highly active Balm facility with historic significance for that community was listed for closure earlier this year as the debt-burdened postal service contracts in costs saving efforts. The community vigorously resisted the closure, petitioning for help at the congressional level.

Rice said a decision is expected before end of the year.

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Enjoy a free Thanksgiving Dinner

Thanks to Beanies Family Sports Grill, South Bay Hospital and the South Shore Anglers, the United Methodist Church of Sun City Center, 1210 Del Webb Blvd. West in Sun City Center will be serving 200 complete turkey dinners on Thanksgiving Day from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. in Creason Hall, the church's fellowship hall. The church is one of four area churches participating in the annual South Shore 'Big Give'. According to Beanie, the owner of the popular eatery on SR41 in Ruskin, the restaurant will be cooking approximately 750 pounds of turkey for the event. His hope is that the 'Big Give' will allow folks who might not get the chance to spend the holiday with others will come together in fellowship and a great meal. Dinners will include dressing, mashed potatoes, gravy, sweet corn, green beans, rolls, drinks and desserts. The United Methodist Church will only be able to serve the first 200 that arrive that day. Volunteers will be needed to staff the 'Big Give' event and are asked to sign up by calling 813-634-2539 or visit the church office during normal business hours 8:30 a.m.-4 p.m. Volunteers will need to arrive by 10 a.m. Thanksgiving Day.

For more information call Jeff Jordan, Director of Music and the Arts, at 813-634-2539 or visit their website at www.sccumc.com.

Community gathers for Thanksgiving eve worship service

The Sun City Center Community Thanksgiving service will be at 7 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 23 at St. Andrew Presbyterian Church, 1239 Del Webb Blvd., West. The service is sponsored by the Sun City Center Ministerial Association and the Rev. David Campbell of the First Christian Church will be speaking.

Choirs and representatives of Temple Beth Israel, Redeemer Lutheran Church, St. Andrew Presbyterian Church, St. John the Divine Episcopal Church, the United Community Church, Prince of Peace Catholic Church, Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Church, Lifepath Hospice, and the United Methodist Church will all take part. Charles Wirick will direct the combined choirs.

The offering this year will be divided between the Our Lady of Guadalupe Food Pantry and the food pantry of the Beth-el Mission. These pantries feed well over 250 families per week.

The Ministerial Association hopes that many people from the community will turn out for this interfaith service, because Thanksgiving is the only community, presidentially proclaimed religious holiday. It is a wonderful time for people of the community and all faiths to get together to offer their thanks and also to give generously to help the poor.



Front row: Brandon Ceme', Matthew Martinez, Gabby Cordiviola; Middle row: Michael Ngo, Megan Millar, Danielle Baker, Gillian Garbus; Back Row: Brittini Goodson, Peite Hatfield, Ari Moss, Richard Scilabro.

Ruskin Christian School students all ace spelling bee

On Nov. 4 Ruskin Christian School participated in the Florida Association of Christian Schools Regional Spelling Bee. There were ten divisions for grades 1-12 and RCS students finished first in five of the ten divisions. Their first place winners were Gabby Cordiviola - grade 2, Louisina Morancy - grade 3, Danielle Baker - grade 8, Megan Millar - grades 9/10, and Brittini Goodson - grades 11/12. Other students that placed were Matthew Martinez - 4th in grade 2, Brandon Ceme - 3rd in grade 5, Michael Ngo - 3rd in grade 8, Richard Scilabro - 4th in grade 8, Peite Hatfield - 3rd in grades 9/10, Ari Moss - 2nd in grades 11/12, and Gillian Garbus - 4th in grades 11/12. Brandon Ceme finished in second place and Richard Scilabro finished in third place at the State Spelling Bee in Orlando.



New members welcomed

Trinity Baptist Church recently welcomed several new members. Nearly 50 new members have joined the church this year. Pictured from left to right are Dr. Jim and Kathy Clor, George and Carlene Bowen, Pastor Ron Churchill, Beverly Carnes, Doris Carey, and Mary and Gil Fadely. For information on the church, call 634-4228.

Tree Lighting Festival kicks-off holiday season

Celebrate the holiday season with Hillsborough County and the Friends of the County Parks during the 10th Annual Hillsborough County Holiday Tree Lighting Festival. This free, family-friendly event is from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 1 at Joe Chillura Courthouse Square, located at the corner of Pierce St. and Kennedy Blvd. in downtown Tampa. Free parking is provided during the event at the County Center Public Parking Garage, corner of Pierce St. and Jackson St., entrance on Jackson St.

Kids of all ages can listen to musical entertainment, play carnival and inflatable games, create holiday arts-n-crafts, enjoy free food and of course witness the official tree lighting ceremony. Don't forget to bring your camera to take a picture with Mr. and Mrs. Santa Claus.

Call the Hillsborough County Parks, Recreation and Conservation Department at (813) 635-3500 for information.

St. Stephen to host Wiglia - A Polish Christmas Eve

The Christmas Holiday is an ecclesiastical holiday revered in the heart of every Pole and Polish-American. It is steeped with traditions dating back for centuries, and is greeted every year with such anticipation, careful planning, and mystical symbolism that it has become a celebration like no other. Celebrate this holiday and join a review of Polish and Polish-American traditions, and the singing of Polish and English Christmas songs. Admission tickets are \$10/adult or \$12 at the door. Ticket locations are St. Stephen Catholic Church Main Office, 5049 Bell Shoals Rd., Valrico, Taste of Europe Polish Deli, 717 W. Lumsden Rd., Brandon, and Ave Maria, 222 Bryan Rd., Brandon, FL.

Proceeds from Wiglia held at 7:30 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 2 at St. Stephen Catholic Church on 5049 Bell Shoals Rd. Valrico, will benefit the new St. Stephen Catholic Church Building Campaign.

For more information, contact Paco Alicea (Public Relations) 813-689-4892 or pacodeysy@aol.com

Area Places of Worship

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. Richard Nussel 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

Friendship Baptist Church

Rance Goad, 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

Ruskin Foursquare Church

Building Community Thru God's Love
 106 7th Ave. N.W. **10 a.m. Sunday School**
 Ruskin, FL 33570 **11 a.m. Worship Service**
 N. Blanton (813) 309-3558 **7 p.m. Wed. Bible Study**

REDEEMER LUTHERAN CHURCH - ELCA

701 Valley Forge Blvd. • Sun City Center, FL 33573-5354
Rev. Dr. Peter Stiller, Pastor
 Telephone: 813-634-1292 • Website: scredeemer.org
 Worship Services on Sunday 9:30 & 11:15 a.m.
 Holy Communion First & Third Sunday • Bible Class Thursday 10 a.m., Guests Welcome

St. John the Divine Episcopal Church

Growing by Faith from Generation to Generation
Rev. Tracy H. Wilder • Church Office: 813-645-1521
Sunday Services: 9:00 a.m. - Contemporary Service and Sunday School
 at West Campus (S.R. 674 and 9th Street SE, Ruskin)
 8:00 a.m. - Traditional Service and 11:00 a.m. Holy Communion with Choir at
 East Campus (1015 Del Webb Blvd., Sun City Center)
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Welcome to the: South Hillsborough Church of Christ

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.

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of SCC

Meets in the Henry Gibson Social Hall of the Beth Israel Synagogue • 1115. E. Del Webb Blvd.
 Thursday, 7:00 PM • Call 633-0396
The dogmas of the past are inadequate to the stormy present. — Abraham Lincoln

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.calvarylutheranchurch.net 645-1305

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820 COLLEGE AVE. W.
 RUSKIN, FL 33570
 645-6439
www.fbcofruskin.org
 A Resource for Families
 Sunday School.....9:45 a.m.
 Morning Worship.....8:30 a.m. & 11 a.m.
 Evening Service.....6:00 p.m.
 Wednesday Night Service.....7:00 p.m.
 Awana7:00 p.m.
 Dr. Barry Rumsey
CHRISTIAN SCHOOL K-2 THROUGH 12TH GRADE

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 Need the comfort of a warm and loving family?
 Join us on Sunday to come home to the warmth of our church family.
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 "Getting to Know You" (Donuts & Coffee)9:00 a.m.
 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 Prayer10:00 a.m.
Dan Collis, Pastor
 Come join us to learn about God's Word and salvation in Jesus Christ

The United Methodist Church of Sun City Center

1210 Del Webb Blvd West • 634-2539
<http://www.sccumc.com>
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 The United Methodist Church
 Sunday School Fellowship Center
Worship Services
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 4:00 PM Creason Hall (Casual Service)
 Sunday
 8:15 AM Sanctuary (Communion Service)
 9:15 AM Creason Hall (Oasis Contemporary)
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Rev. Dr. Michael F. Evans ~ Worship Service ~ 10 AM
 (813) 634-1304 ~ www.uccinscc.org

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 & 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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 1115 Del Webb E. • Sun City Center, FL
 www.unitycommunityofjoy.com

Sunday Service 10:00 a.m.
 813-298-7745

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 Sunday Morning Worship 10:45 a.m.
 Sunday Evening Worship 6:00 p.m.
 Wednesday (all ages) 6:30 p.m.

Dr. Samuel (Sam) A. Roach, Pastor
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 *Morning Worship 10:30 A.M.
 Sunday Evening 6:00 P.M.
 Mid-Week (Wed.) 7:00 P.M.

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 Sunday School 10:00 a.m.
 Wednesday Service 5:00 p.m.
 Reading Room Wednesday 4 to 4:45 p.m.

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 Casual Service 11:00 a.m.

Prayers with anointing for healing and wholeness during worship the second Sunday of every month.

Pastor: Rev. Dr. Mark E. Salmon
 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.standrewatssc.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

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

Area Obituaries

Ludd R. Farr

Ludd R. Farr, retired Federal Administrative Law Judge, of Sun City Center, Florida, formerly of Versailles, Kentucky and Baltimore, Maryland and Husband of Lois Fitzhugh Farr, passed away on Sunday, November 13, 2011, following a very lengthy and debilitating illness. Born in Ansted, West Virginia, he was the son of the late Ludd R. Farr, Sr. and the late Faye Hawver Farr. In addition to his wife he is also survived by his son Daniel T. Farr (Wendi K. Reich) and his granddaughter, Mia Simone Farr, all of Indianapolis, Indiana. There will be a service to celebrate his life on Saturday, November 26, 2011, at 11:00 a.m. in the chapel of Sun Towers, Sun City Center, Florida. A memorial service will be celebrated in the spring in Versailles, Kentucky. Memorials may be sent to LifePath Hospice of Sun City Center, FL., 3010 W. Azelee Street, Tampa, FL. 33609 or to the Sun City Center Emergency Squad, 720 Ray Watson Drive, Sun City Center, FL. 33573



Stephen Austin Phillips

Stephen Austin Phillips, 90, of Sun City Center, passed away Monday, November 14, 2011, at LifePath Hospice. Born Sept. 6, 1921 in Pittsfield, MA. he attended Bluefield College, W. VA. from 1939-1941 and VA. Polytechnic Institute in 1942-1943. He earned his M.S. in Mechanical Engineering and was a member of Pi Tau Sigma fraternity.

He saw active duty in the Pacific theater for two years in the Hydropropulsion Branch of the U.S. Navy and Reserves until 1954.

He returned to civilian life as an Asst. Professor of Mechanical Engineering at V.P.I. and taught Internal Combustion engine courses and allied subjects.

In 1965, Mr. Phillips assumed the position of Mechanical Engineer. at the University of Virginia. His duties included planning and development, new construction sites, and utilities installation.

He resigned his position to establish a consulting engineer office. His clients included land surveyors and subdivision developers. When he had free time, he engaged in farming, raising black Angus, and constructing a home.

Lt. Stephen A. Phillips held a pilot's license and was a member of Civil Air Patrol. In 1972, the Monticello Squadron received a Unit Citation Award for exceptional meritorious service during Hurricane Agnes for working long hours to man radio stations, search and rescue missions and evacuations.

A loving and devoted husband, he is survived by his wife Helen; daughter Carolinda Brooks; sisters Beverly Jarrett and Shirley Hanken; grandchildren, nieces and nephews. In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations be directed to LifePath Hospice, 3723 Upper Creek Drive.

Joseph Pliska

Joseph Pliska, 98 of Willoughby Hills, died November 19, 2011. Loving husband of Mary (neeBurtick) for 73 years; father of Joseph (Margaret), Caroline and Eugene (Carol); grandfather of 4; great-grandfather of 6. Funeral Mass was held Wednesday at St. Mary Magdalene Church. Burial was at Whitehaven Cemetery. Contributions may be made to Cleveland Society of the Blind.

Leslie Gordon Kilpatrick

Leslie Gordon Kilpatrick, 90, of Sun City Center, died, November 20, 2011. He was born in Devonshire, Britain, to Daniel and Winifred Kilpatrick on September 12, 1921. Leslie was educated at Sherborne School and New College, Oxford and graduated BA (1942), BM. Bch (1942), MA (1947) from Oxford University. He served as a medical Officer in the British Army in Libya, Palestine and Greece (1945-48) and on returning to Britain completed a residency in Anesthesiology at the University of Wisconsin, Madison until his retirement in 1983. Dr. Kilpatrick is preceded in death by his wife, Elizabeth (nee Bickerton). He is survived by his three daughters, Julia Fiechter (Jonathan), Linda Livermore (Bruce) and Marie Kaczor (Ralph), and five grandchildren. His hobbies were painting, sailing and classical piano. By his request there will be no funeral or visitations.



Gerald I. Simmons

Gerald I. Simmons, 75, of Wimauma, passed away November 15, 2011, while fishing on Wimauma Lake.

Born in Plant City on March 25, 1936, Gerald was raised on Grange Hall Loop in Fort Lonesome, Florida. He attended Wimauma School when it served all grades including high school. As a young man he followed his family's footsteps as a cowhunter tending the family's cattle in southern Hillsborough County.

In 1954 he married the love of his life Martha (Lowrey) and they raised their family of three children in Gibsonton until 1974 when they moved to Wimauma. Gerald was employed by the Atlantic Coastline Railroad for the first 18 years of their marriage and during that time he founded Gerald Simmons Tropical Fish Farm, Ruskin, which he oversaw until retiring in 2000.

He was passionate about several things. Topping the list was his family, but most recently was his devotion to the Lord, modeling himself to be an example for the next generation.

Gerald was an avid sportsman who loved to hunt and fish and he passed down his knowledge of the outdoors as a priceless legacy to his children and grandchildren. His passion for the outdoors was eclipsed only by his love for NASCAR. He attended races throughout the southeast and was a dedicated fan.

He also loved to cook and was known for his skill around a deep fryer. He organized many fish fries for community events and fundraisers throughout the years including cookouts held for the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Department.

The epitome of a southern gentleman, it was rare to find him without a mess of fish, a bucket of tomatoes, a bag of homemade jerky, or a bushel of oysters, ready to share with anyone who crossed his path. His generosity was well-known throughout the community.

Gerald leaves behind his wife of 57 years, Martha Simmons of Wimauma; two sons, Steve (Chere) Simmons, and Rickie (Yvonne) Simmons Sr.; a daughter, Linda Simmons; six grandchildren, Chrissy (Dan) Hartzog, Rickie Simmons Jr., Ty (Jennifer) Simmons, Timmy Simmons, Jared Hodge, Marcus Wilson; four great-grandchildren, Carlie and Asher Simmons, Hannah Simmons, and Emma Hartzog all of Ruskin; a sister, Evelyn Bell, of Live Oak, FL; a very close cousin, June Sumner of Brandon; a beloved sister-in-law and her husband, Harry and Vonda Cunningham, of Gibsonton; a brother-in-law, Donald Lowrey, of Gibsonton; and many nieces, nephews, cousins, and friends too numerous to name.

He was preceded in death by a brother Kenneth Simmons; and two sisters Elizabeth Bailey and Barbara Hall.

He was an active member of Simmons Loop Baptist Church in Riverview; an Honorary Hillsborough County Sheriff's Deputy; and a member of the Florida Redneck Goatropers Association.

A service was held Nov. 19 at Simmons Loop Baptist Church with Pastor and friend Stacey Bowen officiating. Memorial contributions were made in lieu of flowers to the Simmons Loop Baptist Church building fund.

Arrangements were made by Sun City Center Funeral Home.



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C.A.R.E. Pets of the Week

C.A.R.E. is open from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday. For directions, visit www.CareShelter.org or call (813) 645-2273.



Geronimo

Geronimo, also a brother of Arrow and son of Maggie is an adorable gray tabby kitten. He is very playful and shows love and affection readily. Geronimo is fun but likes his afternoon nap on the cat tower when not racing around the wild environs of the shelter. See him and give him a loving forever home. As part of his adoption, Geronimo will be neutered and brought up-to-date on his shots as well as micro chipped.

DOB: 09/15/2011



Lou

Lou is an adorable Chihuahua. He had a home for five years. Sadly, his owner dumped him when she decided to get two new dogs. If you are patient and gentle with Lou, he will warm up to you. He likes to cuddle under your chin. He has a sweet personality. Lou's old owner told us that he is used to cats and is housebroken. He would do best in a single dog home. Lou is neutered, microchipped, and current on his shots.

EST. DOB: November 2, 2006



First Baptist Church of Ruskin's Christmas tradition continues

A long time standing Christmas tradition in the South Shore area has been the First Baptist Church of Ruskin's Christmas Production. It has been their gift to the community for over 20 years.

The performances for this year's production will be a matinee at 2 p.m. and an evening performance at 7 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 10. The final performance will be at 6 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 11.

This year's production "Jesus Our Treasure" contains scenes filled with music, comedy and an unexpected twist in the storyline when Jacob (Sandy Weatherholt) tells his granddaughter (Molly Williams) how Jesus' birth, life, death and resurrection impacted his entire life.

As always there will be no charge. It is First Baptist Church of Ruskin's gift to the community. If it is not already a tradition, why not start this year.

First Baptist Church of Ruskin is located at 820 College Ave. W in Ruskin, 1/2 mile west of US 41. For more information call the church office at (813) 645-6439 or go to their website www.fbcruskin.org.

Christmas Trees support good cause

For 47 years, Brandon residents have returned each Holiday season to the tree lot at First United Methodist Church in Brandon for beautiful, fresh Christmas trees. This year, the lot re-opens Friday, Nov. 25, with extended hours from 9 a.m. – 8 p.m. that day only. One hundred percent of the proceeds from tree lot sales go to support the Florida United Methodist Children's Home. Gift certificates are available.

For the first time, they're introducing handsome outdoor products crafted at the Children's Home. These include a sturdy 6-foot picnic table, an attractive Adirondack chair with foot stool, and a rustic bird house. These items will make wonderful gifts as well as helping fund the skills-training program at the Children's Home. Visit the Church website at fmcbrandon.org for pictures and pricing.

The Tree Lot is open seven days a week: from 3:30-8 p.m. Monday-Friday, 10 a.m.-8 p.m. Saturdays, and noon-6 p.m. on Sundays.

Child Abuse Council hosts holiday gift store

In efforts to help make the holiday season a little brighter, the Child Abuse Council (CAC) will open its doors and host its annual Holiday Gift Store for CAC client families.

During this event, parents and caregivers will "shop" for their children's holiday gifts. All toys are free of charge and gift wrapped, providing needy families in their programs with that final festive touch.

The Holidays may be a financially difficult time of year, placing strain on many families within their community during such a joyous time of the year. The CAC wants to insure that children will wake up with something they can unwrap and enjoy.

Last year, 575 children and 284 families visited the Holiday Store to select new toys for their loved ones. The CAC thanks the community for all the generous donations that enabled this event to happen.

They call on your support again, as they anticipate an even greater need this year. Help them spread holiday cheer and collect toys for children ages 0 – 12. All donations can be dropped off at their Main Offices, located on 3108 West Azele Street in South Tampa; all toys are due by Friday, Dec. 2.

Volunteers are welcomed and needed to help make the Holiday Store a big success. They need help with set-up, clean-up, toy sorting, wrapping and more.

Call Jessica DuChene to sign-up and get involved; (813)673-4646, ext.225 or email her as jduchene@cachillsborough.com.

Since 1977, the Child Abuse Council has been helping thousands of families in Hillsborough County through prevention, education and treatment programs. Their mission is to build stronger families in the Tampa Bay region through child abuse prevention and family education programs. They envision a community where children grow up in nurturing families that are free from violence and abuse. For more information on the CAC, visit their Web site at www.childabusecouncil.com.

Ymmm...spaghetti

There will be a Spaghetti Dinner sponsored by The Knights of Columbus held from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 3 at Saint Anne Church in Ruskin.

Spaghetti and meatballs with a salad will be served. The ticket price is \$8 per person; children under 12 will be FREE.



South Hillsborough Elks Lodge #2672 Upcoming Activities



Every Tuesday – Jam Session – 3 p.m. -5 – No Charge for all Elks and their guests.

Every Wednesday – Best Spaghetti in Town - \$7, All You Can Eat, for all Elks and their guests. Music by Bryan from 5 to 8 p.m.

Every Friday – Seafood and Sandwiches for all Elks and their guests from 5 – 7 p.m. Karaoke by Bryan from 5 to 8 p.m..

Saturday, Nov. 26, Country & Western Dance, The Countrymen, \$8 with light snacks, 6-9 p.m..

Monday, Nov. 28, Blue Plate Special, for all Elks and their guests, \$7, Menu: Special Hawaiian Chicken with all the trimmings

Sunday, Dec. 4, Memorial Service for all our departed Elks, please plan on attending, Nora Baker is the Chairwoman of this event.

Saturday, Dec. 10, Anniversary / Christmas Dinner Dance for all Elks and their guests, mark your calendars. Menu: Prime Rib dinner with all the trimmings, \$20, Music by Buddy Young's 5 piece orchestra.

Feb. 12 to Feb. 19, 2012, Join S. Hillsborough Elks Lodge Valentine's Western Caribbean Fund Raiser Cruise, 7days only \$643

The South Hillsborough Elk's Lodge is located at 1630 US Hwy 41 S., Ruskin, FL 33570, and has a clean, smoke free environment. For more information, call (813) 645-2089.



Redeemer Lutheran Church presents German service

The Sun City Center German American Club Singers, in cooperation with Redeemer Lutheran Church will present a German service at 3 p.m. on Sunday, Dec. 4 in the church sanctuary. Readings and choral numbers will be presented in the German language. Plan to join them in celebrating the Christmas season. Refreshments will be served following the service. The Redeemer Lutheran Church is located at 701 Valley Forge Blvd. Sun City Center on the corner of Valley Forge Blvd. and S.R. 674.

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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

Huge yard sale. Power tools, fishing & misc. Nov. 26, Saturday, 8am-2pm. Holiday Park RV Resort, 19th Ave., & US 41, Ruskin.

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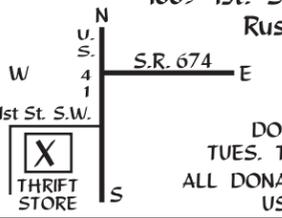
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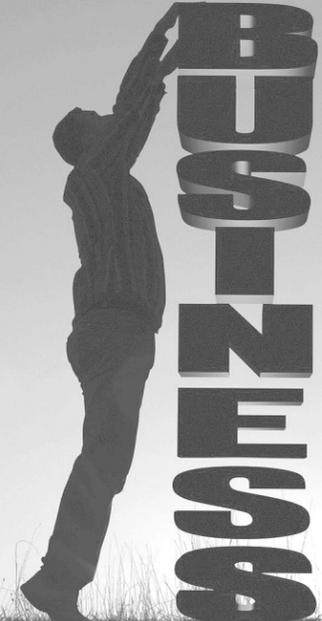
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