



South County Career Center and Riverview High School in an "iron-chef"-style competition. See page 17.

ABWIG pencils in June as the starting time for Apollo Beach canal dredging to begin. See story on page 3.

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New high voltage electricity lines, substation under consideration

■ By MELODY JAMESON

BALM – Pointing to potentially higher demands for power in the near future, Tampa Electric Company is proposing a new substation and high voltage transmission lines here.

The utility displayed and discussed aspects of its proposal last week in Wimauma for area residents, some of them expressing concerns about possible impacts on their physical health or property values.

And, as those issues were being raised, one of the community's most outspoken advocates assailed the very manner in which the company's project was presented to its customers.

Looking ahead about five years, Tampa Electric is considering an expansion of its Polk Power Station on S.R. 37 in southwest Polk County to include a new substation facility near the Balm-Boyette Road just north of C.R. 672, in Balm. The project also would involve construction of about 40 miles of 230-kilovolt transmission line across Hillsborough County's far southeastern corner which encompasses most of Balm.

The proposal is dubbed the Polk Power to Fishhawk Substation Line in the company's April 2 letter to customers and property owners in the area. An accompanying map outlines five potential routes for a

transmission line carrying 230,000 volts of electricity.

Each possible route would link an existing substation on Boyette Road near Fishhawk Boulevard, the proposed new substation close to the Boyette Road-Aspen Avenue intersection in Balm, another existing

See **SUBSTATION PROPOSED**, page 8

Area businesses express concern over tax-exempt competition

■ BY PENNY FLETCHER

penny@observernews.net

APOLLO BEACH — Some South County business owners say if County Commissioners approve the plan recently submitted by the YMCA, it will amount to tax-exempt competition for private business owners.

YMCA officials disagree. They say their mission is community betterment and that is why they are able to keep their 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status.

Concerns of business people are rising because of a proposal for a public-private partnership between Hillsborough County and the YMCA to build a facility that could be as large as 30,000-square feet on land bordering both Big Bend Road in Riverview and Vance Vogel Park on Bullfrog Creek Road in Gibsonton.

Business owners say this would be unfair because they are required to pay sales and property taxes, while the YMCA is not, yet they offer many of the same services as the YMCA.

"We paid more than \$55,000 in property and sales taxes last year. I wish I had that to put back into the business so I could offer more programs," said Logan Sultenfuss, co-owner of the Apollo Beach Racquet and Fitness Club. "The YMCA isn't the same as when it was first started. Now it makes billions of dollars a year."

Sultenfuss is not the only health club owner charging unfair competition from the YMCA.

The International Health, Racquet & Sports Club Association based in Boston, Mass., states that these days, the YMCA is selling fitness like a business.

"Charitable donations are finite when the YMCA operates like a business and competes with true charities. In fact, it's a double hit because the public loses both tax revenue and vital charitable services," said IHRSA spokeswoman Meredith Poppler in email and telephone interviews April 23.

Tom Looby, CEO of the Tampa Metropolitan Area YMCA explains that nationally, the Y does make billions of dollars annually. But it is permitted to keep its tax-exempt status because it not only scholarships families that cannot afford health clubs, but also performs other services. And because it is required to spend all its profits, it is able to offer many new programs which benefit whole communities.

"For instance, Hillsborough County has the highest number of kid's drowning deaths for any county in the entire nation," Looby said. "So we have partnered with the county already to build two swimming pools and teach swimming."

The local Y has also partnered with the county for a full facility in Town n' Country, he said.

"It works well, because they have the land and no money for facilities, and we, as a tax-exempt organization, must spend our profits, so we can offer the programs most needed in various areas," Looby continued. "Locally, one in four families is usually scholar shipped, but in the recession, now



Released by the Suncoast Seabird Sanctuary, a rehabilitated pelican flies over the newly dedicated Cockroach Bay on Friday during the 20-year project's dedication ceremony. See more on page 8.

MITCH TRAPHAGEN PHOTO

Early this month, tornados struck a major metropolitan area with no loss of life. Forecasting helped but some also credit text messages for saving lives.

Could a text message save your life?

■ By MITCH TRAPHAGEN mitch@observernews.net

On April 3, tornadoes carved a wide path of destruction through Texas causing hundreds of millions of dollars in damage. Tractor-trailers were tossed into the air like toys and tens of thousands of people were left without power. Millions of people in and near the Dallas-Fort Worth Metropolitan Area were threatened by the furious displays of nature's power — yet no one was killed and there were only a handful

of injuries.

The forecasts for severe weather by the National Weather Service no doubt saved many lives, but some emergency managers in the area also credited something else for saving lives and keeping residents safe: the use of cell phone emergency text messages.

With the growing preponderance of cell phone and text message usage, could such a system save lives in Hillsborough County?

The answer, of course, isn't entirely clear. The state of Texas experiences more than 150 tornadoes each year while such events are relatively rare in Hillsborough County. Hurricanes are an annual threat, however they tend to be forecasted out days into the future, thus lessening the need for instant emergency communication and increasing the need for personal preparedness on the part of residents. Strong and potentially dangerous thunderstorms, however, are a continuous threat, as are significant threats to specific neighborhoods due to ammonia pipeline leaks or even hazardous situations that may occur near railroad tracks, freeways, or at the Port of Tampa. A text message system could also be used to communicate post-disaster information if traditional telephone and cable lines are out assuming, of course, that cell towers are still available or are rapidly replaced.

When asked by *The Observer News*, Hillsborough County Commissioner Mark Sharpe agreed that an emergency text messaging system could be used for any number of scenarios. He, in turn, asked Hillsborough County Fire Rescue Emergency Management Director Preston Cook about it.

"We currently use several methods in Hillsborough County to no-

See **SAVING YOUR LIFE**, page 20

See **TAX-EXEMPT COMPETITION**, page 22



NOAA / HARALD RICHTER PHOTO

Tornados such as this one in Texas are rare in Florida but severe weather is common. Could a county-wide text messaging system save lives in Hillsborough County?

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Apollo Beach channel dredging nearing reality

By MELODY JAMESON

APOLLO BEACH – Buoyed by the cooperation of several governmental entities, volunteers piloting a channel dredging effort here are tacking toward a June start date.

They may have to trim sheets and weather a financial downdraft, however, to get there.

The Apollo Beach Water Improvement Group (ABWIG) has raised about \$108,000 in donations from companies and individuals in its most recent effort to finance silt cleaning of the channels that give outboard AB boaters access to Tampa Bay and to their home docks on the return trip. Len Berkstresser, ABWIG president, made the announcement to about 80 AB area residents during a community town hall hosted by the group last week.

The session followed closely a meeting involving several agencies with expertise pertinent to the project and brought together by Sandy Murman, Hillsborough county commissioner representing District One that includes Apollo Beach. Murman, present for the town hall, noted that “you’ve been a strong group; you’ve raised money and you’ve raised your voices.”

Those coming aboard to form a public-private partnership and help with the project in a variety of ways include Hillsborough’s Parks, Recreation and Conservation Department, the county’s Environmental Protection Commission, the county administration, The Southwest Florida Water Management District and the Tampa Port Authority, along with ABWIG, Berkstresser said.

Their objective is arranging and

financing dredging of the north and south channels to a depth of seven feet at mean low water, depositing the dredged material at minimal cost and employing the optimum means available to prevent facing the task again any time soon. The north channel, between the northern edge of Apollo Beach and Tampa Electric’s Big Bend power plant, rounds the tip of the AB Nature Park at the north terminus of Surfside Boulevard. The south channel serves the canals in the southern portions of the boating community, Andalucia as well as Symphony Isles and Mira Bay.

Cleaning out the multiple smaller canals bordered by individual homesites and residents’ docks is not included in the project. Hillsborough County a few years ago offered waterfront home owners opportunity to create special taxing districts using a Municipal Services Taxing Unit (MSTU) concept whereby they could repay canal dredging costs the county would underwrite for them with a new tax added to annual property tax assessments over a period of years. Few canal front homeowners were interested.

The original estimated cost of the channel dredging project was \$350,000.

Berkstresser indicated the scope of work in and around the north channel will include not only dredging but also renourishing the beach portion of the nature park and installing WADs, the pyramid-shaped, hollow concrete wave attenuation devices that redirect wave action and are expected to both prevent beach erosion and protect the channel from re-silting.

The county administration



MELODY JAMESON PHOTO

With the help of a detailed aerial map, Len Berkstresser, president of the Apollo Beach Waterway Improvement Group (above), points out specific locations targeted for dredging as the group continues its efforts to clean the south and north channels of built-up, boat-barring silt. The group has raised more than \$100,000 for the project and is looking toward a June start date.

and the parks department have indicated financial help forthcoming from their budgets, Berkstresser said. However, he added that the north channel work cannot be undertaken this summer because the funding is not yet in place and it cannot be undertaken during cold months because of the manatee population wintering in the warm power plant run-off waters. Consequently, this portion of the project probably will be scheduled during the summer of 2013.

Work on the south channel

dredging, however, could be undertaken early this summer, if the financial burden were shared among all of the benefitting neighborhoods, the president added.

The ABWIG dredging fund now standing at more than \$100,000 was kicked off initially with a \$35,000 donation by Tampa Electric Company. The utility added another \$15,000 to that figure when asked for help a second time, Berkstresser noted. Symphony Isles has contributed \$30,000 to the project and Andalucia pledged \$3,500. The Mira Bay Mariners stepped up with a \$1,000 contribution. In addition, private parties have made cash and in-kind donations, Berkstresser said, and dozens of smaller contributions by members of the AB community have swelled the kitty further.

But when pressed, Berkstresser also acknowledged that neither the Mira Bay community as a whole nor Newland Communities, the Mira Bay developer now poised to begin the massive Waterset collection of neighborhoods on the east side of U.S. 41, have responded to the funding campaign even though Mira Bay homeowners stand to benefit considerably in both the

short and long terms.

Concerned about the potential for a closing window of opportunity if permits now in hand are not exercised in a timely manner before expiration dates, he added that the campaign needs another \$40,000, and quickly.

Nonetheless, the ABWIG leader said he still has a dredging start date penciled in on his June calendar. “The tipping point is \$150,000,” he said, adding that he remains optimistic “it is doable.”

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Fundraiser organized

A fundraiser is scheduled for Lila Ruiz, a local three-year-old suffering from Megacystis-Microrcolon-Intestinal-Hypoperistalsis syndrome from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. this Saturday, April 28 at Winthrop Barn, 11349 Bloomingdale Ave., Riverview. This life threatening genetic disorder is very rare. During her short life Lila has endured 29 surgeries, monthly hospital stays and visits to specialists in four states.

This event will feature music, monster trucks, car shows, bounce houses, balloons, face painting, giveaways, a silent auction, food and fun. To find out more about the fundraiser, go to www.stay-stronglila.com or call Sandy Martinez at 813-309-2395.

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Extra Income

I have done a lot to cut expenses and even went back to work full time to generate more income for the family. However, I am still in debt. I contacted the school board and arranged for a foreign high school student to stay with us for the eight months of the school term starting in September. I will net about \$500 per month in stipend after expenses. In Ontario, the stipend is not rental income and therefore not taxable as income. I have an extra bedroom and have two high school aged children of my own. Although there will be some sacrifices, I expect there will be many gains. One of them will be putting around an extra \$500 each month towards paying off my debts.

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Controlling fear from within

The battleground of fear is here, right where you are standing. It is not in some far off place. That's the funny thing about fear. It always gives the impression that if you avoid it now, you can fight the battle later. But the truth is that when you avoid the situation causing you fear, fear has won the battle. Ralph Waldo Emerson said, "He has not learned the lesson of life who does not every day surmount a fear."

What are your fears? What causes you to aim low and to accept less? What causes you to cower in fright and miss the delights of the day? Sometimes just facing our fears is enough to make them vanish. I remember as a child I was afraid of the dark. When night came and I had to retire to my room, every shadow turned into a monster and even the slightest noise was cause for fright. I didn't want to tell my folks of my fear because I thought they would think me a baby. Somehow though my father sensed my fear and he turned the

dreaded bedtime into a game. Every night he would ask me to help him make a safety check of the bedrooms. We would look under the beds and in the closets. He would not stop looking until I assured him all was clear. Not once do I remember him making fun of my fear. You see, he knew that even if the threat was not real, the fear of it was. He taught me a great lesson. Fear is real to the one feeling it, and the best way to rid that person of the fear is to help them discover there is nothing to fear, not just tell them there is nothing to fear.

Just like my childhood fear of the dark, most of our fears do not come from external sources, but rather from inside ourselves. As Pogo once said, "We have met the enemy and they are us." The greatest fear, according to the book of lists, is the fear of public speaking. Now why should one

fear standing in front of a group of people and sharing with them our ideas, thoughts and convictions?

The answer is simple: we fear being judged inadequate by the listeners. We fear that the listeners will laugh at us. We fear that we will lose the esteem of the audience. These are all internally generated fears. We can decide to give in to the fear, avoid putting ourselves in a

situation, and therefore lose the battle without a fight; or we can battle the enemy by challenging the premises causing the fear. I've watched many people come into my presentation skills classes absolutely petrified; but as we challenged their fears, we found most of them had no basis in fact. As to being judged inadequate, almost anyone has the capability to speak before a group. Practice, of course, builds confidence; but your audience will give you points just for being up there because they're glad it's not them. Failing to do something for fear of someone else's laughter is a sad reason for inaction. If the audience should find you hysterically funny, you might have stumbled upon your talent as a comedian, and that's not all bad. As to esteem, if you will stand up before the group, conquering a fear every member of the audience has, you cannot help but garner esteem, rather than lose it. So, to conquer fear and win the battle, determine whether the fear comes from within or without. You have control over that fear which comes from within, but only if you exercise it.

Finally, keep these words of Mark Twain in mind, "Courage is resistance to fear, mastery of

fear—not absence of fear. Except a creature be part coward, it is not a compliment to say it is brave; it is merely a loose application of the word. Consider the flea—incomparably the bravest of all the creatures of God, if ignorance of fear were courage." The battleground of fear is here. Are you a person of courage?

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



Positive Talk

By William Hodges

Kissimmee Chain of Lakes aquatic plant management meeting is May 2

On May 2, a public meeting about aquatic plant management on the Kissimmee Chain of Lakes will be held at the city of Lake Wales Administration Building, 201 Central Ave. W. The meeting is from 6-8 p.m. The goal of this meeting is to solicit public input on the management of invasive aquatic plants.

"In this continuing series of public meetings, we want to keep abreast of what business owners, property owners, anglers, hunters, bird watchers, airboaters and others who have a vested interest in the chain of lakes are thinking,"

said Danielle Schobl, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) invasive plant management biologist.

Public input from the wide variety of user groups on the Kissimmee Chain of Lakes, which includes lakes Kissimmee, Hatchineha, Cypress, Jackson, Tohopekaliga and East Lake Tohopekaliga, is critical to maintaining a well-balanced approach to managing hydrilla and other invasive aquatic plants.

For more details about the meeting, contact Danielle Schobl at 863-534-7074.



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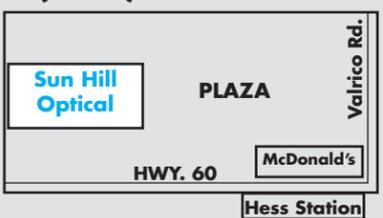
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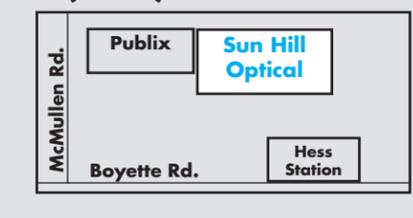
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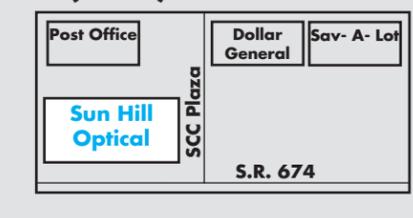
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St. Stephens Catholic School students excel in Science Fair

Approximately 60,000 middle school students from public, private, charter and magnet schools compete in Science Fairs around the state of Florida. St. Stephens Catholic School on Boyette Road in Riverview, had outstanding success this year in competing at the District and State Level Science, Technology, Math and Engineering Fairs.

Marisa Luciano, seventh grade; Colton Lewis, sixth grade; and Patrick McCormick, sixth grade, each won their division at the District Science Fair.

This is the first time in the history of the school, that 3 students won their categories. Marisa Luciano won first place in Jr. Medicine and Health with "Is Dance A Sport;" Colton Lewis won first place in Jr. Physics with "Magnets in Charge;" and Patrick McCormick won first place in Jr. Computer Science with "Animation Calculation."

Under the guidance of science teacher Caryl Nolan, the students were extremely successful with their projects which consisted of creating a hypothesis and using a project board complete with data, graphs, research paper and results, all with the application of the scientific process. Colton Lewis also won the Nelda Mason Memorial Award for the most outstanding hands on project.

The three students then became members of "Team Hillsborough," along with other winners from the district, and competed at the largest Academic STEM contest of the state. Marisa 'wowed' the judges with her project "Is Dance A Sport?," in which she provided data that entailed measuring the heart rate and using the "talk test" while subjects were dancing, to show that indeed dance should be considered a sport.

Colton won 4th place in the largest category of Jr. Physics and Astronomy combined. Using two electromagnets that he built, testing the ability in the strength of the lifting powers using 5 different voltages.

Patrick won first place in Jr. Computer Science. He created a stop motion animation to have students determine at what point the video went from choppy to smooth.

He was able to prove his hypothesis that at 20 frames per second the video appeared smooth. Patrick was also one of the select few, who was nominated to compete in Broadcom Master competition in Washington D.C.

It is very rare that so many top winners come from such a small private school. St. Stephens Catholic School has approximately 300 students.



Proud winners representing St. Stephens Catholic School from left to right: Patrick McCormick, Colton Lewis and Marisa Luciano.

Helping to fight cancer

The VFW Post 8108, along with its Ladies' and Men's Auxiliaries are working hard in the community to enhance awareness and support the fight against cancer. They are asking for your support to help them in this important cause, so they may help their fellow veterans that are suffering in this battle for their lives.

A Cancer Fundraiser Drive will be held at 5 p.m. on Saturday, May 12 at VFW Post 8108, located at 7504 Riverview Dr. in Riverview, to help raise funds for cancer aid and research. At 6:30 p.m. there will be an open bar, free food ('til it's gone), door prizes, basket raffles, silent auctions and a 50/50. Entertainment will be provided by Taylor and Taylor and karaoke with Tito & Debi. They are asking for a \$5 donation at the door.

VFW Post 8108 and its Ladies' and Men's Auxiliaries have set a goal to raise \$10,000 in one night through silent auctions, raffles and cash donations. Just like the cure for cancer...it is a lofty goal, but with community help they know they can reach the unreachable.

For more information, call Laura Swanson at (813) 230-8289.



Madi Brown holding her first place plaque after competing in the Ornamental Horticulture Demo competition.

Local future farmer takes first place

"Well, today I'd like to demonstrate how to make a particularly canine version of a garden container that might get a few howls of delight from your neighbor," Madi Brown exclaimed, beginning what would turn out to be her district winning Ornamental Horticulture Demonstration. This event was held April 3 at the First Baptist Church of Dover.

The OH Demo is a detailed contest available to FFA members across the state of Florida. It is broken down into five individual categories: Artistic Arrangement, Consumer Use, Landscaping, Marketing, and Production. Each contestant is required to demonstrate a unique 'how to' that falls into one of the available categories, accompanied by a speech and visual aid. The entire demonstration can be no longer than ten minutes, requiring the demonstrator to create a quick and fluent manner of presentation. Afterwards the contestant is scored on their ability to answer a variety of questions asked on the spot by three judges.

Madi Brown, representing the Lennard FFA Chapter, competed in the Artistic Arrangement category with her interesting take on a container garden called 'Peat the Pot Puppy.' Her efforts were not wasted, as she earned a first place for her chapter. She will have the opportunity to compete at the State Level April 27 at the University of Florida campus in Gainesville.

Girls' Camp begins July 30

The GFWC Brandon Junior Woman's Club will again be hosting the annual Teen Forum from July 30-Aug. 3 at Nativity Catholic Church, 705 E. Brandon Blvd. in Brandon.

The week-long, half-day camp is for girls entering 6th, 7th or 8th grades. Speakers will be provided on topics ranging from self-esteem and fitness to service as well as crafts, team activities, snacks and prizes.

Reserve your spot now by going to www.thebjwc.com to print the form and send it with payment of \$70 to Brandon Junior Woman's Club, P.O. Box 66, Brandon, FL 33509.

For more information, call Donna Griffin at (813) 244-4758.

Make your own solar cooker

Join the County's Extension Service, 5339 County Road 579 in Seffner and learn how to make and use a solar cooker. A \$5 donation will be requested to cover cost of food and supplies.

Participants are asked to bring some basic supplies, and by the end of the workshop they should have a functioning solar cooker. Basic instructions for cooking and some recipes will be provided.

After the end of the class, participants will be able to prepare for power outages or emergencies, have hot meals if the power goes off, use the sun to cook food and reduce energy costs.

The classes will take place on the following dates:

Saturday, June 2 • 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Register at <http://solarcooker060212.eventbrite.com>

Friday, June 22 • 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Register at <http://solarcookerjune2212.eventbrite.com>

Saturday, July 7 • 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Register at <http://solarcookerjuly072012.eventbrite.com>

A detailed list of materials will be sent when participants register for the workshop. Some materials will be supplied. A \$5 donation will be requested to cover cost of food and supplies.

For more information, call Mary Keith at Extension Service, (813) 744-5519, ext. 54136.

TechPlayzone Science and Technology Summer Camps in Southshore

There will be 9 weeks of stand-alone camps (June 11-Aug. 17) at 13208 Boyette Rd., Riverview, 1/4 mile west of Bell Shoals Road.

The activities include Video Game Creation, Hands-on Science Experiments, LEGO Mindstorms Robotics and Green Screen Movie Making for K-8th grade students. The cost for a half day (9 a.m. to noon) is \$100; or a full day (8 a.m. to 5 p.m.) is \$175.

Special events at TechPlayzone:

Open House and Scratch Day Celebration • May 19 • 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Games, contests, and prizes.

Upcoming Events:

Open House • May 19 • 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Food, fun, prizes, Lego building contests.

First Lego League (FLL) informational meeting • June 2, 2012 • 10 a.m. for students interested in forming the Robotics Competitive Team.

For more information, call or email Desh Bagley, owner, at www.techplayzone.com. (813) 684-7329. techplayzone@gmail.com.

American Sewing Guild to meet

The Brandon/Eastbay Chapter of the American Sewing Guild will meet on Wednesday, May 2 at the Brandon Recreation Center, located at 502 East Sadie Street in Brandon.

Coffee will be served at 9:30 a.m. with a business meeting at 10 a.m.

Costumes and dance will be the program this month. Newcomers are always welcome.

For more information, call Darlene Youmans at (813) 671-8852.

Pick a fairytale; kiss a frog

Hear Ye! Hear Ye! All the princesses and knights from across the land are gathering at an event that's sure to be grand. The Lowry Park Zoo's first ever Fairytale and Frogs event from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Sunday, April 29.

Dress as your favorite fairytale character for a day of discovery and fun with frogs. Meet real frogs and toads, and the zookeepers who care for them.

For more information visit www.lowryparkzoo.com

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 11:30 a.m.

Thursday, April 26 -- Bar Games at 3 p.m.

Friday, April 27 — Feather Your Nest Game at 6 p.m.

Saturday, April 28 — NO DINNER. Music by Bert & Sassy from 6:30 to 10:30 p.m.

Sunday, April 29 — Feather Your Nest Game at 6 p.m.

Monday, April 30 — Bingo at 6 p.m.

Tuesday, May 1 — Come on down and socialize.

Wednesday, May 2 — 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.



THE SAVVY SENIOR

The Often Ignored Warning Signs of a Mini-Stroke

Dear Savvy Senior,

How can a person know if they've had a stroke? My 70-year-old husband had a spell a few weeks ago where he suddenly felt dizzy for no apparent reason and had trouble talking and walking because his left side went numb, but it went away after a few minutes and he feels fine now.

Seems Fine



The Savvy Senior

By Jim Miller

Dear Seems,

It's very possible that your husband may have had a "mini-stroke" also known as a transient ischemic attack (TIA), and if he hasn't already done so, he needs to see a doctor pronto.

Each year, more than a quarter-million Americans have a mini-stroke, but only about half of them realize what's happening. That's because the symptoms are usually fleeting (lasting only a few minutes, up to an hour or two), causing most people to ignore them or brush them off as no big deal. But anyone who has had a mini-stroke is 10 times more likely to have a full-blown stroke, which can cause long-term paralysis, impaired memory, loss of speech or vision, or even death.

A mini-stroke is caused by a

temporary blockage of blood flow to the brain, and can be a warning sign that a major stroke may soon be coming. That's why mini-strokes need to be treated like emergencies.

Who's Vulnerable?

A person is more likely to suffer a TIA or stroke if they are overweight or inactive, have high blood pressure, elevated cholesterol or diabetes. Other factors that boost the risks are age (over 60), smoking, heart disease, atrial fibrillation and having a family history of stroke. Men also have a greater risk for stroke than women, and African Americans and Hispanics are at higher risk than those of other races.

Warning Signs

The symptoms of a mini-stroke are the same as those of a full-blown stroke, but can be subtle and short-lived, and they don't leave any permanent damage. They include:

- Sudden numbness or weakness of the face, arm or leg on one side of the body.
- Sudden confusion, trouble speaking or understanding.
- Sudden trouble seeing in one or both eyes.
- Sudden trouble walking, dizziness, loss of balance or coordination.
- Sudden, severe headache with no known cause.

Anyone who is having any of these symptoms should call 911 immediately. Or, if you've had any of them and they went away, ask someone to drive you to the emergency room or nearby stroke center as soon as possible and tell

them you may have had stroke.

Take This Quiz

More than one-third of mini-stroke sufferers will eventually have a full-blown stroke, unless their underlying conditions are treated. If your husband did have a mini-stroke and did not get medical treatment, this self-assessment quiz (known as the ABCD2 tool) can estimate his risk of having a major stroke in the very near future.

- Age: If over age 60 – 1 point.
- Blood pressure: If his systolic blood pressure (top number) is higher than 140 mmHg and/or diastolic blood pressure (bottom number) is higher than 90 – 1 point.
- Clinical features: If he had weakness on one side of your body during your mini-stroke – 2 points. If you had a speech disturbance without weakness – 1 point.
- Duration of symptoms: If his symptoms lasted for 10 minutes to an hour – 1 point. If they lasted an hour or longer – 2 points.
- Diabetes: If he has diabetes – 1 point.

If his score is 3 or less, his risk of having a major stroke within a month of his TIA is 2 percent. A score of 4 or 5 indicates about an 8 percent risk for stroke within 30 days and a 10 percent risk within 90 days. And a score of 6 or 7 estimate a 16 percent chance of stroke in 30 days and around 20 percent within 90 days.

Send your senior questions to: SavvySenior, 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.



Mrs. Moss and some of her students displaying their new reading materials.

Reddick Elementary receives literacy grant from Interfaith Council

Mrs. Moss, the Academic Intervention Specialist (AIS) of Reddick Elementary School in Wimauma was the proud recipient of a literacy grant from Interfaith Council of Greater Sun City Center. The grant was obtained to purchase a variety of books, book baggies, etc. for the AIS students to use for reading at home and to also help the students want to become lifelong readers.

Mrs. Moss is not only appreciative of the grant donation, but she is also appreciative that Interfaith Council provided a way for struggling readers to enjoy additional books in the comfort of their homes. Children not only need to read a lot but they also need access to books they can read (Allington, 2001). The AIS Literacy Grant project helps to support this idea.

Diner's coupon booklet available

The Sun City Center Kiwanis Club is offering their 2012/2013 Diner's Coupon booklet for sale at the Kiosk in the Atrium Community Association. Kiwanis members will be there from 9 a.m. to noon on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday during April and May 2012. Tickets will also be available from SCC Chamber of Commerce.

This year they have ten excellent restaurants offering discounts. They include: Apollo's Bistro, Beanie's, Beef O' Brady's, Bella Cucina, Copper Penny, The Docks, Ozzies Buffet & Grill, Seafood Dive, Shenaniganz, and Sunshine Cafe (who just opened). Donate \$10 and save up to \$50.

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New substation proposed

Continued from page 1

substation at State Roads 674 and 39 and the Polk power station just south of S.R. 640 in Polk County's southwest corner.

Each of the five routes identified by the utility put the high voltage lines along Boyette Road from the Fishhawk substation south to the proposed new facility in Balm and along S.R. 674 from S.R. 39 east to S.R. 37 and then northeast to the Polk power station. The variations come into play when routing the transmission line from the new substation to S.R. 674, through the Balm community.

One scenario would place it just north of C.R. 672 on a generally straight alignment east to S.R. 39 and then south to S.R. 674. A second potential route places the transmission line north of 672 but then takes it south across the road and through rural area west of 39 before connecting with the Mines Substation at 674 and 39.

Yet another routing would put the power line on a southwest alignment from the new substation out to 674 and then eastward while a fourth would take it south along Carlton Lake Road to 674 and then east. Still another possibility dog legs the line south along the Balm-Wimauma Road to 674 and eastward.

In each instance, the line would be adjacent to scattered residential properties, interspersed with agricultural acreages and vacant land.

None of the routes, however, are settled, said Cherie Jacobs, Tampa Electric spokesperson. The utility

anticipates that as the recession fades and economic conditions improve, demand for electrical power will increase, she added. In southeast Hillsborough, the company has adopted a five-year perspective, looking ahead to 2017.

Part of that perspective, Jacobs noted, is recognition that some of the contracts for purchase of electrical power that the utility has with other suppliers soon will expire. Consequently, the company is evaluating all options, looking for the most cost effective direction to meet the demand, which might be the Polk plant expansion.

A choice among the options could come in August, Jacobs indicated, when the company is to provide a Petition of Need to Florida's Public Service Commission. She said that the costs of the entire project have not been pinned down.

Using the "open house" format which offers interested visitors visual descriptions of a project at various stations around a room, the utility conducted three public meetings on the proposed expansion during April. The two held prior to the Wimauma session were in Lithia and Fishhawk churches. Attendance at the Fishhawk meeting topped 100, Jacobs said, while 30 to 35 area residents attended each of the other two. Written comments made by those attending the three sessions centered on health related questions and property value impacts, she added.

There is "no consensus about the

health impacts" of high voltage power lines, the spokeswoman said, noting that Florida regulates magnetic fields and that Tampa Electric complies with state standards. Jacobs also said she had no data regarding potential impacts on real estate values.

As some citizens pondered these matters, Marcella Osteen, Balm resident and immediate past president of the Balm Civic Association, voiced strong opposition to the open house format used by Tampa Electric for presentation of the project. The open house concept places the burden of obtaining factual information on those attending rather than on the host, she said. Citizens are forced to frame and ask the right questions in order to get full useful information instead of the company stepping up to provide it voluntarily, Osteen emphasized, and "if the right questions are not asked, the



MELODY JAMESON PHOTOS

Using a scaled, three-dimensional model of Tampa Electric Company's Polk Power Station in southwest Polk County, utility personnel explained a possible expansion of the facility for South County citizens last week that would put a new substation in Balm, along with a high voltage transmission line on either its north or south border. Here, Chuck Walters, a project engineer (right), points out aspects of the Polk plant for Nate Alcoz (left), an environmental specialist on the utility's staff. The possible expansion is part of a five-year plan to meet future power demands.

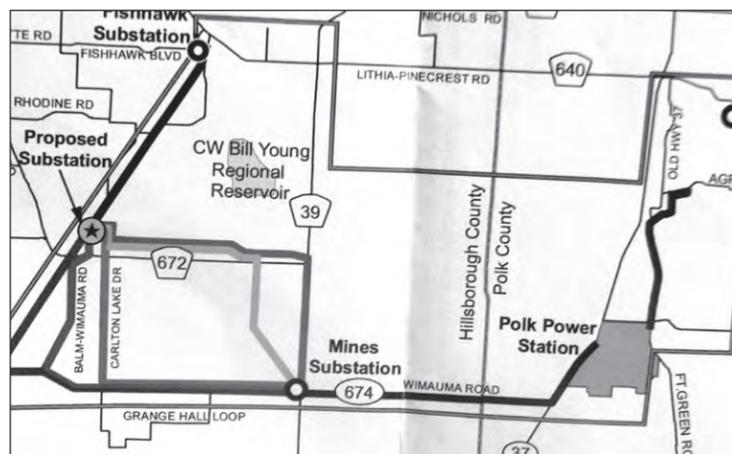
company can avoid providing data which could be important to citizens. Yet the company still appears to have conducted a reasonable public outreach."

Jacobs pointed out that the open house format allows citizens to come and go at their convenience and to explore the displays that

most interest them. "We appreciate all feedback," she added.

Project Manager Arlee Jones, who discussed Osteen's complaint with her, said later that he suggested she add her views on the open house format to a comment card "and I told her I would consider it when I review the comments."

Copyright 2012 Melody Jameson



Five possible routes of a 230 KV power transmission line are traced on this Tampa Electric Company map of Balm and southeast Hillsborough County used last week as the utility explained a potential expansion to meet future power demands. The project would link an existing substation near Fishhawk with a new substation at Balm (left) and connect with another existing substation at Ft. Lonesome (lower center) as well as the utility's Polk Power Station in southwest Polk County (right). The high voltage line could run north and east of the community or west and south of it.

Officials dedicate a Tampa Bay jewel

MITCH TRAPHAGEN PHOTOS



The 500 acre site is home to one of the most complex restoration projects in Tampa Bay.



On Friday, residents and officials from numerous agencies gathered to dedicate the completion of a 20-year restoration project at Cockroach Bay. The Cockroach Bay Ecosystem Restoration Project represents one of the largest, most complex ecosystem restoration projects ever developed for Tampa Bay. The 20-year project was initiated and managed by the Southwest Florida Water Management District's Surface Water Improvement and Management Program and the Hillsborough county Parks, Recreation and Conservations Department.

Before the restoration, the area suffered from a number of environmental problems including habitat degradation, invasive plant infestation and poor water quality. Hillsborough County purchased the 500-acre property in 1991. Since that time, 176 tons of garbage have been removed from the site and more than 2,500 volunteers have helped to plant trees and grasses as part of the restoration.

U.S. Congresswoman Kathy Castor and Hillsborough County Commissioner Sandra Murman both spoke at a dedication ceremony for the project. "All of you have played a very significant and important role on behalf of this wonderful Tampa Bay project," Castor said to those in attendance, which included former county commissioner Jan Platt and officials from the Tampa Port Authority that helped to fund the project.

Afterwards, the Suncoast Seabird Sanctuary released four

rehabilitated seabirds over the restoration area.

Cockroach Bay is open not only to seabirds and other wildlife but also to visitors. It is located at 3709 Gulf City Road in Ruskin.



Hillsborough County Commissioner Sandra Murman



U.S. Congresswoman Kathy Castor thanks those in attendance at the ceremony for their work and dedication in making the project a success.



Front row, left to right: Rand Rodriquez, Lion Tom Wolf, Lion Harriet Wollmers, Alexander Ventura and Josh Vega. Back row: Corey Freeman, Bruce Anderson, Assistant Scout Master.

Lions support Scouting

At a recent meeting of Boy Scout Troop #675, headquartered at the United Methodist Church, the Sun City Center Lions Club presented the scout troop a check in the amount of \$250. The check presented by Lion Tom Wolf, an Eagle Scout, and Lion Harriet Wollmers will be used to benefit the troops. Lion Wolf explained to the scouts just what scouting meant to him when he was growing up.

For more information about the Sun City Center Lions Club, call (813) 633-4202. The Lions meet the second and fourth Wednesday of every month, except December.

Silver Osprey to meet

Retired Military: Do you want to help your grandchildren have a better chance to enroll in the United States Naval Academy?

To find out the best way to achieve this, attend the Friday, May 4, luncheon meeting of the Silver Osprey Squadron, at The Plaza Club, Freedom Plaza, 3932 Upper Creek Drive. CAPT. Richard Petrucci, USN (Ret.) is the guest speaker. He graduated from the Naval Academy in 1961, was designated a Naval Aviator in 1963, and served in the Navy for 25 years. His flying assignments included squadron commander. He has over 7,500 hours of pilot time.

Since retirement, Captain Petrucci has been a Naval Academy Blue and Gold Officer, for many

years. These officers are located in every state and play a major part in the admissions process for the Naval Academy. Over the years Captain Petrucci has counseled more than 200? Applicants. The earlier an applicant can meet a Blue and Gold Officer, the better his or her chances of admission.

Since Captain Petrucci's home state has been Florida since 1998, he could be especially helpful to your grandchildren who live in Florida, but his knowledge of Blue and Gold officers in other states could be helpful also.

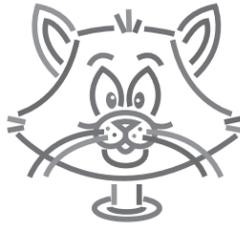
To reserve a seat at the table, call Bill Shanks at (813) 634-3194 or e-mail WSHANKS@tampabay.rr.com. All checks must be received by Wednesday, May 2.

Cat food drive organized

South Shore Felines will be holding a "Feed the Tuna Chest" cat food drive May 7-19 -- Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.; and from 9 a.m. to noon on Saturdays at Harriet's Flower Shop, 226 W. College Ave., Ruskin.

The food will benefit low-income residents and community cat colonies. Each person making a donation will receive an entry to win a \$50 gift certificate to Harriet's.

For more information, email Info@SouthShoreFelines.org.



Military Officers Association of America to meet

The Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) meeting featuring Col. David Pavey, USAFR, will be held at 11 a.m. on Wednesday, May 2 in the Sun City Center Atrium building in the Florida Room. Reservations can be made by calling 642-0497 no later than the Sunday before the Wednesday meeting. The cost is \$14.

Col. Pavey is responsible for the organization, training, equipping, and worldwide readiness of a combined Reserve and civilian wing of approximately 800 people. The 927th Air Refueling Wing flies the KC-135R Stratotanker whose missions consist of in-flight air refueling, cargo and passenger airlift, aeromedical evacuation, and supporting contingencies and humanitarian operations around the world.

Among his many assignments, Colonel Pavey was assigned to Dover AFB, Del., where he flew the C-5 Galaxy in Operations Desert Shield, Desert Storm and Desert Calm.



COL. DAVID PAVEY, USAFR

You, Me, and Business

By: Dana Dittmar, Executive Director

SCC Chamber News

My passion for golf began when I was a toddler living down the interstate in Venice. My parents would play the front nine of a small par three course every Friday morning before work. I would tag along and chase after balls my father would throw to me.

For my fourth Christmas, Santa gave me my own little red plaid golf bag with four short plastic clubs. My response to my parents was "where's the grass?" I guess I thought Santa should have given

me my own putt-putt course. Nevertheless, I hit my whiffle golf ball around the yard and proudly carried my bag with my folks on Friday mornings at the course.

My father's name was John Schroeder, and there happened to be a pro on the PGA circuit with the same name. Never mind the age difference or the fact that my father was a leftie and the pro wasn't. All I had to do was say

I was John Schroeder's daughter, and I was treated a little better at the pro shop.



You, Me & Business

By Dana Dittmar

Unfortunately, my dream of joining the LPGA was thwarted in college when my coach told me I had the hardest swing he had ever seen on a woman. But there was absolutely no way to know where the ball would end up. I would slice, hook and sometimes hit it back over my head into the parking lot. It was pathetic, and no amount of his patient teaching made it any better. Hours at the driving range were wasted. I was an eagle eye for the putting, but you have to get it to the green first.

But I still love golf and get all excited when it's time for our tournament. This year, our 2nd Annual Chamber Cup Classic will be held on Friday, May 11 at the Caloosa Golf and Country Club in Sun City Center. The fee is \$60 per person or \$200 for a foursome. That includes breakfast and lunch, beverages, contests, door prizes and a whole lotta fun. Registration is at 7 a.m. with a shotgun start at 8 a.m. It's a four person best ball scramble, which always makes for some interesting golf! We'll have the coveted navy blue blazers to put on the shoulders of the winning foursome, along with the Chamber Cup and individual awards for closest to the hole, the putting contest and closest to the alligator.

And thanks to the wonderful folks at Caloosa, every foursome will have their own personal guide to assist them with tips on the course. Who better to tell you how the greens lie than someone who plays them every week?

If you're interested in playing, call or come by the Chamber so we can get the names of your players. If you're a local business, call us about hole sponsorships. The hole signs will be out there from Thursday through Sunday for maximum exposure and if you are present at the hole when all teams come through, you will have a perfect opportunity to do some serious networking!

Fortunately, for everyone there, I won't be playing. I'll be there to hand out goodie bags and door prizes, but your car windshield will be safe. I'll keep my little red plaid bag at home.



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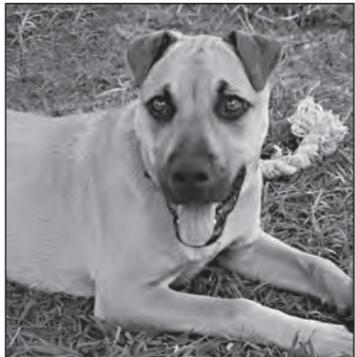
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Georgana Collins,
ADM

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.



KAY

Kay is a happy Lab/Shepherd mix puppy who is a delight to be around. She appears to have had a home at some point, but sadly, no owner was found. She is energetic and smart, so an active home is best. Kay seems to like the other dogs and absolutely loves people. She is also fond of a good game of fetch. Kay is spayed, microchipped, and current on her shots. Stop by and meet this great little lady! DOB: November 2, 2011.



PIXIE

Pixie is a sweet little female who was brought to the shelter with three buddies. She has bounced back from her early misadventures to be a real little lover who loves to be held by volunteers and gets her motor going right away. She also has a wonderful orange hue to her fur. Visit C.A.R.E. soon and take Pixie to her forever home. Pixie has been spayed, microchipped, and brought up-to-date on her shots. DOB: September 2, 2005.

Butterfly award winner is announced

The Sun City Coalition annually presents the Butterfly Award in recognition of a volunteer's outstanding service and creative ability. The award is especially meaningful because the butterfly symbolizes the awakening to new life, the rising out of a cocoon to become a new free spirit. This is a reminder that we always work to help people soar to new heights.

This year's Butterfly Award recipient is psychologist Ken Barringer, Ph.D. Dr Barringer moved to Sun City in 1996 after retiring from a highly successful practice in Wisconsin, and was surprised to note the dearth of mental health services and resources in the Sun City Center area. In a monumental effort to establish such resources, he brought together a group of retired mental health professionals and founded the Mental Health Advocates. Under Dr. Barringer's leadership, the Advocates accomplished their goals of raising community awareness of mental health issues affecting seniors, recruiting mental health professionals to actively practice in Sun City Center, and educating the community through seminars about mental health issues such as depression, stress, caregiver issues, marital difficulties, and drug and alcohol abuse. After three years of volunteer services, it was necessary for Mental Health Advocates to disband because many of the original volunteers had developed health problems, and wanted to spend more time in retirement and less time taking active volunteer roles.

However, Dr. Barringer persisted in pursuing his vision of increasing mental health services for the Sun City Center community, and in 1999 he once again recruited a group of mental health professionals and lay volunteers to establish the Sun City Coalition. He formed a board of directors to guide the efforts of the Coalition, with a focus upon assessing the mental health needs of the community and increasing services and education offered to the community. This entity eventually evolved into what is now the South Shore Coalition on Mental Health and Aging, as the focus of providing mental health resources broadened to include the Apollo Beach area. The coalition now has non-profit 501(c)(3) status, has established a part-time office in Sun Towers, and offers a full roster of educational seminars, 5 support groups, and in-home screenings for depression and dementia. After 15 years as president of the Coalition, Dr. Barringer stepped down from that position, but remained on the board of directors to continue to lend his expertise and indefatigable energy to help guide the Coalition's efforts.

Because of Dr. Barringer's vision and tireless efforts, the Sun City community now has a plethora of mental health resources available, many of them free charge.



Paul A. Diel receiving gratitude from Commander Ron Engles.

American Legion member honored

Paul A. Diel of Sun City Center received an award from Commander Ron Engles of Sun City Post 246 marking his 50 years as a member of the American Legion. Paul served during the Korean conflict as an aircraft mechanic and flight engineer.

Getting rid of head lice

To remove lice and nits from hair, take a jar of coconut oil, melt it (gas or electric oven on low heat or put jar in a pot of water on low heat like you would re-melt honey), and then use as a conditioner.

Leave on overnight wrapped in plastic or a towel. In the morning, wash hair thoroughly. Repeat every three days for a month.

The coconut oil kills the lice and eggs and repeated use will assure any lice that hatch from eggs that escaped being killed off will be killed with a repeat application.

H.

Want to live better on the money you already make? Visit www.stretcher.com to find hundreds of articles to help you stretch your day and your dollar! Copyright 2011 Dollar Stretcher, Inc.

AARP Driver Safety Program announces class schedule

Thursday, May 3 • 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
1st United Methodist – 121 Knights Ave., Brandon
Registration: (813) 716-8180

Friday, May 4 • 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. • Kings Point
Registration: Encore Bank (813) 634-8001

Monday, May 14 • 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Aston Gardens, 11702 Lake Aston Court
Registration: (813) 855-2811 or (813) 931-3458

Monday, May 21 • 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. • Sun City Center
Registration: Encore Bank (813) 634-8001

Tuesday, May 29 • Noon to 6 p.m.
H2U Brandon Regional Hospital, 228 Oakfield Plaza, Room 228
Registration: H2U Office 9 a.m. to noon (813) 684-3316

Cost: AARP members \$12 Non-AARP members \$14

Call AARP Driver Safety Program for additional class locations
1-888-227-7669.

The Veterans Administration offers the Aid and Attendance Benefit for Wartime Veterans and Surviving Spouses to help pay for Assisted Living.



Call or visit Sun City Senior Living today to learn if you, a loved one, or parent is eligible for up to **\$2,020 per month** to pay for assisted living expenses.

Call 813-938-2259 to arrange a personal tour.

Move in during April to take advantage of our \$300 Off per month special on select Memory Care apartments!



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What are we doing here?

I pulled off the quiet country road and dropped the motorcycle's kickstand just as the sun touched the distant edge of the earth on the flat Kansas horizon. I was starting to worry. It would be dark soon and I was miles from anywhere. In truth, I was afraid.

I was in a lonely rest area off a lonely two-lane road, the number of which I can no longer recall. There was one car in the parking lot. As I stepped off my motorcycle, a well-past-middle-age couple and one other man emerged from the building and got into the car. I recall the couple referring to the third man as Uncle...Joe? Bob? Perhaps he just looked like someone's uncle. I'll never know. Our mutual existence only briefly touched and, as I removed my gloves, they drove off leaving me alone under the darkening sky.

That was the beginning of the loneliest and oddest night I would ever spend on the road. I pressed the starter on my bike and resumed my westward travel. My global positioning system indicated I was passing small towns, however I saw nothing at all. For mile after mile there was blackness interrupted only by the occasional highway sign.

After far too long, I saw lights on the horizon. Road signs indicated a town, but all I found was a brightly lit gas station and convenience store. For no particular reason, other than a pervasive sense of loneliness, I pulled in and went inside the store. The man behind the counter mumbled a greeting and then warned me of the impending

danger of an overzealous law enforcement officer lying in wait 20 miles down the road.

Lying in wait for what? There was no traffic and this man was the first human I had encountered since the rest area. It was not the first time that I had wondered to myself, "What the hell am I doing here?"

That seems to be the theme of my life. Am I alone in that? I'm seriously starting to wonder. I spend so much time traveling to somewhere else and much of that time looking forward to getting home that I'm beginning to realize that it just doesn't make sense. Or, perhaps, I'm simply looking for something that doesn't exist where I am. Or maybe I'm just plain crazy. I keep looking towards the horizon, but I look for something that I can't quite put my finger on and it is something that, at best, I can only occasionally glimpse out of the corner of my eye as it scurries on. So I keep moving, hoping that one day I'll catch up to it. I wonder if I'm just seeing things. As the years have passed, I've started looking more at what's around me rather than what is ahead.

That night in Kansas stands out because I've never before felt so alone. I've also never felt so motivated to find anything at all over the horizon because it had to be better than where I was: on a dark two-lane road in the middle of nowhere. The ironic part is that I ended up in a generic trucker's motel off a freeway just outside of

Wichita and there was absolutely nothing memorable about it except, of course, for the ride that lead me there.

I was alive that night. I felt fear and anxiety, but I was moving forward — moving towards something and it was exciting. It didn't matter at the time that the end game would be a generic cinderblock motel near a freeway, I just knew I had to get somewhere. I felt passionate about everything — about the bike that was

taking me through that night, about the air passing over me, and about the pitch-black horizon ahead of me. It was a privilege to be free enough to be out there, but it wasn't easy.

These days I feel like I'm on a dark two-lane road in the middle of nowhere, but I'm not moving. "What am I doing here?" I frequently ask myself. The answer isn't forthcoming. In the past few years, I've traveled tens of thousands of miles. I've spent nights alone on the Atlantic Ocean and nights on trains passing through decimated small towns that only exist because a handful of hardy souls refuse to accept that their time has come and gone. Perhaps that description fits me as well because in all those miles I never found the place that tells me, "This is where I belong. This is what I should be doing." Yet at the end of the day or the end of the trip, I always end up back home in Florida.

I know that some people have a



Observations
By Mitch Traphagen
mitch@observernews.net



MITCH TRAPHAGEN PHOTO

Alone in a rest area in the middle of nowhere with night falling is a very lonely feeling. The journey lead me to a pot of gold, however. Or, more specifically, to a cinderblock freeway motel outside of Wichita.

calling because I'm privileged to tell their stories in this newspaper, but does everyone have a calling? Do you have a calling? If so, did you answer it? I'd really like to hear from you and perhaps together we can answer some of life's questions. Unless, of course, it turns out that I'm alone with those questions. If so, never mind.

My bike has a thick layer of dust on it, and I'm pretty sure the battery is dead. Over the years, I've had friends severely and permanently injured while riding motorcycles. There is usually a story in the daily newspapers about a motorcyclist being killed somewhere in the Tampa Bay area. It would be no fun being hurt or killed on a motorcycle, but perhaps an even worse death would be that of simply fading off without passion, a little fear, and a lot of excitement about what

lies over the horizon. Somehow, with the passage of time, it seems I've lost my passion for dreaming about what is over the horizon. Is it possible that the safe and easy road is the most dangerous route of all?

I've long known that the journey itself is the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow. To me, that makes sense both for a road trip on a motorcycle and for life itself. I might not remember a night in a generic motel in Kansas, but I'll never forget the night on my motorcycle that led up to it.

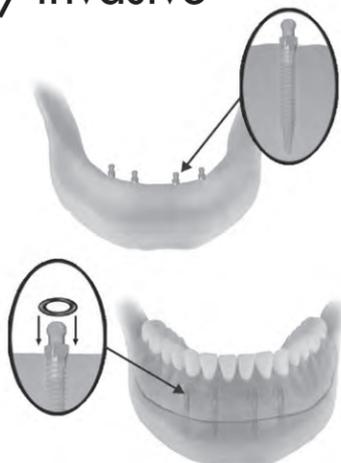
The longer I live the more questions I have. I don't have many answers, but I'm becoming more certain about one thing: I need to start looking for the pot of gold again. Maybe, just maybe, it's in a cinderblock motel somewhere off a freeway.

Don't Miss Our FREE Seminar on Mini Implants, and Sedation Dentistry Friday, May 11th • 1:00 p.m.

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15816 Beth Shields Way • Ruskin 33573

Kids' Program/Event Highlights April 26-May 2

Teen Night: Game Zone
Thursday, April 26 • 5 to 7 p.m.

For middle and high school students. Get in the zone with friends for some gaming fun on the Xbox 360 and Nintendo Wii with games such as Band Hero, Guitar Hero 5, Smash Brothers Brawl and more! Funding provided by the Friends of the SouthShore Regional Library.

Family Story Time
Thursday, April 26 • 7 to 7:30 p.m.

For ages 2-5 with a caregiver. Make reading time family time. Stories, action rhymes, songs, interactive activities, and crafts make up this fun 30-minute program that celebrates a love of reading. Children may wear pajamas and bring a blanket and favorite cuddly toy.

Baby Time
Monday, April 30 • 1:35 to 1:55 p.m.
Tuesday, May 1 • 11:35 to 11:55 a.m.
Wednesday May 2 • 10:05 to 10:25 a.m.

For children ages 0-20 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.

"Creative Artists:" Let's Create!
Monday, April 30 • 3 to 4 p.m.

"Creative Artists," 7-10 years, will join our art instructor and create an art project to take home. Limit 20. Registration required at either the Information Desk or by calling 273-3652.

Teen/Adult Cartoon Notecards
Monday, April 30 • 6:30 to 8 p.m.

Join Cartoonist Leah Lopez for this popular art class. You will create cartoons with step-by-step instructions and put them on notecards. All levels welcome. Limit 20. Registration required at the Information Desk or by calling 273-3652. Funding for this program provided by the Friends of the SouthShore Regional Library.

Wonders of Nature
Monday, April 30 • 7 to 7:40 p.m.

For children in grades K-5. See this unique animal show featuring flying raptors and parrots, and reptiles, including one of the largest pythons in the world. The show combines humor, conservation and audience participation. Funding for this program provided by the Friends of the SouthShore Regional Library.

Toddler Time
Tuesday, May 1 • 10:05 to 10:25 a.m. and 10:35 to 10:55 a.m.
Wednesday, May 2 • 10:35 to 10:55 a.m.

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

Story Time
Tuesday, May 1 • 11 to 11:30 a.m.
Wednesday, May 2 • 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.

Dance your way to a fitter new you

Hillsborough County Parks, Recreation and Conservation Department offers a great way to have fun, get in shape, and gain confidence. Zumba, often referred to as an exercise in disguise, is offered at the following Hillsborough County recreation centers.

Apollo Beach Recreation Center

664 Golf & Sea Blvd. in Apollo Beach • (813) 671-7635
Mondays at 6:30 p.m.; Wednesdays at 9:30 a.m. and 6:30 p.m.
\$6 per class • Instructor: Erika Rivere

Gardenville Recreation Center

6219 Symmes Rd. in Gibsonton • (813) 672-1120
Tuesdays at 9:30 a.m. and 7:45 p.m.
Thursdays at 9:30 a.m. and 7:45 p.m.
\$6 per class • Instructor: Erika Rivere

Providence West Park

5417 Providence Road in Riverview • (813) 635-7452
Thursdays at 6:30 p.m.
\$5 per class • Instructor: Lolita Ortiz

Riverview Community Center

11020 Park Drive in Riverview • (813) 671-7600
Tuesdays and Wednesday at 6:30 p.m.
\$5 per class • Instructor: Lolita Ortiz

Ruskin Recreation Center

901 6th Street S.E. in Ruskin • (813) 672-7881
Tuesdays at 6:30 p.m.; Thursdays at 6:30 p.m.
\$6 per class • Instructor: Erika Rivere

For more information, call Hillsborough County Parks, Recreation and Conservation at (813) 635-3500, or one of the above recreation centers.



Gibsonton Elementary's Terrific Kids announced

The following students were outstanding examples of what it means to be Inquisitive: Kevin Lommer, Rigoberto Pantoja, Lola Hernandez, Quaneal Cowen, Emma Blanton, Earlisha Jackson, Elizabeth Arnold, Christopher Trejo, Hailey Sturgeon, Payton Ballard, Marti Pineda, Luis Glass, William Hancock, Alexus Baldree, Tony Sandoval, Ethan Pelham, Jordan Mabee, Liberty Drury, Bella Rodriguez, Estrella Soto, Molly George, Amanda Hardin, Nadine Flores, Jesus Hernandez, and Alexavier Ledesma.



Governor approves funding for USF Health Heart Institute

Gov. Rick Scott approved \$6.9 million in state funding Tuesday to support the initial design of the new USF Health Heart Institute. The funding will allow USF Health to move ahead as one of the nation's leaders in cardiovascular care, with a special focus on genomics-based personalized medicine.

"This is a forward-looking action on the part of the governor, and we thank him for it," said USF President Judy Genshaft. "We're also grateful for the support of Florida legislators and the leadership of Rep. Will Weatherford."

USF Health already has committed nearly \$25 million in resources for genomics-based personalized medicine, including funding of research equipment and facilities, as well as the recruitment of two top physicians, Dr. Leslie Miller, chair of the Department of Cardiovascular Sciences, and Dr. Steve Liggett, a nationally prominent researcher who will become director of the Personalized Medicine Institute.

"With the addition of the USF Health Heart Institute, the Tampa Bay area has an amazing opportunity to become the healthcare solutions zone," Dr. Klasko said. "It will include USF Health's brand-new Center for Advanced Medical Learning and Simulation, the USF Health Byrd Alzheimer's Institute, Moffitt Cancer Center, and now our new initiatives in personalized medicine and the future of heart care."

The American College of Cardiology has selected the USF Health Heart Institute as a partner to conduct the first trial linking genomic screening with a clinical database of millions of patients with cardiovascular disease. The ACC also recently named CAMLS as its first-ever Center of Excellence in Education and Training.

USF Health will partner in this new project with the Florida Hospital Pepin Heart Institute, which is located at Florida Hospital Tampa, a new part of the Adventist Health System. USF Health and Pepin plan to collaborate on research and clinical trials.

"Gov. Scott's approval of this funding is great news for the heart institute," said Tom Pepin, founding philanthropist of the Florida Hospital Pepin Heart Institute. "Patients across Florida and beyond will benefit from better cardiovascular care because of the research and care improvements being made through our partnership."

Cardiovascular disease accounts for 40 percent of all hospitalizations and deaths in Florida. State costs for cardiovascular care are projected to increase to \$17 billion a year by 2020. The USF Health Heart Institute can help with research that will help identify those at greatest risk for heart disease, allowing practitioners to treat them earlier; improve the knowledge of how an individual's genetics can better guide drug treatments and dosage; and find new therapeutic treatments based on genetic discoveries.

Hillsborough County Commissioners will consider \$2 million in additional funding for the institute Wednesday, a key part of helping USF Health and the Tampa Bay community to create a health care innovation hub and expand the region's growing reputation as a medical destination.

Starting the Institute shows how USF Health works to act as an entrepreneurial academic center, Dr. Klasko said.

"This is a great example of growing our own biomedical start-up," Dr. Klasko said. "Instead of recruiting a center, we're creating one. Most importantly, this is the future of health care, and we'll have it right here in Tampa Bay."

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.



HOLE-IN-ONE

Joe MacLean of Halifax, Nova Scotia shot a hole-in-one on April 13, 2012 on the 17th hole at the Apollo Beach Golf Club of Apollo Beach, FL.

He used a 7 Wood and drove the ball 185 yards. This feat was witnessed by Pete Morgan who said "Best shot I ever saw."

SSYPA social to benefit ECHO

Join the South Shore Young Professionals Association (SSYPA) at Barnacles for a special evening social event to benefit ECHO from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. on Tuesday, May 1. Door prizes are welcomed.

Don't miss this great networking opportunity! For more information visit www.ssypa.com.

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FISH TALES

Did you go fishing as a child?

My question this week to anglers, was, 'did you go fishing as a child?' I got a multitude of answers, but the majority replied that their first fishing trip, with a member of their family or a loved one was the most memorable.

Those first days of fishing as a child stay in our minds forever. The thrill of catching that first fish, regardless of the size, has been repeated over and over again.

You might move to a big city and join the corporate world, but you will never lose the memories of that first fish.

Memories are forever; I hope that each of you will find time to take your child fishing this summer.

If you stay at home for your vacation there are many parks close by where fishing is great.

A park just 10 miles away is Alafia River State Park, located at 14502 Hwy. 39 in Lithia. This park has 6,000 acres of reclaimed land from the phosphate mines. It is made up of many lakes and the south prong of the Alafia River. It is a great place to fish; bring your family and your dog. Camping

areas are available.

Another nearby park is the Little Manatee River State Park located off Hwy. 301, south of Ruskin in Wimauma, just 5 miles south of Sun City Center. A great place to fish and if you own a horse they are welcome and you can even rent a covered stall for them. You have 2,416 acres to hike, fish, run your horse, or just relax and enjoy Mother Nature.

If you travel 12 miles north of Tampa you will be at Hillsborough River State Park, which has been a favorite for families for years. This park opened in 1938. It has great fishing, nature studying, swimming, camping concession stands, and snack bars.

In Ruskin we have Simmons Park on 19th Avenue. It has pier fishing, canal fishing, is a gate to Tampa Bay, and an ideal place to swim, fish, boat, and relax as you enjoy the campground.

The king of the waterway this week is the tarpon. Because of our warm weather, Mr. Tarpon has arrived early this year. With the beautiful warm weather they have been seen playing and soar-

ing in the air, all around our bay waters. For those who live for tarpon season, they couldn't be more blessed.

It is a trophy fish and not edible, although, someone will call me telling me that they have eaten tarpon. I have never heard of this fish having any food value. The flesh of this fish can be as foul as the food it eats. Tarpon is one of the world's greatest game fish. They are caught with a wide range of baits and a wide variety of methods. You must have a tag on your license to land this fish. Average weight is 68



pounds with largest on record over 300 pounds.

Those fishing from land, bridges, and piers this week are enjoying sheephead, whiting, trout, and redfish catches.

Mangrove snapper, grouper, large flounder, gator trout, redfish, and snapper have all been seen on boats coming in from the deep waters.

Freshwater catfish and largemouth bass are being caught in our freshwater rivers and lakes, along with a variety of pan fish.

We have a waterway teeming with fish. So fish at home, don't roam.

Aleta Jonie Maschek is a member of Florida Outdoor Press.



Fish Tales
By Jonie Maschek

Public art inspired by surrounding environment

Join Hillsborough County at 10 a.m. on Tuesday, May 22 at the SouthShore Regional Library, 15816 Beth Shields Way in Ruskin to celebrate and enjoy newly-installed public art in the library's outdoor plaza.

This public art, Sandpiper Pavilions by Koryn Rolstad, defines activity space in the James J. Harkins IV Plaza. Sandpiper Pavilions features two shade pavilions facing each other across open space, ornamented with water drop patterns sandblasted into the ground paving. Laser-cut openings in the pavilions' ceilings cast patterns of layered palm leaves onto the water drop patterns below. At night, LED lights accent the pavilions. The columns supporting the pavilions give a nod to the legs of the sandpiper birds of the nearby shore. This work of art references palms, water and sandpipers giving a visual reference to the plaza that fits the surrounding environment and architecture.

The contract amount for this public art was \$75,000.

Koryn Rolstad's background in engineering, architecture and fine arts leads her to create works of art that emphasize environmental forms while exploring materials, technology and imagery. Her goal in creating works of public art is often to further identify public spaces as safe and welcoming destinations with iconic appeal.

The Hillsborough County Public Art Program was established in 1988 to provide art as a basic service to all citizens, acknowledging that enhancing the appearance of buildings and spaces provides benefits to the community by expanding the historical, cultural and creative knowledge of citizens.

For more information, call Dan Myers at (813) 307-1035.

Republican club to meet

The Southshore Republican Club will host Dr. Tina Trent as its guest speaker at its Thursday, May 3 meeting at The Alley Bowling Lanes on Big Bend Road starting at 6 p.m. with a social time before the meeting.

Dr. Trent, a resident of Ruskin, is active as a volunteer club member with the Ruskin Woman's Club and is helping to archive and preserve the History Collection of the club.

Currently, her political efforts are spent writing about George Soros and her thought that he is pushing a progressive agenda in our society. Dr. Trent writes and blogs on political radicals, social movements, academia, crime and criminal justice. Her work has appeared in several newspapers. She is a contributing editor to the blog Disident Prof and has her own blog, Crime Victims Media Report.

Also, candidates for various political offices are expected to be on hand.

The South Shore Republican Club meets on the first Thursday of each month.

For more information on the Southshore Republican Club, call Vice President Kirk Faryniasz at (813) 677-2606.



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Ruskin Woman's Club celebrates 100 years of community involvement



MITCH TRAPHAGEN PHOTOS

On Saturday, the Ruskin Woman's Club celebrated 100 years in the community, complete with some members wearing garments from the era of their founding. The Woman's Club is located in a 1912 Swiss-style chalet that was originally built as the home for the president of Ruskin College, Dr. George MacArthur Miller and his wife, Adaline Dickman Miller. It is the only remaining original Ruskin College building to have survived a 1918 fire. The Miller family deeded it to the Woman's Club in 1940 and it was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1974. Today the Ruskin Woman's Club is active in providing scholarships and assistance to numerous community organizations ranging from the Mary Martha House to South East Guide Dogs and Keep Hillsborough Beautiful. For more information about the club call 813-645-5381. Above, Wilma Wood, June Cooper and Nancy Vance welcome visitors to the centennial open house at the club.



Visitors chat and look through photo albums and scrapbooks documenting the club's history and involvement in the community.



Shown presenting/accepting the bonus check are, left to right: David Miller, AAA district Manager; Joy Dunn, AAA Sales Counselor; Walter Mannherz, Scholarship Fund Treasurer; Peggy Burgess, Freedom Plaza cruise escort and Ed Landry, Scholarship Fund President.

Cruising for a Cause

A group of 28 Freedom Plaza residents recently enjoyed a fun-raising Caribbean cruise gleaming over \$3,300 for their Scholarship Fund. The total donation included contributions from participants, AAA and Holland America Cruise Line.

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Soup - Seafood Chowder

Salads - Arugula Salad, Simple Green Salad with Assorted Dressings and Condiments, Mediterranean Salad, Pasta Salad, Tomato Mozzarella Julienne Basil

Displays - Anti-Pasta Display with Assorted Cured Meats and Imported Cheeses, Fruit Display, Cheese Display, Smoked Salmon with Appropriate Condiments Assorted Seafood Display, Oysters, Peel-and-Eat Shrimp, Stone Crab Claws

Carving Station - Roasted Steamship Round with Horseradish Sauce, and Herb Au Jus

Honey Glazed Ham with a Cranberry Pineapple Chutney and Creole Mustard Sauce

Entrée Selection - BBQ Rubbed Salmon with Lemon Thyme Butter Sauce Topped with Mandarin Orange Salsa

Parmesan Crusted Chicken with Wilted Spinach Diced Tomato and Supreme Sauce Seafood Mac & Cheese Scallops, Lobster and Shrimp with Sherry Cream Cheese Sauce

Baked Cod with Lobster Cream Sauce

Accompaniments - Roasted Vegetable Medley

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May 16th, 11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

South Bay Hospital Medical Auditorium

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STK #L017749A

2009 HONDA
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\$15,977 | **\$202** PER MO.^{***}

STK #E052916A

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\$17,977 | **\$234** PER MO.^{***}

STK #L003115A

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\$17,977 | **\$234** PER MO.^{***}

STK #KA98677

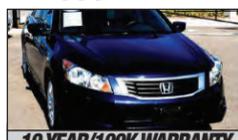
2009 HONDA
ACCORD LX



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\$18,977 | **\$241** PER MO.^{***}

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10 YEAR/100K WARRANTY
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STK #C006557M

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STK #KJ08859

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\$23,777 | **\$324** PER MO.^{***}

STK #L012852A

2010 NISSAN
FRONTIER



10 YEAR/100K WARRANTY
\$23,977 | **\$329** PER MO.^{***}

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South County Career Center students cook up excitement in Brandon



MITCH TRAPHAGEN PHOTOS



On Saturday, culinary students from the South County Career Center and Riverview High School took part in an "iron-chef" style competition at the Rolling Pin Emporium in Brandon. Each team of four students submitted recipes, discussed the dishes with judges and then created an appetizer, main course and dessert for presentation to the judges. The themed ingredient was carrots and no preparation was allowed in advance. Who was the winner? Well, the judges of course. The winning team, however, will go on to compete against Durant High School on April 28. The Rolling Pin Emporium is located at 2080 Badlands Drive in Brandon. For more information visit www.rollingpinonline.com or call 813-653-2418.

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APRIL EVENTS

Tues., May 1 • 2:30-4 p.m. • Congestive Heart Failure (CHF) Support Group. Join our facilitator Jennifer Petit, from Hometown Homecare as she introduces cutting edge resources. This group is exclusively for those living with heart failure, their families and caregivers.

Thurs., May 3 • 4-5:30 p.m. • Aging Gracefully Support Group. This is a support group for individuals who are learning to live with the effects of aging in a graceful, healthy manner. Facilitated by Laura Burch from Hanson Services, In Home Care.

Tues., May 8 • 2:30-4 p.m. • COPD Support Group Joy Barlaan, ARNP and Jan Whitaker, LPN from Ace Homecare have 50+ combined years of experience and will be facilitators. The available resources are endless!

Thurs., May 10 • 2:30-4 p.m. • Grief, Loss or Depression Support Group facilitated by Edmond Dubreuil MSW, RCSWI mental health professional. Supported by: South Shore Coalition on Mental Health & Aging & United Methodist Church of SCC

Tues., May 15 • 10-11 a.m. • Stedman Clinical Trials will be offering **Free Memory Screens.** Everyone over age 55 is encouraged to screen. Takes about 15 minutes. What you don't know can hurt! Three Alzheimer's studies are enrolling for those that qualify. Early intervention is the key to stopping the progression of this disease.

Tues., May 15 • 2:30-3:30p.m. • Alzheimer's Association Caregiver Support Group. Join Katie Colwell Williams, MA, CMC from Aging Care Advocates. The resources are endless! [alzheimer's association](http://alzheimer'sassociation.org)

Wed., May 16 • 5-7:30 p.m. • OPEN HOUSE CELEBRATION! Please join Sun Towers as we celebrate the opening of our newest addition in caring for our residents and your loved one. This new Memory Care community within Sun Towers offers loving care from staff trained by Educational Coordinator Eileen Poiley from the USF Byrd Alzheimer's Institute. Our sponsors, Comprehensive Home Health, Lifepath Hospice and Brightstar Lifecare invite you to join us for libations, giveaways and a tour of our new community!
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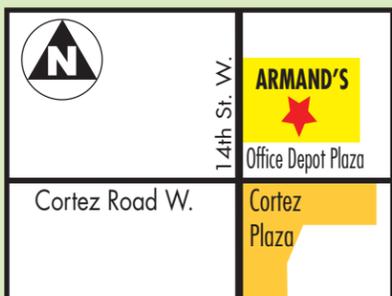
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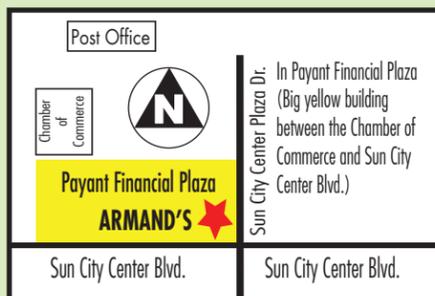
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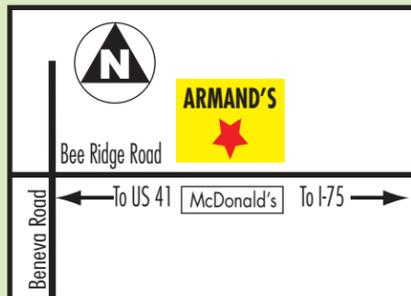
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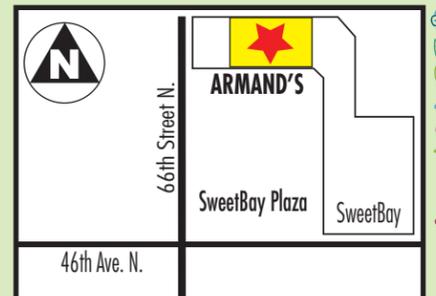
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BUSINESS NEWS



Ribbon cutting ceremony for Southbay Auto Service. Southbay Auto Service joins SCC Chamber of Commerce

On Feb. 22, a ribbon cutting with the Sun City Center Chamber was held for Southbay Auto Service. Southbay Auto Service 10623 Big Bend Rd. is a family owned and operated business that has been open since June 2008. They offer full service repair and maintenance on Hybrids and American vehicles 2000 and newer and specialize in Asian vehicles.

For more information call 741-2886 or visit www.southbayautoservice.net.



Chamber members welcome new local business AmberJack's Bar & Grill. AmberJack's Bar & Grill celebrates with a grand opening

On Tuesday, April 17, AmberJack's Bar & Grill hosted a Greater Riverview Chamber of Commerce Ribbon Cutting to celebrate the grand opening of their new business located at 11238 Boyette Road, Riverview. Local businesses came out to enjoy menu samples and to welcome them to the Riverview Community. AmberJack's Bar & Grill is open Sunday through Thursday from 11am- 1am and Friday-Saturday 11am-3am. For more information call (813) 677-4848 or visit their website at www.amberjacksbarandgrill.com.



From left to right Jayson, Colleen Savard, Adina, Amy Burness and Hugo, Jayson, Adina and Hugo are the Exchange educators.

Local stylists get updated

Amy Burness and Colleen Savard recently upgraded their skills to bring you fresh and exciting salon services. Amy and Colleen were two of the dedicated salon professionals, who attended The Redken Exchange overlooking 5th Ave in New York City. Along with other stylists from around the globe Amy and Colleen learned advanced techniques in hair de-

sign from leading experts in the salon industry. The Redken Exchange is the leading resource for learning in the professional salon industry, so it was a great opportunity for Amy and Colleen to be there. Thousands attend from almost every country in the world, making it a great venue for exchanging tips, ideas and techniques with other stylists- as well as for getting the latest information on Redken hair care and styling products.

Consumers interested in fresh, modern, innovative style or color can call Victoria's 5th Avenue Salon at 813-645-0109 to make an appointment.

See the current issues of *The Observer News*, as well as past issues, classified advertising, advertising information, and much more!

www.ObserverNews.net



Its all about fashion jewelry

On Thursday, April 19, Park Lane Fashion Jewelry hosted a Greater Riverview Chamber of Commerce Ribbon Cutting Ceremony to welcome the jewelry line's new Area Director, Lisa Wheeler. Chamber members were treated to a light breakfast while learning about the jewelry line employment opportunities within the company.

For more information call Lisa at (813) 967-3694 or visit www.parklanejewelry.com.

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Participants of the South Shore Cares Walk-A-Thon sponsored by Keller Williams South Shore Realty. Real Estate firm gives back

In keeping with the real estate franchise's core values, the Keller Williams Realty South Shore Market Center recently hosted their Third Annual South Shore Cares Walk-A-Thon, which raised over \$3,500 for Project Corregidor (www.favebe.com).

"We believe in supporting the community where we live and work. It's our way of saying thanks to our friends, neighbors, clients and customers," says Team Leader, Gary Kaukonen. "The number of walkers was wonderful, and the participation from the local business community definitely contributed to the success of our event," said Kaukonen.

According to Mr. Kaukonen, "Project Corregidor's Peer Mentoring Program was developed to provide compassion, support and hope to the soldiers who are returning from the battlefield. Our soldiers who have been deployed most often have experienced a magnitude of losses. Grief is a natural response to loss and the single most important factor in healing from loss is having the support of other people."

On May 10, Keller Williams Realty is having a Red Day nationwide to express its culture of giving to others. This year SouthShore Cares is going to complete a beautification project at the facilities that will be utilized for the veterans as a part of the peer mentoring program.

Each year every Keller Williams Realty office chooses a local charity to support. Nominations for the 2013 charity will be accepted beginning in November. To nominate a charity for consideration, contact Debbi Tinker at (813) 263-0932.

For more information call (813) 641-8300 or email gkukonen@kw.com.

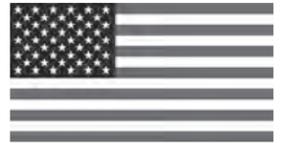
Local business expands

Dale and Wendy Cooper of Kona Ice would like to announce that they are now at the Lowery Park Zoo in the children's area.

Over the last three years they have enjoyed being involved with many Hillsborough County Schools and youth sports leagues. They also have returned a portion of their sales to schools and sports leagues.

They are available for corporate events, church functions, employee appreciation visits, birthday parties and many more events.

For more information visit <http://tampa.kona-ice.com> or kona-ice.com and like them on Facebook at Kona Ice East Hillsborough County



Attention all Veterans

Sun City Center Chapter #110 of the Disabled American Veterans (DAV) has opened an outreach center in Conessa Hall at the Prince of Peace Church located at 702 Valley Forge Blvd., Sun City Center.

Bob Gerdes and Darrell Katz are DAV certified service officers who will discuss benefits and assist with claims for all veterans in South Hillsborough County. Male and female Vets are welcome to participate in this non-denominational, and free service. Appointments are available for Tuesday mornings from 9 a.m.- noon.

Drivers also are needed to assist Veterans with transportation to James A. Haley Veterans' Hospital in Tampa.

For more information call Bob at 813-634-1761 or Darrell at 813-260-3692.

All aboard for the Tampa Union Station



Friends of Tampa Union Station is announcing that Historic Tampa Union Station will be the site of events for the Tampa Union Station Centennial and National Train Day, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday, May 12. Admission is free. The preliminary schedule for National Train Day in Tampa features:

- Railroad equipment displays! Amtrak equipment open for tours
- Operating model trains! From the Suncoast Model Railroad Club, H.B. Plant Model Railroad Historical Society, and more
- Live Music!
- Food Trucks!
- History and railroading exhibits!

Tampa Union Station, constructed as a joint project of the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad, Seaboard Air Line Railway, and the Tampa Northern Northern Railroad, opened to the public on May 15, 1912. Some of Tampa's prominent citizens of the time, such as Col. Peter O. Knight, pushed for the opening of the new station, which was originally constructed for a cost of \$250,000. It was restored in 1998 after many years of neglect.

For more informatin visit www.nationaltrainday.com.

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72" W x 72" H.....	\$93 Installed

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52" W x 48" H.....	\$49 Installed
60" W x 48" H.....	\$69 Installed
72" W x 72" H.....	\$86 Installed

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72" W x 60" H.....	\$131 Installed

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Saving your life

Continued from page 1

tify our citizens of emergencies or threatening situations," Cook said. "We don't rely on just one method of notification as you may realize that no one system is the 'silver bullet' as it were."

Cook's point was graphically proven earlier this month when a lightning strike disabled one Oklahoma town's tornado siren system. As a tornado bore down on Woodward, OK, some of the community's sirens remained silent. Five people were killed and 20 were injured in that storm.

According to Cook, NOAA Weather Radios remain among the best options for Hillsborough residents to be notified of weather emergencies. With hurricane season only weeks away, if you don't already have one, now is the time to get one.

"Currently we work closely with the State of Florida's Warning Point as well as the National Weather Service-Ruskin when it involves severe weather," Cook continued. "Currently the NOAA Weather Radios are still highly recommended for notifications of severe weather. We also have a voice notification system that we use to notify citizens of threats or emergency situations. We do not have a text base notification system currently."

The Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office maintains a reverse-911 system to notify residents in specific areas of everything from severe weather to emergency evacuations or missing persons. The system, however, is designed to work only with published telephone numbers. Those with unpublished numbers can call 813-247-8200 to make a request to be included in the system.

According to Cook, however, the county is currently reviewing emergency notification options, includ-

ing a text messaging system, to determine if that would enhance their notification systems.

"I do agree that having the text feature for making notifications to our citizens is a great tool."

Cook mentioned it was used successfully in a previous position he held outside of Hillsborough County.

County emergency managers and commissioners will decide if such a system is feasible and appropriate in Hillsborough County. In the past, such systems have been criticized for providing messages too late and for consuming large amounts of cellular bandwidth, thus potentially having an impact on people attempting to call 911 via cell phone. As more and more people turn to cell phones, however, and as cellular companies increase capacity, the latter issue, at least, might be muted. Advancing technology should answer the former.

"Cost is a major factor in utilizing this technology," Cook said. "But we are looking for the best solution as our only goal is to insure our citizen's safety."

Commissioner Sharpe apparently agrees with that sentiment. Resources will always play a role in what can be done during an emergency, but the bottom line is always saving lives in Hillsborough County. Of course, it must always be something the county can afford and justify.

"I am open to [learning about] anything that will help save a life," Sharpe said.

For information about the HCSO Reverse 911 Community Notification System, visit www.hcso.tampa.fl.us/A-Z-Directory/R/Reverse-911.aspx on the web. NOAA Weather Radios are available at most major retailers.

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online SAFETY



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For a fun and safe place for kids, parents and even grandparents to play together online, visit buildabearville.com, the Build-A-Bear Workshop virtual world. Build-A-Bear Workshop is committed to working together with kids, parents, educators, industry experts, policymakers, and law enforcement officials to make the Internet a safer place for kids through education and awareness. The tools that are currently available at buildabearville.com for kids to learn about Internet safety include:

- Cyber Safety Quiz
- Landing page with tips and suggestions on playing safe online
- Events throughout the year to promote safe play

In 2010, Build-A-Bearville received the Inaugural StopCyberbullying Award from StopCyberbullying.org. In 2009 the site earned the WiredKids Best of the Web Award sponsored by WiredSafety.org and in 2008, Build-A-Bearville received the I-Parenting Award.



Tips for parents and kids

FAMILY FEATURES

Parents' concerns about Internet safety used to be confined to the computer. Today, kids have more access to the Internet through smart phones and gaming devices so the potential for cyberbullying is greater than ever.

Cyberbullying is when one minor uses technology as a weapon to target another young person. According to StopCyberbullying.org, elementary and middle schools report cyberbullying as the most frequent problem they face.

Most people think of cyberbullying as girl to girl. Girls become the more prevalent cyberbullies in middle school, harassing other girls and boys. Cyberbullying at the elementary school level is typically boy to boy due to the higher percentage of boys who play online games as opposed to girls.

Twenty percent of kids in the fourth through sixth grade have reported one type of cyberbullying when playing games, including:

- Password theft
- Accessing and stealing virtual items
- Mean messages

What parents can do

Parental involvement is key to preventing cyberbullying and keeping kids safe online. Marsali Hancock, president and CEO of the Internet Keep Safe Coalition (www.ikeepSAFE.org), recommends the following tips for parents to keep their children safe online:

- Keep current with technology. You don't have to be an expert, but a little understanding goes a long way towards keeping your child safe online. Get basic technical training and learn about new products as they are released.
- Keep communicating with your child about what he or she is experiencing on the Internet and with technology in general. Know their lingo, and ask when you don't understand something. Work to keep communication lines open.
- Keep checking your child's Internet activity. Know where they go online. Let them know that you will keep checking because you want them to understand that the Internet is a public forum and never truly private.
- Keep participating with your child's online activities. They are the experts, so you can ask them to help you. Not only will your knowledge of the digital world be strengthened — so will your relationship with your children.

"When we ask our kids what is going on at school they often reply 'not much,' but when we play online games with them, they start to talk about other things going on in their lives, too — it is a great way to ease into conversations that may otherwise be difficult to get started," said Mary Heston, director of the WiredSafety's Wiredmoms program.

What kids can do

"Cyberbullying starts early and lasts a lifetime," said Parry Aftab, founder and Executive Director of WiredSafety, home of StopCyberbullying.org and Wiredkids.org. "We have to teach our children good digital hygiene — about password safety and following the Internet Golden Rule — don't do anything online that you wouldn't do offline."

Here are some other things kids can do to help prevent cyberbullying:

- Protect your identity and reputation by being careful not to share your name, contact information, or pictures.
- Realize that what is put in the digital world can stay there forever. Only post pictures that you would want your parents, peers and school to see.
- Create secure passwords. Passwords should be easy to remember, hard to guess. If you have to write it down, it's too hard to remember. If it's a pet's name, your middle name, your favorite sports team, etc., it's too easy to guess. Remember, a combination of numbers and letters is always best.
- Don't share your passwords. Don't allow kids to give out their password to others. Eighty-five percent of elementary school students and 70 percent of teens polled said they shared their password with at least one friend. That's one friend too many. Friends can be cyberbullies too, signing onto your account, impersonating you and possibly embarrassing you. They can also change your password, locking you out of your account.

Tax-exempt competition

■ Continued from page 1

it's more like one in three. But our charitable status isn't only based on scholarships for the poor. We offer other things to the community that entitle us to keep our 501(c)(3) status."

In 2011 the Tampa Metropolitan Area YMCA provided area residents more than \$7.1 million in scholarships.

Meanwhile, local businesses are worried that the new Y's proposed location – which would be visible right off the Apollo Beach Interstate exit- will keep people from going into Apollo Beach to use their facilities.

"I was planning an expansion but have now put my plans on hold until I hear what happens with the Y," said Phillip Penticost, owner of Victory Martial Arts Academy on Apollo Beach Boulevard. "An expansion is a 5-year business plan and now I don't know what's going to happen."

Penticost, who originally came to Florida from England, has been in business in Apollo Beach for two years.

Nancy and Rusty Solomon, owners of the Tampa Bay Martial Arts Academy, have been in Apollo Beach 14 years. Offering three complete programs, kickboxing, self defense and after school for youth, they also plan a summer camp.

Andy Keith was kickboxing in the same class as his two daughters, 5 and 7, when I arrived to take photographs. He said he's there because he wants his girls to learn to defend themselves.

Eileen Eletto was also kicking up a storm Saturday morning. At 68, Eileen has been kickboxing about three months and says her energy and strength have never been better. "I'm preparing for my 50th class reunion and I want to look good," she told me.

But the real strength of the Solomon's programs was laid out by Shellie Nichols, whose three sons take part.

"Nothing the Y or any other program can do can replace these people," said Nichols. "The Solomons are active with the whole family and with the schools. This presents a triangle of communication so the boys know everyone is in contact and aware of their actions."

Her son Andrew, 8, said he loves the program because it helps him make better decisions. "It helps me control myself," he said.

Andrew's older brothers John Paul, 13 and Alex, 17 also take part and Alex also helps out with the kids after school.

Bruce Davis, owner of Flip Flops and Fitness in Apollo Beach, thinks Wimauma or Gibsonton would have been more suitable for the clientele the YMCA is trying to serve.

"The YMCA talks about its scholarships for families that can't afford to belong," Davis said. "So why not put it in an area like Wimauma or Gibsonton where there would be lots more who can't afford to join health clubs?"

Many business owners pointed out that the current proposed location is near master planned communities along the Big Bend corridor that all have their own pools, tennis courts and gyms.

Davis says his main concern is traffic – especially the Interstate entrance and exit- at Apollo Beach. "It is so very dangerous and will eventually need a cloverleaf like Brandon has.

When St. Joseph's (hospital) and the mall are built on Big Bend, it will be terrible. It's bad enough now. I don't see why the county doesn't designate this particular plot of land for road improvements that can be made by the state."

Davis, a former trainer of Olympic gymnasts, says people who are serious about gymnastics will seek him out anyway because of his reputation with Olympians. "I'm not worried about losing business," he stated. "But I think the area chosen for the project is all wrong for the community."

Teo Leonard, owner of Tampa PC Networks on Boytte Road in Riverview, has a different concern.

Leonard was on the board of his church when it was working with the YMCA to possibly go together and buy land on U.S. 301. "This was way before the "needs study" they are referring to now. "Because I was on the board of the church when we were deciding whether to work with the Y I know the facts presented (by Tom Looby and county officials) at the meeting (in January in Gibsonton) are incorrect. The county has decided where it wants this facility to go and has already made up its mind."

Leonard's church, the South Shore Methodist Church that used to meet at East Bay High school, eventually merged with Big Bend Methodist Church instead of working with the YMCA. "We just decided it wouldn't be a good fit," he said.

Carrie Elwell, who owns Kids R Kids child care in Kings Lake Plaza on Big Bend Road along with her husband Kevin, says what worries her most about the county putting out money in a joint public-private project is that there is a budget crunch.

"There is an educational budget crisis in our state and county causing established and effective programs, such as School Readiness and the county's Parks and Recreation programs to be cut or eliminated," Elwell said. "These, and other targeted programs, had been effective in helping an underserved and at-risk population of our community's

children. In light of this, it seems counter-intuitive for the county to provide millions of dollars in tax breaks and land grants to a quasi-public entity."

Last week's *Observer News* contained a story about the county entertaining a proposal to allow the YMCA to be built on what is currently listed as ELAPP land (ELAPP being the Environmental Acquisition and Protection Program) by using a clause in ELAPP documents that has not been used before. Those who have not read that story may find it at www.observernews.net.

The public, both residents and business owners, may attend any of three meetings scheduled before the County Commission votes on whether to allow the currently-protected land to be released for use by the YMCA.

One of them is scheduled in the Planning Commission board room at its regular monthly board meeting May 14 at 2 p.m. Then, the same day at 5:30 p.m. there will be another chance for the public to comment at an open meeting also at the Planning Commission at County Center. At that meeting the Planning Commission will vote on whether to approve a measure presented by staff to allow land currently under the preservation program ELAPP to use its "acquisition of convenience" clause and release the land for use by the YMCA.

If the Planning Commission approves the measure, then County Commissioners will vote June 7 at 6 p.m. after giving the public a final chance to comment.



PENNY FLETCHER PHOTOS

Nancy and Rusty Solomon (in the center of the back row) and their Saturday morning students take a moment to explain how their exercises help people of any age. The Solomons own and operate the Tampa Bay Martial Arts Academy at 6038 U.S. 41 in Apollo Beach.



Kids R Kids Southshore in Kings Lake Plaza on Big Bend Road in Apollo Beach is just one of the many private child care facilities in South County that picks children up after school in its own bus and takes them to their after school program.



Eileen Eletto, 68, has only been training for three months and says she feels better than she has in years.

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Corr Elementary's Terrific Kids recognized for making responsible choices.

The 40+ students Pre-K through 5 each received certificates for their responsible choices. Corr Elementary's teachers and staff are all very proud of these Terrific Kids. Pre-K – Jaymen Ituriaga, Joshua Johnson; K – Javier Marin, Andrew Artau, Miguel Ramos, Diego Roblero-Perez, Dylan King, Melanie Munoz, Alex Pedraja, Brayden Smith, Lia Muniz; 1 – Makaila Bowie, Johan Galindo, Joshua Shanahan, Sterling Washington, Aishwarya Ramirez, Desmond Nieto, Kayla Mason, Pedro Llanas, Yesenia Reyna; 2- Jayden Hazel, Hector Rodriguez, Hector Rodriguez, Jennifer Landeros-Lopez, Anna Chen, Kamrynn Lovell, Alexander Elliot; 3 – Bradley Sylva, Celeen Castro, Shay Hickman, Valerie Moody, David Muniz, Abigail Sexton, Krystal Villegas, Jefferson Jean-Pierre; 4 – Micah Gaston, Veronicka Llanas, Mikayla Harris, Adecia Richardson, Kimberly Lazano, Jourdan Green, Jesus Garcia; 5- Yasmien Farsakh, Meagan Difilippo, Victor Porras, Zachary Kennedy, Antonio Robinson, Nazlie Casiano-Diaz, Brian Ayala.

Genealogy Society to meet

The South Bay Genealogical Society will feature Ann Mohr Osisek who will discuss library sources at noon on Tuesday, May 15 at the SouthShore Regional Library.

Ann has served as Managing Instructor for the Genealogy Programs at Disney Institute in Orlando; taught genealogy classes for the Orange County, FL; Adult Education Program for nineteen years; and has been a computer lab genealogy instructor at the Seminole County, FL Community College.

This luncheon meeting is \$13 and reservations are required by

Wednesday, May 9 by calling Beth Clarke at (813) 642-9329.

The Society provides "Ask a Genealogist" assistance at SouthShore Regional Library on a scheduled basis, holds monthly program meetings, plus workshops and seminars to assist those tracing their family history. Membership is open to all South County residents who have an interest in genealogy.

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 2 p.m. Horseshoes

UPCOMING EVENTS

- Friday, April 27 7-11 p.m. Caribbean Cowboys
 - Saturday, April 28 7-11 p.m. Karaoke with Kim Mullins
- All events are open to qualified Moose members and guests

Art classes offered for elementary school age children

Classes will be offered once again for elementary-age children at the Big Draw Studio. The first series of three classes will focus on drawing skills using different medias. The second series will focus on creating three-dimensional artworks.

The cost for each series is \$45 and includes all supplies.

Series 1:

- Monday, April 30, May 7 and 14
- 4 p.m. to 5 p.m. for ages 6-8
- 5 p.m. to 6 p.m. for ages 9-11

Series 2

- Monday, May 21, June 4 and 11
- 4 p.m. to 5 p.m. for ages 6-8
- 5 p.m. to 6 p.m. for ages 9-11

Each class size is limited to 12 children. To register and reserve your spot, email Margit Redlawsk at mmredlawsk@gmail.com. Pre-pay at www.ruskinbigdraw.com.



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Area Obituaries



Joyce M. Beehler

Joyce M. Beehler, 89, died April 15, 2012 of various age related causes. Joyce was born in New Jersey on February 9, 1923.

After graduation from Jersey City State Teachers College, Joyce moved with her best friend to Arizona.

In August, 1947 Joyce married John Beehler in Phoenix, AZ. They were later divorced and Joyce moved back to New Jersey with her two daughters.

Joyce taught elementary school in Westwood, NJ until her retirement in 1988. Upon retirement, she moved to Sun City Center, FL.

Joyce is survived by two daughters, one grandchild, two great grandchildren and her lifelong friend, Carol Sorehagen.

Joyce was cremated in Ruskin, FL. No memorial service is planned at this time.



Wellington H. (Wellie) Ent

Wellington H. (Wellie) Ent, 91, of Sun City Center, passed away peacefully at home on Monday, April 16. He had resided with his daughter, Linda, during his illness of the past six months and was surrounded by his loving daughters at the time of his passing. He was born and raised in Bloomsburg, Pennsylvania, the son of the late Wellington H. and Miriam C. (Brink) Ent. He was one of four children and was the last surviving member of his family. He graduated from Bloomsburg High School in 1938 and served in the U.S. Navy during World War II. He worked in the family owned bus company for many years before driving for Friedman's Express, Wilkes Barre, PA, until his retirement in 1982. After living in Bloomsburg most of his life, he moved to Florida over 24 years ago and enjoyed his active retirement in Sun City Center, FL. He was a member of the Sun City Center Shrine Club and the Egypt Temple of Tampa and was a 32nd degree Mason in the DeSoto Masonic Lodge, Riverview, FL. He was also a member of the Scottish Rite Club, Sun City Center, the former SCC High Twelve Club, the DeSoto Chapter #201 of the Order of the Eastern Star, Ruskin, FL, the Elks Lodge #2672, Ruskin, FL, the Masonic Oriental Lodge #460, Orangeville, PA, a lifetime member of American Legion Post #541, Bloomsburg, PA, and the Honorable Order of Kentucky Colonels, Louisville, KY. When in good health, Wellie was active in the Shrine Club and believed passionately in his volunteer work at the Shriners Childrens Hospital in Tampa. He also had been a former volunteer member of the Sun City Center Security Patrol.

He is survived by his two daughters, Linda McCown and Patricia Casacci, both of Sun City Center, a stepson, Douglas Hippensteel, and his wife,

Wellington H. Ent obituary continued at top of page

Wellington H. Ent obituary continued

Kathy, Millville, PA, and a stepdaughter, Joyce Wolf and her husband, Dale, Orangeville, PA, several nieces and nephews and step-grandchildren, and one step-great grandchild. He was predeceased by his son, David Ent, in 1983, by his three wives, Virginia M. Ent in 1979, Ruth Hippensteel Ent in 1987, and Marguerite Ent (of Sun City Center) in 2001, by his parents and his two sisters, Eleanor Ent Pollock, Mansfield, PA and Ruth Ent Lupini, Bloomsburg, PA and his brother, Charles (Chick) Ent, Berwick, PA.

A Celebration of Wellie's Life, which will include a Masonic Service, will be held on Monday, April 30, at 11:00 AM at St. Andrews Presbyterian Church, 1239 Del Webb Boulevard West, Sun City Center, with the Reverend Dr. Mark Salmon officiating. A reception will be held in the Church Hall immediately following the services.

Cremation arrangements were made by Zipperer's Funeral Home in Ruskin, and burial of his ashes will take place at a later date in the family plot in Pennsylvania. Memorial contributions may be made in his memory to the Shriners Childrens Hospital in Tampa or to Lifepath Hospice of Sun City Center.

Larry Mirkle

Larry Mirkle, 60, lost his battle with cancer on March 20, 2012. He is survived by his wife Karen; sons, Scott (Kristin) and Charlie (Sarah); brother, Charles; sisters, Jody Hamilton, Susan Gibbons, Barb (Jim) Stenger and 3 grandchildren.

Marvin J. Schmitt

The Honorable Marvin J. Schmitt, 93, passed away Monday, April 23.

He is survived by his wife, Patricia; daughter, Claudia; son, John; 3 grandchildren and 2 great grandchildren. Mr. Schmitt was a retired Federal Court Judge who began his legal career as an attorney for the National Labor Relations Board. He was also a decorated veteran of WWII, rising to the rank of Staff Sergeant in the USAF. He will be greatly missed by family and friends.

The service will be held at 10:30 a.m. on Saturday, April 28 at St. Anne's Church in Ruskin.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the St. Anne's Building Fund. Checks can be sent to 106 11th Ave NE, Ruskin, FL 33570

National Day of Prayer is May 3

The National Day of Prayer will be held from 7 to 9 p.m., Thursday, May 3 at Legends Field, 3802 Martin Luther King Blvd., Tampa. The stadium can hold 10,400 people in the infield. This event is sponsored by members of the Community Campaign.

Chai Chapter of Hadassah to meet

You won't want to miss author, poet and presenter Fran Orenstein who will be the guest speaker at the Chai Chapter of Hadassah monthly meeting at 1:30 p.m. on Thursday, May 17 at Beth Israel, 1115 Del Webb E., Sun City Center. This event is open to members and non-members. Refreshments will be served.

R.S.V.P. to Carol at monkey-andwife@yahoo.com, or call 813-829-7227.

Churches unite for National Day of Prayer

The South Hillsborough Ministerial Association (SHMA) will host a local expression of the 61st Annual National Day of Prayer. This year's event will be held from 4 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, May 3 at E. G. Simmons Park located at 2401 19th Avenue NW, Ruskin. The theme for this year is "One Nation Under God." All local pastors, congregations, intercessors, ministries, and others interested in "prayer" in the South Hillsborough community are invited to participate. Families are welcomed. Restrooms and playgrounds are available. Free food and drinks will be available. This year, SHMA will underwrite the Park entry fee. Upon arrival at the gate, mention: "National Day of Prayer Event."

For more information, call 813-645-1538. www.shmasouthshores.org

Community Sing planned

South Hillsborough Ministerial Association (SHMA), an organized, interactive group of local church ministers and congregations committed to the work of The Lord Jesus Christ in South Hillsborough County, will facilitate the monthly "Community Sing" on Monday, April 30 at the Maranatha Church of God located at 55 6th Avenue S.E., Ruskin, FL beginning at 7 p.m. Grace and Truth Fellowship International will be the "host" Church. A "Worship Prelude" to the sing will begin at 6:30 p.m. Refreshments will be served.

For more information call (813) 634-5585.

Living Well Women's Retreat May 4th & 5th

Join us for a fun-filled weekend as we learn how to love well! The Women's Ministry of South Bay Church will be hosting a two-day BETH MOORE video retreat **Fri., May 4, 5:30 to 9 p.m. & Sat., May 5, 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.** Register and pay online through April 22 at www.SouthBay.cc. \$25 per person. Email info@southbay.cc for more information.

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From left to right: Doreen Cruz, Mayda Cruz-Maxwell (kneeling), Mary Houston, Alice Tolley, Beverly Majewski, Rev. Bill Cruz, Paula Lickfeldt, Mission Chair Beverly Bassette, and Audrey Vietzke

Lord's Lighthouse Mission receives donation

The Mission Board of The United Community Church, 1501 La Jolla Avenue visited the Lord's Lighthouse Mission to present a check for their very special work and care in the community. The Lord's Lighthouse Mission is located in Ruskin and was founded by Pastor Bill and Dora Cruz with the assistance and association of St. John the Divine Episcopal Church. There they offer Spanish services on Sunday as most of the clients are Hispanic. They have a food bank, provide help with obtaining social services, provide meals to the needy, clothing, weekly food baskets to about 250 families, crisis intervention, spiritual counseling, and general information and support to those in need. Rev. Bill and Dora began after their retirement from the Good Samaritan Mission and it is a family run operation with their two daughters helping. The church presented a check for \$1,505 from the Mission of the Month fund.

CCW- Card Party planned

The Council of Catholic Women of Prince of Peace Catholic Church invites anyone who likes to play cards or any board game to make up a table in advance and come to their monthly Dessert Card Party on Wednesday, May 9 from noon until 3:30 p.m. in Conesa Center. They furnish cards, pencils and tallies. They have an assortment of desserts plus table and door prizes. For more information call 813-633-2460.

Vacation Bible School planned

Registration begins May 1 for the DoDad's Discovery Lab, where children will discover and learn about the Fruits of the Spirit at St. Andrew's United Methodist Church on 3315 Bryan Road in Brandon. The classes are for children ages 3 years (as of 9/1/2011) through 5th grade. The cost is \$25 per child, at a maximum per family of \$50. If the parent/grandparent/adult family member volunteers (a background check is required) and the registration fee is waived for the first child and a 50% discount for the second and there after child. Family maximum is \$50. Online registration and payment is available at the church website www.saumc.net. For more information, call 813-689-6849.

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While in Rome, I walked into a store to buy a shirt. But when I reached for my billfold, it wasn't in my hip pocket. "Sorry," I said, "I don't have my money."
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 Why couldn't I buy that shirt? I didn't have any money? No, I had money, but I didn't know I had it.
 Do you know why Christians are defeated? They don't know they have the power of God. But have the Son of God and you'll have His strength.
 St. Paul said, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."
 For more visit TheSower.com



Members of the KidzKlub. KidzKlub of United Methodist Church receives Lockmiller Grant

The Children's Coalition of the Florida Conference of the United Methodist Church has awarded a prestigious 2012 Lockmiller Grant to KidzKlub, a weekly Children's Ministry focusing on children in South Hillsborough County. The Lockmiller Grant is awarded to programs that reach out into the community to meet the needs of children and their families in economic and/or social stress. The grant recognizes outstanding programs which focus on hunger reduction, educational enrichment, parenting skills and physical recreation. Under the leadership of Pat Hill, Director of Ministries, the United Methodist Church has plans to expand all areas of Children's Ministry. For more information, call 813-634-2539 or visit www.sccumc.com.

Youth music program receives support

The South Shore Symphony Orchestra has received a grant for a musical youth instrumental lesson program to be held at the Firehouse Cultural Center in Ruskin. The South Shore Symphony Orchestra will present a program called the "Young Student after School Music Lesson Program." Mr. Galati, President of the SSSO said, "This program is for those students that would like to learn to play a musical instrument. The program will be starting shortly for children from ages 9 to 13 in elementary and middle school in SouthShore.
 Lessons will be in a class setting at the new Firehouse Cultural Center in Ruskin. The lesson program will include most musical instruments used in an orchestra or band. These lessons will be for all students and will be taught by professional musicians from the South Shore Symphony Orchestra or by other professional musicians and teachers." An announcement will be made as to the exact start date and sign-up dates for these lesson programs.
 The SSSO is pleased to accept this grant from the Interfaith Action Council of Sun City Center with funds from the Nearly New Shop of Sun City Center. These funds will help the youth of SouthShore enjoy the experience of learning music and playing a musical instrument.
 The SSSO will also form a Jr. /Youth orchestra and/or band from these funds and musicians or others that already play a musical instrument of the ages 9 to 13. This Grant will help students rent to own new musical instruments for a low monthly fee with a 0% interest rate for the life of the rental loan. Those that already play an instrument can join the Jr. orchestra/band immediately and are eligible to rent to own instruments also.

Muslim precepts presented to Sun City Center retirees

■ By MELODY JAMESON

SUN CITY CENTER – Controversy frequently follows Hassan Shibly, Esq., but it does not so much as slow down this advocate for Islam on a mission.

Shibly, whose November presentation to college-bound seniors at Steinbrenner High School raised parental ire and subsequently produced a stormy Hillsborough County School Board session, spoke here last week. He was the invited guest of the Universalist Unitarians.

A U.S. trained attorney admitted to practice in both Florida and federal courts, Shibly heads the Tampa office of the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR). And his mission, he told the 30 or so assembled UUs, is to acquaint non-Muslims with the facts of the faith. It is ignorance, he asserted, that leads to misunderstandings. “When we speak to each other” he added, “we build respect for each other and learn from each other.”

Seeming to separate himself and most other Muslims from those who call themselves Muslim but foment terrorism, Shibly declared “Islam teaches that human rights are often greater than God’s rights,” adding that “you (we) cannot pray to God all day and then hurt people at night.” It is Muslim practice to pray five times each day.

Speaking of God, he continued, Muslims believe that theirs is not a separate God but rather that there is only one, which is neither male nor female, a being above and beyond human comprehension who is represented by the several prophets, which include Abraham, Jesus Christ and Mohammed.

And, he added, “Islam is more tolerant of Christianity than Christianity is of Islam.”

Relating an anecdote about a mother who despaired when she believed she had lost her child, but then recovered the child and experienced unbridled joy, Shibly measured God’s love against that of the joyous mother. “God’s love for humanity is greater than that mother’s unbounded love for her child,” he said.

As part of his overview of Islam, Shibly outlined for the UUs the five pillars of the faith: testimony, prayer, fasting, alms giving and pilgrimage. And, standing before them, he practiced at least the first two.

As the day drew to a close, Shibly excused himself and left the podium for a few moments of silent prayer, joining with millions of Muslims around the world in one of the most obvious rituals that characterizes their faith. He then returned to the group to answer questions.

Asked about the Muslim position on atheism, the attorney replied that in the Islamic faith the one unforgivable failing is to die without ever recognizing God.

And when the subject of Muslim attitudes toward and

treatment of women was raised, Shibly sidestepped and countered that in the context of Islam as it is practiced in his world, in fact, his wife can have more power than he has. Because his wife, in their faith, is entitled to keep all that she earns while his earnings must be used to support her and their family, he said, she may accumulate more materially than he and therefore would have greater power if it is equated with money. He later acknowledged that his wife does not work outside the home.

On the subject of money, Shibly also noted that in the Islamic belief, charging interest on a loan is a greater offense than adultery. To make a loan to someone is commendable because it is helpful, he explained, but to add interest to the loan when due for repayment is unacceptable because it can create a burden which is harmful.

He also acknowledged that there are extremists who distort the Qur’an to fit their agendas. “There never is justification for terrorism he asserted, “but terrorism stems from political differences, not from religious differences.”

Born in Syria but raised in the United States since the age of four, Shibly grew up in a Sunni Muslim home in Buffalo, N.Y., the son of parents who both are professionals. He earned his undergraduate degree as well as his law degree at New York University, Buffalo. Now just 25, he also is married and the father of three children.

It is his three offspring, he told *The Observer* in an interview following the meeting, which drive his dedication to CAIR, primarily a civil rights and anti-defamation organization headquartered in Washington, D.C. He could earn more as an attorney in private practice, he noted, but added that at the present time it is more important to uphold the U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights on the civil rights front. Their precepts protect everyone, he said.

Elaborating on his comments to the UUs concerning women’s rights under Islamic law, Shibly acknowledged there are abuses such as so called “honor killing”



MELODY JAMESON PHOTO
Hassan Shibly, Esq. spoke to SCC group

which is murder of an offending female by her male relatives who perceive themselves to be dishonored. However, he pointed out what he considers a certain “double standard.” American men, in fact, murder women for all kinds of offenses they feel dishonor them, but it simply is not known as “honor killing” he said. Another difference is American criminal law which severely punishes proven murder.

Asked about the several documentary films which have circulated in the U.S. during recent years and focus on reported training camps in several states – Georgia, North Carolina, New

York, Virginia, Colorado – where young Muslim converts are taught how and where to wage war on “infidel” Americans, Shibly emphatically denied they exist. Any effort to overthrow the U.S. government would be blatantly illegal, he insisted, and if such training facilities existed they therefore would be forcefully entered and closed by U.S. law enforcement.

And when it comes to the root of conflicts in the Middle East, Shibly attributed the warfare during the last 60 plus years since Israel was established to “colonization” leading to a “cutting up” and a repopulation of

the area at the expense of peoples with historic claims. This is what has given rise, he indicated, to terrorist groups such as Hasbollah and Hamas.

In Syria today, he noted, bloody battles are ongoing because its people want so badly to have the freedoms others enjoy.

Closer to home, Shibly allowed that he has been threatened from time to time and is vigilant. He and his family, he added, must take security precautions, but their determination to bridge the divide created by the misunderstandings of Islam is not diminished.

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