



MITCH TRAPHAGEN PHOTO

The Weeki Wachee mermaids offer a unique experience. They've been entertaining visitors at the Spring Hill park since 1947.

Fun in the sun for many or one

■ BY PENNY FLETCHER
penny@observernews.net

Are the kids out of school, or are your parents or grown children visiting during summer vacation?

Could be you're just seeking a fun way to spend a day.

Maybe you've seen all the major attractions like Busch Gardens and Adventure Island or just don't like all those crowds. What then, are some of the most unusual things you can do with about a 50-mile driving limit that doesn't cost you a full month's rent or mortgage payment?

I've lived in this area since 1979 and still can't say I've seen anywhere near all of what the 50-mile surrounding area has to offer. You can live here for years and still not have seen (or done) anywhere near everything even once.

So I recently spent some time on the Internet, talked to the staff at local chambers of commerce, drove around and picked up brochures, and finally came up with a list of unusual things our readers might enjoy.

Of course, there are more. This list is only offered as a variety of suggestions. I'm sure you have plenty of your own you'll add once you get behind the wheel of your car.

E.G. Simmons Park, 2401 19th Ave. N.W., Ruskin, has a lot going on. There are leashed pet areas, ADA accessible restrooms, covered shelters, fishing piers and shoreline, a swimming beach, 87 individual camp sites, barbecue grills and picnic areas on its 258 acres of open land and intertwined waterways. Wildlife lovers can also find an additional 200 acres of mangrove swamp that's been preserved as a bird and wildlife sanctuary, and boaters have public launches for access to salt-water fishing upriver or in the Bay.

Other parks in South County also offer whole days of fun, like Lithia Springs Park at 3932 Lithia Springs Rd. in Lithia, less than a mile north of where FishHawk Blvd. meets Lithia-

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The new road connecting Riverview to Westfield Brandon Mall is ahead of schedule and will open months early than expected. See Kevin Brady's update on **page 2**

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With a labor of love, he has something to prove

Kelly Emerson has combined the music in his DNA from a famous father with designs in his mind to fill some big shoes. It turns out, the shoes were his own.

■ By MITCH TRAPHAGEN
mitch@observernews.net

The older woman at the Bullet Free Sky fundraiser left \$50 in the donation box, sitting next to a table of t-shirts and other items for sale. "Thank you for your support!" the volunteer said with sincere gratitude. "Oh, I'm not here for you, I'm here for him," she said pointing to the silver-haired man on the stage with an electric guitar strapped over his shoulder. "I'm a groupie."

The guitarist was Kelly Emerson, performing with his long-time partner Gary Garbelman, bringing everyone in the crowd at the fundraising benefit to their feet. Emerson is a man of diverse talents.

"I'm a senior maintenance supervisor in Sun City Center," he said. "I'm on my 16th year there now. Luckily, the good Lord has blessed me to do it."

The talent for his day job was proven at an early age. When he was five years old, his family home flooded and among the casualties was a destroyed lawnmower.

"I just had this innate curiosity about making it run again," he said. "I didn't know what I was doing but yet I somehow did. I kept trying and trying, finally taking the motor apart one day. I pulled on the cord and it fired up. Victory, man."

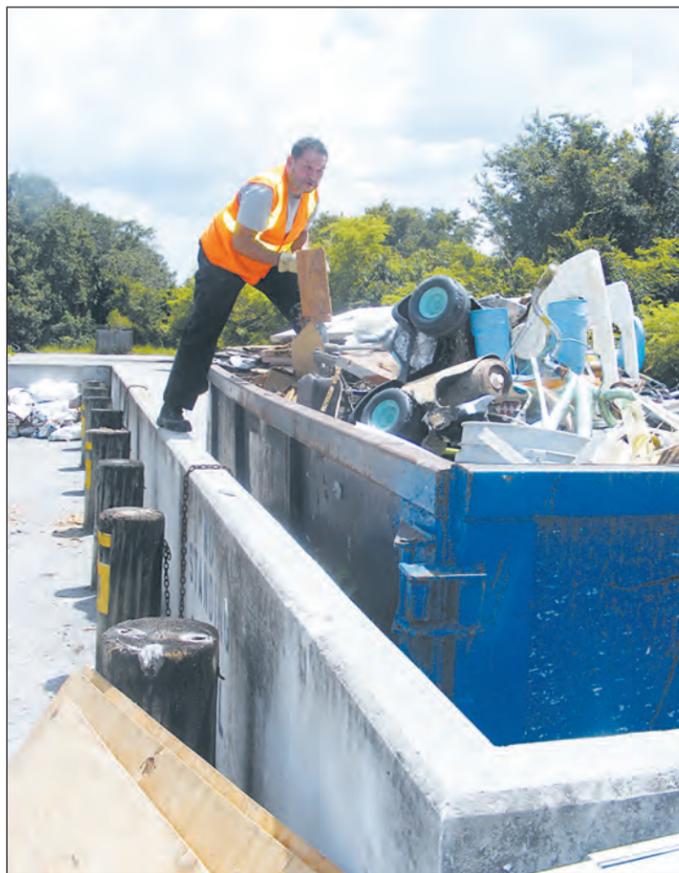
But aside from his wife of seven years, music is his first love. He sometimes calls it a hobby but it is clearly far more than that. Music

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MITCH TRAPHAGEN PHOTO

Emerson on the banjo during last week's benefit performance at the Firehouse Cultural Center. He appeared with long-time musical partner Gary Garbelman.



PENNY FLETCHER PHOTO

Workers at the temporary dump site, 16180 West Lake Drive, Wimauma, accumulated more than 12 tons of heavy trash items in the first five days of the area cleanup.

Cleanup is easier when people work together

Wimauma residents have until July 16 to get help dumping large items

■ BY PENNY FLETCHER
penny@observernews.net

As of July 8, the fifth working day after the start of a massive cleanup of the Wimauma area, more than 12 tons of trash had been removed from the area by county workers.

"We have several things going on there at once," said Bill Langford, who manages Hillsborough County's Special Code Enforcement Unit. "We're doing Operation Fight the Blight, and also mowing overgrowth and inspecting properties and securing vacant houses and other dangers."

Fight the Blight is a cleanup operation focusing on specific areas of the county where lots of citations for yard garbage and roadside dumping have occurred, Langford said.

Four portable dumpsters are located at 16180 Westlake Dr. in Wimauma, which can be found north of State Road 674 just before the railroad and down about two miles on the left.

Between now and July 16, residents who need help lifting heavy items, including mattresses, washing machines and old refrigerators, may call the county for help. Workers will also be going from yard to yard, and contacting anyone who has received a violation as well.

Langford said men from his department and the county's Public Works Department are working together and many area residents are also helping load their items.

But if someone cannot lift their items and needs help, this is the time to get it done.

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New road connecting Riverview, Brandon Mall to open ahead of schedule

■ By KEVIN BRADY
kevin@observernews.net

South County area drivers are getting an early Christmas present this year, courtesy of Hillsborough County Public Works.

A new road that will connect Riverview to Westfield Brandon Mall, scheduled to open just before the holiday shopping season, is now on track to open months earlier, making that drive to the popular area shopping destination less of a headache on the car if not the wallet.

“Everything is moving right along,” said C.T. Chen, a project manager with Hillsborough County’s Public Works Department. “If everything goes as planned, we are looking at opening in early September.”

Constructing the Gornto Lake Road extension is expected to ease congestion at the entrance and exits from Interstate 75 on State Road 60 as well as the mall. The extension is expected to handle about 20,000 vehicles a day.

The \$3.95 million roadway will stretch for 0.7 miles from State Road 60 to about 800 feet south of Town Center Boulevard and has been on the books since 2006.

The road will give South County drivers a straight shot to the mall from U.S. Highway 301 and Bloomingdale Avenue along Gornto Lake Road into the mall’s rear entrance.

Mall officials are excited the new roadway will open early.

“We have been working with the county for some time to get this in place and we are thrilled it is finally coming to fruition,” said Dawn Arvidson, Westfield Brandon’s marketing director. “It’s



PHOTO BY KEVIN BRADY

Constructing the Gornto Lake Road extension is expected to ease congestion at the entrance and exits from Interstate 75 on State Road 60 as well as the Westfield Brandon Mall.

even better that it will be finished early.”

The new road will not only give shoppers an extra access point to the mall but will also alleviate some of the overflow traffic that frequently cuts through the shopping center. Drivers trying to reach State Road 60 from Providence Road often use the mall as a short cut. They will now be able to use the new extension road.

“It will just be easier for people to now get in and out of our property. It’s certainly a positive for us,” Arvidson said.

Good weather, the absence of any major storms and the lack of any underground pipes have helped speed the project along, Chen said.

“The weather has cooperated and we have a lot less underground work to worry about with this road because it’s an extension and a new road. Even when the afternoon summer storms started, we already had the blacktop in place; otherwise it might have washed out the work we had already done.”

Chen also credited workers on the project, which is being over-

seen by QGS Development Inc.

“They have done a really good job and been very diligent about working with the contractor.”

Martin Bebbington, owner of Euro Café, a European deli on State Road 60, a stone’s throw from the new roadway, can’t wait for the project to be complete.

“The congestion around this area is really bad at times, especially around the holidays,” Bebbington said.

“Due to the increase in residential and commercial development in the Brandon area, there was a need for an additional north-south corridor between State Road 60 and Lumsden Road (Causeway Boulevard),” according to a county report outlining the project.

Ground broke on the project last October, a response to years of congestion around the mall that is home to more than 100 businesses including Macy’s, Apple and Dillard’s.

“It will definitely make a big difference, especially around Christmas time, relieving pressure around the mall because most people use just one way in and out now,” Chen said.

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Wed., July 17 • 1:30-2:30 p.m. • Low Vision Support Group Facilitated by Ana Maria Oliva, M.D. Do you have an interest in cataract surgery or corneal transplants, have dry eye? Why not ask the Doctor? Dr. Oliva specializes in these and many other disorders and is ready to assist you! During the summer months, our meeting will consist of “caring and sharing” so please attend and share your challenges and successes!

Thurs., July 18 • 11 a.m. - 2 p.m. • FREE BALANCE TESTING! Are you concerned that you are at risk of falling? If you feel that your balance may be an issue, be sure to play it safe and have your FREE Balance Screening today! Hosted by Jennifer Nelson with Comprehensive Home Care. Refreshments will be provided.

Tues., July 23 • 2-3 p.m. • Amputee Support Group Facilitated by Ty Wilson, Patient Care Advocate with Orthotic & Prosthetic Centers. The group is open to amputees, their family, friends and involved medical personnel. It is our goal to enrich the lives of amputees and help them reach their full potential. The tools used are peer support, education and activism.

Thurs., July 25 • 10-11 a.m. • Legislative Changes in Higher Education for Seniors? Dr. Craig D. Hardesty, Dean of Academic Affairs at HCC Southshore Campus will be present to discuss upcoming legislative changes in higher education and future plans for the Southshore HCC Campus along with continuing education opportunities available for seniors. Don’t miss this opportunity to learn what may be available for you!

Thurs., July 25 • 2:30-4 p.m. • Mental Wellness Support Group Facilitated by Edmond Dubreuil MSW, RCSWI mental health professional. Supported by: South Shore Coalition on Mental Health & Aging and United Methodist Church of Sun City Center.

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Observations: A test of faith?

I can whine a lot. I can wax on melodramatically about this and that, the good old days, things I should have done and so on, but I seem to have problems just enjoying the now. Sometimes there is a reason for that.

Florida can be a nut farm. When something truly bizarre happens in other states, people always seem to be surprised that it didn't happen in Florida. Or, perhaps, it already had happened, except even weirder. Florida is a paradise to visit but it can sometimes be a very difficult place to live.

And just when I'm ready to write off Florida, along comes Robert.

I love old sports cars but in the heat of the summer, nothing can beat the arctic-cold air conditioning of my old Ford Ranger. The truck has had a long and hard life but it keeps on going. At least it did until we stopped by SweetBay in Ruskin on the Fourth of July to pick up some snacks. We loaded our groceries into the cramped cab, started it up (with the arctic-cold A/C blasting) and...nothing. It wouldn't move. The shifter just flopped around uselessly. That's how we met Robert.

I was enjoying nothing about the "now" as our insurance company told us our wonderful roadside assistance package didn't cover our old truck. It was a holiday, and I was wondering who would come out to tow us to a mechanic? And worse, how much would it cost?

Michelle called SunPoint Automotive and Towing in Ruskin and before long, Robert pulled up in a big truck. I told him the transmission lever was

flopping around but that it seemed to be stuck in park so it would have to be towed from the back since the rear wheels were locked.

"No, I don't think so," Robert said. "I'll just follow you there."

And with that, he crawled under the truck sitting in a rain-soaked parking lot and told me to keep my foot on the brake. Within a moment, I felt the truck shift into drive. We were mobile again

and, as promised, he followed us to the auto repair center. He then crawled under the truck again and shifted it into park.

Robert noticed the groceries we had in the cab and asked, "So how are you getting home?"

We told him that we lived only a few miles away and thought we'd walk.

"Hop in," he said.

When it came time to pay the bill, Robert refused. "I didn't tow you," he said. We had to force some bills into his hand and he drove away from our house with our profuse thanks and my spirits dramatically lifted. There really are good people here, and this community is made better because of Robert. That involves more than saving a few bucks; it is a priceless uplifting of the spirit.

When we got home, I could feel something was wrong in the house. My cat and best buddy, Emma, was missing.

She likes to go outside, mostly to sit on the top of the stairs at the front door to snooze or chirp at the birds and squirrels. I only let her out for short periods and she

would rarely leave the yard. She isn't young but there is something timeless about her. I've had so many conversations with her over the years, and she would



Observations
By Mitch Traphagen
mitch@observernews.net

actually talk back — or sometimes just look at me with her emerald green eyes and rub her face against mine. Emma convinced me long ago that cats could have deep empathy.

And now she is gone. We walked the streets of our neighborhood, searching the gullies

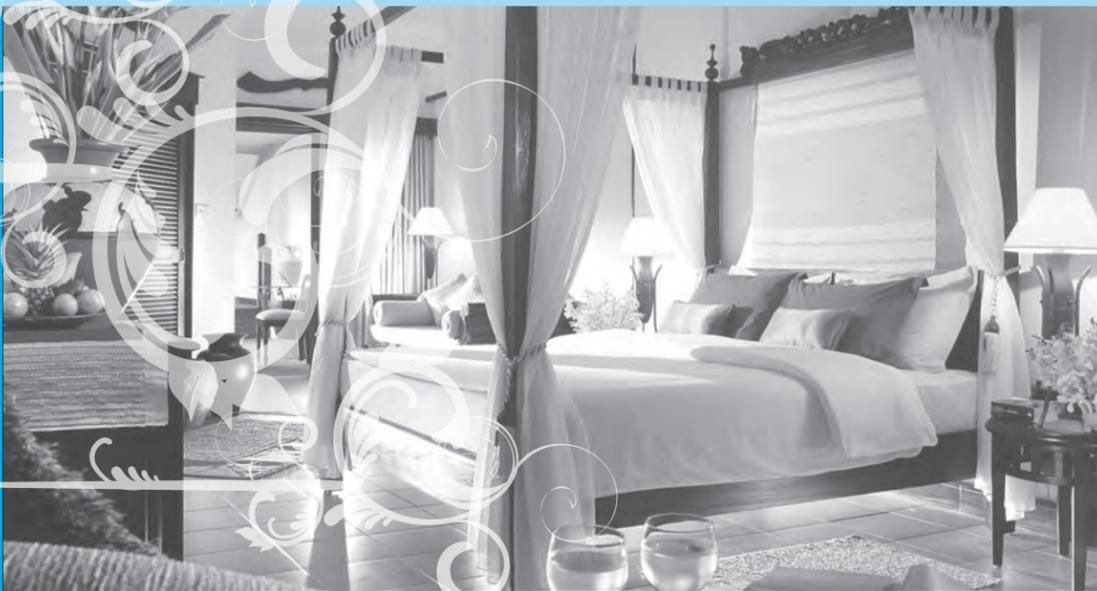
and putting up signs. We talked to the neighbors and the guests at the resort across the street. There was no trace of her. In the middle of the day, she simply vanished. I am heartbroken in ways that far exceed my limited ability to describe it. For those who may think, "It's just a cat," I won't try to explain it, but I know there are many who can understand.

I 'get' things like starvation in Somalia. That is an immense human problem, and it is something that humans who believe and have faith should work to resolve. It is our responsibility to do better for the weakest among us. We most certainly can do better. But in this world, it seems the meek are exploited by those who are oh-so-successful at greed. The meek are shouted down in anger by those who want more for themselves. Where is God in all of that? Perhaps He is being shouted down as well.

Last week a 13-year-old girl disappeared from Ruskin. On Saturday, two 16-year-old girls

▶ Continued on page 6

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Positive Talk: A matter of luck? I think not

One man sits and complains, while another acts on his plan. One man falls behind, as another moves up the ladder of success. One man laments that he just doesn't have any luck, while another is busy making his luck. Each of us has the choice to be like the first man or the second. Our future is in our hands. It is not so much a matter of luck as it is of planning and work.



By William Hodges

If you feel that you are not as successful as you wish to be and luck seems to be eluding you, here are some ideas that just might help you to move in the right direction.

- Develop a sense of direction — of having a goal; it is important for our very well-being. Without it, we have nothing on which to judge our progress. Can you imagine a quarterback who has been blindfolded, spun around four times, and then told to lead his team to the end zone? The odds against him getting the team there are phenomenal. Yet, every day, when we don't have a plan for our business and personal lives, we try to do just that.
- Take every opportunity to be a leader. If there is a committee being formed, whether it is to work on corporate affairs or charitable actions, volunteer to

be its chairman. The corporate committees give you an opportunity to work with people from all levels of the company. The charitable committees give you the chance to meet and become friends with others outside your own organization.

- Be very considerate of your group's bottom line. Keep your expenses at a minimum and where possible, make suggestions on how to make or save more money. It is no accident that people with strong financial knowledge manage so many companies.
- We can take our future in our own hands or drift aimlessly like a ship that has a broken rudder. It is up to us to make our own luck

- Be thoughtful of your friends, peers, subordinates and supervisors. Treat them all the same — with respect. On special days, send appropriate cards, candy, flowers, or even a phone call to say you are remembering them. It is fun to share in their special occasions. One year a client called to thank us for the card we sent from Hodges Seminars; he said it was the only card he received.
- Create a very high profile for yourself. Take every opportunity to make presentations to management. In order to enhance your presentation skills, attend a speaking workshop or, for long-term improvement, join a Toastmasters club. Toastmasters clubs give assistance and feedback in a non-threatening atmosphere. For more information on how to find a Toastmasters club, check the Internet (Toastmasters.org) or contact me.

- Educate yourself — not only to the requirements of the job you are doing, but also for the job you want and the one above it. This knowledge establishes you as the "expert," and people within your organization will seek your advice.

• Be very considerate of your group's bottom line. Keep your expenses at a minimum and where possible, make suggestions on how to make or save more money. It is no accident that people with strong financial knowledge manage so many companies.

We can take our future in our own hands or drift aimlessly like a ship that has a broken rudder. It is up to us to make our own luck

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. (Bright House channel 950, Verizon channel 30) and Wednesdays at 7:30 p.m. (BH channel 949, Verizon channel 36). The shows can also be viewed at www.hodgesvideos.com. Phone: 824-641-0816. Email: bill@billhodges.com Website: www.billhodges.com

Nominations sought for the Florida Women's Hall of Fame

The Florida Commission on the Status of Women is accepting nominations through Monday, July 15, for the 2013-2014 Florida Women's Hall of Fame.

Since its inception in 1982, the Women's Hall of Fame has recognized and honored Florida women who have made significant contributions to the improvement of life for all Floridians. Last year's inductees were Clara C. Frye formerly of Tampa, Aleene Pridgen Kidd MacKenzie of Miami, and Lillie Pierce Voss formerly of Delray Beach.

The Commission on the Status of Women reviews the nominations and recommends 10 nominees to Governor Rick Scott. The Governor then selects up to three women for induction into the Women's Hall of Fame in March 2014.

Nomination forms may be obtained by visiting fcswnet.net, by calling 850-414-3300, or by writing the Florida Commission on the Status of Women, Office of the Attorney General, PL-01, The Capitol, Tallahassee, FL 32399-1050.

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Fitness One America tackles childhood obesity

The Fitness One America team traveled to Wimauma Elementary School on June 18 to help educate kids on the advantages of exercise and a healthy lifestyle.

The goal of the team is to help support and aid in publicizing Michelle Obama's "Let's Move" campaign in the effort to eliminate the obesity problem that now confronts our nation. The team feels a good place to start is with children and grandchildren, and where better to start than in the local elementary schools?

Childhood obesity has more than tripled in the past 30 years. The percentage of children aged 6-11 years in the U.S. who were obese increased from 7 percent in 1980 to nearly 20 percent in 2008. Similarly, the percentage of adolescents aged 12-19 years who were obese increased from 5 percent to 18 percent over the same period.

According to the Centers for

Disease Control, obese youth are more likely to have risk factors for cardiovascular disease, such as high cholesterol or high blood pressure. In a population-based sample of 5-to-17-year-olds, 70 percent of obese youth had at least one risk factor for cardiovascular disease.

Obese adolescents are more likely to have prediabetes, a condition in which blood glucose levels indicate a high risk for development of diabetes. Children and adolescents who are obese are likely to be obese as adults and are therefore more at risk for adult health problems such as heart disease, type 2 diabetes, stroke, several types of cancer, and osteoarthritis.

Military leaders tell us that a high percent of rejections to the armed services is because of obesity.

During the last three years, the Fitness One America Team has appeared at 19 elementary schools

in Hillsborough County and addressed more than 1,000 children. The program is initiated with a 15-minute fitness talk by Fitness One American Chairman Sol Fried, age 92, who urges the children to take home a copy of his remarks so that the adults may cooperate in helping to avoid obesity.

Stephen Attles spent about 10 minutes leading the children in a few exercises to demonstrate how they can help prevent obesity. A short video is presented showing Sun City Center's seniors engaging in various athletic activities.

After the video, the program is completed with senior ladies Jan Cline and Marilyn Wakeman to emphasize that dancing can be an important part of any exercise program.

For more information contact Sol Fried, chairman, 813-634-7692 or email him at sfried25@tampabay.rr.com.



SCC Women's Chorus welcomes new director

The Women's Chorus of Sun City Center has selected Sherry Jaryszak as the group's new director. Having studied piano for 12 years and organ for four, Sherry is an accomplished pianist and organist. She competed in elite annual music contests from the ages of nine to 18. At the age of ten Sherry began accompanying a children's choir at her church, and added the adult choir, which continued throughout her elementary years. In high school, Sherry played with the orchestra and also accompanied the Freshman Glee Club, concert band, rehearsal the high school choir and took lead parts in school musicals.

Sherry's directing skills had their roots at the second and third grade level, and steadily progressed through the primary grades, high school and church choirs. Most recently she conducted the Christmas Cantata at Calvary Lutheran Church in Apollo Beach, where she teaches and directs music for the blended worship service.

Christmas in July Party at the Borini

The Heartland Club invites the residents of Sun City Center and Kings Point to join them for a full-spread Christmas Dinner on Saturday, July 27. The event will be held in the Kings Point Clubhouse Borini Theater. The doors will open at 5 p.m. and dinner will be served at 5:30 p.m.

Included in the dinner will be salad, roast turkey, ham steak, stuffing, mashed potatoes, vegetables, cranberries, bread and butter, dessert, iced tea and coffee. You are welcome to BYOB for a little holiday cheer.

Following dinner, music for dancing will be provided by DJ Gari from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. The cost is \$13 per person.

For reservations, send checks, payable to Richard Schuler, to Sylvia Eddens, 2517 Lancaster Dr., SCC, FL 33573. To reserve a complete or partial table, send checks for entire group in one envelope.

For questions or more information, call Linda at 813-642-0744 (after noon) or Sylvia at 813-633-9963.

Letter to the editor

What in the world!

Dear Editor:

What in the world is happening to the world? It's like someone started a snowball, rolled it down a hill, and it has been picking up disastrous global events at a phenomenal speed. The entire world seems to have taken a massive dose of PCP, and you get the feeling that some countries have developed a death wish and are doing their damndest to make it happen.

Egypt has ended its revolution. And what did it accomplish? It quite simply replaced one dictator with another. When will it learn?

After 45 years, most of the mid-east still refuses to recognize Israel as a legitimate country. Don't they ever get tired of fighting?

But no country's president has risen to the height of villainy, arrogance, and just plain stupidity as has that of Syria. This seems to be one man who will not stop until his entire country has been rendered devoid of any human habitation — and then he'll be president of nothing!

The mid-east is rife with conflicts that are decimating the population in all its countries. Soon they may all have to consolidate into one new country just to have a population.

Here at home, we had the state of Texas wishing to secede from the Union, but that's recently been knocked down. Why not let them? It would be one less state to use government money.

We have endless drug wars consuming many of the Latin American countries, and they all spill over into ours. Drugs have become the modern life energy drink.

To top it off, our country is in the throes of a gun war — Colombia and Mexico have nothing on us. It seems the price of admission to school these days is bringing a gun. And if it isn't bad enough to have children killing children, we also have adults gunning for them. Children today just don't seem to have a chance at growing up any more.

Every generation's future is unforeseeable. I am told that wars are a necessary way of population control and of providing jobs, and maybe so. Maybe people need wars just as they need religion, but since throughout history more wars have been started because of religion than for any other reason, maybe we are just doomed to perpetuate our mistakes.

Patt Sulzberger
Sun City Center



Stained Glass Club donates \$1,000 to LifePath Hospice

The Stained Glass Club of Sun City Center presented a check for \$1,000 to LifePath Hospice. Front row, from left, are: Sue Wilson, president of the Stained Glass Club; Martha Fellows, Clinical Manager of LifePath Hospice; and Cathy Killian, board member of the club. Back row, from left, are: Pat Patrocky, Gerry Coleman, Mike Killian and Susan Stanis.



UMC donates \$1,286 to PACE

Mary Houston, right, chair of the Mission committee of the United Community Church in SCC, presents a check for \$1,286 to Davia Lerebours of PACE Center for Girls, Inc. a community-based, non-residential prevention, diversion, and early intervention program in Hillsborough County.



Aileen Engel and Mike Swisler are 'featured volunteers' with the SCC Emergency Squad.

Emergency Squad 'Featured Volunteers'

Each month the SCC Emergency Squad selects a volunteer or two to feature in their internal publication, *The Siren*. This month the Squad is sharing the profile with the readers of *The SCC Observer*.

Featured volunteers this month are Aileen Engel and Mike Swisler. Aileen and Mike joined the Squad as First Responders in October, 2009. Both grew up on farms in southwest Ohio, and they celebrated their 31st wedding anniversary on June 26. Mike is a Vietnam Vet who served in the USMC from 1962-1966. Aileen served in the USAF from 1969-1973. Both Aileen and Mike worked with computers as programmers and systems analysts for 30 years. Mike was also a school bus driver for the last seven years before he retired. Since he was a professional driver, he decided to become an ambulance driver. After a year as a First Responder, Aileen decided to take classes to become an EMT. She completed her training and was nationally certified as an EMT in May, 2011. At that time she agreed to work for Team 1 as well as Team 5.

Aileen and Mike enjoy playing golf, biking, working out at the fitness center and going to the beach. Both felt the need to do more. According to Mike, "You can only play so much golf. You need something meaningful to anchor your life around. It's a great feeling knowing you have helped someone in their time of need."

Silverliners will gather July 24

The members of the Florida Gulf Coast Chapter of Eastern Airlines Silverliners International will meet at the Rusty Pelican Restaurant, 2425 Rocky Point Dr. in Tampa on Wednesday, July 24 at 1 p.m.

Silverliners is an organization composed of former flight attendants for Eastern Airlines. They

also invite former flight attendants of other airlines to join.

Membership information may be obtained from Barbara Reed 813-671-3078 or Janice Henry, 813-837-4312.





Tricolor Flooring opens new showroom in Ruskin

On June 27 the Sun City Center Area Chamber of Commerce held a ribbon-cutting for Tricolor Flooring's new showroom at 2202 S. US Hwy. 41 in Ruskin. The firm offers a range of quality flooring and carpeting at wholesale prices. For more information, call 813-645-1201.

Artists wanted!

The Valencia Lakes Arts and Crafts Festival, set for Saturday, Oct. 5, is looking for artists and crafters who want to participate.

If you are interested, call 305-794-1955 or visit www.valencia-lakes-festival.com.



Local business helps Scouts fight off mosquitos

Boy Scout Troop #2140 in Ruskin is grateful to the donation of Reedy Plumbing, Inc., based in Wimaum, through the generosity of its supplier, the Gorman Company. The company donated enough pvc pipe and fittings for the troop to craft frames for mosquito netting to use over their cots at this year's Scout Summer Camp in Flaming Arrow. The mosquitos, extremely aggressive this year, threatened to put a damper on the whole summer camp experience. Thanks to Reedy Plumbing, the boys will be able to sleep more soundly this year.



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SouthShore Regional Library

Kids program/event highlights

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Baby Time - Monday, July 15 at 1:35 p.m.

Tuesday, July 16 at 11:35 a.m.

Wednesday, July 17 at 10:05 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.

Toddler Time - Tuesday, July 16 at 10:05 a.m. & 10:35 a.m.

Wednesday, July 17 at 10:35 a.m.

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

Story Time - Tuesday, July 16 at 11 a.m.

Wednesday, July 17 at 11 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.

The Selfish Giant - Tuesday, July 16 at 1 p.m. & 2:15 p.m.

For children entering grades K-5 ~ Join Orisiris on an African advFor children entering grades K-5 ~ Bits 'N Pieces Puppet Theatre uses marionettes to tell the story of how a boy and his friends teach a giant how selfishness can bring sadness and pain, and sharing can warm the heart and build friendship. A puppet-making workshop will follow the performance. Funded by the Friends of the SouthShore Regional Library.

Just Dig It - Wednesday, July 17 at 2 p.m.

For children entering grades K-5 ~ Seeds, sun and fun are all a part of this summer program sure to sprout some creativity and laughter. Plow, sow and water with books, games, activities and crafts.

Comic Book Club - Thursday, July 18 at 4 p.m.

For teens entering grades 6-12 ~ Comic lovers can join teens with the same interest in this club to create comics and discuss comic favorites!.

Teen Night- Thursday, July 18 at 5 p.m.

Three hours of video games and anime on our large projector screens.

Family Story Time - Thursday, July 18 at 7 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.

Membership with the Friends of the SouthShore Regional Library helps provide the funding for free programs offered at the Library. If you would be interested in becoming a Member of the Friends of the Library, call Jim Duffy at 813-634-1396, www.southshorefriends.com.

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Emma and me.

PHOTO BY MICHELLE TRAPHAGEN



Emma.

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Observations

▶ Continued from page 3

were killed in the jetliner that crashed in San Francisco. Many of the survivors credited divine intervention for their miraculous escape from the crash. Okay, but does that mean that God had something against the two young girls who perished? I don't think so.

When we left for that quick errand, I had assumed Emma was inside the house. I've prayed hard but she hasn't magically appeared, and I haven't heard an answer. Why does everything have to be so mysterious? For those who have suffered, most far more than me, parables can wear thin. Free will? Okay, I know that God won't put a neon sign in the sky, but where's the harm in helping a little cat? Or in holding two 16-year-old girls in a celestial hand when a plane crashes?

Some might also chalk things up to a test of faith. Really? Like an omnipotent grandfather-like figure sitting on high with all of the answers throwing random and painful tests our way? I can't accept that.

And what about a little cat? I'm not exactly asking to part the Red Sea here. If this is a test of faith, it is a horrible test. I can't believe that it is.

Reverend David Looney once wisely said that too many people think of God as an errand boy, expecting favor and fortune for all manners of things. I've tried not to think that way, instead offering thanks for what I have, asking for help for those less fortunate and often asking for help on the many things over the past years I've not always been convinced I could handle on my own.

I am sick that something horrible may have happened, that Emma was hurt and alone and I wasn't there to help. It's been days now and there is still no sign of her. She enjoyed being tucked into bed at night even more than she enjoyed chirping at squirrels. I know that if she could come home, she would. I wonder if my silent words are just a monologue, but in the end, I know the responsibility was mine and praying can't change that. In

the end, God blessed me with her, entrusted me, and any failure was mine.

My faith has been shaken from so many difficult events over the past year, by the hole now in my heart left by my little buddy Emma, and by so much horror in the world from wars and carnage to murders and mayhem. Despite wishes to the contrary, I know that God isn't my errand boy and that, by and large, He has given us the tools to solve problems. It is my responsibility to use those tools rather than simply whine about

things.

Having free will suggests that God is okay with us questioning faith, because I can't imagine that God wants a flock of blind sheep. Most likely my faith will eventually emerge stronger but I wish the circumstances weren't always so damn painful. This isn't how it was supposed to be. Emma is supposed to be here. She's just an innocent cat. She is my friend.

My faith may be shaken but apparently I still have hope. Why else would I go to the door every 20 minutes to see if she's there?

In the meantime, I've prayed for the families of the two young girls, for the family who has since found their missing daughter, and for Emma to come home. Is that hypocritical? Of course it is, but I'm only human. A heartbroken human. At least I know there are good souls out there. I have Robert and many of you to thank for that. I will try to remember that when I run to the door upon waking tomorrow morning, hoping that Emma will be there. I'll try harder when, most likely, I slowly close the door again.

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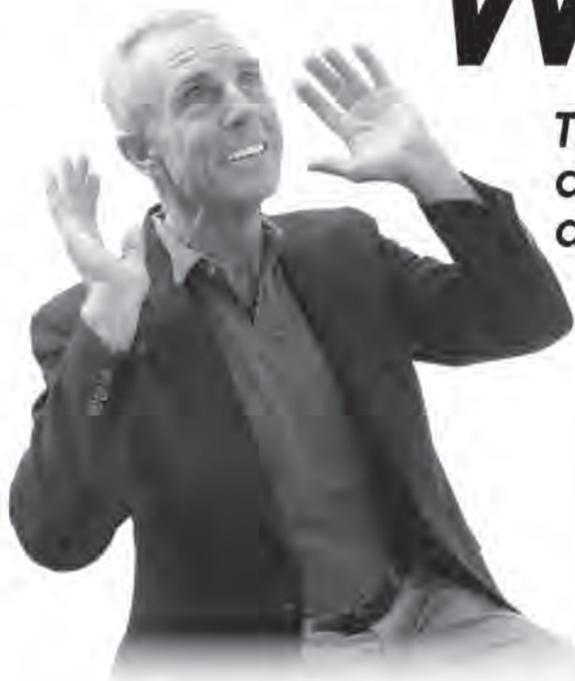


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Dick Gail Majcher and their red Corvette.

SCC Sports Car Club visits Sarasota Jungle Gardens

The SCC Sports Car Club's June Mystery Cruise was another huge success! The Corvettes, Porsches, BMWs, Mercedes, Jaguars and Miatas were all in attendance as Dick & Gail Majcher led the cars from Sun City Center to Sarasota Jungle Gardens in their beautiful red Corvette.

Dick and Gail moved here from Kenosha, WI in 2000. Dick retired from TWA Airlines in 1999, where he was sales manager in Milwaukee. Gail was a travel agent in Kenosha. They enjoy traveling to new and different places as much as possible. Gail works part-time at South Bay Hospital in food services and Dick takes people to and from the airport, or to appointments.

The sports cars departed SCC and enjoyed a beautiful drive through the back roads of Hillsborough and Manatee counties to Sarasota. After arriving, the group enjoyed a special program featuring many of the "Jungle" animals. Sarasota Jungle Gardens first came into being in the early 1930s when local newspaperman David Breed Lindsay purchased 10 acres of land just west of U.S. 41 with plans to develop the virgin subtropical jungle into a botanical garden. Importing thousands of tropical plants, trees and flowers from all over the world, hand-picked because they would flourish harmoniously with native species, the Gardens gradually began to take shape. Some of its prized possessions include the rare Australian Nut Tree, a Bunya Bunya tree, the largest Norfolk Island pine in Florida, Bulrush, Strangler Figs and many other exotic plants. The Jungle Gardens also has a wide variety of birds and animals — many of them rescued — including Florida's noted pink flamingos, lots of parrots, crocodiles, lemurs, snakes and much more. All nestled within 10 acres of lush, tropical landscaping connected by winding jungle trails, it's one of the only places you can walk up to and feed free-roaming flamingos. After visiting the Jungle Gardens, the club traveled to Marina Jack's Restaurant for lunch.

The next Cruise will be on Thursday, July 18. For information on the club, call Gary at 813-634-2405. This is an informal club with no dues and the only bylaws are "to drive a sports car and to have a good time"!



From left are Peggy Gleason, SCC Rotary Club president; Dr. Joe Corcoran, Chief Medical Officer at South Bay Hospital; and Ellie Cardwell, RN, Infection Prevention Nurse at South Bay Hospital.

SCC Rotarians learn about infection reduction

On June 25, Dr. Joe Corcoran, Chief Medical Officer at South Bay Hospital, made a presentation to the SCC Rotary Club.

The presentation was on a recent study, conducted by Hospital Corporation of America, Harvard, the Centers for Disease Control and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, to determine what treatment worked best to reduce infections for intensive-care patients in the hospital setting.

South Bay Hospital was one of 43 hospitals that participated in the study, which focused on preventing

methicillin resistant staphylococcus aureus (MRSA) in intensive-care units. Three infection prevention strategies were researched and compared, and it was found that universal decolonization, treating every patient as a carrier of MRSA and requiring them to bathe with chlorhexidine and apply antibacterial ointment in the nostrils, reduced MRSA by 44 percent.

The study was published in the May, 2013 *New England Journal of Medicine*, and the strategy of universal decolonization is now considered a best practice for hospitals.

Local business helps Scouts fight off mosquitos

Boy Scout Troop #2140 in Ruskin is grateful to the donation of Reedy Plumbing, Inc. through the generosity of its supplier, the Gorman Company. The company donated enough pvc pipe and fittings for the troop to craft frames for mosquito netting to use over their cots at this year's Scout Summer Camp in Flaming Arrow. The mosquitos, extremely aggressive this year, threatened to put a damper on the whole summer camp experience.



Dr. Steven Walker joins Community Mental Wellness Center

Licensed psychologist Dr. Steven Walker has joined the staff of the Community Mental Wellness Center, located at 1210 Del Webb Blvd. in Sun City Center.



Dr. Steven Walker

Dr. Walker holds a doctoral degree in clinical psychology and a master's degree in counseling psychology. He has more than 15 years of experience helping clients of all ages develop more self-awareness and achieve their potential.

Dr. Walker has experience working with depression, anxiety, PTSD, ADHD, substance abuse and all manners of addictions, existential and meaning of life questions, anger management, executive coaching, and end of life transitions.

House calls can be arranged.

For more information or to arrange an appointment with Dr. Walker, call him directly at: Office, 813-3474464 Ext. 224 or cell, 971-533-4145. Email: licensedpsychologist@gmail.com.

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Plan ahead for your online hereafter

Asset protection lawyer offers 3 steps to take now

In some ways, you really can live forever, but that's not necessarily a good thing.

Many of your online accounts — from automatic bill payments to eBay — may remain active after you pass away, unless you take steps to ensure they don't, says attorney Hillel Presser, author of *Financial Self-Defense*.

Automatic bill pay, for example, can theoretically keep tapping your bank account long after you're gone or, at least, until your money is.

"It's important to make sure your online bank and shopping accounts, even your social media, can be closed out, or that your loved ones are authorized to access them," Presser says. "You may ask, 'Why would I care if I'm gone?' I can tell you from experience: because it can create real headaches, and more heartache, for your family."

Bank and shopping accounts will be vulnerable to identity theft, which would affect your estate if someone opens credit cards in your name. You might have valuable intellectual property, like domain names. They may need access to your health records, particularly if you died under questionable circumstances, he says.

There's the sentimental stuff — photos and emails — that your family may want as a remembrance of you, and the libraries of music and ebooks, which may represent a considerable investment on your part.

"The problem is, even if you provide a family member with all of your accounts, log-ins and passwords, they may not be legally allowed to access them," Presser says. "In many cases, they may be violating the accounts' terms of service or violating federal privacy

and computer fraud laws. Some states have laws governing online materials, but they're different and which of your accounts are covered depends on where the provider is located."

What can you do to ensure your family isn't left with a virtual nightmare after your passing? Presser offers these tips:

■ Create a list of all of your accounts, including log-in names, passwords, and answers to any security questions. Obviously, your list will need to be securely stored. Since you'll need to update it regularly as you add accounts or change passwords, it will be easiest if you keep the list on your computer in a password-protected folder. Remember to create a backup of your list, whether it's on a jump drive or printed out on paper. Store the backup in a secure place such as a safe deposit box. Do not put password information in your will, which is a public document.

■ If you have a Google account, set up the new inactive account manager. In May 2013, Google became the first site to give users an option for choosing what becomes of their content if they should become debilitated or die. Under the profile button, click "Account," scroll down to "Account Management," and you'll find instructions for "Control what happens to your account when you stop using Google." You can select how long the account should be inactive before your plans are set into motion; choose to whom you want to offer content, such as YouTube videos, Gmail, Google+ posts, Blogger and Picasa web albums, or whether it should simply be deleted.

■ Appoint a digital executor. Perhaps the simplest way to ensure



your online life is taken care of is to appoint a digital executor — a tech-savvy person who will be willing and able to carry out your wishes. Authorize the person to access your inventory of log-in information and spell out what you want done with each account, whether it's providing access to loved ones or business partners, or deleting it.

The digital world has grown and transformed so rapidly, the law hasn't kept up, which makes man-

aging your digital afterlife challenging, Presser says.

"Until there are more consistent laws and procedures governing this area, it's best to plan ahead, leave clear instructions and be sure you have a list of accounts where your estate lawyer or a loved one can find it and access it," he says. "It will make a world of difference to your survivors."

Florida colleges among most affordable in nation

Despite rising tuition costs across the country, 19 Florida College System (FCS) institutions landed at the top of a list of public, four-year colleges with the lowest tuition rates. The U.S. Department of Education's (USED) College Affordability and Transparency Center released lists identifying college costs to help students make informed choices about higher education.

The USED opened the center in 2011 to help track college costs while providing tools and data to help students and families make smart decisions about their higher education options. Using data from more than 4,000 institutions, the center highlighted colleges with the highest and lowest tuitions, the highest and lowest net prices, and the fastest-rising costs.

Among public, four-year institutions, the center identified 19 Florida colleges as being in the bottom 10 percent for tuition and fees. The average for tuition and fees in the FCS for public, four-year institutions is \$2,792, well below the mid-point of the national average of \$7,135. The average for tuition and fees in the FCS for public, two-year institutions is \$2,727, below the national average of \$2,905.

The center also highlighted average net prices, which is the average price of attendance that is paid by students after grants and scholarships are taken into account. Nine FCS institutions were in the bottom 10 percent for net price; eight in the public, four-year category and one in the public, two-year category. The average net price in the FCS for public, four-year institutions is \$6,757, below the national average of \$10,863. The average net price for all FCS institutions is \$6,750.

For more information and to view the reports, visit <http://collegecost.ed.gov/cat/Default.aspx>.

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PHOTOS MARLENE GREENBERG



Juliet

Juliet is a very sweet little gray tabby kitten who was recently born at C.A.R.E. with her three siblings, Romeo, Tippy and Grayson. Juliet is very curious and will play with all her other kitten friends in the kitten room. She enjoys sunning on the lanai and is quite a charmer. Go see this lovely kitten and give her that forever home she really needs. Juliet has been spayed and microchipped, and has been brought current on her shots.

DOB: January 2, 2013.

Stevie

Stevie is a unique-looking Terrier mix with the most adorable ears. He is receiving some TLC at C.A.R.E. and will be good as new in no time. Stevie is gentle, sweet, and playful. He can often be found just relaxing and taking in the world outside his kennel. The family that rescued him reports that he is good with kids and other dogs. This lovable puppy is anxious to find a forever home. Won't you come make his dreams come true? As part of his adoption, Stevie will be neutered, microchipped and brought current on his shots.

DOB: January 2, 2013.



RUSKIN VFW POST #6287

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

Thur., July 11 - Bar Bingo 6 p.m.

Fri., July 12 - Fish & Chips 4:30 - 7 p.m. Treasure Hunt 7:30 p.m. Music by Sun Coast 7 - 11 p.m.

Sat., July 13 - Music by You 2 Kan 7 p.m.

Sun., July 14 - Music by Chuck Cobbs 6:30 p.m.

Mon., July 15 - Crew Games & free hot dogs

Tues., July 16 - Games in Lounge 1-4 p.m. Kitchen opens 4:30 p.m. Bingo, 6 p.m.

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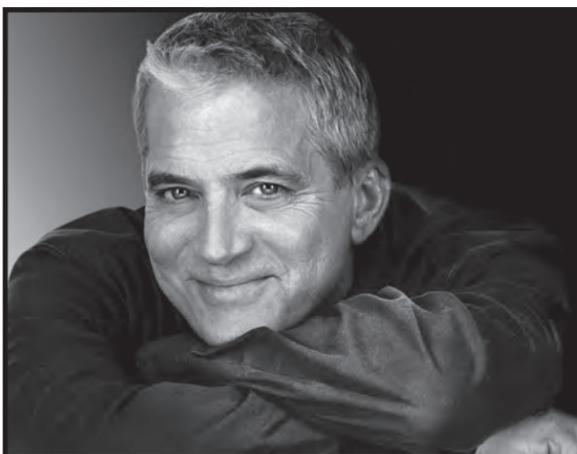
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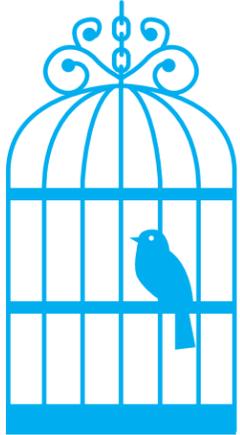
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Little Manatee River State Park is minutes away in Sundance, just south of Sun City Center on U.S. 301.

Fun in the sun

► Continued from page 1

Pinecrest Road, and the Little Manatee River Park, 215 Lightfoot Rd., Wimauma, five miles south of Sun City Center just west off U.S. 301, both of which offer more of an Old Florida-type experience.

Lithia's cold water springs and surrounding woods and the upper end of the Little Manatee River are great places to canoe or kayak or walk safe trails into the woodlands examining the native wildflowers and plants and perhaps see some wildlife as well.

In fact, there are lots of out-of-the-way places in South County along both the Little Manatee and the Alafia rivers. Meandering inlets and mangroves and small islands and trails offer plenty of places to explore both on land and on water.

There are 18 miles of hiking and biking trails in the 4,933-acre Balm-Boyette Scrub Nature Preserve as well, and, at last count, 14 licensed fishing tour guides and 10 places to launch your boats.

If you're looking for any of these, or others, two good places to start are by visiting www.tinyurl.com/observerfun1 or www.tinyurl.com/observerfun2.

But right here in South County you can find the Outdoor Learning Center at Camp Bayou, 4140 24th St. S.E., Ruskin, with its "Nature Experience" interpretive tours and special events. Since it is only open on certain days and hours, a call there is always good at (813) 641-8545 or check out the events section at www.campbayou.org.

For those who wish to visit any of the other areas of Tampa Bay — which tourism experts say includes all of South County, Tampa, St. Petersburg, Clearwater and Bradenton-Sarasota (even though Sarasota doesn't actually touch the Bay) — there are many other types of things to do besides those connected with wilderness or water.

Tampa's Lowry Park Zoo is always a good bet for fun for the kids, and adults, too, who want to see safari-type animals in habi-

tats created especially to match the ones they have in the wild. Located at 1101 W. Sligh Ave., the zoo is open daily from 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. every day of the year except Thanksgiving and Christmas.

Those people who especially like "big cats" have several places to choose from that feature only those: Big Cat Rescue, 12802 Easy St., Tampa, is a 55-acre nonprofit sanctuary dedicated to big cats that have been abused or abandoned. It offers daily tours for adults, and special tours for children under 10, where you can see lions, tigers, leopards, ocelots, cougars, lynx, and servals and more. Since children are not permitted on all tours, it's best to call (813) 920-4130 first.

Meanwhile Big Cat Habitat and Gulf Coast Sanctuary, 7101 Palmer Rd. in Sarasota, has tours daily Wednesday through Sunday but schedules change with the seasons, so calling there is also advised. Its number is (941) 371-6377.

Here you'll find not only tours but also educational animal training demonstrations and shows with a focus on fostering appreciation for animals and stressing the importance of habitat preservation.

Elmira's Wildlife Sanctuary in Wimauma also offers three tours every Saturday. For information, visit www.elmirawildlife.org.

There's plenty more to see just south of us, like the John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art and circus memorabilia, and the Marie Selby Botanical Gardens, but for now, let's go in the other direction, across Tampa Bay to St. Petersburg, and mention the Salvador Dali Museum at One Dali Blvd.; the Museum of Fine Arts, 255 Beach Dr. N.E.; and if it's raining, you can always browse through Haslam's Book Store, at 2025 Central Ave., which has been a landmark in St. Petersburg since 1933 with its more than 300,000-item collection of new, used and rare books.

► Continued on page 11

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Fun in the sun

► Continued from page 10

There are two ways you can see the area from the air up close and personal. For \$35 a person you can hover over the area in a helicopter leaving from the Peter O. Knight Airport, just south of downtown on Davis Island and for the more adventurous, there are biplane rides also available. These are open-top, old-fashioned World War II aircraft that do both sightseeing and aerobatics, depending on the one or two passengers that can ride. Biplane rides can be arranged by calling (321) 392-4125.

A different type of experience could be touring the Mixon Fruit Farms on the Orange Blossom Tram that travels through the groves, wetland refuge, butterfly garden and wildlife areas. The entrance to this is at 2712 26th Ave. E. in Bradenton.

Or maybe a winery is more to your taste, at Rosa Fiorelli Vineyard, 4020 County Road 675, Bradenton, where you can see how grapes are grown and harvested and taste various varieties of wines.

The Tampa Bay History Center,

a Smithsonian affiliate, at 801 Old Water St., Tampa has three floors of permanent and temporary exhibitions. Also in Tampa are the Tampa Ghost Tours, leaving nightly from 514 N. Franklin St.; and TECO's In-Town Trolley tours that run a loop from downtown to Harbor Island or the streetcars that link the Florida Aquarium to historic Ybor City. To find out more about Tampa's streetcars, visit www.tecolinestreetcar.org.

If you don't mind driving 32 miles to the northwest of Tampa, you could go to the authentically Greek sponge docks of Tarpon Springs, or drive almost straight north, 56 miles, to Weeki Wachee Springs. These aren't even whole-day trips but once there, can provide a whole day's worth of entertainment.

Thirty-nine miles northeast of Tampa, at 38650 Mickler Rd. in Dade City, you can see an honest-to-goodness Giraffe Ranch that currently has two tours a day, 11 a.m. and 2 p.m., where not only giraffes are kept, but rhinos, camels, lemons and many other exotic animals. Not a zoo or theme park, Giraffe Ranch

is a real, working game farm and wildlife preserve where animals have lots of room to roam.

Guides can allow you to feed some of the animals including giraffes and zebras and other African and Asian animals right from the safari-type vehicle they use for the tours.

Now, if you've tried some of the things that attracted you and you're still looking for things to do, perhaps a day at the beach or a night on the town might be just right to complete your guest's summer vacation trip.



PENNY FLETCHER PHOTO

Three lifeguards were on duty July 6 at the swimming area of E.G. Simmons Park while children and adults enjoyed the sand and Bay. A clear sunny day after nearly 14 days of intermittent hard rain kept the crowds down.



TECO's In-Town Trolley tours run a loop from downtown to Harbor Island and link the Florida Aquarium to historic Ybor City.

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MITCH TRAPHAGEN PHOTOS

During the Bullet Free Sky fundraising event on July 3, the music brought people to their feet. The event also included food, raffles and a silent auction.

Progress, but bullets still fall on 4th

■ By MITCH TRAPHAGEN
mitch@observernews.net

On July 3, local nonprofit Bullet Free Sky, dedicated to stopping senseless injuries and deaths from celebratory gunfire, held its first fundraising event at the Firehouse Cultural Center. The funds raised will go 100 percent towards the organization's continuing efforts to educate about the dangers of that activity. It appeared that much of South Hillsborough was indeed able to celebrate the holiday under bullet-free skies.

Unfortunately, other parts of Tampa Bay and the nation weren't so lucky. The *Tampa Bay Times* reported two incidents involving celebratory gunfire in St. Petersburg, with bullets falling through the roofs of homes, resulting in one injury. In Miami, a woman was hit in the thigh; in Maryland, a 17-year-old girl was hit by a stray bullet shot by her grandfather; and a 29-year-old woman in Georgia was hit in the chest and is in critical condition. Sadly, at least one life was taken during the holiday when a 7-year-old boy in Virginia was struck in the head by a falling bullet while holding hands with his father.

The Bullet Free Sky event was sponsored by numerous local businesses including the Firehouse Cultural Center, SouthShore Chamber of Commerce, Aegis Tactical, the Dog House & More, Elmira's Wildlife Sanctuary, Alert Air, Fifth Third Bank-Ruskin, South Shore Arts Council and Apollo's Bistro, along with other area businesses. The event also included a free concert by Kelly Emerson and Gary Garbelman.

For more information, visit www.bulletfreesky.com.



Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office Public Information Officer Larry McKinnon spoke about the dangers of celebratory gunfire during a press conference in Ruskin on July 3.

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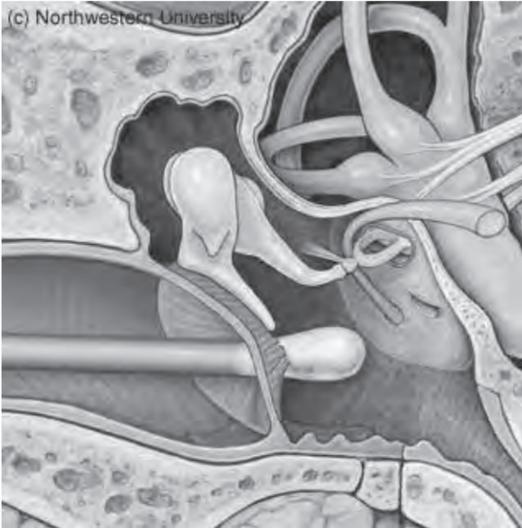
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| Mon 15: | CHA CHA DANCING (COUPLES) SLOW-FLOW YOGA NO CLASSES GENTLE CHAIR-YOGA NO CLASSES | 11 am to Noon UNTIL SEPT 16 UNTIL SEPT 16 | Dominoes are always available to play at the SCC Activity Center! |
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PHOTO COURTESY OF KELLY EMERSON

For Emerson, building the banjos is a labor of love.

Labor of love

► Continued from page 1

is in his DNA and seeing people respond to him on stage reveals just how innate it is. Emerson is the son of banjo great and bluegrass hall of fame inductee Bill Emerson. His parents divorced when he was just a young child, and over the years he has had little personal contact with his father, but the music comes to him as naturally as breathing.

"I have a beautiful wife, Amy, and where I'm at in life, I'm happy," he said. "It makes me happy to be able to express myself through my music. There is nothing like it. We are really content with that alone. The reality is that if we ever got signed to a major deal, our lives would change. It would be fun, but it would be all business."

Such as it was for his father who had a life on the road as a bluegrass musician, a life that involved paying a price for missing out on his son's life.

Emerson, too, knows because he was a guitarist in a band signed to a major label as a young man. "I was just a kid then," he said.

"He was a very high level banjo player in the world of bluegrass music," Emerson said. "They were signed to a major label and touring around the world. He had too much of that life to even imagine another life."

That is not necessarily the life Emerson wants for himself and his family. But he still sees big shoes to fill.

"I always thought that I was supposed to hit the big time but my calling hasn't come yet," he said. "That's my dream, whether it comes or not."

For a lot of people in Sun City Center and the surrounding area, he has hit the big time. Like the woman last week, hundreds of people routinely turn out to see Emerson and Garbelman perform. They invariably pack the venues in which they perform. "That guy can sing," Emerson said of Garbelman.

Ironically, his dream may well come true through a combination of the music in his blood and the lifelong skills at creating things in his mind. Last year, Emerson began building custom banjos. He plans to build 20 of them over the next 20 years. Now nearing completion of his second, he has 18 years left to go.

Emerson long considered himself a guitarist rather than following his famous father on the banjo. But over time, things change.

"I've been playing the guitar for 42 years. I've been playing the banjo for 17 years," he said. Today, he has an endorsement deal with Goldtone Banjos out of Titusville for their EBM Electric Banjo.

And now he is building them. Kenny Bailey of Bailey Music offered lessons on instrument making,



MITCH TRAPHAGEN PHOTO

generally guitars, mandolins and banjos. Kelly took the class, after commissioning Bailey to build him a banjo.

"It was just beautiful but I didn't like the way it played and the way it felt," he said of the instrument he had commissioned. "It was a beautiful banjo but it just wasn't right for me. It broke my heart to sell it, and I think it hurt him. But over the years we worked back into our friendship. A few years later he called me up to tell me about a class he was offering."

For the past seven years, Emerson has had the design for a banjo in his head. He created the first one with the help of a talented woodworker and instrument maker in Sun City Center named Bill Kobel.

"He helped to build the prototype and it was a little raw but it was still a work of art because everything was made by hand," Emerson said.

Emerson sold that banjo and received a letter from the buyer, thanking him for an instrument that looked and sounded beautiful; he described it as a work of art worth twice what he paid for it.

And thus the Emerson Power Banjo was born. With his second instrument nearing completion, as distinct from the first as the second will be from the third, it literally gleams beauty.

"I think I have something to prove, mostly to myself," he said. "In my family, I was the one that got Bill's genes, I was blessed to have the music."

He is not only proving himself through his music, visible to all who have seen him perform, he is also setting himself apart from his famous father with banjos that emerge from a labor of love. Whether he knows it or not, the shoes have been filled. Soon they'll be overflowing. His banjos are a legacy in the making.

Back in the Firehouse Cultural Center, Emerson and Garbelman had the crowd on their feet, with music ranging from original tunes to Bob Seger's "Old Time Rock

► Continued on page 15



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► Continued from page 14

'n Roll" to "YMCA" by the Village People. Now a lot of people would turn the dial if the latter song came on the radio but there was something fun and magical about how Emerson and Garbelman performed it. The entire crowd, ranging in age from five years old to 80, was on their feet, smiling and acting out the letters. It was phenomenal.

Emerson and Garbelman performed the event at no charge. It's not something they can always do because each time they set up, they incur expenses. Not to mention, their talent is worth something.

"For that, for Bullet Free Sky, that involved one of our kids. It was important," Emerson said.

After the show, he invited Diego Duran, the young Ruskin boy who was injured by celebratory gunfire, up on stage to try out his vintage Fender Stratocaster electric guitar.

Their appearance at the event made more of a difference than he could imagine. They provided hope for the fledgling public service organization. They made something good happen that night, they changed the dynamic and provided momentum that will carry well past when the guitars were put away and the speakers were packed up.

Few people have an easy skate in life, and despite making crowds happy wherever he performs, Emerson is not immune to ups and downs. But he is patient and he has faith.

"My dad emailed me about

three months or so and saw one of my original songs on YouTube," he said. "He told me that he just had to say that it was really good and that he was proud to see that I had my own style and was doing so well with it."

The note was signed, "Dad." Emerson hasn't seen his father since 1997 but recently found out that he will be an instructor at a banjo camp Emerson will be attending in Nashville in October. For the first time ever, the father and son will perform together. The big shoes are filled, as is Emerson's heart. He will perform as the son of a banjo great but more importantly as his own man.

"That's my life and it makes me who I am," Emerson said. "I always try to be all I can be. I always try to be above par. I always have something to prove but I'm happy with my life."

For Kelly Emerson, life continues to unfold like sheet music that is still being composed. His dreams are coming true. In many ways, they already have.

On Saturday, August 10, Emerson and Garbelman will perform two shows at the Rollins Theater in Sun City Center. Tickets are available at the SCC Kiosk on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. or by calling 813-220-7913. For more information, visit www.thekegg.com. Kelly's premiere, well-reviewed bluegrass CD, entitled Big Daddy's Barn Burner Blues, is available by emailing ub2soup@hotmail.com.

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PENNY FLETCHER PHOTO

Bill Langford, general manager of the Special Code Enforcement Unit for Hillsborough County talks about the huge cleanup going on in the Wimauma area through July 17.

Area cleanup

▶ Continued from page 14

To dump at the South County Waste Processing Facility and Southeast County Landfill require property owners to present tax bills to prove they can dump without charge, but anyone showing residency with proof like a driver's license or electric bill in their name may take part in Operation Fight the Blight.

"We expect that we'll collect about 20 dumpsters-full before we're done," Langford said. The first few days, more than 12 tons of trash were collected, including 760 pounds of tires — 21 found in road ditches — and 55 tires off residential property, he said.

"We inspected 65 properties in the area and secured two abandoned dwellings that were near the school zone, which is a (designated) Child Safe Zone," he said. "We have one coming down in a couple of days."

Besides collecting and disposing of the trash, which included chairs, broken tables and other furniture and all kinds of electronics, especially televisions, 10 code enforcement officers, with the help of others, have eliminated 740 square feet of gang graffiti and mowed more than 85,000 square feet of weeds and high grass in surrounding abandoned dwellings and on vacant lots, he said.

"The old way of county thinking is over," he said. "There used to be a silo mentality. You know how a silo stands alone? Well, since the new county administrator started, we've gotten rid of that mentality and all the departments work better together."

County Administrator Michael Merrill took office in December

2010.

"He and the director of code enforcement, Dexter Barge, have partnership goals between the county department workers and our residents."

Animal Services, Affordable Housing Services, the sheriff's office and Tampa Electric Company also helped in the cleanup.

"Working together, the first day of the operation we got a ton of waste off the right-of-way," he said.

One thing that makes things more difficult for code enforcement is when a home is foreclosed.

"Vacancies attract all kinds of crime, and are always a danger to neighborhood children," he said.

Similar cleanups were done in Town n' Country and Palm River earlier this year, and one is planned for Gibsonton Sept. 3 through 18.

"We deliver flyers door-to-door in the targeted areas and leave flyers in businesses and other places before the cleanups," he said. "We have officers who speak both English and Spanish so everyone knows what we're planning to do."

Langford said they plan to remove the last of the dumpsters July 16 and check the area for small items and last-minute disposal on the 17th.

"The sooner people get their things down there the better," he said. "And I wouldn't plan on coming the 17th because the dumpsters will already be gone."

To get help with disposal of large items, residents may call (813) 274-6600.



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New challenge issued for Southeastern Guide Dogs school

Earlier this year, Sarasota supporter Keith G. Hirst put out a \$500,000 matching challenge to the community to help Southeastern Guide Dogs, the southeast's only accredited guide dog school, build a new Canine Assessment Center.

The community met Hirst's challenge and now work is underway to build the 5,000-square-foot facility where Southeastern's dogs will be welcomed back to campus from their puppy-raiser homes.

Now that the construction plans are funded, Hirst has issued another challenge to the community to help outfit the center with the essential fixtures, equipment, and furnishings needed to carry out the important work of assessing the new trainees as they begin their formal harness training.

"Southeastern Guide Dogs needs to raise \$200,000 to make this Assessment Center a fully functioning home for the in-for-training dogs, and I'm launching a 90-day, \$100,000 dollar-for-dollar matching challenge to help the school reach their goals, ending October 9, 2013," stated Hirst.

A formal groundbreaking event recently was held on Southeastern Guide Dogs' 35-acre campus in Palmetto, where Hirst issued forth this second challenge grant.

Items such as modular runs for the kennel areas, scales, an LED microscope, an ophthalmoscope/otoscope, and other updated tools are just some of the items needed to make the new Assessment Center a state-of-the-art facility to serve Southeastern's dogs for many years to come.



Keith Hirst

Supporters may visit www.guidedogs.org/hirstchallenge to donate and have their contribution count double during the Hirst 90-Day Challenge.

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Saturday, July 13 5 p.m. Steak dinner
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Sunday Feather Your Nest game canceled until
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 For more information, call (813) 645-2922.

South Hillsborough Elks Lodge #2672 Upcoming Activities



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

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

Every Friday - Seafood, Sandwiches, and a Chef's Special for all Elks and their guests from 5 to 7 p.m. Music by Bryan from 5 to 8 p.m. Special price for summer: 2 fish dinners, either fried or baked, for \$14.

Monday, July 22 - Blue Plate Special for all Elks and their guests at 5 p.m. Menu: Salisbury Steak with all the trimmings, \$7 person, only 50 tickets available.

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Area Obituaries

Dolores Day

Dolores (Dolly) Day went to be with her loving Father July 2, 2013, after a long battle with Alzheimer's. She was surrounded by her family.

Dolly was an amazing wife and mother. She enjoyed being with family and friends and playing golf. She retired from Clinton Memorial Hospital after 19 years of service.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Roy and Dorothy Landry.

She is survived by her husband of 57 years, Chester (Chet) Day; son and daughter-in-law Dwayne Day and Patty Gillis Poe; daughter and son-in-law Kathy and Don Wilson; brother and sister-in-law Don and Karen Landry; six grandchildren; 10 great-grandchildren and many nieces and nephews, all of whom she loved very much.

Chet and Dolly moved from Clarksville, Ohio to Wimauma, Fla. in 2000.

The family requests donations be made in her memory to LifePath Hospice, 3010 West Azele St., Tampa, FL 33609.

Matt and his wife traveled the world for many years. He loved to fish and play golf, and lived on the water for 28 years of his life. In later years, he moved to an acreage where he mastered a riding lawn mower and worked in his yard.

He is survived by wife Aleta Jonie; daughter Jackalyn and husband John Campbell; grandchildren James Durrance, Julie Deriso and Reid Campbell; and great-granddaughters Kelli and Kristin Durrance, Ciera Hamblin and Kayla Pettis.

A memorial service will be held for Matt at a later date. He will be buried at Sarasota Veterans Cemetery, near his Long Boat Key condominium.

(Virginia) Wepfer of Lake Milton, OH; brother-in-law Rudolph (Marian) Habermann of Ormond Beach, FL and all their families.

Friends visited the family at Sun City Center Funeral Home on Wednesday, July 10, 2013. There was a funeral service at 1 p.m., followed by entombment at Hillsboro Memorial Gardens in Brandon. In lieu of flowers, a contribution to the Community Foundation of Sun City Center is suggested. Arrangements by Sun City Center Funeral Home.

Sally Wepfer

Sally (Habermann) Wepfer, 80, of Sun City Center, passed away, suddenly and unexpectedly, on Sunday, June 30, 2013. She was born October 17, 1932 in Battle Creek, Michigan.

She was survived by her husband of 59 years, Russell; daughters Karen Thompson of Maui, HI and Barbara (Charles) Philpot; grandchildren Theodore and Samantha Philpot of Auburn, WA; brother Rudolph (Marian) Habermann of Ormond Beach, FL; sister-in-law Bernice Wittig of Fond du Lac, WI; and brother-in-law Gordon (Virginia) Wepfer of Lake Milton, OH. Her only first cousin, Rudolph Knight of Seattle, WA, also survives her.

After being raised in Battle Creek as the daughter of Rudolph, Sr. and Helen Habermann, she received dual degrees in Math and Education from the University of Michigan in 1954, where Russ and Sally had met. They married immediately thereafter and settled in the Milwaukee, Wisconsin area, Russ's hometown and place of employment with General Motors. Sally then taught two years of junior high math in the suburb of Wauwatosa. Between raising their daughters and needing to follow Russ's jobs, she got used to managing household moves: from Milwaukee to Augsburg (Germany), to the Detroit area, to Greendale, WI, back to Detroit and finally, to Carmel, IN. She also worked during some periods, for General Motors, then for an auto dealer, and for the Internal Revenue Service.

Sally and Russ moved to Sun City Center in 1985. Soon after arriving, she and Russ were active in the United Community Church on its decorating committee and in the Keenager's group, and on the Security Patrol.

She became deeply involved with the art of Bunke. She was the treasurer of the South Bay Genealogical Society for several years, volunteered at the new Hillsborough County library's facility, and taught genealogy classes at the United Community Church's college. She was also a member of the Panhellenic bridge group, several other informal bridge groups, the local group of Alpha Xi Delta alumnae, and OAR. All during this time, she and Russ traveled frequently both to visit their children and to expand their world experience.

Friends visited the family at Sun City Center Funeral Home on Wednesday, July 10, where there was a funeral service at 1 p.m., followed by entombment at Hillsboro Memorial Gardens in Brandon.

In lieu of flowers, a contribution to the Community Foundation of Sun City Center is suggested. Arrangements by Sun City Center Funeral Home.

Sound the Shofar meets July 14

Sound the Shofar will meet on Sunday, July 14 at 2 p.m. in the South Shore Library. Pastor David Jones of Ruach Ministries in Brandon, will speak on "True Freedom, the Biblical way." Everyone is welcome to attend. Beginning at 2 p.m., there will be a time of Praise and Worship with Hebraic dance.

Ruskin Aglow meets July 20

Ruskin Aglow will meet Saturday, July 20, 2013 at Palm Garden, 3850 Upper Creek Dr., Sun City Center, FL at 10 a.m.

For more information, call Gloria at 813-633 9613.

Russell William Wepfer

Russell William Wepfer, 84, of Sun City Center, passed away on Tuesday, July 2, 2013. His heart was not able to go on without his wife of 59 years, Sally, who had passed away suddenly. Russ was grateful for his many unexpected and wonderful years as husband of Sally, father of Karen Thompson of Maui, HI and Barbara (Charles) Philpot, and grandfather of Theodore and Samantha Philpot of Auburn, WA.

He was born November 25, 1928, in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. He was predeceased by his parents, William and Edna Wepfer, but he always appreciated their loving care during his youth in Shorewood, WI and after their retirement in Merrill, WI.

Russ was a member of the U.S. Army of Occupation in Japan during 1946 and 1947, but was reluctant to talk about his wartime contribution because he was never in combat. Yet, there was a pride resulting from his volunteering to speed the return home of the true heroes of World War II.

He was a proud graduate of the University of Michigan and, after a short attempt to work for the U.S. Forest Service, made a successful career in the administration of military programs for General Motors Corporation.

After moving often in their earlier life, from Milwaukee to Germany, to Detroit, back to Milwaukee, back to Detroit again and finally to Carmel, IN, Russ and Sally retired to Sun City Center in 1985 and loved every minute of their life here. Together they were active in the United Community Church and volunteered for 15 years on the Security Patrol.

In addition to his immediate family, Russ is survived by sister Bernice Wittig of Fond du Lac, WI; brother Gordon



Matthew John Maschek

Matthew John Maschek, 93, passed away at South Bay Hospital on Sunday, July 7.

He was born in Chicago, Illinois on June 15, 1920. A World War II veteran, he served in the European theater as well as in the Pacific, spending many days waiting for orders to go to Japan.

Matt was married to Aleta Jonie Maschek for 55 years.

He worked for Service Drug in Chicago, Johnson Drug, McKesson Drug and Kendall-Futuro Drug Company for 38 years.

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Sunday: 8:00 a.m., 10:00 a.m., Noon
 Saturday Vigil..... 4:00 p.m.
 Daily 8:00 a.m.

Confessions:

Mon.-Fri. 7:30 a.m. and Sat. 8:30 a.m. and 3 p.m.

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

Dr. Samuel (Sam) A. Roach, Pastor

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 Wednesday.....7:00 p.m.

Wimauma Church of God

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 Sunday Evening Worship 6:00 p.m.
 Wednesday Youth Worship 6:00 p.m.
 Wednesday Evening Service 7:00 p.m.

Pastor Tom Durrance 5504 S.R. 674, Wimauma, FL 33598 • 813-634-4776

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http://www.sccumc.com

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 9:15 a.m. New Life Enrichment Center (Contemporary)
 10:55 a.m. Sanctuary (Traditional with Choir & Bells)
 11:00 a.m. Hispanic Worship
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 South Bay Kids.....Sundays 9:00 & 11:00 a.m. LifeFocus Support Groups.....Mondays 7:00 p.m.
 Bible Study in Creole.....Sundays 11:00 a.m. Collide Student Ministry.....Wednesdays 6:30 p.m.

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| Sunday School..... 9:30 am. | Wednesday Evening Service..... 7:00 p.m. |
| Sunday Morning Worship..... 10:55 a.m. | Thursday Morning Prayer..... 10:00 a.m. |

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| Evening Service..... 6:00 p.m. | |
| Wednesday Night Service..... 7:00 p.m. | |
| Awana..... 7:00 p.m. | |

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Fr. Lee Miller
 Priest

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

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Contemporary Service 11:00 a.m.
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Very Rev. John F. McEvoy, V.F.

MASSES

| | |
|-------------------------|--|
| Vigil Mass..... | Saturday 5:00 p.m. |
| Sunday Mass..... | 8:00 a.m., 10:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. (Contemporary) |
| Monday thru Friday..... | 8:00 a.m. |
| Holy Days..... | Contact Parish Office for Schedule |
| Español..... | Domingo - 12:30 p.m.; Jueves 7:00 p.m. |
| Confession..... | Thursday 6:15 p.m.; Saturday 3:45 p.m. |

Shop early at Christmas in July Bazaar in Lithia

Nearly 50 vendors will sell everything from handmade gifts to home decor at the Saturday, July 27 Christmas in July Bazaar at Grace United Methodist Church at FishHawk. The event is from 9:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the church, located at 5708 Lithia Pinecrest Road, Lithia.

Items for sale include jewelry, crosses, pet supplies, honey, homemade jelly, birdhouses, handmade soaps and purses.

Most of the vendors will be inside the air-conditioned church, so guests can shop in comfort. There is no entrance fee, and free door prizes will be given away.

The bazaar is a fundraiser for Grace United Methodist Women (UMW). Nationally, United Methodist Women is the largest denominational faith organization for women whose mission is fostering spiritual growth, developing leaders and advocating for justice.

At Grace, the United Methodist Women focus on community organizations that support women, youth and children in the Lithia area and abroad.

Most recently, members created packets of personal care items to send to Nicaragua for the church's first overseas mission trip. In June, 17 youth and nine adults from Grace United Methodist Church went on a mission trip to Nicaragua.

All women are invited to attend Grace UMW meetings, which are the fourth Sunday of every month at the church. The meetings start at noon, and a free lunch is served.

For more information about the bazaar and Grace UMW, visit www.mygraceumc.com or call 813-661-8858.

Movies fit the bill at United Community Church

The United Community Church will again be having its summer cinema series.

The movies will be shown at 1 p.m. in the Great Hall each Thursday during July and August. There is no admission; all are welcome.

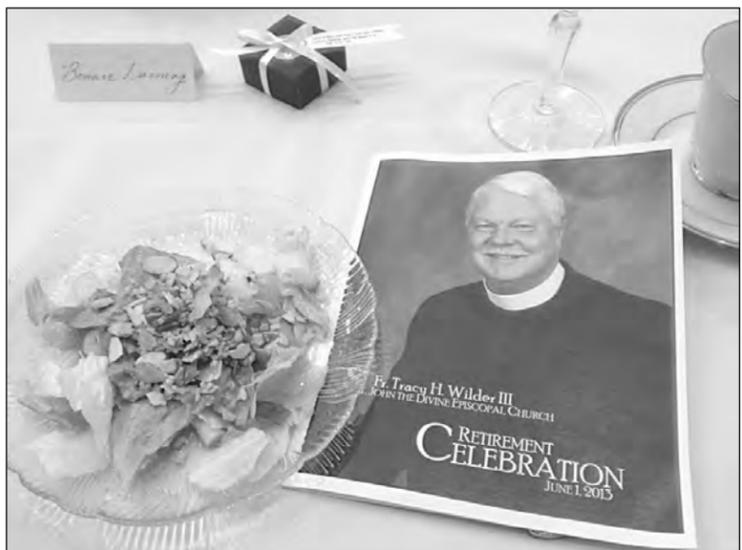
The schedule is: July 11 - *Les Miserables*; July 18 - *Water for Elephants*; July 15 - *Lincoln*; Aug. 1 - *Big Miracle*; Aug. 8 - *Best Exotic Marigold Hotel*; Aug. 15 - *Life of Pi*; Aug. 22 - *Red Dog*; Aug. 29 - *Parental Guidance*.

United Community Church is located at 1501 La Jolla Ave. in Sun City Center.



New Beginnings Fellowship celebrates graduation

Chris Giddens graduated from Lennard High School this year and as is the custom at New Beginnings Fellowship, his name was placed on the Graduate Plaque. Chris has been a member of the church for many years and helps out by taking up offerings, singing specials and is a wonderful help to Pastor Brady who calls Chris his "assistant." Congratulations to Chris and all the 2013 graduates!



A tribute to Fr. Tracy

A bittersweet Retirement Celebration was held for The Rev. Tracy H. Wilder, III on June 1, 2013 at the Sun City Center St. John the Divine Episcopal Church campus.

The parishioners went "all out" to make this a memorable celebration for their beloved rector and his wife Susan. It was an elegant black and white theme, with fresh flowers that included fresh roses on each table and throughout the parish. Approximately 300 parishioners attended the affair, which included an appetizer and fellowship hour, and a delicious sit-down dinner prepared by the parishioners of the church.

Entertainment with music by Chuck Wirick, the church music director, the Redemption Band, and some very talented singers in the parish completed the celebration.

A special surprise was the appearance of George Burns, aka Ed Brown; the Senior Warden of the church, and local band Tampa Bay Time Machine, which played music from the 60s — Father Tracy sang along to "Surfin' USA."

The Rev. Michael Durning, of Bishop Smith's office (Diocese of SW Florida), writing on the Internet, commented, "St. John the Divine pulled out all the stops! After dinner they had musical tributes, gifts, a Conga line, and even an appearance from George Burns."

The Wilders, the next day, said they were dazed by the avalanche of affection. The event was bittersweet, warm, wonderful and unforgettable.

Metaphysical Society to discuss the Gospel of Thomas

At 10 a.m. on Wednesday, July 17 the Metaphysical Society will have a presentation on "The Gospel of Thomas, Verses 11-20."

The Gospel of Thomas is considered by some to be one of the missing books of the Bible. Member Don Smith, PhD, spoke previously on Verses 1-10, and continues in this presentation. A question-and-answer period will follow.

The event will take place in the Eberhardt Room in the Lawn Bowlers Building, 909 North Course Lane in SCC.

The program is open to SCC/KP residents and guests. Admission is a love offering. For information, call Holli at 813-419-4704

For membership information call Ludi at 813-938-5686 or send an email to metaphysicalsociety@gmail.com.

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MERCHANDISE 300

310 GARAGE/YARD SALE

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Friday 8am-2pm. Saturday 9am-noon. Children clothes & toys, some furniture, household. Good bargains, great prices. 1901 East View Dr., SCC.

Cul-de-sac yard sale. Saturday, July 13, 8am-2pm. Baby clothes, car seat, bassinet, bounce seat, bookcases, end tables, wicker table & chairs, maternity clothes, Trek road bike & more. 13208 Laraway Dr., Summerfield.

Saturday, July 13th, 8am-? 617 Ft. Duquesna, SCC. Home decor, womens clothing, lawn equipment, patio furniture, misc. household.

Multi family yard sale. Saturday, 7/20 (Check date) 8am-noon. Kitchen, household goods, furniture & more. 6606 Dolphin Cove, Apollo Beach.

Yard sale. Everything has to go. 202 5th Ave. NW, Ruskin (off Shell Point). 8am-? Saturday 13th, rain Sunday 14th.

310 GARAGE/YARD SALE

SCC 2126 New Bedford Dr. Friday July 12, 8am-noon. Matching sleeper sofa, loveseat, cocktail & end tables, (2) dining room sets. Bedroom suite, full mattress, mens, ladies casual clothes & household misc.

Yard sale. Saturday, July 13, 8am-1pm. 1419 Murillo Loop, Ruskin. Clothing, household, wagon, refrigerator, yard trailer, dolls, toys, misc & more.

Moving sale. Friday & Saturday, 8am-noon. ChulaVista Landing. 2510 Bosun Lane, Ruskin. All must go cheap. Tools, hot tub. 50¢ clothes.

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1211 W. Del Webb Blvd., SCC. 7am-11am. Half price 10:30am-11am. Saturday, July 13. Small refrigerator, furniture, bric-a-brac & lots misc.

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