

Path to Tallahassee may not be easy

By Michael Hinman
mhinman@cnewsups.com

Although there always was a chance he could run for re-election, Danny Burgess knew he had just a short time as mayor of Zephyrhills when he was elected unopposed earlier this year.

He will step down from that office in April with an eye on a much bigger prize: replacing Will Weatherford as the area's state representative in Tallahassee.

Burgess has all the qualities of a strong

candidate — a solid government service background, the ability to connect with just about anyone, and a winning smile that will look good on campaign posters — as well as the same youthful vigor Weatherford had when he was first elected to the House.

But the badge of the Republican Party, typically so strong that anyone who wore it could practically start picking office furniture at The Capitol soon after they win their primary, may not be what it once was.

And it might mean an uphill battle for Burgess, a registered Republican who has

practically lived in the local public spotlight his entire adult life.

"I don't concern myself with polls and how the federal government is doing," Burgess said. "I'm going to focus on the election, getting to meet people, and to hear what those people are concerned about."

Yet, what the federal government is doing could come back to haunt candidates, even ones at the state level.

"This is going to be a very nationalized

See BURGESS, page 9

AROUND THE PARKS



CAN'T WAIT

Annmarie Shackewyc is tempted to taste the pies before serving the slices at Grand Horizons' Thanksgiving feast. —More Grand Horizons, page 12



SPIRITUAL GIFT

Pastor Dan and his wife Patti Wright have served in Rainbow Village for the past seven years. —More Rainbow Village, page 11



Sharing life experiences

M.J. Price of Goin' Postal reads some of her own children's books to students at Woodland Elementary School as part of the Great American Teach-in last month. Price also shared details of different career paths they can take, while still enjoying life. (Photo courtesy of M.J. Price)

Tubas, euphoniums invade Zephyrhills for Christmas

By Michael Hinman
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In a holiday world where trumpets and hand bells reign supreme, it's about time tubas and euphoniums get their due.

And they will Dec. 21 when TubaChristmas returns to Times Square on Fifth Avenue in Zephyrhills.

The low brass instrumentalists will perform Christmas favorites from the gazebo, made up of players both locally and regionally. And all of them will play together as a single unit for the first time, just hours after their one and only practice.

That just adds to the fun, said John Wheeler, a longtime TubaChristmas performer, who is organizing the Zephyrhills event for the seventh year.

"They tend to be musicians who have a good time," Wheeler said. "They are low-key, and this is a bit of a come-as-you-are party."

TubaChristmas has performances all over the country, each performance never conflicting with others so that players can attend as many as they want. In fact, some of the 25 or so musicians that show up for the Zephyrhills event have already done other events, like one last week in Lakeland.

And anyone with a tuba or euphonium, and a \$10 registration fee, can join in. Those who would like to watch need only show



Young, old, local or not — players need only show up the day of the performance, and anyone who'd like to watch can do so for free. (Photos courtesy of John Wheeler)

up with lawn chairs at 7 p.m. to get a free one-hour show.

"The tubas and euphoniums are the lower brass instruments in the band, and it is a mellow rumbling sound that you get from it," Wheeler said. "It gives people a

chance to sing along."

Euphoniums, which have a sound that's a step higher than tubas, typically take on the melodic parts. And without the rest of the higher-pitch instruments, it gives these players — usually relegated to the background — a chance to stand out.

"You usually get buried by everybody else, and this is the one chance that we get to star," Wheeler said.

The rehearsal for this performance will begin at 2 p.m. at First United Methodist Church, 38635 Fifth Ave. Players not only get a chance to perform for the community, but they also receive a commemorative TubaChristmas button honoring their participation in the event.

The performers are all ages, and some of them even come from the local high schools, Wheeler said.

"It's a wonderful opportunity, especially for the younger generations," he said. "No one is judging them on playing right or wrong notes."

Some players might just stay local, but others travel quite a bit.

"We have players from all over who'll participate, and one time we had a guy who showed me on a back of an envelope where he had recorded the dates that he played in

See TUBAS, page 9

Tour de Clay shows artistry of pottery

The Laker/Lutz News Staff Report

Clay artists at each of the five studios in the sixth annual Tampa Tour de Clay have been busy making, glazing and firing in pottery works in preparation of this year's event, scheduled for Dec. 14 and Dec. 15.

The Tour de Clay includes studios in Pinellas, Pasco and Hillsborough counties, and features 22 clay artists.

The tour kicks off at 9 a.m., at the Pottery Boys Clay Studio at 30 Bogie Lane in Palm Harbor. The next opening is at 10:30 a.m., at the Clay and Paper Studio, located at 110 Peterson Lane in Palm Harbor.

Hidden Lake Pottery, at 16705 Hutchison Road in Odessa, will have its opening at 2 p.m., followed by the Wellman and Welsch Pottery opening at 3 p.m., at 17202 Whirley Road in Lutz.

The final opening is at 5 p.m. at San Antonio Pottery, 11903 Curley St., in San Antonio. That location has extended hours until 9 p.m., and will serve refreshments. Singer and songwriter Rebekah Pulley also will perform at that studio.

Pottery demos are planned for 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., at all the studios on Sunday.

Those visiting the pottery studios will have a chance to talk to the potters and do some shopping.

For more information about the artists and the event, visit TampaTourDeClay.com.



Pilots host district governor-elect

The Pilot Club of Zephyrhills hosted Nancy Bierma, Florida district governor-elect, at its September meeting at Florida Hospital Zephyrhills. Bierma commended the club on its ongoing projects and fundraisers and explained the new Anchors, Brain Health and Caregivers programs. Joining Bierma, left, are Nancy Bierma, Caroline Whitis, Cindy Bucklen and Seta Ruiz. (Photo courtesy of Joan Midgett)



Closer Look

AN ADVERTISER PROFILE

A whole body approach to health care

by Mike Matthew
special to The Laker / Lutz News

Dr. Brandon DelleChiaie, a chiropractic physician at the Florida Wellness and Rehab Center in Zephyrhills, offers his clients a holistic approach to wellness. “We attack every condition with a whole-body approach,” says Dr. Brandon. “This is the foundation for the way we practice medicine.”

Florida Wellness and Rehab is a multidisciplinary company providing patients with a one-stop place for health care. “The difference between us and a family doctor’s office is that we do it all in-house,” says Dr. Brandon. “Our patients love this convenience.”

They have a primary care physician on-site providing the same services as your family doctor. In addition, they provide chiropractic care, physical therapy and massage therapy. “This is the direction medicine is going,” says Dr. Brandon. “Medicine is a need for care. We treat the whole person, not just the symptoms of a particular problem.”

During his youth, he felt the aches, pains and injuries of an aspiring athlete. He learned firsthand how chiropractic care out-performed traditional medicine and allowed him to heal and get back in the game quicker.

But it was an auto accident in college that proved to him that a holistic approach was more effective at reducing pain and solving problems than traditional medicine. He was studying

premed at Florida State University, and then chose to attend chiropractic school over medical school.

Dr. Brandon graduated from the prestigious Palmer College of Chiropractic in 2010. Palmer College was the first school offering chiropractic care. It’s over 100 years old. It was also the first school to offer a course of study in physical therapy to treat physical pain and provide a formal path to recovery.

Dr. Brandon was born and raised in Dade City. He is active in sports and is keenly aware of the importance of exercise and proper nutrition for the maintenance of a healthy lifestyle.

A holistic approach to medicine looks at the whole person. Dr. Brandon takes the time to get to know every one of his patients. Treatments provided at Florida Wellness and Rehab are focused on adding to the fullness of your life, rather than trying to simply remove a symptom.

“The holistic approach to medicine is the next big thing,” says Dr. Brandon. “We see the whole person that walked into our office. We want them to walk out our door with much more than a prescription. We want them to live an optimal life, a full and healthy life in every way possible.”

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Local hospital foundation cooks its way to \$70,000

The Laker/Lutz News Staff Report

Nearly \$70,000 was raised recently for the Florida Hospital Zephyrhills Foundation during its annual gala and golf tournament at Saddlebrook Resort.

The money will be used for the construction of the new Brain and Spine Institute at the Zephyrhills campus of the hospital.

The event featured 15 “celebrity” chefs that included, among others, Pasco County Sheriff Chris Nocco, Zephyrhills City Councilman Lance Smith, businessman Kevin Bahr, and State Sen. Wilton Simpson, R-Trilby. Judges included Linda Hauff, Vonnie Mikkelsen and Pasco County Clerk Paula O’Neil.

Chefs prepared a signature food item of their choice, and were judged both by the female judges as well as the audience. Winners included:

- **Todd Batchelor’s** prime rib sandwiches won best appetizer from both the judges and the audience.

- **Wilton Simpson’s** Italian white bean soup was the best side dish from the judges.

- **David West’s** mixed vegetable casserole was the best side dish as chosen by the audience.

- **Ronald Oakley’s** beef tenderloin not only won best main dish by both the judges and the audience, but was the overall people’s choice.

- **Kevin Bahr’s** crème brulee was best dessert by both the judges and the audience.

- **LeRoy Hauff’s** beef summer sausage was the best overall judge’s choice.

- **Jack Rhoden and Chris Drews** won for best presentation.

- **Dr. Raul Olivera** received the most tips.

“I’ve never seen such a group of people laugh so hard and have so much fun,” said Carolyn Sentelik, executive director of the Florida Hospital Zephyrhills Foundation, in a release. “We are grateful for the support from all of the chefs. I realize the amount of time, work and expense that goes into it for them, and it is truly appreciated.”

The next day, the Foundation hosted its 24th annual golf tournament at Saddlebrook. Winners there included the team of Kevin Bahr, David Bahr, Chris Black and Frede Bender in first place; Glen Greenfelder, Goeun Lee, Fran Reidy and Mike Madagan in second place; Kerry Ryman, Kyle Ryman, Nelson Ryman and Darrell Humphries in third place.

The new Brain and Spine Institute at the hospital will provide neurological care, including the only Agency for Health Care Administration-certified comprehensive stroke center in Pasco County. The Foundation has pledged to raise \$2 million to support what it has deemed to be a critical project.

Florida Hospital Zephyrhills is a 139-bed regional medical center that is a member of one of the state’s largest health care providers, the Florida Hospital network of Adventist Health System.



Ron Oakley, who won both the judge’s and people’s choice categories for his main dish of beef tenderloin, shows off his 2012 and 2013 trophies from the ‘Men Who Cook’ competition to benefit Florida Hospital Zephyrhills Foundation. (Photo courtesy of Michelle Oswald-Bianchet)

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A good portion of Dade Oaks Apartments remains empty after continuous flooding over the decades made some units uninhabitable. A new Dade Oaks further up on 14th Street could be under construction by next summer. (Photo by Michael Hinman)

Dade Oaks on way to new home, location

By Michael Hinman
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From 14th Street in Dade City, it's hard to imagine the site that has been home to Dade Oaks Apartments since 1977 was once a lakebed.

Yet, there are some parts of the property, maintained by the Pasco County Housing Authority, that drop as much as 55 feet, and flooding has been an issue there for decades.

That's why when the time came to do something about the aging buildings, Pasco County decided to tear it all down and start from scratch — somewhere else.

Pasco County Commissioners has set into motion the final days for the 69-unit, single-level complex, eyeing a 12.8-acre site up the road.

"There has been flooding continually at this apartment complex, and HUD has continually threatened to take back all the vouchers there," said George Romagnoli, the county community development manager.

Not that the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development would have a lot of vouchers to take back. Flooding and other issues have created unsuitable living conditions there, and with it a high vacancy rate. That means people looking to get housing assistance help have even more limited options than they already had because of the state of Dade Oaks.

Commissioner Pat Mulieri said she's seen flooding firsthand at the apartment complex.

"There were many times we had our mobile medical unit, and we had this great event with a pig roast, and then because of all the flooding, it had to be discontinued,"

she said. "Flooding is a known factor there." Razing the complex has been on the table for more than a year, but putting plans and funding together to fix the situation has not been easy.

Now, however, a new Dade Oaks could rise through the Florida Housing Finance Corp. efforts to pick up federal funds. It will take \$12 million to build a new complex to house 69 units, along with nearly \$330,000 to purchase the new property.

Commissioners approved making a deposit of \$13,000 through the State Housing Initiatives Partnership for the land that will allow the housing authority to complete its purchase by the end of February.

Commissioners also approved a local match to federal funds, pulling \$1.25 million from its county Home funds as well as from Neighborhood Stabilization Program 2. HUD's Home Investment Partnerships Program provides grants to states and localities (like cities and counties) that help buy, build or rehabilitate affordable housing. The program allocates \$2 billion each year to states.

"It is true that this is a large portion of our budget," Romagnoli said. "That's 15 percent of our funds right now," but because of the dilapidated condition of the complex, something needs to be done soon.

The new site, as proposed, would include some duplexes among its 69 units, and could be under construction as early as next summer, said Dianne Morris, executive director of the Pasco County Housing Authority.

Commissioners approved the measure unanimously, with Ted Schrader abstaining since he had a family member involved in the deal.

Repaving causing traffic delays in some areas

The Laker/Lutz News Staff Report

Roadwork continues in different parts of the region, with planned lane closures in some locations this week, according to the Florida Department of Transportation.

In Pasco County, repaving at U.S. 301 between Pioneer Museum and Mosstown roads could result in lane closures between 8 a.m. and 5:30 p.m.

Nightly lane closures are planned for U.S. 301 at the State Road 35 and U.S. 98 intersection between 7 p.m. and 6 a.m., for signal work. Nightly lane closures also are planned

on U.S. 301 between Geiger and Tucker roads for repaving between 9:30 p.m. and 6 a.m.

Repaving on U.S. 98 between U.S. 301 and Oak Forest Drive will cause intermittent daily lane closures between 7 a.m. and 6 p.m.

In Hillsborough County, repaving on North Dale Mabry Highway between Van Dyke Road and County Line Road will result in nightly lane closures from 8 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

For more information or questions, call FDOT's public information office at (813) 975-6060.

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A decade of dedication from three employees

By Diane Kortus
Publisher



Terri Williamson, Mary Eberhard and Carolyn Bennett each have played important roles at The Laker/Lutz News for 10 years. (Photo by B.C. Manion)



We are a company of just 12 employees, myself included.

It is a small group, really, to take on the many steps needed to produce a unique community newspaper every week.

There is no cookie-cutter approach to what we do. Every story you read, every photo you see, every ad you review and every invoice we prepare is created new each week by our team of writers, artists, sales representatives and customer service folks.

To produce the 20-page newspaper you are holding, my staff was looking at 20 blank pages last Tuesday. They had just five business days — until Monday — to fill these pages with new stories, new photos and new advertisements. This is the equivalent of 15,000 words, 80 headlines, 30 photos, 140 display ads, 60 directory ads and 125 classified ads.

People are often surprised when I tell them there are only a dozen of us getting the paper out each week. Our group makes it happen week after week because we share a vision, and a commitment, to produce a newspaper with quality stories and

effective advertisements that are important to our readers and local businesses.

This shared vision keeps us motivated and satisfied by our work. Employees are trusted to make decisions that are best for readers and advertisers, and know their decisions will ultimately be best for our company.

I credit our success to this culture of self-determination, and believe it is why eight of our 12 employees have worked here for more than six years. Even more remarkable is that three of these employees are celebrating 10 continuous years with our company.

Terri Williamson, our senior account manager, was the first to pass this milestone in November. In the business community, Terri is the face of The Laker/Lutz News, attending two or three chamber and community events most weeks.

I never fail to marvel at Terri's ability to assess a business' marketing needs and then recommend ideas to maximize its budget and exposure. Her goal always is focused on getting more people to buy products or services from the businesses she consults with, whether it's through ads in our newspapers, by sponsoring a chamber event, or connecting the owner or manager to another

business that targets similar customers.

Next up is Mary Eberhard, our accounting manager, whose anniversary was Dec. 2. Mary is the ultimate diplomat — the rare person who intuitively sees the other's perspective. She brings a kind heart and level head to our accounting process, and manages her area with outstanding communication and accuracy.

And then there's Carolyn Bennett, who celebrates 10 years on March 2. As our inside customer service rep, she is the person most customers work with to update their ads and sign off on their proofs. Carolyn also works closely with other departments in a position that is perhaps the most detailed in the company.

No matter what her responsibility, Carolyn handles it with incredible efficiency and finesse.

I single out Terri, Mary and Carolyn in this column because of the significance 10 years represents. But they would be the first to tell you they would not be successful at their jobs without the shared commitment of the rest of our team: Matt Mistretta, Stefanie Burlingame, Kathy Welton, Suzanne Beauchaine, Rachel Thompson, Mary Rathman, Michael Hinman, B.C. Manion and myself.

It is our appreciation and respect for each other that unites us at The Laker/Lutz News. We come together to produce a new newspaper every week with commitment and dedication because we know our newspaper is important to each other and to the communities we serve.

Senior citizens looking for much-needed Santa

The Laker/Lutz News Staff Report

One of the most overlooked groups every holiday season are senior citizens, and the Pasco County Tax Collector's office is stepping up to make a difference.

The office is launching "Be a Santa to a Senior" program. It's held in conjunction with Home Instead Senior Care, an organization dedicated to providing services to the elderly, many of whom do not have family or friends to provide companion-

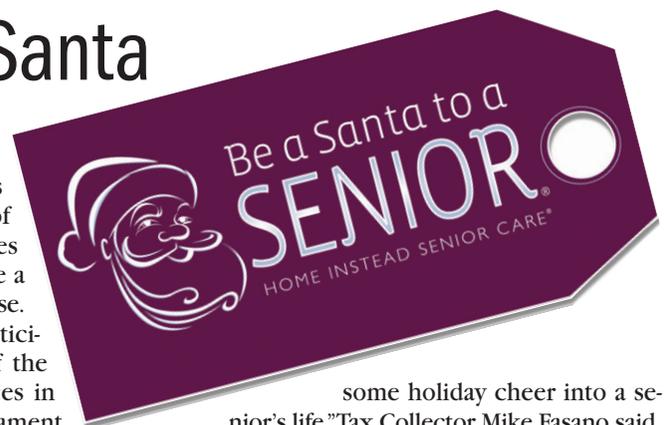
ship or assistance.

The program provides gifts and other necessities that elderly residents of long-term care facilities need and may never have a chance to receive otherwise.

Those wishing to participate can stop by any of the four tax collector's offices in the county, claim an ornament from the gift tree in the lobby, and then bring that item back to the tax collector's office before the requested due date.

Home Instead will wrap and deliver all gifts to long-term care residents throughout Pasco County.

"I encourage everyone to stop by one of our offices, pick up an ornament, and bring



some holiday cheer into a senior's life," Tax Collector Mike Fasano said, in a release. "This is a way for everyone to touch the lives of someone who may be alone and in need."

Gift trees can be found locally at the Central Pasco Government Center, 51111 Land O' Lakes Blvd., Land O' Lakes, and at 14236 Sixth St., Room 100, in Dade City.

For more information, visit the tax collector's office online at www.PascoTaxes.com.

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SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS NOW BEING ACCEPTED

The Greater Dade City Chamber of Commerce has three Community Involvement and Service Scholarships available, valued at \$1,000 each, for seniors of Pasco High School and Moore Mickens Education Center. The application period runs through Jan. 15, and applications are available through the Pasco Education Foundation at PascoEducationFoundation.org.

For information, call the Foundation at (352) 524-2705.

'BEE BULLY-FREE' IN ZEPHYRHILLS

Zephyrhills area schools are encouraging students, teachers and staff to wear black and yellow on the last Friday of each month as part of the "Bee Bully-Free Initiative." The initiative plan provides stickers and coloring book pages for schools, participates in the Great American Teach-in, and provides certificates and awards for students who transform into kinder versions of themselves.

Upcoming black and yellow Fridays are Dec. 20, Jan. 31, Feb. 28, March 28, April 25 and May 30. For information on the initiative, visit Facebook.com/beebullyfree.



Chamber honors September Student Citizens

The Greater Zephyrhills Chamber of Commerce recognized the following Student Citizens at the September ceremony in their honor. Each month, one student from 10 area schools is selected for exemplary effort, achievement and contribution to their school, family and community. The September Student Citizens are, from left, Aayden Sammons of The Broach School, Alaina Vila of West Zephyrhills Elementary School, Daphne Scott of Woodland Elementary School, Nicholas Whittington of Stewart Middle School, Hunter Smith of Taylor Elementary School, Kevin Lee of Zephyrhills High School, Damien Aguilar of Heritage Academy, Nicholas Dester from Florida Autism Center of Excellence, and Antonio Ayala of East Pasco Adventist Academy. Joining the children are Jon Dearolf, the chamber's Youth & Education chair, left, and Vonnie Mikkelsen, the chamber's executive director (Photo courtesy of Gary Hatrick)

SAINT LEO CREATES NEW TEACHING SPACE

Saint Leo University recently celebrated the renovation of a university campus building to house the music department. Saint Leo created the new teaching space to accommodate growing student interest in vocal and instrumental instruction and performance opportunities.

Students and faculty perform in both fall

and spring semesters in programs that are free and open to the public, in addition to the annual Christmas program.

For information, visit SaintLeo.edu.

SCHOOL BOARD ELECTS CRUMBLEY, LUIKART

The Pasco County School Board recently elected Alison Crumbley as chairwoman, and Steve Luikart as vice chair.

Crumbley was elected to the District 4 school board seat in 2010 to complete the final two years of Kathryn Starkey's term when Starkey ran for county commission, and was re-elected in 2012 to a four-year term. Crumbley is marketing director for her family's real estate company.

Luikart was elected to the District 5 school board seat in 2010, and is serving a four-year term. Luikart is a retired school administrator.

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GIVE BACK AT CHILI'S

Chili's, 7643 Gall Blvd., in Zephyrhills, will host the East Pasco Meals on Wheels Give Back Event on Dec. 11 from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. For each flier presented on that day, Chili's will donate 10 percent of the event-day sales back to Meals on Wheels. For information and a flier, contact the Greater Dade City Chamber of Commerce at (352) 567-3769.

RADIO CITY ROCKETTES

The Radio City Christmas Spectacular is Dec. 12 through Dec. 29 at Carol Morsani Hall at the Straz Center for the Performing Arts, 1010 N. Macinnes Place in Tampa. The show features the Rockettes in an all-new holiday production. Tickets start at \$42.50. For information, call (813) 229-7827.

BOOK BARGAINS

The Hugh Embry Library, 14215 Fourth St., in Dade City, will host a book bazaar on Dec. 13 and Dec. 14 from 11 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. The sale will feature a diverse selection of slightly used books, audio and video media, magazines, and related materials, many available for less than \$3. For information, call (352) 567-3576.

WINE DOWN IN DADE CITY

The Garden Café, 14227 Seventh St., in Dade City, is hosting its Wine Down on Friday evenings from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m., with wine and beer specials, and live entertainment. Upcoming music on Dec. 13 is the Valerie Gillespie Ensemble, and The Sunspots on Dec. 20. There will be no Wine Down on Dec. 27. For information or schedule of entertainment, visit DineInTheGarden.com.

FORT FOSTER CANDLELIGHT EVENT

Historic Fort Foster, 15402 U.S. 301 in Thonotosassa, will host a candlelight experience on Dec. 13 and Dec. 14 from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. Guests will follow a lantern-lit trail through the fort, encountering live history scenarios along the way. There will be folk music, and cider and cookies. There will be a battle reenactment on both days after 8 p.m. Cost is \$5 per person. Children younger than 5 are free. Proceeds benefit the Hillsborough River State Park Preservation Society. For information, call (813) 987-6771.

SANDY HOOK MEMORIAL SERVICE

There will be a memorial service on the first anniversary of the Sandy Hook Elementary School shootings at the band shell in Zephyr Park, 38116 Fifth Ave., in

COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT

MOVIES IN THE PARK

The City of Dade City Youth Council will host a free movie in the park, on Dec. 13 at 5:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m., with a Christmas double feature. The movies are "Arthur Christmas" and Disney's "A Christmas Carol." Movies will be shown at Pyracantha Park, 38122 Dr. Martin Luther King Blvd., in Dade City. Refreshments will be sold. For information, call (352) 523-5050.



Zephyrhills, on Dec. 14 beginning at 9:30 a.m. All are invited to join in this time of remembrance.

COUNTRY CHRISTMAS STROLL

The 29th annual Country Christmas Stroll will be Dec. 14 from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. in downtown Dade City, around the Historic County Courthouse and Agnes Lamb Park. Guests can go for carriage rides, meet Santa, enjoy treats and listen to carolers.

DAV CHAPTER YARD SALE

Disabled American Veterans Chapter 65 will host a year-end clearance yard sale on Dec. 14 from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m., at 5325 Eighth St., in Zephyrhills. Christmas and holiday decorations will be available, while they last. There also will be new items for sale. Coffee and water will be available.

DADE CITY SYMPHONY

The Dade City Symphony will present its Christmas Memories Holiday Concert on Dec. 14 at 7 p.m., at Pasco Middle School, 13925 14th St., in Dade City. Admission is free. For information, visit DadeCitySymphony.com.

ST. JOSEPH'S CHRISTMAS CONCERT

St. Joseph Catholic Church, 38750 Fifth Ave., in Zephyrhills, will host its Old Fashioned Christmas Concert on Dec. 15 at 4 p.m., at the parish center. Tickets are \$10 for adults and \$5 for students. Children sitting on an adult lap are free. All proceeds will go into the organ fund to purchase a replacement organ for the church.

GRANDPARENT SUPPORT PROGRAM

Kinship Services Network of Pasco County will host an East Pasco support group for grandparents and other relatives raising kin on Dec. 17 from 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. at St. Joseph Catholic Church, 5316 11th St., in Zephyrhills. The group will provide information on community resources, services, family support and reducing stress. For information, call (813) 716-8254, or visit ChildrensHome.org.

GIVE BEANIE BABIES, GET DISCOUNT

Gulfside Regional Hospice is collecting Beanie Babies at its thrift shops through December to be used in the Mending Hearts Kids' Program. The program visits local schools to perform puppet shows about grief. Each child who attends a show receives a Beanie Baby. Anyone donating a Beanie Baby will receive 25 percent off one item in the store. The shops are located at:

- 36524 State Road 54 in Zephyrhills, (813) 788-5461
- 37925 Sky Ridge Circle in Dade City, (813) 782-7200

CHRISTMAS DRAMA AT FIRST BAPTIST

The First Baptist Church of Dade City, 37511 Church Ave., will be presenting "The Joy of Every Longing Heart," a Christmas music and drama performance on Dec. 15 at 6 p.m. An encore performance will be presented Dec. 21 at 7 p.m. as part of the annual Church Street Christmas. For information, call (352) 567-3265.

MODEL TRAIN SHOW, SALE

Golden Spike Enterprises will host its Model Train Show & Sale at the Florida State Fairgrounds, 4800 U.S. 301 in Tampa, on Dec. 21 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Dec. 22 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. More than 350 dealers will have model items in all gauges and railroad antiques for sale. Admission is

\$8. Children younger than 12 are free. There is a parking fee. Guests can get a discount coupon at GSERR.com. For information, call Alan Altman at (813) 949-7197.

'PRAISING HYMN' AT CHURCH STREET

The Christian rock band "Praising Hymn" will be playing at the Church Street Christmas in Dade City on Dec. 21, Dec. 22 and Dec. 23 from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. This event is free. Guests can take a stroll down Church Street decorated with lights and listen to music. For show information, visit PraisingHymn.com. For event information, visit ChurchStreetChristmas.org.

VICTORIAN CHRISTMAS STROLL

The Henry B. Plant Museum's annual Victorian Christmas Stroll runs through Dec. 23 from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. daily. There are 14 exhibit rooms, designed in 19th century themes and antique holiday accessories. Complimentary spiced cider and cookies are served on the veranda. Evening carolers will perform. The museum is at 401 W. Kennedy Blvd., in Tampa. For admission prices and discount days, visit PlantMuseum.org.

TIMBER LAKE BINGO

Timber Lake Estates, 34301 Country Side Drive in Zephyrhills, hosts bingo every Thursday. Doors open at 4:30 p.m., and bingo starts at 6 p.m. Food will be served. For information, call (813) 788-6647.

SATURDAY NIGHT SHOWS AT SOUTHERN CHARM

Southern Charm RV Resort, 37811 Chancey Road in Zephyrhills, will host Steve Jeffris on Jan. 11 at 7 p.m. Tickets are available from Southern Charm's office for \$8. The Browns, a family affair presenting gospel music, will perform Jan. 25. Individual show tickets are \$8, with the exception of Brian Gurl priced at \$9. A complete package of show tickets may be purchased for \$49. For information on future performances, call Southern Charm's office at (813) 783-3477, or Walt Hershberger at (813) 783-3346.

CENTENNIAL EAGLES CLUB EVENTS

Centennial Eagles No. 4399 Fraternal Order of Eagles, 15924 U.S. 301 in Dade City, hosts live music on Sundays from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m., darts at 7 p.m. on Monday, euchre at 1 p.m. on Tuesday, nickel bingo from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Wednesday and Saturday, Texas Hold 'em poker at 7 p.m. on Thursday, pool tournaments at 7 p.m. on Friday, and nickel bingo from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturday. The club serves dinner from 4 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. on Fridays, open to the public. Club meetings are the first and third Tuesdays of the month at 7 p.m. The Ladies' Auxiliary meetings are the first and third Wednesdays of the month at 7 p.m. For information, call (352) 567-9755.

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Young woman encourages others to gaze at stars

By B.C. Manion
bcmanion@cnewsbooks.com

Melanie Crowson set up her telescope in the side yard of the New River Branch Library on an evening in October and welcomed anyone with an interest to come take a peek at the stars.

In a sense, the young woman from Wesley Chapel was coming full circle.

"We actually used to go up to the New River Library when we were kids, and I would check out all of the astronomy books," said the 23-year-old who aspires to become a professional astronomer.

Crowson enjoys sharing her love for astronomy at the occasional community viewing nights that she offers.

"It's fun," she said. As the viewing night approaches, she's excited about sharing astronomy. When it's over, it's nice to relax.

She loves introducing others to the world of stars, planets and galaxies. She also enjoys talking with people who share her fascination with celestial bodies.

"You end up discussing some interesting theories," Crowson said.

The astronomy student eventually wants to work at a planetarium or an observatory, and is taking online courses to pursue those aims through American Public University.

Crowson, who is a Christian, also hopes to use astronomy in connection with her spiritual life, too. She said she is getting to know God in a new light through her interest in astronomy. It's driven her to learn more and hopes one day to help develop new scientific evidence of the existence of God.

People talk about loving God with their whole heart, Crowson said. She wants to make full use of her intellectual capabilities to love God with her whole mind, too.

Her fascination with celestial bodies began quite early in life.

"I think I've always been interested, since



Melanie Crowson's interest in astronomy began when she was very young. She now offers free community viewings, using the telescope she and her father made when she was in high school. (Photos by B.C. Manion)



The telescope that Melanie Crowson and her dad made, a project that took two years and lots of trial and error.

I was a real small kid," Crowson said.

She recalls going on occasional rides during the dark early morning hours with her dad, who was delivering his newspaper route.

"It was really cool. We could see all of the stars," Crowson said.

As she learned more about stars and planets, her fascination grew.

Crowson, who was home-schooled, said her parents encouraged her to pursue her curiosity about the heavens.

During her high school years, she and her dad ran across a book that provided in-

structions for building a telescope. They decided to take on the challenge.

She chronicled the project in a manual she titled, "Closer To The Stars: Detailed Instructions for Building Your Own Telescope."

It took about two years to build the telescope and it cost about \$1,000. It would have been cheaper to buy a telescope, but then she would have missed out on valuable lessons, Crowson said.

Building the telescope helped her better understand how it works, she said. It also gave her a chance to apply math in real life.

"We used math to figure out sizes, distances, making sure the corners lined up," Crowson said.

If something goes wrong with her telescope, she also knows how to fix it.

"We built it so that we know where everything is. I know exactly what every screw is there for and what it does, what it's holding together," Crowson said. "I know which parts I can take apart. If I need to replace anything, I know everything about it."

Having community viewing nights gives Crowson a way to share what she loves and offers an opportunity to inspire others. She hopes people who come to peer through her telescope will enjoy what they see.

She also hopes it piques their curiosity.

"Maybe it will make them wonder: What's out there? How was it made? Was it really a Big Bang? Make them question it a little bit more," she said.

Maybe gazing through the telescope, the experience "will bring them closer to God," she said.

If you would like to know more about Melanie Crowson's community viewings, email her at scopegal617@gmail.com.

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Kiki Young has joined Cameo Salon & Spa as a licensed massage therapist.

Using a unique combination of Lomi Lomi techniques and traditional massage, Young develops individualized therapeutic treatment plans for every client. Her massages include sports, Swedish relaxation, customized deep tissue, prenatal and trigger point.

Cameo is located at 1817 Collier Parkway in Lutz. For more information, call (813) 948-7411.



Kiki Young

CONNERTON'S \$1,000 GRAND TOUR

Connerton, the planned community of 8,000 homes in central Pasco County, is offering visitors a chance to win \$1,000 by taking part in its grand tour of homes. But anyone looking for a chance to win will need to hurry, as the drawing is set to take place Dec. 15.

Builders taking part in the tour include Ryland Homes, Taylor Morrison, M/I Homes, and Homes by WestBay. Each offers different types of homes ranging in price from the higher \$100,000, to more than \$700,000.

Ryland can be reached at (813) 996-1800, or at Ryland.com. Taylor Morrison is at (866) 495-6006, or at TaylorMorrison.com. M/I is at (813) 388-6836, or at MIHomes.com, while WestBay can be reached at (813) 428-5973, or at HomesByWestBay.com.

Since the community's grand reopening in May, more than 75 homes have been sold in the community.

Connerton is located west of Interstate 75 on U.S. 41, five miles north of State Road 54.

For more information, visit online at Connerton.com.

KIRK SPEAKING AT CHAMBER BREAKFAST

The Greater Dade City Chamber of Commerce will host a business breakfast Dec. 17 beginning at 8 a.m., at the Hornbuckle Room of the Dade City Business Center, 15000 Citrus Country Drive in Dade City.

The guest speaker is Arthur Kirk Jr., president of Saint Leo University.

Cost is \$5 per person.

For more information, and to RSVP, call (352) 567-3769.

CHAMBER HOSTS QUARTERLY MEMBERSHIP MEETING

The Greater Zephyrhills Chamber of Commerce will host its quarterly membership meeting Dec. 11 beginning at 9 a.m. at the chamber office, 38550 Fifth Ave., in Zephyrhills.

Scheduled to speak are Krista Covey from the SmartStart Business Incubator, chamber president Carolyn Sentelik, and chamber executive director Vonnice Mikkelsen.

For more information, call (813) 782-1913, or email news@zephyrhillschamber.org.

BUSINESS LINK MEETING

The Greater Dade City Chamber of Commerce will host its Business Link meeting Dec. 11 beginning at 7:30 a.m., at Quality Inn & Suites, 6185 Gall Blvd., in Zephyrhills.

A complimentary breakfast will be provided.

For more information, or to RSVP, call Rebecca Gaddis at (813) 778-2142, or email her at rgaddis@sacfcu.org.

DADE CITY EATERY HAS NEW OWNER

Tropical Café in downtown Dade City has opened its doors under new ownership.

Luis Rivera said he will keep the name and same style of cuisine that has been a part of the restaurant since it opened.

He purchased the restaurant from Ivelisse Martes, who was recently hospitalized and then advised by her doctors to step away from the restaurant business, according to a release.

Tropical Café is located at 14249 Seventh St., in Dade City.

SMARTSTART LOOKING FOR BUSINESSES TO HELP

The SmartStart business incubator from the Pasco Economic Development Council is putting a call out to companies from a variety of industries that might be looking for startup assistance in the Tampa Bay area.

For more information, contact Krista Covey at (352) 437-4861, or by email at kcovey@pascoedc.com.



Ashlyn Head receives philanthropy award

The Association of Fundraising Professionals Nature Coast Chapter recognized Ashlyn Head, 14, with the Youth in Philanthropy Award for her service to Gulfside Regional Hospice's Ride for Hospice. She has been the top fundraiser for the event every year since it began in 2009. Head has raised more than \$6,500 to help Gulfside continue to provide hospice care for patients in Pasco County.

Free hearing aid batteries

The Sertoma Speech & Hearing Foundation of Florida will have a free battery giveaway on Dec. 13 from 10 a.m. to noon at its New Port Richey office, 4443 Rowan Road.

The most common sizes of 10, 13, 312, and 675 will be available, while supplies last. For information, call (727) 834-5479.

'Tree of Life' at HPH

HPH Hospice is hosting its annual "Tree of Life" through Dec. 24. With a donation of \$5 up to \$1,000 or more, an ornament corresponding to that amount will be placed on one of HPH's trees in memory or honor of a loved one. The proceeds will benefit HPH's patient care and family support programs.

Donations can be made online at HPH-Hospice.org, or by calling the HPH Foundation at (800) 486-8784. In-person donations also can be made at the East Pasco Hospice Care Center, 37439 Clinton Ave., in Dade City.

Donations should be made by Dec. 18.

For information, call (727) 863-7971.

Tobacco cessation program

Florida Hospital Zephyrhills, 7050 Gall Blvd., will provide a free tobacco cessation seminar on Dec. 19 from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m., in

Hospice celebrates National Hospice Month

Pasco County Commissioners proclaimed November National Hospice and Palliative Care Month, and commended the staff from Gulfside Regional Hospice for their service to the residents of the county during its Nov. 5 meeting in Dade City. Holding the proclamation is Gulfside president and chief executive Linda Ward, alongside from left, Commissioners Ted Schrader, Pat Mulieri and Henry Wilson. (Photo courtesy of Gulfside Regional Hospice)

the first floor education room.

The program is aimed at providing all the information, tools and resources needed to quit using tobacco. Participants will receive four weeks of optional nicotine replacement therapy.

Space is limited. To register, call (813) 929-1000.

Gulfside volunteer orientation

Gulfside Regional Hospice is hosting a volunteer orientation for new recruits in East Pasco on Dec. 19 and Dec. 20 from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., at Gulfside's Center for Hospice Care, 5760 Dean Dairy Road in Zephyrhills.

Volunteers must be at least 16 years old. Reservations are required as space is limited.

For information, call Jennifer Ball or Tracey Thompson at (813) 780-1235.

Volunteer at Pasco Regional

Pasco Regional Medical Center, 13100 Fort King Road in Dade City, is looking for energetic men and women to join its volunteer team, including junior volunteers between the ages of 14 and 18.

Opportunities are available in both clinical and nonclinical areas of the hospital.

To learn more about the program, call Amy Fort at (352) 521-1195.

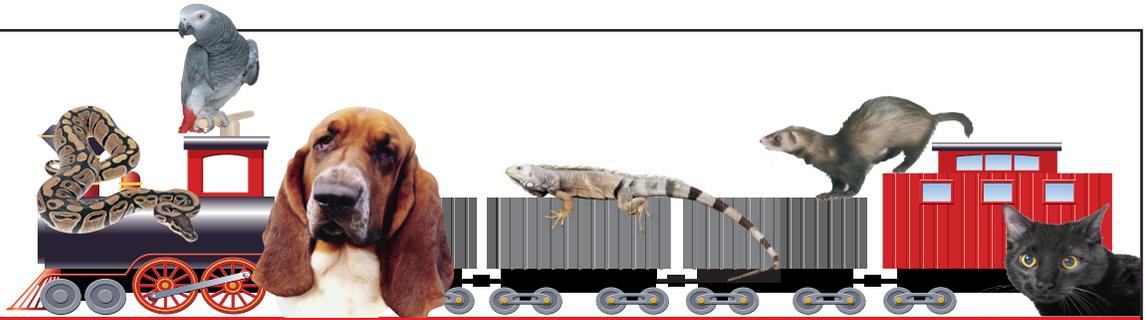
CARES programs

CARES Enrichment Center, 13906 Fifth St., in Dade City, offers activities:

- **Adult Day Care:** Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Participants receive breakfast, lunch and a snack, along with organized activities. The program provides social and health services to adults who need supervision in a safe place outside the home. Reservations are required, and veterans are accepted. For costs and available funding, call Melinda at (352) 519-9300.

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BURGESS, from page 1

election from the top of the ballot all the way down," said Susan MacManus, a political science professor at the University of South Florida, who grew up in Land O' Lakes. "People's images of politicians at this moment are based on what's happening in Washington, specifically the President and Congress, but most basically Congress."

Weatherford originally won his House seat by more than 20 points in 2006, and despite raising more than \$1.7 million through all of his elections, didn't have to put up too much of a fight.

But next November is an election where many will use the ballot box to share their opinions of Washington, D.C. Although a lot can change in 11 months, current polls have rated the Republican-controlled U.S. House of Representatives at some of its lowest levels in history. And there could be a real blowback on state-level races, including ones like Weatherford's legislative seat.

"Americans right now don't like either party," MacManus said, meaning two things could happen at local races. "Some of the independent candidates, like a Libertarian candidate, could get a lot of protest votes, which can drain from both parties.

"The second is more frightful — turnout drops," she said.

In Pasco County, independents have a real shot of tipping the political scale one way or the other. They make up more than 27 percent of the electorate, leaving just 39 percent for Republicans, and 34 percent for Democrats.

Two other candidates have already filed to seek Weatherford's seat, including Republican Minerva Diaz and Democrat Beverly Anne Ledbetter. Diaz made news earlier this year when she told Pasco County Commissioners she wanted to see more stringent background checks on firearm buyers. Ledbetter is a former public school teacher who currently works at Saint Leo University, according to published reports.

Diaz has raised \$1,960 in cash so far in the young election, with Ledbetter scheduled to file her first campaign finance report this week. New candidates have until July 28, just before the Aug. 26 primary, to file their paperwork if they want to run.

But judging by past elections in this district, the successful candidate is going to have to raise hundreds of thousands of dol-



Danny Burgess

Timeline of Danny Burgess

2004: Graduates from Zephyrhills High School.

2005: Becomes youngest member of the Zephyrhills City Council in history at 18.

2006: Faces scrutiny when it's believed he spends more time living on campus at the University of South Florida. However, city attorney confirms his permanent residence remains in Zephyrhills, which is needed to remain on the council.

2007: Re-elected to city council.

2008: Graduates from USF and is elected council president; later resigns to attend law school in Orlando.

2011: Graduates from Barry University School of Law, and later passes the Florida Bar examination to become a lawyer.

2013: Elected unopposed as youngest mayor of Zephyrhills; joins Johnson Auvil Pratico & Chane P.A. of Dade City, practicing in commercial litigation; Announces run to replace Will Weatherford for the state House seat in District 38.

lars — far more than Burgess has ever needed running for city council or mayor in Zephyrhills. Yet, he feels that city-level experience gives him a significant leg up over anyone who might run against him.

"Having the opportunity to serve at a local level as a councilman has given me a keen understanding of municipalities and local government," Burgess said. "And local governments are exactly what encompasses your district as a state representative. I am currently the mayor of the largest city in the district, and I feel like I have the opportunity and the understanding of what the district means to help make it better."

While he wouldn't get into specifics, Burgess said he is ready to serve, even if the governor after the next election isn't Republican.

"I'm a team player, and I look forward to working with people on both sides of the aisle," Burgess said. "I do what I am elected to do, but I also understand that there's much stuff that gets done up there for whatever reason, so I hope to be a good positive change in Tallahassee, and hopefully, to get some good things accomplished."



You know it's Christmas in downtown Zephyrhills when TubaChristmas — a national effort to bring tuba and euphonium players together for public performances — takes over downtown's Times Square.

TUBAS, from page 1

TubaChristmases all over the country that year," Wheeler said. "He attended 84 of them."

Because players can wait right up until the same-day practice to show up, Wheeler does admit as an organizer it can be a little frightening wondering if enough players will show up to play. The Zephyrhills event, however, has really taken root in the town over the last several years, which means only a little stress for Wheeler leading up to the concert.

"I lost a little sleep the first time out," he said.

Wheeler has performed with TubaChristmas for 28 years, getting his start in New Hampshire and other parts of New England.

"I remember playing once in Maine with the snowflakes coming down and the valves (on his instrument) tend to freeze up," he said. "We're in Florida now, so we don't have to worry about it. I've had the pleasure of playing in a variety of instances, and Zephyrhills is the most enjoyable one."

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New recycle containers coming to Zephyrhills

The Laker/Lutz News Staff Report

The Zephyrhills City Council has approved a contract that will purchase 6,000 curbside 18-gallon recycling bins.

The Public Works Department will distribute the containers to residents in an effort to provide a higher level of recyclables collection service, and also to increase recycling participation, according to documents submitted to the city council. The initiative

began after the 2013 City Survey showed significant support for using recycling bins instead of the blue bag process.

The city received just one bid, from Rehrig Pacific Co., in Orlando, for \$41,460, or just under \$7 per container. That was well below the \$56,000 the city had budgeted for the purchase.

The bins could be distributed as early as February, Public Works director Shane LeBlanc said.

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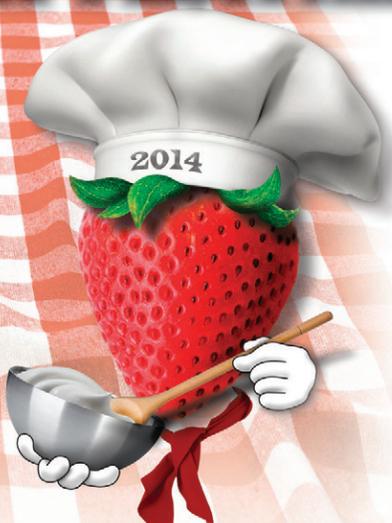
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Looking forward to a great Christmas season

By Sandra Gilbert-Abel
Rainbow Village

A lot of planning goes on for preparing a Thanksgiving dinner at Rainbow Village.

First, you need to sign up for a table of 12. The association pays for turkey, dressing and gravy, and those that sign up for the table bring the rest of the meal to serve all the people at that table.

A big thanks goes out to Harry Hersey and his great committee for a delicious meal. A big thanks goes to our manager Sue Flynn, who sees that everything goes smoothly.

The computer club had their first meeting with a great turnout of residents who want to learn new things. We look forward to discovering what we can do with our computers. A big thanks to Phil and Bonnie Lundeen who donate their services, and have great patience with us senior citizens.

Rainbow Village had its first park-wide yard sale on Nov. 23. This was a time to sell things you don't need anymore but somebody else needs. It is also a time to get out and talk to your neighbors. Thanks to Emil Ruhlrig and his committee for organizing the yard sale.

Our new outdoor stage really looks great. We watched them build it day by day. It has a carpeted floor, a new roof to protect entertainers from the sun and bad weather. It also has a railing that prevents anyone from falling off the stage. Looking forward to the welcome back party the manager promised. A big thanks goes to the park team for building a great looking stage.

At Rainbow Village we are so blessed to have our own church services each Sunday morning in our social hall, starting the first week in November until April. All denominations are welcome.



Harry Hersey and his dinner committee made sure the residents of Rainbow Village had a Thanksgiving feast. (Photo by Sandra Gilbert-Abel)

We also are blessed to have our own retired pastor that resides in our park. Pastor Don and wife Patti Wright have served our park for the past seven years. Pastor Don retired from Northside Christian Church in Terre Haute, Ind.

Rainbow church has a board that serves the pastor and the congregation. The offerings have blessed so many organizations and special needs in the community. We also have our own choir lead by Bev Were, and our own organist Joanne Peet, who has served for many years.

Thank you all for your service to our Rainbow Church.

At a recent ice cream social, John

Wilson, a very talented young man who performs at Busch Gardens, entertained us. He sang Frankie Valli songs, television theme songs, Broadway show tunes, gospel, and Mike Bovay songs. He also honored the veterans.

Just want to remind you about our upcoming shows starting on Jan. 8 at 7 p.m., when the Rich Wilson Musical Memories show will perform songs many of us grew up with and fondly remember by such artists as Frank Sinatra, Elvis Presley, Johnny Ray, Bobby Darin and so many more. You won't want to miss this show.

On Jan. 22, Joe Wright, who plays the steel guitar and presents a funny comedy

show, will perform.

On Feb. 5, Steve Jeffris' one-man band variety show, with guitar and vocals, will perform. There will be a repeat performance by Sarah Getto, singer, musician and songwriter, on Feb. 19.

Last but not least, the "Jimmy Smith Remembering the Legends and Gospel Show" will be on March 5. The shows all start at 7 p.m.

To get your tickets, call Sue Flynn at (813) 782-5075. Cost of tickets is \$8 each.

It is beginning to look like Christmas at Rainbow. Residents are putting up their decorations. We look forward to a great Christmas season.



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Holiday season opens with a feast at Grand Horizons

By Helene Rubenstein
Grand Horizons

While the holidays are approaching Grand Horizons, we still have a busy schedule.

We are getting ready for new and fun things like Christmas decorating in our community center and the gate entrance on Dec. 4 with hosts Brian Heidman and Barb Sullins, along with our decorating committee. We also have a golf cart parade along with entertainment, snacks, Christmas carols and socializing on Dec. 7.

While we are looking forward to these fun activities, we still are enjoying our many other activities, like a lovely pancake breakfast on Nov. 23. We had a great time, and you got your choice of pancakes or French toast, or both, plus sausage. There was coffee and orange juice to complete the meal. And, of course, we talk as there is many a discussion going on. This was a great way to start the day.

On Nov. 25, plus every Monday, Wednesday and Friday, we had a fun game of shuffleboard. The morning hours started off with a definite chill in the air, and this kept many of the regular shuffleboard players away, but six people still showed up. We had a great time with those who braved the cold weather, and by the middle of the game, coats were taken off. Any resident of Grand Horizons is welcome.

Fun anecdotes pass between the players like, "Don't you dare put me in the kitchen," "You know payback is coming," and other little quips.

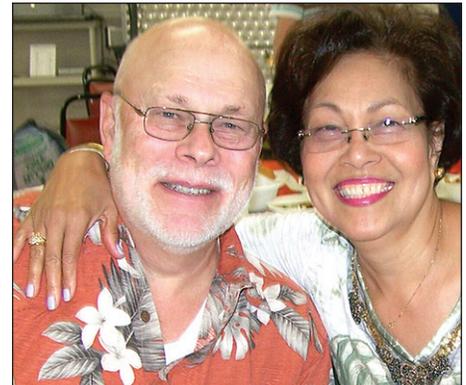
Later on that night, 20 of us showed up for a game of Mexican Train. Dominoes are always a blast, and here too we have the people at each table talking and joking around with the others at their table. The remarks are different, as you may hear "Train wreck," "My train never left the station," "This must be satisfied before you can begin your



Ron and Maureen Walker attend the Thanksgiving feast at Grand Horizons. (Photos by Helene Rubenstein)



Usually behind the camera, Helene Rubenstein takes a moment with her husband Marty at the park's Thanksgiving feast. (Photo by Brian Heidman)



John and Tita Mauk celebrate Thanksgiving at Grand Horizons.



Starting their Thanksgiving dinner with a salad are Nancy and Eugene Martin.



Paul and Carolyn Ray look forward to a Thanksgiving dinner with all the trimmings.



Rich and Chris Fulton attend the Thanksgiving feast at Grand Horizons.

train again," and so much more.

Friendly banter goes around each individual table, and before you know it, it's time to end the game and go home. We left with expectations of our holiday Thanksgiving meal on Nov. 28.

Thanksgiving arrived and about 90 people attended the feast. Hosts Andy and Margaret Castonguay had help in the kitchen

from Bill and Judy Ellsworth, plus Chick and Annmarie Shackewyc. They all arrived early in the morning to prepare for this special occasion, and what a superb job they did.

We had a full dinner complete with 12 items. There was salad, turkey, stuffing, cranberry sauce, green bean casserole, green peas, potatoes, squash, apple and pumpkin pie, and more. If anyone left hungry, it was

their own fault.

On the table, when we first entered, a salad greeted us. Before the dinner even started, grace was said by Cookie, and he did a splendid job. It was precise and to the point. After grace, tables were called by number, and the dinner started.

The entire committee did a great job and our thanks go out to all of them.

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Christmas spirit at Southern Charm

By Mary Ann Stephens
Southern Charm Park

“All I Want for Christmas is ...” — and what is on your wish list?

If you're not in the Christmas spirit just yet, take a walk or drive through our park and look at all the Christmas decorations. Streetlights display large decorations, as well as the clubhouse and individual homes. The spirit of Christmas certainly cannot be missed.

The Christmas dance is always a fun time. This year's dance will be on Dec. 13. Superstition of Friday the 13th did not stop the sale of tickets, as they sold very quickly.

Beautiful Christmas decorations for the dance were displayed on the tables and walls. Many thanks to our dance committee who generously give their time and work to make our dances successful.

Christmas Eve begins with the lighting of the luminaries that line the streets through-

out the park. Three live nativity scenes will be presented beginning at 6 p.m. Snacks and finger foods will be available inside the clubhouse until 7 p.m., when the Southern Charm choir begins their program.

Opening their performance with “Frosty the Snowman” and “Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer,” other favorites will be sung, bringing back childhood memories. The audience will not be able to resist joining the singing.

The second half of the program is the story of Mary and Joseph told by song and readings. Many thanks to all the faithful choir members, directed by Audrey Pitcher and accompanied by Marti DeVries. The choir meets for weekly practices and sings at all the Sunday worship services plus other special events.

Did you finish your Christmas list yet? Here's hoping you're on Santa's good boy or girl list and you get what you asked for.

Southern Charm wishes all a blessed Christmas and a healthy New Year.



It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas

Park manager Dan Olson and helper Jeremy worked hard to put lights and decorations outside at Happy Days RV Park. The residents are now ready for the Christmas party, caroling, light contest, our candlelight service, and Christmas dinner. (Photos courtesy of Judy Olson)



After a wonderful Thanksgiving dinner, Toni Fischer, Linda Jenkins, Eileen Frantz and Heather Graham gathered to decorate the Christmas tree in the recreation hall at Happy Days RV Park.



Doctor presents eye-opening seminar

The Sundance Park Woman's Club of Zephyrhills hosted Dr. Ahad Mahootchi from the Eye Clinic of Florida at its Nov. 11 meeting and luncheon. Dr. Mahootchi presented an informative talk on cataract concerns, macular degeneration and diabetic eye problems. Woman's Club president Ann McDonald, left, introduced Dr. Mahootchi. (Photo courtesy of Barbara White)

Closer Look

AN ADVERTISER PROFILE

Permanent makeup comes to Wesley Chapel

by Mike Matthew
special to The Laker / Lutz News

Valerie Rudmin, owner of Everlasting Beauty, has been a permanent makeup specialist for 26 years. She first heard about permanent makeup when Michael Jackson had permanent eyeliner applied. She thought, what a great idea! That inspired her to become a permanent makeup artist to help those in need, especially women without eyebrows.

She immediately enrolled in one of the only schools in the United States offering permanent makeup and began offering it as a service through the hair salon she owned in Chicago.

Her first client was herself. “I wanted to show my clients what I was talking about, rather than trying to explain it, no one knew what this was” says Valerie. “That way, they could see the results firsthand.” Her business took off from there.

In 1990, she moved to Florida. Shortly after that, she met a doctor in Hernando County, who asked her to come to work in his office. Her reputation grew, and she began working with cosmetic surgeons at the Clearwater Center for Cosmetic Surgery.

After attending a conference 16 years ago in North Carolina, she was invited to open a studio in Des Moines, Iowa. Every couple of months, she flies there to work with clients who've booked appointments from all over the U.S.

“I always wanted to work closer to home,” says Valerie. “A friend found a studio that's just a few minutes from my home, so I opened a studio in Wesley Chapel in January (2013) adding to my other locations.”

Valerie currently has over 30 certifications in permanent makeup. Her education is ongoing. “I'm always interested in learning something new,” says Valerie. “In 1992, I took some time off to study with master tattoo artist Big Joe in New York. He was the best in the industry and a really interesting character.”

The majority of her work comes from referrals. “People need to know who's working on their face,” says Valerie. “There are things that should not be done, mistakes that can cause irreversible damage. A tattoo artist with a couple of classes in permanent makeup is probably not the wisest choice.”

Valerie's studio is a safe and sterile environment that's been licensed and inspected by the State of Florida Health Department. She uses the best topical anesthetic and knows how to apply them so her clients don't feel anything while she's working on them. Most work is completed in a single visit lasting a little over one hour. Clients leave her office with no swelling, bleeding or bruising, just makeup that won't wash off.

Valerie is a Lifetime Member of The Society of Permanent Cosmetic Professionals (SPCP.org). She also remodels scars, including chemo port scars, creates the 3D areola on “our beautiful breast cancer survivors”, as well as eyebrows, eyeliner and lip liner. She also has her own skin care product line. She works by appointment only. Call her at (727) 460-3847 to set up an appointment.

“I can take 10 years off your face simply by doing your eyebrows,” says Valerie. “It feels good to wake up with makeup.”

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News from around the senior parks in East Pasco is accepted YEAR-ROUND for The Laker-East Pasco edition, published every other week.

Upcoming publication dates and deadlines are as follows:

Publication Date	Deadline Date
Dec. 11	Dec. 3
Dec. 25	Dec. 16
Jan. 8, 2014	Dec. 30, 2013
Jan. 22	Jan. 14
Feb. 5	Jan. 28
Feb. 19	Feb. 11
March 5	Feb. 25
March 19	March 11
April 2	March 25
April 16	April 8

Send your photos and submissions to Mary Rathman at mrathman@cnewspubs.com or P.O. Box 479, Lutz, FL 33548. Submissions can also be dropped off at our office, 3632 Land O' Lakes Blvd., Suite 102, in the Copperstone Executive Suites, Land O' Lakes.

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Parents of the couple are John and Donna Elifson of Land O' Lakes, Florida, and Ken and Michele Fackler of Oviedo, Florida. Grandparents of the couple are LaVonne Blakeslee of Livingston, Montana, the late William Blakeslee, and the late James and Elna Elifson, of Clinton, Iowa. Also, Ken and Sandy Fackler of Ocala, Florida, Mavis Monell, of Franklin, New Jersey, and the late Paul Burger of Wayne, New Jersey.

The bride-to-be is a graduate of UCF in '12, majoring in Health Services Administration and is employed with SimonMed as an Account Manager. Her fiance' is a graduate of UCF in '11, majoring in Marketing and is employed with the Orlando Sentinel as a Digital Account Executive.

Vows will be exchanged in Orlando, Florida on 12-13-14

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