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Share your wildlife photos

If you've captured a photograph of an interesting bird or wild creature, we'd love to share your image with our readers.

If you'd like us to consider publishing your photograph, please email it to us at news@lakerlutznews.com.

Please be sure to include what kind of animal it is, and where you took the picture. Also include your contact information, so we can get in touch with you, if we need to.



INSIDE, PAGE 1B

Crystal Lagoon debuts with a splash

By Kevin Weiss
 kweiss@lakerlutznews.com

The weather was warm, the sun shining, and the crowd deep for the grand debut of the Crystal Lagoon at Epperson.

The April 28 kickoff for the nation's first lagoon was further buoyed with a special appearance from retired Olympic swimmer and gold medalist Michael Phelps.

Phelps, the most decorated athlete in Olympics history with 28 medals — 23 gold, three silver, two bronze — serves as global ambassador for Crystal Lagoons Inc.

Following a short promotional video and introductions, Phelps' entrance at the Wesley Chapel-based lagoon drew bursts of cheers and applause from the crowd, who nestled near a main stage to get an up-close look at the legendary swimmer.



RANDY UNDERHILL
Michael Phelps, a retired Olympic swimmer, spent part of the time during his visit talking about the importance of water safety.

Phelps engaged the crowd by highlighting the enjoyment his own family had at a similar lagoon in Cabo San Lucas, Mexico.

"You guys are going to enjoy it. It's so much fun," Phelps said in his opening remarks. "The water's crystal clear, and there's so many activities — and that's something that's so much fun for me now being a dad with two kids, so I'm excited you guys get to experience this."

Phelps noted it was his first visit to Wesley Chapel and the Tampa Bay area, arriving on a flight from New York City.

"I wish I lived down here, so I could experience this with my family more often," he said. "Maybe we'll have to bring the family down sometime soon."

Following brief remarks, Phelps met with

See LAGOON, page 13A



Twelve-year-old Annalyse Guash, of Zephyrhills, waters the tomatoes that she helped to plant during the Earth Day Celebration at the New River Library's Community Garden.



Erin Buskey, center, of Wesley Chapel, and her children, 10-year-old Camden, left, and 9-year-old Isabelle, pack dirt around a marigold that they planted. This was the children's first experience in gardening.



CHRISTINE HOLTZMAN

Library celebrates 'Earth Day' in its community garden

The New River Branch Library at 34043 State Road 54, in Wesley Chapel, paid homage to Mother Earth with a community gardening celebration. Jacob Lenzi, of Zephyrhills, a patron of the New River Library's Community Garden, picks a carrot that is ready for harvest.

Corley discusses voting system reliability, security

By Kevin Weiss
 kweiss@lakerlutznews.com

With primary and general elections on tap later this year — and the recent completion of the municipal election — Pasco County Supervisor of Elections Brian Corley wants local residents to know their vote always counts.

His message: "Sleep well at night; we've got it covered."

Corley was the featured speaker at the Republican Club of Central Pasco's recent monthly meeting, where he spoke extensively about the reliability and security of the county's voting system.



KEVIN WEISS

Pasco County Supervisor of Elections Brian Corley spoke extensively about the reliability and security of the county's voting system during the Republican Club of Central Pasco's monthly meeting.

Corley, who's served as the county's elections supervisor since 2007, explained the elections office has been working closely with the FBI, Homeland Security, the Pasco County Sheriff's Office and other agencies to vet any potential threats, particularly of the cyber variety.

Additional security precautions have been taken since the 2016 Presidential Election and measures are in place for "every possible scenario," Corley said.

In a worst-case scenario — such as the PascoVotes website getting compromised — Corley explained the county's elections office would have the ability to recreate the election. That's because its headquarters has "multiple redundancies" to preserve the county's voter registration database.

"If there was any kind of issue, there's backups of the voter data," the elections supervisor said.

Corley referenced a website called Norsecorp.com, which analyzes real-time cyber attempts to hack networks. To underscore the reinforced security of the county elections office, Corley made an analogy of

would-be election hackers to a car thief attempting to unlock cars in a parking lot: "In our office, our doors are locked — and you can't get to the car."

Corley explained the Dade City-based elections service center "couldn't be any more secure" should someone attempt to hack its internal servers, steal electronic poll books or other data.

The Category-5 hardened building is equipped with security cameras and multiple levels of physical access control systems, Corley said.

Furthermore, to even activate those voting machines or poll books, Corley said the elections office has multiple sets of unique passwords.

"You'd have to physically drive a Mack truck through the wall, and I don't think a Mack truck can even get through that wall, to be honest," he said.

Corley also said his office always conducts a post-election audit — physically

See CORLEY, page 13A

Homeless shelter to help families find housing

By Kathy Steele
 ksteele@lakerlutznews.com

A "one-stop navigation center" for the homeless population in Pasco County will provide temporary shelter for families, instead of the initial plan to help single adult men and women.

If opened, the center would be Pasco's first homeless shelter.

An estimated \$100,000 annual cost for around-the-clock security at the facility and neighborhood opposition to the original plan prompted the shift in the shelter's purpose.

"We realized the need was great for families, and we will have more funding (opportunities) for families," said Don Anderson, chief executive officer for the Homeless Coalition of Pasco County.

A public meeting to discuss the new concept will be held May 16 at 6 p.m., at the Pasco County Commission board room in New Port Richey. Additional outreach to residents in nearby neighborhoods also is planned.

Commissioners voted on April 24 to continue the public hearing for a conditional use permit for the facility until June 19.

That will allow time to amend the coalition's application, and to hear from area residents.

Commissioners have been supportive of the project, and previously approved funding to remodel the center.

Commissioner Jack Mariano, however, has been critical of the county's choice of location.

Residents from Crane's Roost, a neighborhood of about 90 homes, off Little Road,

See SHELTER, page 13A

Sunlake student named Foot Locker scholar-athlete

By Kevin Weiss
kweiss@lakerlutznews.com

Sunlake High School's Andrea Wallace is more than just a star basketball player who can score and rebound at will, and dazzle in the post, with her 6-foot-1 frame.

She's also a standout in the classroom, maintaining a 4.0 grade-point average all through high school.

Besides athletics and academics, Wallace, too, strives to make an impact in the community. It's why she founded a school club her junior year called Pass It Forward, which focuses on empowering young girls in Land O' Lakes to use their voice, display their strengths and encourage one another.

"She's that kid that wants to be great," said Reesa Hendrix-Pledge, Sunlake athletic director and girls head basketball coach.

In her seven-plus years at Sunlake, Hendrix-Pledge says no student-athlete better exemplifies "excellence" in all aspects of life than the senior forward.

"She's kind of the model student," the coach said.

Wallace's leadership skills, too, "are like no other" — evidenced in being a three-time team captain on the girls varsity hoops team.

"A coach couldn't ask for somebody else that can actually talk it then back it up at the same time," Hendrix-Pledge said.

To other Sunlake teachers and administrators meanwhile, Wallace is simply "an awesome kid."

To those that know her, it's not far-fetched that Wallace recently became one of just 20 student-athletes nationwide honored this year in the Foot Locker Scholar-Athletes Program. She was selected from a competitive pool of over 13,000 applicants.

As a Foot Locker Scholar Athlete, Wallace was awarded a \$20,000 scholarship in a surprise lunchtime ceremony on April 18 at the high school.

Wallace was told she'd be giving a presentation to district board members. However, while giving her speech in an administration room, Wallace was abruptly overcome with emotion when a pair of Foot Locker representatives entered the room and diverted her attention with a large check — literally — that read 'Twenty Thousand' dollars.

Wallace recalled the eventful moment afterwards: "It was actually pretty funny,



COURTESY OF SUNLAKE HIGH SCHOOL

Sunlake High's Andrea Wallace was one of just 20 student-athletes nationwide honored this year in the Foot Locker Scholar-Athletes Program, selected from a competitive pool of over 13,000 applicants. Wallace was recognized for her academic and athletic excellence, along with her service to the community. She will play basketball next season at St. Petersburg College, with plans to transfer to a university in a year or two.

because when I walked in everybody had their cameras out. I was like, 'I'm not anybody. I'm not that special.' But, because I thought it was for the district board — that's what I was told — so I came in and gave the speech, but when they brought the check I almost started crying. ...It's amazing. I didn't even think that I'd be able to get that."

Wallace's mother, Anne-Marie, was also in attendance at the ceremony and was likewise shocked by the scholarship reveal. She used her lunch break to visit the school even though she wasn't given the reason.

"I was completely caught off guard," Wallace's mother said. "This is going to be so much of a big help for her, because with (college) loans, at least it'll be less on her. I am very grateful; very grateful. I was not expecting this..."

Though remaining humble about her

daughter's accomplishments, Anne-Marie noted her academically and athletically gifted daughter has always displayed strong work ethic and leadership qualities.

"She's a pretty good girl," Anne-Marie said. "Andrea, she just works very hard, and she's disciplined, and she has such a good attitude."

Wallace applied for the scholarship in mid-November at the behest of Hendrix-Pledge. Five months later her coach received a call from Foot Locker on a random Friday evening. "...It was kind of out of sight, out of mind, and then she had been chosen," said Hendrix-Pledge, who noted she wasn't totally taken aback, as her star pupil met all the qualifications to win the prestigious scholarship.

Wallace will play basketball next season at St. Petersburg College, with intentions to transfer to a university in a year or two. She

plans to study pre-law with hopes of becoming a lawyer and a judge someday.

It all follows what's been a momentous four-year varsity career, including her senior campaign, where she averaged a double-double (13.3 points, 10.6 rebounds) en route to Sunlake's first 20-win season and the 7A regional finals. After the season, Wallace was awarded the Sunshine Athletic Conference East Girls Basketball Player of the Year, along with first team All-Conference honors.

Wallace made major strides on the court after her freshman season, motivated to improve after the team lost in the first round of the district playoffs.

"I was upset that we lost...so I was like, 'I really like playing basketball, and I like being on the team, so what is a good way for me to get better?' So, I just kind of worked that whole summer just to get better and be in a position to play."

That she did — developing into one of the Bay Area's top post players, and leading the Seahawks to three straight winning seasons and regional appearances.

Of her 81 career games played, one she'll never forget is defeating Land O' Lakes High her sophomore year in the district semifinals, 54-20. (Sunlake later defeated Springstead to capture the Class 6A district title). Said Wallace, "That was like a moment that I'll always remember forever because we'd never, ever won anything like that. ... To win our district championship and beat Land O' Lakes High School was like really, really big."

Meanwhile, Wallace said balancing all her commitments and responsibilities—academically, athletically, socially — at times "gets really, really difficult."

But, she doesn't let the pressure rattle her.

"It's really easy to just say, 'You know what, I'm not going to do that today.' Like, it's super easy to give up, so you just have to stay focused on the bigger goal," she said.

It's a message she often bestows on others, including her fellow teammates on achieving their dreams: "If you want to be the best, then you have to do something about it. ... What can you do to push yourself to a bigger level?"

The Foot Locker Scholar Athletes program began in 2011, which has resulted in

140 total scholarship recipients over that time.

Updated website revealed for Pasco County

By Mary Rathman
mrathman@lakerlutznews.com

The Pasco County Government has announced the launch of its new, updated website, which offers more accessibility for its partners, customers and visitors.

A few of the website's new features include: expanded search capabilities, streamlined menu options, mobile device compatibility, simpler navigation, and direct access to various materials.

There also is a bigger, more prominent search bar with improved functionality.

The main menu now provides access to department information and tools. Social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter and Pasco TV also are available on the home page.

Customers can easily click on icons located in the center of the page to connect to Online Bill Pay, Transparency, Customer Service, Job and Volunteer Opportunities, and Parks and Recreation.

A 'Tools' icon allows users to email or



print pages, translate a page into another language, view documents, and more.

Also on the updated site is a spotlight section about Pasco County departments, and a general calendar for public meetings and events.

Other helpful links include Adopt a Pet, Agendas, the Purchasing Department, Disaster Planning.

Pasco County is committed to show an ongoing effort to keep the website content compliant.

To see, and use, the new and improved website, visit PascoCountyFL.net.

Water-Wise awards open for nominations

By Mary Rathman
mrathman@lakerlutznews.com

Do you think your landscape is both eye-catching and water-efficient?

If you do, you may want to enter the 2018 Tampa Bay Community Water-Wise Awards.

Winners will receive a custom-made mosaic landscape stepping stone, as well as recognition from local elected officials.

And, of course, they'll earn neighborhood bragging rights, too.

Tampa Bay Water, in partnership with the University of Florida's Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (IFAS) county extension offices and the Florida-Friendly Landscaping Program, is looking to recognize residents, local businesses and community organizations that are commit-

ted to conserving water resources, and protecting the environment by using best practice to create attractive, water-efficient landscaping.

The program is a way to engage with the community and encourage the efficient use of water resources, and to protect drinking water sources from pollution.

All entries will be reviewed by representatives of the UF's IFAS County Extension. On-site evaluations will be scheduled for all submissions that meet the core criteria.

Winning the coveted award requires the act of balancing Florida-friendly plants and landscape elements with attractive design and minimal maintenance, as well as using efficient irrigation techniques that reduce water use.

For more information and to apply by June 30, visit TampaBayWaterWise.org.





Frank Sinatra

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Monday, May 21, 2018 | 2:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

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Wiregrass Ranch still practices patient approach to growth

By B.C. Manion
bcmanion@lakerlutznews.com

Since the outset of the development of Wiregrass Ranch, the Porter family has used a patient approach to assembling the building blocks of a community.

Over time, land once occupied by cattle and orange groves has been transformed.

Developments including The Shops at Wiregrass, Florida Hospital Wesley Chapel, Pasco-Hernando State College's Porter Campus at Wiregrass Ranch, North Tampa Bay Behavioral Health Hospital, Beach House Assisted Living & Memory Care at Wiregrass, and public schools, subdivisions and apartments are just some of the projects that have popped out of the landscape.

And, there's more to come, J.D. Porter told a crowd at the North Tampa Bay Chamber's April economic briefing at Hunter's Green Golf & Country Club.

"The demographic that is moving into the area right now is younger, dual income, dual college education," Porter said.

That lends itself to high-quality housing, upscale restaurants, specialty grocers and other sought-after development, he said.

The Porter family is choosy about the types of new projects it brings into Wiregrass, to protect the quality of the development, he said.

"There are users out there that aren't a good fit for Wiregrass," Porter explained.

And, even when a project is a good match for Wiregrass, the family paces the development to make sure that ongoing projects can be successful before introducing new ones.

Porter takes particular pride in the area's job creation.

"Right now there are 2,500 jobs that have been created," Porter said. "We've created more jobs than we have homes."

That's a statistic that would be hard to match in other Pasco or Hillsborough developments, Porter said.

He also noted that it's important to have a mix of large and small users, so there's not too much reliance on large users — in case they go away.

Having the proper mix of development is important, too, he said.

"It's nice to have boutique restaurants, shops, locally owned businesses and stuff like that. To make that work, you have to have people around it, and you have to have people around that during the day," he said.

The family envisions a town center, with increased residential density, as it gets closer to the town center, Porter said.

The town center — which would be a walkable Wesley Chapel downtown — will include retail, office space, residential, a school, light rail or bus rapid transit stops, a park and ride, a hotel, a fire station, a sher-



B.C. MANION

J.D. Porter and the Porter family are choosy about the types of new projects they bring into Wiregrass.

iff's office, an indoor sports facility, playgrounds, a walking trail, a hotel, a county office building and other amenities, according to the Wiregrass Ranch website.

Porter also addressed the big user side of development, during the economic briefing.

Wiregrass Ranch is "currently shortlisted for two Fortune 200 companies. One for 600,000; one for 1.2 million square feet," Porter said. "It'd be nice to have another big one. Both of them are ranked higher than what Raymond James is, on the Fortune 500 list."

Raymond James, which has long been expected to have an office park in the Wiregrass Ranch development "will be turning dirt before the end of the year," Porter said, in response to a question from the audience. "They're going to be taking steps towards getting site-ready for construction." He also offered his thoughts on some transportation issues.

The diverging diamond, a project to retrofit the Interstate 75-State Road 56 interchange, should help, Porter said.

"The upside is, it really will help that traffic problem quite a bit," he said. But, he predicts there will be accidents, and even deaths, as people learn to negotiate it.

The \$40 million diverging diamond project is expected to begin this summer and could take two years to three years to complete, according to officials with the Florida Department of Transportation.

Porter also predicted that rapid bus transit is more likely to happen than light rail, and noted that Wiregrass Ranch already has 3 1/2 miles to 4 miles dedicated for either option.

In general, Porter said, "you have got to have good connectivity on roadways, regardless where they're at."

POLITICAL AGENDA

Upcoming events on the political scene

CLUB MEETINGS

• The Land O Lakes Democratic Club will meet May 2 at 6:30 p.m., at the Brick City Eatery, 16540 Pointe Village Drive, Suite 198, in Lutz. Noemi McGregor, president of the Democratic Hispanic Caucus of Florida, is the guest speaker.

• The Democratic Environmental Caucus of Florida — Pasco Chapter will meet May 9 from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m., at the community center at Land O' Lakes Heritage Park, Room No. 1, 5401 Land O Lakes Blvd., in Land O' Lakes.

SUMMER KICKOFF PICNIC

Kelly Smith, a candidate for the District 2 seat on the Pasco County Commission, is hosting a Volunteer Thank You/ Summer Kick Off Picnic May 6 from noon to 2 p.m., at Jay B. Starkey Wilderness Park. For more information, email mary@kellysmithforpascocounty.com.

ENDORSEMENT

Former Pasco County Commission Pat Mulieri has endorsed Mike Moore in his reelection bid for the District 2 seat on the board, according to Moore's campaign.

Political Agenda is a column that runs only during election years. It gives candidates a place to announce they are seeking political office. It lets voters know of upcoming Meet the Candidate nights or political forums. It is a place where political clubs can announce upcoming meetings, and it will include news that is pertinent to voters for upcoming elections. It will not include political fundraising events. There is never a guarantee of publication, but we do consider each item we receive. Please submit items for consideration at least two weeks prior to the desired publication date. Send submissions to news@lakerlutznews.com.

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What's Happening

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BOOKS FOR TROOPS

Books for Troops, a nonprofit group that provides recreational and educational reading material to men and women in uniform free of charge. The group is asking for specific books to answer a request from Forward Operating Base Fenty. All books on the required military reading lists are for officers and enlisted on active duty or reserve duty. These donations will be accepted in hardback. The list of needed books can be found at BooksForTroops.org/books-requested. Donations can be dropped off at Simply Self Storage, 22831 Preakness Blvd., in Land O' Lakes.

DAY OF PRAYER

The 67th annual National Day of Prayer will be recognized May 3 from 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m., at the Historic Dade City Courthouse Square, 37918 Meridian Ave., in Dade City. For information, call The Greater Dade City Chamber of Commerce at (352) 567-3769.

CINCO DE MAYO SOIREE

The Land O' Lakes Library, 2818 Collier Parkway, will host a Social Seniors' Cinco de Mayo Salsa Soiree May 3 from 10 a.m. to noon, for ages 55 and older. Dancing with Grace will teach the salsa, and there will be coffee and cake. Seniors also can offer library programming suggestions. For information, call (813) 929-1214.

PRESERVATION SOCIETY

The Historic Hernando Preservation Society will meet May 3 at 6:30 p.m., at Brooksville City Hall, 201 Howell Ave., in Brooksville. The guest speaker will be Shane Forrester on "Indians of Eastern Hernando/Pasco County." Admission is free. For information, visit HistoricHernandoPreservationSociety.org.

Z BOOK CLUB

The Z Book Club will meet May 4 at 3 p.m., at the Zephyrhills Public Library, 5347 Eighth St., to discuss "The Dry" by Jane Harper. For information, call (813) 780-0064.

ODESSA POWWOW

The Spirit People Intertribal Family and the Gunn Highway Flea Market will host a Spring PowWow on May 4, May 5 and May 6 at the flea market, 2317 Gunn Highway in Odessa. There will be drumming, dancing, storytelling, flute playing, food, vendors, a trade blanket, raffles and a 50/50 drawing. Gates open each day at 10 a.m. Admission is \$5 per person or \$10 per family of five. Children age 12 and younger are free. All veterans and active service members are free with ID. For information, call LeeAnn Graf at (727) 514-4795 or Robert Langlais at (727) 277-4770.

COLOR TO RELAX

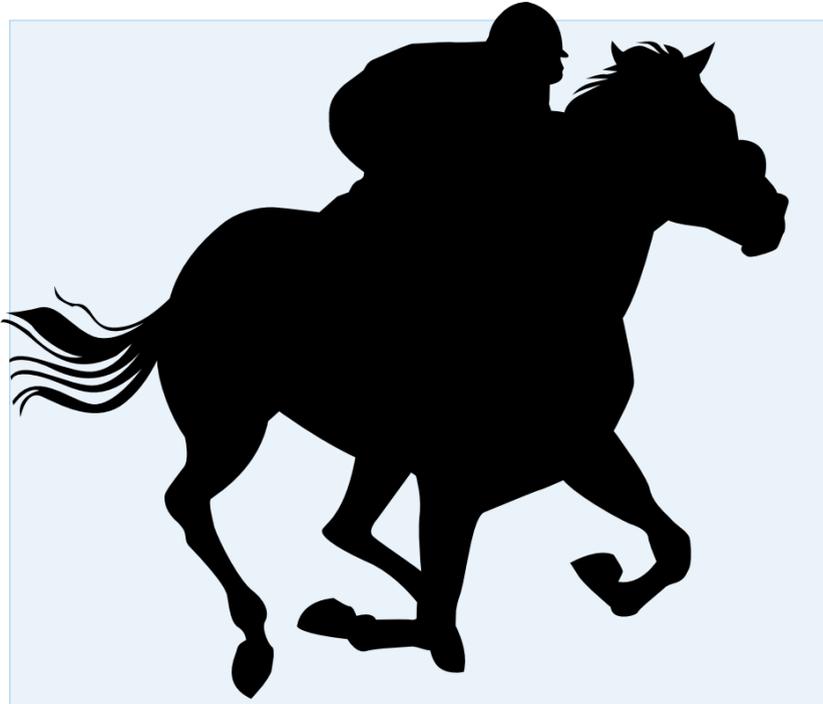
The Zephyrhills Public Library, 5347 Eighth St., will offer "Color Us Creative" May 4 at 10 a.m., for adults only. Guests can bring their own pencils, pages and supplies, or use those at the library. For information, call (813) 780-0064.

CHILDREN'S NETWORK GALA

The Children's Home Network will host "A Night to Remember," presented by Karl Flammer Ford, May 4 from 7 p.m. to 11 p.m., at the Bryan Glazer Family JCC. There will be food, cocktails and live music from The Fabulous Rockers. Proceeds will help heal abused, neglected and abandoned children, and support local families in need. Sponsorship opportunities are available. For information, visit ChildrensHomeNetwork.org/nighttoremember.

FARM ACTIVITIES

Sweetfields Farm, 17250 Benes Roush Road in Masaryktown, will again showcase its 'living labyrinth' — a sunflower maze — on weekends during the month of May from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., on Saturdays and Sundays



Derby party fundraiser

The Wesley Chapel Rotary Club will host its inaugural "Hats & Horse" Kentucky Derby Party on May 5 from 4 p.m. to 9 p.m., at Waller Ranch, 17307 Powerline Road in Dade City. Dress in a fancy hat, sundresses and dapper suits. Tickets are \$75 each and are tax deductible. Proceeds will benefit Habitat for Humanity of East and Central Pasco County, and the Rotary's community programs. For information and tickets, visit tinyurl.com/ycdz9735.

Charity classic event

The Cheval Women's Club, along with the Cheval Golf Club, will host a Kentucky Derby Charity Classic Event May 5 from 5:30 p.m. to 9 p.m. There will be live music, and a sit-down dinner after the live broadcast of the race. Contests will include most creative hat for women, best-dressed lady, best-dressed man, most creative costume for men, and more. There also will be drink specials. The cost is \$30 per person. All proceeds from drawings and silent auctions will benefit Paws for Patriots, Operation Helping Hand and Joshua House. No walk-ins. For information, call Billie Byers at (813) 948-3939.

(last admission on farm grounds is at 3 p.m.) The maze also will be open Memorial Day, May 28. Admission is \$9.50 plus tax for age 12 and older; \$5 plus tax for ages 3 to 11; and free for age 2 and younger. No pets are allowed. This is an outside activity, and subject to close if weather is severe. No rain checks or refunds. For information, call (352) 279-0977, or visit SweetfieldsFarm.com.

CARROLLWOOD TOASTMASTERS

The Carrollwood Toastmasters will meet May 5 from 7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., at the Jimmie B. Keel Regional Library, 2902 W. Bearss Ave., in Carrollwood. For information, visit Carrollwood.toastmastersclubs.org.

JUNKOHOLIC MARKET

The Blooming House, 10600 Land O' Lakes Blvd., in Land O' Lakes, will host a Summer Junkoholic Fest Vintage Market May 5 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. There will be vendors with everything from antiques to shabby chic to handmade furniture, signs, art, old doors and windows, garden art and rusty stuff. There also will be food, music and giveaways. For information, call (813) 541-9234.

QUARTER AUCTION

The second annual Marjorie's Hope Quarter Auction will be May 5 at 7 p.m., at Seven Springs Golf & Country Club, 3535 Trophy Blvd., in New Port Richey. Marjorie's Hope provides children in need with school supplies, toys and other necessities, through its Back to School program and Clothes Donation program. Tickets are \$20. Extra paddles cost \$5 each. There also will be a 50/50 drawing. For information, call Debi Shackowsky at (727) 776-5458.

THE MARKET PLACE

The last seasonal Market Place at Hibiscus Park, Seventh Street and Bougainvillea Avenue, in Dade City will be May 5 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. It will return in September. In addition to vendors, there will be a gift basket drawing by the Dade City Garden Club, with proceeds benefiting the Dade City Youth Council. The market is pet-friendly. For information, contact Lucy Avila at (352) 521-5858 or lucyavila707@gmail.com.

BOOK SIGNING

The Jimmie B. Keel Regional Library, 2902 W. Bearss Ave., in Carrollwood, will host romance author Susan Wiggs on May 5 at 2:30 p.m. Wiggs will share her experiences from her 30-year writing career and discuss her recent book, "Map of the Heart." There will be a question-and-answer session, and a book signing, after the presentation. For information, call (813) 273-3652, or visit HCPLC.org.

KOL AMI PICNIC

Congregation Kol Ami, 3919 Moran Road in Tampa, will host its annual End-of-the-Year Picnic May 6 from 11:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. There will be a bounce house, an obstacle course, a slip-and-slide, picnic food, and more. For information, contact Mitchell Weiss at (813) 962-6338 or execdirector@kolami.org.

LITTLE MERMAID SING-ALONG

Tampa Theatre, 711 N. Franklin St., in downtown Tampa, will host a sing-along version of "The Little Mermaid" May 6 at 3 p.m., as part of its Family Favorites film series. Tickets are \$10 for adults, \$8 for ages 2 to 12, and \$7 for theater members. For information, visit TampaTheatre.org.

FLORIDA WIND BAND

The Florida Wind Band will present "Rhapsody in Blue" May 6 at 4 p.m., at the USF School of Music Concert Hall. Tickets are \$15 for general admission, and \$10 for seniors and students. Group rates are available. For information, visit FloridaWindBand.org.

DRAWING CLASS

The Land O' Lakes Library, 2818 Collier Parkway, will host an Observational Drawing Class May 7 from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m., for ages 14 and older. Participants can learn about historical and contemporary drawing practices, and enhance their own skills through observational methods. Any experience levels can attend. All supplies will be provided, but guests can bring their own paper and drawing tools. Registration and a signed liability waiver are required. For information, call (813) 929-1214.

READ TO A DOG

The Land O' Lakes Library, 2818 Collier Parkway, will host the "Read with Charlie the Dog" program May 8. Charlie will be available for 15-minute increments starting at 4 p.m. Bring your own book or use one from the library. A signed liability waiver is required. To schedule a spot, call (813) 929-1214.

TEEN TOASTMASTERS

The "Teen Toastmasters" cooking class will take place May 8 from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m., at the Land O' Lakes Library, 2818 Collier Parkway, for ages 13 to 18. Registration and a signed liability waiver are required. For information, call (813) 929-1214.

ENGLISH CHAT

The Land O' Lakes Library, 2818 Collier Parkway, will host "Coffee and a Chat" May 9 from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m., for anyone age 16 and older that wants to practice English as a second language. For information, call (813) 929-1214.

MOTHER-SON GAME NIGHT

The Land O' Lakes Recreation Complex, and Pasco County Parks, Recreation and Natural Resources will host a "Mother-Son Game Night" May 11 from 6 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., at 3032 Collier Parkway, for ages 4 to 15. There will be inflatables, laser tag, mini golf and more activities. The cost is \$10 per pair and \$5 for any additional child, if paid by May 9. After May 9, the price is \$15 per pair and \$5 for an additional child. For information, call (813) 929-1220.

NAUTICAL MASON JARS

The Zephyrhills Public Library, 5347 Eighth St., will offer a craft makers class May 11 at 10 a.m. Participants can learn to make a nautical mason jar. The class is limited to 20 participants. All supplies are included. Registration is required by calling (813) 780-0064.

TEA & FASHION BENEFIT

There will be a Spring Tea and Fashion Show May 12 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., at Saint Anthony Padua Catholic Church Parish Center, 32825 Rhode Island Ave., in San Antonio, to benefit the Foundations of Life Pregnancy Center in Dade City. Guests should bring their own teacup. Hats and gloves are encouraged. Tickets are \$20 per person. Seating is limited. For information, call Angelica Herrera at (352) 521-1218. For tickets, call Herrera or visit Foundations of Life at 37733 Meridian Ave., in Dade City.

SUMMER FOOD DRIVE

Participating Goodwill stores will be hosting "Cereal for Summer" food drives through May 13 to help feed needy families this summer. The stores, including the Goodwill Superstore at 2390 Willow Oak Drive in Wesley Chapel, will be collecting donations (drive-through or walk-ins) of cereal, oatmeal, breakfast bars and other nonperishable breakfast foods.

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During a Hawaiian vacation with her husband, Marek caught a full view of her body from all angles in the full-length mirrors in the cabin and wept at what she saw in her reflection. Through tears, she apologized to her husband for allowing herself to get unhealthy and out of shape, and jumped on the internet looking for a solution. She ended up reading testimonials on Samantha Taylor's website and was encouraged that many of the women that were successful in their weight loss journey were near her age or older.

Upon returning home, Marek called Samantha Taylor Fitness and immediately started on the fitness



Lost 49 lbs.!

program. Adopting the exercise routine and healthy, eating plan resulted in Marek's loss of 50 lbs., 50 inches and 5 dress sizes. "My husband also lost 25 lbs. and loves eating this way," said Marek. "It's definitely been a lifestyle change for us, not a diet."

To find out more about nutrition and exercise with Samantha Taylor Fitness, book a free consultation at www.SamanthaTaylorFitness.com.

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Take a walk on the wild side during American Wetlands month

By B.C. Manion
bcmanion@lakerlutznews.com

Nature-lovers can explore four of Hillsborough County's most scenic wetlands areas during free tours being offered as part of American Wetlands Month.

The guided tours are being offered by the wetlands division of the Environmental Protection Commission of Hillsborough County, and the Conservation and Environmental Lands Management Department of Hillsborough County.

Guides will give tour-takers a chance to learn about different kinds of plants and find out why wetlands are important, said Jackie Jordan, wetlands division project manager for the Environmental Protection Commission of Hillsborough County.

Some of those benefits include serving as a habitat for many wildlife species, providing recreational opportunities, filtering drinking water and reducing flooding hazards, Jordan said.

This is the schedule of the upcoming tours:

- May 5 from 9 a.m. to 10 a.m.: Lettuce

Lake Conservation Park, 6920 E. Fletcher Ave., in Tampa.

- May 11 from 9 a.m. to 10 a.m.: Lutz Lake Fern Trailhead, 7020 Lutz Lake Fern Road in Odessa.

- May 19 from 9 a.m. to 10 a.m.: Alderman's Ford Conservation Park, 100 Alderman's Ford Park Drive in Plant City (There is more than one entrance, this one is the best one to use).

- May 25 from 9 a.m. to 10 a.m.: Upper Tampa Bay Conservation Park, 8001 Double Branch Road in Tampa.

Although the tours are free, there is a \$2 park entry fee per vehicle, for up to eight people.

Other things to know about these tours:

- Anyone under 18 must be accompanied by adult
- Hikers will walk a distance of 1 mile to 2 miles

Those planning to go on the tour are advised to bring water in a refillable container, a hat, sunglasses, sunscreen and bug spray.

Bringing a camera is a good idea, too, Jordan said, noting there will likely be some photo opportunities.



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Closer Look

AN ADVERTISER PROFILE

A Passion for What They Do

Special to The Laker / Lutz News

Owning and managing a successful business requires a lot of time, energy, experience and knowledge. A key ingredient, however, is passion, and Eddie and Tamara Griffin are overflowing with it for their business, Mac Daddy Sales and Service in Land O' Lakes.

The couple launched the business in 2000, equipping the shop with the latest in hydraulic lifts, ultra-sonic cleaners, and a staff certified to work on all major brands and types of small engines. As an authorized warranty repair shop for Honda, Briggs and Stratton, Kohler, Kawasaki, Dyson and other brands, they also service vacuum cleaners, generators, scooters and boat engines. Their motto is "If it has a motor, we can fix it!"

Eddie Griffin is a longtime resident of Land O' Lakes who met his wife Tamara in Lutz. Speaking with great pride, she says her husband is a natural-born genius with engines. "He has an inner ear for mechanics," she says. "His combination of hands-on experience and training allow him to solve any glitch that comes along. He's dogmatic in neatness and quality, personally checking every repair before releasing it back to the customer."

Tamara Griffin previously worked for USAA, where she learned to multitask, listen to customers, document service and submit claims. She is the friendly voice on the phone and the smiling face customers see when they visit the shop. Like her husband, she is committed to providing excellent service.

"Mac Daddy blends technology and mechanics in a way that makes our service unique," she explains. "We take pictures of



the equipment and make videos of the mechanic explaining the repairs needed. We then email these to our customers in advance with the estimate. Plus, all their old parts are returned to them when they pick up the repaired equipment. We want to be their service center for life, not just today."

Besides servicing and repairing engines, Mac Daddy's also sells new and refurbished mowers, air compressors, pressure washers, blowers, chain saws, and ATVs and golf carts. Brands they carry include Encore and Bad Boy mowers for both commercial and residential use, Honda and Simpson pressure washers, and Campbell Hausfeld air compressors.

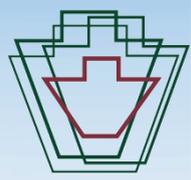
"We stand behind every item we sell," says Eddie Griffin. "That's easy to do because we sell the best - like top of the line Zero Turns with welded framed and decks. Plus, we educate our customers on the proper maintenance they can do to avoid future performance issues. You won't get that kind of support at a box store."

The public is invited to attend Mac Daddy's Cinco de Mayo Customer Appreciation Day on May 5 from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. They're located at 6630 Land O' Lakes Boulevard, just north of S.R. 54.

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Green Dot program teaches violence prevention in Pasco

By Kathy Steele

ksteele@lakerlutznews.com

Central Pasco Huddle hosted a community discussion and learning session at the Land O' Lakes Branch Library on violence prevention.

The huddle is a locally organized group of the Central Gulf Coast chapter of the Women's March Florida.

Its members, who come from Wesley Chapel, Land O' Lakes, and Lutz, meet monthly in Land O' Lakes, said huddle member Charity Hensy-Brooks.

The goal is to find activities "to make Pasco better for people," she said. "We're going to do more events like this for Pasco's women and children."

Aubrey Hall, Green Dot coordinator with Sunrise of Pasco County Inc., led the recent workshop - "Embrace Your Voice."

Combating violence in all its forms "is daunting," she said. "How do we change something that is so ingrained?"

Cultural change isn't something that happens quickly, she added.

She said, though, that she's encouraged by the #metoo movement, which is prompting people - mostly women - to come forward to tell their stories.

Green Dot is a violence prevention program that seeks to enlist the help of bystanders - who witness violence in everyday situations.

Green Dot provides educational awareness, training and actions that can reduce sexual assault, dating/domestic violence and stalking.

Green Dot serves more than 300 colleges and universities across the country.

Sunrise at Pasco works with students at Saint Leo University.

"To stop violence, we first have to recognize what it is," Hall said.

Examples of violence include physical, sexual, verbal, economic and psychological assaults where one person has real or perceived power over another person.

People often overlook economic issues, Hall said. But, she noted: "Economic abuse is present in 98 percent of domestic violence abuses."

She also explained that stalking can go beyond physically shadowing another person.

"You can be stalked by someone you never see now because of social media," Hall said. "It's so normal to like and follow."

Hall led the workshop participants through a series of activities to identify early, immediate and after signs of sexual assault, stalking and dating/domestic violence.

She also addressed bullying.



KATHY STEELE
Green Dot coordinator for Sunrise of Pasco County, Aubrey Hall, led discussion on violence prevention at Land O' Lakes Branch Library.

Participants watched videos that had no sound to help them learn how to recognize body language cues, in different scenarios, of stalking and domestic violence. The videos show bystanders reacting to each situation.

"Being able to identify behavior, that's going to be key," Hall said.

Working in two teams, the workshop participants came up with ways that bystanders could choose to intervene, either directly or indirectly, to stop or calm down volatile situations.

They also discussed the barriers that often prevent bystanders from becoming involved.

Sometimes those barriers are the fear of becoming a target, or of being retaliated against, or of being uncomfortable, or not knowing where to seek help.

The Green Dot program offers the "three Ds" as guidelines to follow.

Those are:

- Direct action: Asking someone to stop his or her behavior.

- Delegating action: Calling 911, human resources or the school's campus police. (The key is "making sure it's someone who can do something," Hall said.)

- Distraction or delay: This can be done by possibly asking a question. "Do anything that allows the tension to break," Hall said.

The Green Dot program launched at the University of Kentucky in 2006, as a sexual assault, domestic violence and stalking prevention program. It was funded with a grant from the U.S. Department of Justice.

The program was adapted for high schools, and expanded to other colleges. A nonprofit, known as Green Dot, etc Inc., was established, and its headquarters moved from Kentucky to Washington D.C.

In 2017, it also got a new name - Alteristic. For information, visit SunrisePasco.org/green-dot-rev.

For information on Central Pasco Huddle, email Wmcgcharity@gmail.com.



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Wednesday, May 9, 2018 / 5:30pm - 7:30pm
Florida Hospital Wesley Chapel
2600 Bruce B Downs Blvd Wesley Chapel

Tuesday May 15, 2018 / 10:00am - 12:00pm
Premier Community Healthcare
37944 Pasco Avenue, Dade City

Wednesday, May 16, 2018 / 10:00am - 12:00pm
Good Samaritan Clinic
5334 Aspen Street, New Port Richey

Thursday, May 17, 2018 / 5:00pm - 7:00pm
Florida Hospital Zephyrhills
38233 Daughtery Road, Zephyrhills

Wednesday, May 23, 2018 / 5:00pm - 7:00pm
Regional Medical Center Bayonet Point
14000 Fivay Road, Hudson

Friday, May 25, 2018 / 10:00am - 12:00pm
Pasco County Health Department
10841 Little Road, New Port Richey

Friday, May 25, 2018 / 1:00pm - 3:00pm
Zephyrhills Library
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HEALTH & WELLNESS



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YOUNG PARENT WORKSHOP

The Children's Board of Hillsborough County has given a grant to Family God's Way to provide free educational workshops to young parents.

The organization will present the Gottman Institute's "Bringing Baby Home" workshop to inform and educate parents of children ages 0 to 4.

The two-day workshop requires preregistration and will be May 5 and June 2 at the First Baptist Church in Lutz.

A wide range of topics will be aimed at helping young families start off on a healthy path as they introduce children to their homes.

All materials, content and lunch will be provided at no cost to registered participants.

Interested couples may register online at FamilyGodsWay.com/events/BBH.

BIRTH CENTER TOURS

St. Joseph's Hospital-North, 4211 Van Dyke Road in Lutz, will offer birth center tours in the Labor & Delivery Unit at 1 p.m., on May 6, May 13, May 20 and May 27.

The orientation program and tour are designed to introduce the services available to the entire family. Admission is free.

To register, call (813) 443-2046.

JOINT LECTURE

St. Joseph's Hospital-North, 4211 Van Dyke Road in Lutz, will offer a lecture on total joint replacement May 7 at 10 a.m., in the Nursing Administration Classroom.

Participants can increase their knowledge of total joint replacement, prepare for surgery and become familiar with the recovery process.

Based on the requirements of your physician and availability, participants could get

pre-op testing done the same day.

Admission is free. To register, call (813) 443-2046.

OBSTETRICS TOURS

The Medical Center of Trinity, 9330 State Road 54, will provide tours of its obstetrics unit May 8, May 15, May 22 and May 29 at 5 p.m.

Reservations are required. For information, call (727) 834-5630.

WOMEN'S HEALTH

Oak Hill Hospital will offer a seminar on "Advances in Women's Health: Gynecological Care for the Mature Woman" May 8 from 5:30 p.m. to 7 p.m., at Silverthorn Country Club, 4550 Golf Club Lane in Spring Hill.

Dr. Samir Shakfeh will discuss the advances, breakthroughs and treatments for conditions related to women's health, for complete gynecological care.

There will be a question-and-answer session after the presentation.

A complimentary hot meal will be served. Doors open at 4:45 p.m.

Reservations are required. For information, call (352) 597-6333.

PROSTATE CANCER SUPPORT

Florida Cancer Affiliates, 3611 Little Road in Trinity, will offer the Man-to-Man prostate cancer support group May 8 from 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Topics will include early detection, signs and symptoms, prognosis, disease stages, incontinence, impotence, treatment options, and more.

For information, call Dennis Brown at (727) 203-6713.

Continued on next page



NEW DONOR RECORD

Donate Life Florida, a nonprofit organization dedicated to empowering the public to save and enhance lives through organ, tissue and eye donation, announced a new donor record.

Ten million Floridians have signed up as donors through Florida's Joshua Abbott Organ and Tissue Donor Registry, the third largest in the nation.

The strength of Florida's donor registry is due in great part to the work of the Florida Department of Highway Safety & Motor Vehicles and Florida tax collector offices, where residents completing driver license applications can sign up.

Because of the partnership, 95 percent of the state's 10 million registered organ donors have come through the state's tax collectors and DHSMV.

Since the registry was established in 1997, donors who had registered prior to death made possible nearly 37,000 life-saving transplant surgeries in the state. Donors helped even more through tissue donation.

To learn more, visit DonateLifeFlorida.org.

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Cancer and its devastating effects have touched the lives of many. On Saturday, May 12, we'll celebrate life, and will honor all cancer survivors and caregivers. Whether you're a cancer survivor, you've been affected by cancer or you just want to come and support cancer survivors, join BayCare and the Tampa Tarpons at this special event.

This event is free for cancer survivors. Additional tickets can be purchased for \$4 per ticket and parking is free. Each guest will receive a food voucher, a commemorative hat and free photo opportunities. Stay for fireworks and an exclusive Cancer Survivor Recognition Concert by the band Smithfield immediately following the game.

Registration closes May 7. Get your tickets today: BayCareCancerSurvivorEvent.org



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A century full of life

Ruth Troszaniec celebrated her 100th birthday with her family and friends on April 16, at Palm Gardens Nursing Home in Tampa. Ruth has lived in the Land O' Lakes (Lake Padgett) area for at least 45 years.

BREAST CANCER TEA

Oak Hill Hospital, 11375 Cortez Blvd., in Spring Hill, will offer "Afternoon Tea With the Ladies" May 8 at 3:30 p.m., for newly diagnosed breast cancer patients.

For information, call Cheryl Whitman, patient care navigator of the Women's Imaging Center, at (352) 597-6130.

PELVIC HEALTH

Florida Hospital Wesley Chapel will offer a pelvic health lecture called "What's Going on Down There?" May 9 at 5:30 p.m., at Inspiration Place, Wellness Plaza, third floor.

Participants can learn how to take care of themselves after childbirth.

Reservations are required. For information, call (844) 504-9378, or visit FHWesleyChapel.org/events.

SIGNS OF ADDICTION

Morton Plant North Bay Hospital, 6600 Madison St., in New Port Richey, will offer a discussion on recognizing the signs of addiction May 9 at 10 a.m., in the Bekesh Education & Conference Center.

The guest speaker will be Tracy Daniels on the symptoms and behaviors, including available treatment and resource options.

To preregister, call (727) 953-6877, or visit BayCareEvents.org.

HEALTH CARE ROUNDTABLE

CareerSource Pasco-Hernando will host a free Health Care Roundtable for all health care employers May 10 at Rasmussen College, 18600 Fernview St., in Land O' Lakes.

The discussion will feature training and workforce needs, business growth and technology, market trends and sector strategy.

To register, contact Ana Segovia at asegovia@careersourcepascohernando.com or (352) 293-1335.

TREADMILL CHALLENGE

The Tampa Metropolitan Area YMCA was the winner in the Treadmill Tuesday Tie-Breaker, an annual competition meant to inspire community members to become more physically active and adopt healthier lifestyles.

The total distance and number of local participants for the Tampa YMCA were: Bob Sierra North Tampa YMCA, 281 participants, 684.81 miles; Dade City Family YMCA, 46 participants, 75.28 miles; East Pasco Family YMCA, 131 participants, 224.69 miles; and New Tampa Family YMCA, 132 participants, 269.57 miles.

In addition to participating at a neighborhood Y, community members were also able to join via social media.

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Chalk Talk

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ALL-FLORIDA ACADEMIC TEAM

Pasco-Hernando State College students were nominated to the 2018 Phi Theta Kappa All-Florida Academic Team.

Representing PHSC are Megan Best and Matthew Gadow, from the Spring Hill campus; and Elizabeth Merwin, from the East Campus in Dade City.

Students were selected based on outstanding academic achievement, leadership and community service, and had the opportunity to attend an awards ceremony on April 6.

For information, visit PHSC.edu.

MENTAL HEALTH SYMPOSIUM

Pasco County Schools student services staff and community mental health providers will take part in a Mental Health Symposium May 4.

May is Mental Health Awareness Month, so the district wants to raise awareness of students' mental health needs, build capacity of staff to respond, and increase collaboration between schools and mental health providers.

The day will include a panel discussion, and cover topics such as eating disorders, anxiety, school-based violence prevention, trauma reduction and supporting recovery, non-suicidal self-injury, and connecting mental health services.

For information, email Cassandra Hall at chall@pasco.k12.fl.us.

PROM & TALENT SHOW

Wiregrass Ranch High School, 2909 Mansfield Blvd., in Wesley Chapel, will host the ESE Prom (Exceptional Student Education) May 4 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., in the gymnasium.

The theme will be "Hollywood Stars: A Red Carpet Event."

Student volunteers, Best Buddies and the Special Olympics club will team up for this fifth annual event.

The prom will include a disc jockey, a prom court, and voting for king and queen.

There also will be a talent show and participants will receive an "Oscar."

For information, email Malisa Gonzalez at mmcgowin@pasco.k12.fl.us.

SCHOOL SAFETY MEETING

A School Safety Town Hall meeting will take place May 7 from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m., at Wiregrass Ranch High School, 2909 Mansfield Blvd., in Wesley Chapel.

Participants will include Pasco County Schools, Pasco County Council of PTAs/PTSAs, local law enforcement, mental health providers, parents, students and local elected officials.

A question-and-answer session will follow the presentation. The community is encouraged to attend to give input.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY

Martial Arts Academy, 5268 Village Market in Wesley Chapel, has volunteer hour opportunities for high school students. The academy is affiliated with Global Humanitarian Resources.

To apply, visit the academy or email habitskd@gmail.com.

SUMMER REGISTRATION

Registration for three summer sessions at Pasco-Hernando State College is underway.

Sessions include one 10-week term and two six-week terms, starting May 7 and June 19.

TEACHER APPRECIATION

Students and the community can thank a teacher during Teacher Appreciation Week, May 7 to May 11.

"Teachers play a key role in the development of our future leaders, and they have an invaluable impact on our education system and society as a whole... Their day does not begin and end when the first and final class bells sound," said Pasco County Schools Superintendent Kurt Browning, in a release.

Browning also is asking businesses throughout the community to use marquee, Facebook pages, and other social media accounts to say, "Thank you, Pasco County teachers."

Currently enrolled and returning students should register as soon as possible.

The summer course schedule is online at PHSC.edu.

New students interested in taking summer or fall classes should visit the website for admissions information and to apply online.

Financial aid for the summer term may be available through Florida Bright Futures, Pell, Florida Pre-Paid, and Foundation Scholarships.

The application fee for new students is \$25, and orientation and placement tests are free.

KINDERGARTEN AND HEAD START

Pasco County Schools kindergarten pre-registration for children who turn 5 years old on or before Sept. 1, 2018, is May 7, at all Pasco County elementary schools.

Required documentation includes: Child's birth certificate or other proof of birth date; health examination HRS Form 3040; HRS Certificate of Immunization; and three official documents proving residency.

Those interested should contact their area school for details about orientation activities and times.

For information, call Danielle Varcardipone at (813) 794-2404.

Head Start and Early Head Start applications also are now available.

Expectant mothers, infants, toddlers and children through age 5 that meet income eligibility requirements may apply for the programs. Completing an application does not guarantee a child's eligibility for services.

For information on minimum required documents, call Alexis Russell at (813) 794-2730.

FUTURE BUSINESS LEADERS

Pasco-Hernando State College students participated in the Future Business Leaders of America-Phi Beta Lambda State Leadership Conference and Competition.

PHSC West Campus student Charles Henderson IV placed first in Contemporary Sports Issues and second in Sports Management and Marketing, qualifying for national competition.

The Spring Hill Campus team of Rahul Kader and Mia Toner placed third in Hospitality Management. Kader also placed fifth in Computer Concepts.

Also from the Spring Hill Campus, Cameron Malone placed fourth in Impromptu Speaking.

North Campus student Emily Brock placed fourth in Desktop Publishing and fifth in Business Presentation.

The annual Future Business Leaders of America-Phi Beta Lambda National Competition will take place in Baltimore, Maryland in June.



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Hundreds of people turned out to see Michael Phelps at the grand debut of the Crystal Lagoon at Epperson.

LAGOON, from page 1A

scores of fans and spent the afternoon signing autographs.

He later held a formal question-and-answer session with media.

Phelps' first impression of the 7.5-acre lagoon? Gorgeous.

Said Phelps, "This is such a great place to be, and the atmosphere is incredible, so it's going to be cool to watch this place grow, and watch families come and enjoy this."

Phelps also said he "would love one in Arizona," half-jokingly egging lagoon developers within earshot to plan a similar lagoon near his Phoenix-area residence.

Besides the Epperson lagoon itself, Phelps said he's impressed by the modern technology which maintains the waters' vibrant blue hue — the brainchild of biochemist and real estate developer Fernando Fischmann.

Phelps said, "To be able to turn brackish water into the prettiest, crystal blue water you can possibly find — it's pretty mind-blowing. It's incredible to be able to see the technology that we've been able to use...and it's so cool how you can literally clean 1 percent (of the water) if 1percent needs cleaned."

Meanwhile, Phelps used his platform to discuss the importance of water safety, particularly regarding young children.

He stressed the importance of lifeguard and parent supervision, as well as teaching children to swim properly and to avoid drains.

Drowning is the second-highest cause of death for children under the age of 14, Phelps said, noting that teaching children about water safety is one of his passions.

Other dignitaries at the event included Pasco County Commission Chairman Mike Wells Jr.; Pasco County commissioners Mike Moore and Kathryn Starkey; state Reps. Danny Burgess and Amber Mariano; Kevin Morgan, executive vice president of Crystal Lagoons US Corp; Greg Singleton, president of Metro Development Group; and

Christopher Souza, regional manager for Crystal Lagoon.

In addition to Phelps' appearance, the day-long tropical-themed celebration included water ski shows, flyboarding performances, and live music and dancing.

The perimeter of the lagoon was lined with food trucks, bounce houses and several other family-friendly activities.

Various real estate agents and home-builder companies also had booths there.

While attendees weren't allowed to swim in the lagoon, many walked along the perimeter, with some dipping their toes in the sand and shallow water.

The lagoon won't be open for swimming until sometime this summer.

The lagoon spans over three-quarters of a mile, with its deepest point around 10 feet. It's filled with approximately 16 million gallons of water.

It is the featured centerpiece of the Epperson community, which is eventually expected to have 2,000 homes.

Epperson residents will be able to enjoy aquatic activities, including swimming, kayaking, paddleboarding and sailing small boats, as well as Caribbean-style beaches and cabanas, a waterslide, an entertainment plaza, a yoga lawn and an area for special events.

The lagoon will have some limited guest opportunities, but will more or less function as a private club.

Though Epperson is the first, it's one of 22 Crystal Lagoons planned throughout the U.S., by Metro Development Group. A majority of those are in Florida, with a handful in Texas, along with another on the Las Vegas Strip.

That includes a Crystal Lagoon planned for Mirada, a master-planned community next to Epperson. Another is planned in south Hillsborough County for the Southshore Bay community.

Both Epperson and Mirada are part of the Connected City corridor, which encompasses about 7,800 acres in northeast Pasco County.

At build-out, the entire Connected City will have about 37,000 homes and more than 12 million square feet of commercial space.

SHELTER, from page 1A

said the homeless population needs help, but they think the proposed location is wrong.

They worry about increased solicitations, crime and lowered property values.

Business owners at Ridge Plaza, adjacent to the Youth Lane site, have objected, too.

The commission's boardroom was packed during the public hearing in 2017, with people equally passionate on both sides of the issue.

Advocates for the center point to its location near bus stops, government offices and service agencies as a good fit to help people in need. They also say Pasco County has been unresponsive in the past in meeting the needs of its homeless population, which at times has been counted as high as 3,000 people.

The center would operate at the two-building campus formerly leased by the county to the Boys & Girls Club, at the end of Youth Lane, off Little Road.

Under the initial concept, the goal was to house 50 to 75 homeless adult men and women for an average of 90 days at the navigation center. They would receive help in locating housing, jobs, job training and health care.

A survey by the Pasco County Sheriff's Office found about 100 homeless camps throughout the county. The initiative would focus on one camp at a time.

Under the new plan, the coalition's "housing first" program would provide temporary shelter to families for 30 days to 60 days.

Anderson said an average stay could be 45 days or less. He anticipates housing about four families to six families at a time.

The coalition's administrative offices would operate from Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. People would receive help with job training, showers, health care, behavioral health care, case management, resume building and financial literacy.

The only food services provided would be to families staying at the center.

The people who are served at the coalition's location on Pine Street are polite and respectful, Anderson said.

"They are really looking for services that can help them get out of their situation," he said.

Anderson said he was hopeful that the new direction for the navigation center will be well-received.

"We really want to take advantage of their (the county's) willingness to do something in the community for the homeless," Anderson said.



COURTESY OF PATRICIA SERIO

One step at a time, for cancer

The GFWC Lutz-Land O' Lakes Woman's Club was well-represented at the annual Relay for Life event at J.W. Mitchell High School. The team worked hard to raise funds donated to the American Cancer Society and had participants walk in every lap of the relay. The club also had a 'Survivors' Chair' on display to honor their sister members who are battling or have survived cancer, as well as those who have lost their battle. Eileen 'Plant Lady' Pittman, left, walks with her daughter, Sandi Marrow, both are cancer survivors.

CORLEY, from page 1A

counting ballots from a randomly selected race and a certain percentage of precincts, to be sure of factual results.

"We reconcile everything that we do," Corley said. "We always have 100 percent accuracy," Corley said.

The elections supervisor also addressed other voting-related matters, including voter fraud.

He acknowledged the existence of voter fraud in Florida and elsewhere, but doesn't feel it's as widespread as some believe.

"Respectfully, I don't really think it's as bad as the president says it was," he said.

Corley suggested many fraud cases occur through voters registered in multiple states, such as Florida and New York. "When you vote in two states, that's when it becomes problematic," he said.

The dilemma may soon be alleviated once Florida and its 14 million voters officially join the Electronic Registration Information Center (ERIC), which is a non-partisan, nonprofit consortium among 20 states and the District of Columbia. The consortium shares voter registration information to improve the accuracy and integrity of voter lists.

The consortium was designed to improve the integrity of voter rolls by matching millions of voter records from one state with those of other participating states. The data matches can identify voters

that have registered in two states, voters that have moved between states, and those that have died.

"It's an absolute no-brainer," Corley said of the ERIC system. "We're obviously very, very excited about that."

Meanwhile, Corley shared some details about the upcoming Aug. 28 primary election.

He branded the one-page midterm ballot "very, very busy" with its Florida Constitution Revision Commission amendments, as well as several other state and county amendments.

"We're going into a crazy midterm," Corley said. "It's like the election in 2016 never ended. It has that feel to it. It's going to be a lengthy battle."

He said the elections office is doing more to service absentee voters.

More voting days will be added to the schedule, and there will be three additional voting precincts — Pasco County Utilities building, in Land O' Lakes; Alice Hall Community Center, in Zephyrhills; and Odessa Community Park, in Odessa.

With a population of nearly 500,000 and a voter registration roll of about 340,000, Pasco County is divided into 109 precincts.

Absentee or early voting accounted for about 60 percent of all votes cast in the 2016 election, Corley said.

"Early voting seems to kind of be the way to go," he said. "We're not expecting that to change."

Academy at the Lakes savors first winning season

By Kevin Weiss

kweiss@lakerlutznews.com

After five seasons of varsity baseball, senior Eric Hutchison can finally say he was part of a winning team.

"It's always nice to be the first success in something. The fact that I'm a senior makes it much better," said Hutchison, a team captain pitcher/infielder who's played for Academy at the Lakes (AATL) since eighth grade.

The Wildcats just wrapped up its first winning season in program history, posting a 12-9 regular season mark, under third-year head coach John DiBenedetto.

As several other of the school's sports programs achieved notable success of late—namely football, basketball and softball—baseball often lagged behind.

The baseball team suffered five consecutive winless seasons from 2006 to 2010, and went a combined 17-45 from 2011 to 2015.

Hutchison remembers some of those trying years.

"When I played in eighth grade, it was rough," he said. "We only won one or two games and that was due to forfeit..."

It hasn't been the case the past three years under new leadership, however.

Since the 27-year-old DiBenedetto took over, the program has quietly been on an upward trajectory, going 8-11 in 2016, 9-12 in 2017 and then 12-9 this season.

A former standout at Blake and Newsome high schools, and later playing college baseball on scholarship in New Hampshire, DiBenedetto has brought an approach that prioritizes skill development and proper fundamentals, and mastering game situations via organized, purposeful practices and workouts.

A sign of the team's previous struggles, DiBenedetto is already the program's winningest coach with 29 career wins.

"He's a really fun dude to play for," said freshman middle infielder Jordan Oladokun, who's played varsity baseball since seventh grade. "Honestly, I was thinking about quitting baseball, and he was the one that made me keep continuing my baseball career. ... So, if it wasn't for him, I wouldn't be here playing baseball right now."

DiBenedetto's in-game strategy is best described as "overly aggressive" — taking extra bases, stealing often, and manufacturing runs via hit-and-run plays.

The Wildcats collectively have 93 stolen bases (out of 103 attempts).

It's a style that puts added pressure on opposing pitchers and defenses in the 2A ranks, forcing them to "make a play."

"Because they're high school kids in the moment, it's not easy to field a ground ball and make a throw," DiBenedetto said of the strategy.

But, the Wildcats newfound success is more than just a byproduct of small ball.

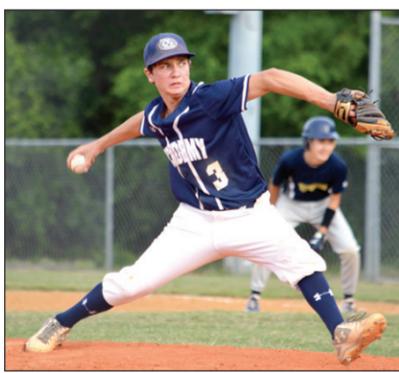
A quick glance at the numbers and it becomes clear why the Wildcats have enjoyed a breakout campaign.

The team batted a collective .351 with a .456 on-base percentage, setting a program record in about every offensive statistical category, from home runs (nine) and doubles (34), to RBIs (142) and runs scored (169).



COURTESY OF BRIAN TEETER

Academy at the Lakes celebrated its first-ever winning season with the help of a roster chock-full of young players, including, from left, freshmen Jack Teeter, Andrew Kilfoyl and Spencer Boynton.



Pitcher/infielder Eric Hutchison is one of just two seniors on Academy at the Lakes' baseball roster.



Third-year head coach John DiBenedetto, pictured with freshman middle infielder Jordan Oladokun, has helped turn around the Wildcats baseball program.

The lineup showcased four .400-plus hitters — Oladokun (.455), freshman Andrew Kilfoyl (.452), Hutchison (.424), and freshman Jack Teeter (.411) — and two others batting over .350—freshman newcomer Spencer Boynton (.359) and senior Joel Eason (.353).

The pitching staff, anchored by Hutchison and others, likewise held its own, posting a 3.62 team ERA and 174 strikeouts in 120 innings pitched.

MAKING THE MOST OF A YOUNG ROSTER

It was all done with a thin roster of just 11 healthy players, composed mainly of freshman, sophomores and eighth-graders.

Though young, the team was battle-tested with many who've played varsity since seventh grade and eighth grade, under DiBenedetto, respectively.

Players suggest the prior seasons together yielded greater camaraderie and trust, and therefore more success.

"We kept the same guys here the whole time, so we all got closer, all started getting to know each other. We really got to know each other better, so that was really good," Oladokun said.

"We play for each other," Kilfoyl added. "We've been playing together, not so much

for ourselves, but as one whole team."

Meanwhile, DiBenedetto had an inkling 2018 was time for a breakout, after building up the program the last couple years.

Entering the season, the coach saw "a much more well-rounded team" with a strong batting order top to bottom and a deep pitching staff — even following the graduation of Darin Kilfoyl, Andrew's older brother, who was perhaps the most dominant pitcher/hitter in program history. He now plays at St. Johns River State College in Palatka.

"We kind of knew coming in that, if it wasn't last year, it was going to be this year," the Wildcats coach said of a winning season.

"You didn't have the superstar (Darin Kilfoyl) anymore, and that was the only fear at first...but, they've all complemented each other in their own certain outright way," he said.

Along with a roster chock-full of underclassmen, the Wildcats racked up victories despite losing two key players to injuries in the first week of the season.

Not having a true home field was another challenge they've overcome.

While the team practices at the Land O' Lakes Recreation Complex, its handful of "home games" was at Northwest Little

League near Leto High School in Hillsborough County, at least a 45-minute drive from the Academy at the Lakes campus. It's a neutral site, at best, the coach said.

Moreover, several road games were in Citrus, Hernando, Pinellas and Polk counties.

"We're traveling all over the place and to be where we are right now, it's a credit to them," DiBenedetto said.

EXCEEDING OPPONENTS' EXPECTATIONS

Wherever they play and no matter the competition, DiBenedetto noted Wildcats players this year always came to the ballpark with a winning attitude and belief in themselves.

It resulted in winning several close games and coming from behind in others — each the makings of "a good baseball team."

Said DiBenedetto: "We have the conversation, 'Prove everyone wrong because nobody expects you to do stuff. Continue to prove people wrong, and battle and chip, and fight and claw for what you deserve.' That's kind of been the motto we've adopted and hung onto all year, so we've embraced it; it's been fun."

Ask players their favorite game this season and it's unanimous: A 6-5 win against Canterbury in early March — the Wildcats' first-ever victory against the rival St. Petersburg-based private school.

Oladokun summed it up best: "Played them every single year, can't beat 'em. Played them twice a year, can't beat 'em. And, this year, everyone kind of was doubting us because we didn't have Darin Kilfoyl, 'the man.' Everyone's doubting us, and we went in there, beat 'em 6-5, close game."

The contest had extra meaning for Hutchison, the senior leader.

Two years ago, Hutchison allowed the winning run in the ninth inning of the district quarterfinals Canterbury, a 3-2 loss.

"It was super, super depressing because a bunch of seniors left that year, and we kind of sent them off on not the best note," Hutchison recalled.

This time around, however, Hutchison made the last play to end the game.

"I got the 'last say' essentially. That was such a great feeling," he said.

And, it's likely not the last time Academy at the Lakes will get the best of Canterbury or other teams who previously dominated the once-floundering baseball program.

With a solid young corps to build around combined with coaching stability, the outlook seems promising for 2019 and beyond.

"It's been a really fun year, and I'm looking forward to next year," said Boynton, a shortstop/pitcher in his first year at AATL after attending Benito Middle School. "Hopefully we can get some more wins next year, too."

DiBenedetto said the goal is to make modest improvements each season.

Still, he can't help but think about the possibilities once his crop of talented freshman, like Boynton, become seniors.

"Just imagine three years from now when they're going to be big and strong. It's going to be crazy. It's going to be exciting," he said.



SAINT LEO ASSISTANT HONORED

Saint Leo University assistant women's basketball coach Amber Moore has been named to the 2018 Women's Basketball Coaches Association (WBCA) Thirty under 30 list.

The list recognizes 30 up-and-coming women's basketball coaches age 30 and under, at all levels of the game. Each honoree was selected based upon involvement in community service, mentorship, professional manner and professional association involvement.

Moore joined the Lions' staff in October 2017, after a brief coaching stint at Urbana High School in Illinois.

She helped the Lions to the second-most Sunshine State Conference (SSC) wins in program history, finishing 13-16 overall, 8-12 in league play. The Lions' 2017-2018 season was highlighted by a six-game winning streak.

Moore played collegiate at Division I University of Illinois, where she holds the



COURTESY OF SAINT LEO UNIVERSITY

Amber Moore

school record for career three-pointers made (295) and career free-throw accuracy (84.7 percent). She also played professionally overseas for two years.

Correction: The second annual Pasco County all-star baseball and softball classic begins at noon, May 12, at Bishop McLaughlin Catholic High School. An incorrect start time was published on April 18 in The Laker/Lutz News.



COURTESY OF JOHN MEDVID

Fishing duo keeps reeling 'em in

Dave Panno, left, and Ken Willis, teamed up for another first place win at the South Pasco Bassmasters (SPBM) April tournament, hauling in five bass for a total weight of 11.94 pounds at the Harris Chain of Lakes. It marks the fishing duo's third tournament victory this year — also taking first at SPBM events in January and February. Panno and Willis caught their winning haul with Spinner Baits, Finesse Worms, and Lipless Crankbaits along residential canals. The next SPBM tournament is May 19 at Lake Hernando. For information, visit SouthPascoBassmasters.com.



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Worth the Trip

Karen Haymon Long
Special to The Laker/Lutz News

Of all the wonders at Mote Marine Laboratory & Aquarium, kids seem to love watching sharks the most.

River otters, baby gators, tubby manatees, sea turtles and scary stingrays draw crowds, too.

But, the sharks - bonnetheads, hammerheads, nurse, blacknose and more, in the Shark Zone - are the superstars here.

No wonder the aquarium features a pretty vicious-looking shark on the cover of its brochures and on its logo.

That explains the 135,000-gallon shark habitat in the main aquarium, too.

At 11 a.m., every Monday, Wednesday and Friday, follow the crowds to the Shark Zone in the main aquarium to see the shark-training sessions and watch the creatures swim to specific places for food.

Who knew sharks could be trained? Friendly, knowledgeable trainers answer questions and tell a bit about sharks in the wild. Hammerheads, they say, can live 25 to 35 years and pick up electrical pulses from all living things through electro receptors.

"Hammerheads' heads are like metal detectors," one trainer explains to a group of shark gawkers.

Behind the scenes, Mote scientists are researching why sharks and their cousins, stingrays, rarely get cancer. They're hoping what they discover may lead them to human cancer treatments.

That's one of the beauties of Mote - it's both a marine laboratory and an aquarium, open daily to the public.

It's a big place, divided into two areas across the street from each other, so plan plenty of time, and go on a weekday if you can. It can get very busy on weekends.

Depending on what you like to see, ask when feedings are scheduled, so you can see more action.

We started at the Marine Mammal Center across the street from the main aquarium because we wanted to see the manatee feedings at 1 p.m.

We often see manatees in the wild off the city pier in Safety Harbor. But, here you can see them so much better through the glass tanks, floating along and even swimming up to the glass, to stare at us staring at them.

Who wouldn't be excited to see how adorable they are, with their huge eyes and round bodies that earned them the nickname sea cows?

When trainers throw them big heads of iceberg lettuce the giant creatures float around munching it while we humans take photos of them.

A few steps away, three sea turtles paddle around inside stone habitats. They were all injured in the wild and brought to Mote for rehabilitation.

Volunteers answer questions about them, and tell you their names and how they were injured. A young volunteer, wearing a blue Mote T-shirt, introduced us to Squirt 2, a Kemp's Ridley sea turtle who was hit by a boat propeller in the Peace River.

He said Squirt 2 has a broken jaw, so he can't eat shellfish, his natural diet. The sea turtle will stay in the marine center where he's fed and cared for by Mote workers.

The volunteer talked softly to Squirt 2, who looked up at him from his stone tank as if he was listening.

"You're so lucky to work here," I told him.

He smiled and admitted, "It's a nice way to spend the day."

Around the corner, three river otters - Huck, Jane and Pippi - frolic around a glass-enclosed habitat, swimming underwater for a while, then slithering out of the water onto rocks. At 1:30 p.m., trainers come out to feed the three, that, like the sharks, go to specific places to get food on command.

Like the manatees, they're adorable and many kids were taking pictures of them with cellphones, as were the adults.

In other glass-enclosed habitats sat caimans, which are kin to alligators, and turtles. Sometimes, they're replaced by gators or crocodiles.

We see gators all the time, too - they actually sit on our lawn by the pond behind our house. But, it's still interesting to see caimans, which have stubbier snouts than gators and narrower bodies than crocs.

Upstairs, tanks hold other marvels, such as cobalt-blue Australian spotted jellyfish, snook, and displays on what Mote is doing to restore and conserve coral reefs.

On the way out, a sea turtle skeleton keeps guard from a circular display, looking like a giant, prehistoric alien.

Behind the scenes, and not accessible to



A little girl snaps a picture of a curious manatee at Mote Marine Laboratory & Aquarium just before feeding time.

KAREN HAYMON LONG



An Australian Spotted Jelly glows cobalt blue and looks almost like something from outer space.



A display at Mote's aquarium gives an underwater view of what coral reefs look like in the wild. An orange and white clownfish swims amidst the colorful coral.

Mote Marine Laboratories & Aquarium

WHERE: 1600 Ken Thompson Parkway, Sarasota, just north of St. Armands Circle

WHEN: Open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., daily

COST: Adults, \$22; ages 3-12, \$16; under age 3, free. Parking free

DETAILS: Check out the Shark Zone, watch Manatees being fed, get a look at all kinds of sea creatures and find out about current research involving marine life.

INFO: Call (941) 388-4441, ext. 416, or visit Mote.org.

Additional Mote Adventures:

- **Sea Life Encounter Cruises**, an hour-and-45-minute cruise in Sarasota and Roberts bays on pontoon boats; combo cost for the cruise and admission to aquarium: adults, \$44; ages 3-12, \$37. Cruise price alone: adults, \$29; ages 3-16, \$25. For details, call (904) 388-4200; visit SarasotaBayExplorers.com.

- **Full Moon Paddles**, the next one on May 29, are led by Mote educators. For reservations, call (941) 388-4441, ext. 348, or email lauren@mote.org.

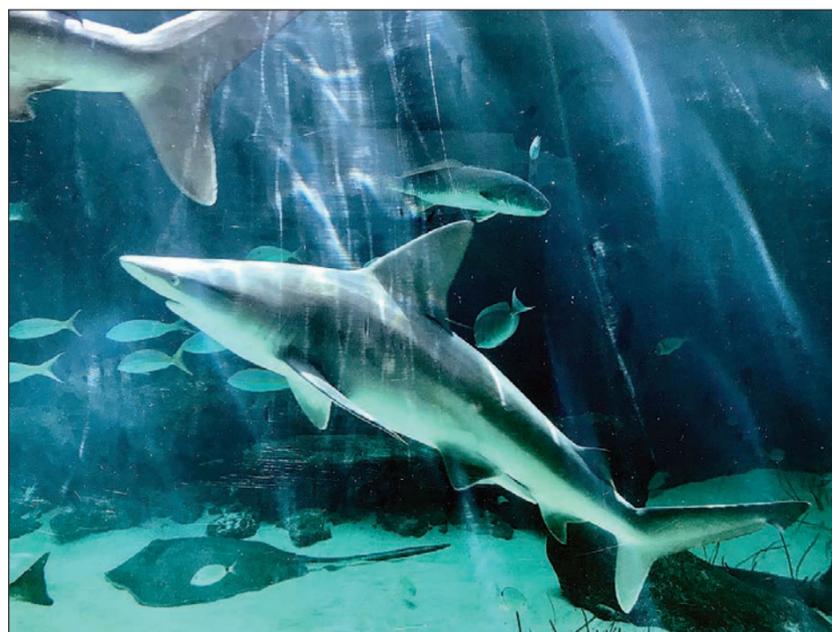
- **Other guided kayak trips**, nature safari eco-tours, private charters are more

the public, are sea turtle, dolphin and whale hospitals.

Back at the main aquarium, visitors learn about Florida's coastal and freshwater habitats by looking at all sorts of displays of everything from living coral to a diamond-back terrapin, clownfish, lobsters, a yellow moray eel, red grouper and blue moon jellyfish.

We especially liked the seahorse display, where we saw babies that were born on Jan. 30, then slightly larger babies born last November. A volunteer told us Mote sells seahorses to other labs to help reduce the wild seahorse market.

A temporary exhibit through June 15 fea-



A shark swims in Mote Aquarium's Shark Zone, the most popular place in Mote's complex in Sarasota.

Where to eat

- **The aquarium's 1950s-style Deep Sea Diner** offers everything from burgers and hotdogs, to salads, wraps and fruit smoothies.
- **Columbia Restaurant**, 411 St. Armands Circle
- **The Old Salty Dog**, 1601 B Ken Thompson Parkway
- **New Pass Grill & Bait Shop**, 1505 Ken Thompson Parkway

Nearby Attraction

Just off St. Armands Circle, at 55 S. Boulevard of the Presidents, visit the newest **Clyde Butcher Gallery**, where you'll find limited edition, and signed black and white photographs of mostly Florida scenes by the widely known photographer.

Mote Science Education Aquarium, which Mote officials say could be the "Silicon Valley of marine science and technology in Southwest Florida."

They say the new aquarium, within sight of the interstate, will attract more Floridians and visitors to learn about marine life, while current facilities will give Mote more space for research labs.

Until then, visitors can enjoy the otters, manatees, turtles, and the ever-prowling, popular sharks at Mote's longtime aquarium.

LOCAL WILDLIFE



A common sight in the Sunshine State

Michael Rowshan saw a few Sandhill Cranes in the Wesley Chapel area, and just had to snap a photo. Sandhill Cranes are similar in plumage, but they vary in size. 'Lesser' Sandhill Cranes breed in the Arctic and are the smallest; the largest form — 'Greater' Sandhill Crane — breeds in the northern U.S. The non-migratory 'Florida' Sandhill Crane and a form that breeds in central Canada are intermediate in size.

Adopt A Friend FOR LIFE



Belle is a young pup

Belle is just over 1½ years old and she sure loves toys. She needs someone who can work with her and help her learn that it's OK to share. The shelter's trainer can advise on working on Belle's impulse control when it comes to toys. A home with no cats and no young children is recommended. The shelter will accommodate a meet-and-greet with your dog and Belle at the shelter to assist with the best placement possible.



Bob is a spirited cat

Bob was quite spirited when he arrived at the shelter in March. He has recently become quieter, but still enjoys being petted by staff and volunteers. Bob does have the lingering symptoms of an upper respiratory infection that is currently being treated, but the symptoms do not dampen his personality. Bob waits for his turn when people are visiting.

If you would like to adopt Belle or Bob, be sure to visit Pasco County Animal Services at 19640 Dogpatch Lane in Land O' Lakes. The adoption center is open Tuesday through Saturday, noon to 6:30 p.m. All adoption fees include spay/neuter, microchip and vaccines. For more information, email adoptionpartners@pascocountyfl.net.

PET cetera

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PET of the WEEK



Ms. Jean is a little 'gift from God'

Ms. Jean is a 5-pound Maltipoo. She loves walking and running in the yard, and around the neighborhood everyday. Ms. Jean's proud owner is Pam Bruschi of Land O' Lakes.

Send us a picture and information on your favorite pet!

Write a short paragraph about why your pet is special along with a photo and mail to: Pet of the Week, c/o The Laker, P.O. Box 479, Lutz, FL 33548 or email to mrathman@lakerlutznews.com, ATTN: Pet of the Week

PLEASE NOTE: OWNERS NAME AND ADDRESS MUST BE INCLUDED FOR YOUR PET TO BE CONSIDERED FOR PUBLICATION.

PET PAWS

HUMANE SOCIETY BENEFIT

c.1949, a beer garden at 6905 N. Orleans Ave., in Tampa, will host a Cinco De Mayo Fiesta on May 5 from 7:30 p.m. to 10:30 p.m.

There will be a donation-only Taco Bar, as well as \$1 off all beer of Latin descent and sangria. Acho Brother will play the acoustic Spanish guitar.

Proceeds will benefit the Humane Society of Tampa Bay.

For information, visit c.1949.com/events.

ADOPTERS NEEDED

The dog kennels at Hillsborough County's Pet Resource Center, 440 N. Falkenburg Road in Tampa, are full of pets that need a loving family to give them a second chance.

The center is an open-admission shelter and is at 99 percent capacity.

There are more than 250 dogs available for adoption. Many are ready-to-go, which means the dog can be adopted and taken home the same day for \$20.

All pets are vaccinated, microchipped, registered and have been spayed or neutered.

The shelter is open Tuesday through Sunday from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.

For information, call (813) 744-5660.

DOG DAY AFTERNOON

Asturia, located off State Road 54 just west of the Suncoast Parkway in Land O' Lakes, will host Dog Day Afternoon May 19 from noon to 5 p.m.

Dog lovers can sit, stay and play with their pets, and kids can visit the bounce house and slide. There also will be face painting, a balloon artist, door prizes, live music and food trucks that will offer "ap-PET-tizers."

More than a dozen pet-friendly exhibitors will be at the event.

Exhibit space is still available for \$50.

For information, call Carla Luigs at (904) 810-0500 or David Weekly Homes at (813) 422-6166.

SHARE YOUR PET NEWS

If you have pet news about adoptions, walks or other events for pet owners and their pets, you can let us know by sending us an email. We just need the basics: who, what, when, where and why.

The information should be submitted two weeks prior to the desired publication date. We also need a contact name and number, in case we have questions.

There is no guarantee of publication.

If you'd like to make a submission, send it to news@lakerlutznews.com.



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BUSINESS DIGEST

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LOCAL TRAINING DOLLARS AVAILABLE

Career Source Pasco Hernando offers financial assistance for employee training through the Employed Worker Training Program.

The program aids the employer by improving company efficiency, increasing employee retention and building employee morale.

Up to half of the employers' direct training costs can be reimbursed through the EWT program. Employers can choose a specific trainer, curriculum or training course that benefits the company's needs.

The program has yielded 77 certificates, to date, for 2017-2018.

Training grants are limited and distributed on a first-come, first-served basis.

For information, visit CareerSourcePascoHernando.com, or call: in east Pasco County (813) 377-1327; in west Pasco County (352) 293-1335; or in Hernando County (352) 200-3027.

CHAMBER ANNUAL BUSINESS AWARDS

The Central Pasco Chamber of Commerce is seeking nominations for its annual business awards.

The deadline for nominations is noon of May 4.

A Nominating Committee will review all nominees.

Nominees must be members in good standing for at least one year, and have a record of outstanding business and civic contributions to the community.

Reasons for the nomination, including accomplishments, must be part of the application. Additional reasons or comments on a separate sheet of paper are welcome.

Awards are given to the Non-Profit of the Year, Small Business of the Year, Large Business of the Year, Chamber Member of the Year and a Community Service Award.

Please mail nominations to 1903 Land O' Lakes Blvd., Suite 16, Land O' Lakes, FL 33549. Or, you can send via email to Director@centralpascochamber.com.

Nominations also can be submitted online at CentralPascoChamber.com.

CULVER'S RIBBON CUTTING

Culver's of Zephyrhills had a ribbon cutting April 30 to celebrate the fast-food restaurant's opening at 6386 Gall Blvd., in Zephyrhills.

Hours of operation are seven days a week from 10 a.m. to 11 p.m., with the exception of some holidays.

Culver's signature sandwich is the "Butterburger." The restaurant also offers three flavors of frozen custard: vanilla, chocolate and Flavor of the Day.

Franchise owner and operator Mark Murphy started his Culver's career in 2013 as general manager at Culver's in Mauston, Wisconsin, according to a news release from Culver's.

The restaurant's menu includes Wisconsin cheese curds, fresh garden salads, and chicken and fish dinners. Kid's meals also are available.

For information, visit Culvers.com.

BUSINESS SEMINAR

SCORE will host a free business seminar, "Learn How to Start a New Business Successfully" at the New River Library, 34043 State Road 56 in Zephyrhills.

The seminar will cover the business idea, testing and protecting the idea, finding good people, how to structure your business, cash flow and other relevant issues.

Seating is limited.

Register at PascoHernando.score.org.

WOMEN-N-CHARGE

Join Women-in-Charge May 4 from 11:15 a.m. to 1:15 p.m., at the new meeting location at Plantation Palms Golf Club, 23253 Plantation Palms Blvd., in Land O' Lakes.

The women share talents and resources, and build relationships with other women in business.

Guest speaker will be Christy Maldonado of Social Media Marketing. She will discuss Facebook basics and marketing tools.

The cost is \$15 for members and \$18 for guests who RSVP by Tuesday prior to the meeting. Afterward, the cost is \$20 for members and \$23 for guests.

Register at Women-n-charge.com/meetings/.

For information, call (813) 600-9848, or email info@women-n-charge.com.

FLORIDA HOSPITAL DADE CITY RIBBON CUTTING

Florida Hospital Dade City will host a community celebration and ribbon cutting May 8 from 5:30 to 7 p.m., at 13100 Fort King Road in Dade City.

For information, call The Greater Dade City Chamber of Commerce at (352) 567-3769.

NORTH TAMPA LUNCHEON

The North Tampa Chamber of Commerce will have its May 2018 Momentum Thursday on May 10 from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., at Brookdale of Lutz, 414 Chapman Road.

For early bird registration, RSVP online with credit card at NorthTampaChamber.com or by email to the chamber at Contact@northtampachamber.com by 5 p.m. May 9, at the discounted rate of \$15 (whether

Continued on next page

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For information, call the chamber at (813) 563-0180.

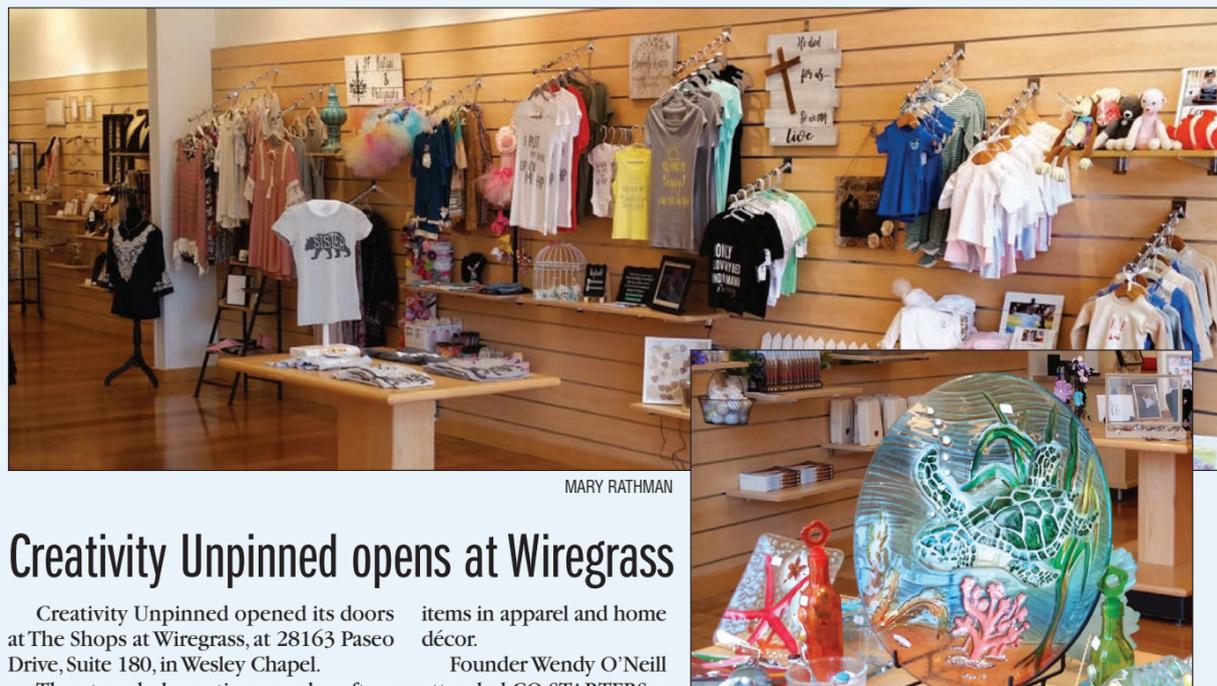
BACKYARD POOL SUPPLIES OPENING

Backyard Pool Supplies will have a grand opening and ribbon cutting May 10 from 10 a.m. to noon, at 6417 County Line Road, Suite 103, in Tampa. The store is on the southwest corner of Bruce B. Downs Boulevard, between Winn Dixie and LA Fitness.

Refreshments will be served.
For information, email Charlene Kutzan at info@a-qualitypools.net.

NORTH TAMPA BAY CHAMBER GRAND OPENING

The North Tampa Bay Chamber of Commerce will have its grand opening



MARY RATHMAN

Creativity Unpinned opens at Wiregrass

Creativity Unpinned opened its doors at The Shops at Wiregrass, at 28163 Paseo Drive, Suite 180, in Wesley Chapel.

The store helps artisans and crafters find customers who want to buy handmade products. It features distinctive

items in apparel and home décor.

Founder Wendy O'Neill attended CO.STARTERS, a SMARTstart program offered through the Pasco Economic Development Council.

She learned how to price items, and also got advice from local business owners.

and ribbon cutting May 10 from 4:30 p.m. to 7 p.m., at 1868 Highland Oaks Blvd., Suite A, in Lutz.

There will be hors d'oeuvres, an office tour, networking and a cash bar.

Please RSVP to the chamber at (813)

994-8534, or email Grace Martin at gmartin@northtampabaychamber.com.

BUSINESS SEMINAR

SCORE will have a free business seminar on "YouTube and Small Business" May

8 from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m., at the Hugh Embry Library, 14215 Fourth St., in Dade City.

Space is limited.
To register, you can visit PascoHernando.score.org.

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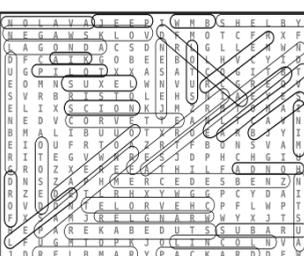
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9	8	7	4	5	6	3	2	1
1	4	3	2	7	8	6	9	5
2	5	6	3	1	9	8	4	7
8	1	9	5	3	2	7	6	4
5	3	4	6	9	7	1	8	2
6	7	2	1	8	4	5	3	9
4	2	8	7	6	1	9	5	3
3	6	1	9	2	5	4	7	8
7	9	5	8	4	3	2	1	6

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| FERRARI | | |

SEE SOLUTIONS, PAGE 6B

To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

9					6			
	4		2	7				5
		6			9	8		
		9	5	3			6	
5							8	2
	7							
4	2						5	
		1					7	
7						2	1	6

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 E O M N S U X E L W N V U R C G R E O V
 S V R B R I S T O L E H S N I A E Y E S
 E L I X S C I O N K J M Z R M T O H A I
 N E D V C O R V E T T E A N L T C A V N
 B M A L I B U U O T X R O E A R B J Y I
 E I O U F R T O A Z R T F B O N S V A M
 R I T E G V W N R E S J D P H C H G I U
 G R O Z X E R E F A T H I L F A D N O H
 D N S Z A P H M E R C E D E S B E N Z N
 R Z E D E T L R H X Y W G G P C Y D A I
 O V D D N T E L O R V E H C P F L W P T
 F X S A M J R E L G N A R W W Y X J T S
 H E P A R E K A B E D U T S S U B A R U
 L F U G M T O P K J O L I N C O L N V A
 J D R E L B M A R Y P A C K A R D D E W

Find the words hidden vertically, horizontally & diagonally throughout the puzzle.

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