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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.

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SPECIAL SECTION
inside this week

Hillsborough files 'opioid' lawsuit

By **B.C. Manion**
bcmanion@lakerlutznews.com

Hillsborough County has filed a lawsuit in the 13th judicial circuit court in Hillsborough County against 14 manufacturers and distributors alleging they have played a role in the opioid epidemic in the county.

The county has hired a national team of lawyers to represent them in the lawsuit, with attorney Mike Moore as the lead litigant. Moore, a former Mississippi attorney

general, is now handling a number of similar suits on behalf of local and state governments nationwide.

The list of defendants in the county's lawsuit includes Purdue Pharma, Teva Pharmaceutical Industries, McKesson Corporation, CVS Health Corporation, Walgreens and nine others.

At a news conference announcing the lawsuit, Hillsborough County Commission Chairwoman Sandra Murman said, "Today is an important day, but today is just like every

day in Hillsborough County. There's a baby being born that's substance exposed because the mother was on drugs. We have many children every single day being removed from their homes, put in foster care because their parents are substance exposed and addicts.

"We have young people every day that are dying of opioid overdose," Murman said.

The county's lawsuit "alleges that manufacturers of these drugs misrepresented the

See OPIOID, page 15A



CHRISTINE HOLTZMAN

School's back in session

A new academic year has begun and the students at Sanders Memorial School, a STEAM Magnet School, at 5126 School Road in Land O' Lakes, seemed eager to get back to learning. Kids streamed out of buses and up the sidewalks, as they made their way to start the 2018-2019 school year. Above, Kelly Edwards, assistant principal at Sanders Memorial Elementary, greets children as they step off yellow buses and head off to classes. It was only Day 2 of school, and the children seemed to have a good handle on the routine, Edwards said.



Steve LaVare, an armed school safety guard, monitors the parking lot area as parents are dropping off their kids on the second day of school. LaVare, a retired police captain from upstate New York, is one of the new armed guards the school district hired to comply with a new state law in response to the Valentine Day's shooting spree at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland.



Hector Colón spends a few minutes with his children before they head off to class at Sanders Memorial Elementary School. Five-year-old Simeon, left, is in kindergarten, and 9-year-old Naomi is in fourth grade.

Local astronomy club promotes stargazing

By **Kevin Weiss**
kweiss@lakerlutznews.com

A group of amateur astronomers have gathered at New Port Richey's Starkey Park for 15 years, toting their telescopes to help the public get an intimate glimpse at planets, star clusters, meteors and galaxies.

The space enthusiasts' latest gathering held particular meaning. The Pasco Astronomers celebrated its 15th anniversary on Aug. 11 with a free public stargazing event the park.

It was an evening where four planets — Mars, Saturn, Jupiter and Venus — were each in prime viewing position.

The event, too, coincided with the first time the group met 15 years ago — a day when Mars was last closest to Earth, otherwise known as perihelic opposition.

Pasco Astronomers was established in 2003 by Joe Colantonio and Tom Wade, after a few county park officials requested some astronomy-related activities.

Since then, the club has sought to promote science and astronomy through public outreach programs, by providing telescopes



KEVIN WEISS

Pasco Astronomers club member Carl Wight, right, assists Greg Shimp with properly setting up a telescope.

and general space knowledge.

"It's kind of nice to have people look through your telescope, and see the awe and the wonder that they experience," said Wade, a retired pastor who studied astronomy at the University of South Florida. "The first time they see things up close — the craters of the moon, the rings of Saturn —

See STARGAZING, page 15A

Voters head out to polls in Florida's primary election

By **B.C. Manion**
bcmanion@lakerlutznews.com

Voters will be heading to the polls on Aug. 28 in Florida's primary election.

Statewide, voters will decide who will represent the Democrats and who will represent the Republicans in a number of seats, including the race for governor.

On the local front, voters will cast their ballots for districts one, three and five of the Pasco County School Board.

The winner of those school board races could be decided, if a candidate secures more than 50 percent of the vote. Otherwise, the winner will be selected in the Nov. 6 general election.

Voters also will be choosing judges and selecting candidates in a number of primary races.

Polls are open on Election Day from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.

See ELECTION, page 15A

Beautiful, One-Of-A Kind Waterfront Home

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It's seldom that such a versatile, lakefront family home becomes available in central Pasco — especially one located conveniently in the heart of Land O' Lakes, less than a mile from Lowe's and the intersection of State Road 54 and U.S. 41.

This five-bedroom, three-bath home on Wilsky Road is truly one-of-a-kind. Located at the end of a winding, quiet country lane, the spacious home emerges as the centerpiece of this tranquil lakefront paradise. The property is completely fenced and encompasses 2.7 acres of lawn, fields and beautiful old oaks, and boasts over 330 feet of shoreline on a peaceful lake surrounded by cypress trees draped in Spanish moss.

The home's huge open living area has stunning views of the private fishing lake. A large covered and screened lanai is perfect for relaxing with family and entertaining friends. The huge galley kitchen opens to the great room and features plenty of storage, an 11-foot breakfast bar, and separate eat-in area that is surrounded by windows with views of the lake.

The home has a unique, three-way-split bedroom plan that creates individual privacy for every member of the family. A laundry room and oversized, two-car garage are located just off the kitchen, making it easy to bring in the groceries.

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- Kitchen - 17' X 11' galley layout with Corian counters, tile backsplash, lots of storage, large pantry, eat-in area surrounded by windows with views of the lake
- Study - 16' X 8'
- Master Bedroom - 22' X 16', two walk-in closets, lake view, sliders to the lanai
- Master Bath - lots of storage, jetted tub, separate shower
- Bedroom 2 - 14' X 14', PLUS 11' X 8' loft, walk-in closet, sliders to lanai, lake view
- Bedroom 3 - 13'6" X 11', built-in desk, walk-in closet
- Bedroom 4 - 14' X 11', built-in desk
- Bedroom 5 - 14' X 10'
- Attached 2-Car Garage - 24' X 21'6", heated and cooled, extra insulation, laundry sink, door to side yard

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Food trucks get the go-ahead

By Kathy Steele
ksteel@lakerlutznews.com

Pasco County is close to rolling out the welcome mat to food trucks as a dining option.

The Pasco County Planning Commission approved a proposed food truck ordinance at its Aug. 9 meeting in Dade City.

Next, the Pasco County Commission will consider the ordinance, which establishes regulations on food trucks, as well as "veggie vans."

Members of the county's Food Policy Advisory Council helped craft the proposed ordinance. The advisory council also helped create the county's first ordinance on community gardens.

Food trucks currently operate under regulations for special events, such as the Kumquat festival in Dade City.

The Pasco County Fairgrounds is exempt from the ordinance because there already is a food venue agreement in place for that site.

If the ordinance is approved, no permits or registration would be required.

The ordinance aims to encourage more food truck events, including food truck rallies.

Other state agencies, including the Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulations, already regulate food truck operations for health and safety.

"Qualifying mobile food operations will be those having obtained all required permits and licenses from the State of Florida," according to the county's ordinance.

The county would, however, impose special regulations to operate a permanent food

truck "court."

Those venues typically have multiple food truck selections in one location, and provide amenities, such as restrooms, seating, trash cans and play areas.

Football tailgaters don't need to fret that the barbecue ribs, chicken, hot dogs and burgers served up from the back of their trucks will be governed by the new ordinance.

"It doesn't regulate folks doing private tailgating," said Denise Hernandez, the county's zoning administrator. "This is for public consumption (of food) being sold to the public."

The history of food trucks dates back centuries to when street vendors sold their wares from pushcarts. Charles Goodnight gets credit for the first chuck wagon that trailed along with cowboys during cattle drives in the West in the mid-1800s.

The more recent food truck fad started several years ago, and has become a permanent feature of the food industry.

Operating hours for food trucks generally would be from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. However, a location abutting residential would be open from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Food trucks would not be able to park overnight. If they operate from one location more than 90 days, the county would consider the operation permanent. Other regulations would then apply.

The ordinance also allows county departments, such as parks and recreation, to reach individual agreements for temporary food truck operations on county-owned property. A reservation fee, to be determined by each department, may be required.

Bexley seeks permit for on-site borrow pit

By Kathy Steele
ksteel@lakerlutznews.com

Bexley by Newland Communities won approval from the Pasco County Planning Commission to operate a borrow pit at the master-planned community, off State Road 54, in Land O' Lakes.

Approval also is required from the Southwest Florida Water Management District, also known as Swiftmud, and the matter also needs approval from the Pasco County Commission.

If approved, the conditional use permit from Pasco would allow up to 1 million cubic yards of sand and dirt to be excavated and hauled away over four years.

The borrow pit would be reclaimed afterward.

The infill dirt is for internal uses at Bexley. However, some portion of the dirt would cross over Tower Road, a road used by the public.

The borrow pit site is south of Tower

Road, west of Sunlake Boulevard, and about half-mile east of Ballantrae Boulevard.

"The fill dirt is being removed and will be used for development of the office portion of the project," said attorney Andrea Zelman.

Though some trucks will cross over Tower Road, all of the dirt will be used as part of the Bexley development, Zelman said.

The borrow pit's operating hours will be from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. It will not operate on Sundays or holidays.

Once work begins, signs will be posted to alert motorists of trucks accessing Tower Road.

Bexley is a master-planned community with about 1,700 acres located on the north side of State Road 54, east of the Suncoast Parkway, and on north and south sides of Tower Road.

The community is approved for up to 1,200 single family residences and 520 multi-family dwellings, as well as about 94,500 square feet of commercial and retail, and about 563,000 square feet of offices.

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Annual school photos capture moment in time

By B.C. Manion
bcmanion@lakerlutznews.com

Those annual photos that parents, grandparents and friends take on the First Day of School are a fun way to mark the beginning of a new year of learning.

They also offer a way to record changes in height, hair styles and fashions, over time.

Taking a First Day of School photo is a tradition for many families and, as the years roll by, they become miniature time capsules — offering a visual reminder of the children that were, and the young adults they've become.

Thanks, to our readers, who shared their First Day of School photos with us.



COURTESY OF THE FRISCO FAMILY
Baylor Frisco, wearing a gray shirt, on his first day of his senior year at Sunlake High School, along with his brother, Cannon, who is in his freshman year at the school, located in Land O' Lakes.



COURTESY OF GEORGE O'CONNOR
Julia O'Connor on the first day of school. She is a first-grader at Sand Pine Elementary School, in Wesley Chapel.



COURTESY OF KIMBERLY CHAPMAN
Nicholas Chapman heads to his first day of third grade at Sanders Memorial Elementary School in Land O' Lakes.



COURTESY OF AMANDA PERKINS
Liam Perkins, of Zephyrhills, on his first day as a sixth-grader at Stewart Middle School.



COURTESY OF SARAH CROWDER
Nathan Crowder and his little sister, Delanie Hadley, give each other encouragement as they head to fourth grade and kindergarten, respectively, at Sanders Memorial Elementary School in Land O' Lakes.



COURTESY OF BETSY MURDOCK
Kate Murdock has her photo taken near the sign at Learning Gate Community School, in Lutz, on the first day of the 2018-2019 school year.



COURTESY OF ROWENA MENDOZA
Thirteen-year-old Colin Mendoza and 10-year-old Kayla Mendoza on the first day of school. Colin is in eighth grade at John Long Middle School and Kayla is in fifth grade at Seven Oaks Elementary School. Both schools are in Wesley Chapel.

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What's Happening

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JUNIOR WOMEN MEET

The GFWC New Tampa Junior Woman's Club will meet Aug. 23 from 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m., at Stonewood Grill & Tavern, 17050 Palm Pointe Drive in Tampa Palms. Guests can have appetizers and mingle with current club members to learn more about how the group helps the community. For information, visit GFWCNewTampaJuniors.org or [Facebook.com/GFWCNewTampaJuniors](https://www.facebook.com/GFWCNewTampaJuniors), or email ntjwc@gfwcnewtampajuniors.org.

GAME NIGHT

Barnes & Noble at The Shops at Wiregrass, 28152 Paseo Drive, Suite 100, in Wesley Chapel, will host a game night Aug. 23 at 7 p.m., as part of its Summer Game Night Series. Every week, participants can play old classics and discover new favorites. For information, call (813) 907-7739.

AARP MEETING

Land O' Lakes AARP Chapter 4764 will meet Aug. 24 at 10 a.m., at Land O' Lakes Heritage Park, 5401 Land O' Lakes Blvd. The meeting will double as the chapter's fifth annual charity silent auction to benefit The Alzheimer's Association. A hot dog lunch will be served. Chapter members are free and will receive five free prize bidding tickets. Non-chapter members can pay \$15 at the door, either in cash or check, and receive 15 prize bidding tickets. The cost is \$10 per calendar year to join the chapter. For information, email tata101@tampabay.rr.com.

DOMINOES TOURNAMENT

The Lutz Senior Center, 112 First Ave., N.W., will host a Dominoes Tournament Aug. 24 at 10 a.m., for those that want to prepare for the countywide tournament. For information, call (813) 264-3804.

FREE FAMILY MOVIE

University Area CDC will host a free family movie night Aug. 24 at the University Area Community Center, 14013 N. 22nd St., in Tampa. The movie will be Disney's "A Wrinkle in Time." Doors open at 6 p.m., and the movie starts at 6:30 p.m. Drinks and popcorn will be free. Additional food will be available for purchase. There also will be prizes. Kids age 14 and younger must be accompanied by an adult. The event is co-sponsored by New Tampa Players, and Safe and Sound Hillsborough. For information, call Diana Diaz at (813) 558-5212, ext. 316.

Fresh Market

The Fresh Market at Wiregrass, at The Shops at Wiregrass in Wesley Chapel, takes place the first and third Saturdays of the month, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., through October. The next market is Sept. 1.

The event features more than 50 vendors, including locally grown produce, plants, herbs and flowers, and locally made take-home foods, such as jams, jellies, salsa, dips, seasonings, sauces and oils.

There also will be local artists showcasing eco-friendly products.

For information, visit TampaBayMarkets.com.

The Market Place

The Market Place at Hibiscus Park in Dade City, Seventh Street and Bougainvillea Avenue, will open Sept. 1 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., and every first Saturday of each month through May 2019. There will be a variety of vendors and entertainment.

The event is free and pet-friendly.

SHABBAT SERVICES

Congregation Kol Ami, 3919 Moran Road in Tampa, will have family Shabbat services Aug. 24 at 6:30 p.m. There will be guitar music, stories and active participation from kids and adults. For information, call (813) 962-6338.

CLASSIC CAR CRUISE-IN

Main Street Zephyrhills, 38537 Fifth Ave., will host a Saturday Day in the Square Classic Car Cruise-In on Aug. 25 from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. Guests can bring their hotrods, and enjoy craft food and beverages. There also will be live entertainment by The Shane Forrester band and DJ Starvin Marvin at the Eiland Clock Stage. For information, visit MainStreetZephyrhills.org.

THE WIZARD OF OZ

Tampa Theatre, 711 N. Franklin St., in downtown Tampa, will show "The Wizard of Oz" Aug. 26 at 3 p.m., as part of its annual Summer Classics Movies Series. Tickets are \$7 for theater members and \$10 for non-members. For information, visit TampaTheatre.org.

SUMMER SOCK HOP

The Lutz Senior Center, 112 First Ave., N.W., will host a Summer Sock Hop on Aug. 25 from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. For details, call (813) 264-3804.

BOOK CLUB

The Tree of Life Long Learning Book Club at Congregation Kol Ami, 3919 Moran Road in Tampa, will meet Aug. 28 at 7 p.m. The club will be reading and discussing "If All the Seas Were Ink" by Ilana Kurshan, a winner of multiple Jewish literature awards. For information, call (813) 962-6338, or email execdirector@kolami.org.

ORCHID CLUB

The Tampa Orchid Club will meet Aug. 28 at the Northdale Recreation Center, 15550 Spring Pine Drive in Tampa. The guest speaker will be Glen Gross of Gross Orchids on the subject of mounting and growing orchids on a variety of materials. Doors open at 9:30 a.m., followed by the meeting at 10 a.m. There also will be a bloom table, plants for sale and a silent auction. For information, call Barbara Barkhurst at (813) 949-7467, or visit TampaOrchidClub.shutterfly.com.

BIG BROTHERS BIG SISTERS

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Tampa Bay will meet Aug. 28 from 5:30 p.m. to 7 p.m., at Wesley Chapel Honda, 27750 Wesley Chapel Blvd. Anyone interested in becoming a mentor/volunteer can attend. For information, contact Deb Kirstol-Irwin at (813) 997-6881 or DebK@bbstampabay.org.

GOODWILL OFFER

Drop off clothing or household items at any Goodwill Industries-Suncoast donation site and receive a coupon good for up to two free children's tickets to Dinosaur World, one for each paid adult admission. Goodwill shoppers who "round up" their purchases to the nearest dollar will also get a coupon. The Dinosaur World BOGO coupons will be distributed through August, while supplies last, and can be redeemed through Oct. 31. For store locations and attended donation sites, visit Goodwill-suncoast.org.

COMEDY/DRAMA

The East Lake Fire Rescue & Fall Prevention Coalition of BLS will sponsor the comedy/drama "Denying Gravity" Sept. 1 from 2 p.m. to 3:30 p.m., at the Lutheran

Church of the Resurrection, 1555 Windmill Pointe Road in Palm Harbor. The play follows a woman trying to live life on her own terms, letting the "chips and hips" fall where they may. Admission is free, although reservations are requested. Online tickets can be found at

DenyingGravity.Eventbrite.com. Walk-ins are welcome. For information, call Senior Actors Guild & Education Services at (727) 536-7076.

GARDEN CLUB

The Orange Blossom Garden Club of Lutz will meet Sept. 5 at 9:40 a.m., at the Lutz Civic Center, 98 First Ave., N.W. The guest speaker will be from Hollie's Farm & Garden in Lutz on the topic of new fall plants and how to care for them. Members should bring a canned good for the food bank and a plant/cutting for the plant exchange. Newcomers are welcome. For information, call (813) 949-1301.

GARAGE SALE FUNDRAISER

The Forest Hills Presbyterian Church crafters will host a garage sale Sept. 14 and Sept. 15 from 7:30 a.m. to 2 p.m., at 3320 Schefflera Road. The money raised will help purchase materials for the group's annual holiday bazaar, set for Oct. 20 at the church, 709 W. Linebaugh Ave. The proceeds from the bazaar will be returned to the community with grants to nonprofit organizations. For information, call (813) 932-6149.

BOOK BAZAAR

The Friends of the Hugh Embry Library, 14215 Fourth St., in Dade City, will have a book bazaar Sept. 14 and Sept. 15 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. There will be a diverse selection of books, audio and video media, magazines and other related materials, most for a modest price. For information, call Glen Thompson at (352) 567-7449 or email Bookbollard@icloud.com

CHAIR PLANTER DEMO

Life's Treasures Thrift Store, 4910 S. Allen Road in the Westgate Shopping Center, Zephyrhills, will offer a free DIY chair planter demonstration Sept. 15 at 11 a.m. Guests can learn how to transform an old, worn-out chair into an upcycled garden decoration. Those interested can sign up for the workshop at the store or online at ChaptersHealth.org/calendar-chapters-health. For information, call the store at (813) 355-4830.

EARLY VOTE 2018

Primary Election Dates & Times

Sat Aug 18 - Sat Aug 25

Sat & Sun 9 - 5

Mon - Fri 10 - 6

4 New Locations

11 Locations Countywide:

PASCO COUNTY UTILITIES ADMINISTRATION BLDG
19420 Central Blvd
Land O Lakes FL 34637

FLORIDA HOSPITAL CENTER ICE
3173 Cypress Ridge Blvd
Wesley Chapel, FL 33544

ALICE HALL COMMUNITY CENTER
38116 5th Ave
Zephyrhills FL 33542

NEW RIVER LIBRARY
34043 State Road 54
Wesley Chapel, FL 33543

EAST PASCO GOVERNMENT CENTER
14236 6th St
Dade City FL 33523

WEST PASCO GOVERNMENT CENTER
8731 Citizens Dr
New Port Richey, FL 34654

HUDSON LIBRARY
8012 Library Rd
Hudson, FL 34667

REGENCY PARK LIBRARY
9701 Little Rd
New Port Richey, FL 34654

SOUTH HOLIDAY LIBRARY
4649 Mile Stretch Dr
Holiday, FL 34690

ODESSA COMMUNITY CENTER
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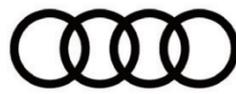
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Asturia's Uniquely Smaller Size

More of a neighborhood than a sprawling development

Asturia, a new home community in Odessa, stands out among other planned developments along State Road 54 in Pasco County because of its uniquely smaller size.

At build out in the next few years, Asturia will be a community of just 670 homes, while nearby master-planned communities have between 1,500 and 6,500 homes planned over several years of construction.

"Asturia feels more like a neighborhood than a sprawling community," said Lane Gardner, managing director for Hines, Asturia's developer that is based in Jacksonville.

"Our nature trails, pocket parks, first-class amenities and community events encourage residents to get to know their neighbors," he continued. "Families choose Asturia because it is a friendly, walkable community that promotes a healthy, active lifestyle."

Asturia's builders offer a variety of home sizes and prices, making it ideal for families looking to buy their first home, and for growing families with school-age children that need larger homes. The community also attracts empty-nesters and seasonal residents who are downsizing to a smaller home, and want the latest in technological upgrades and energy efficiencies.

Asturia also stands out because its developer sponsors community events almost monthly to provide opportunities for residents to get to



know their neighbors, and non-residents to see what it would be like to live in Asturia. Recent events include a 4th of July Pool Party, Hawaiian Spring Luau, and Dog Day Afternoon for people and their four-legged friends.

Since Asturia opened in February 2016, over 200 homes have been sold in its first two phases. Hines is launching a third phase later this year, which will add townhomes for the first time to its mix of homes.

Ryan Homes, one of the nation's oldest builders with communities in 14 states, is building the townhomes, which feature garages in the rear of the home. Townhomes will sell in the mid \$200,000s, and are being constructed near the front of the

community, walkable to Asturia's Amenity Center.

Later in Phase 3, Ryan Homes will also build traditional single-family homes.

"We're looking at townhome models opening toward the end of the year, or early in 2019," said Gardner. "We are very pleased that Ryan Homes has joined us as a builder in Asturia, complementing our longtime builders — David Weekley Homes, Ashton Woods and ICI Homes."

While infrastructure work is underway in Phase 3, home construction continues in Asturia's Phase 2, which is tucked against pristine conservation and cypress-lined wetlands.

"All of our Phase 2 home sites offer

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- From the mid \$200s
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(813) 501-6225 for more information

privacy and peaceful, quiet surroundings," said Gardner. "Some of the prettiest and most private lots in the community are still available."

AWARD WINNING AMENITY CENTER

Asturia's distinctive, 5,800-square-foot Amenity Center and Clubhouse has earned the prestigious Silver Aurora Award for the Best Recreational Facility from the Southeast Building Conference, as well as Best Mixed-Use Community of the Year.

This contemporary-design Amenity Center includes a fully equipped, modern clubhouse; covered outdoor dining areas; a luxurious, beach-entry, resort-style swimming pool; and an expansive event lawn for outdoor games. In the playground areas, there is a Kompan climbing dome, swings, slides, and spinners for youngsters to explore and enjoy.

Make Asturia your new home by visiting its models, registering at the community's website, AsturiaFlorida.com, or by calling (813) 227-4148.

Asturia

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This Month's Featured Realtor & House



Meet Heather Patierno

813-833-7804 • Heather@advantagereservices.com

A native Floridian, Heather was born and raised in Tampa Bay. She has been involved in the real estate industry since 2004 and has specialized in Residential Real Estate in the Lutz / Land O' Lakes area for several years. She prides herself on going over and above for each and every client. Contact Heather to see how she can put her personalized services to work for you.



3004 MARBLE CREST DR, LAND O' LAKES, FL 34638

Welcome home to this beautiful Southern Crafted Homes, Boca Grande Model, located in the highly desirable gated community of Stonegate. This spacious 3298 sqft, 3 car garage home boasts 4 bedrooms with walk in closets, 3 full bathrooms, formal living room, dining room, and an open concept eat in kitchen / family room combination with surround sound and a natural gas fireplace. Not to mention, a huge second story bonus room that will no doubt become your favorite room in the house. The beautiful, sparkling pool will keep you cooled off in the summer while enjoying your amazing views of the pond and expansive treed greenspace within the community. Feel like taking a dip in the winter months? Go right ahead! The pool has a spill over spa and both the spa and pool are solar heated for year round enjoyment. The additional outdoor living space is pre-plumbed with water, electric, and gas for you to create your dream outdoor kitchen. All of this in the wonderful gated community of Stonegate. Priced at \$439,900. Contact Heather Patierno for additional details.



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Breathtaking Setting, Luxurious Living in Lutz at Cordoba Estates

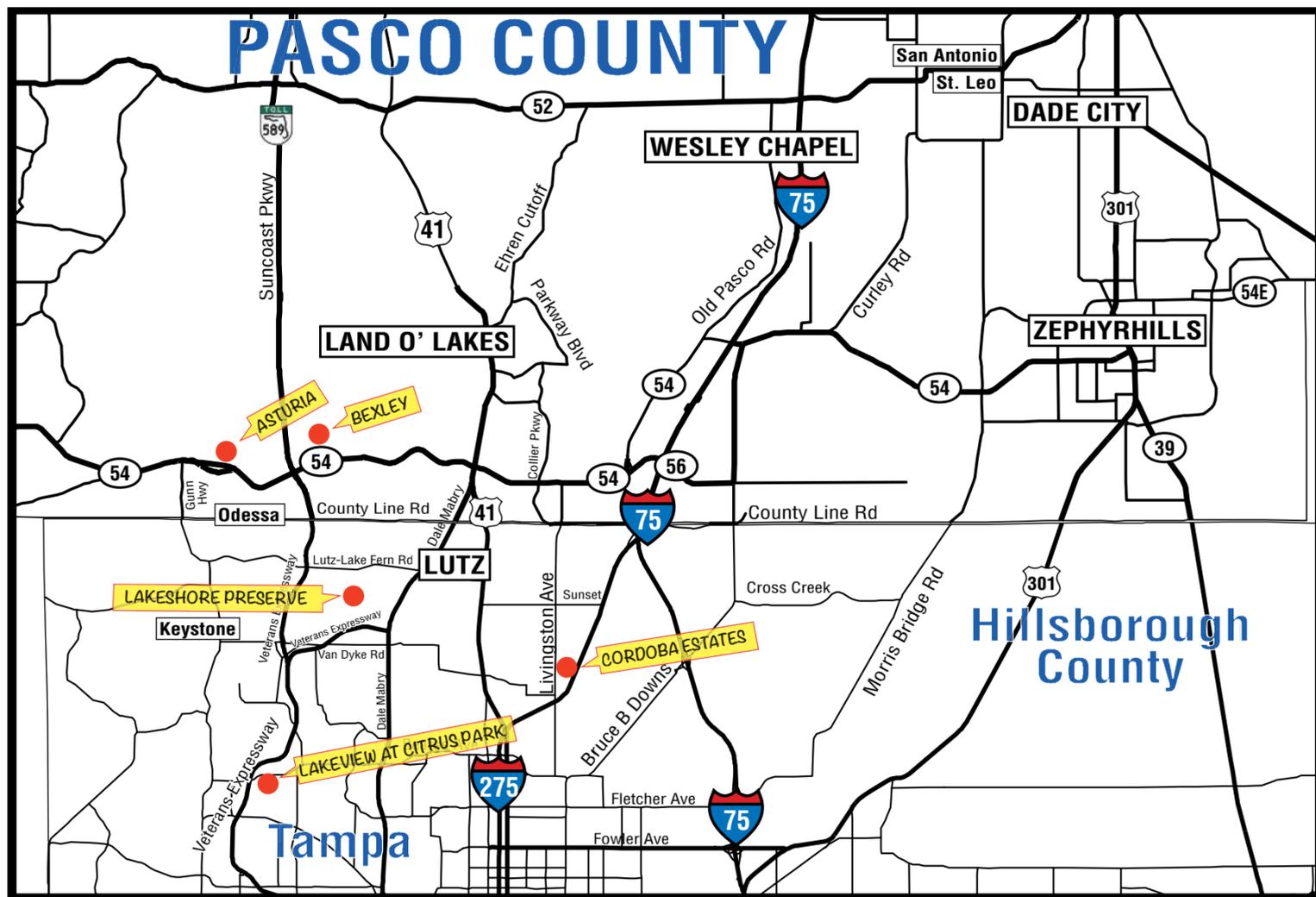
Cordoba Estates sets a new standard of elegance in Lutz. Estate and executive homes showcase Old Florida splendor amid grand oaks draped with Spanish moss set among 800 lush acres of lakes and ponds. Distinctive architecture evokes Old World gentility. Elegantly appointed homes are nestled in half-acre homesites for unrivaled space and privacy in the gated community. Stylish European Cottage, Italianate and Spanish exteriors complement eight generous floorplans in Cordoba Estates' Premier Series and Executive Series homes. Along with the community's private amenities that include a beach-entry pool, sports courts, a playground and more, Cordoba Estates offers luxury homes appointed with top-of-the-line features. Those include 42-inch birch cabinetry, granite countertops and state-of-the-art appliances in the kitchen, a spa-like master's suite and much more. In the Premier Series, five innovative and

thoughtful designs are priced from \$394,990 to \$479,990. Designs range from 2,915 to 3,703 square feet with three to four bedrooms and three to four baths. Available in one or two stories, the design also includes a three- to four-car garage. The Saratoga, with 4,439 to 4,488 square feet, comprises six bedrooms and four baths in two stories with a three-car garage. One model in the Premier Series includes the Bellingham, which earned a Parade of Homes award as "Owner's Bath Feature Winner." Cordoba's Executive Series' estate homes range from 3,486 to 5,359 and priced from \$524,990 to \$599,990. At least one model provides a popular one-story floorplan featuring open-air family rooms, gracious formal dining rooms, kitchens with oversized islands, and comfortable and fashionable entertainment spaces. Homes also include graceful indoor/outdoor features for entertaining or simply relaxing in Lutz's nearly 250 days of annual sunshine.

Cordoba Estates, just 15 miles north of Tampa and within 28 miles of the Gulf's sugar-sand beaches, provides outstanding access to the best of Tampa Bay from its tranquil location. Just minutes from I-275, the community is within 10 miles of The Shops at Wiregrass and Tampa Premium Outlets. Adjacent to charming Wesley Chapel, Cordoba Estates lies near the edge of the sprawling and breathtaking Lower Hillsborough Wilderness Preserve and only about seven miles from Tampa Palms Golf & Country Club. Numerous public parks envelop the community. Hillsborough County Public Schools' Maniscalco Elementary is within two miles of Cordoba Estates, while Liberty Middle and Freedom High schools are within 10 miles. WCI brings more than 60 years' experience creating luxury homes in ideally situated communities, including the exclusive Cordoba Estates. **For more information, contact WCITampaBay.com or (844)478-5429**

THE LAKER / LUTZ NEWS

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Mattamy Homes

LAKEVIEW AT CITRUS PARK
Mattamy Homes



Builders in blue appear in today's Home Section

Keep Your Home Cool By Planning Ahead

The last thing your family wants to deal with during the hot summer months is your home's A/C unit going on the blink.

And, the best way to prevent that from happening is to have a maintenance plan with a reputable HVAC company, and to be aware when your unit's warranty will expire.

"Your A/C should receive regular maintenance every six to 12 months to prevent an emergency situation," said Dana Spears, president of Cornerstone Air Conditioning, Plumbing & Electrical in Land O' Lakes.

"Maintaining your A/C is much like taking your vehicle in for regular oil changes and service updates. If you don't service your vehicle, you are looking for trouble. And, if you are not doing regular maintenance on your A/C system, when you have problems, it will likely be during the hottest times of the year when your unit is working its hardest," said Spears.

A well-maintained A/C system should continue to operate through the end of its warranty period. However, as a system gets older, it loses much of its efficiencies and begins to show its age with inconsistent hot and cold pockets, and excessive noise.

In many cases, Cornerstone's technicians recommend replacing a system when the warranty expiration is nearing its end to avoid inevitable mechanical problems, and also to take advantage of new technology that makes A/C systems much more energy efficient.

"Often times, we find that the saving on a customer's power bill is so significant because of the energy efficiencies of a new A/C unit, that it is more cost effective to replace a unit, than to repair it," Spears said.

"Plus, once you begin to replace parts on an older system, repairs often add up, and it's better to put



this money into a new system," said continued.

Many owners of newer homes are surprised to learn that the warranty on their builder-grade air conditioning system on their newly built home is only five or six years, and are unprepared for the expense when their out-of-warranty A/C needs to be repaired or replaced.

"There are thousands of homes in this area that have been built in the last 10 years, and many homeowners are not aware that their A/C is out of warranty," said Spears. "It is much better to be proactive and look into replacing your A/C system before it goes down, then waiting until you are in an emergency situation."

The new Daikin A/C systems installed by Cornerstone are of much better quality than builder-grade units, and come with 10 to 12 year warranties. For most homes, the cost for a new HVAC system is between \$5,500 and \$12,000, depending on the unit's seer rating and type of technology the system offers to achieve higher energy efficient levels.

"The higher the seer rating, the

more expensive the unit because it uses two-stage or inverter technology and slow speeds," Spears explains. "But, a higher seer rating is more energy efficiency and can save a family hundreds to thousands of dollars a year on their power bill."

Spears goes on to explain that a home's air conditioning system typically accounts for 50 percent of its power bill.

"For many families, it makes sense to go with a higher seer-rated unit because it will pay for itself within a few years. Plus, a higher quality system operates more quietly, and comes with a 12-year warranty, instead of the standard 10 years," said Spears.

One of the biggest worries homeowners have when their old A/C unit starts having problems is the cost of repairs that keep adding up.

"It may be smarter to replace an old A/C unit, than it is to keep repairing it, which is also frustrating, time consuming and means your family will be without air conditioning for several hours to several days," said Spears.

To help families afford a new A/C system, Cornerstone offers third

party financing. Options include 18-month terms with 0 percent interest, and payments for as little as \$60 a month on financing with 60-month terms.

"If your A/C system is at the end of its warranty period, give us a call. We have a large selection of equipment in stock, and there are some excellent rebates being offered by our manufacturers that will save you hundreds of dollars," said Spears.

"And remember," Spears adds, "that your A/C is a home appliance, just like your refrigerator. All appliances have a life span and don't last forever."

Cornerstone was founded in 2006 as an air conditioning service company. It moved to its 4-acre site on Land O' Lakes Boulevard in 2011, and the following year added plumbing services. In 2014, it expanded again with electrical services.

Spears credits her company's growth to its commitment to outstanding customer service, and also because its employees exemplify her company's values.

"We hire people who are genuine, honest, trustworthy, clean-cut, and live their life with good ethics and morals," said Spears. "Most employees are local people who live in our service area, and they are very committed to their work and community."

Cornerstone phones are answered 24/7, and technicians are available around the clock, including weekends and holidays. Call (813) 990-0561 anytime, day or night. For more information, visit their website at CornerstonePros.com.

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Lakeview At Citrus Park Has Park-Like Setting And Superb Location

Next to the Veterans and just minutes to Carrollwood

Mattamy Homes is launching its second townhome community in north Tampa — Lakeview at Citrus Park. The community is opening soon at an idyllic location overlooking Gant Lake at the end of Tom Fuller Road, located just south of Ehrlich Road and east of the Veterans Expressway.

VIP-only presales are taking place this weekend, Aug. 24 to Aug. 26, with sales opening to the general public on Saturday, Sept. 1.

To qualify for VIP presales, register at MattamyHomes.com/Tampa. VIP benefits include first selection of homes, VIP pricing and other incentives.

“This is one of the prettiest and most convenient locations in the north Tampa area,” said Kathleen Dec, marketing manager for Mattamy’s West Florida Division. “Our homeowners will enjoy living less than two miles from Westfield Citrus Park Mall, and will appreciate the easy access to Tampa via the Veterans Expressway. Plus, Tampa International Airport is only 12 miles from the community.”

In addition to its great location, this gated community will boast a community pier with resident access to Gant Lake for fishing, kayaking and paddle boarding, and also a children’s playground.

Upon completion, Lakeview at Citrus Park will have 124 townhomes. Buyers will choose from five floor plans that are similar to the popular plans sold at Mattamy Homes’ Lakeside Preserve community in Lutz.

Home sizes will range from 1,670 to 2,620 square feet, and offer 3 to 4 bedrooms, 2.5 to 3 baths, and 1- or 2-car garages. Pricing begins from the mid \$200,000s.

To learn more about Lakeview at Citrus Park, call Melanie Sikorski at (813) 278-1760, or email Sikorski.MelanieK@mattamycorp.com, or visit MattamyHomes.com.



LAST CHANCE FOR LAKESHORE PRESERVE

In less than a year, the Mattamy Homes community of Lakeshore Preserve in Lutz has sold 80 percent of its townhomes in the 102-home community, located on Van

Dyke Road and Lakeshore Road, just west of Dale Mabry Highway.

“We’re down to our last 20 homes, and expect all to sell by the end of the year,” said Marketing Manager Dec. “Lakeshore Preserve has sold very well in the year since we opened because of its great location and unique floor plans that optimize living spaces to fit an array of buyers’ needs.”

Lakeshore Preserve has two contemporary townhome designs still available that offer 3 bedrooms, 2.5 bathrooms and 1- or 2-car garages. Townhomes are larger than many single-family homes, ranging from 1,888 to 2,333 square feet. Prices start in the mid \$200,000s.



all located less than three miles away on Lutz Lake Fern Road. Charter school Sunlake Academy of Math and Science is less than a mile away.

This gated community offers a beautiful amenity center, which includes a large resort-style pool, outdoor area equipped with a covered cabana and breeze fans, outdoor kitchen, hammocks, shaded seating areas and game area.

To learn more about Lakeshore Preserve, call Melanie Sikorski at (813) 370-1254, or email Sikorski.MelanieK@mattamycorp.com, or visit MattamyHomes.com.

Mattamy Homes is the largest privately owned homebuilder in North America, with a nearly 40-year history of operations across the United States and Canada. Every year, Mattamy helps 7,000 families realize their dream of home ownership. Visit MattamyHomes.com for more information.

The community is less than two miles from the Veterans Expressway and Dale Mabry Highway, and close to shopping and dining in Carrollwood, Land O’ Lakes and Wesley Chapel.

“Plus, our kids attend some of the best schools in all of Hillsborough County, which is a huge draw for many of our residents,” said Dec.

Lakeshore Preserve students are zoned to Steinbrenner High, Martinez Middle and Schwarzkopf Elementary,

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AT CITRUS PARK

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- Fabulous Citrus Park location on Ehrlich Road (Less than a minute from the Veteran's Expressway)
- Gated community with a tot lot, community pier, and access to Gant Lake for fishing, kayaking, and paddleboarding
- Less than three miles from Westfield Citrus Park Mall and fifteen minutes from Downtown Tampa and Tampa International Airport

**LAKESHORE
PRESERVE**

- Two Townhome designs offering 1,888–2,230 sq. ft. with 3–4 bedrooms, 2.5–3 baths, and 1–2 car garages
- Gated community entrance with amenities including a resort-style pool and cabana
- Conveniently located on Van Dyke Road close to shopping, dining and recreation
- A-rated school district including Schwarzkopf Elementary, Martinez Middle School, and Steinbrenner High School
- Only 20 homes remaining
- Quick Move-In Homes are available with special savings*

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from the mid \$200s**

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All dimensions are approximate. All pricing, availability and plans are subject to prior sale and may change without notice or obligation. *Terms and conditions apply. Values of incentives vary by community, home, home site and closing date. Valid only on new contracts signed 8/3/18 - 8/31/18; and home must close upon completion. Closing Costs incentives offered only when financing home through Mattamy Home Funding LLC, our preferred lender, (NMLS#64022). Alternate incentive may apply for cash purchases. Other restrictions apply. Please see a Mattamy Homes New Home Counselor for complete details. E.&O.E. Builder's #CGC1524054



First Responders Call Bexley Home

First responders are a tight-knit group. It's that feeling of camaraderie that attracted Liam Symmonds, a firefighter and paramedic in Pasco County, to the Bexley community in Land O' Lakes.

Liam, his wife, Keisha and their three young daughters moved to Bexley last year from Trinity. Turns out, Liam is in good company, because Bexley is home to about a dozen first responders who work throughout Tampa Bay.

Since moving to their new neighborhood, Liam learned that two of his co-workers also live in Bexley; one of them just a few doors down from the Symmonds family. Liam was so impressed with his home-buying experience at Bexley, and with all the community has to offer, that he encouraged another friend and first responder who works in Tampa to make the move to Bexley.

"I've also met several other firefighters and police officers around the community, either at neighborhood events or at the pool," Liam said.

For the Symmonds, Bexley is an idyllic place to raise a young family.

"Bexley has a great vibe," he added. "We love all of the amenities, the parks and the events that are held within the community. It's so much more than just a regular neighborhood."

Bexley takes its inspiration from nature. With 1,825 acres of pastoral ranch lands, mature woodlands and cypress wetlands, Bexley offers miles of multi-surface Avid™ trails for biking, jogging or walking. Fit Stations are placed along the trails for exercisers who want to work out while enjoying the great outdoor scenery,

or take their workout regimen to the next level. Around the community, kids spend hours on the custom-built playgrounds; sports lovers of all ages enjoy Mud, Sweat and Gears Park for soccer or football games; and Bexley's BMX bicycle pump track lets daredevils try out new tricks. There's even the BarkYard Park for four-legged family members, with separate spaces for big and small dogs.

As a volunteer soccer coach, Liam also appreciates living so close to Mud, Sweat & Gears park, where he can kick the ball around with his daughters, ages 11, 8 and 5. The fact that his girls can walk or ride their bikes to nearby Bexley Elementary

School, located within the community, is also a convenience for Liam and his wife. Plus, Liam has a short, 3-mile commute to work.

"The first responders who live in Bexley bring a great sense of fellowship to the community," said Pam Parisi, vice president of marketing for Newland Communities, the developer of Bexley. "As we prepared for Hurricane Irma, many of the first responders were there to lend a helping hand to their neighbors by putting up storm shutters and making sure families were ready."

"Bexley is a place where neighbors look out for each other," added Liam. "You just don't find that everywhere."

Located in Land O'Lakes in central Pasco County, north of State Road 54 and just east of the Suncoast Parkway, Bexley is in a prime location that is convenient to many areas of Tampa Bay.

The community's 1,825 acres of pastoral ranch lands, mature woodlands and cypress wetlands have earned it numerous awards, including best master-planned community and best recreational facility from the Southeast Building Conference, and a Best in American Living Award for best single-family community from the National Association of Home Builders.

To learn more about living at Bexley, visit BexleyFlorida.com.



Liam, his wife, Keisha and their three daughters, ages 11, 8 and 5, moved to Bexley last year from Trinity.



There's nothing better than living in Bexley.

It's simply the best.* Two expansive, resort-style pools, lush landscaping, a unique open-air game room with billiards and air hockey, and custom playgrounds are just the beginning. Take a loop around our picturesque trails with plenty of outdoor Fit Stations along the way, before treating your taste buds at the Twisted Sprocket Café.

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NASH Bexley, LLC ("Fee Owner") is the owner and developer of the Bexley Community ("Community"). Certain homebuilders unaffiliated with the Fee Owner or its related entities are building homes in the Community ("Builder(s)"). Fee Owner has retained Newland Communities solely as the property manager for the Community. North America Sekisui House has an interest in one of the members in Fee Owner. See www.bexleyflorida.com for full terms of use. This is not intended to be an offer to sell or a solicitation of offers to buy real estate in the Bexley Community to residents of Connecticut, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, New York, New Jersey, and Oregon, or in any other jurisdiction where prohibited by law. © 2018 Bexley. All rights reserved. Bexley is a trademark of NASH Bexley, LLC, and may not be copied, imitated or used, in whole or in part, without prior written permission. EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITY

Want To Move To A New Home By The Holidays?

Then visit Ashton Woods' 18 Inventory Homes In Asturia

Ashton Woods is in its final sales phase at Asturia, with 75 percent of home sites sold since the community opened two years ago.

"We've had tremendous success in Asturia, selling over 100 beautiful homes in this much-desired community on State Road 54," said Sales Manager Kristin Wilson. "We have just 45 homes to go, and expect all to be gone by the end of the year, with many families closing before the holidays."

Because most families want to move into their new home by the end of the year, Ashton Woods has received permits from Pasco County for its remaining homes sites in Asturia

"This saves our buyers up to three months in the building process," said Jillian Harris, Ashton Woods' community sales manager in Asturia, a master-planned community in Odessa.

"Our designers have put together beautiful combinations of flooring, countertops, design features and colors that will excite the vast majority of buyers," she said. "Plus, we have a great combination of homes that convert flex space to extra bedrooms, add bonus rooms and extra baths, and have great outdoor living areas with front porches and extended lanais."

While construction is underway on many homes, Ashton Woods buyers are still able to select flooring, countertops, cabinets and other nonstructural customizations on several homes that will be completed in November and December.

"We are known for our affordable personalization at the Design Studio, and families who want to pick out their finishes and colors are reserving these homes right now," said Harris.

INVENTORY HOMES

Ashton Woods offers traditional one- and two-story homes in its tradi-



tional home series. All feature open floor plans, large living areas, beautiful master suites, high-end finishes and lots of storage. Homes have two or three-car garages, and many back up to private conservation lots.

SPACIOUS CLASSIC SERIES

Six traditional inventory homes are ready now in the Classic series, including two, one-story homes. The versatile Odessa plan has three bedrooms and two-and-a-half baths in 2,243 square feet. The larger Naples plan offers four bedrooms, three baths in 2,321 square feet.

Also ready now are three, two-story homes with two-car garages, including the Ferrara model home at 2,890 square feet with its four bedrooms and three-and-a-half baths.

The 3,362-square-foot Athens is the largest home Ashton Woods builds in Asturia, and boasts up to five bedrooms and three-and-a-half baths.

AFFORDABLE HERITAGE SERIES

Many first-time homebuyers and downsizing families choose the Heritage Series. Ashton Woods has five move-in ready homes available in these well-designed floor plans, including three, one-story homes.

Two homes are ready now in the popular Milan plans, at 2,722 square feet with four bedrooms and three-and-a-half baths. The slightly smaller Adams plan is 1,829 square feet with three bedrooms and two baths.

Available two stories homes are the Lincoln, Monroe and Ellington plans. Square footage ranges from 2,329 to 2,638 square feet, and homes offer up to five bedrooms and three baths.

EVERGREEN AND GROVE SERIES

Ashton Woods is the only builder in Asturia offering single-family homes with garages at the rear of the house.

There are nine, quick move-in homes available in these series, all conveniently located close to Asturia's Amenity center.

The two-story Blackwater is the largest rear-load home available, at 2,309 square feet with four bedrooms and two-and-a-half baths.

There are four Arlington plans at 2,003 square feet, and also four Ortega plans at 2,189 square feet. These homes begin at \$279,000.

GREAT SCHOOLS

"For families with children, Asturia is a very popular community because it is zoned for some of the best schools in Pasco County — J.W. Mitchell High, Seven Springs Middle and Odessa Elementary," said Harris.

Asturia is the ultimate choice for buyers considering the many master-planned communities along State Road 54. Buyers prefer Asturia's smaller size of just 550 homes, compared to thousands being built in neighboring developments, and appreciate that construction will not be going on for years.

"People especially like that our homes are not on top of each other," said Sales Manager Wilson. "Asturia's developer did a great job laying out its streets, so it doesn't look like a cookie-cutter community."

Ashton Woods was named the 2017 Builder of the Year by Builder and Developer Magazine and, for the fourth consecutive year, has been ranked among the top three for Most Trusted Builders in America.

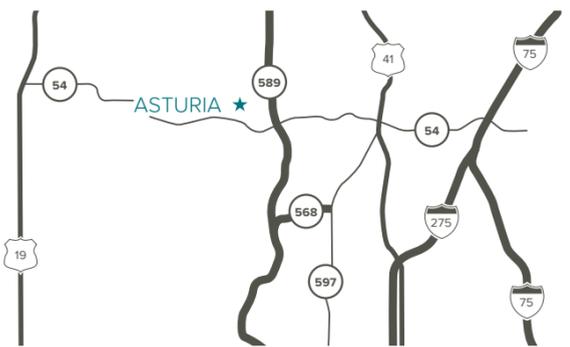
For more information, go to AshtonWoods.com/tampa/Asturia. You can also call the sales center at (813) 446-8362.

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Ashton Woods is the home of possibilities, and this August, we're making it possible for you to move into a beautifully designed, new home quickly and get started making it feel like home with a \$5,000 Pottery Barn gift card. Come see the quick-move-in homes available now, and explore the lifestyle in this exceptional community with miles of walking trails, a resort-style pool and state-of-the-art community clubhouse. At Asturia, you'll love the possibilities.



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Serena — 3073 Satilla Loop
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Pamela — 16725 Courtyard Loop
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ICI Homes in Bexley

Priced from the Low \$400s — 7 Plans to choose from

Bexley is a planned community embracing a natural setting in Land O' Lakes, Florida. It features single-family homes that absorb the "old Florida" feel. Bexley includes a clubhouse, pools, fitness center, bike shop, cafe and more. With acres of parks and preserved areas, miles of walking and bike trails, what more could you want in your new home community?

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call (813) 252-1108 or visit www.ICIHomes.com

*On Showcase or TBB homes, terms and restrictions apply. Promotion ends 9/3/18. See a Sales Associate for details. Prices and offerings are subject to change. Intervest Construction of Tampa, LLC 2660 Cypress Ridge Blvd, Suite 104, Wesley Chapel, FL 33544 / CGC #1523402





COURTESY OF SERTOMA SPEECH & HEARING FOUNDATION

New mobile audiology services

The Sertoma Speech & Hearing Foundation of Florida had a ribbon-cutting at Country Way Village Child Care in Tampa, with a presentation of its new mobile audiology services van. The van will provide pediatric hearing screenings and evaluations, along with fitting and dispensing hearing aids. The foundation's focus is rural and under-served communities.

From left: Kathy Spurling, assistant outreach coordinator at Sertoma; Jesse Brown, district governor of Central Florida Sertoma District; Taylor, a Country Way Village Child Care employee; and Emylee Baumann, outreach coordinator at Sertoma. For information, call (727) 312-3881.

NAMI PROGRAM

NAMI Family-to-Family, a local organization of the National Alliance on Mental Illness, will offer an education program starting Aug. 23, every Thursday from 6:30 p.m. to 9 p.m., for 12 weeks at Medical Center of Trinity Behavioral Health, 5637 Marine Parkway in New Port Richey.

The program is for family, partners, friends and significant others of adults living with mental illness.

The course can help participants understand and support their loved one living with mental illness, while maintaining their own well-being.

Information will be included on illnesses such as schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, major depression and other mental health conditions.

Seating is limited. To register, call (727) 992-9653, or email Gloria Strother at gloriasstrother@verizon.net.

HORMONE SEMINAR

Samantha Taylor Fitness, 2206 Knight Road in Land O' Lakes, will host a free hormone seminar, entitled "How Hormones Affect a Sexier, Healthier, Younger and More Vibrant You," Aug. 25 at 12:30 p.m.

The seminar is for men and women. The guest speakers will be from Infinity Medical Institute.

Coffee and healthy desserts will be provided.

Reservations are required at SamanthaTaylorSeminars.com.

TOBACCO CESSATION

Tobacco Free Florida will offer a class Aug. 29 from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m., at the Central Pasco Government Center, 19420 Central Blvd., in Land O' Lakes.

The program covers all forms of tobacco. Participants will receive a free workbook

and materials. Free nicotine replacement patches, gum or lozenges also will be available, if medically appropriate for ages 18 and older.

Preregistration is required by calling (813) 929-1000.

For information on the program, visit TobaccoFreeFlorida.com/quityourway.

HOSPITAL RANKS IN TOP 100

Florida Hospital Wesley Chapel was named one of the nation's 100 Top Hospitals by IBM Watson Health.

The study, conducted by IBM Watson Health, spotlights the top-performing hospitals in the United States based on a balanced scorecard of publicly available clinical, operational and patient satisfaction metrics and data.

The hospital also was named one of the 100 Best Hospitals for Patient Experience by the Women's Choice Award.

Since opening nearly six years ago Florida Hospital Wesley Chapel has established itself as a national leader, earning recognition from a variety of industry leaders for patient care, safety and satisfaction.

The hospital continues to grow and expand its services, most recently opening an offsite Emergency Room in Land O' Lakes

It also opened Inspiration Place - a comprehensive women's health center that offers concierge care with female physicians, women's imaging services and women's physical therapy services, located together with a boutique spa.

A wound-healing institute also is under construction.

FREE HEARING AID BATTERIES

The Sertoma Speech & Hearing Foundation of Florida will offer free hearing aid batteries Sept. 7 from 10 a.m. to noon, at its New Port Richey office, at 6333 River Road.

The most common sizes of 10, 13, 312 and 675 will be available, while supplies last.

Through the Sertoma Hearing Aid Recycling Program, Sertoma clubs also collect hearing aids in any condition to provide recycled and refurbished hearing aids to clients who need them.

Hearing aid recycling containers can be found at participating local Publix grocery stores.

For information, all (727) 312-3881, or visit FamilyHearingHelp.org.

FLORIDA KIDCARE

Florida KidCare and its partners are reminding parents to take advantage of their child's health care benefits or to sign them up for health and dental coverage.

Through Florida KidCare, sports physicals, vision and hearing tests, routine dental cleanings and pediatric checkups are all covered.

To offer families more local opportunities to learn about and apply for Florida KidCare,

the Florida Healthy Kids Corporation has awarded nine back-to-school grants to community organizations across the state.

For those interested in applying for Florida KidCare, the corporation has debuted a free online eligibility calculator. The calculator can be accessed at tinyurl.com/ybgleael.

To learn more or to apply, visit FloridaKidCare.org.

ST. JOSEPH'S GARNERS TWO AWARDS

For the second year in a row, St. Joseph's Hospital-North has received two awards for quality acute care from the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association: Mission: Lifeline STEMI Receiving Center.

The Gold Achievement Award and the Get With the Guidelines Stroke Gold Plus Elite Quality Achievement Award both recognize the hospital's efforts in implementing specific quality improvement measures for the treatment of severe heart attacks and stroke.

The Mission: Lifeline program is a coordinated proactive system of care that turns first responders, hospitals and other health care providers into a team that uses proven guidelines and best practices to treat patients suffering from STEMI (ST elevation myocardial infarction).

It allows all of the components of care - from the onset of the emergency all the way through hospital discharge and the start of secondary prevention - to work quickly and seamlessly.

St. Joseph's Hospital-North is at 4211 Van Dyke Road in Lutz.

The Laker/Lutz News likes to keep our readers informed about available classes, seminars, lectures and events regarding health and wellness issues. Hospitals, doctors, individual practitioners and anyone related to the health care industry can submit information, at least two weeks in advance, to be considered for publication. Photos of events, recognitions and so on, also are welcome. Submissions should include who, what, where, when, cost, contact information, identifications for individuals in a photo (unless it is a large group), and a photo credit. This information should be emailed to news@lakerlutznews.com.



PRESENTER: **Sue Wegener, BSN, RN**
Behavioral Health Services

TOPIC: **When Help is Needed- sadness, grief, life stress, traumatic events**

SEPT 11TH



PRESENTER: **Raul Jimenez, MD**
Board Certified Electrophysiologist

TOPIC: **A-FIB**
September is Afib Awareness Month

SEPT 18TH



PRESENTERS: **Taylor Kirkman, DO**
PGY-3 Internal Medicine Chief Resident

Nicholas Kolinsky, DO
PGY-3 Internal Medicine Chief Resident

TOPIC: **Cholesterol**
SEPT 25TH

• Registration/Lunch 11:30 • Tutorials begin at Noon •

Tuesday Tutorials with Complimentary Lunch for the Community

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WIREGRASS OPEN HOUSE

Wiregrass Ranch High School will host an open house Aug. 27 from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m., for all students.

Participants can learn about the academic and athletic programs available, as well as clubs and booster programs.

Teachers will be in their classrooms to meet with families and answer any questions.

For information, call (813) 346-6000.

AFIRE OF PASCO

All Pasco County Tax Collector offices will be accepting donations for AFIRE of Pasco during the month of August.

AFIRE of Pasco is a day-training program for adults with developmental and intellectual disabilities. It is geared specifically for people 22 years of age and older who have completed all school district programs for individuals with disabilities. AFIRE provides service five days per week to enrolled adults.

Services include basic academics, one-on-one computer instruction, training in daily living skills, and recreation and social outings/activities.

For information on donating, visit PascoTaxes.com, or call Greg Giordano, assistant tax collector, at (727) 847-8179.

For information on the organization, visit AfirePasco.com, or call Denise Haystrand at (727) 849-8982.

DEAN'S LIST HONOREES

• Connor O' Keefe, of Lutz, made the Dean's List at Wheaton College in Norton, Massachusetts, for the spring semester.

• Em Ovalle, of Lutz, was named to the Dean's List at Centre College in Danville, Kentucky. Ovalle is a graduate of Freedom High School.

• Jordan Wheeler, of Land O' Lakes, made the Dean's List at Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri. Wheeler is enrolled in the university's School of Engineering and Applied Science.

SUMMER ORIENTATION

Zane Tarrance, of Odessa, attended Newberry College's Wolf Pack Welcome, the college's summer orientation.

The welcome is a one-day program de-



COURTESY OF ST. MARY'S UNIVERSITY

Ania McNamara, far right, was the recipient of the Outstanding Young Alumna Award from St. Mary's University of Minnesota. Other award winners, from left: Judy Mullins Lucas, Alumni Appreciation Award; Sarah Bellingham Laitinen, Lasallian Service Award; Ann Merchlewitz, Saint Mary's interim president; Bobbie Smith Gostout, Distinguished Alumna Award.

OUTSTANDING ALUMNA

Ania McNamara, of Odessa, received the Outstanding Young Alumna Award from Saint Mary's University of Minnesota, during the school's Reunion Weekend.

The award honors a young alum for outstanding accomplishments within the first 10 years of graduation whose professional accomplishments, service to the alma mater, or selfless and caring work to benefit society are distinctive.

McNamara has found success in her career and in her personal passion by providing gifts to orphans throughout Poland. A senior marketing professional, specializing in digital marketing,

McNamara has broad perspective on the marketing needs of small companies, as well as the complex world of modern marketing and technology.

In 2016, she found McNamara Marketing, a flexible marketing resource firm providing full-service marketing to businesses worldwide.

In her spare time, McNamara organizes the CCF4Orphans Project, a 10-year initiative sending Christmas gifts overseas to children in Polish orphanages. The cause is particularly close to her heart as she and her sisters were adopted as young children from an orphanage in Poland.

For more information, visit CCF4Orphans Project on Facebook.

signed to help first-year students transition smoothly from high school to Newberry College (South Carolina).

Activities included a team-building session, an academic session, a technology session, and an advisement session with an academic advisor.

INSURANCE COMPANY STEPS UP

American Income Life, a provider of life, accident and supplemental health insurance, made a \$25,000 contribution to Step Up For Students, helping lower-income children attend the kindergarten through 12th grade school that best fits their learning needs. The

donation will fund three scholarships for the 2018-2019 school year.

This is the first time American Income has partnered with Step Up For Students, a nonprofit organization that helps manage the income-based Florida Tax Credit Scholarship Program.

The tax credit program is for financially disadvantaged schoolchildren, and allows parents and schoolchildren to choose between a kindergarten through 12th grade scholarship that helps with private school tuition and fees, or one that assists with transportation costs to out-of-county public schools.

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OPIOID, from page 1A

risk of opioids and marketed the drugs for chronic pain, when in fact, there's not one single valid scientific study that supports the use of opioids for treatment of long-term chronic pain, Murman said.

The county intends to prove that drug distributors shipped excessive amounts of pain pills into the community, flooding county streets with pain pills, the commission chairwoman added.

The opioid epidemic is widespread, crossing socioeconomic boundaries, she said.

"It affects our seniors. It affects adolescents. Children. Families," she said.

There have been 1,072 opioid overdose deaths in Hillsborough County since 2012, Murman said. The county also has seen a 24 percent increase in opioids over a period of five years.

"That's a direct result of the fraudulent marketing of the drugs and the excessive amounts of drugs shipped into our county by these defendants," Murman said.

"Hillsborough County is leading the state in the number of babies born addicted to opioids," Murman said. "That is totally unacceptable."

There were 579 cases of babies addicted to opioids reported in Hillsborough County in 2015, she said.

"For me, it's personal," Murman said. "My sister, who was addicted to painkillers, committed suicide."

At the news conference, Moore said he was involved in helping to resolve the BP oil spill.

"What we have here is a pill spill," Moore said. "Close to 40,000 people in your county are opioid addicts."

Moore characterized the problem as a "ticking, ticking time bomb."

"We want these companies to pay to clean the pill spill," Moore said.

Moore challenged a perception that some may have about the types of people who die from opioid abuse. It's not just a problem faced by people who live on the streets, he said.

"It's somebody's 19-year-old college student."

"It's a 35-year-old lawyer."

"It's a housewife," Moore said.

State attorney Andrew Warren, who also spoke at the news conference, agreed: "It's a public health crisis. It does not discriminate."

Hillsborough County Sheriff Chad Chronister, weighed in, as well. He put it like this: "We must dry up the supply. This is not an epidemic we're going to arrest our way out of."

Hillsborough's lawsuit follows a national trend for local governments to fight against the distributors and manufacturers of opioid medications.

The Pasco County Commission voted in January to become one of several plaintiffs in litigation that seeks to replicate the kind of payouts attorneys won in the late 1990s against the tobacco industry.

Pensacola-based Levin Papantonio is representing Pasco County. The law firm is part of a consortium that is pursuing lawsuits in several states including West Virginia, Ohio and Kentucky.

In 2016, Pasco County had 165 drug overdose deaths, and 120 were related to opioids.

ELECTION, from page 1A

Pasco County Supervisor of Elections Brian Corley is not anticipating a heavy turnout.

"Generally, with elections, the best indicator is history, so when we're talking about previous times, the most recent thing to go back to would be the last midterm, which would be in 2014.

"It pains me to report that the turnout was less than 15 percent.

"I'm optimistic that we'll do better, we, as the electorate, but only time will tell," Corley said.

"Midterm primaries are generally lackluster turnout," he added.

There has been a slight spike in registration, but only about 5 percent, he said.

Corley also noted that "there has been a lot of anecdotal evidence of a youth voter surge, between 18 and 29 year olds," but he said, he has not been seeing it.

"Compared to the same time in 2014, it's about on par. That really, really surprised me," Corley said.

Pasco County has slightly less than 347,000 voters, making it 12th largest in Florida. Of those, there are 134,824 registered Republicans, 108,520 registered Democrats, 100,637 registered as No Party and 2,791 registered as Minor Party.

Corley said there has been substantial interest in election security.

"If someone would have told me prior to the 2016 election, we would spend pretty much every waking moment since that November election focusing on, intensely, becoming hyper-vigilant on all things security — both physical and cyber — I would have said, 'No, you're crazy.' But, here we are."

Recently, U.S. Sen. Bill Nelson, who is running for re-election, made national headlines by saying that Russia had penetrated Florida's election systems.

Corley said it is difficult to respond to Nelson's statement.

"It's really, really challenging because I'm not sure exactly what Senator Nelson is alluding to. I know the Department of Homeland Security has sort of publicly refuted his comments. Of course, far be it for me to correct a senator on the intelligence

committee. I just know of no information."

Corley went on to say: "We have worked extensively with our state and federal partners. We're talking about the FBI, even the National Guard, but particularly the Department of Homeland Security."

He also noted that in 2017, the elections were declared critical infrastructure.

"We now have a seat at the table right next to nuclear power plants, for example, because how much more critical can you be than the underpinnings of our democracy?" Corley said.

The Department of Homeland Security has offered a myriad of services for advice, counsel and assistance.

"I can't tell you, for obvious security reasons, and so that's the balance, trying to reassure voters that we're doing everything that we can to fortify the elections and letting them know there's always a Plan B.

"For security reasons, I can't tell my wife. I can't tell my dog. I can't tell anybody" he said.

Corley also noted that Pasco has added three new early voting locations.

"Early voting clearly has become very, very popular," he said.

"We added Alice Hall. We added the Florida Hospital Ice Center complex. We jokingly say we literally and figuratively have the coolest early voting site. We added the Odessa Community Center," he said.

Vote by mail is popular, too.

"We have record numbers of Vote by Mail. We're almost at 70,000 vote by mail ballots that went out.

"There are literally, tens of thousands of ballots, sitting on coffee tables or on kitchen tables. All they have to do is fill out a few ovals and shoot it back to us, and it could change any race," he said.

"What's the old adage? 'We get the government that we deserve,'" Corley said.

"Everyone remembers the infamous 2000 election. Everyone remembers, it came down to Florida," he said. With 6 million votes cast, Bush had a lead over Gore of 537 votes.

Corley said what many people don't realize is one fact that he "almost couldn't make up."

The number of Pasco voters skipping the presidential race that year was '1776,' Corley said, adding "#Irony."



Dozens of families gathered for the Pasco Astronomers' 15th anniversary stargazing party at Starkey Park in New Port Richey. At the Aug. 11 event, space enthusiasts were able to view four planets — Mars, Saturn, Jupiter and Venus — through the lenses of telescopes and binoculars.

STARGAZING, from page 1A

some of them are speechless."

Added Colantonio: "We're not really here for ourselves. We're just here to enlighten people, give them something to do that's cheap," he said.

Plus, he noted: "It's a good thing to have something free for kids to do, other than sit at their computers."

Ward and Colantonio have since handed the club's reins to Mark Hardies, mathematics and physics professor at St. Petersburg College, who's had an interest in amateur astronomy going on 30 years.

Since he's taken over, anywhere from 300 to 500 people — and as many as 1,200 — show up for monthly stargazing events, or "Star Parties," as they're colorfully called.

"I just enjoy that our whole purpose is to do this for the public," said Hardies, who joined the club about 12 years ago.

He added: "It's nice to be here to help the public see what's available, to get them interested in (astronomy) and to give them a chance to see through a telescope, because quite frankly, most people don't get that chance."

As well as Pasco, club members venture from as far as Brandon, Lutz, Largo and Spring Hill.

And, many happily supply telescopes they've made from scratch.

Colantonio, for instance, brought along his own 10-inch truss-tubed Dobsonian he built 15 years ago inside a mirror lab at the St. Pete Astronomy Club.

"I just kind of winged it," he said. "It took me like six months to grind the mirror."

His personal interest in astronomy piqued 20 years ago after he bought his wife a telescope. "I got addicted seeing the planets," he said.

But, nowadays, the club's original co-founder mainly prefers to impart his astronomy wisdom to others, detailing subjects like Messier 37 and the Ring Nebula, all

through the lens of his scope.

He explained: "I like to show the real dim stuff. People get a kick out of that because you don't see anything but black sky, and then when you look through the scope, there's something there."

Jack Brockhurst, another astronomy enthusiast and club member, also supplied his own handmade scope — a 13-inch Dobsonian weighing over 130 pounds.

The New Port Richey resident said he's been building telescopes for 40 years.

A machinist by trade, Brockhurst first constructed a small 3-inch scope. He eventually progressed to larger Dobsonians and German Equatorials measuring over 10 inches in diameter.

His collection of handcrafted scopes is now up to 11.

"I got what they call light bucket fever. I had to build bigger ones," he said, jokingly.

Brockhurst still regularly likes to experience "what's out there" in space.

But, like Colantonio, he also gets a kick from sharing his passion for astronomy with others. "My best reward is when I hear the oohs and aahs from the parents and the kids," he said.

Aside from the regular club-goers, the 15th anniversary event drew several first-timers, like Tampa's Raj Reddy and his group of friends.

"We just wanted to see the meteors," Reddy said, "and, I also think it's cool that you can watch other planets today."

New Port Richey's Greg Shimp and his son, Kevin, also were among the newcomers.

Besides peering at Mars and the other planets — "That's something that we wanted to see," Shimp said — the father and son learned to properly navigate an 8-inch refractor telescope purchased last year. "Mostly, we're here for the help, kind of getting the (scope) set up," Shimp said.

For information on the Pasco Astronomer's Club, visit their Facebook page, Facebook.com/Pasco-Astronomers-169098913172928/.

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A WARM & RELAXED ATMOSPHERE

Land O' Lakes girl is all-star golfer

By Kevin Weiss
kweiss@lakerlutznews.com

Hailey Stricker already has collected a fair number of medals and trophies competing in youth tournaments throughout Tampa Bay.

The 12-year-old from Land O' Lakes is seeking an addition to her trophy case — as a member of the Clearwater Jr. PGA All-Star team.

The 10-member all-star team will compete on Aug. 26 in the PGA Jr. League North Florida Section Championship at Orlando's Grand Cypress Golf Club.

Earlier this month, the group won a sectional qualifier at Apollo Beach Golf Club, besting a handful of other all-star teams from Tampa, Sarasota and Odessa.

A top finish this weekend would allow the team to advance to the PGA Jr. regional tournament in St. Augustine. Winners from 12 regional tournaments across the country then earn a spot in the seventh PGA Junior League Championship in November in Scottsdale, Arizona.

Stricker, who's been golfing since age 8, already has made a name for herself within the Greater Tampa Bay Junior Golf Association.

Over the past two years, she's collected five top-three finishes for her age group. That includes a pair of first place titles she won last October and November, at Wentworth Golf Club and Tampa Palms Golf & Country Club, respectively.

Orlando will mark the longest distance



COURTESY OF BRIAN STRICKER

Land O' Lakes resident Hailey Stricker, 12, has notched several top finishes within the Greater Tampa Bay Junior Golf Association. This summer, Stricker was selected to the Clearwater Jr. PGA All-Star team. She is a seventh-grader at Rushe Middle School.

that Stricker has traveled to compete in a golf tournament.

She's optimistic about the team's chances, even against tougher competition.

"I'm looking forward to our team pulling through it and winning, so we can go to St. Augustine and do that tournament," said the seventh-grader, who attends Rushe Middle School.

Stricker is one of just two girls on the Clearwater Jr. PGA All-Star team.

She was named to the select squad after strong showings all summer in the PGA Junior

League at Westchase Golf Club, in Tampa.

Stricker considers it a special honor.

"It's kind of cool because I tell people I'm on the all-star team, and they're proud of me. I just feel really good about it because I've practiced and worked hard for this moment," she said.

Her grandfather, Brian Stricker, is enjoying the moment, too. He's the one who encouraged the young golfer when she showed an interest in the sport four years ago.

"She kind of took to (golf) in a natural way," her grandfather said. "She can stand up

on the tee and, when she gets a good swing on the ball, she can hit the ball 160 yards straight. She has a pretty well-rounded game, and she just has a passion for it that's really impressive."

Stricker said she plans to play golf in high school and "definitely" wants to play in college.

Her ultimate goal? "To play on the LPGA (Ladies Professional Golf Association) Tour," she said.

Stricker appears to be on the right path for playing at a high level someday, according to Michael Cestone, who operates the Cestone Golf Academy at Westchase Golf Club.

The golf instructor said Stricker has "great promise" and a "very good skillset."

"She has all of the basic fundamentals of the game," said Cestone, who nominated Stricker to the Clearwater all-star team. "She has a good swing. She can chip. She can putt. She can do pretty much any of the shots that you need to play golf — it's just a matter of getting better."

Cestone noted Stricker regularly shoots in the high 80s and low 90s from the ladies tees.

He "very soon" foresees Stricker reaching the high 70s and low 80s — a striking feat for a young girl.

"If she stays on the track that she's on, she'll play college golf," Cestone said. "Whether she wants a DI (Division 1) or D2 (Division 2) school, that'll depend on how much time she's willing to put into this game," Cestone said.

High school football kickoff week

Jonesing for the return of high school football?

Here's a look at all the Friday night matchups for teams in The Laker/Lutz News coverage area. All Week 1 games are at 7:30 p.m., Aug. 24, unless otherwise noted.

HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY

St. Petersburg Catholic Barons at Carrollwood Day Patriots (7 p.m.) — Both teams come off losing seasons, but the Patriots feature a large senior class and one of the area's top quarterbacks in senior Chris Butash.

Freedom Patriots at Steinbrenner Warriors — The Warriors have reigned supreme in this matchup the last three years (and hold the series lead 4-1). However, the Patriots will have arguably the best player on the field in senior receiver/safety Jeremiah Ashe, who boasts over a dozen Division I FBS scholarship offers.

Gaither Cowboys at Chamberlain Chiefs — The Cowboys' strong running attack (262.5 yards per game in 2017) will be imperative to keep the Chiefs offense and

senior quarterback Tyler Riddell off the field; Riddell, a University of Akron commit, threw for 30 touchdowns and just four interceptions last season.

PASCO COUNTY

Bishop McLaughlin Catholic Hurricanes at Shorecrest Prep Chargers (7 p.m.) — Last time these teams met was in 2013, where the Hurricanes were shut out 40-0. The Hurricanes should have better luck this time around, with Shorecrest Prep coming off a 1-6 campaign.

Cypress Creek Coyotes at Gulf Buccaneers — The Coyotes are seeking its first official win in program history after it was forced to forfeit its 12-0 victory against Gulf last season.

Land O' Lakes Gators at Citrus Hurricanes — Gators first-year head coach Chad Walker faces a relatively manageable test against a Hurricanes squad that has just six seniors and is without several key contributors from last season.

Pasco Pirates at Hudson Cobras — Pasco

won last year's matchup 22-10 and holds the overall series lead, 6-2. A victory here would be a good start for the Pirates, who are seeking their first winning season since 2014.

Sunlake Seahawks at Wesley Chapel Wildcats — Wesley Chapel handily beat Sunlake last year (42-24). Doing so again likely won't be as easy, as the Wildcats have lost some of the county's top offensive and defensive players from 2017, including Isaiah Bolden, Dexter Leverett, Malik Melvin and Austin Wittish.

Wiregrass Ranch Bulls at Zephyrhills Bulldogs — Two of Pasco County's top squads square off in what should be an exciting, back-and-forth affair. Adding fuel to the fire: Former Zephyrhills head coach Reggie Roberts is now an assistant at Wiregrass Ranch.

LATER WEEK 1 GAMES:
North Florida Christian (Tallahassee) at Zephyrhills Christian Warriors (Aug. 31, 7:30 p.m.) — A good barometer for both teams coming off eight-win seasons and appearances in the FHSAA Class 2A playoffs.



FILE

Coming off a 10-2 mark, the Zephyrhills Bulldogs and head coach Nick Carroll figure to again be one of Pasco County's top teams this fall. They play Wiregrass Ranch on Friday at 7:30 p.m.

Donahue Catholic Shamrocks (Ave Maria) at Academy at the Lakes Wildcats (Sept. 7, 7 p.m.) — The defending FCAPPS eight-man state champions shouldn't have much trouble against the visiting Shamrocks; the Wildcats won last year's contest 36-0.

Compiled by Kevin Weiss
kweiss@lakerlutznews.com

CHECK THIS OUT
SEND SPORTS NEWS TO KWEISS@LAKERLUTZNEWS.COM

PICKLEBALL GAMES

The Land O' Lakes Recreation Complex is offering pickleball games every Tuesday and Thursday from 9 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. All ages are encouraged to play. Paddles and balls are provided. For information, email Bob Matthews at bobmatthews60@gmail.com.

ROBERT D. SUMNER GOLF TOURNAMENT

The third annual Robert D. Sumner Memorial Golf Tournament is scheduled for Sept. 29 at Silverado Golf & Country Club, 36841 Clubhouse Drive in Zephyrhills. The four-player scramble will begin with an 8:30 a.m., shotgun start. Fee is \$50 per player, which includes green fees, golf cart and lunch. Prize packs are available, encompassing four closest to the pin, one long drive, one closest to the line, two mulligans and two drink tickets. Event will also include a silent auction, door prizes, 50/50 tickets and more. Proceeds from the event benefit the Pioneer Florida Museum & Village, a 501(c)3 nonprofit. For information, call Brenda Minton at (352) 206-8889.

SENIOR SOFTBALL LEAGUE

North Tampa Bay Senior Softball will begin its seventh season on Sept 21. Before that, player tryouts and evaluations will take place



COURTESY OF KERRI SUMNER

Sectional Champs

The Land O' Lakes Little League Majors Division All-Stars were recently crowned Little League Florida Section 4 Champions, and also advanced to the state tournament in Fort Myers. Back row, from left: Manager Bart Sumner, Isabell Barrios, Alyssa Forgas, Erin Vandiver, Coach Scott Vandiver, Molly Blackwood, Deanna Finch, Zoe Cacio, Coach Dave Barr, Zoe Barr and Taylor Jones. Front row, from left: Emily Cheek, Caidee Sumner, Alexis D' Altorio, Aliyah Bentley and Julia Foster. (Not Pictured: Coach Abner Barrios)

Sept. 7 and Sept. 14, at Land O' Lakes Heritage Park, 5401 Land O' Lakes Blvd. Tryouts begin at 8:30 a.m., both days. The league is open to men over 60 years old and women over 55. For safety, players must demonstrate a mini-

mum level of playing ability - running, throwing, hitting, catching. Games are played Friday mornings through mid-December. League fees are \$25. For information, email NTBSS2016@aol.com, or call (813) 528-5664.



FILE

National medalist

Zephyrhills Christian Academy graduate Evan Miller medaled and placed fifth in the 200-meter dash with a time of 21.66 seconds at the recent AAU Junior Olympic Games in Des Moines, Iowa. Miller recently accepted a track scholarship with Division I University of South Carolina. He previously signed with NAIA Warner University (Lake Wales) on a football/track scholarship. In May, he won the Class 1A boys 100-meter dash (10.75 seconds) at the Florida High School Athletic Association Track & Field 2018 Championships.

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Mark Martin, of Zephyrhills, left, and his wife, Amber, pose for a picture with the dog that they adopted during the Clear the Shelters event on Aug. 18 at Pasco County Animal Services in Land O' Lakes. Amber said she knew 'Charlie,' a Jack Russell mix, was the one for them because he was very timid, and he appeared to need extra patience and love to trust people again, which they are happy to provide.



Pasco County dispatch operator K.c. Pearson, of Port Richey, cuddles the kitten that she will soon officially adopt during the Clear the Shelters event. Pearson plans to name the kitten Psi. She already has a cat named 'Zeta' that she previously adopted from the shelter.

'Clear the Shelters' makes both pets and people happy

By Christine Holtzman
Special to The Laker/Lutz News

Pet lovers had a chance to add a new member to their family without paying adoption fees during a "Clear the Shelters" event at Pasco County Animal Services, at 19640 Dogpatch Lane in Land O'Lakes.

The animal shelter, along with the non-profit group Friends of Animal Services Inc., hosted the event as part of the national pet adoption drive.

The drive, launched four years ago, is spearheaded by the television media company NBC Universal, and sponsored by Cat's Pride and Hill's Pet Nutrition.

Shelters across the country taking part in the event either reduced or waived pet adoption fees.

The Pasco shelter waived the adoption fee for the dozens of available cats and dogs, and required only the purchase of appropriate licensing for a new pet.

Normally, adoption fees are \$70 to \$85 for dogs and \$40 to \$50 for cats, which includes spay/neutering, vaccinations, microchip, heartworm testing for dogs, and

FIV and feline leukemia for cats.

Rachel Stever, the education and outreach coordinator for the shelter, said this was the second year the shelter participated, and she expected about 300 people to attend.

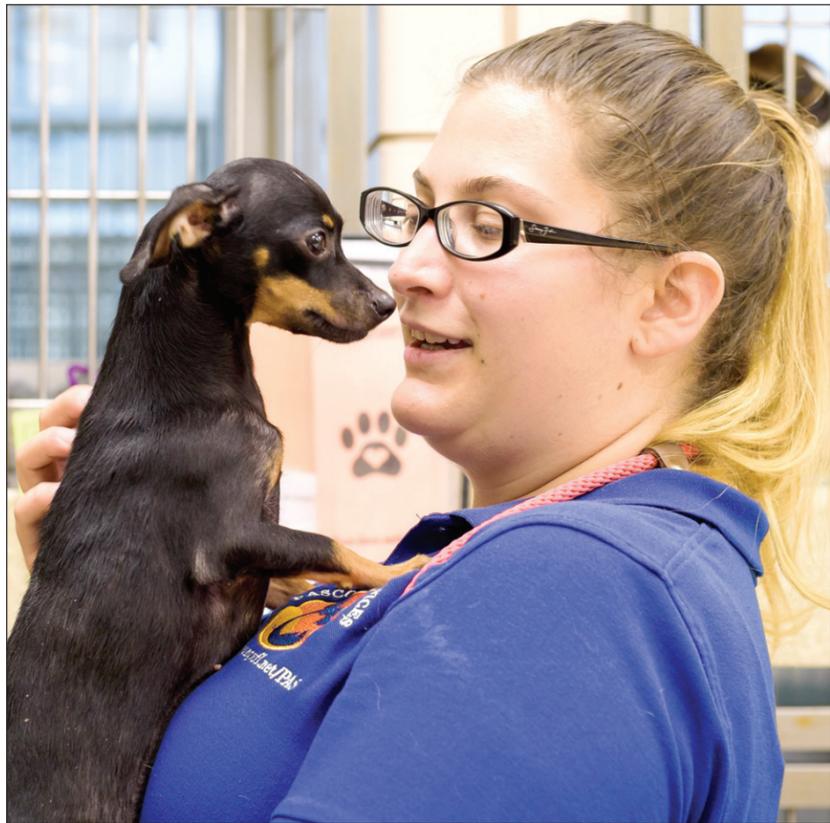
People began lining up two hours before the doors opened and, by the time it did, a crowd of about 100 had gathered, Stever said.

During the first two hours of the event, 16 adoptions had occurred and 11 were pending, she added.

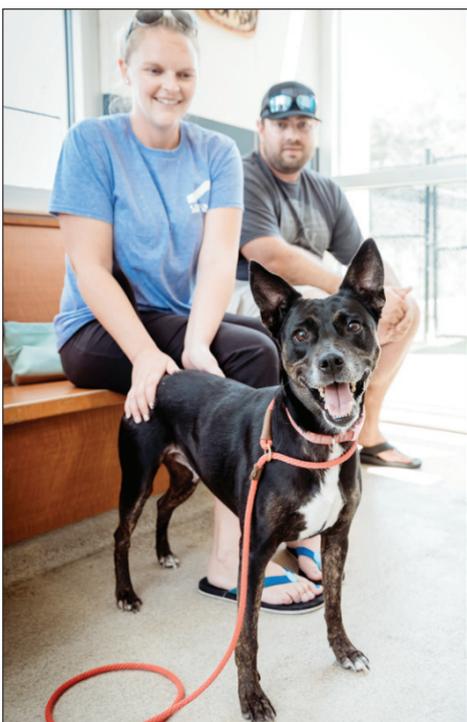
Pasco County Animal Services became a "Save 90" shelter in 2012, meaning that its goal is to save 90 percent of the animals that are brought to the facility.

In addition to getting adoption fees waived, those attending the event could pick up swag bags provided by Pet Supplies Plus, complete with pet food samples, treats and coupons, and a spin the wheel game for a chance to win a prize.

Friends of Animal Services, the nonprofit support group of Pasco County Animal Services, was there, too, showing off its memorial tree. Those making a \$100 donation receive an engraved leaf on the memorial tree. All donations support the shelter.



Rachel Stever, the education and outreach coordinator for Pasco County Animal Services, cuddles a miniature Dachshund-Chihuahua mix that was just adopted during Clear the Shelters. Stever estimated that roughly 300 people would pass through its doors in pursuit of finding a new addition for their family. The shelter waived the normal adoption fees, and Pasco County residents were required to purchase the appropriate licensing.



Molly Petrocco, of Hudson, and her husband, Ian, have a meet and greet with 'Sassy' during Clear the Shelters. The Petroccos were at the shelter looking to adopt an older dog, and they wanted to get to know the 7-year-old Shepherd mix.



Hanging out in the Feline Showroom, 12-year-old Mikaylah Chimara, of Zephyrhills, left, holds a kitten named 'Flash.' Her 8-year-old sister, Bella, center, holds 'Shy,' and her 10-year-old sister, Alicia, cuddles with 'Rocket.' Their mother Nicole, who brought the girls to the event as a surprise, said that they would be taking 'Flash' home.



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LOCAL WILDLIFE



Caught, and released

Meagan Rathman-Urena, of Lutz, spotted this tiny gecko in her workplace. Normally found outside, geckos can range from .64 inches to 24 inches in length. Geckos have various patterns and colors. Most are nocturnal, but day geckos are usually active to nibble on insects, fruits and flower nectar.

PET PAWS

ALLIGATOR HARVEST HAS BEGUN

Florida's statewide alligator harvest, nationally and internationally recognized as a model program for the sustainable use of a renewable natural resource, started Aug. 15.

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission issued more than 7,500 permits, including an additional 1,313 countywide permits, as a method to help manage the alligator population.

Alligators are a conservation success story in Florida. They were included on the original federal endangered species list in 1967. Conservation efforts allowed the population to rebound, and they were removed from the list in 1987.

Today, the state alligator population is

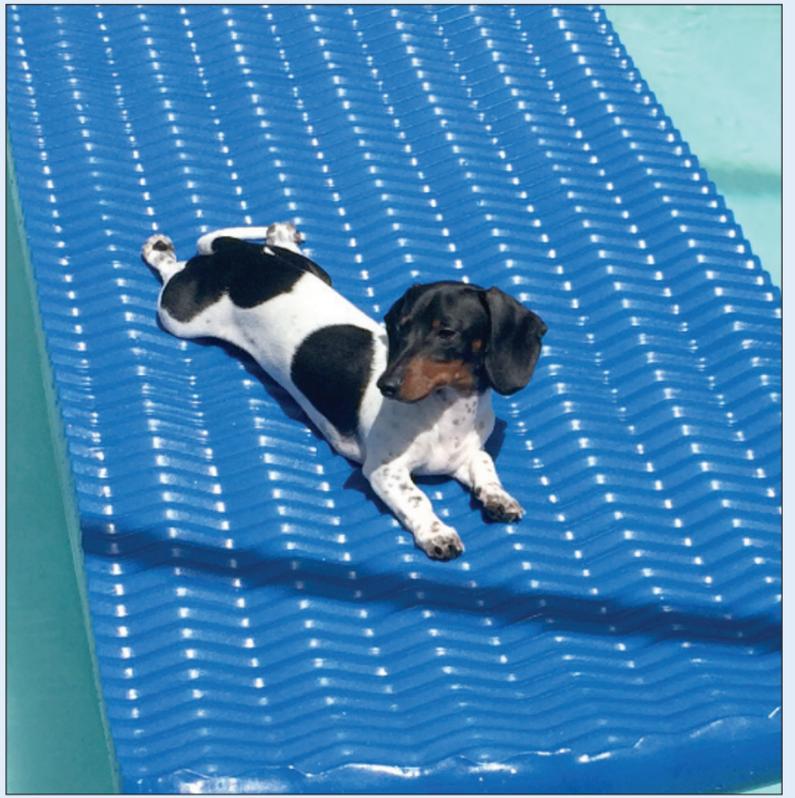
estimated at 1.3 million alligators and has been stable for many years.

For more than 30 years, the Statewide Alligator Harvest Program has provided sustainable hunting opportunities throughout the state. The FWC establishes management units with appropriate harvest quotas based on research and proven science to ensure the long-term well-being of the alligator resource.

Recreational alligator hunting is just one part of the FWC's overall approach to managing the species.

The FWC's Statewide Nuisance Alligator Program is another. People who believe a specific alligator poses a threat to people, pets or property should call the toll-free hotline at (866) 392-4286.

PET of the WEEK



Zoe enjoys the sun

Zoe was the best 45th anniversary gift ever for her owners, Siegfried and Linda Barry, of Land O' Lakes. Zoe is a sweet, 1 1/2-year-old piebald mini dachshund who loves being in the pool on 'her float.' She does her best to warm her family's hearts each day.

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 Loss Support Group



Last Thursday of the Month from 3 - 4:30 p.m.
Upcoming Dates: July 26, Aug. 30, Sept. 27 & Oct. 25

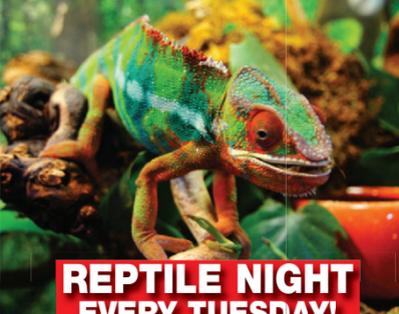
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BUSINESS DIGEST

Send business news to news@lakerlutznews.com

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

The North Tampa Chamber of Commerce is seeking volunteers to help the residents of Knight Homes, a part of the Sunrise Community Homes.

The chamber is sponsoring a day of community service to help residents by painting and doing basic landscaping.

The event will be Sept. 15 at 9 a.m., at 7809 N. Glen Ave., in Tampa.

Cash, checks, gift cards, movie tickets and event tickets also are needed.

Drop-off sites for donations will be at Uncle Maddios, 3949 Van Dyke Road in Lutz; U.S. Renal Care, 3421 N. Lakeview Drive in Tampa; and Subway, 13032 Race Track Road in Tampa.

This also is an opportunity for children who need to fulfill community service hours for school.

Donations being sought include bed linens for twin and full-size beds; washcloths, hand and bath towels; toiletries for travel or full size; and drapes for eight bedrooms.

For information, email Jody Fowler at jodyfowler@moresinsuranceservices.com.

HAIR SALON RIBBON CUTTING

The Greater Zephyrhills Chamber of Commerce will host the ribbon cutting for Infinity Hair Salon on Aug. 25 from 11:30 a.m. to noon, at 6536 Stadium Drive, Suite M, in Zephyrhills.

For information, contact the chamber at (813) 782-1913 or admin@zephyrhillschamber.org.

EAST PASCO NETWORKING

The East Pasco Networking Group will meet Aug. 28 at 7:30 a.m., at IHOP, 13100 U.S. 301 in Dade City.

Guest speaker will be Brent Nye, of Nye Commercial Advisors Inc.

For information, contact Nils Lenz at (813) 782-9491 or nilslenz@gmail.com.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BRIEFING

The North Tampa Bay Chamber of Commerce will have its monthly economic briefing lunch Aug. 27 from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., at Hunter's Green Country Club, 18101 Longwater Run in Tampa.

The cost is \$15 for members and \$20 for non-members.

For information, call (813) 994-8534, or email Grace Martin at gmartin@northtampabaychamber.com.

FINAL FRIDAY

The North Tampa Bay Chamber of Commerce will have a "Final Friday" mixer Aug. 31 from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m., at Chuy's Tex-Mex restaurant, 25750 Sierra Center Blvd., at Cypress Creek Town Center in Lutz.

There will be networking, discounted



B.C. MANION

Hyatt Place Hotel is open for guests at Cypress Creek Town Center, on Sierra Center Boulevard.

HYATT PLACE HOTEL OPENS

Workers are putting finishing touches on the Hyatt Place Hotel and Convention Center at Cypress Creek Town Center, off State Road 54.

But, the 130-room hotel, at 26000 Sierra Center Blvd., is open for guests. It is near the Interstate 75 interchange and across from Tampa Premium Outlets.

It is part of the growing activity at the town center, which includes restaurants and shops.

Current retail includes Bahama Breeze Island Grill, Chuy's Tex-Mex, Mellow Mushroom, Men's Warehouse and Aspen Dental.

Future retail includes Burlington, Earth Fare and Five Below.

prices and happy hour specials.

The mixer is open to members and guests, who can attend two chamber events without joining the chamber.

For information, call the chamber at (813) 994-8534.

WOMEN HELPING WOMEN

Boss Babes Network group will host a free mixer for women professionals and entrepre-

neurs Sept. 4 from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m., at Two Sisters DIY Workshop, 2020 Land O' Lakes Blvd., Suite 4, in Lutz.

This is a monthly event to help Boss Babes make more connections and referrals. Bring business cards. There will be drawings, food, beverages and fun.

Each attendee is asked to bring a product, gift card or small gift basket for the drawings, and to show off your business.

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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!

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

SOLUTIONS, PAGE 7B

CONSTELLATION WORD SEARCH

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

Find the words hidden vertically, horizontally, diagonally, and backwards.

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Notices

ANNOUNCEMENTS

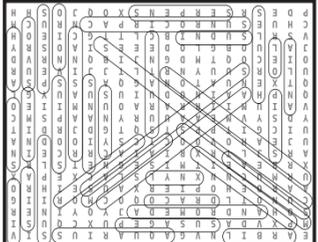
Classifieds WORK!

"I wanted to reach out and thank you for placing my ad for the three kittens in last week's Classified Section, Rachel. I received good feedback, and was in fact able to place all the kittens in good homes - so mission accomplished! Probably could not have done it without your help - so recognition is warranted."

*John Parachini
Tampa, FL*

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GAME PAGE ANSWERS



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

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