FWC challenges public to bag Burmese pythons

BY LINDSEY NESMITH
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After a three-year hiatus, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission has reprised its Python Challenge for 2016, encouraging hunters to capture as many invasive Burmese pythons as possible between Saturday, Jan. 16, and Sunday, Feb. 14.

One of the five largest snakes on the planet, the python has become an increasingly problematic invasive species in South Florida, where the state's breeding population resides. Though they mostly inhabit Everglades National Park, pythons have been seen all over the state and into Alabama and Georgia.

SEE PYTHONs, A14

CONSPIRACY THEORY FILES

Dr. Jeff Bradstreet
found dead 6.19.2015

Dr. Baron Holt
dead 6.21.2015

Dr. Bruce Hedendal
found dead 6.21.2015

Dr. Teresa Sievers
found dead 6.28.2015

Dr. Jeff Bradstreet was found dead in a river with a gunshot wound to his chest June 19. Authorities say it was a suicide but critics took issue with this finding. The Melbourne-based physician practiced controversial autism research, implicating vaccines.

Dr. Baron Holt died unexpectedly June 21. The 53-year-old chiropractor, who once practiced in Naples, was said to have been a vigorous athlete who was looking to “change the practice of health care so that we can relieve unnecessary human suffering, disease and early death,” according to his website.

Dr. Bruce Hedendal was found dead in his car June 21. The 67-year-old chiropractor out of Boca Raton was an alternative medicine practitioner and robust athlete.

Dr. Teresa Sievers was found murdered in her Bonita Springs home June 28. The 46-year-old physician focused on an “integrated approach to metabolic and nutritional medicine, providing solutions to current biomedical problems, including biomedical aging,” according to her website. Lee County Sheriff Mike Scott said when all is known, books and movies will be written about the case.

From JFK to 9/11 — Americans crave conspiracies. A spate of doctor murders with Florida ties spawns new, wild theories.

DERIDE THEM, DECry THEM AND denounce them, and most of us would like to think that we are above them. We are talking conspiracy theories here, which are the intellectual equivalents of a bloody, three-car pileup on a busy highway. As with a gory automobile collision, we are at once repelled and intrigued by conspiracy theories. We may hate ourselves for slowing to catch a quick peek at an accident or setting aside time to read or speculate about the latest outlandish rumor, but more often than not we yield to our base instincts.

SEE CONSPIRACIES, A8

W E TAKE OFF FROM JFK, we land in New York, and we step into the abyss. Or, perhaps, it is more accurate to say we step from the abyss. Americans, after all, have always been a nation of conspiracy theories. From JFK to 9/11 and beyond, we have a penchant for seeing patterns where there are none. We love our conspiracies, and they love us.

But why this passion? A spate of doctor murders with Florida ties may offer some clues. For months, conspiracy theories have shoot to the top of the blogosphere — and beyond.

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COMMENTARY

The Shubert Theatre solution

No sooner had Donald Trump emitted his latest flatulence than my air conditioning went out.

After two Boston toughs beat up a homeless brown immigrant and mentioned the candidate as their inspiration, Mr. Trump assumed an Aryan sneer and called them “passionate” Americans who “love this country (and) they want this country to be great again.”

Suddenly, poof! He’d incapacitated my run capacitor (at least that’s my theory), shutting down the system.

Thanks to The Donald, the temperature in my oak-shaded little home, built in 1932 of cypress and yellow-heart pine, jumped from 78 or 80 to about 88 degrees Fahrenheit during the day and deep into the sweating, subtropical night.

I love it hot, of course, because I believe in the redemptive power of suffering. It builds character, especially in my children. That way I don’t have to. And heat rhymes with eat, something Americans in 1932 were not doing enough of (but look how much character they had).

There were solutions in those days to eat-and-heat extremes. Since to my knowledge that was not the idea of President Franklin D. Roosevelt, it was not a “socialist” solution. It was a capitalist solution, which just goes to show you how well public and private enterprise can work together in times of moral relativism. It drew them by the thousands. Big blocks of ice were ferried into the city and set up in the back of the theater. Fans were then aimed at the ice to blow cold air across the crowd.

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At any rate, my youngest son quickly resisted the DTs (the Donald Trumps, of course) by adapting the Shubert Theatre solution to local conditions: Fill a Styrofoam cooler with ice. Cut three holes in the lid, two smaller circles for little elbow chinks of the tin kind that fit behind clothes dryers, and a third for a little fan. Fasten the chimneys into the lid so they’re pointing at you, place the fan facedown so it blows air onto the ice, and let cold-air convection blast hot-air jingoism.

Then (in his case) get up the next morning and go off to your first day of eighth grade — which, fortunately, presents the opportunity for more suffering.

Unfortunately there’s a lot more hot air in politics (or the eighth grade) than ice and coolers can handle. And some of it comes from the so-called left.

Hillary Clinton, for example, apparently doesn’t give a fig about maintaining open records for the public, either classified (we get to see them later) or not (we get to see them now), unless votes are at stake.

Some of my critics may be delighted to hear me point this out, because they think that not only am I a biased lefty, but so are all reporters.

I’ve been reading and watching politics for many decades and one thing I know is true: the mainstream U.S. media is not only liberal, it’s socialist, ‘progressive’ in the extreme and any other voice is to be silenced and stamped out as not authentic,” wrote Janet Thomas last week. “Listen to the biggest failure to ever sit in this White House as he consistently derides, ridicules and hopes you will all help him destroy Fox News.”

Wrong. Here are the words of award-winning former investigative journalist Lee Melsek, addressing some of his colleagues. He speaks for me, as well.

“I’m puzzled, and a bit saddened, (after) failing to detect any outrage at all among some respected journalists regarding Hillary Clinton’s smugging of State Department records into the privacy of her home.

“Public records are sacred to newspaper people. They are a vital piece in insuring the people’s right to know. Good papers have always been quick to go into court to protect that concept and see that they are not removed from access.

“Congressional caps in Florida, H.R. 378, requires all newspapers to maintain an ‘air-cooled’ environment for audiences in every community.”

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“in Florida, officials can go to jail for doing what she did. But what about that paragon of lefty darkness, George Soros? Why don’t you talk about George Soros? Explain how he is the Wiz-ard behind every Democratic move. The hypocrisy is ridiculous,” writes Cathy Alberson.

We might have to get a couple more coolers and fans if either Mr. Soros or Ms. Alberson carry on.

None of this is fair, of course — and a woman writing as Jeanellee knows it. Responding to my last column pointing out that American women as a whole continue to lack equal opportunities or pay in this society, she offered this note: “Your first sentence (‘there is no such thing as equality’) is correct; everything else is conjecture... ‘Fairness,’ as is everything else, is totally subjective. Your training in ‘moral relativism’ should have taught you that.”

Well, no. My training in “moral relativism” has taught me that hot air is neither relative nor moral. It’s just hot.

So now we’re going to have to abandon the Shubert Theatre solution as too retro. Now we’re going to have to tighten our belts and just get a new reinforced capaci-tor — quickly, before The Donald opens his mouth again.

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NFL quarterbacks fear Pittsburgh Steelers linebacker James Harrison. So should participation trophies, the ubiqui-
tous trinkets given to children for merely showing up and rounding out the rosters of local sports leagues.

The other day, Mr. Harrison learned that his sons had brought a couple of them home and was none too pleased: “I came home to find out that my boys received two trophies for nothing, participation trophies!” He swiftly returned the offending tokens and explained himself on Insta-
gram: “These trophies will be given back until they earn a real trophy. I’m sorry I’m not sorry for believing that everything in life should be earned and I’m not about to raise two boys to be men by making them believe that they are entitled to something just because they tried their best.”

Mr. Harrison can be forgiven for hav-
ing any touchy-feely sentiment wrung out of him by clawing his way to the top of the most punishing meritocracy in all of sports. He was signed by the Steelers as an undrafted rookie, got cut multiple times and considered quitting and becom-
ing a truck driver like his dad, until he finally caught on in the NFL, where they don’t hand you for participating. Most people are still with Harrison, if a Reason-Rupe poll from last year is to be believed. It found that 78 percent of people think only winning players should get trophies, putting a clear majority on the side of the atavistic impulse to reward only victory.

The trophy has gone from exceptional reward for excellence, to nice gesture, to this could be an entitlement. When a cash-strapped Little League in Oklahoma canceled its participation trophies a couple years ago, one parent complained, “Thanks little league for failing my son and disappointing him as well.”

Writing in The New York Times, author Ashley Merryman cites a South-
ern California branch of the American Youth Soccer Organization that dis-
tributes about 3,500 awards per season, with about a third of players getting two trophies each. Local branches of the soccer outfit, according to Ms. Merryman, spend

In most parts of the country, it is state fair time again, but not so in Florida. We of the endless summer have no need to fear the early frost and gather our rosebuds while we may. Plenty of time for that, so February seems as good as any month to have our state fair.

Elsewhere, state fairs are a watershed moment announcing seasonal change, a rite by which we let go of the last blast of warm weather to move along on a schedule much all-inclusive. The attractions are plentiful, and move along on a schedule

Still, the timing of Florida’s own state fair seems like a bit of a shame. We seem to be missing all the fun just now.

Iowa had its II-day extravaganza in Des Moines this month, and what a show it was. It attracts a million or so

This year, all the candidates seemed to be taking the presidency, he won the consolation
trophy for you

Politics on a stick

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wrapped, macaroni and cheese cupcake. The food always
and hobbies gone wild. The food always
and eye candy, the candidates satis-
And it was probably in there somewhere.
He emerged from the copter, unload-
and disappointing him as well.”

Mr. Harrison said of his sons’ unearned trophies: “Sometimes your best is not enough.”

“Sometimes your best is not enough.”

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In his dream machine.

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PACE Center for Girls has more than 30 years of experience serving girls who are deemed at-risk for juvenile delinquency. Their histories include physical and sexual abuse, school failure, substance abuse, family instability, poverty… the identical risk factors for girls to become victims of sex trafficking.

The organization began in 1985 with one center serving 10 girls in Jacksonville; today 19 centers in Florida serve more than 2,000 girls each year. PACE is now recognized as a national model for reducing recidivism and improving school success, employment and self-sufficiency amongst girls.

Marianne Kearns has been executive director of the PACE Center for Girls-Collier at Immokalee for five years. She has worked with teenage girls throughout her career and was with PACE for seven years prior to coming to Immokalee, beginning as a program manager in Pasco County. She relocated to open the Lee County center in Fort Myers, where she worked as program director for two years before she was tapped to lead the Immokalee center.

“The girls are expected to show up,” she says about the 67 young women who are in the Immokalee center. “If they aren’t with us, they aren’t learning. We provide a lot of incentives for the girls to come to the program. We focus on the positive changes and accomplishments, and reward good behavior. We focus on the positive changes and accomplishments of our girls. It is about what they have accomplished, and reward good behavior. We focus on the positive changes and accomplishments of our girls. It is about what they have accomplished, and reward good behavior. We focus on the positive changes and accomplishments of our girls. It is about what they have accomplished, and reward good behavior. We focus on the positive changes and accomplishments of our girls. It is about what they have accomplished, and reward good behavior. We focus on the positive changes and accomplishments of our girls. It is about what they have accomplished, and reward good behavior. 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So, no matter how much we pooh-pooh conspiracy theories or proclaim them to be the province of fools and paranoiacs, it seems as if we — as a society — cannot get enough of them. Perhaps we shouldn’t feel such guilt when we indulge our curiosity about the absurd and unfathomable. It seems to be encoded in our DNA. Conspiracy theories have been around for millennia, and the pages of history are littered with plots and intrigues that range from the documented (the assassinations of Julius Caesar and Abraham Lincoln, for example) to the plausible (the murder of John F. Kennedy) to the fully imagined (such as the beliefs that the Bush administration orchestrated the 9/11 attacks or that President Barack Obama colluded with offshore accounts to produce a fraudulent birth certificate or that extraterrestrials crashed a space ship in Roswell, N.M., in 1947 and the United States government has kept their little green corpses under wraps for almost 60 years). In essence, then, one man’s conspiracy theory is another man’s proof positive. Some of us are more selective in what we believe and demand a higher level of documentation, but all of us, experts say, do subscribe to conspiracy theories of one form or the other.

“Our theory took us to the how and why of the 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Center in New York, Washington, D.C., it’s a conspiracy theory about the Bush administration orchestrated the attacks and the United States government has kept their little green corpses under wraps for almost 60 years). In essence, then, one man’s conspiracy theory is another man’s proof positive. Some of us are more selective in what we believe and demand a higher level of documentation, but all of us, experts say, do subscribe to conspiracy theories of one form or the other.

“This view that conspiracy theories can encompass the real as well as the imagined is echoed by another expert in the field, Dr. Joseph E. Uscinski, co-author of the book “American Conspiracy Theories.”

“Watergate and Iran-Contra are conspiracies,” says Dr. Uscinski, an associate professor of political science at the University of Miami. “Sometimes conspiracy theories actually unearth information we wouldn’t have had otherwise.”

“A key piece of this has been a discredited theory about a plot to kill medi cal practitioners is the case of Dr. Teresa Sievers, a 46-year-old physician who was found murdered in her Bonita Springs home on June 29. The case remains unsolved, and authorities are revealing precious little about their investigation. The existence of a definitive explanation for this savage crime leaves the field wide open for speculation — no matter how irrational or irresponsible it may be. Mystery, fear and sensationalism are crucial to a conspiracy theory, and Dr. Sievers’ horrific murder possesses all of those elements.

In spasdes. So it’s not a stretch to say that we are all potential conspiracists. "Sometimes conspiracy theories actually unearth information we wouldn’t have had otherwise." — Dr. Joseph E. Uscinski, co-author of the book "American Conspiracy Theories"

Inter net, where it will find a recep tive, if limited, audience that is eager to confirm its own worst fears and prejudices. This is not to say that everyone who exposes a conspiracy theory is a pajama-clad blogger who operates out of his basement or his parents’ home. Some are learned skeptics asking legitimate questions about puzzling events.

Undoubtedly, though, the Internet affords almost anyone — be he erudite, demented or somewhere in between — the opportunity to spin gliberious nonsense that seems to be the case of a recent conspiracy theory — rooted, at least in part, on the east and west coasts of South Florida. This particular nugget of web-generated lunacy posits that a cabal (possibly composed of and funded by large pharmaceutical companies and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration) is hunting down practitioners of alternative medicine and killing them. At this conspiracy’s core are the unrelated deaths of five health professionals. Four of these deaths have connections to Florida. On June 19, a homeopathic physician who had practiced in Melbourne, Fla., before moving to Georgia, was found dead in what was ruled to be a suicide. Two days later, two chiropractors died unexpectedly and in a similar fashion in Boca Raton and Jacksonville, and then on June 28, a plastic physician died unexpectedly and was found murdered in her home in Bonita Springs.

As conspiracy theories go, this is hardly in the same league as the Roswell incident or the 9/11 coverup, but it has gained some traction, and it does provide a neat — if not wholly explicable — look at how this sort of stuff begins.

In the matter of the alternative doctors, disparate and unrelated cases have been tied together in the minds of the practitioners, strings and presented as evidence of a vast plot whose aim is to silence those who criticize mandatory vaccinations and advocate for nontraditional medical practices. Those circulating this rumor/conspiracy contain that these practices threaten the very core of the medical establishment, which now seems to line up with its corporate sponsors.

According to Dr. Dentith, a dubious theory — rooted, at least in part, on the east and west coasts of South Florida. This particular nugget of web-generated lunacy posits that a cabal (possibly composed of and funded by large pharmaceutical companies and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration) is hunting down practitioners of alternative medicine and killing them. At this conspiracy’s core are the unrelated deaths of five health professionals. Four of these deaths have connections to Florida. On June 19, a homeopathic physician who had practiced in Melbourne, Fla., before moving to Georgia, was found dead in what was ruled to be a suicide. Two days later, two chiropractors died unexpectedly and in a similar fashion in Boca Raton and Jacksonville, and then on June 28, a plastic physician died unexpectedly and was found murdered in her home in Bonita Springs.

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Northville, Mich. - A 17-city Army Special Operations Forces training exercise, believed to be related to Jade Helm, is raising questions in Texas about the military's plans.

A story published by the Austin American-Statesman earlier this week detailed the Jade Helm training exercise, which is set to take place from July 15 to Sept. 15. The story noted that the training mission is thought to be related to the military's plans for a possible future war in the Middle East and that it has raised concerns among residents of the area.

The exercise, which is being conducted by the Army's Special Operations Command, is designed to prepare soldiers for urban warfare and counter-terrorism operations. It will involve the use of drones, unmanned ground vehicles, and other technology.

As questions about the exercise and its purpose have been raised, federal authorities have sought to reassure the public that the training is not related to any imminent threat of war or terrorism.

Still, residents in the area are concerned about the impact of the exercise on their daily lives. Some have expressed fear that the training activities could lead to an increase in crime or that the exercise could be used as a cover for other activities.

As the training exercise begins, it will be important to monitor its progress and ensure that it is conducted in a manner that is both effective and safe. It will be important for the military to engage with local communities and keep them informed about the objectives and activities of the exercise.

The need for open communication and transparent decision-making is clear. It is important that all stakeholders, including the military, local authorities, and the public, work together to ensure that the training exercise is conducted in a manner that is consistent with the principles of accountability, transparency, and safety.
WEEK OF AUG. 27-SEP. 2, 2015

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Pitch in to clean up Keewaydin

Spend a day at the beach with the Collier County Sheriff’s Office on Saturday, Aug. 29.
That’s when the CCSO Marine Bureau will hold the seventh annual Keewaydin Cleanup. Transportation will be provided by the sailing vessel Sweet Liberty, which will depart from Naples City Dock at 8:30 a.m. and return from the island around 12:30 p.m.
A cleanup for the southern half of the island is also scheduled for this day and will leave out of Isles of Capri aboard the Calusa Spirit, which will depart from Pelican Bend restaurant on Isles of Capri at 8:30 a.m. and return from the island around 12:30 p.m.
Participants will enjoy this pristine stretch of Collier County coastline while doing their part to keep it clean.
Seats are limited to 35 aboard each vessel. To reserve a spot, send an email to keewaydincleanup@gmail.com. Include your name, telephone number of each participant and vessel preference.
Bottled water will be provided. Don’t forget to bring your own sunscreen.

Watch out for traffic deputies on the road

Here’s where Collier County Sheriff’s Office traffic-enforcement deputies will be the week of Aug. 31-Sept. 4:

Monday, Aug. 31
- Glades Boulevard and Palm Drive: Red-light running
- Immokalee Drive and North 15th Street: Red-light running
- Old 41 Road and Tamiami Trail North: Speeding

Tuesday, Sept. 1
- Goodlette-Frank Road and Pelican Marsh Boulevard: Speeding
- Davis and Lakewood boulevards: Speeding
- Pine Ridge Road at Pine Ridge Middle School: Speeding

Wednesday, Sept. 2
- 23rd Avenue S.W. and 49th Terrace S.W.: Speeding
- Golden Gate Parkway and Tropicana Boulevard: Red-light running
- Shadowlawn Drive at Shadowlawn Elementary School: Aggressive driving

Thursday, Sept. 3
- Santa Barbara and Devonshire boulevards: Aggressive driving
- Vanderbilt Beach and Livingston roads: Aggressive driving

Friday, Sept. 4
- Oil Well and Immokalee roads: Red-light running
- Naples Boulevard: Speeding
- Green and Collier boulevards: Aggressive driving

■
The Jewish Congregation of Marco Island welcomes Rabbi John Spitzer to lead High Holy Day services for the year 5776. Following his ordination from the Hebrew Union College in 1973, Rabbi Spitzer served as an associate rabbi for Congregation Shaare Emeth in St. Louis, Mo., before moving to Temple Israel in Canton, Ohio, in 1981, where he served for 27 years.

He earned a doctor of ministry from the Pittsburgh Theological Seminary and has been awarded two honorary doctorates and served as associate professor of Jewish studies at Walsh University. He has been honored by the National Martin Luther King Commission, The Jewish Chautauqua Society, Walsh University, State of Israel Bonds, Canton Rotary, the Greater Stark County United Way and the Greater Stark County Chamber of Commerce.

He has made some 20 trips to Israel, leading many interfaith groups and family B’nai Mitzvah trips. JCMI’s High Holy Day observance schedule is as follows:

**Friday, Sept. 4:** 8 p.m. Shabbat/Selichot services
**Sunday, Sept. 13:** 8 p.m. Erev Rosh Hashanah service
**Monday, Sept. 14:** 10 a.m. Rosh Hashanah service
**Friday, Sept. 18:** 8 p.m. Shabbat Shuvah service
**Tuesday, Sept. 22:** 8 p.m. Yom Kippur Kol Nidre service
**Wednesday, Sept. 23:** 10 a.m. Yom Kippur morning service; 3:30 p.m. Yizkor, Ne’elah service

Tickets for non-members are $100. For reservations or more information, call the JCMI office at 642-0800.
The distress across the Western world in July over the big-game killing of Cecil the lion in Zimbabwe was apparently misdirected, according to veteran “animal communicator” Karen Anderson of Elk, Wash., who told Facebook and Internet visitors (AnimalCommunicating.com) that Cecil and she had discussed his demise and that he was over it. Also, Cecil apparently speaks in formal, graceful English, as Anderson quoted him (according to London’s The Independent): “Let not the actions of these few men defeat us,” said Cecil, “or allow darkness to enter our hearts.” “I am,” he added, “grander than before as no one can take our purity, our truth or our soul.” (Anderson’s usual fee to speak with deceased pets is $250 for 15 minutes, but she did not disclose whether she had a client for Cecil’s tab.)

**Chutzpah**

In May, three Santa Ana, Calif., police officers who had just raided the unlicensed Sky High Holistic medical marijuana dispensary were caught on the facility’s surveillance video eating supposedly seized cannabis-infused chocolate bars, and an “internal affair” investigation was opened. However, in August, the Orange County Register reported that the cops went to court to have the video pressed. Their familiar legal argument is that the video violates their right to privacy — in that they had purposely disabled the cameras before they began munching the contraband and thus had the requisite “expectation of privacy” that triggers the right. (Possibly, they had missed a camera.)

The estate of Dr. Rajan Verma filed a lawsuit in July against the Traf Music Hall in Buffalo, N.Y., after Dr. Verma fell to his death following a concert when he lost his balance sliding down the banister. The estate claims that there must have been a sticky substance on the railing. The estate’s lawyers said that since alcohol was served at the concert, the promoters should have known to take extra safety precautions for banister-riders.

Who gets badly hurt playing musical chairs? Robin Earnest, 46, told an Arkansas claims hearing that she broke two fingers and was forced into “years” of surgery and physical therapy over a game that was part of a class at the College of the Ozachitas in 2011 and demanded at least $75,000 from the state. The July hearing was dominated by a discussion of the proper way to play musical chairs because the instructor had ordered three students to contest one chair — with Mr. Earnest asserting that everyone knows it would be two chairs for three people.

**News of the Weird**

The aristocrats

(1) Wallace Berg, 81, was charged with public indecency in Stratford, Conn., in July after a neighbor showed police a video he had made of Mr. Berg, naked and (according to an Associated Press report) “performing a sex act with some shrubbery.” (2) “Where the sun don’t shine” is now a standard hiding place for contraband, including for Matthew Smith, 36, arrested in Greendale, Ind., in July. After he drew attention with a long restroom session at a Shell station, police confronted him about the white powder on his nose, and Mr. Smith sheepishly handed over two minutes-ago-removed pills and cocaine — but he had also extracted, inexplicably, a fishing bobber, a screwdriver and an “open tire plug kit.”

**Chitects**

On Aug. 1, one of the world’s weirdest border disputes came to an end, as India and Bangladesh exchanged more than 160 “enclaves” — sovereign territory completely surrounded by the other country’s sovereign territory (in principle, making travel out of the enclaves impossible unless the enclave had an embassy or another office that issued passports). There was one Indian enclave (Dahala Khagrabari) completely within a Bangladeshi enclave that is completely inside an Indian enclave inside Bangladesh.

The continuing crisis

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**PACE loves volunteers for fundraiser**

PACE Center for Girls-Collier at Immokalee needs a few good volunteers to help out at Love That Dress!, the nonprofit’s major fundraiser coming up Wednesday evening, Sept. 2, at the Naples Grande.

The feel-good shopping spree of the year, Love That Dress! features new and gently loved dresses and accessories for nominal prices, plus a silent auction, camaraderie and cocktails from 6-9 p.m. General admission is $30; VIP admission (early entry at 5 p.m. and access to the private dressing rooms, express check-out, complimentary cocktails and hors d’oeuvres and more) is $150.

For information about volunteering, call Marianne Kearns at 842-5406. To purchase tickets to shop, go to lovethatdress.org.

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**Hoops tourney welcomes all ages**

The Greater Naples YMCA, in partnership with the Rotary Club of Immokalee and the 1-by-1 Leadership Foundation, hosts the first Naples Gus Macker Basketball Tournament on Sept. 19-20 at Golden Gate High School.

“Gus Macker basketball is one of the best-known 3-on-3 tournaments in the country, and we’re thrilled to bring the event to Naples,” says Paul Thein, YMCA president and CEO. “It appeals to players of all backgrounds and levels, whether you’re an experienced older team or an athletic college-based team.”

Open to players ages 7 to 70-plus, the double-elimination format tourney guarantees two games for each four-person team; one spot on the roster is held for a single substitute. Teams are computer-matched into male and female divisions in junior, adult or top categories. The age, height and experience of all four players are considered.

The tournament also includes a consolation bracket — the “Toilet Bowl” — for teams losing their first two games. A GusBuster maintains law and order on each court and calls all fouls and violations in the Junior Divisions.

Tournament activities include a dunk contest, free-throw contest, celebrity judges and kids’ courts.

Registration is $132 per team, with proceeds to be divided between the Greater Naples YMCA and the Rotary Club of Immokalee and earmarked to support youth programs.

Online registration at macker.com must be completed by Aug. 31. For more information, call 597-3348.

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PYTHONS

From page 1

While the Python Challenge captures the imaginations of hunters around the country to go tramping through backwoods swamps, the point of the hunt is to increase public knowledge about the species and their capture.

“Burmese pythons continue to be a significant issue in the Everglades,” FWC Commissioner Ron Bergeron says. “We hope these efforts will increase sightings and the removal of pythons over the long term in this valuable ecosystem.”

In 2013, more than 1,500 hunters registered for the month-long competition and captured 68 snakes. Brian Barrows bagged six snakes to take home first-place honors and $1,500 in the general competition. In the permit holders’ competition, Ruben Ramirez snagged the top spot and $1,500 for capturing 18 snakes.

Mr. Ramirez is a lifelong reptile collector who does not kill his captures, but works with the University of Florida, FWC and the South Florida Water Management District to monitor the snakes. During the past 30 years, he has honed his “herping” skills to detect the sneaky species, and other reptiles, and turn them over.

“All my python catch, the adrenaline is like the first time,” he says. “Today, I can go into my backyard and tell you the ‘Burm’s aren’t moving.’”

Years of practice and study enabled Mr. Ramirez to capture his winning total of “Burm’s” three years ago. While he plans to participate in the 2016 challenge, he doesn’t necessarily have his sights set on recapturing first place. “I want to participate in the aspect of guiding and helping others more,” he says. All participants must complete an online education course to learn how to identify and humanely capture the snakes, Lisa Thompson of the FWC says. The agency also plans to conduct in-person training around the region in the coming months in hopes that more planning and education will improve the competition.

“During the first python challenge, I saw a lot of native snakes killed that looked similar to pythons,” Mr. Ramirez says, adding most hunters “didn’t know the difference between a python and a corn snake.” For the upcoming challenge, he adds, “I think people realize they need to come more prepared. They’ve had a lot of time to do more research and learn a little more.”

FWC will post rules, geographical boundaries, prize information and more for the 2016 Python Challenge on the website pythonchallenge.org in the coming months. In the past, only live captures have been allowed and were submitted to the agency to be humanely euthanized. In the upcoming challenge, live captures will only be required in certain areas, Ms. Thompson says. The agency is still finalizing details about competition rules.

Burmese python sightings in Florida go back to the 1980s, and wildlife experts agree that the state’s population of the invasive species most likely began as escaped pets. There is speculation the problem was compounded during Hurricane Andrew, when breeding facilities near Homestead were severely damaged, likely resulting in escaped snakes finding refuge in an ecosystem that strongly suits their cold-blooded aquatic bodies.

“As far as the Burmese python, I think it’s pretty much a reality, sorry to say,” says Art Boybal, senior fish and wildlife biologist with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. “They’re going to be part of the natural landscape.”

Officials do not have an estimate of how large Florida’s population of Burmese pythons is, mostly because the snake has proven too slippery to pin down. Most low estimates start at 10,000 snakes.

“Due to an exceedingly low rate of detection, population numbers remain elusive,” FWC’s Ms. Thompson says. “Though capture rates are often used as a proxy for gauging population trends, there is no statistical correlation between captures and population.”

Ruben Ramirez, who won the 2013 Python Challenge for permit holders by bagging 18 snakes, has been capturing reptiles since he was 12. He now puts those skills to use by removing invasive species from the wild and relinquishing them to the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission or the University of Florida.
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Greater Naples Delta Gamma alumnae meet for Girls’ Night Out from 4:30-6:30 p.m. Thursday, Aug. 27, at Bio Tuscan Grille in Waterside Shops. September gatherings are as follows: Coffee klatch from 9-11 a.m. Monday, Sept. 7, at DeRomo’s in the Promenade at Bonita Bay; bus trip to Sarasota for a tour of Southwest Guide Dogs and lunch at the Columbia from 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Friday, Sept. 18; and GNO from 5-7 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 24, at the Dock at Crayton Cove. RSVP to any of the above by calling Andrea Pandaza at 992-2119 or emailing naplesdeltagamma@gmail.com. All Delta Gamma sisters are welcome.

The Naples Digital Photo Club begins a series of lectures/workshops with noted photography experts from 9 a.m. to noon Saturday, Aug. 29, at Florida SouthWestern State College-Collier. For the opening program, Mike Collier, of Nikon Professional Services, will discuss “Impact, Energy and Emotion” as the key ingredients for a successful image. Attendance is free for club members and $30 for others (which includes membership and free admission to future workshops).

Through September, club members are exhibiting 50 images with a “water” theme at Shangri-La Springs in Bonita Springs. Most images are for sale, with 40 percent of the proceeds designated to help fund activities at the venue. For more information, call Sonny Saunders at 777-0053 or visit dpi-sig.org.

The Gulf Breeze Button Club, whose members collect and study antique clothing buttons, meets at 1:30 p.m. the first Tuesday of every month at the Golden Gate Community Center, 4701 Golden Gate Parkway. The next meeting in Sept. 1. Guests are always welcome. For more information, call 682-6117.

The Experimental Aircraft Association Chapter 10670-Naples meets at 7 p.m. on the first Wednesday of the month at Naples Municipal Airport. The next meeting is Sept. 2.

Members also serve a pancake breakfast from 8-11 a.m. on the second Sunday of each month in the pilots’ lounge at Naples Municipal Airport. Admission for $5 includes pancakes, eggs, bacon or sausage and orange juice. All proceeds benefit the EAA Young Eagles program that acquaints youth ages 8-17 with aviation as a career. The next breakfast is Sept. 13. The Naples EAA chapter is one of approximately 1,700 chapters worldwide. Members are pilots, student pilots, plane builders and aviation enthusiasts. For more information, call 649-6627 or visit eaa1067.com.

The Naples Orchid Society invites all orchid aficionados to its next meeting and workshop Thursday, Sept. 3, at Moorings Presbyterian Church. Doors open at 6 p.m. for a session with the “Orchid Doctor” and club member Bill Overton; bring in an orchid for diagnosis or culture recommendations. Judging for the plant competition will be at 7 p.m., and the program starts at 7:30 p.m.

Guest speaker Segundo Cuesta of Quest Orchids in Miami will discuss pollinating orchids. Members can bring a plant if they want to self it or two plants of the same genus if they would like to make a cross. A selection of orchids will be for sale. Attendance is free. For more information, visit naplesorchidsociety.org.

The Naples Christian Women’s Connection invites area women to a luncheon and fashion show at 11:30 a.m. Friday, Sept. 4, at Quail Creek Country Club. St. John’s Thrift Shop will introduce models wearing an array of fashions from the shop. Inspirational speaker Tamra Nashman Richard will present “Just a Bump in the Road” and musical guest will be singer-guitarist Jeff Leigh. Cost is $28. Call 547-2207 or email cwc-naples@gmail.com for reservations.

Naples Writers Forum offers free weekly workshops for writers of all levels from 10 a.m. to noon Saturdays starting Sept. 5 at St. John The Redeemer Church, 625 11th Ave. N. (in the Claussen Family Center, which is the third building on the campus). Attendees should bring 10 copies of one page of fiction, non-fiction, memoir or poetry for critique. For more information, call Gary Melhart at 949-3621 or email gwmelhart@gmail.com.

Naples Ship Modelers is an informal group dedicated to the hobby of building wooden ship models. Members meet at 9:30 a.m. on the first and third Sat-
urdays of every month at the Landmark Naples community in North Naples. The next meetings are Sept. 5 and 19. For more information, call Dick Ritchie at 594-0868 or email dcritchie@comcast.net.

The Western University Club of Greater Naples welcomes alumni, parents and friends to kick off the football season when Northwestern students host Stanford on Saturday, Sept. 5, beginning at noon at Bekamper’s Sports Bar & Grille at the corner of Vanderbilt Beach and Airport-Pulling roads. For more information, email NUNaples@hotmail.com.

The Naples Italian American Foundation invites members and guests to a Labor Day social and barbecue dinner on Monday afternoon, Sept. 7, at club headquarters, 7035 Airport-Pulling Road. Bocce (weather permitting), bridge, mah jongg and poker will be played, and pulled pork and all the trimmings will be served. Doors open at 12:30 p.m.

Cost is $15 for members, $18 for others. There will be a cash bar. Reservations are required by 4 p.m. Friday, Sept. 4. Call 597-5210.

Alumnae of Gamma Phi Beta in the Naples area meet for lunch and conversation on the second Monday of each month. The next meeting is Sept. 14. For more information, call Lynne Nordhoff at 594-8420 or email lynneonorhound@comcast.net.

Pilot Club of Naples/Pilots Pilot Foundation meets at 6 p.m. on the second Thursday of every month at Perkins on Pine Ridge Road. The next meeting is Sept. 10. Guests and new members are always welcome. Reservations are not required. Attendees order from the menu and pay for their meals. Pilot International focuses its charitable and educational efforts on brain-related disorders and disabilities, including traumatic brain injuries, dementia and autism. For more information, call Sue Lester 289-8268.

Kappa Alpha Theta alumnae are invited to join the Naples, Marco Island and Bonita Springs chapter for monthly luncheons, speakers, socials and events. The next event is a luncheon starting at noon Monday, Sept. 14, at M Waterfront Grill in the Village on Venetian Bay. RSVP is required by Sept. 10 and can be made by calling Betsy Penzo at 464-3975 or emailing penzob@aol.com. For more information, contact Linda Shearer, chapter president, by calling (402) 770-3737 or emailing lworklife@msn.com.

Pi Beta Phi alumnae in Naples, Bonita Springs and Marco Island are invited to socialize from 5-7 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 17, at Bice’s Restaurant at La Playa Beach and Golf Resort in North Naples. For reservations or more information, call Barbara Craig at 908-7201 or email bhc9514@gmail.com.

Naples Newcomers Club welcomes women who have moved to the area within the past five years. In addition to a monthly luncheon, members get together to explore Naples and to enjoy a variety of interests, from books to bridge and mah-jongg to gourmet cooking and conversations over coffee. A coffee for prospective new members takes place on the first Thursday of each month. For more information, call 298-4083 or visit naplesnewcomers.com.

Naples Nites Lions Club meets at 6 p.m. on the second and fourth Tuesday of every month at Perkins on Pine Ridge Road at Interstate-75. The next meetings are Sept. 8 and 22. All current and former Lions are welcome. For more information, call Dan Sams at 352-2827.

The Naples Civician Club meets at noon on the second Wednesday of the month at Perkins on Pine Ridge Road and on the fourth Wednesday of the month at varying locations. The next meetings are Sept. 9 and 23. For more information, call 774-2623 or email naplescivitan@aol.com.

The Marco Island Civician Club meets at 6 p.m. on the second and fourth Tuesday of every month. The next meetings are Sept. 8 and 22. For locations, call Anthony DeLacia at 285-6785 or email marcoislandciviciansclub2014@yahoo.com.

The International service club focuses on assisting people with developmental disabilities and finding the cause, cure and better treatments of brain disorders including autism, Alzheimer’s disease and Down syndrome.

The Gulf Coast Orchid Alliance meets on the third Thursday of every month at Vanderbilt Presbyterian Church. In addition to a guest speaker, members are invited to bring orchids from their collections for judging, and an orchid raffle is help. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. The next meeting is Sept. 12. Admission is free for all, and guests are always welcome.

The alliance welcomes donations of out-of-bloom or unwanted orchids, which members use for educational purposes. Free pick up is available and can be arranged by calling 498-9741. For more information about the alliance, visit gulfcoastorchidalliance.com.

The Naples chapter of PFLAG, Parents Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays, a support, education and advocacy group for families with gay or transgender members, meets at 7 p.m. on the third Thursday of each month at Naples United Church of Christ, 5200 Crayton Road. The next meeting is Sept. 17. For more information, call 963-4670 or visit pflagnaples.org.

The Solo Women Travel Group meets at 2 p.m. on the third Saturday of the month at St. John the Evangelist Church in North Naples. All are welcome to share their travel experiences and travel wish list. The next meeting is Sept. 19. For more information, call Barb Garrett at (305) 664-9202.

The Naples base of the U.S. Submarine Veterans (USSVI) meets at 7 p.m. on the third Monday of every month at the VFW Post 7721, 800 Neffs Way in Naples. The next meeting is Sept. 21. Membership is open to active duty and retired submariners who have earned the Qualified in Submarines designation. The local USSVI base commander is Jack Hogan of Naples. For more information, visit ussvi.org/base/naples.asp.

— Email club news to Cindy Pierce at cpierce@floridaweekly.com.
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Get to know about Girl Scouting

Getting back to school means it’s also time to get into scouting. Girl Scouts of Gulf Coast Florida invites girls to join the fun for the new membership year. The following “Troop Building” events are designed to inform families about the opportunities scouting provides for trying new things, making new friends, gaining confidence and building leadership skills. All are welcome.

Thursday, Aug. 27: 6:30 p.m. at Naples Park Elementary School
Monday, Aug. 31: 6:30 p.m. at Tommie Barfield Elementary School, Marco Island
Tuesday, Sept. 1: 6:30 p.m. at Avalon Elementary School
Tuesday, Sept. 1: 6:30 p.m. at Veterans Memorial Elementary School

Partnerships with community groups making a difference at Youth Haven

Youth Haven is getting ready for season by partnering with six community organizations in the next six weeks.

The first event, Paint-Palooza, takes place Saturday, Aug. 29, with the Rotary Club of Naples at Youth Haven. Club members will repaint the counseling center with paint donated by Home Depot. Members of Rotaract Club of Naples will descend on the campus Saturday, Sept. 5, to clean and paint the chickee hut.

On Saturday, Sept. 12, volunteers from the Naples Junior Women’s Club will help get Youth Haven’s campus garden ready for fall. And from Aug. 30-Sept. 19, Living Word Family Church is holding a food drive to stock the pantry shelves at the emergency shelter.

On Saturday, Sept. 26, the children of Youth Haven will participate in The United Way’s Walk for the Way, and on Saturday, Oct. 3, they will take part in the annual Hodges University Diversity Festival.

Thanks to community partners like these, Youth Haven is able to continue providing services to the area’s most vulnerable citizens: abused, neglected, abandoned and homeless children and teens. For information about numerous ways to get involved as a Youth Haven partner, call Angela Navarro at 687-5178 or email angela.navarro@youthhavenswfl.org.

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Exploring the benefits of a difficult childhood

BY DON ST. JOHN, PH.D.
Special to Florida Weekly

Most of us have had our share of challenges and sorrows.

Maybe you didn’t receive unconditional love from both your parents throughout the formative years of your childhood.

Or maybe you didn’t grow up in a home in which your parents showed each other — or your siblings and you — with affection.

Perhaps you didn’t grow up in a home in which your parents helped you to understand, clarify and express your feelings in a clear and strong way without outing aggression. Maybe it wasn’t easy for your parents to be firm, authoritative and loving.

Though your childhood may have been less than perfect, what you may not realize is that having a difficult childhood can have benefits and opportunities. Here are some examples of what can bloom from a seemingly desolate upbringing:

■ You become an adventurer.

You may begin walking a path that eventually will bring you experiential riches that you could not have begun to imagine at the outset. At first you may just want to feel better. Then you realize there is so much more than just reducing your anxiety or depression. There is the exciting adventure of becoming who you were truly meant to be. There is no greater adventure than the one of becoming whole — of becoming you.

■ You want more than what the culture offers.

You are less likely to be satisfied with what the culture has to offer you. All the important indexes measured by our culture are financial. There’s the gross domestic product, the Dow Jones, employment statistics, but there are no wellbeing indexes. There are no indexes to measure personal, spiritual development or relationship satisfaction. If all was “just fine” at home, you might never challenge the dominant cultural values passed on to you by your family. But if your childhood wasn’t all so peachy, it can be easier to find the courage to begin your own journey and become your own person.

■ Settling for “normal” isn’t an option.

You may be more likely to challenge the concept of what is “normal” and look for what is possible.

In our cultural paradigm, if you don’t have symptoms, you’re normal. That assumption is applied both to our physical body and to our emotional wellbeing. When you begin to question this assumption, you realize that “normal” is the last thing you want to be. What you want is to thrive. You want to remain vital throughout your lifespan. You want your marriage to stay juicy for decades, not just for the honeymoon.

Most normal people, for example, believe their erotic potential diminishes with age. In one sense, it obviously does. But in a fuller sense of the word erotic, it doesn’t have to. The information and the resources to do so are available, and those who have begun the journey are much more likely to find and utilize them.

■ Compassion comes more easily.

Once you begin the process of healing, you will have more texture, depth and empathy than those who say they haven’t been hurt. However you have healed a wound, there will be empathy for others with similar issues. Those who deny their own pain and their own wounds often have little compassion for the obvious suffering of others. If they don’t see it in themselves, they can’t bear it in others.

But simply stated, those who have embarked on the path of healing are more compassionate.

■ You treasure what is truly important.

Treasuring what is important is the genuine, heartfelt connection to life and those we love. It is to engage in the world whole-heartedly and to leave the world just a little better than how we found it. It is to realize that love-connections, those moments when two people truly meet, are precious and nourishing. They are not luxuries; they are essential life nutrients.

Even if you’ve had a difficult childhood that you wouldn’t want to relive, you can become an alchemist. You can turn cheap metal into gold. All the raw materials are there, waiting for you to begin.

— Don St. John, Ph.D., is the author of “Healing the Wounds of Childhood.” To learn more, visit healingthewoundsofchildhood.com.
Quest for Blue Zone designation is good for entire community

Our community is embarking on a journey to improve the wellness of every resident, and NCH is leading by example. The journey is called the Blue Zones Project, and NCH leadership is vital for its success.

The project is about one thing: creating a healthier environment for all of us. As Deb Millsap, executive director for the local effort, is fond of saying, this is a “we” initiative, meaning that every sector of our community must play a role. We will start with education about the various healthy-living choices we can make and the science behind them. We will share best practices and encourage each other’s well-being. At NCH, we’ve got a head start. More than 87 percent of our 5,800 colleagues and their family members have been on this road to wellness for six years. The journey started in 2009, when three of our nurses were belatedly diagnosed with breast cancer because, like too many caregivers, they did not prioritize their own mammograms.

This was a wake-up call to all of us. We began by securing a better insurance plan and by agreeing to participate in age- and gender-appropriate diagnostic testing, following the recommendations of the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force. Early results were shocking. The number of colleagues with occult cancers (breast, colon and prostate), high blood pressure and early diabetes was nothing short of alarming. Most of the tests were easy — blood tests, height, weight, waist and hip circumferences, mammograms, etc. The one uncomfort-able test was colonoscopy at age 50 and every 10 years thereafter.

No one was forced to participate, but those who signed on also had to commit to avoiding the use tobacco products. Over time, the progress we have made improving the health of our colleagues has been heartening. Three years ago we stopped hiring smokers and mounted a campaign to encourage our smok-ers to quit. We shared the data that non-smokers live, on average, 10 years longer than smokers; if you had grandchildren, this would typically be the decade you could attend their weddings in person, rather than as a memory. On a personal level, that kind of emotional connec tion helped motivate individuals to stop smoking. Again, no one was let go if they couldn’t quit, but the campaign had a huge impact.

NCH’s health-care costs have dropped an average of 7.8 percent per year over the past five years for our 5,800 people insured. But we are nowhere near fin-ished. We still can and should do better, and we constantly encourage our col leagues to help themselves by creating a culture where the healthy choice is the easier choice.

This is the Blue Zones Project jour-ney that we are leading in Southwest Florida, using our health-care resources for prevention more than repair, just as others have done in 27 commu-nities across the country. We’ll begin the formal effort this fall, offering our NCH colleagues and anyone in the commu-nity educational briefings and opportu-nities to take the free and confidential “Vitality Compass” assessment to see how we can add years to our lives.

There is nothing mystical about the Blue Zones Project. It’s designed to help everyone — ourselves, our families and our neighbors — live longer, happier and healthier lives. And that’s a goal on which everyone can agree.

— Dr. Allen Weiss is president and CEO of the NCH Healthcare System.

STROKE

From page 20

only during the first years after stroke but also in the long term. Caregivers’ quality of life was most adversely affected by their spouses’ level of disability, cognitive difficulties and depressive symptoms.

“It is known that spouses of older stroke patients experience health-relat-ed physical and mental issues, and that the degree of their problems is associ-ated with the severity of the stroke, but ours is the first long-term study of seven years follow-up to explore this in a younger group of people,” says study author Josefine Persson, a researcher and Ph.D. candidate at the Institute of Neuroscience and Physiology at Sahlgrenska Academy, University of Gothenburg, Sweden.

“Our results also highlight the impact on the spouses’ mental health due to demanding and can reduce a hus-band’s or wife’s time spent at their occu-pation, which can also be a burden for many younger families, and the under-lying problems can continue several years,” Ms. Persson said. The findings also have implications for health-care policymakers and call attention to the need for greater social support for these individuals, she says.

Researchers surveyed spouses using questionnaires to measure their health and daily living activities, depression and dependence on caregivers, body pain, standardized tests to assess the severity of these families, not only during the first years after stroke onset but also in the long term.”

The stroke survivors underwent stan-dardized tests to assess the severity of their stroke, degree of disability and dependence on caregivers, body pain, daily living activities, depression and anxiety.

[Image 34x1010 to 214x1078]

[42x1027]allen.weiss@nchmd.org

[45x116]Florida Weekly

[45x116]*Must call before 9/3/15 and mention (3) Laser-Lipo treatments & (2) B-12 shots

[583x628]anxiety.

[583x639]daily living activities, depression and
dependence on caregivers, body pain,
stANDARDIZED TESTS TO ASSESS THE SEVERITY OF THESE FAMILIES, NOT ONLY DURING THE FIRST YEARS AFTER STROKE ONSET BUT ALSO IN THE LONG TERM."
When you're in the sun, you might be tempted to leave your dog in the car. Remember, if it’s warmer than 70 degrees, it’s too hot to leave your dog in the car. Short-nosed dogs are especially at risk.

Brachycephalic breeds like pugs have a hard time breathing anyway,” she says. “If you put an older pig in a black car with the windows rolled up, he’s going to be at a disadvantage.”

It’s 69 degrees and cloudy at the beach, with a humidity level of 83 percent and no breeze. You see a dog locked in a truck with the sunroof open, but all the windows rolled up. There’s no sunshade blocking the windshield, and the dog doesn’t appear to have water. He’s barking frantically.

Several news stories recently reported on people breaking into cars to rescue dogs locked in, only to be arrested for their good deed. In response, at... — but only if the rescuer takes certain steps beforehand, such as searching for the owner and notifying law enforcement.

What are some recent trends you’ve seen in the business? We’re experiencing rapid growth, both in the short and long term. There has also been huge growth in the services we offer, such as...
THE DIVA DIARIES

Lamenting the Summer of Fugly while imagining sweaters and boots

A gaggle of girlfriends and I recently sat around in one of our living rooms for a mid-afternoon happy hour, enjoying icy-cold cocktails and discussing the Summer of Fugly.

For those who’ve never heard of “fugly,” it basically takes the state of ugly to a whole new freaking degree. You can use whatever F-word you fancy. Whether it’s “fantastically ugly,” “ferociously ugly,” “flamingly ugly” or something else, any way to say it, fugly makes ugly look almost pretty.

And the Summer of 2015 is fugly to the extreme. It’s far too hot outside to care about how we look. It’s not that we’ve given up — far from it — it’s just that beauty-wise, we’re on hold until the heat index dips somewhere below 107 degrees.

We all agreed: It’s too hot for makeup. Under-eye concealer just perspires right off, mascara melts and foundation seems to sink quickly into pores that have enlarged themselves due to unusually high humidity levels. When the sweat on your collar is the beige/toasty color of Maybelline Fair to Medium, you know it’s the Summer of Fugly.

But we also all agreed that we must snap ourselves out of the fugliness. Granted, we’re in Southwest Florida, so while other parts of the United States start preparing for that thing they refer to as Autumn by purchasing gourds and gathering pretty leaves with which to decorate and bringing out their favorite cozy sweaters, we instead hunker down for the most sweltering month of the entire year: September.

Oh, sure, my gal pals and I agreed we would love to start thinking about Pumpkin Spice lattes, cute scarves and boots with leggings. But that’s not any Southwest Florida girl’s reality heading into September, when the average temperature is 704 degrees. The Summer of Fugly simply leads into the Fall of Super Fugly.

The conversation started because my friends Asha, Brooke and Lara are headed to a wedding in Chicago in a couple of weeks.

“It’s too hot to paint my nails or color my hair or work out,” Asha lamented. “In this heat, it’s all I can do to even brush my teeth or shave my legs. It’s too hot to care.” But she and the girls are off to the northern climes for a sparkly event, and while it’s disgustingly hot here, for them it’s time to suck it up and remove the fugly.

It’s time to color the gray hairs, get a pedicure and exfoliate everything. I realize it’s still too hot for Spanx, but we must at least entertain the idea. While I’m not going to Chicago, I did check my calendar and noted at least three major galas right here in Southwest Florida next month. Apparently, gala organizers are oblivious to the fact that we have no autumn here; they want us to don gowns and heels and suffer in the heat.

So as the kids return to school, I shall return to the wonderful woman who waxes my eyebrows. I will attempt to ignore the temperature and try to care about my hair instead of tossing it up in a clip every day so it doesn’t stick to my dripping neck. I will pay a nice lady to paint my toenails because I don’t quite have the energy to do it myself yet.

The Summer of Fugly has gone on too long — (deep breath) bring on the September of Spanx.

— Ciao for now, my lovelies! Stay tuned for another divalicious diary entry next week...
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At its core, the NBC2 First Alert Live Radar houses a 350,000 watt dish which has the ability to track storms up to three hundred miles in all directions. With a range of six hundred miles, NBC2 has the ability to alert you first as storms approach Southwest Florida.
Electronic shout-outs

More and more, good reviews on websites bring big business

BY NANNI THEORET
Florida Weekly Correspondent

Reuben’s Smokehouse, 11: Eleven Café, McCarthy’s Wildlife Sanctuary and other local businesses are benefiting from the power of the online customer review and the celebrity shout-out. When customers and celebrities rate, others read. As several businesses in Southwest Florida and West Palm Beach have discovered, rankings by TripAdvisor and visits from famous foodies will ratchet up customer counts and improve their online cred.

Three months after Internet powerhouse TripAdvisor named Reuben's the fourth-best barbecue restaurant in the country, the Fort Myers business is still packed to its rafters. Celebrity chef Alton Brown’s kudos for the avocado grilled cheese sandwich at 11: Eleven in Fort Myers and the Hostess cupcake milkshake at Relish in West Palm Beach also created a similar avalanche.

“Forty percent of our business continues to be from people who saw us on TripAdvisor,” says Arvey Krise, Reuben’s co-owner. “It’s such a wonderful tool for businesses and for people in the area looking for a place to eat. We have just 11 tables and recently had visitors from Sweden, France, Germany and Great Britain here at the same time. They all heard about us from TripAdvisor.”

Mr. Brown’s favorite restaurant finds, unearthed during his recent North American tour, were featured in USA TODAY and print and online media outlets worldwide as were the recent TripAdvisor top 10 national rankings for Reuben’s, Brooks Gourmet Burgers and Dogs and Harborwalk Scoops & Bites.

“Thousands of people came in who had no idea we were here,” says Ms. Krise, “Even older people were finding us online and on their smartphones. It’s been absolutely great. There were people seeing a place they had no idea existed.”

Oil, oil everywhere and what it means for fuel prices

When I was in elementary school, I went through a very extreme pro-environmental phase. It was spurred on by a school assembly speaker from a national environmental group who scared the bejeezus out of us with pictures of rainforests being cut down, acid rain and dead wildlife. He then told us that by the turn of the century, the world will have run out of oil and we all would be riding horses again unless we cut back our consumption. I can remember actually not talking to my parents for a week because I thought that they were wasting a resource that was about to run out any day.

Flash-forward 30 years and the world is awash in cheap oil. So why didn’t we go through a very extreme pro-environmental phase? I thought that they were wasting a resource that was about to run out any day.

There was actual solid math behind the claims in the 1970s and ’80s that the world would run out of oil. If you divided the amount of proven reserves by the amount of oil the world was using per year, you would get an answer of around 30 years of oil remaining.

However, what my scare-tactic environmentalist speaker failed to take into account was human ingenuity. He did not foresee deep-sea drilling or frack- ing or drilling in the arctic or horizontal drilling. Every year we find, and are able to tap, new pockets of oil that were undiscovered the year before. The cost to bring this new oil to market may be expensive, but the previous years I believe we will continue to discover new sources of oil for centuries into the future.

But if new oil finds are more expensive to tap, why is the price of oil currently plummeting? The simple answer is that there is more oil supply compared to demand and there are two primary reasons for this.

The first cause is Saudi Arabia. Historically, the largest exporter of crude oil in the world has been a steadying force in the oil markets. When prices fell, the Saudis would hold back oil to drive the price higher. When prices rose, they would export more to keep prices from rising too high. It was in their best interest to keep oil prices within a certain range so they could make a good profit while stimulating global economic growth and thus oil demand.

Recently, however, the Saudis changed their export strategy and announced that they would continue to produce high volumes of oil regardless of how low prices fell. They explained this policy shift by stating that they wanted to defend their market share and didn’t want customers buying oil from other sources. However, many analysts believe that Saudi Arabia is undertaking this policy to first punish its primary rival in the Middle East, Iran.

Iran is much more dependant on high oil prices than Saudi Arabia for its income. Lower oil prices would serve to cripple the Iranian economy just as economic sanctions are poised to be lifted. In addition, many believe that Saudi Arabia is trying to drive North American producers out of business. American companies’ cost to harvest oil is much higher than that of Saudi Arabia. The U.S. companies cannot profitably operate at low price levels forever.

The second reason that oil supply continues to be higher than demand is the structure of the North American oil industry.

Historically, oil production was dominated by large companies that drilled for oil when the price they received at market was higher than their drilling costs, and stopped drilling when the price fell below that level.

Today, many U.S. drillers are smaller companies that took on huge debt loads to finance their drilling activities. Banks approved these loans because these companies hedged the price of oil many years into the future. That means that even if oil prices fall, like they are right now, many drillers have hedges in place that guarantee their profits for years to come. So there is no reason for them to stop drilling for oil and supplies just increase even more.

So does this mean that oil supplies are always going to be cheaper than demand and prices are going to be depressed forever? Absolutely not. Most significantly, almost every oil company across the globe has slashed their exploration budgets for this year and into the foreseeable future. That means as current oil wells are drying up, there will not be new wells coming online to replace them. That isn’t affecting prices this year but it will have an effect in the not so distant future.

And the demand side of the oil equation is not static, either. Whether the Chinese economy will continue to grow or will start to contract will have a significant effect on oil prices in the next several years. Other growing countries such as India will also impact oil demand in the near and long term.

But with OPEC and North America pumping away, oil surpluses and low prices should be around for years to come. In fact, today, the world produces more than a million barrels per day more than is consumed. I guess I won’t need to be taking those horseback riding lessons after all.

— Eric Bretan, the co-owner of Rick’s Estate & Jewelry Buyers in Punta Gorda, was a senior derivatives marketer and investment banker for more than 15 years at several global banks.
ON THE MOVE

Awards & Recognition

Darin Henry, senior sales manager at the Naples Downtown Coconut Point Resort & Spa, has been named a Chamber Associate Member of the Year by the Naples Florida Society of Association Executives. The award was presented at FASE’s annual conference held recently at The Ritz-Carlton, Naples.

Will Reynolds, managing partner of The Capital Grille in Naples, has attained Darden Restaurants’ Diamond Club status. He joins a group of top-performing managing partners recognized for their commitment to delivering guest experiences at the highest level, while making a difference in the community by serving and employing neighbors and community members. Mr. Reynolds is one of five managing partners selected from the more than 35 Capital Grille restaurants in North America.

Board Appointments

Linda Carp and Lisa Campbell have been elected to the board of directors at TheatreZone, a non-profit professional Equity theater company. Ms. Campbell was born and raised in Cleveland, Ohio. She attended the University of Minnesota and Augsburg College, where she earned a bachelor’s degree in history and spent the first nine years of her life in Dakar, Senegal, immigrating to the U.S. in 1997. He holds a bachelor’s degree in biology and biomedical physics from the University of South Florida and earned his doctor’s degree in dental medicine from the University of Florida. He is a member of the American Dental Association, the Florida Dental Association and the Academy of General Dentistry.

Interior Design

Luann Powers Gliwski has joined the team of professional interior designers at Romanza Interior Design, an affiliate of London Bay Homes. A graduate of Florida State University, Ms. Gliwski brings more than 20 years of design experience to the Romanza team. She most recently worked at Robb & Stucky Furniture & Interiors.

Information Technology

Matthew Thomas has been promoted to service delivery manager at Telelogic IT, a national provider of comprehensive IT management services for businesses. An employee of the company since January 2012, he previously was a technical support team lead. In his new role he will be responsible for managing the delivery of all technical services to TeamLogic IT customers.

Law

Pamela Lundborg has joined the Naples office of Schoeneck & King as an associate, relocating from the firm’s Syracuse, N.Y., office. Ms. Lundborg deals primarily in business law, handling matters such as commercial transactions and contracts, mergers and acquisitions, debt restructuring and bankruptcy. Her clients include corporations, partnerships, sole proprietors and nonprofits. She completed her undergraduate and law school studies at Syracuse University.

New Location

Southwest Florida Estate Planning PLLC has opened a Naples office at 7935 Bayview Road in the Bayview Corporate Center. The firm is dedicated to helping people protect their legacies and plan for incapacity.

Health Care

Dr. Ali Yazback has joined the staff at Brissin Dental, a licensed general dentist. Dr. Yazback was born in Dunedin and spent the first nine years of his life in Dakar, Senegal, immigrating to the U.S. in 1997. He holds a bachelor’s degree in biochemical sciences with minors in public health and biomedical physics from the University of South Florida and earned his doctor’s degree in dental medicine from the University of Florida. He is a member of the American Dental Association, the Florida Dental Association and the Academy of General Dentistry.

Nonprofit Organizations

Chris Brissin, Kelly Lowman and Jeffrey Binder have joined the staff of Gulfshore Playhouse as general manager, director of development and artistic associate, respectively. Mr. Brissin has stage management experience at the following venues: The Heights Playhouse, theobao Dance Theatre and Tao Dance Theatre and has traveled through Europe, Asia, Africa and the Middle East as the production stage manager for Pilo- bolus Dance Theatre, Cameron Mackintosh and Royal Caribbean Cruise Lines.

Jim Warnken has joined D.C. Lawrence Center, Collier County’s only comprehensive, non-profit mental health and substance abuse treatment facility serving children, adults and families, as chief planning and business development officer, a newly created executive management position. Mr. Warnken comes to DCL with extensive leadership experience in health care administration and non-profit executive management. He most recently served as executive vice president of The United Way of Collier County and prior to that was CFO of the NCH Healthcare System, CEO of DEI Laboratories and CFO Brandwyine Hospital and Trauma Center in Pennsylvania.

We believe personal attention is best given in person.

When you work with the Huntington Private Client Group, we meet with you face-to-face. Using our Listen, Plan, Advise® approach, we work with you to create a clear plan that fits your needs, giving you meaningful advice about the options available for meeting your objectives. As your goals change over time, we help you review your plan to make any necessary revisions. And we keep you involved every step of the way. Learn more by visiting huntington.com/pgc or calling your local Naples team at 800-231-5598.

Welcome.

HUNTINGTON PRIVATE CLIENT GROUP

The Huntington Private Client Group is a team of professionals that includes Private Bankers and Personal Trust Administrators and Portfolio Managers from The Huntington National Bank and lead asset management representation of The Huntington Investment Company, who work together to advise a full range of wealth and financial services.

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Huntington National Bank.
According to Julie Cassetina, senior publisher, and 160 new contributions every minute, TripAdvisor is the world's largest travel site with 375 million unique monthly visitors and customers reviews. It was pretty amazing how much power the rating gave us. By getting mentioned it pulls us up to the top of search engines. It gives us a great advantage.

Although Google, Yelp and Facebook garner customer reviews, TripAdvisor is the king of the travel and hospitality world with 375 million unique monthly visitors, 250 million worldwide reviews and 360,000 reviews every minute, according to Julie Cassetina, senior public relations specialist.

**Instant celebrity**

Throughout the year TripAdvisor releases top 10 lists, using an algorithm for businesses with fewer than 10 locations and factoring in quality, quantity and customer bubble scores. A five-bubble rating is the highest score possible. “People are very passionate about food and we help them uncover lesser-known places for pizza, barbecue and ice cream,” Ms. Cassetina says. “There’s a huge appetite for food stories and our team at TripAdvisor has a lot of fun putting them together.”

Sometimes its timing, however, isn’t the best, especially for high winter season destinations. Ron and Claudia Thomas, owners of Scoops & Bites in Punta Gorda, were vacationing in Brazil when the news broke Aug. 11 of their No. 1 rating. Brooksburg was one of the first takeout windows of its kind north of Miami. Locals often see Mr. Brown also recognized Havana, a Cuban restaurant that boasted one of the first takeout windows of its kind north of Miami. His service is exceptional and I have as many as two hundred people lined up to order. We pride ourselves on providing an exceptional experience,” she says. “I know some restaurant owners don’t like or if their food isn’t exactly what they expected. I use this to gauge the quality of our food and service. I try to respond to almost all the reviews because I appreciate customers taking the time. Some are long and heartfelt; others are just a few lines. But I know people are reading them.”

The online customer review world also extends into other Myers restaurants. The public with rankings appearing on Google, Facebook and even industry-specific websites. While restaurants adapt to the “Yelpification” of downtown West Palm Beach, many are just getting started.

**The negative review**

Most business owners remember the customer and the situation that caused a bad review. Despite safeguards in place — TripAdvisor employs 200 staffers with criminal investigation backgrounds, according to Ms. Cassetina — some single out their competition for giving them a bad rap.

“I approach it positively and ask them to reach out to me personally to discuss the issue so we can learn from it,” says Ms. Brooks. “You know when you mess up.”

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**My Dumbest Investment**

It’s easy to put too much faith in an announcement that a Wall Street analyst says, upped its rating of a stock from “neutral” to “buy.” I did just that, and paid a price 10 percent above its going price.

That’s not as meaningful as it may seem, because analysts are paid to ride with troubling concerns. (We refer to this in article to “sell-side” analysts, who often work for big banks providing research that other companies buy, and not to “buy-side” analysts, who work for institutional money managers and tend to keep to the good side of the clients they’re assigned to.

For one thing, analysts rarely issue “sell” ratings. Could it be that they don’t want to tick off companies that might hire their employers in the future? That would be a conflict of interest.

The Bespoke Investment Group recently found that out of 12,122 company ratings, only 7 percent were “sell,” vs. 48 percent “buy” and 45 percent “hold.”

Remember that analyst target prices are just based on estimates, which may well prove to be too optimistic or too conservative. They’re also based on comments and guidance from management, which we can look up and evaluate on our own, in earnings press releases and post-earnings conference calls.

Most troubling is that these analysts, in general, don’t care much about the stock’s value or results for investors as you might think they do.

According to a survey of 365 analysts by business professors Lawrence D. Brown, Andrew C. Call, Michael B. Clement and Nathan W. Heite of Ohio State University, if investors based their decisions on relative stock valuation, they would have earned a conversion of 4.2 percent per year on their investments, instead of -1.5 percent over the same period.

Instead, industry knowledge and connections are what count. Also more important than accuracy and profitability is the analysis “success at generating underwriting business or financing commissions.”

Instead of paying a lot of attention to analyst ratings and price targets, you will likely be better served in your investing by studying companies on your own and assessing their health, growth prospects, management quality, competition, regulatory concerns, and opportunities for market share and growth.

The Motley Fool Responds: Many ETFs, such as ones with low fees that are based on indexes tracking broad markets, are solid and will serve investors very well. You’re referring, however, to a dangerous kind of ETF — one that uses leverage (debt) and derivatives in order to amplify gains.

One of the problems with such ETFs is that they amplify losses too, so if the underlying investment drops 20 percent, the ETF drops 40 percent. (We refer to this approach as “levering” or “shorting” in the expanded direction.)

ETFs with “2X” or “3X” in their names are extra-risky, as are ones that are “short,” betting against the stock’s, the overall market. After all, the market and most industries will tend to grow in value over the long term, albeit not in a straight line. Don’t bet against them unless you’re confident that they’re likely to fail.

Note that these so-called short ETFs are not meant to be used over long periods, as their returns are generally based on daily price movements. Most of us should steer clear of them.

Name That Company

I trace my roots back to 1925 and an eventful dust-up with Suiza Foods, which took my name. Over the years I acquired many companies and spun some off, such as Almond Breeze (sold to The Hain Celestial Group), Jewel Tea (sold to Private Equity;浊-tone and Almond Breeze), which became TreeHouse Foods and WhiteWave Foods. My brands today include Alta Dena, Ben & Jerry’s, Oroweat, Face & Body, Pure, Garlick Farms, Lehigh Valley Dairy Farms, Mayfield, McArthur, Meadow Gold, Oak Farms, T.G. Lee, TruMoo and Tuscan. I rake in more than $9 billion annually. Who am I?

Think you know the answer? We’ll announce it in next week’s Fool.

My Dumbest Investment

Ultra-Short — and Ultra-Risky

My dumbest investment was an exchange-traded fund (ETF) that sold short-term stocks in the financial industry, aiming to deliver investors three times the value of the decline in the stock price. I learned not to bet against the banks, as it’s like betting the casino will lose money. Totally stupid. I lost only a few hundred dollars, but at the time that was big money for me.

— TM, online

Write to Us! Send questions for Ask the Fool, Dumbest (or Smartest) Investments (up to 50 words), and your Trivia entries to Fool@fool.com or via regular mail to this newspaper, attn: The Motley Fool, Sorry, we can’t provide individual financial advice.

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**Ask the Fool: Triple Witching**

What are “triple-witching” days?

— JO, East Syracuse, New York

Triple witching occurs on the third Friday of March, June, and September each year. It’s when stock options, stock-index options and stock-index futures all simultaneously expire. The “triple-witching” hour is the one before the market closes on that day (from 3 to 4 p.m. Eastern time), and it’s when the stock market is likely to be more volatile than usual as traders buy and sell various securities before the final bell.

You can enjoy a profitable investing life without giving much thought to triple witching. Most options and futures contracts are on cash stocks, and their short-term pricing rather than long-term business growth. If you’re a long-term investor, these things don’t matter much.

**Q**

I’ve sometimes heard that a certain stock would be good as a long-term investment. What, exactly, does “long-term” mean?

— H.K., Las Cruces, New Mexico

**A**

Such expressions generally don’t have specific time frames in mind, but they usually mean at least a few years instead of a few weeks or months. Long-term investors buy stocks for many years is a good strategy for building significant wealth, as companies can grow for decades. When it comes to taxes, though, Uncle Sam defines long-term differently. The IRS considers an investment “long-term if you held it for at least one year.” And a day before selling. Any such gain would be a long-term capital gain, and can qualify for a lower tax rate overall and a lower tax rate for most of us and 20 percent for high earners. Assets held for less time are short-term, with short-term capital gains taxed at your ordinary income tax rate, which can be 25 percent or nearly 40 percent.

**Write to Us! Send questions for Ask the Fool, Dumbest (or Smartest) Investments (up to 50 words), and your Trivia entries to Fool@fool.com or via regular mail to this newspaper, attn: The Motley Fool, Sorry, we can’t provide individual financial advice.

**I’d like to buy a business; Penny Fisher, the Naples Daily News**

**A**

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**A**

**The Fool Responds:** Have you considered the pros and cons of starting your own business? What’s your unique niche in the market? What makes you qualified to run it?

**Q**

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Your local hometown hero

As your local independent agent, we’re your neighbor - someone you can trust and someone who’s here when you need us!

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NETWORKING

Bonita Springs Area Young Professionals at Fish Crazy Restaurant & Fish Market

Iberiabank welcomes Dr. Kurtis Biggs for season’s first In the Round

“Like” us on Facebook.com/NaplesFloridaWeekly to see more photos. We take more society and networking photos at area events than we can fit in the newspaper. If you think we missed you or one of your friends, go to floridaweekly.com and view the photo albums from the many events we cover. The website is also where you can purchase photos. Send us your society and networking photos. Include the names of everyone in the picture. Email them to cpierce@floridaweekly.com.
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<th>Neighborhood</th>
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<td>Park Shore</td>
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Lunch programs will shed light on association issues

SPECIAL TO FLORIDA WEEKLY

Iberiabank and Henry Johnson & Associates PA invite condominium and homeowners association board members and management companies to a series of educational lunch programs. The first takes place from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 16, at the bank branch at 2150 Goodlette-Frank Road and will cover construction lien laws, contract breaches and insurance issues.

Henry Paul Johnson has worked with condominium and homeowners associations throughout Southwest Florida for more than 30 years and is a member of the adjunct faculty at the Loretto Walker Institute of Technology and chairman of the education committee for the Collier Building Industry Association. In addition to his presentation, Anita Tynski and Karen Shawdee of Iberiabank will discuss the different types of loans that are available to condominium and homeowners associations for capital improvements and new construction projects. The two have nearly 65 years combined financial experience and work with more than 2,500 associations in Florida.

The seminar is free and open to the public, however, seating is limited and registration is required in advance. Call 403-6670 to sign up.

NABOR numbers indicate summer activity strong

SPECIAL TO FLORIDA WEEKLY

Activity in the Naples area housing market continues its upward momentum as evidenced in the latest market report released by the Naples Area Board of Realtors, NABOR tracks home listings and sales within Collier County (excluding Marco Island).

An 8 percent increase in overall pending sales (homes under contract), from 845 in July 2014 to 913 in July 2015, is one indication that real estate professionals stayed busy in July. Unlike July 2014, the NABOR numbers indicate summer activity strong.
Coastal Chic.

Prices from $1.3 Million. Sales Center Open Daily
Another Naples community by the developers of Moraya Bay & The Dunes
KaleaBay.com  239-793-0110   13910 Old Coast Road, Naples, FL 34110
Located off Vanderbilt Drive just north of Wiggins Pass Road

The lakefront clubhouse at Kalea Bay will be a social center of epic proportions. With three pools, an indoor/outdoor restaurant, poolside bar, expansive sundeck, tennis pavilion and nearby guest suites, a fun-in-the-sun day is guaranteed. All wrapped within our brand new hi-rise, resort-style community consisting of 3 and 4 bedroom waterfront residences.

Social Cool.
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Property Type</th>
<th>Details</th>
<th>Price</th>
<th>MLS Number</th>
<th>Contact</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NAPLES</td>
<td>Lakefront Executive Home &amp; Cabana</td>
<td>5 BR + Den, 5.5 BA Pool &amp; Spa</td>
<td>$2,225,000</td>
<td>215037074</td>
<td>Liz Appling 239.272.7281</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IRIS COVE</td>
<td>3 BR Pool Home</td>
<td>Wraparound Lake Views; Southern Exposure</td>
<td>$2,149,000</td>
<td>215010866</td>
<td>Connie Lummis, The Lummis Team 239.289.3543</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Naples Club Estates</td>
<td>4 BR + Den, 4 Full &amp; 3 Half Baths</td>
<td>Gated 155 Acres w/39 Estate Homes</td>
<td>$1,795,000</td>
<td>213005455</td>
<td>Roger Stening, The Fischer Group 239.770.4707</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pelican Bay</td>
<td>Private Pool</td>
<td>Highrise Amenities</td>
<td>$1,395,000</td>
<td>215080601</td>
<td>Steve Suddeth &amp; Jenn Nicol 239.784.0693</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regency Towers</td>
<td>3 BR Co-Op Situated on the Beach</td>
<td>Westerly View of The Gulf for Beautiful Sunsets</td>
<td>$1,199,000</td>
<td>214048750</td>
<td>Steve Suddeth &amp; Ben Maltese 239.784.0693</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capri</td>
<td>Beautifully &amp; Completely Updated Home</td>
<td>4.15+ acres</td>
<td>$699,000</td>
<td>215046496</td>
<td>Roger Stening, The Fischer Group 239.770.4707</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cottages Plus Acreage</td>
<td>3 BR + Den, 3.5 BA</td>
<td>Serene Preserve Setting</td>
<td>$585,000</td>
<td>215053881</td>
<td>Kurt Petersen 239.777.6080</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peck</td>
<td>Beautiful 4.15 acres</td>
<td>Beautiful Views of Lake &amp; Fairways</td>
<td>$685,000</td>
<td>215030328</td>
<td>Cory Reiter, The Lummis Team 239.273.3722</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bonaire Springs</td>
<td>Newly Decorated Furnished 3 BR, 3.5 BA Condo</td>
<td>Beautiful Views of Lake &amp; Fairways</td>
<td>$525,000</td>
<td>215031278</td>
<td>The Taranto Team 239.572.00767</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vines</td>
<td>Well Maintained 1st Floor Condo</td>
<td>Beautiful Courtyard Home</td>
<td>$499,900</td>
<td>215032861</td>
<td>Bette Pitzer 239.960.2627</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bonaire Springs</td>
<td>Fantastical 3 BR + Den, 2 BA Newer Pool Home</td>
<td>Beautiful Courtyard Home</td>
<td>$699,000</td>
<td>215008057</td>
<td>Dott Pagan, The Fagan Team 239.272.4946</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paradise Village</td>
<td>3 Bedrooms + Office/Lot</td>
<td>Wood &amp; Tile Floors Throughout</td>
<td>$535,000</td>
<td>215038544</td>
<td>Pam Olson 239.464.6873</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pelican Landing</td>
<td>Beautifully &amp; Completely Updated Home</td>
<td>155 Acres w/39 Estate Homes</td>
<td>$1,259,000</td>
<td>215030435</td>
<td>Pamela McCaff 239.273.7428</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bonaire Springs</td>
<td>Light, Bright &amp; Airy 2 BR + Den, 2 BA</td>
<td>Pet Friendly Community - No Size Restrictions</td>
<td>$299,999</td>
<td>215009083</td>
<td>Liz Appling 239.272.7281</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Pointe at Pelican Landing</td>
<td>Furnished 2 BR, 2 BA Condo in Quiet, Private Location</td>
<td>Golf Access Off Imperial River, Calling All Bathers!</td>
<td>$399,000</td>
<td>215000857</td>
<td>Dott Pagan, The Fagan Team 239.272.4946</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bonita Springs</td>
<td>Residential Lot on Imperial River</td>
<td>Oversize Boat Dock in Place</td>
<td>$275,000</td>
<td>215030413</td>
<td>Jim Griffeth, Bokhlin Team 239.322.2409</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ultimate Condo Lifestyle</td>
<td>Well Maintained 1st Floor Condo</td>
<td>Beautiful Courtyard Home</td>
<td>$699,000</td>
<td>215044798</td>
<td>Kurt Petersen 239.777.6080</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pelican Landing</td>
<td>5 BR + Den, 4 Full &amp; 3 Half Baths</td>
<td>Close to 5th Ave. S.</td>
<td>$199,000</td>
<td>215044798</td>
<td>Gary Ryan 239.273.6796</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bonita Beach</td>
<td>Great Sunsets</td>
<td>Cross the Street to the Beach</td>
<td>$174,900</td>
<td>214065734</td>
<td>Gary Ryan 239.273.6796</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Only two home sites remain in Caprini at Miromar Lakes

COURTESY PHOTO

The Custom Courtyard design has three bedrooms, 3½ baths, a library, family room and three-car garage in 4,842 total square feet (3,322 under air). A unique feature of this plan is one of the bathrooms and a bedroom are in a cabana guesthouse that includes a sitting room and kitchenette. A gated entry leads to an interior courtyard with a pool, a spa, brick paver sundek and a covered patio with summer kitchen and bar counter top. The freestanding guest cabana is adjacent to the gated entry, just across the pool deck from the main house where a double door entry opens into a large angled foyer. The foyer opens to the living room that has a tall wall of curved windows. The formal dining room with a tray ceiling is adjacent to the living room.

To the right of the foyer are the kitchen, family room, library, and utility room. The kitchen is between the dining room and the family room, making it ideally situated for entertaining or for relaxed family dining. A breakfast nook overlooks the patio. The bedroom has a full bath and walk-in closet. The library also has a walk-in closet and is adjacent to the powder bath, making it an option for additional guest accommodations. The family room, library and bedroom all overlook the pool, and each room has sliding glass doors providing direct access to the deck.

The master suite occupies the entire west wing of the Custom Courtyard home. The bedroom has a coffered ceiling, a spacious sitting area and double doors to the deck and pool area. His-and-hers walk-in closets are on either side of the hallway leading to the master bath, which has an oval soaking tub, separate walk-in shower and dual vanities with sinks. Exterior features in both the Capri and Custom Courtyard plans include a custom-designed heated pool and raised spa, a full outdoor kitchen and wet bar, a 2¼-inch mahogany front door and Andersen impact-resistant windows. Interior details include wood floorings throughout the private master suite, including a spacious master bathroom with soaking tub, shower enclosure and his-and-hers vanities. A door from the master bedroom provides direct access to the lanai.

The Custom Courtyard design also features a great room with coffered ceiling details. The foyer has a tall wall of curved windows. The building site is ideally situated for entertaining or for relaxed family dining. A breakfast nook overlooks the patio. The bedroom has a full bath and walk-in closet. The library also has a walk-in closet and is adjacent to the powder bath, making it an option for additional guest accommodations. The family room, library and bedroom all overlook the pool, and each room has sliding glass doors providing direct access to the deck.

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Interior finishes can be customized for each of the final two home sites available in Miromar Lakes’ Caprini villa neighborhood.

The home features an octagonal foyer with coffered ceiling details. The foyer has a tall wall of curved windows. The building site is ideally situated for entertaining or for relaxed family dining. A breakfast nook overlooks the patio. The bedroom has a full bath and walk-in closet. The library also has a walk-in closet and is adjacent to the powder bath, making it an option for additional guest accommodations. The family room, library and bedroom all overlook the pool, and each room has sliding glass doors providing direct access to the deck.

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SPECIAL TO FLORIDA WEEKLY

Caprini, a Tuscan-inspired single-family villa neighborhood on Lake Como in Miromar Lakes’ Beach & Golf Club, has only two sites remaining, both on a quiet cul de sac. The builder, Distinctive Communities, has introduced floor plans designed to maximize the shape and size of each site, with the buyer being able to customize selections.

The new plans present casual yet elegant comfort with progressive, energy-efficient features.

The Capri has three bedrooms, 3½ baths, a library and a two-car garage in 3,769 total square feet (2,965 under air). The home features an octagonal foyer with coffered ceiling details. The foyer is the pivot point from which several areas of the home are accessible. Double doors on the left open to the library, while an adjacent hallway leads to the powder bath, laundry room and a storage closet. The library’s proximity to the half-bath and closet make it a potential guest room option. To the right of the foyer are two guest bedrooms, each with a full bath.

An open great room plan accommodates a living room and formal dining area. A wall of sliding glass doors connects the great room to the lanai and features pavers and a small area for a three-sided eat-in counter. A double door entry opens into the great room and features grates into the great room and features pavers and a small area for a three-sided eat-in counter. An open great room plan accommodates a living room and formal dining area. A wall of sliding glass doors connects the great room to the lanai and features pavers and a three-sided eat-in counter. The library with a half-bath and closet make it a potential guest room option. To the right of the foyer are two guest bedrooms, each with a full bath.

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where overall pending sales and over-all inventory both decreased 13 percent, activity in July 2015 had many peaks and valleys. The overall inventory decreased 1 percent, from 3,563 in July 2014 to 3,538 in July 2015, but inventory for single-family homes rebounded with a 7 percent increase, from 1,906 single-family homes in July 2014 to 2,040 this current year.

Overall pending sales for homes over $800,000 increased 23 percent from July 2014 to July 2015, and overall pending sales for homes over $300,000 increased 16 percent, from 4,213 homes in the 12 months ending July 2014 to 4,978 homes in the 12 months ending July 2015.

Kathy Zorn, broker/owner at Florida Home Realty, says the $1 million and above market has been the most interesting-Frye Realty Inc., agrees, saying, “The demand for this area. Not anymore,” she adds.

Many homeowners are feeling confident that their homes have regained some value since the bottom of the market in 2012. This is most apparent in the single-family homes market, where the $300,000 and below price category fell 31 percent, but other categories saw big gains.

The July 2015 report provides comparables of single-family homes and condominiums (via the Southwest Florida MLS), price ranges and geographic segmentation and includes an overall market summary. Here are some of the overall findings:

Overall pending sales increased 8 percent, from 845 homes in July 2014 to 913 homes in July 2015.

Overall closed sales increased 1 percent, from 971 homes in the 12 months ending July 2014 to 987 homes in the 12 months ending July 2015.

Overall closed sales for condominiums in the $800,000 to $1,000,000 category increased 38 percent, from 866 in the 12 months ending July 2014 to 1,105 condominiums in the 12 months ending July 2015.

Overall median closed price increased 14 percent, from $295,000 in the 12 months ending July 2014 to $336,000 in the 12 months ending July 2015.

Overall median closed price increased 8 percent, from $295,000 in the 12 months ending July 2014 to $336,000 in the 12 months ending July 2015.
As a tourist, President Obama has been a homebody trailing almost every president since John F. Kennedy in vacation days taken. Like most presidents, however, he has his favorite vacation spots.

Since he became president, Mr. Obama and family have spent Christmas vacations at the beach in Hawaii. But like President Bill Clinton and many Washington, D.C., executives, President Obama and family enjoy Martha’s Vineyard in the summer, when temperatures in the Capitol frequently soar past the 90s.

One of the prettiest vacation spots for the Obama family is a private compound on Martha’s Vineyard, Chilmark Pond, with views over the pond and crashing waves on the beach a short rowboat ride away. Chilmark is where Steven Spielberg filmed “Jaws” in 1975 and home to Obama friends Ted Danson and Mary Steenbergen. The First Family spent eight days there in August 2013.

Now for sale at $22.5 million, Chilmark Pond is the most expensive listing on the island. Originally built in 1961 on 10 acres, the house had a complete redesign in 2006 as a light-filled contemporary residence similar to the Obama winter vacation homes in Hawaii. In addition to a half basketball court and home gym, there is a heated pool and a private boat dock on the pond.

The 6,967-square-foot main house sits 120 feet above sea level. There are six bedrooms and seven baths, three fireplaces and floor-to-ceiling windows. A two-bedroom guesthouse is also on the property.

The listing agent is Thomas Wallace of Sotheby’s International Realty in Edgartown, Mass. For more information about this and other entertaining, important and unusual real estate news stories, visit TopTenRealEstateDeals.com.

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Florida Weekly’s Open Houses

Open Houses are Sunday 1-4, unless otherwise marked

>$300,000
1 • BERKSHIRE LAKES • 6632 Merryport Lane • $386,000 • Premier Sotheby's International Realty • Jon Peter Vollmer • 239.250.9414

>$400,000
2 • BONITA BAY - BAY POINTE • 26091 Montego Pointe Court #203 • $429,000 • PSIR • Mark Lavan • 239.754.5686
3 • KENSINGTON • 5089 Kensington High • $499,000 • PSIR • Saxie Culp • 239.290.9000

>$500,000
4 • FIDDLER’S CREEK - CASCADA • 9025 Cascada Way #202 • $529,000 • PSIR • Michelle Thomas • 239.860.7176
5 • THE QUARRY • 9527 Quartz Lane • $539,000 • PSIR • Kara Eisenga • 239.398.0461

>$800,000
6 • VINEYARDS - HAMMOCK ISLES • 5910 Hammock Isles Circle • $848,000 • PSIR • Denise Sands • 215.327.9930
7 • QUAIL CREEK • 12887 Valewood Drive • $888,000 • PSIR • Melinda Gunther • 239.297.2155
8 • ISLES OF CAPRI • 107 Trinidad Street • $989,000 • PSIR • Ann Patterson • 239.826.6655

>$900,000
9 • FIDDLER’S CREEK - MAHOGANY BEND • 3848 Mahogany Bend Drive • $999,900 • PSIR • Michelle Thomas • 239.860.7176

>$1,000,000
10 • CABREO AT MEDITERRA • 14725 Cabreo Drive • $1,295,000 • John R Wood Properties • Emily K. Buas & Tade Bua-Bell • 239.404.6800
11 • QUAIL CREEK • 13501 Pond Apple Drive • $1,280,000 • PSIR • Bonnie Nageon del Lestang • 239.280.6997
12 • VANDERBILT BEACH - VANDERBILT SHORES • 1069 Gulfshore Drive #600 • $1,595,000 • PSIR • Pat Caulli • 239.250.0562
13 • GREY OAKS - ESTUARY • 1220 Gordon River Trail • From $1,795,000 • PSIR • Call 239.261.2200 • Open Monday-Saturday 9am-5pm & Sunday 12-5pm
14 • THE MOORINGS - FAIRWAY TERRACE • 69 Fairway Terrace • $1,799,000 • PSIR • Debron Fowles • 239.290.9000
15 • GREY OAKS - ESTATES • 2751 Buckthorn Way • $1,999,000 • PSIR • Fahada Saad • 239.595.8500

>$2,000,000
16 • PARK SHORE - HORIZON HOUSE • 7931 Gulf Shore Boulevard North, Penthouse 1A • $2,000,000 • PSIR • Pat Duggan • 239.290.1980
17 • OLD NAPLES - MANGROVE BAY • 31 Goodlette Road South • $2,000,000 • Paradise Realty of Naples, LLC • Sales Center • 239.261.2200 • Open Daily
18 • THE MOORINGS • 728 Regatta Road • $2,125,000 • Berkshire Hathaway • Jackie May • 239.450.0776 • Daily 1-5pm
19 • PELICAN MARSH - BAY LAUREL ESTATES • 1730 Sparkle Lane • $2,695,000 • PSIR • Erik David Barber • 321.526.4911
20 • OLD NAPLES • 386 Central Avenue • $2,999,000 • PSIR • Jillian Trettis • 321.759.9434

>$3,000,000
21 • THE MOORINGS • 611 Spring Line Drive • $3,549,000 • PSIR • Phil Collins • 239.404.6800
22 • OLD NAPLES • 630 5th Avenue North • $3,597,000 • PSIR • Chris Resop • 239.281.6064
23 • THE MOORINGS • 875 Wedge Drive • $3,595,000 • PSIR • Phil Collins • 239.404.6800
24 • PADOVA AT MEDITERRA • 1502 Frescott Way • $3,990,000 • John R Wood Properties • Emily K. Buas & Tade Bua-Bell • 239.398.0461
25 • GREY OAKS - ESTUARY • 1473 Anhinga Pointe • $3,995,000 • PSIR • Melissa Williams • 239.248.7238

>$5,000,000
26 • PORT ROYAL • 605 Galleon Drive • $5,850,000 • Berkshire Hathaway • Jackie May • 239.450.0776 • Daily 1-5pm
27 • TREVISO AT MEDITERRA • 16996 Treviso Way • $5,990,000 • John R Wood Properties • Emily K. Buas & Tade Bua-Bell • 239.398.0461

>$6,000,000
28 • GREY OAKS - ESTUARY • 1395 Great Egret Trail • $6,900,000 • PSIR • Jamie Dockweiler • 239.236.3703
29 • PORT ROYAL • 901 Galleon Drive • $6,650,000 • PSIR • Phil Collins • 239.404.6800

>$7,000,000
30 • GREY OAKS - ESTUARY • 1224 Gordon River Trail • $7,095,000 • PSIR • Melissa Williams • 239.248.7238

>$9,000,000
31 • PORT ROYAL • 3250 Gin Lane • $9,450,000 • PSIR • Frank Sajtar • 239.290.9000

>$22,000,000
32 • PORT ROYAL • 840 Admiralty Parade • $22,900,000 • Berkshire Hathaway • Jackie May • 239.450.0776 • Daily 1-5pm

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What a DOLL

Doll maker inspired by influential, sometimes overlooked women in history

BY LINDSEY NESMITH
lnesmith@floridaweekly.com

Walk into any toy section in a big-box store and you will see a proliferation of pink, overly mature and unrealistically molded dolls available for young girls to take home. For almost a generation now, mothers, grandmothers, aunts and beloved female role models have wrestled with the dilemma of whether to purchase these toys for the young girls in their lives.

Now a local seamstress is inserting herself into the problem by creating a line of huggable, un-pink dolls modeled after accomplished women in history.

Rosa Leon Riley, a Naples mental health counselor and owner of the craft website Twirling Tiny Sticks, recently launched her line of “Joan and Her Rad Friends” dolls. Only available on her

SEE DOLL, C4

Four plays announced for New Works Festival

SPECIAL TO FLORIDA WEEKLY

Four plays have been chosen for Gulfshore Playhouse’s third annual New Works Festival, which will bring playwrights, actors and directors from across the country to The Norris Center Sept. 24-27.

Each of the works is assigned a director and actors who work together for 14.5 hours before performing a public staged reading.

The New Works Festival allows playwrights to transition from writing in a solitary environment to adding actors and ultimately an audience to help them understand how their plays work in performance. Audience feedback is a vital part of the process.

“I am passionate about what I view

SEE PLAYS, C16

Writing Challenge
Photograph inspires fresh fiction from Southwest Florida writers.

Twice the mystery
Two murders vie for attention in new Matt Royal story.

Nailed it
When it’s worth getting ready for that salon appointment.
On a recent Monday morning, I packed a stack of pages to edit and headed to my local nail salon. Never mind the fact that I wore old jeans and a T-shirt, sported no makeup and had my hair pulled back in a ponytail. Who dresses up for a pedicure? Women who want the gorgeous nail tech, that’s who.

I had forgotten about him until I arrived: the painfully good-looking young man at the nail salon who only seemed to work on the most attractive women. He’d talk to them in a low voice while he filed their nails, and the women would giggle and blush. When he’d start in on the foot rub, they’d lean back and close their eyes, a rapturous expression on their lovely faces.

On this particular Monday, the salon was empty except for one other customer, a matronly woman deep in the middle of a session with a female nail tech. I was led to a pedicure chair in the back and offered a seat. As the tub filled with hot water, I rolled up my pants legs and stepped in, grimacing at the obvious fact that I’d gone a few days without shaving. I gave a mental shrug. Surely the lady working on my feet wouldn’t mind.

Just as she started to strap on her rubber gloves, an older man came over and whispered something in her ear. There was a brief discussion, and she yielded her place to him. He smiled at me as he sat down, but before he could even begin to cut my big toenail, the gorgeous nail tech appeared. All activity in the salon stopped as the handsome young man surveyed the room. The woman in the corner was almost done with her pedicure and that left — I realized with a flush — only me. The young man exchanged a few words with the man on the stool at my feet, and the older man stood so that the young man could take his place.

Up close, the nail tech was even more handsome than he had been at a distance. He spoke to me softly, reassuringly, as he pulled on his rubber gloves. My cheeks burned; of all the days to leave the house looking like a wreck. When the young man was gloved and ready, he clicked on the utility light hanging overhead. As my legs and feet blazed into blinding clarity, every unshaven hair seemed to stand up and announce its presence. I looked at the nail tech; he raised his eyebrows only slightly.

As he filed and buffed, he asked me polite questions about my life — Was I a teacher? Did I have pets? — and spoke sweetly about his own. When he started in on the foot rub, I leaned back and closed my eyes. It was, without exception, the best foot massage I’ve ever had.

Suddenly, I realized why the other women I’d seen at the salon always looked so good, their hair done, makeup just right. Their effort had seemed excessive at the time, but now I understood what was at stake. I would never show up unprepared again.

— Artis Henderson is the author of “Unremarried Widow” published by Simon and Schuster.
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DOLL

From page 1

website, the line features depictions of medieval military phenom Joan of Arc, freedom fighter Harriet Tubman and Naval yeomanette Loretta Perfectus Walsh.

A friend planted the idea with Ms. Riley via an offhanded comment during a museum visit.

“She said, ‘When I have kids, they’re only going to play with dolls that are educational figures,’” the doll maker recalls. “The conversation didn’t go any further than that, but I kept it in my mind and thought it was a good concept.”

Ms. Riley picked up sewing and crafting when she was 28 years old and her seamstress mother gifted her with a sewing machine. Since then, and after a few overly ambitious projects, she has taught herself how to sew and launched Twirling Tiny Sticks over a year ago. She now has an Etsy shop and is a fixture at local farmers markets.

Her blog, also names Twirling Tiny Sticks, is another creative expression evolution as a seamstress and businesswoman. Through posts about things like crossbody bags, bibs, cocktail napkins and other small household and personal items she makes.

Launching Twirling Tiny Sticks has been a learning process, she says, and she hopes to one day turn it into a full-time occupation.

“It’s within the last year-and-a-half that I’ve been as serious as it is now. It wasn’t really until a year and-a-half that I’ve been working in earnest on Joan and her Rad Friends,” she says. “I started in February 2014, and I really wanted to do this as more than just a hobby. I’m going full force to have a crafting business.”

She started working in earnest on “Joan and her Rad Friends” last March. She had no experience at all creating custom dolls for $57.99 each. The bulk of her business consists of selling items such as crossbody bags, bibs, cocktail napkins and other small household and personal items she makes.

Each doll is $47.99. A portion of each sale from the first 100 dolls will be donated to Girls on the Run of Collier County. Ms. Riley also creates custom dolls for $87.99 each. For more information, visit twirlingtinsticks.com.

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WEEK OF AUGUST 27-SEPTEMBER 2, 2015

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NAPLES FLORIDA WEEKLY
Call it Phil’s law. Whenever you have a mystery novel with two separate murder cases, the chances are they will become linked in some way. Such is the situation in the latest from H. Terrell Griffin in his Matt Royal series.

A couple of murders are occupying their time and energy, though Longboat Key Police Det. J.D. (Jennifer Diane) Duncan and usually retired lawyer Matt Royal find plenty of energy for each other.

In J.D.’s professional lap is the question of why a nude, beautiful, surgically enhanced blonde named Linda Favereaux had been found, skull crushed, in her enormous, luxurious beach home. Her husband, two-plus decades her senior, is nowhere to be found.

Matt has agreed to come out of retirement to defend his good friend Abby Lester, wife of J.D.’s police chief boss. She has been accused of murdering a shady local businessman named Nate Bannister. Worse yet (though what’s worse than murder, really?), she has been accused of having had an affair with the man.

A piece of physical evidence puts Abby at the scene of the crime. She says she had never even met Bannister. If that’s true, how did that evidence get there?

What’s going on? Why is the case moving so quickly? What does it mean that the prosecuting attorney is bowed down, in another jurisdiction within the state? Why has the investigation been given over to a state law enforcement agency? And why does the agent in charge seem to be so eager for this assignment?

Back to J.D.’s case: While the Favereaux couple has been living on Longboat Key for a couple of years, hardly anyone knows them. They keep to themselves. It’s obvious that they are enormously wealthy, but what is the source of that wealth?

These mysteries are like two giant pinatas with many smaller mysteries inside.

J.D. has a case that leads to upper echelons of clandestine government operations. Yet it remains pretty much a mystery, there is a tangled up with people in high places, courtroom drama. His case, too, becomes linked in some way. Such is the situation in the latest from H. Terrell Griffin in his Matt Royal series.

Somehow in both cases, Matt gets into their heads and usually inaccessible records. It’s obvious that they are extremely wealthy, but what is the source of that wealth?

Matt’s story turns into a legal procedural and ultimately into a finely crafted courtroom drama. His case, too, becomes tangled up with people in high places — power players who have a lot to hide, including who really killed Nate Bannister. The pacing of “Chasing Justice” is mighty fine, as is the dialogue between Matt and J.D. as they share what they can and brainstorm each other’s cases. It’s fascinating to get into their heads as they turn over possibilities, second-guess motives, run what-if scenarios and review emerging pieces of evidence.

As ever in a Matt Royal mystery, there is a sterling cast of supporting players. Once again, we meet the mysterious Jock, a superspy with access to national leaders and usually inaccessible records. He has been a kind of deus ex machina in earlier Matt Royal adventures, so it’s something of an in-joke when he shows up again.

We also meet Victoria “Tori” Madison, a piece of bad-girl work if there ever were one. And what about George Swann, the conceited prosecuting attorney who lords it over Matt and has readers waiting for Matt to destroy him (in the courtroom, that is)? The presiding judge, Wayne Lee Thomas, is another fascinating, well-drawn character. His manner and his rulings are important ingredients, lessons in respect for the law, the process and the office he fills.

Mr. Griffin’s handling of the Sarasota area setting is as sure-handed and appealing as ever. The charm of the community radiates through the novel with the impact of an additional major character. It’s a place for fun, and is thus the perfect setting for the good-natured humor that the author works into his totally convincing and appealing major characters and their relationships.

The Matt Royal mystery series is one of the best going, and Griffin’s temporary resurrection of his career as a lawyer provider a splendid variation on a captivating theme. ■

— Phil Jason, Ph.D., United States Naval Academy professor emeritus of English, is a poet, critic and freelance writer with 20 books to his credit, including several studies of war literature and a creative writing text.
WHAT TO DO, WHERE TO GO

THEATER

Some Enchanted Evening – Through Sept. 26 at the Broadway Palm Theatre, Fort Myers. 278-4422 or broadwaypalmt producers.com.

Happy – By Laboratory Theatre of Florida Aug. 28-29, 1634 Woodford Ave., Fort Myers. 288-0481 or laboratorythea terflorida.org.

THURSDAY, 8.27

Turtle Time – Learn about the log gerhead’s life story and Delnor-Wiggins State Park’s role in nesting season at 9:30 a.m. Reservations recommended. Free after park entry fee ($2 for bicyclists and walkers), $4 per car with one person, $6 per car with two or more people. 597- 0650 or floridastateparks.org.

Paint Your Heart Out – Bring your beverage of choice to enjoy while receiving guidance in painting your own masterpiece starting at 6:30 p.m. at Vino’s Picasso. Tonight’s subject: Lovegrove’s Heart. $42 includes all supplies. 2467 Vanderbilt Beach Road. 341-8750 or vinopicsasso.com.

HEMI Guy – Most recognizable from Dodge commercials and as the Season 5 five winner of “Last Comic Standing,” John Reep performs at Off the Hook Comedy Club tonight through Sunday, Aug. 30. Check website for show times and prices. 2506 2nd St. Thursday, Sept. 3. 643-7275 or offthehookcomedy.com.

FRIDAY, 8.28

The Power Within – Join the medita tion session and chill out at 10 a.m. at Goddess I Am. $10. 600 Goodlette-Frank Road. 228-6949 or goddessiam.com.

Yappy Hour – Pucci & Catana pet bou tique hosts yappy hour to benefit Golden Retriever Rescue of Southwest Florida from 5-7 p.m. Meet adoptable goldens and enjoy wine, hors d’oeuvres and music. O’Moló! – Colisano Children’s Museum of Naples invites you to the public to Communi nity Night with the Fort Myers Miracle frog at 6 p.m. in historic Naples’ Hammond Stadium in Fort Myers. $6.50, with a portion of ticket proceeds benefiting the museum. 5111 Collier Blvd.

Fight Night – WWE and the Super stars of Monday Night Raw come to Germain Arena at 7:30 p.m. $15-$65. 948-7825 or germainarena.com.

SATURDAY, 8.29

Purely Yoga – Purely You Spa hosts a yoga class at 8:30 a.m. that targets back pain by strengthening the core. $10 includes complimentary aromatherapy and a gift certifcate toward a pri vate yoga session. 3066 Tamiami Trail N. 326-8260 or purelyyouspa.com.

Book Signing – Kim McGuire signs her new book, “Flashback Katrina 10 Years Later” starting at 11 a.m. at Dillard’s in Coastland Center. 262-2322 or dillards.com.

All That Jazz – The Naples Jazzmas ters present an intimate 1-3 p.m. at Taki’s Cafe. Donations appreciated. 213-3058 or jazzydjm@gmail.com.

Battle Royale – Seminole Casino Immokalee hosts the final challenge in its month-long Battle of the Bands starting at noon in the Zig Zag Lounge. Free. (888) 218-0007 or seminoleimmok alee.com.

TUESDAY, 8.31

Yappy Hour – Hosted by the Fort Myers Bar Association at 6:30 p.m. in the Zig Zag Lounge. Free. 949 Second Ave. N. 261-0005.

Films for Lovers – Centers for the Arts Bonita Springs presents “The Wind Rises” (USA, 2013) at 7 p.m. A look at the life of Jiro Hirokoshi, who designed Japanese fighter planes during World War II. $10. 10300 Bonita Beach Road. 495-8899 or artcenterbonita.org.

TUESDAY, 9.1

Take a Walk – Take a 90-minute guided stroll along the shaded, 2.25-mile boardwalk at Audubon Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary starting at 9:30 a.m. Free with regular admission ($12 for adults, $6 for college students, $4 for ages 6-18, free for ages 5 and younger). Limited to 12 participants. $45 includes all supplies. 738-4184 or naplesgarden.org.

Read ‘em and see ‘em at the Naples Botanical Garden for diagnosis and tips for managing your lawn. Bring your lawn to the Garden for diagnosis and tips for managing your lawn. 643-7275 or naplesgarden.org.

Grow Organic – Naples Botanical Garden hosts a workshop on organic vegetable production at 9 a.m. Thursday, Sept. 3. 5111 Collier Blvd. $30 for members, $40 for non-members. 505-4620 or gardenclinic.org.

Fun with Friends and Collier County Domestic Violence Prevention and Education, $5 each for adults, $6 for college students, $4 for ages 6-18, free for ages 5 and younger). Limited to 12 participants. Tours are offered every Monday, Tuesday and Friday through October. 348-9125 or cork screw.audubon.org.

Rec Room – The Naples Italian American Foundation hosts mom jam, bridge, and book club meetings at 11:30 a.m. $6 for members, $3 for non-members. 7038 Airport Road. 597-3210 or niafoundation.org.

The fifth annual Kids Day – Miromar Outlet hosts arts and crafts for kids from 9-11 a.m. or 2-4 p.m. Free admission. 348-9125 or cork screw.audubon.org.

WEDNESDAY, 9.2

Garden Clinic – Bring photos or sam ples of your ailing greenery to Naples Botanical Garden for diagnosis and tips for managing your lawn. 643-7275 or naplesgarden.org.

Comedy Club – Naples Regional Library screens “Funny Face” (USA, 1968) at 6 p.m. An impromptu fashion shoot at a bookstore results in a shop clerk being “discov ered.” Free. Registration required. 236- 7768 or collierlibrary.org.

Happy Hour – Join a ringer-led walk around Delnor-Wiggins State Park at 9 a.m. Thursday, Sept. 3. Free with park entry fee ($2 for bicyclists and walkers), $4 per car with one person, $6 per car with two or more people. 597-0650 or floridastateparks.org.

Garden City – Bring photos or sam ples of your ailing greenery to Naples Botanical Garden for diagnosis and tips for managing your lawn. 643-7275 or naplesgarden.org.

Garden City – Bring photos or sam ples of your ailing greenery to Naples Botanical Garden for diagnosis and tips for managing your lawn. 643-7275 or naplesgarden.org.

All Fun! – Centers for the Arts Bonita Springs invites guests to create a piece of art while enjoying pizza and wine starting at 5:30 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 3. 5111 Collier Blvd. 495-8899 or artcenterbonita.org.

Free Concert – Rick Howard and the Screwbumps perform on the lawn at Mercato starting at 6 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 3. 250-1080 or mercatoshops.com.

Foreign Film – South Regional Library screens “Amour” (France, 2012) at 6 p.m. A tale of two sexagenarian couple’s grown daughter has a stroke, their bond of love is severely tested. Bring lawn chairs. 5100 65th St. Lely Cultural Parkway 252-5425 or col lierlibrary.org.

Foxy Night – The Betty Fox Band performs at 6-10 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 5, at Artis—Naples. $15. 597-9990 or artisnaples.org.

Free Fun – The Conservancy of Southwest Florida offers free admission for kids 12 and younger every Saturday in September. 262-0304 or conservancy.org.

Find Furry Friends – For Footed Friends and Collier County Domestic Animals, $5 adoption event at 11 a.m. Saturday, Sept. 5 at the pet store. 1304 Livingston Road. 384-9999 or forfootedfriends.com.

Improv Night – Enjoy ad-libbing at its finest at the Broadway Palm Theatre at 8 p.m. Free admission for kids 12 and younger every Saturday in September. 262-0304 or conservancy.org.

T.G.I.M. – The Fort Myers Film Fes tival kicks off a new season of T.G.I.M. screenings and discussions at 6:30 p.m. Monday, Sept. 7, at the Sidney & Berne Davis Art Center in downtown Fort Myers. sbdac.com.
WHAT TO DO, WHERE TO GO

Films for Film Lovers – Centers for the Arts Bonita Springs screens “Like Water for Chocolate” (Mexico, 1992) at 7 p.m. Monday, Sept. 7. Mama Elena’s youngest daughter, Tita, is forced to take care of her mother and live with her former love after he marries her sister. $8. 495-8989 or artcenterbonita.org.

Labor Day BBQ – Naples Italian American Foundation hosts a barbecue buffet at 12:30 p.m. on Labor Day, Monday, Sept. 7. Bring a card game or board to enjoy with others. Make reservations by 4 p.m. Friday, Sept. 4. $15 for members, $18 for others. 7035 Airport Road. 597-3210 or niafoundation.org.

Story Time – Bring the kids to Lovers Key State Park for a reading of Eric Carle’s “A House for Hermit Crab” at 10 a.m. Tuesday, Sept. 8. Reservations required. Free with park entry fee. 463-4588 or floridastateparks.org.

Free Film – Headquarters Regional Library screens “Still Alice” (USA, 2015) at 2 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 9. A linguistics professor and her family find their bonds tested when she is diagnosed with early onset Alzheimer’s disease. Free, registration required. 285 Orange Blossom Drive. 593-0177 or collierlibrary.org.

Take the Cannoli – Naples International Film Festival screens “The Godfather” (1972) at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 9, at Silverspot Cinema at Mercato. $30. 775-3456 or silverspotcinema.com.

Champagne & Chocolate – Shula’s Steakhouse hosts the fifth annual Champagne & Chocolate Sunset Cruise to benefit The United Way setting out on the Naples Princess at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 9. 885. Reservations required. 699-376- or shulasnaples.com.

Classical Concert – South Regional Library hosts a chamber concert at 5 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 10. Free. 8065 Lely Cultural Parkway. 252-7542 or collierlibrary.org.

Raku for You – Richard Rosen guides participants through painting a bisqued vase using the ancient technique of raku from 5:30-8:30 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 10, at his studio in the Naples Art District. $48 includes a casual buffet dinner. 2172 J&C Blvd. 821-0161 or rictra@earthlink.net.

Fancy Lady – Comedian Tammy Pescatelli takes the stage at Off the Hook Comedy Club Thursday through Sunday, Sept. 10. Check website for prices and showtimes. 290 Vanderbilt Beach Road. 389-6901 or offthehookcomedy.com.

Films for Film Lovers – Centers for the Arts Bonita Springs screens “13 Tzameti” (France, 2005) at 7 p.m. Monday, Sept. 14. Sebastian follows instructions not meant for him while a cop is tailing him into a degenerate, clandestine world where men gamble with each other’s lives. $8. 495-8989 or artcenterbonita.org.

Military Lecture – Hodges University presents a lecture about Nathan Bedford Forrest at 1 p.m. Monday, Sept. 14, at Vi at Bentley Village. 561 Bentley Village Court. 525-583-3353 or hodges.edu.

The Betty Fox Band performs at 6:30 and 9 p.m. Friday, Sept. 4, at Arts—Naples. $15. — artsnaples.org
**WHAT TO DO**

**Great Bowls of Fire** – Learn some glazing techniques while creating your own ceramic bowl in a session starting at 5:30 p.m. Tuesday, Sept. 15, at the Center for the Arts Bonita Springs. $55. 26100 Old 41 Road. 495-8989 or artcenterbonita.org.

**Dinner Social** – Naples Italian American Foundation hosts a four-course dinner with dessert and coffee at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 16, followed by cards and mahjongg. Proper attire required (no shorts or jeans). $25 for members, $30 for non-members. 7035 Airport Road. 597-5210 or niafoundation.org.

**Kids’ Concert** – Artis—Naples presents “The Snow Queen” with the Naples Philharmonic for homeschoolers and families starting at 9:45 a.m. Friday, Sept. 18. Check website for dates. 597-1900 or artisnaples.org.

**Paws in the Day** – The Continental and Humane Society Naples host Bow Wow Brunch, a dog-friendly meal for young professionals who want to learn about getting involved with HSN at 11 a.m. Sunday, Sept. 20. $30. 643-1555 or hsnaples.org.

Hurry to Everglades Wonder Gardens, home of Southwest Florida’s only pink flamingos, before Monday, Sept. 7, when special summer pricing ends for Collier and Lee residents. With proof of residency, locals pay $7 for adults and $5 for children. The gardens on Old 41 Road in Bonita Springs are open daily from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. 992-2591 or evergladeswondergardens.com.
Kiss Your Double Chin Goodbye!

If you are bothered by your double chin, you’re not alone! According to a survey conducted by the American Society of Dermatologic Surgery, 68% of consumers are bothered by their double chin. In contrast, 71% are bothered by lines and wrinkles between their eyes. Good news is the FDA approved an injectable treatment that contours and improves the appearance of moderate to severe submental fullness or “double chin.” To learn more about submental fullness or the treatment, please call Naples Laser and MedSpa at 239.228.7491.

Naples Laser and MedSpa
NaplesMedSpa.com 239.228.7491

Cultural Lecture – Hodges University presents a lecture about the people and places of South America at 1 p.m. Monday, Sept. 21, at Vi at Bentley Village. 561 Bentley Village Court. $25. 598-6633 or hodges.edu.

Films for Film Lovers – Centers for the Arts Bonita Springs screens “Buena Vista Social Club” (France, 1999) at 7 p.m. Monday, Sept. 21. Aging Cuban musicians are brought out of retirement by an extraordinary bandleader. $10. 495-8909 or artcenterbonita.org.

Remember the Ladies – Naples Regional Library hosts a one-woman play about the rich and varied life of Abigail Adams at 3 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 23. Free. registration required. 263-7768 or collierlibrary.org.

Mangrove Walk – Explore the mangroves and learn about the unique ecosystem from a park ranger at Delnor-Wiggins State Park at 9:30 a.m. Thursday, Sept. 24. Free. Park entry fee ($2 for bicyclists and walkers, $4 per car with one person, $6 per car with two or more people). 597-6106 or floridastateparks.org.

Script Club – Headquarters Regional Library launches a new club that explores how theater artists interpret scripts as they prepare for stage performances. The first session is at 2 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 24. Gulfshore Playhouse staff will lead a discussion about “The Glass Menagerie.” Register and pick up script 14 days prior to meeting. Free. 2385 Orange Blossom Drive. 593-0177 or collierlibrary.org.

Passion for Fashion – Waterside Shops hosts its third annual Craving Fashion event at 5:30 p.m. Friday, Sept. 25, to benefit Make-a-Wish Southern Florida and The United Way of Collier County. Sit, shop and stroll while enjoying bites from dozens of area 40 restaurants. $50. 598-4665 or watersideshops.com.

Balancing Workshop – Shangri-La Springs holds a chakra balancing workshop at 1 p.m. Friday, Sept. 25. $27750 Old 41 Road. 949-0749 or shangrilasprings.com.

Finders Keepers – Lovers Key State Park celebrates National Public Lands Day with a scavenger hunt through the park at 9 a.m. Saturday, Sept. 26. Digital or phone camera required. Free, but registration required. Park entry fee waived for participants. 463-4588 or floridastateparks.org.

Boat Show – The Marine Industries Association of Collier County presents the Naples Boat Show at Naples City Dock on Saturday and Sunday, Oct. 3-4.

Yard Sale – Lovers Key State Park celebrates America Recycles Day with a community yard sale at 8 a.m. Saturday, Nov. 14. Registration for spaces now open. 463-4588 or friendsoloverskey.org.

— Email calendar listings and high-resolution photos to Lindsey Nesmith at lnesmith@floridaweekly.com. Please send Word or text documents and jpgs with pertinent details, cost and contact information. No pdfs or photos of fliers. Deadline for calendar submissions is noon Monday.
The moment he saw her drag herself into the green house across the street from Jack Thompson’s yellow one. The moment he saw her drag herself out of her parents’ car and trudge up to the front door, he knew she was the one. She was his age. He would walk to her school every day. They would be in the same class. They would always be together. It was a revelation — a prophecy.

Destiny.

Maddie paused on the welcome mat. She left eyes on her. She cocked her head to the side and cut her eyes over to look at Jack looking back at her from across the street. She would always know when he was staring at her. She smiled at him with the corner of her mouth. She would always know when he was staring at her. She smiled her half-smile at him. Her lips were always ice cold. Maddie looked through the blackness of the tunnel, jutting out from her lips. She would always know when he was staring at her. She smiled her half-smile at him. Her lips were always ice cold.

“Do ya love me, Jackie-boy?” Maddie inquired lowly. She opened them and cut her eyes to look at him looking at her.

“...I. Yes. I guess so. Maddie. L.” Jack replied under the blocked archway. Maddie smiled her half-smile at him.

“Prove it!” she shouted and dashed off into the tunnel’s entrance, gazing down fondly upon a heart-shape encircled with a large heart. Maddie, on the other hand, won “Most likely to fizzle out” with Arrowhead High School.

“Do you remember that day?” she asked him. “It was the Fourth of July, shortly after I moved to Arrowhead.”

“Prove it,” she said. He quickly rejoined her there. She stood up and dropped her skateboard. She glanced over to look at Jack looking back at her from across the street. She would always know when he was staring at her. She smiled at him with the corner of her mouth. She would always know when he was staring at her. She smiled her half-smile at him. Her lips were always ice cold. Maddie looked through the blackness of the tunnel, jutting out from her lips. She would always know when he was staring at her. She smiled her half-smile at him. Her lips were always ice cold.
“Be yourself; everyone else is already taken.”

- Oscar Wilde

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Horoscopes

★ ★ ★

Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row across, each column down and each small 9-box square contains all of the numbers from one to nine.

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★ ★ ★

Moderate

★ ★ ★ ★

Challenging

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Expert

Puzzle Difficulty this week:

Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row across, each column down and each small 9-box square contains all of the numbers from one to nine.

★ ★ ★ ★

Moderate

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Challenging

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Expert


Aries (March 21 to April 19)

Cupid is strong in the Aries aspect this week, with the cherub opening romantic possibilities for single Lambs, and strengthening ties ‘twixt loving pairs already in a caring relationship.

Taurus (April 20 to May 20)

Your dramatic flair might make things more interesting as you recount an event to your colleagues. But be careful not to exaggerate reality to the point that facts and fancy combine to form fiction.

Gemini (May 21 to June 20)

You love to talk, and this week you should get lots of chances to share your thoughts with people who will not only pay attention to what you have to say, but will want to hear more.

Cancer (June 21 to July 22)

The pattern of recent changes could begin to shift from mostly workplace-related events to more personal matters. Continue to keep an open mind as you prepare to deal with them.

Leo (July 23 to August 22)

An opportunity for work-related travel could be just what the Terrific Tabby needs to get a new perspective on a balky situation. The trip also could prove to be personally rewarding.

Born This Week:

You have a gift for organization that would make you a fine archivist. (Are you listening out there, Library of Congress?)

See Answers, C11

See Answers, C11

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HOROSCOPES

★ VIRGO (August 23 to September 22)

You might want to suggest resolving an old disagreement before it can affect a matter expected to come up for discussion. It’s always best to start with a clean slate.

★ LIBRA (September 23 to October 22)

The week favors combining dollops of creativity and practicality to work out both professional and personal problems. A longtime friend could have something of note to suggest.

★ SCORPIO (October 23 to November 22)

Some surprising facts could come to light if you decide to probe deeper into an “opportunity” than you might usually do. What you’ll learn could determine what you’ll earn.

★ SAGITTARIUS (November 22 to December 21)

Someone close to you might seek your counsel. Hear him/her out, but hold the line at giving actual advice until you get credible answers to all your questions.

★ CAPRICORN (December 22 to January 19)

What seems to be an overwhelming workplace project can be dealt with quite well if you handle one category at a time. Things will soon begin to fall into place.

★ AQUARIUS (January 20 to February 18)

A personal matter might need more of your time than you had expected. Try to prioritize between your many outside commitments and your domestic responsibilities.

★ PISCES (February 19 to March 20)

A developing situation still needs more time to grow, and more time to study before you can plunge in and make some attention-getting waves. Patience is best for wise Pisceans.

★ ARIES (March 21 to April 19)

Cupid is strong in the Aries aspect this week, with the cherub opening romantic possibilities for single Lambs, and strengthening ties ‘twixt loving pairs already in a caring relationship.

★ Taurus (April 20 to May 20)

Your dramatic flair might make things more interesting as you recount an event to your colleagues. But be careful not to exaggerate reality to the point that facts and fancy combine to form fiction.

★ Gemini (May 21 to June 20)

You love to talk, and this week you should get lots of chances to share your thoughts with people who will not only pay attention to what you have to say, but will want to hear more.

★ Cancer (June 21 to July 22)

The pattern of recent changes could begin to shift from mostly workplace-related events to more personal matters. Continue to keep an open mind as you prepare to deal with them.

★ Leo (July 23 to August 22)

An opportunity for work-related travel could be just what the Terrific Tabby needs to get a new perspective on a balky situation. The trip also could prove to be personally rewarding.

★ Born This Week:

You have a gift for organization that would make you a fine archivist. (Are you listening out there, Library of Congress?)

See Answers, C11

See Answers, C11

PUZZLES

HOROSCOPES
CONTRACT BRIDGE

Haste makes waste
BY STEVE BECKER

A declarer who neglects to plan the play must sometimes pay a heavy penalty for his negligence.

Take this case where West leads a heart against four spades. South plays low from dummy, winning East’s queen with the ace, and returns the king of diamonds. East defends well by ducking, then takes the next diamond with the ace and shifts to the jack of clubs.

South must now go down one regardless of what he does next. He can’t get to his hand to cash the jack of diamonds and discard a club from dummy, and he eventually loses two trumps, a diamond and a club.

At first glance, it would appear that the contract failed because East made a good defensive play by ducking the diamond at trick two. But closer examination reveals that South lost the contract at trick one by playing the seven of hearts from dummy instead of the jack.

It costs declarer nothing to play the jack rather than the seven, since he will score three heart tricks either way. But the advantage of playing the jack is that South guarantees a second heart entry to his hand later on with either the ace or ten if a defender ducks the king of diamonds at trick two.

In the actual deal, declarer wins East’s seven of hearts with the ace and loses the second diamond to the ace. After taking East’s club shift with the ace, South leads the seven of hearts to the ten, cashes the jack of diamonds, discarding a club from dummy, and easily makes four spades.
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FILM CAPSULES

Straight Outta Compton ★★★★ 1/2
(O’Shea Jackson Jr., Corey Hawkins, Jason Mitchell) The early days of pioneering rap group N.W.A. are highlighted in this tremendous biopic from director F. Gary Gray (“The Italian Job”). The music and story are well done, but the real highlight of the film is the performances, particularly Mr. Mitchell as Eazy-E. Rated R.

The Man From U.N.C.L.E. ★★★
(Henry Cavill, Armie Hammer, Alicia Vikander) In 1963, a CIA agent (Mr. Cavill) and KGB agent (Mr. Hammer) reluctantly work together to stop the construction and sale of a nuclear weapon. It has some whimsical, breezy charm and decent action, but there’s nothing spectacular here. Rated PG-13.

Fantastic Four ★★★
(Jamie Bell, Kate Mara, Michael B. Jordan) Young scientists teleport to an alternate dimension, only to return with superpowers. You can see the potential, but poor story structure undoes anything the movie has going for it. Rated PG-13.

Ricki and the Flash ★★
(Meryl Streep, Kevin Kline, Mamie Gummer) With her daughter’s (Ms. Gummer) marriage in shambles, distant Ricki (Ms. Streep) comes back to town to offer support. Too bad she’s not wanted. For a cast of this caliber, from a script by Diablo Cody and directed by Jonathan Demme, we have a right to expect much more than this standard and predictable dramedy. Rated PG-13.

Mission: Impossible – Rogue Nation ★★★
(Tom Cruise, Jeremy Renner, Alec Baldwin) Ethan (Mr. Cruise) and his team try to stop a terrorist while the director of the CIA (Mr. Baldwin) wants to hold him accountable for all the damage Ethan has caused. It’s an absolute blast, except for the action sequence at an opera, which lacks suspense. Still, you’ll enjoy the high-octane ride. Rated PG-13.

Irrational Man ★★★★ 1/2
(Joaquin Phoenix, Emma Stone, Parker Posey) A depressed philosophy professor (Mr. Phoenix) finds a new zest for life, and it’s not necessarily coming from relationships with his student (Ms. Stone) or his colleague (Ms. Posey). Writer/director Woody Allen is in top form, telling a psychologically and morally complex story. Rated R.

Vacation ★★
(Ed Helms, Christina Applegate, Leslie Mann) Loving father Rusty (Mr. Helms) takes his wife (Ms. Applegate) and kids to Walley World, just as his father (Chevy Chase) did with the family 30 years earlier. Although it’s a loving homage to the original “Vacation” (1983), it’s not nearly as funny. Rated R.

Pixels ★★★
(Adam Sandler, Peter Dinklage) When aliens misinterpret a time capsule space probe containing 1982 video games as an act of war, gamer champions of yesteryear are called in to save the world. There’s no denying it’s stupid, but it’s also good, clean fun. I got a kick out of it. Rated PG-13.
LATEST FILMS

‘American Ultra’

Is it worth $10? No

“American Ultra” lost me in its opening scene and never got me back. This is one of those movies in which the ending is immediately revealed and we work back to that dramatic moment tediously — a storytelling technique that’s almost always a mistake. Doing this undermines any drama or tension the film might have, essentially forcing us to wonder “How did he get there?” as opposed to the much-preferred “Where is he going?” — and all for no good reason. But wait, it gets worse.

Not only do we learn where the protagonist, Mike (Jesse Eisenberg), will end up, director Nima Nourizadeh (“Project X”) then gives us a reverse-chronological, rapidly edited flashback that shows moments from the film all the way back to three days earlier. The big question is why do this? There is no reason to structure the story this way, as it adds nothing to the narrative aside from inevitability.

The filmmaker’s hope is that the opening tease will get us hooked and intrigued. Alas, seeing a battered and bruised Mike in handcuffs about to be interrogated in a well-lit room, followed by close-ups of random pictures, isn’t nearly enough to draw us in.

Poor setup aside, the script by Max Landis (“Chronicle”) did have potential. Mike is a longhaired stoner loser do-nothing who isn’t even trying to get his act together. His girlfriend Phoebe (Kristen Stewart) accepts him for who he is, even though she knows they’re going nowhere together. In fact, there’s really nothing interesting about them until Mike easily kills two dudes outside the grocery store at which he works.

Come to find out Mike was the subject of a failed CIA experiment to create a super agent, and now he’s in danger. Desk jockey Victoria (Connie Britton) began the now-dormant program, and CIA ladder-climber Adrian (Topher Grace) has swooped in to clean up her mess. But Victoria, feeling protective of Mike (for no good reason), “activates” him so he can defend himself against Adrian’s assassins.

Yes, the plot is “Harold & Kumar” meets “The Bourne Identity.” There are too many holes to cover. There isn’t a convincing villain, and it’s not nearly as funny as it thinks it is. Casting Mr. Eisenberg and Ms. Stewart was the right choice for actors who can mix comedy with action and dramatic moments. Still, it doesn’t come together.

Part of the reason is the aforementioned flawed setup, and another is the excessive violence. We hear bones cracking, see blood splatter, observe deaths by all sorts of household appliances. It’s a bit much for the otherwise silly premise of a stoner who fights back against a secret government experiment gone wrong. A lighter PG-13 rating would have suited Grace’s “Oh jeez, come on!” villainous approach better, and allowed for more comedy, less violence and a better overall experience.

In July 2015 the studio distributing the film, Lionsgate, targeted San Diego Comic Con attendees with an offer of free weed for those who could prove they had a prescription for medical marijuana.

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When your journey from a dream to a great story includes you, you travel better.

In the know

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PLAYS

From page 1

as one of Gulfshore Playhouse’s most significant tasks: developing the next generation of contemporary playwrights and growing the canon of American theater,” Kristen Coury, founder and producing artistic director of Gulfshore Playhouse, says. To that end, this year’s finalists are:

- **“Ariadne on the Island,”** by Kate Nicclee – Beginning on an island of refuge during a mechanized war zone, this new play tells the story of a hard fought conflict from four perspectives: Peter, the hero; Via, the comrade in arms; Dante, former leader of the resistance; and Ana, daughter of an enemy commandant.

  With a story that today’s audiences will connect with, while at the same time borrowing beautifully from the theatrical and historical past, “Ariadne on the Island” asks the timely and important questions: What are the effects of war on varied peoples? How do we recreate ourselves and our social structure in destruction’s wake? And can we ever truly love our enemy?

- **“Embalmled, Buried, Gone,”** by Ashlin Halfnight – When a young man kills himself under unusual and upsetting circumstances, his sisters immediately return to their childhood home in Michigan to honor his memory. When the town deniers has body a proper burial, and even a funeral looks unlikely, the family members battle fiercely amongst themselves to claim his legacy and to come to terms with his life and death.

- **“ other than Honorable,”** by Jamie Pachino – Grace Rattigan is a former military officer who resigned her commission under sealed terms and now works in a high-profile Washington, D.C., law firm. When a new client arrives at her office — AWOL after stabbing her immediate superior — Grace’s old wounds are reopened. As she pursues the case, the layers of her own experience with the base’s commanding officer leave Grace at a crossroads: She can come forward and tell the truth about her past, or she can stay AWOL from that part of her life.

- **“White,”** by James Ijames – Gus wants to be a famous painter, and Vanesa wants to be a famous actor. When the two artistic dreamers cross paths, their assumptions about whether an artist and making art are dismantled. Gus’ desire to be acquired by a major contemporary art museum looking for “new perspectives” inspires him to “sculpt” a woman to claim his work as her own. When this modern take on the Frankenstein tale spins out of control as it explores issues of race, gender, sexuality and art.

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Here is the schedule of the staged readings:

- 8 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 24: “Embalmled, Buried, Gone”
- 8 p.m. Friday, Sept. 25: “Ariadne on the Island”
- 8 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 26: “ Other than Honorable”
- 3 p.m. Sunday, Sept. 27: “White”

Tickets are $15 for each performance. Call 261-7529 or visit gulfshoreplayhouse.org.

“I am passionate about what I view as one of Gulfshore Playhouse’s most significant tasks: developing the next generation of contemporary playwrights and growing the canon of American theater.”

— Kristen Coury, founder and producing artistic director of Gulfshore Playhouse
Local artists invited to submit works to be juried for November exhibition

Storytellers Creative Arts invites Southwest Florida visual artists to create and submit artworks for a juried art exhibition as part of the annual Evening of Music & Arts concert and awards ceremony.

The deadline for submission is Oct. 20. This year’s event takes place Friday, Nov. 6, at Covenant Church of Naples.

The art exhibition will be held in tandem with the sixth annual Storytell- ers Creative Arts conference set for Nov. 13-14. Works to be considered for the exhibition should be based on the theme, “Chrysalis, A New Creation” and can include abstract and representa- tional art. They should also be available for purchase.

Jurors will include Cheri Dunnigan, the 2014 Art Expo curator, master gold- smith and landscape painter; Arturo Samaniego, painter; and Marco Bronzi- ni, painter and sculptor, who is also the curator for the show. Cash awards will be made in the Professional and Com- munity Artist divisions.

For details about submitting artwork for consideration, visit storytellerscrea- tivearts.com/californiaartists.

In addition to the art exhibition, the Evening of Music & Arts will include a concert by The Annie Moses Band, seven siblings whose innovative sound has delighted audiences around the world via PBS broadcasts and perfor- mances on stages as diverse as Carnegie Hall and the Grand Ole Opry.

Veteran composer Bill Wolaver weaves musical styles into cinematic arrangements while his brothers and sisters bring Juilliard-honed chops to Nashville-styled music making.

Tickets for $25 general admission and $50 VIP are available at storytellerscrea- tivearts.com. A portion of the evening’s proceeds will benefit the Boys & Girls Club of Collier County.

About the conference

The Storytellers Creative Arts confer- ence itself encompasses all of the arts including visual, music and worship, film and production, drama and the- ater, dance and writing. Presenters will include celebrated “storytellers” in each of these areas who are making a differ- ence in the world using their creative gifts.

The purpose of the conference is to motivate and inspire emerging and experienced artists, as well as art lovers. The conference will be held at Florida Gulf Coast University.

Storytellers Creative Arts is a 501(c) (3) corporation based in Southwest Florida. Conceived and founded by Bill Burnett, its mission is to develop communi- ties where artists can connect, cel- ebrate and create art that expresses faith, transforms life and elevates cul- ture. For more information, visit the

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NAPLES FLORIDA WEEKLY | WEEK OF AUGUST 27-SEPTEMBER 2, 2015 | C17
Glass, pottery, bronze, silver and of course, paper and canvas, are all used to make important, and often expensive, works of art. But wood has been somewhat neglected as art, although highly regarded for useful furniture. Eighteenth-century furniture was made with hand tools and decorated with carvings, inlay and the selection of attractive grain in the woods. The 19th century increased the amount of carved decoration. By the 1880s, there were Black Forest benches, tables, hall trees and other furniture held by life-sized carved wooden bears. Twentieth-century craftsman and artist George Nakashima (1905-1990) made his unique wooden art furniture from slabs of wood. Wendell Castle (born 1932) made modern furniture, including a carved wooden coat and hat rack holding a wooden coat, and a park bench that appears to be growing from a tall tangle of vines.

Artists today are using wood to make sculptures, statues, puzzle boxes and huge burl bowls that are sold at art galleries, not furniture stores. Now is the time to start collecting wooden art. There are artists making everything from realistic to abstract and science fiction-inspired carvings, humorous figures, life-size statues and tiny imaginary animals. A talented Italian artist, Livio De Marchi, makes lifelike caricatures, humorous figures, life-size statues and tiny imaginary animals. A talented Italian artist, Livio De Marchi, makes life-like caricatures, humorous figures, life-size statues and tiny imaginary animals. A talented Italian artist, Livio De Marchi, makes life-like caricatures, humorous figures, life-size statues and tiny imaginary animals. A talented Italian artist, Livio De Marchi, makes life-like caricatures, humorous figures, life-size statues and tiny imaginary animals.

As: First, get rid of the gunpowder! Old explosives can be dangerous. You can take the powder flask to a gun range and ask them to dispose of the residual powder. Renactors and people who collect Civil War memorabilia might be interested in your powder flasks, especially if you can give them information about your ancestor and his service in the Civil War. Powder flasks that are signed or have decoration sell for more than plain powder flasks. A signed copper Civil War powder flask sold for $47, and another for $215 recently. Powder flasks with historically significant decoration sell for $100 or more.

Q: I received this lamp from my mother-in-law. It’s brass, has a pierced corrugated frame over a burner, and a small plaque on the front that has a wolf and reads “Permissible Miners Flame Safety Lamp, Safety Lamp Co. of America.” It also has a tag with the number 28 and a hook for hanging. Can you tell me a little about its history and value?

As: You have a coal miner’s lamp, made by the Wolf Safety Lamp Co. of America of Brooklyn, N.Y. Until the development of safe electric lamps in the early 1900s, coal miners used flame lamps to provide light. Lamps with open flames could ignite flammable gas or dust and cause explosions. So safety lamps were invented to enclose the flame. Before World War I, Wolf was a distributor for safety lamps made in Germany. After the war, the company made lamp tools and accessories and their own safety lamps that burned naphtha, vegetable oil and carbide. Wolf operated until the 1960s. Your lamp burned a mixture of carbide and water. The “permissible” engraving on the lamp meant it passed safety tests and was approved by the U.S. Bureau of Mines (in 1921), and the hang tag represents the miner’s number. Your lamp is from the early 1920s and is worth about $100.

Tips: To avoid breakage, glasses should be stored with the rims up. The rim is weak and easily chipped if bounced on a hard surface. Keep the glasses a half inch apart and never stack one inside the other.

KOVEL: ANTIQUES

Wooden art a hot commodity

BY TERRY KOVEL AND KIM KOVEL

What can you tell me about the company and its furniture?

As: W.B. Moses opened a furniture store in Washington, D.C., in the 1860s. Business expanded and by 1899 W.B. Moses & Sons occupied several buildings, including shops and manufacturing facilities. The company redecorated some of the rooms in the White House in 1881, supplying new carpeting, drapes, and furniture. Value of your chair, $50-$100.

Q: What is the history of the chair? Is it worth anything? I bought it from a family member who was Jewish and it was passed down through the family.

As: The history of this chair is unknown. Your chair, $50-$100.

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Art Fest Naples invites artists to submit works for consideration

Art Fest Naples at Fleischmann Park is seeking artists working in all media to exhibit at the annual juried show that takes place Jan. 23-24. Artists must apply online at artfestnaples.com by Oct. 15.

Proceeds from the festival benefit the Special Needs Children’s Fund and its work to improve the lives of children and young adults with physical and developmental disabilities, including autism, in Collier County.

“Some of the nation’s finest artists will be participating in Art Fest Naples, displaying and selling their work ranging from oil, acrylic and water color paintings, blown glass, turned wood pieces, sculptures, jewelry to a variety of mixed media,” says festival director Taire Malloy.

“Art Fest Naples is a major fundraiser for us and we greatly appreciate the community’s support,” says Julie Stanley, president of the Special Needs Children’s Fund. Sponsorship opportunities are available. For information, call Ms. Malloy at 634-2337, email artfestnaples@gmail.com or visit artfestnaples.com.

For more information about the Special Needs Children’s Fund, visit specialneedschildrenfund.com or email info@specialneedschildrenfund.com.

Here Come the Mummies are a sure bet for fun at the casino

Here Come the Mummies bring their Viral Tour to Seminole Casino Immokalee on Saturday, Oct. 10. Show time is 8 p.m., and tickets are on sale now.

Shrouded in mystery, the show band consists of Eddie Mummy, Java, K.W. Tut, Mummy Cass, Spaz, The Pole, Midnight, Mummy Rah and The Flu, all roused from a sort of semi-vegetative torpor to perform funk/ R&B originals chiefly extolling the virtues (and vices) of the opposite sex. Everything is in search of the ultimate riff, which the Mummies believe can unlock an ancient curse and let them finally rest in peace. (Some say the Mummies were cursed after deflowering a great pharaoh’s daughter, while others claim they are reincarnated Grammy-winning studio musicians.)

Despite their dusty hearts and withered appendages, the Mummies have produced six studio albums, numerous EPs and a full-length concert film, “Rejuvenihilation,” that aired across the U.S. in Season 3 of “Front and Center” on American Public Television. Their song “Pants” aired on NBC’s “Sunday Night Football” last season.

February 2015 brought the launch of the Viral Tour, which in addition to Seminole Immokalee Casino includes appearances at the 15th annual Summer Camp Music Festival as well as Common Ground, Ribfest and Voodoo Fest.

General admission tickets for the casino performance are $35 and can be purchased at the casino or by calling (800) 218-0007.

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THIS WEEK ON WGCU-TV

THURSDAY, AUG. 27, 9 P.M.
Doc Martin, Season 6
The Tameness of a Wolf
Doc and Louisa find a replacement nanny. Louisa is Bert’s least favorite person when one of her pupils pens a damning review of his restaurant in the school magazine.

FRIDAY, AUG. 28, 9 P.M.
Great Performances
The Vienna Philharmonic
Summer Night Concert 2015
The Vienna Philharmonic performs from the gardens of Austria’s Imperial Schloss- runn Palace. Zubin Mehta conduct with pianist Rudolf Buchbinder as soloist, a program of works by Grieg, Sibelius, Richard Strauss and Johann Strauss II.

SATURDAY, AUG. 29, 10 P.M.
Keeping Up Appearances
In this 1994 special, Hyacinth is busy planning a new kitchen, and someone is found in “Daddy’s” bed — but it isn’t “Daddy.”

SUNDAY, AUG. 30, 8 P.M.
Secrets of Her Majesty’s Secret Service
This program lifts the veil of secrecy on MI6, the legendary British spy agency.

MONDAY, AUG. 31, 8 P.M.
Big Blue Live, Part I
Join scientists, animal behaviorists and other experts in a live TV broadcast to view the rejuvenation of the once-endangered ecosystem of Monterey Bay, Calif., where marine creatures convene in an annual confluence of fins, fur and fangs.

“A SIZZLING SUMMER EVENT!”
Old Naples
Onsite Estate Sale
Saturday, August 29th – 9am
165 14th Avenue South
Featuring fine art, antiques, home furnishings, and decorative accessories from a prominent Naples, FL estate!

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‘Twin Peaks’ to return for new series

BY CINDY ELAVSKY

Q: Is it true that “Twin Peaks” is coming back on the air? Where and when? Will David Lynch be involved?
— Justin D., via email

A: In order, your answers are yes, Showtime, hopefully sometime next year, and yes. Showtime’s head honcho David Nevins spilled the beans recently about the reboot, and one of those beans is that David Lynch will be there to direct season three, which will have at least nine episodes, with some sources reporting as many as 18 episodes.

Mr. Nevins also teased about whether former series stars will be back (as you’ll recall, the series starred Kyle MacLachlan, Laura Flynn Boyle, Richard Beymer, Sherilyn Fenn and Madchen Amick, and featured a young David Duchovny): “You recall, the series starred Kyle MacLachlan, Laura Flynn Boyle, Richard Beymer, Sherilyn Fenn and Madchen Amick, and featured a young David Duchovny: “You should be optimistic that the people that you want will be there, and there will be some surprises in addition. I’m hoping we make 2016. It’s not clear. It’s ultimately going to be in their control. They’re going to shoot the whole thing and then they’ll start posting... but I’m hoping sooner rather than later.”

Q: Can you give me any “Arrow” news?
— Kylie F., Baltimore

A: Coming in October, you can watch Tommy in Jason Reitman’s latest project called “Casual,” which will air exclusively on Hulu. The story centers on divorced mom Valerie (played by Michaela Watkins) as she rediscovers herself while living with her brother, Alex (Tommy), and her teen-age daughter, Laura (Tara Lynne Barr). The dry, sometimes-dark, dysfunctional-family comedy will have a 10-episode first season, with a new episode released each week (not all at once like Netflix tends to do). The series will follow the same approach as Hulu-exclusive series such as “Difficult People” and the newly acquired “The Mindy Project.”

Q: I love Tommy Dewey, especially his role of Josh Daniels on “The Mindy Project.” Can you tell me what else I can see him in?
— Ginger D., via email

A: As coming in October, you can watch Tommy in Jason Reitman’s latest project called “Casual,” which will air exclusively on Hulu. The story centers on divorced mom Valerie (played by Michaela Watkins) as she rediscovers herself while living with her brother, Alex (Tommy), and her teen-age daughter, Laura (Tara Lynne Barr). The dry, sometimes-dark, dysfunctional-family comedy will have a 10-episode first season, with a new episode released each week (not all at once like Netflix tends to do). The series will follow the same approach as Hulu-exclusive series such as “Difficult People” and the newly acquired “The Mindy Project.”

Q: Can you give me any “Arrow” news?
— Kyle E., Baltimore

A: There’s lots of casting news for season four, most recently that Rutina Wesley of “True Blood” and Parker Young of “Suburgatory” are joining the cast as Liza Warner and Alex Davis, respectively. Liza is a cop and a member of an anti-vigilante task force, while Alex will be a love interest for Thea. And finally, after much teasing throughout season three, we’ll finally meet the mysterious Damien Darhk, who’ll be played by Neal McDonough. Season four of “Arrow” premieres at 8 p.m. Oct. 7 on the CW.

Q: I love Tommy Dewey, especially his role of Josh Daniels on “The Mindy Project.” Can you tell me what else I can see him in?
— Ginger D., via email

A: As coming in October, you can watch Tommy in Jason Reitman’s latest project called “Casual,” which will air exclusively on Hulu. The story centers on divorced mom Valerie (played by Michaela Watkins) as she rediscovers herself while living with her brother, Alex (Tommy), and her teen-age daughter, Laura (Tara Lynne Barr). The dry, sometimes-dark, dysfunctional-family comedy will have a 10-episode first season, with a new episode released each week (not all at once like Netflix tends to do). The series will follow the same approach as Hulu-exclusive series such as “Difficult People” and the newly acquired “The Mindy Project.”

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— Kylie F., Baltimore

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SOCIETY

Youth Haven throws a ‘pARTy with a Purpose’ at The von Liebig Art Center

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SOCIETY

‘Castles for Kids’ sand-sculpting competition to benefit the Golisano Children’s Museum of Naples

Clive Daniel Home hosts a Dress Collection Party for PACE Center for Girls

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CUSINE NEWS

Naples Winter Wine Festival gives sneak peek at 2016 auction lots

The Naples Winter Wine Festival has released a first look at some of the auction lots that will be on the block for festival guests in 2016.

“The heart of the Naples Winter Wine Festival is the live auction, and our amazing team has assembled some of the most exciting auction lots we’ve ever seen,” says Tom Moran, co-chair for next year. He means what he says.

Among the exotic, indulgent packages up for bid next year: dinner with country star Martina McBride; a private tour and dinner at Versailles; a trip to New York City for dinner with a Broadway star and tickets to his/her show; custom and engraved rings from goldsmith Christoph Wellendorf; two magnums of Hamel Family Wines and a trip to Sonoma Valley that includes a private tour, tasting and dinner at the Hamel Family Estate; private access to Bulgari’s High Jewelry event and a private preview of Bulgari’s latest High Jewelry collection; 14 nights aboard The World, the largest privately owned residential yacht on Earth.

Since 2001, the festival’s live auctions have raised more than $135 million to support the Naples Children & Education Foundation, which gives out annual grants that have provided more than 200,000 local children with services and resources.

The Naples Winter Wine Festival: “Great Expectations” takes place Thursday through Sunday, Jan. 28-31. Ticket packages start at $10,000 per couple. For more information, call (888) 837-4919 or visit napleswinefestival.com.

Take Note:
- Dagny’s Spirits hosts a free wine and liquor tasting at 4:30 p.m. Thursday, Aug. 27. 15205 Collier Blvd. 384-9421 or dagnysspirits.com.

■ The fifth annual Shula’s Steakhouse Champagne & Chocolate Sunset Cruise to benefit The United Way of Collier County sets sail aboard the Naples Princess at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 9. Guests will enjoy hors d’oeuvres and giveaways while sipping bubbly provided by Shula’s and sweets from Norman Love Confections. $85. To make reservations, call Jeff Jerome at 659-3176 or visit shulasnaples.com.

— Email dining and restaurant news to Lindsey Nesmith at lnesmith@florida weekly.com.
THE DISH

The Dish: The Veggie sandwich

The Price: $7.50

The Place: Sweet Caroline’s

The Hours: 7:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday. Closed Sunday.

The Full Menu: sweetcarolinesnaples.com

The Details: Last week, I embarked on an ill-advised health crusade that intersected with an unplanned lunch date. While this endeavor promises some scintillating menu selections for this column, the Veggie sandwich at Sweet Caroline’s is one nutritious item that won’t leave well-intentioned gluttons like myself crying in our sprouts. Between two slices of homemade wheat bread, you’ll find cucumbers, bell peppers, tomatoes, shredded carrots, green olives, sprouts and Parmesan cheese, all moistened with honey mustard dressing. The olives and dressing sound like an odd combination, but it’s actually genius, the briny bite of the olives cutting through the honey mustard in a way that keeps diners chomping through about two RDAs worth of vegetables.

One More Thing: The café has two cases of freshly baked goods that sorely tested my resolve to cut sugar. Should you find yourself at Sweet Caroline’s, order a brownie in my honor. ■

— Lindsey Nesmith
lnesmith@floridaweekly.com

— Lindsey Nesmith
lnesmith@floridaweekly.com
PAST REPASTS

Here are some capsule reviews of previous restaurant reviews:

- **The Bay House**, 799 Walkerbilt Road, Naples; 591-3837
  When you’re seated in the dining room gazing out on the tranquil mangrove-lined Cocohatchee River, it’s hard to believe busy U.S. 41 is just yards away. The grand view is matched by superb food and polished service. Executive Chef Andy Hunter and his team do a masterful job of showcasing fresh seafood with a nod to carnivores in the form of steak and one chicken dish. An appetizer called South of Broad features perfectly cooked fried green tomatoes, tangy goat feta, basil puree and tomato jam. A roasted beet and citrus salad with horseradish panna cotta was equally good. The Coastal Pan Roast featured golden horseradish panna cotta was equally good. A roasted beet and citrus salad with horseradish panna cotta was equally good. A roasted beet and citrus salad with horseradish panna cotta was equally good. A roasted beet and citrus salad with horseradish panna cotta was equally good. A roasted beet and citrus salad with horseradish panna cotta was equally good. 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Fresh tortillas part of Tortilleria La Rancherita’s claim to fame

The renown that Tortilleria La Rancherita in Bonita Springs has earned for its taco belles the modest setting where the staff cranks out thousands of fresh tortillas a day. Half grocery/half restaurant, Rancherita seats just 20 diners — but then, three-quarters of its business is takeout, according to owner and professionally trained chef Paul Judice.

Those fresh tortillas are a key component of what have been called the best tacos in Southwest Florida.

“The fresh, hot corn tortillas certainly play an important if not the most important role, but the other components need to be fresh, loud with flavor and seasoned well,” Mr. Judice says. “Fresh corn tortillas are the staple and foundation of Mexican food, and without them you can’t expect anything else to be done right.”

“We started in 1999 with fresh corn tortillas, a Coke machine and cans of jalapeños. Yes, our tortilla machine is big and requires a lot of TLC, but she’s well worth it. This is what we founded our business on.”

“On weekdays, we manufacture about 5,000 corn tortillas and on the weekends about 10,000 a day.”

Q: At what point did you find your passion for cooking and decide to devote your career to it?

A: As a young child, I had great interest and curiosity for food. My father and mother, both native to Mexico, brought to the longevity and success of this unique dive.

Q: What role does your wife, Yesenia, play in the business?

A: Yesenia has been the heart and soul of our restaurant. She has lent unconditional inspiration and respect to our clientele and employees. She’s been gifted with presentation, which encourages customers who just want to come in for one or two items to purchase more. She’s also 100 percent Mexican, so you know that the flavors that are represented and influenced by the passion and love that she brings to the longevity and success of this unique dive.

Q: Did you learn Mexican cooking from her?

A: Yesenia inspired me to learn more about Mexican cuisine when she made me a torta de jamón (grilled Mexican ham sandwich). From that day forward, I could not resist the bold, loud but simple ingredients that this cuisine embraces. I also have traveled to Mexico on numerous occasions and read many books to gain knowledge and understanding.

Q: I appreciate the fact that you don’t top dishes with loads of cheddar cheese and sour cream like a lot of Americanized Mexican restaurants. Do you think most Americans understand what authentic Mexican food is?

A: People who have traveled to Mexico/Central America or have lived in states like Texas, Arizona or California are in the know about how real Mexican food should look and taste. Unfortunately, too many people — not only here locally, but also nationwide — haven’t had the pleasure and experience of enjoying the embodiment of true Mexican flavor.

Q: The tamales aren’t always available, though I did enjoy some the last time I visited. They were so light but had just enough structure to hold together. Are they difficult to make?

A: Tamales are certainly a science and take time, almost like baking, as it relates to the measuring of ingredients, preparation and cooking. We cook in small batches to maximize the freshness of the tamales, and at times clientele will walk in and order large quantities, which is why we don’t always have them available. My suggestion would be to call ahead for large orders and know that if we’re out, we normally will have availability the following day.

Q: Any plans to expand the menu or the business?

A: The menu has just been fine-tuned and updated, so there are no major changes on the horizon. There are new projects pending on franchising the great stories that have made us successful. Stay tuned!

Q: What do you do when you’re not thinking about food, talking about food, cooking food?

A: Stay positive, make a difference, take care of myself as best I can and spend as much time as possible with my three beautiful children.

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<td>Whiskey Creek Condo</td>
<td>Super clean 2 bedroom 3 bath, 3rd floor condo with Elevator access! End unit.</td>
<td>$84,900</td>
<td>1-866-657-2300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ST. JAMES CITY</td>
<td>Walk to Everything Manufactured Home</td>
<td>Two bed two bath, large two car garage, close to all shopping, walking distance to everything.</td>
<td></td>
<td>1-866-657-2300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FORT MYERS</td>
<td>Winkler Ave Area Condo</td>
<td>Freshly painted 2 bedroom 2 bath condo in a convenient area close to the corner of Winkler and Metro.</td>
<td>$67,950</td>
<td>1-866-657-2300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMMOKALLEE</td>
<td>Nice</td>
<td>Sellers open to all offers, very motivated.</td>
<td>$65,000</td>
<td>1-866-657-2300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FORT MYERS</td>
<td>2 Bed/2 Bath Townhouse</td>
<td>Beautiful Location. Perfect for those with a large family or entertaining.</td>
<td>$118,900</td>
<td>1-866-657-2300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAPE CORAL</td>
<td>Cape Coral Riverfront</td>
<td>Simply the best! Gorgeous Riverfront home. The best of everything in this wide open floor plan.</td>
<td>$1,750,000</td>
<td>1-866-657-2300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NORTH FORT MYERS</td>
<td>Key West Style Riverfront Estate</td>
<td>Custom built home. Boasts crown molding, wood trim, watercooled plantation shutters and more. 2nd floor master.</td>
<td>$1,699,000</td>
<td>1-866-657-2300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAPE CORAL</td>
<td>Elite Estate Home in Tranquil Country Setting</td>
<td>Come explore this hidden gem on 10.6 perfectly manicured waterfront grounds.</td>
<td>$1,195,000</td>
<td>1-866-657-2300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAPE CORAL</td>
<td>Riverfront</td>
<td>Boat H &amp; Dock. Heated pool &amp; spa. 2 story 3 bedroom 3 bath 2 car garage.</td>
<td>$79,000</td>
<td>1-866-657-2300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAPE CORAL</td>
<td>Custom Built</td>
<td>Over 3000 sq. ft. gulf access home with private media room. 3 bed &amp; 3 bath with all top of the line features.</td>
<td>$895,000</td>
<td>1-866-657-2300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAPE CORAL</td>
<td>10 Acres On Caloosahatchee River</td>
<td>Scenic river views. Deep water protected boat dockage. For horse lovers there is a 2 stall barn with tack room.</td>
<td>$865,000</td>
<td>1-866-657-2300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FORT MYERS</td>
<td>Waterfront Paradise!!</td>
<td>Deep Water Direct Gulf Access. Stunning views of Matlacha Pass from almost every room of the house.</td>
<td>$749,000</td>
<td>1-866-657-2300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FORT MYERS</td>
<td>McGregor Reserve Custom Home</td>
<td>5 bedroom custom home with 4 full baths, 3 half baths, chefs kitchen, lake front views, pool, wood burning fireplaces.</td>
<td>$675,000</td>
<td>1-866-657-2300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAPE CORAL</td>
<td>Golf Access 5 Bedrooms 4 Bath Home</td>
<td>Plantation shutters throughout, wood &amp; tile gourmet island granite kitchen with stainless appliances.</td>
<td>$675,000</td>
<td>1-866-657-2300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAPE CORAL</td>
<td>Live on the Golf Course</td>
<td>Spectacular Views of the Golf Course and Sunset! Large Island Kitchen with wood cabinets, granite counter tops &amp; more.</td>
<td>$659,000</td>
<td>1-866-657-2300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MATLACHA</td>
<td>Waterfront Paradise!!</td>
<td>Deep Water Direct Gulf Access. Stunning views of Matlacha Pass from almost every room of the house.</td>
<td>$539,000</td>
<td>1-866-657-2300</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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