**The Observer News**

With big grant, Bayou Pass Village greens up for Earth Day

American Victory

‘Greatest Generation’ cruise to honor late congressman, veterans

A quote passed widely around Facebook in the weeks leading up to Earth Day and Arbor Day said, “Imagine if trees gave off Wi-Fi signals, we would be planting so many trees and we’d probably save the planet, too. Too bad they only produce the oxygen we breathe.”

On Earth Day, April 22, a dozen volunteers working with Florida Home Partnership and assisted by a grant from Wells Fargo actually did plant trees (sorry, there were no reports the trees included Wi-Fi signals) as part of the 14th Avenue Beautification Project at FPHS’s Bayou Pass Village Phase 4 development. The group planted several Washingtonia Palms along 14th Avenue SE and 6th Street SE.

While another widely distributed quote on Facebook attributes President Abraham Lincoln as saying, “You can’t believe everything you read on the Internet,” the first quote is indeed, based on fact. Trees produce oxygen we breathe. For Bayou Pass Village and the surrounding community, there are other benefits in addition to oxygen and neighborhood beautification. The palm trees as planted will help to reduce noise pollution from the nearby roads and work to not only clean soil but also reduce carbon dioxide in the air.

The Earth Day tree planting was made possible by a grant from Wells Fargo. The event was attended by Steve Schultz, Wells Fargo area president, who delivered remarks after the tree planting and presented FPH with a check for $21,990, part of the corporation’s UrbanLIFTSM program, a program that distributed $11.4 million in grants to organizations in just 25 cities across the nation. UrbanLIFTSM was established by the national financial firm to help advance community stabilization in communities significantly impacted by the housing crisis. It is the most recent commitment in Wells Fargo’s oldest and most trusted flooring dealer

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**I never thought I’d be saying this...**
The SS American Victory, American Victory

Continued from page 1
are still mounted on deck, they have been demilitarized. Of 534 Victory Class ships built, Ameri- can Victory is one of only four that remain fully operational. American Victory continued from page 1

Hillsborough Choice Options accepting applications

The Hillsborough Choice Op- tions application period for ele- mentary magnet and School Choice programs for the 2014-2015 school year is open now through May 14 at noon. Under Hillsborough Choice Op- tions, students can apply for a magnet school or another public school with available space within Hillsborough County. Students who wish to remain at their cur- rent magnet or choice school, or prefer to go to their attendance area school, do not need to complete an application.

School choice and magnet pro- grams are available for students entering kindergarten through 11th grade. Students currently enrolled in a Hillsborough County public elementary school should apply di- rectly online. Students new to Hills-borough County Public Schools can download an application from the Choice Options website, complete it and mail it to the address listed on the application.

Applications are available online at choice.mysdhc.org. Parents can call the Choice Information Line at 813-272-4692 for answers to their questions. For more information, visit www. ChoicesWomensCenter.com or call 813-938-6024.

Volunteers and staff at the Choices Women’s Center held a ribbon-cutting at their new location in the Sun Point Shopping Center, 2018 E. College Ave., Ruskin, last week. Members of the SouthShore Chamber of Commerce were on hand for the ceremony (above). The expanded resource center can now offer more services for those facing an unplanned pregnancy, including counseling, ultrasounds, pregnancy testing, baby care items, mentoring, parenting classes and more. All services are confidential and free of charge. For more information, visit www. ChoicesWomensCenter.com or call 813-938-6024. Women’s center holds ribbon cutting

Choices Women’s Center

Continued from page 1

Area churches donate items and other resources to Choices Women’s Center on a monthly basis. At right, diapers and baby wipes were collecting during April at South Bay Church in Riverview. Heading the project was Dee Frazee, with help from Amanda Joplin, Nancy Sanders, Faith Moeller and Laura Moore.
The Ruskin Woman’s Club has a new fundraising endeavor. Personalized bricks that will hold special messages for a loved one, special event, business, or as a memorial to someone are available for purchase. The bricks will line the walkway to the front of the clubhouse. The standard size 4-by-8-inch brick with three lines of 20 characters will be $125; a signature 4-by-8-inch brick with two lines of 20 characters plus a signature will be $225; a standard 8-by-8-inch brick with six lines of 20 characters will be $175; and a signature 8-by-8-inch brick with four lines of 20 characters plus a signature will be $275. You may order the bricks by making a check payable to the Ruskin Woman’s Club and mailing the check and order form to Ruskin Woman’s Club, P.O. Box 547, Ruskin, FL 33770. The order form is found online at www.theruskinwomansclub.org. For information, call Carolyn Jones at 813-645-3488.

brick by brick
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Positive Talk: Are they “right-size”?

Almost every day, we read of corporations that will not reimburse their employees to remain competitive. If that happens in your organization, would you be one of the people valuable enough to stay or would you head out the door? In this sometimes harsh world, it behooves us all to look at ourselves carefully and to understand if the company is living up to our true potential.

The ability to wait until a problem is completed? Can you be counted on to remain focused and staying with a project until it is completed? A valuable asset in any company. A man or woman who can be trusted to complete an assignment on time is a necessity. He calls it a fringe benefit; the company paying for unauthorized purposes? I know of at least one company that would call it theft. It is said that God loves a cheerful giver. Are you that person? Employers love a cheerful worker. Do you try to put a smile on your face, even when you are ill? Enthusiasm and cheerfulness are also very valuable traits and highly prized by most employers.

Vitality and energy are a must. Energetic people are the joy to be around, they are the cheerleaders who create the excitement that keeps everyone else involved. They are the ones who set a quick pace for getting things done. Are you setting a pace that will energize your organization? Are you known for perseverance? Having an employee who can be counted on to complete an assignment with bulldog tenacity is a valuable asset in any organization. How good are you at following up and staying with a project until it is completed? Can you be counted on to get things done?

Reliability is a prime factor in retention. Managers want people who can be counted on to remain steadfast and dependable. These are the people who can count on to be where they say they will be when they say they will be there. Would you describe yourself in that way?

In this “bottom line” world, companies need loyalty from their employees and will take loyalty into consideration when they have choices as to who will stay when layoffs are in order. The best rule to follow is not to speak badly of the company paying your salary. If you cannot speak well of your employer, it is time for you to leave while it is still your choice.

So there you have it — several suggestions on how to do your job so that the terrible words “right-size” be heard around your organization. Even if they do not save your job, just developing these traits will put you in a better position to get another one. Remember that there is always another day, and it is up to you to make it great.

Hodges is a nationally recognized speaker, trainer and syndicated columnist. He also hosts an internet television program, Spotlight on Government, which airs on the Tampa Bay Community Network, but airs on Mondays at 8 p.m. (Bright House channel 930, Verizon channel 30) and Wednesdays at 7:30 p.m. (Bright House channel 949, Verizon channel 38). The shows can also be viewed at www.hodges.com. Phone: 813-641-0016. Email: bill@billhodges.com Website: www.billhodges.com

Attention, all women of the Military Service Army

Tampa Bay WAVES Unit #55 will meet at 11 a.m. on Saturday, May 10, at the Assisted Living Facility of Hawthorne Village, a retirement community located on W. Lumsden Road in Brandon, just west of Kings Avenue on the south side of Lumsden Road. The Assisted Living Facility is the first on the right of the entrance road into the Hawthorne compounds.

The mission of WAVES Unit #55 is to participate in various events assisting American veterans, especially female veterans, including support of programs at James A. Haley VA Hospital in Tampa. The unit is actively seeking new members and welcomes all women who served honorably (including those currently serving) in the U. S. Navy, Navy Nurse Corps, Coast Guard, Marine Corps or Maritime Service, or related service components. Attend and get acquainted with other Sea Waves women veterans and retirees. You’re sure to enjoy the fellowship and activities that will rekindle memories of your military service days.

For more information, call Jeanette Green at 813-657-9164.

For more information, call Laurie Burhop at 813-273-3652.

Opening reception at SouthShore Regional Library

There will be an opening reception from 6 to 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, May 8, for the artists who will display their paintings and mixed media artwork in the Crawford Gallery and Community Gallery at the SouthShore Regional Library. The artists are Margit Redlawski, Anna Schemerhorn, Dolores Phelps, Art Sarlin and Cynthia Worwurm. The exhibit runs through June 26. SouthShore Regional Library is at 15816 Beth Shields Way in Ruskin. For more information, call Laurie Burhop at 813-273-3652.

The views expressed by our writers are not necessarily shared by The Observer News, SCC Observer, The Riverview Current or Wind Publishing Co., Inc.
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HCSO District IV annual appreciation fish fry
There was a huge turnout at the Hillsborough County Sheriff’s Office District 4 fish fry last Saturday. The community is invited to bring their families to this free event, which is held to show appreciation for the officers who protect our communities 24 hours a day. The event featured two bounce houses, cotton candy, candy apples, and other carnival-type foods, as well as the main course of fried fish and softshell turtle, with all the fixings, including Major Ron Hartley’s famous hushpuppies (top left).

Hillsborough County natives had plenty to reminisce about and stories to tell.

Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office District 4 fish fry

Join us! At Discovery University for our free lecture series that examines popular stories and issues around the world. Call for a complete schedule of topics, dates and times, or visit us and get a FREE gift as well! There’s the bell…class is in!

Howard Hughes
Learn about the billionaire industrialist who perhaps was the 20th century’s most interesting and misunderstood person in America.

The Great War: World War I
How the brutalities and casualties of “modern” 20th century warfare profoundly affected the U.S. in the greatest war the world had ever seen.

The Panama Canal Turns 100
As it begins a second century of service, the Panama Canal is being expanded to accommodate enormous cargo container vessels.

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Dr. Earl Lennard and Steve Simmons share a laugh while preparing fish for the fryer. The Simmons family has a long history of cooking for sheriff’s department outings.

Chere Simmons photo

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Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office District 4 fish fry

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Since 1971, Ruskin Christian School has been committed to providing the South Shore community with affordable, quality, Christ-centered education.

On April 10, the Florida Association of Christian Colleges and Schools, or FACCS, awarded Ruskin Christian School “full accreditation.” RCS is one of only two schools in Hillsborough County now holding this stamp of approval. According to Dr. How ard Burke, the chairman of the accreditation committee, it is very rare for a school to receive this level of accreditation the first time through this process. Most schools receive a provisional or probationary status for the first two years.

In order to thrive, schools need to constantly look for areas to improve and to strive for excellence. Ruskin Christian School voluntarily chose to seek external validation of its performance as a school when it submitted the application for accreditation in 2011. RCS went through a rigorous, impartial evaluation by FACCS, and met or exceeded its standards.

According to Tim Vanderveer, Ruskin Christian School administrator, “This process of self-study caused Ruskin Christian School to look at every aspect of our school from a critical perspective to determine the effectiveness of the overall program and create a school improvement plan to address areas of concern,” he said. “The FACCS accreditation validates our educational program, and we are excited to continue to improve ourselves in academic excellence.”

In addition to being accredited, RCS strives to excel in technology. RCS has introduced an iPad lab in the elementary school this year. Steve Weer, high-school principal, said, “This next year, middle-school and high-school teachers who want to can start introducing it. The FACCS accreditation team said our technology plan, if carried out, is very aggressive for a school our size. In the next couple of years [all student(s)] will have their own iPad, eBooks and research-based learning. Technology is our niche. There aren’t a lot of schools, even public schools, using this technology on a daily basis. I think we’re ahead of the game.”

RCS is now enrolling students from age two through 12th grade for the 2014-2015 school year. Interested parents should call 813-645-6441 to schedule an appointment. For a tour of the school, RCS will also host “Treasure Island Summer Camp” in June and July for children age 2 through grade 5.

Students of the Month at Apollo Beach Elementary School

The homeschooling conundrum
Parents are faced with myriad decisions while raising children. One subject that has made a powerful presence in recent years is education. Public or private school? Should it be Homeschooled? Then there is homeschooling.

Choosing a private or public school can be influenced by location, cost, ratings, etc. But home schooling? Are there a lot more decisions to be made?

Guest columnist Barbara Baker of Reversview has attempted to take some of the guess-work out of the decision by writing a series of artic les that will answer many of the questions parents have about the ins and outs of homeschooling.

Barbara was inspired by a family friend with 11 years’ experience teaching at home. She put Barbara on the path to finding the answers needed for this series, and in turn, to enlighten you, our readers, on this important topic.

So, join us for the next few weeks on a journey down the path of home-based education.

BY BARBARA BAKER

According to Dr. Brian Ray of the National Home Education Research Institute (NHERI), “Homeschooling — being homeschooled or self-led, home-based education — is an age-old traditional educational practice that a decade ago appeared to be cutting edge and ‘alternative,’ but is now bordering on ‘mainstream’ in the United States.”

He says there are about 2.2 million home-educated students in the U.S. A degree in education is not required to homeschool your child. However, strong organizational skills are a plus.

There are some websites that tout free, accredited online classes. “There are resources to help your kids, even without a curriculum,” says Sarah Puebla, a homeschool veteran of 11 years. “As you go, you figure out what is best for your child.”

Puebla homeschools her special-needs children, and has learned that one of her children can concentrate better when weights are placed across her shoulders. “It calms her down, she says. That kind of personalized attention is a real perk of homeschooling.

Ray reports that “home-educated students typically score 15 to 20 percentile points above public school students on standardized academic tests, and home-educated students are increasingly being actively recruited by colleges.”

In an article titled Benefits of Home-schooling: Dealing With Conflict, Jeanne Faulconer writes, “I have found that kids tend to be emotionally honest with their parents in the intimate relationship of homeschooling.”

“The ability to control or guide a child who is angry, anxious, frustrated or sad, right when she needs it,” writes Faulconer, “is a remarkable opportunity that is simply woven into the home-school days.”

There are multiple opportunities for socialization. Puebla points out that homeschooled kids can take advantage of field trips organized by the co-ops or sometimes even a couple of moms will get together and organize something.

A homeschool co-op is typically formed by individual families who share their academic goals, morals, religious beliefs and social behaviors. The children learn similar belief and social structures from observation and interaction with the different members of the co-op. There are opportunities for education in music, art and physical education through the co-ops, taught by professional teachers and/or experienced homeschooled adults. Home-educated children of any age may sign up for any sports teams offered by the public high schools.

A good website to start with is www.NewBeeHomeSchooler.com. The owners have created a boot camp for those new to homeschooling. The NHERI also directs parents to pertinent resources and offers a peer-reviewed research journal. There are many magazines on the subject as well.

Statistics from data collected by NHERI show that a diverse group of people embrace homeschooling regardless of their socioeconomic, religious or political standing. Data continues to be collected on the success of adults who were home-educated. In general, they are doing as well, if not better than, their public school counterparts with regard to participation in local community affairs, success at college and in internalizing the values and beliefs of their parents.

Next week: Laws regarding homeschooling. What you need to know to get started.
SouthShore Regional Library

Kids program/event highlights

15816 Beth Shields Way, Ruskin • 813-273-3652

Teen Game Zone — Thursday, May 5, 5:30 p.m.

Teen gamers, come join us as we plug our Xbox 360, Wii and PlayS- tation into our large projector screens for two hours of gaming.

Bedtime Stories — Thursday, May 1, 7 p.m.

For ages 2-5 with a caregiver — Stories, action rhymes, songs, interac- tive activities and crafts make up this fun 30-minute program that cele- brates a love of reading. Children may wear pajamas and bring a blanket and favorite cuddly toy.

Teen Advisory Board Meeting — Thursday, May 1, 7 p.m.

For teens in grades 6-12 — Join the Teen Advisory Board to get in- volved with the Library’s teen programs or earn community service hours for graduation, scholarships and more. Funded by the Friends of the SouthShore Regional Library.

Make It for Everyone & Bookmark Awards — Saturday, May 3, 10:30 a.m.

Join us as we announce the winners of our SouthShore Library Book- mark Contest. After the awards, watch as Magician Cesar Domico amazes with magic tricks, using everything from handkerchiefs and sponge balls to cards and balloons. Funded by the Friends of the South- Shore Regional Library.

Pee Wee Artists: Let’s Create! — Monday, May 5, 10:30 a.m.

Pee Wee Artists, 3-5 years, adult must be present, will join our art in- structor and have fun creating an art project to take home. Limit 18. Register at the Information Desk or call 813-273-3652.

Baby Time — Monday, May 5, 1:35 p.m.

Tuesday, May 6, 11:35 a.m.

For children ages up to 20 months and their caregivers — Early literacy begins at birth. Bond with your baby through stories, bounce rhymes and songs in this 20-minute lap-sit program that introduces early literacy skills and encourages language development.

Super Science Monday — Monday, May 5, 5 p.m.

For children ages 5-12 — Join us for an interactive, hands-on afternoon and experiment as we turn the library into a science lab! The special sci- ence workshop features High Touch High Tech presenting experiments about chemical concoctions. This is a school early-release Monday. Funded by the Friends of the SouthShore Regional Library.

Puppet Show: The Gingerbread Boy — Tuesday, May 6, 10:15 a.m.

For children ages 3 and up — “Run, run, as fast as you can. You can’t catch me, I’m the Gingerbread Man!” The Gingerbread Boy has escaped from the oven and is running away from the little old woman, the little old man and quite a few animals! Find out who will be lucky enough to capture him, or if he successfully escapes! Presented by Creative Arts Theatre of the City of Tampa Parks and Recreation Department.

Teen Game Zone — Tuesday, May 6, 5 p.m.

For children ages 12-17 — Join us as we turn the library into a science lab! The special sci- ence workshop features High Touch High Tech presenting experiments about chemical concoctions. This is a school early-release Monday. Funded by the Friends of the SouthShore Regional Library.

Teen Game Zone — Tuesday, May 6, 6 p.m.

For children ages 12-17 — Join us as we turn the library into a science lab! The special sci- ence workshop features High Touch High Tech presenting experiments about chemical concoctions. This is a school early-release Monday. Funded by the Friends of the SouthShore Regional Library.

Birthday Story Time — Wednesday, May 7, 10:35 a.m.

For children ages 0-36 months and their caregivers — Early literacy begins at birth. Bond with your baby through stories, bounce rhymes and songs in this 20-minute lap-sit program that introduces early literacy skills and encourages language development.

Story Time — Wednesday, May 7, 11 a.m.

For children ages 3-5 and their caregivers — Stories, action rhymes, songs and interactive activities make up this fun 30-minute program that highlights early literacy skills and encourages reading readiness.

Teen Game Zone — Thursday, May 8, 1:35 p.m.

For children ages 12-17 — Join us as we turn the library into a science lab! The special sci- ence workshop features High Touch High Tech presenting experiments about chemical concoctions. This is a school early-release Monday. Funded by the Friends of the SouthShore Regional Library.

Apollo Beach Woman’s Club to award $10k in scholarships

The Club, in conjunction with the Community Foundation of Greater Sun City Center, will award $10,000.00 scholarship to one female high school student in the communities of Apollo Beach and such other places as the Club may determine. Any female high school student is eligible to apply. For more information, contact Judy Peck at 813-746-1072. To learn more, visit www.apollobeachwom- ansclub.org.

Terrific Kids at Cypress Creek Elementary

Cypress Creek Elementary School in Ruskin has awarded Terrific Kids certificates to the following students: Selena Perez-Chavez, Schedena Gay, Malory Ibarra-Ochoa, Dulce Garcia-Vasquez, Jordon Lopez, Marleni Perez-Vazquez, DeJesus, Danny Martinez, Aaron Parra Macias, Judah Flores, Andrew Nguyen, Avah Green, Ramon Galan, Malaya Soto, Sierra Greene, Sophia Ford, Jaiden Smith, Ayla Alcon, Luis Zertuche, Alana Lira, Adolfo Santiago, Shantial Gomez, Jessica Fuentes-Lozoya, Eduardo Yanez Perez, Alejandro Moreno, Vellenia Pena, Jesus Amador: Zykeria White, Julio Lopez, Jessica Martinez, Martin Francisco Villalba, Madison Mathis, Braylan Flores-Perez, Makenzie Ewing, James Woodcock, Judith Perez, Mariana Martinez, Arabelle Gilmore, Alina Bailey, Thanhn Tran. Jesse Flores, Sheryln Bermudez, Mari Vasquez, Jeremiah Martinez, Tristan Smith, Kaitlin Huffman, Novah’ Daniel, Keyanna Joseph, Christopher Brown, Fediana Edward, Jonathan Raso, Toluwanimi Ajani, Malysanna Lee, Janet Zefelino, Marleni Perez-Vasquez, Alicia Perez-Vasquez, Jeanette Hilerio, Jimmy Perez, Sydney Lallue, Janessa Ortiz, Ke’Yana Browne, Princess Gabin, Mariana Cruz, Katherine Hughes and Dyani Guerra. The Terrific Kids program is sponsored by the Kiwanis Club of Sun City Center.

Torrific Kids at Ruskin Elementary School

In March, trustworthiness was the character trait that earned Terrific Kid status at Ruskin Elementary School. In a program sponsored by Kiwanis of Sun City Center. Present for the photo were: Jacklyn Galicia-Miron, Ali Rhodes, Hannah Touchton, Elena Santiago, Jazlyn Aparicio, Mareli Leal-Adame, Marvin Solozano, Bailey Belcher, Oscar Dong, Darcy Perez Ramirez, Adrian Rosales, Alan Caballero, Aria Leon, Kameron McNeill, Elizabeth Reyes-Gaspar, Pablo Martinez-Huerta, Hannah Brundage, Chance Gracel, Autumn Montgomery, Faith Ponco, John Montarrilas, Oscar Ramirez-Porras, Juliana Lizardo, Ricky Rivera, Arianna Breault, Nicholas Scott, Liliana Urriola, Jillian Giles, Eliseo Arias, Rolando Grimaldo, Vicky Mullins, Daisy Ramirez, Samantha Ziff, Haylie Sylies, Adrianna Ibarra, Neptuale Sainttford, Liana Campisciano, Jocelyn Romero-Cruz, Reycheilih Gorgan, Rachel Sherman, Nancy Maya, Justin Roque, Daniel Hernandez, Alejandra Perez, Abigail Nunez, Naiela Portillo, Lisa Soto, Almaree Jones, Juan Lumbrares, Elayne Vergas, Marijoseado Claudio, Miguel Aguilar, Ana Vaughan, Rachel Beasley, Paris Newton, Angelina Bramon, Yarel Aguilar, Destiny Spady and Davon Martin. Also pictured are Ruskin Elementary Principal Lisa Amos and Kiwanis members Donna and Tom Braden. Not present for the photo were children Christopher Mondragon, Savannah Butler and Jessica Sanchez.
Agape Christian School wins salsa contest

Students from Agape Christian School of Sarasota proved to be the salsa champions at the recent Good Samaritan Mission Family Salsa Festival in Wimauma. The team, Agape Christian Team I, included student Kyle Nilles and school principal Cindy Showalter, who won the Judges’ Choice and the People’s Choice awards. Other recipes in the competition included an entry from S&S Tacos of Ruskin and Ana’s Restaurant of Wimauma. Judges for the contest were Lynn Kessel, a local food writer and author of the Table Scraps column; Amy Polinsky of Got Moxy Personal Training; and Bill Cruz of Good Samaritan Mission. For more information on the Family Salsa Festival or Good Samaritan Mission, see the Mission website at www.gsmission.org. For more information on ACS, see its website at agapesarasota.org. Pictured above, from left: Agape Christian School Students Alexis Harbert, Christine Havens and Kyle Nilles; School Principal Cindy Showalter; and Good Samaritan Mission executive director, Bill Cruz.

Salsa Festival draws 1,000 to Good Samaritan Mission

The weather held out, at least for half of the day, but rain couldn’t quench the thirst of visitors for “All Things Salsa” March 29 in Wimauma.

A fundraiser for Good Samaritan Mission, 14920 Balm Wimauma Road, the event drew some 1,000 visitors from all over the Bay area for games, food and music. “Our goals were to bring different people and organizations together to rub shoulders and get to know each other and provide families with a fun day, so I would say it was a success,” said Theresa Cruz, who runs the Mission with her husband, William. The Mission hopes to make the event a must-go-to soiree on the South County entertainment calendar. The first festival was two years ago.

“We hope to make this a major fundraiser,” said Anne Madden, a Mission volunteer. “The idea is to bring people here who have never been to the Mission before.”

Founded in 1984, the Good Samaritan Mission emphasizes education and opportunity to break the cycle of poverty, offering classes in everything from domestic violence to diabetes, and from HIV/AIDS to gang violence — issues that have riven the local community for years, according to research by Mission leaders.

Wayne Kindt, president of the Mission’s board of directors, has been driving from Sarasota for a decade to support Good Samaritan.

“People who come here and take classes, get a little chit for the food pantry, and they can shop themselves,” Kindt said. “That helps preserve people’s dignity because they feel they are earning it.

“You can’t break the cycle of poverty if you don’t help people help themselves. It’s about a hand up, not a hand out,” he said.

For more information, visit the Mission website, www.gsmission.org, email gsmission1984@gmail.com or call 813-634-7136.

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Ruskin Land Code amendment clears a key hurdle

By KEVIN BRADY
kevin@observernews.net

A new land code amendment that sets guidelines for development in large parts of Ruskin passed its legislative test last week.

The public hearing on the amendment was launched by commissioners, who praised county staff for listening to the concerns of Ruskin residents. “You guys reached out. You did a great job,” Hillsborough County Commissioner Sandra Murman told staff at the April 24 public hearing. A stark contrast to a March development bible.

Comprehensive Plan, the county’s Comprehensive Plan; hence, the need for an amendment.

The county’s first draft of that amendment, however, was “worse than useless” according to some Ruskin residents, who demanded a rewrite and called on the community to let their voices be heard on the issue.

Joe Moreda, the county’s director of planning and zoning, said he heard those concerns.

“We reviewed the input we received from the board (of county commissioners) and the community and we’ve made some edits to that language,” Moreda told commissioners. “The edits are primarily in the area of how we will review projects that are not consistent with the guidelines, so if it’s inconsistent with the guidelines, then we’ve established criteria that we will apply to projects.”

“I think the county finally has something that will work for the community,” said Mariella Smith, one of the leaders of an effort to rewrite the amendment.

“It’s really important now that citizens show their support for this by contacting county commissioners.”

If passed, the amendment will give developers two choices: abide by the guidelines of the Community Plan and sail through the approval process, or provide detailed reasons why they need to opt out of the Plan’s guidelines.

At issue are specific guidelines for May 29. With no dissenting

Continued on page 19
Moms get in free at MOSI May 10-11

Dear Savvy Senior,

How Medicare covers your eyes

Dear Savvy Senior,

What does Medicare cover when it comes to eye care? I recently have good vision insurance through my employer but will lose it when I retire.

Looking Ahead

Dear Looking,

Many retirees are unclear with what Medicare does and doesn’t cover when it comes to eye care. The good news is that Medicare covers most medical issues like cataract surgery, treatment of eye diseases and medical emergencies. But unfortunately, routine care like eye exams and eyeglasses are usually the beneficiary’s responsibility.

Here’s a breakdown of how original Medicare covers your eyes, along with some tips that can help you reduce your out-of-pocket costs.

Exams: Routine eye exams (sometimes called “eye refractions”) that test for eyeglasses or contact lenses are usually not covered under Medicare, but you are entitled to a yearly medical eye exam if you have diabetes or are at high risk for glaucoma. People at high risk include diabetics, those with a family history of glaucoma and older Hispanics and African-Americans.

Medicare will also pay for exams to test and treat medical eye diseases and other problems like macular degeneration, dry eye syndrome, eye infections or if you get something in your eye.

Eyeglasses and contact lenses: Medicare does not pay for eyeglasses or contact lenses, with one exception. If you have had a conventional intraocular lens inserted during cataract surgery, Medicare will pay for eyeglasses or contact lenses following the operation. Otherwise, you are on your own.

To find affordable eye exams or eyeglasses, many retailers provide discounts — between 10 and 30 percent. To help with this out-of-pocket expense, you may want to consider getting a Medigap supplemental policy.

If you can’t afford Medigap insurance, check into EyeCare America at eyecareamerica.org. This is a national program that provides medical eye examinations to seniors, age 65 and older, and up to one year of treatment at no cost.

Advantage option

Another idea that can get extra vision coverage when you join Medicare is to choose a Medicare Advantage plan instead of original Medicare. Many of these plans — which are sold through private insurance companies (see Medicare.gov/find-a-plan) — cover routine eye care and eyeglasses along with dental, hearing and prescription drugs, in addition to all of your hospital and medical insurance.

Or, if you’re original Medicare, consider purchasing an individual vision insurance policy (like Visionnaires or Clear Vision Insurance). These policies cover routine eye care and eyeglasses and typically run between $12 and $15 per month.

Send your senior questions to: Savvy Senior, P.O. Box 5443, Norman, OK 73070, or visit SavvySenior.org. Jim Miller is a contributor to the NBC Today show and author of The Savvy Senior book.
**Fish Tales: Sardines make great backup bait**

By JONIE MASCHEK
Merchandiser, Fresh Fish Department, Suncoast Supermarket

There was a lot of choppy water last week, but most days were warm and fish were looking for food. Some anglers said more redfish were caught than any other species.

Schools of fish were reported in several parts of the bay. The legal limit on redfish is one per person. Those who depend on greenbacks for bait might have a hard time finding them. They seem to be slow showing up in the bay this season. Other bait fish are out there in schools, but those who have not mastered their cast nets are having a difficult time getting them. A castnetter must read the water and know when a school of bait fish is passing by. Be ready to throw the net in a complete circle over the school. It takes patience, keep trying.

Local bait shops always have live shrimp and a variety of frozen bait on hand. In case you run out of bait, always have a couple of cans of sardines in your boat; use them for bait instead of going ashore. And, if you’re hungry — sardines and crackers are really tasty.

Many have mastered the art of catching sheepshead, as witnessed by the many catches last week. This fish has a hard, bony mouth, and an angler must master the art of setting a hook to make the catch. Sheepshead has a lean, white meat, and is very good table fare.

Since the sun on sardine fishing has ended, its stock has rebounded to about normal. The catch is still restricted to one per person, per day.

Pier fishing was outstanding last week, boasting great catches of snook, sheepshead, trout and redfish. If you don’t have a boat, find a pier, bridge, park or some landside area where you can legally drop a line. Flounder love the warm water and are no longer lazily on the sandy bottom. You will find them in schools looking for food. Many are out at high and low tide feeding on bait fish.

Freshwater catfish are in our upper rivers, both the Alafia and the Little Manatee. I saw many large catches last week.

Bass catches were great in local fresh waters, private lakes, phosphate pits and upper fresh water rivers.

Happy boating, fishing, and stay safe.

**America’s Boating Class is May 10**

The Manatee Sail and Power Squad-ron invites area boaters to attend “America’s Boating Class” from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on Saturday, May 10, at the Elks Lodge in Palmetto, 4611 4th St. E. (behind Peggy’s Corral).

This class satisfies Florida Boating and Safety Education regulations requiring those born on or after Jan. 1, 1988, to complete a National Association of State Boating Law Administrators-approved boater education course or competency exam before operating a vessel powered by a motor of 10 hp or more. Additionally, some insurers offer discounts for completing this course.

Topics covered include: boat-handling techniques; navigation aids; required equipment; rules of the road; emergency procedures; radio procedures; local water knowledge; and optional on-the-water demonstration.

The class fee is $25, which includes course material, morning coffee and doughnuts, and a light lunch. Advance registration is required.

For more information or to register, call Marty Spencer at 941-763-9444 or email him at mwsomar@gmail.com

**New! Maintenance & Inspection Service**

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9 a.m. to 2 p.m. first Wednesday of each month.

Next Service Date: May 7, 2014.

**Fire Rescue Foundation**

Hillsborough County Fire Rescue has a nonprofit foundation, which has a mission “to promote fire and life safety in Hillsborough County, and the professional development and education of members of HCFR.”

The foundation also provides funding to HCFR “to educate, inform and involve the county’s residences in protecting life and property in the event of an emergency.”

For more information, visit the foundation’s official website: www.hcfoundation.org

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3:00pm – 5:00pm
Sun City Center Chamber of Commerce
1651 Sun City Center Plaza
Sun City Center, FL 33573

Program
3:00-3:15pm Arrival and Check-in
3:15-3:45pm Complimentary hors d’oeuvres
3:45-4:45pm Travel Presentation
4:45-5:00pm Raffle/Conclusion

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3:45-4:45pm Travel Presentation
4:45-5:00pm Raffle/Conclusion

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when George Washington Vanderbilt began planning and building his home, which today is still the largest private residence ever built in America, he was a 28-year-old bachelor. It took six years to complete this 175,000-square-foot French Renaissance château with 250 rooms, 35 bedrooms, 43 bathrooms, 66 servants’ bedrooms, 63 fireplaces and many more features under roof. When it officially opened 120 years ago on Christmas Eve 1895, Vanderbilt was 35.

At a time in history when most homes did not have indoor plumbing and electricity was a novelty, Vanderbilt’s house in Asheville, N.C., was considered one of the most technologically advanced structures ever built. It is still admired today for its beauty and innovative engineering. The house was fully electrified, and used some of Thomas Edison’s first light bulbs. There was a fire-alarm system, an electrical call-box system for servants, two elevators, elaborate indoor plumb- ing for all 35 bedrooms, that new novelty called a telephone, walk-in refrigerators, under-cabinet chilling systems in the kitchen to hold prepared food, a 70,000-gallon indoor swimming pool, a two-lane bowling alley and many more inno- vative features.

The true cost of building the estate seems to be lost in the mists of time. No one I questioned could even venture a guess. There were so many additions and changes to the original plans that a dollar figure wasn’t available. Today this would be called a “time and material job.” An old saying about yacht ownership is that, “If you have to ask how much it costs, you probably cannot afford it.” This would apply to an undertaking like the Biltmore Estate.

Three years after completion of the main building, George Vanderbilt married Edith Stuyvesant Dresser. After a prolonged European honeymoon, Vanderbilt brought his bride to her new home. She had never seen it until, after a slow ride over the three-mile approach road from the main gate, the final bend in the road was negotiated, and there it was. The estate’s landscaping was designed so that the house was hidden from view to anyone entering from the main gate. It can be seen only after rounding the final bend on the approach road.

There were many reported stories as to what Mrs. Vanderbilt said on seeing her new home for the first time. My favorite is, “George, I don’t do windows.”

I first became aware of the Biltmore Estate when watching the wonderful 1979 award-winning movie Being There, with Peter Sellers and Shirley MacLaine. Much of this highly recommended picture was filmed at the Biltmore Estate, both in the house and on the grounds. Originally comprising 125,000 acres or 228 square miles, the Biltmore Estate today is a “manageable” 8,000 acres of forests, streams, lakes, buildings and gardens.

Designed by Frederick Law Olmsted, known as the dean of American landscape design, Biltmore’s formal garden is considered to be one of America’s finest. It was one of Olmsted’s many grand projects, which included New York’s Central Park. At 125,000 acres, the Biltmore Estate was to be his last and greatest accomplishment. Visiting here is a four-season experience. Approximately 5,000 acres of gardens and woodlands are maintained. Eighty or so varieties of roses and 50,000 tulips and many other types of plantings delight visitors at different times of the year.

The Biltmore Estate

Asheville, N.C.

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Continued on page 15
The Biltmore Estate  •  Continued from page 14

the year. When in bloom, rhododendrons show bursts of color among the green of the woods. Because there is so much to see and do on the property, confusion can be the order of the day for first-time visitors who wonder how best to see and experience everything in the time available.

The admission fee gives visitors access to the House, Gardens and Grounds, Antler Hill Village and Winery, optional outdoor adventures and much more. There are numerous choices, both in the House and throughout the 8,000 acres.

The Biltmore Estate opens to visitors at 9 a.m. The House is least crowded then, and again around noon when people break for lunch, and also in early afternoon when many visitors have gone on to visit other parts of the estate. I highly recommend taking advantage of the optional audio tour as you wander through the House.

The one-hour Butler’s Tour took us up and down back staircases, and through kitchens, prep rooms, the staff dining room and staff bedrooms. We learned that in the grand mansions during this country’s Golden Age (1880s - early 1900s), it was the head housekeeper, not the head butler, who ruled the roost. Check the brochures to see which tour(s) would be of interest to you.

The available active outdoor activities would include river trips, fly fishing, equestrian center, trail rides, hiking, archery, sporting clays, Segway tours, Range Rover off-road driving, bicycle riding on 22 miles of trails, and much more. For those interested in less strenuous outdoor activities, there is the new Antler Hill Village.

Opened in 2010, the Village is the center for information about Vanderbilt family history, and features live entertainment, dining and shopping. There are coffee, ice cream, pastry and sandwich shops, and restaurants. It is also the location of the famous Biltmore Winery.

The most visited winery in the United States is not in California’s Napa Valley but right here in the mountains of North Carolina at the Biltmore Estate. The Biltmore Winery hosts approximately 600,000 visitors a year who stop by for a free tour and samples of the Biltmore vineyard’s offerings. George and Edith Vanderbilt had one child, Cornelia, born in 1900.

George Vanderbilt’s bedroom in the Biltmore Estate, Asheville, N.C., first time. It was hoped this would increase tourism in the Asheville area and that visitor admissions would help defray costs of running the estate. Both things came to pass. Today, more than a million visitors pass through the Biltmore Estate gates every year. The Biltmore Estate is privately owned and supported entirely by admission fees. There is neither government funding nor grants.

A question frequently asked is: Why is the property called Biltmore? The Vanderbilt family originally came from Holland. George Vanderbilt called his estate Biltmore from “Bilth,” the Dutch town where his ancestors originated, and “more” an old English word for open, rolling land.

If you have only one day to spend at the Biltmore Estate, do your homework. Go to their website (www.biltmore.com) and check out the things you want to do there. The Biltmore House itself will, of course, be first on the list, but then go to the other venues and make a list, in order of interest, of the other things you would like to experience.

If you can’t do everything during a one-day visit, you might want to plan on coming back during another season and continue the tour. We plan on doing so when the gardens are in bloom.

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George Vanderbilt’s bedroom in the Biltmore Estate, Asheville, N.C.

Ruskim woman left dog with no food or water for week, deputies say

A Ruskim woman is facing a charge of aggravated cruelty to animals after her dog was found emaciated.

Maria Del Rodriguez Alvarado was arrested after Hillsborough County Sheriff’s Office deputies were called to a house in the 500 block of 1st Street NW in Ruskim, April 24, after a report of animal abuse.

Deputies say that when they arrived, they noticed a pit bull chained to a tree. They noticed the dog was unhealthy with its shoulder blades, spine, rib cage and pelvic bones showing.

Rodríguez Alvarado, 36, the dog’s owner, was questioned by deputies, who said they learned she had been away from her residence for two weeks without providing the dog any food, water or shelter.

Hillsborough County Animal Control responded and took custody of the dog.

Rodríguez Alvarado was arrested and transported to the Orient Road Jail.

She was arrested and booked into the Hillsborough County Jail on $2,000 bond.
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Watch our partner, ALAN HAFT, on Fox News – He’s a regular commentator!
I liked Chuck the moment I met him at his Kings Point home. Living in the moment, listening to his stories, had an impact on me. I drove away feeling great.

Observations:

Good people and gratitude

By Mitch Traphagen

I was trying to tell you how much I appreciate you being here keeping an eye on things.” I’d seen him several times over the past week and he was always hard at work, taking his job seriously, and giving me a good feeling about that.

Upon my words, he softened considerably and smiled. We shook hands and he thanked me for saying that. I wonder if enough people tell him that what he does is valuable and is truly appreciated. For him, the best results of his work is that nothing at all happens. Thus, perhaps some people don’t realize that the “nothing” is largely thanks to him doing his job with dedication.

Point being … how friendly and seemingly happy he was to hear that his work was appreciated; and how open he became as a result of the sincerity (I suspect that’s what they call it in some other language). As a note to some of less than noble intent, I wouldn’t want to spread a rumor and ruin his day. The right side of the job he takes seriously — but am happy to have met him. I thanked him and he thanked me for that.

We chatted for a moment until he needed to check in on his radio. We shook hands again and I said, “It’s good to meet you, Richard.”

“Hi,” he replied. “Mitch, I hope you have a nice evening,” he said warmly.

That’s something I remembered my name after a mere chance and very quick introduction was also telling. Every successful person I’ve ever known has had that talent — instantly remembering names and confirming them. I’m quite certain he’ll remember it when I see him again on my next trip to Florida that is quickly approaching.

It really was good to meet Richard. It was wonderful to meet Chuck and Sandy. Good people are everywhere. What a blessing that is. But the reality is that meeting wonderful people is a two-way street. The best way to find them is to try to be a good and thankful person yourself. If you can do that, you’ll be amazed at what you will find: people who can change your day or even your life. Barring that, you may never know just how cool the nurses are at your hospital. If you can do that, you’ll be amazed at how open they become — and how good and thankful people is a two-way street. The best way to find them is to try to be good and thankful person yourself. If you can do that, you’ll be amazed at what you will find: people who can change your day or even your life.

Barring that, you may never know just how cool the nurses are at your hospital. If you can do that, you’ll be amazed at what you will find: people who can change your day or even your life.
It’s that time of year again when seeing that guy win a green blazer reminds us that we can win the coveted navy blue blazer right here! That’s right! It’s time for the fourth annual SCC Chamber Cup on Friday, May 9, at the Apollo Beach Golf Club. The tournament is open to anyone and will benefit the Chamber.

Actually, the entire foursome will win jack-ets and will have ownership of the Chamber Cup for one year and individual trophies to keep. There are lots of gifts in the goodie bags and plenty of prizes to win. If you’re a business owner, now is when you get three of your best customers and reward them for their patronage by giving them a day of golf. If you’ve got great employees, let them put on their company shirts and show off to all the other players!

My days of playing golf are long over. My college coach saw to that when I told me I just re- ally wasn’t any good. His motto was: “How far the drive it matters not, if you scruffeth up the second shot!” He saved me years of grief and lots of money.

But I’ll be one of the Beer and Beverage Bunnies on the front nine with First Light Home Care, and Palm Garden skilled-nursing facility will make sure those on the back nine are given their choice of libations. Any and all tips will go to Wounded Warriors. Manatee Healthcare Systems will be providing a scrumptious on-site station so you can custom-create your breakfast. Lunch will be provided courtesy of the Ruskin Methodist Church Youth Group. The putting contest is sponsored by Service-Master 24 Hour. Many other businesses will sponsor the holes.

We’ll have all sorts of prizes, including $15,000 cash if you make a hole-in-one on the 8th hole, sponsored by Ed Morse Ca-dillac Brandon. Other close- to-the-hole, closest-to-the-alligator and longest-drive prizes include a trip, TVs, gift cards and much more. If putting is your specialty, we’ll have a contest just for that! I might have to enter that one — I’m pretty good at getting the ball through the clown’s mouth.

Entry is only $50 per person or $200 for a foursome, and that includes breakfast and lunch, goodie bags and chances to win door prizes. If you would like to play in the tournament, please come by the Chamber or call us at 813-634-5111 to register. Come on out and have fun! You just might be riding home $15,000 richer, wearing The Jacket, and showing off your trophy to the neighbors!

The Agriculture Shop is in between East Bay High School and Eisenhower Middle School, off Old Big Bend Road. Custom- ers are encouraged to drive down the service road between the two schools and turn right on the second road. The road will dead-end into the agriculture shop.

The Florida FFA Association is a premier youth leadership organi- zation with nearly 17,000 middle- and high-school student members – as part of more than 300 local FFA chapters across the state. FFA makes a positive difference in the lives of students by develop- ing their potential for premier leadership, personal growth and career success through agricultural education.

East Bay High School FFA alum- ni will host their annual Mother’s Day Plant Sale from Wednesday, May 7, until Friday, May 9. The school will be at the East Bay High School Agriculture Shop, 7710 Old Big Bend Road, Gibbon- son. The sale is open to the public from 7:30 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. The sale will feature outdoor landscape plants, hanging baskets, indoor foliage plants and great Mother’s Day gifts.

Money raised from the plant sale will sponsor FFA members to at- tend leadership and career develop- ment events through the Na- tional FFA Organization (formerly known as the Future Farmers of America) to become involved with Chap- ter projects and activities.

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PET TIP: Have a picture taken of yourself together with your pet. This will help verify ownership if you and your pet become separated. You also want to be able to explain any identifying marks on your pet.

Drs. Ott, Langanston, Waddy & Houston
- Newly 100-years of experience • Board Certified in Animal Behavior
- Board certified in Veterinary Acupuncture and Veterinary Chiropractic
- Educator of F.A.S. Acres, Beautiful Dog Park
Ruskin Animal Hospital & Cat Clinic
1515 U.S. Hwy. 41 S. • Ruskin • 813-645-6413
Mon.-Sat. 8am-5pm, 7:30am Sun. 24hr. • Sat. 8am-5pm • Sun. 9am-5pm
in the Community Plan for land use, density and lot sizes in four areas of Ruskin:
Area 1: The Old Ruskin neighborhood west of downtown will feature lower density single-family housing in keeping with the traditional character of the area.
Area 2: This area east of downtown and west of the I-75 employment center will accommodate a variety of housing types, including multi-family and entry-level housing.
Area 3: This area south of College Avenue will accommodate a more suburban style and type of residential development with safeguards for the redevelopment of property along the Manatee River.
Area 4: This area southeast of I-75 will retain its rural and agricultural character and provide for enhanced interaction and access to the publicly owned lands adjacent to the Little Manatee River.
Next for the Ruskin Land Code amendment:
The Planning Commission will review the amendment for consistency with the Comprehensive Plan May 12. Commissioners will vote on the amendment at their 6 p.m., May 29 meeting after the second and final public hearing.
Both public hearings will take place on the second floor of County Center, 601 E. Kennedy Blvd. in Tampa.
Dorothy Kroll Bender
Dorothy Kroll Bender, 94, of the late Paul V. Bender, entered into rest on Wednesday, April 23, 2014, in Evans, Ga.
Dorothy was born to Edward and Harriet Smith on Dec. 12, 1919, in Wisconsin Rapids, Wis. Dorothy graduated from High School. She married Paul Bender in 1941, and they lived in Freeport, Ill., before retiring to Sun City Center, FL. in 1978.
Dorothy worked as a-paraplegic until her retirement. In Augusta, Ga., she was a member of First Baptist Church of Augusta, GA. She was a member of the Augusta Chapter of Scottsdale, Ariz., and Susan Kiosa (Dr. Andrew Kiosa) of Evans, GA. granddaughters Alisa and Kiosa, and great-grandchildren Arda, and Sandy Bender of San Diego, CA. and great-grandchildren Stella and Rachel Zimmerman of Scottsdale.
A memorial service was held Tuesday, April 29, in the Story Chapel at the First Baptist Church of Augusta, with Dr. Greg DeLoach officiating.
Dorothy was survived by children Doug Bender of Scottsdale, AZ., Ariz., and Susan Kiosa (Dr. Andrew Kiosa) of Evans, GA. granddaughters Alisa and Kiosa, and great-grandchildren Arda, and Sandy Bender of San Diego, CA. and great-grandchildren Stella and Rachel Zimmerman of Scottsdale.
A memorial service was held Tuesday, April 29, in the Story Chapel at the First Baptist Church of Augusta, with Dr. Greg DeLoach officiating.
Orrell M. Clark
Orrell M. Clark, 88, of Sun City Center, passed away on Tuesday, April 22, 2014. Loving husband of Orrell M. Clark, in the United Methodist Church of Sun City Center, 1501 La Jolla Ave., Sun City Center, Florida, passed away on Tuesday, April 29, in the Story Chapel at the First Baptist Church of Augusta, GA.
She is survived by daughter retired U.S. Air Force Col. Karen W. Currie, her husband Wayne Daniel Currie, and her children Richard Edward Williams and his wife Sandra Hyesinger of Houston; son Stuart Alan Williams and his wife Cynthia of Williamsburg, VA; and children Conrad Edward Williams of New Orleans, LA, and Colin Patrick Williams of Houston, and several nieces and nephews.
Hazel was a member of St. Andrew Presbyterian Church, the Colonial George Mercer Brooks Chapter of Daughters of the American Revolution in the Sun City Center, the North Carolina Genealogy Society and the Wilson County N.C. Genealogy Society.
In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be made to either First Baptist Church of Augusta, 3500 Walton Way, Augusta, GA 30909 or to The Independence Fund Inc., 52377 Collection Center Drive, Chicago, IL 60693.
A memorial service will be held for Orrell on Saturday, June 14, at the United Community Church of Sun City Center, at 2 p.m.
In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in Orrell’s name to the United Community Church, 1501 La Jolla Ave., Sun City Center, FL 33573-5329. Call 813-634-2539 to reserve a seat and an in- formation packet. This program is designed to help you and your family plan for the future by expressing your wishes. Five Wishes focuses on maintaining your human dignity and getting your needs met. Call the church office at 813-634-2539 to reserve a seat and an in- formation packet. This program is designed to help you and your family plan for the future by expressing your wishes. Five Wishes focuses on maintaining your human dignity and getting your needs met. Call the church office at 813-634-2539 to reserve a seat and an in- formation packet. This program is designed to help you and your family plan for the future by expressing your wishes. Five Wishes focuses on maintaining your human dignity and getting your needs met. Call the church office at 813-634-2539 to reserve a seat and an in- formation packet. This program is designed to help you and your family plan for the future by expressing your wishes. Five Wishes focuses on maintaining your human dignity and getting your needs met. Call the church office at 813-634-2539 to reserve a seat and an in- formation packet. This program is designed to help you and your family plan for the future by expressing your wishes. Five Wishes focuses on maintaining your human dignity and getting your needs met. Call the church office at 813-634-2539 to reserve a seat and an in- formation packet.
Rev. Langer to retire from UMC this Sunday

The Rev. Dr. Warren Langer will preach his last sermon at the United Methodist Church of Sun City Center on Sunday, May 4, at the 9 and 11 a.m. worship services.

Langer has the longest tenure of any of the full-time pastors serving churches in Sun City Center, having served the church from 2003 to the present.

Under his leadership, the church has grown from 450 attendees to a current attendance of 1,200 during winter months.

The church has been twice recognized as the fastest-growing United Methodist Church in the state of Florida and one of more than 740 churches across the United States. In 2007, the church was recognized as the second fastest-growing church in the United States. During this period, the church has completed 15 capital-improvement programs valued at $5.4 million.

During Rev. Langer’s tenure, the church has grown spiritually, numerically and financially. It has become a significant presence in the community, particularly in response to the need for social services. The church has been a leader in providing food, clothing, and other basic needs to those in need.

In 2009, Langer provided leadership for the church’s ministry to the homeless. The church has been involved in building homes and providing medical assistance. Offerings from the church have been used to help rescue street children in Vietnam.

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In 2009, Langer provided leadership for the church’s ministry to the homeless. The church has been involved in building homes and providing medical assistance. Offerings from the church have been used to help rescue street children in Vietnam. "The Empirical Miracle" is topic

At 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, May 1, the Rev. Robert P. Tucker, PhD, will deliver a sermon to the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Sun City Center. The sermon will survey the rise and importance of empiricism and the empirical/scientific method in the West.

Tucker will celebrate the great thinking that arose over the centuries, from individuals like Thales (who produced the first empirical miracle), to Locke, Berkeley and Hume, who helped to set modern thinking on the right path.

The Fellowship meets in the Henry Gibbon Social Hall of the Beth Israel Synagogue on East Del Webb Boulevard in Sun City Center. All are welcome.

May Crowning and Fellowship Sunday at Prince of Peace

On Thursday, May 1, the Ancient Order of Hibernians invites you to attend the May Crowning of the Blessed Virgin Mary statue in the prayer garden of Prince of Peace Catholic Church.

The crowning will take place immediately following 8 a.m. Mass. The rite of crowning the Blessed Virgin Mary originated in 1837 when Pope Gregory XVI placed an Icon of Jesus and Mary. In Catholic tradition, statues are venerated not because of a belief that these images themselves possess anything of divinity or power but because the honor shown them is directed to the prototypes they represent. Catholics join together in the May Crowning to show their love and thankfulness to the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Fellowship Sunday

Are you a new resident of Sun City Center? Are you a Catholic looking for a new parish? The parishioners of Prince of Peace invite you to join them for Mass on Sunday, May 4. Masses will be offered at 8 and 10 a.m. and at noon.

Following Mass, all are invited for a time of fellowship in the Conesa Center, where coffee and doughnuts will be available. A member of the parish stewardship committee will be present to answer any questions.

Prince of Peace Catholic Church is located at 702 Valley Forge Blvd. in Sun City Center. For more information, visit www.popcc.org or call 813-634-2229.
East Bay Watch

By Michael Cooper

From left are Briana Brown, Noora Al-qili and Scarleth Rachel Jimenez.

East Bay's girls' flag football team improved to 6-4 on the season after defeating district rival Lennard 40-0. The Longhorns are much improved with new head coach Cortes Culpepper, but the Indians jumped to a quick lead that Lennard could not overcome.

QB Madeline Hornacek had her first career point on a 3-yard pass. Brown held on to the ball in the endzone, being hit hard as the ball hit her hands. Jenna McIneney closed out the game as QB, making her longest run of the season with a 1-yard scamper. The Indians close the regular season at home against Strawbery Crest and will play as third seed in the district semifinals against Bloomingdale.

Keep up with the team at www.ebhsflagfootball.com.

RUSKIN VFW POST #6287

Ruskin VFW Post #6287, 5120 U.S. 41 N. has listed the following weekly activities. Meetings are: VFW Post Meeting 7 p.m. LAVFW on the 2nd Wednesday each month; and MAVFW, 3rd Thursday each month. Chapel duty at the VA Hospital every Sunday all month, 8:30 a.m.

Thursday, May 1 — Bar Bingo 6 p.m. Jerry's last night.
Friday, May 2 — Fish Fry 4:30 p.m. Music by D Vespi 7 p.m.
Saturday, May 3 — Joint installation 4-8 p.m. followed by a dinner.
Sunday, May 4 — Lounge Games 2 p.m. Music by Bert & Sassy 6:30 p.m. Queen of Hearts drawing 7:30 p.m.
Monday, May 5 — Croquet 6 p.m.
Tuesday, May 6 — Lounge Games 1-4 p.m. Bingo: doors open 3 p.m., Bingo 6 p.m. Kitchen opens 4:30 p.m.

Summer camp for martial arts is in Apollo Beach

Tampa Bay Martial Arts Academy, at 6038 U.S. 41 N. in Apollo Beach, will offer martial arts summer camp, starting Monday, June 9, the first day of summer break. The camp, for children going into kindergarten next fall through 5th Grade, is available weekdays from 8:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. You can sign up for the summer, by the week, or even just two or three days a week.

Besides martial arts classes, the academy has field trips, behind-the-scenes tours of businesses and supervised swimming almost every week. There are also craft times, education game times and just plain play times.

The camp offers family rates and specials. For more information, call Nancy at 813-649-0020 or visit its website at www.tbamma.com.

Community events at Brandon Regional Hospital

Brandon Regional Hospital will offer the following events in May. All will take place in the Oakfield Medical Campus, 119 Oakfield Drive, Brandon, unless otherwise noted.

• Gestational Diabetes – May 1, 8, 15, 22 and 29, 8:30 a.m., classroom C, Suite 258
• Prenatal Tour – May 4 at 3 p.m. and May 12 and 27 at 7:30 p.m., Brandon Regional Hospital, Women’s Center Lobby
• Prepared Childbirth Series – May 5, 12, 19 and 26 at 6:30 p.m., classroom B, Suite 260
• NICU, or Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, Family to Family Support Group – May 6 and 20 at 6:45 p.m., Brandon Regional Hospital, Women’s Center Lobby
• Healthy Heart Nutrition – May 7 at 2:30 p.m., classroom A, Suite 262
• Vascular Victories Cardiac and Stroke Support – May 8, noon, classroom A, Suite 262
• Prepared Childbirth – May 10, 17 at 9 a.m., classroom B, Suite 260
• Pink petals Support Group – May 12 at 6:30 p.m., classroom A, Suite 262
• Prenatal Breastfeeding – May 13 at 6:30 p.m., classroom B, Suite 260
• Nutrition for Cancer Prevention & Treatment Class – May 14, 2:30 p.m., classroom B, Suite 260
• Weight Loss Options – May 14 at 6 p.m., classroom B, Suite 260
• Freedom From Life’s Unexpected Moments – May 22, 4:30 p.m., 1901 Haverford Ave., Suite 106, behind South Bay Hospital, Sun City Center
• Newborn Care Class – May 17 at 9:30 a.m. and May 19 at 6 p.m., classroom A, Suite 262
• Outpatient Diabetes Self-Management – May 21, 8:30 a.m., classroom B, Suite 260
• Surgical Solutions for Weight Loss – May 29, 6:30 p.m., classroom B, Suite 260
• Surgical Weight Loss Support Group – May 29, 6:30 p.m., classroom A, Suite 262

Seating is limited and reservations are advised. For more information and to register, call 813-655-1065 or visit BrandonRegionalHospital.com.
YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD DEALER!

IT’S HERE AND THE RACE IS ON!

$6000 OFF MSRP

ON ALL NEW TOYOTAS IN-STOCK!**

0% APR FINANCING FOR UP TO 60 MO.* AND $0 DOWN ON ANY NEW TOYOTA!

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MAINTENANCE FOR 2 YEARS/25,000 MILES PROVIDED BY TOYOTA

Includes Oil Changes & Major Services

Visit Our State Of The Art Facility!

When you purchase or lease a new Toyota, get

MAINTENANCE FOR 2 YEARS/25,000 MILES PROVIDED BY TOYOTA

Covers normal factory scheduled service. Plan is 2 years or 25K miles, whichever comes first. The new vehicle cannot be part of a rental or commercial fleet, or a livery/taxi vehicle.

See participating Toyota dealer for plan details. Valid only in the continental U.S. and Alaska. Roadside Assistance does not include parts and fluids.

GETTEL 1000 PRE-OWNED SPECIALS!

When you purchase or lease a new Toyota, get

maintenancE for 2 years/25,000 miles provided by Toyota

Covers normal factory scheduled service. Plan is 2 years or 25K miles, whichever comes first. The new vehicle cannot be part of a rental or commercial fleet, or a livery/taxi vehicle.

See participating Toyota dealer for plan details. Valid only in the continental U.S. and Alaska. Roadside Assistance does not include parts and fluids.

All models with approved credit through Toyota Financial Services. Includes tax, tag, title, registration and includes dealer freight. Factory rebates and incentives to dealer. Dealer equipment costs. **See "New 2014 Toyota Sequoia Premium 5.7L V8, STK#LL053865, MDL#7931. MSRP $64,157 - $6000 Dealer Discount = $58,157 Sale Price. ^0% APR financing for 60 months is $16.67 per month per $1000 borrowed with $0 down through Southeast Toyota Financial. ^^Camry: MSRP $26,313 - $2500 Dealer Cash - $2500 Dealer Discount = $21,313 Sale Price. Sienna: MSRP $33,477 - $2250 Dealer Cash - $2750 Dealer Discount = $28,477 Sale Price. Prius: MSRP $28,693 - $1750 Dealer Cash - $1750 Dealer Discount = $26,193 Sale Price. †36 month (Prius = 24 month) lease with $3499 due at signing including $0 security deposit. 12,000 miles per year allowed, 18¢ per mile beyond. 25,000 miles in 3 years, 20,000 miles in 2 years. $0 Down includes all rebates and incentives. Please ask dealer for complete details. Offers expire 5/4/2014.

ToyotaCare

Visit Our State Of The Art Facility!
About a dozen volunteers turned out to help Florida Home Partner- ship plant several Washingtonia Palm trees at Bayou Pass Village Phase 4 in Ruskin on Earth Day, April 22. The project was made possible with a portion of a $219,000 grant presented to FHP from Wells Fargo.

Fargo’s “LIFT” family of initia- tives that promote sustainable efforts.

Bayou Pass Village

Fargo’s “LIFT” family of initia- tives that promote sustainable efforts.

Firehouse Blues & Bar-B-Que

Continued from page 1

King, Screamin’ Jay Hawkins, Lou Christie and The Platters. While performing with his own band, The Divebombers, Worth- more was also joined on stage by such stars as Billy Idol and Paul Schaffer, band leader on The Late Show with David Letterman. After three tours to South Africa, Worthmore bought the nightclub where he performed, The Blues Room, turning it into one of the most prestigious live music venues in Africa. In 2007, after an award-winning 10-year run, he sold the Blues Room and returned to the States and to his first love, performing.

Worthmore’s show is interlaced with humorous comments and anecdotes about the songs, his life and his music.

Tickets for the event are:

$60 VIP Ticket — BBQ, ticket to the Firehouse Pub with Reserved Seating, and a drink ticket
$40 Ticket — BBQ and George Worthmore, ticket to the Firehouse Pub
$20 Ticket — BBQ
$10 Ticket — Children BBQ

The event includes a cash bar. In addition to the barbecue con- cert, the Center will also screen Phantomly as part of its ongoing film series May 8, with Bella Viu hitting the screen May 22. A Latin Roots concert is set for May 9.

“We have so many different types of things happening here,” said Hereford-Griffin, who also credits executive direc- tor, Georgia Vahue, with building the profile of the Center. For more information and tickets, call 813-645-7651 or visit firehouseculturalcenter.org.

ALS COMMUNITY YARD SALE AND SPRING CLEANING FUNDRAISER

Join us at Freedom Plaza Sun City Center May 9 and 10 for a community yard sale, spring cleaning event, and help put an end to ALS. Browse through hundreds of items — you’re sure to find something! Have material to discard? No problem. A shredder will be ready to receive your unwanted “stuff.” And that’s not all. There will also be a DJ, tasty summer refreshments, and complimentary tours of our exceptional Freedom Plaza community. Partial proceeds will benefit the ALS Foundation. Come out and support this great cause! We ask that guests not bring any items to sell. CASH ONLY.

Friday, May 9 and Saturday, May 10 | 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Yard Sale | Shredding (Friday, May 9 only) | DJ
Hot Dogs, Chips and Drink $2 | Complimentary Community Tours

READY FOR ANOTHER ROUND?
Fundraiser attendees will be eligible for our May Golf Specials at Freedom Fairways. $12 rounds, including the cart! Certificates available the day of the event

For more details call 1-888-538-9668 today!

ALL THE PLACES LIFE CAN GO...
A Life Care Community
1010 American Eagle Blvd, Apt. 114
Sun City Center, FL 33573
brookdale.com

FIREHOUSE CULTURAL CENTER

Continued from page 1

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Tickets for the event are:

$60 VIP Ticket — BBQ, ticket to the Firehouse Pub with Reserved Seating, and a drink ticket
$40 Ticket — BBQ and George Worthmore, ticket to the Firehouse Pub
$20 Ticket — BBQ
$10 Ticket — Children BBQ

The event includes a cash bar. In addition to the barbecue con- cert, the Center will also screen Phantomly as part of its ongoing film series May 8, with Bella Viu hitting the screen May 22. A Latin Roots concert is set for May 9.

“We have so many different types of things happening here,” said Hereford-Griffin, who also credits executive direc- tor, Georgia Vahue, with building the profile of the Center. For more information and tickets, call 813-645-7651 or visit firehouseculturalcenter.org.

ALS COMMUNITY YARD SALE AND SPRING CLEANING FUNDRAISER

Join us at Freedom Plaza Sun City Center May 9 and 10 for a community yard sale, spring cleaning event, and help put an end to ALS. Browse through hundreds of items — you’re sure to find something! Have material to discard? No problem. A shredder will be ready to receive your unwanted “stuff.” And that’s not all. There will also be a DJ, tasty summer refreshments, and complimentary tours of our exceptional Freedom Plaza community. Partial proceeds will benefit the ALS Foundation. Come out and support this great cause! We ask that guests not bring any items to sell. CASH ONLY.

Friday, May 9 and Saturday, May 10 | 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Yard Sale | Shredding (Friday, May 9 only) | DJ
Hot Dogs, Chips and Drink $2 | Complimentary Community Tours

READY FOR ANOTHER ROUND?
Fundraiser attendees will be eligible for our May Golf Specials at Freedom Fairways. $12 rounds, including the cart! Certificates available the day of the event

For more details call 1-888-538-9668 today!

ALL THE PLACES LIFE CAN GO...
A Life Care Community
1010 American Eagle Blvd, Apt. 114
Sun City Center, FL 33573
brookdale.com

FIREHOUSE CULTURAL CENTER