Downtown Gallery To Host Reception

Arts for ACT Gallery will hold an opening reception of Imperfect by Artist Daniel Jude Venditti in the main gallery and Waterways by Jeff and Dale Ocasio in the White Gallery on Friday, December 6 from 6 to 10 p.m.

Venditti has always been fascinated with the human form. He has a great interest in human nature that has formed his artistic style to reveal much about himself, the subject and the observer. His Italian heritage, coupled with various European masters, both past and contemporary, has influenced his work in many aspects.

Vendetti received a bachelor degree in fine art from Pratt Institute in 1987. He later attended the New York Academy of Art and received a master’s degree in painting and sculpture in 1994. He also apprenticed with the Russian artists Komar and Melamid for most of the 1990s, working on print editions of DEATH magazine and its America’s Most Wanted series of paintings. He spent 20 years in New York City showing his works in galleries in the city as well as international galleries and group exhibits.

The exhibit is a series of figurative paintings of real people, showing the beauty and grace in human flaws, and all shapes and sizes of humanity. In this day and age of body shaming, human looks have been reduced to a number from 1 to 10, and this series is in response to all that. This ongoing series of portraits will tell each person’s story, through their words, their perception of themselves and the pain, confidence, grace, struggles and beauty that is told by their faces, bodies and gestures.

Waterways is a tribute series to life in the tides. Jeff and Dale Ocasio collaborate on making sculpted and illustrative art. Both were raised in Tampa, where they met, started a family and began a creative life together. North Fort Myers has been their home for over 20 years. Refining their self-taught technique of using paper masking tape as a sculpting medium for more than a decade, they have had their art awarded continued on page 18

Primarios by Felipe Ortiz

Primarios by Felipe Ortiz pop-up art exhibition from Tuesday, December 10 to Thursday, December 12, with an opening reception from 6 to 8 p.m. on Tuesday.

The Fresco Exchange features three Colombian artists and aims to bridge the creative gap between Latin American and U.S. culture around art. Each year, Fresco Exchange curates a traveling exhibit of original fine art from Latin American muralists. They work with artists in studio practice and street art to enhance artistic opportunities, share methods of cultural expression and inspire communities with new ways of creative thinking. These pop-up exhibits expand the international platform for street artists to showcase their experimental studio work.

Together, this collection weaves a story of life in modern Colombia. Fresco Exchange teamed up with Gráfica Mestiza, an alternative creative platform across cities in Latin America, to curate this diverse exhibit that unveils overlapping narratives of native Colombian experiences. Artwork representing indigenous culture is reinvented in striking, modern tones, while imaginary creatures share societal metaphors through their one-of-a-kind creativity. The collection is connected by elements of vibrant nature that make Colombia so uniquely enchanting.

Fresco Exchange has hosted full-circle continued on page 10
The expansive tract of land at the western entrance to historic downtown has been put to many uses over the last century-plus, including playground, sports field, circus camp and community event space.

Now it’s poised to become West End at City Walk, a mixed-use development.

League Field, or Park, as it was known decades ago, was bound by McGregor Boulevard on the south, Virginia Avenue and Clifford Street on the west and east, respectively, and the Caloosahatchee on the north. It should be noted that West First, as we now know it, did not exist until the 1960s, when the bulkhead was extended to make riverfront construction projects possible.

Early in Fort Myers history, that large parcel was used as a community space. For example, in 1917, the three-day Conquista de Florida celebrations was held there. Circuses camped there when they came to town and, in the pre-Terry Park days, Fort Myers High School used it as a football field. Revival meetings and clay-pigeon shoots took place in the open space, and throughout the decades children used it as a playground.

In the 1920s and on, local baseball teams such as the Rotary and Kiwanis clubs played there.

In the post-World War II era, Fort Myers underwent enormous growth, and the expansive open space was finally developed.

In the 1950s, George Sanders (who would, in 1965, develop the Edison Mall south of downtown on Cleveland Avenue) obtained zoning changes to build the town’s first shopping center on the 12 acres.

Boulevard Plaza faced protest from garden clubs who insisted that the royal palms and aesthetics of McGregor Boulevard not be destroyed. Fortunately, the trees were saved.

The plaza had a grand opening on January 21, 1960. It had six national stores and fifteen other businesses, with only two spaces yet to be rented.

This postcard image shows the plaza around the time it opened. Among its larger stores were Food Fair (left), Woolworth’s (center) and WT Grant (right). Note the large “Boulevard Plaza” sign on the far right. Also note the open sky free of condominium towers.

The opening altered downtown’s economic landscape. Some locals believe it was the beginning of the core business district’s decline, a decline exacerbated by the opening of the Edison Mall in 1965.

Indeed, a number of businesses did relocate from the main business district to Boulevard Plaza in 1960.

The plaza thrived for years and had just about every store or service for everyday living, including Pantry Pride Grocery, Liggett Drugs, a beauty salon, barber shop, stationery and office supply, ice cream parlor, appliance store, coin laundry, shoe shop, jeweler, toy store and even a yarn and antique shop.

Dental and medical offices, realtors, lawyers, clothing shops, restaurants and a savings and loan were among the other plaza residents. Eventually, there was even a cinema.

However, by the early 1990s, the plaza had hit hard times. In 1993, it was renovated and renamed Edison-Ford Square.

By the time famed city planner Andres Duany came to Fort Myers in 2001 to design a downtown redevelopment plan, he recommend that the square be leveled and developed for mixed-use: residential, businesses and shops.

He emphasized that the shops should be useful, not just entertainment venues, to fulfill the principles of New Urbanism: a downtown where people can live, work and play, preferably all in walking distance.

In 2003, the plaza was demolished to prepare for a proposed development, First Street Village.

One portion was built on the tract east of Altamont Avenue, opening in 2007 with a Publix as an anchor. However, the second mixed-use phase on the other larger portion never came to fruition.

Now there’s a new plan for the “vacant lot”– West End at City Walk, a mixed-use development, is planned for the site. Since 1960, high-rise condominiums have risen on the waterfront.

A mixed-use development, West End at City Walk, is planned for the site. Since 1960, high-rise condominiums have risen on the waterfront.  

photo by Gerri Reaves
Campers conduct glow in the dark science experiments and learn coding and programming with Bloxels to create video games; play games with Osmos; and program Ozobots to complete different challenges. In Stop Motion Movie Makers, older campers become miniature movie makers by writing a script, designing a set and using action figures to create a short motion action film.

On the following Monday and Tuesday, December 30 and 31, Camp IMAG is offering Jedi Academy for K-2 and Jedi Engineers for 3-5. Campers at Jedi Academy will design light sabers, build droids and fly tie fighters and x-wing paper airplanes. Jedi Engineer campers will design an army of bristle bot droids, build a Death Star tractor beam, create Ewok catapults, race Speeder hovercrafts and launch Star Wars inspired rockets.

On Thursday and Friday, January 2 and 3, Camp IMAG is offering Mad Science Lab for K-2 and Chemistry Magicians for 3-5. Campers will conduct bubbling, fizzing and, yes, even explosive chemistry experiments. As chemistry magicians, older campers will discover the chemistry behind magic tricks; they will learn a polymer trick, use the speed of light to make something disappear and create optical illusions.

On Monday and Tuesday, January 6 and 7, Camp IMAG is offering Animal Grossology for K-2 and Grossology for 3-5. Campers will dissect an owl pellet, identify tracks and scat and meet a hissing cockroach as they experience Animal Grossology. Sometimes science can also be gross, slimy, stinky and, yes, even fun. In Grossology, older campers will learn about germs using glowing germ powder, pop some burping bags, test their taste buds with questionable treats and make fake snot.

For more information and camp registration, visit www.theimag.org.
The Heights Foundation/The Heights Center is seeking organizations and individuals to participate in the annual Harlem Heights Community Gift Drive. Individuals, businesses and philanthropic groups are asked to donate new, unwrapped gifts for local children. Gifts are needed for more than 800 new, unwrapped gifts for local children.

Suggested donations are gifts under $25 including Legos, dolls, art sets, footballs, basketballs, soccer balls, remote control cars, tea sets, action figures, board games, coloring books and crayons. Personal items are needed including pajamas, jewelry, body lotion, spray soaps, hair accessories and wristwatches. Donations of gift cards from Target, Kmart or Walmart are appreciated. Monetary donations can be made at www.heightsfoundation.org/donate. The gifts will be distributed to parents at The Heights Center on Saturday, December 21, keeping the surprise in Christmas for the kids. “This holiday season will again be challenging for many families in the Harlem Heights neighborhood,” said Kathryn Kelly, president and CEO of the Heights Foundation. “This is a great opportunity to bring joy to the children of our community. We are thankful for the generous support of our neighbors.”

Items can be dropped off at The Heights Center, 15570 Hague Drive in Fort Myers. Drop off will be collected through Thursday, December 19. Volunteers are needed to assist with event set up and at the event.

Finalists Named For Annual New Play Contest

Theatre Conspiracy at the Alliance for the Arts recently announced the three finalists for the 21st Annual New Play Contest – Love and Communication by Jim Christy; The Wild Boar by Daniel Damiano; and The Chechens by Phillip Smith. Finalists were selected from over 600 entries from around the world. The audience will vote for their favorite at the event on December 14 at the Alliance for the Arts, 10091 McGregor Boulevard, in Fort Myers.

The New Play Contest provides an opportunity for audiences to get involved with the contest process itself, rather than the final result. The evening begins at 6:30 p.m. with a reception including food and drink. At 7:30 p.m., selections from the finalists will be read by a cast of Alliance for the Arts actors. After the conclusion of the final reading, the audience will vote for which show they think should be the winner. The winning script will be given a full production in the Alliance’s 2020-21 season and receive the Janet & Bruce Bunch New Play Contest Award.

“Our New Play Contest is a daunting task each year, but the payoff is worthy of the effort,” said artistic producing director Bill Taylor. “Supporting new work is an important part of our mission. These playwrights and their work are the future of theatre in America.”

Tickets are $50 and include the reception and readings. Tickets can be purchased at www.arinlee.org/newplaycontest or by calling 939-2787. Here is a synopsis of each play:

Love and Communication by Jim Christy – Samuel Holden is by all accounts, a spectacularly beautiful child. His parents, school administrators, therapists and lawyers fighting about the best way to treat his autism all agree on that. And practically nothing else.

His father Rob will do anything necessary – anything – to get Samuel into a private school with a years-long waiting list. For his mother Megan, the answer is a relatively new therapy patented by a charismatic doctor. As these increasingly desperate efforts take them in different directions, their marriage – and their relationship with their son – hang in the balance.

The show is about autism as an analogy for the difficulty people have communicating with each other. Every allegedly normal character in the play – parents, educators, bureaucrats – displays an inability to communicate or to show empathy for those they are supposed to love, the core of autism.

The Wild Boar by Daniel Damiano – A newly retired teacher moves to a remote island, seeking nothing but solitude and serenity. However, when a boar arrives at her house one day, an unlikely relationship develops, bringing about unexpected feelings from her past, while placing her at odds with the local authorities and the island’s other inhabitants.

The Wild Boar by Daniel Damiano was a finalist for the Woodward/Newman Drama Award and Bloomington Playwrights Project.

The Chechens by Phillip Smith – In modern Chechnya, homosexuals are rumored to be held in camps. Can one family protect their brother suspected of being gay, or will they honor to kill him to protect the name of the family? What prevails in the end-religion, politics or love?

Organizations and individuals interested in participating can contact Melissa Barlow at 482-7706 or melissa@heightsfoundation.org. All donations are tax deductible. Monetary donations can be made online at www.heightsfoundation.org.

For more information, visit www.swflso.org.

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The symphony, with DeSare performing on vocals and piano, will delight audiences with beloved holiday favorites including I’ll be Home For Christmas and Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas, and It’s the Most Wonderful Time of the Year.

Single tickets start at $13 and vary by venue. Family packages are available for $48 for four tickets (two adults and two children) for Barbara B. Mann Performing Arts Hall and First Presbyterian Church performances. Tickets may be purchased from the Southwest Florida Symphony Box Office by calling 418-1500, by visiting in person or online at www.swflso.org, and at the performance venues one hour prior to each performance.

In addition to the holiday classics, the symphony has partnered with Toys for Tots for a holiday toy drive at its Barbara B. Mann concert on Saturday, December 14. Patrons are encouraged to bring a new toy in its original packaging to the concert as a donation to Toys for Tots so that every child in Lee County can have a merry Christmas.
Florida Locations: Bonita Springs/Estero, Cape Coral, Captiva Island, Fort Myers, Naples/Marco Island, Ocala and Sanibel Island

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BLACK AND WHITE
Kickin’ It With Elijah Grant About His Future

by Tom Hall

Pippin

opened at the Alliance for the Arts on November 24. The ambitious musical had an enthusiastic and energetic cast of 30 that included Yuliana Garcia as The Leading Player, Kagan Vann in the role of Charlemagne, Giselle Meyer as his duplicitous wife Fastrada, Dylan Sneddon as her incestuous son, Lewis and Madeline Ritter as widowed mother Catherine.

Elijah Grant reprised the title role. Now a sophomore, Grant traces his love of theater all the way back to second grade. “I went to Gulf Elementary and they had this program where if you got straight A’s, you got to see the musical as your reward. It was the first one I’d ever seen, and I knew I had to try out for the show the following year when I got into third grade,” he said.

The show Grant saw that day was Annie and as luck would have it, one of the young actors who inspired Elijah was none other than Yuliana Garcia, who was in the fourth grade. Not only did he not know Yuliana (kindergarten through second grade was in one building and Grades 3 to 5 were in another), he did not know she was in Annie that day until both sat down with me to talk about their roles in Pippin.

When Gulf Elementary performed Willy Wonka Jr., Grant got a part as an oompa loompa. “Lucky for me, I was very short,” he quipped. “From there, I just fell in love with performing, and I’ve been in at least one musical every year. His past credits include Spamalot the Musical, The Hunchback of Notre Dame and Sweeney Todd.

He played Anthony Hope in the latter show, a role that required him defining characters and goals and really diving into the depth of the show,” noted Alliance Youth Theatre choreographer and costume designer Lauren Perry. “We like challenging the kids and this one was definitely challenging.”

Grant agreed. “Pippin … is trying to find meaning and fulfillment, and that required finding a connection with each scene [i.e. each rite of passage that Pippin undergoes] as the play unfolds. But at the same time, you have to be lost in yourself because each time Pippin finds an experience unfulfilling, it causes him to become increasingly depressed. It’s a drain on his psyche, and the hardest part was conveying that growing sense of disappointment and frustration at that very moment,” noted Grant.

Intended by Stephen Schwartz as a metaphor, Pippin actually resonates with teens and twenty-somethings to a surprising degree when you consider that the musical was penned in 1972. It’s not just that the “American Dream” seems so far out of reach for the vast majority of Gen X and Gen Z who find that in addition to stifling student loan debt, a four-year-degree and uncompromising work ethic don’t guarantee a great-paying job with good benefits, never mind home ownership and financial security. They may not even have a habitable planet in 50 years because of climate change and related ecological threats. It’s hard to start a career, business or even a family when you might be facing a climatological Armageddon before your 50th birthday.

But in true Pippin fashion, Grant rejects pervasive pessimism. Echoing the sentiment expressed in Pippin’s character-defining solo Corner of the Sky, Elijah believes that his generation will discover and introduce achievable plans to reduce gun violence, eliminate related ecological threats. It’s hard to start a career, business or even a family when you might be facing a climatological Armageddon before your 50th birthday.

Indeed, members of Gen Z are establishing themselves as exemplary global citizens and planetary stewards with increasing frequency. By way of example, consider the strides taken in just the past year by climate activist Greta Thunberg, Marjorie Stoneman Douglass activists Sarah Chadwick, Cameron Kasky, Delaney Tarr, David Hogg and Jaclyn Corin (co-founder of March for Our Lives) and the legions of young women and girls associated with #GirlsToo and Girls For Gender Equality.

“My generation hasn’t been corrupted by money or wealth yet,” Grant adds optimistically. “That gives us an advantage because we’ve seen what [greed] does to our planet. We will change that. We just have to wait for our opportunity.”

Tom Hall is both an amateur artist and aspiring novelist who writes art quest thrillers. He is in the final stages of completing his debut novel titled Art Detective. A former tax attorney, he lives in Estero with his fiancée and their four cats.♦

From page 2

Historic Downtown

community with 300 residential rental units, a 128-room Marriott brand hotel, and 5,000 to 10,000 square feet of commercial space.

Walk down to the lot where children played and Fort Myers’s first shopping center was built. Then visit the following research centers to learn more about local shopping options in the 1960s.

The Southwest Florida Historical Society is an all-volunteer, nonprofit organization open Wednesday and Saturday between 9 a.m. and noon and Wednesday 4 to 7 p.m. It is located at 10091 McGregor Boulevard on the campus of the Lee County Alliance for the Arts. Call 939-4044 for more information.

The Lee County Black History Society is located at 1936 Henderson Avenue, adjacent to the Williams Academy Museum at Roberto Clemente Park. Hours for the nonprofit organization are Wednesday through Friday from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. and on Saturday by appointment only. For more information, call 332-8778 or visit www.leecountyblackhistorysociety.org.

Visit the IMAG History & Science Center at 2000 Cranford Avenue or at www.theimag.org.


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Arbitrary Illusions, the first judged show of the season, recently opened at the Fort Myers Beach Art Association’s (FMBAA) main gallery. The group’s members submitted paintings for the exhibit, judged by artist and professor Francesco Gillia and sponsored by the Red Coconut RV Park.

Christine Reichow and Cheryl Fausel gave a gallery talk about the art of judging. Both artists are accomplished members of many prestigious art societies. Artists Floyd Lawrence and Donna Bergeron are displaying their artwork in Studio 2. Their show will run through December 5.

Best of Show, awarded in memory of Lee Ackert who was FMBAA president from 1983 to 1985, went to Cheryl Fausel for A Bag of Flowers. Nancy Morgan took first place with Viewer Favorites; JoAnn LaPadula placed second with On the Vine, while Floyd Lawrence took third with Beach Cottage. Julie Nusbaum received the Maya Bryant Award (outdoor painter) for Puerto de San Miguel. Dorothy McDowell received the Gretchen Johnson Memorial Award in the memory of longtime FMBAA member Gretchen Johnson for Lighthouse View.

Merit awards were awarded to the following: Wild Horses by Pam Flaherty and View From Room #249 by Bob Mueller. Honorable mentions went to Back Bay by Phyllis Abed and Oak Park by Patricia Payzant.

The Quick Draw Event was a success and the following awards were presented: Best Representation of Times Square went to Patricia Payzant; and Best Representation of the Beach went to Julie Nusbaum.

The annual Art Divine sale of original art priced at or below $150 begins on Sunday, December 8. The FMBAA Gallery will host a public reception on Wednesday, December 11 from 5:30 to 7 p.m. Entries for the FMBAA Winter Show will be accepted on Friday, January 10. A gallery talk by artist and professor Francesco Gillia will take place on Sunday, January 19.

For more information, visit www.fortmyersbeachart.com, email Pam Flaherty at fmbaapublicity@gmail, call 463-3909 or stop by the Fort Myers Beach Art Association, located at 3030 Shell Mound Boulevard on Fort Myers Beach.

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Beach Art Group
Arbitrary Illusions Exhibit Winners

Cheryl Fausel was awarded Best of Show for A Bag of Flowers.
B onita Bills Waterfront Café will host the annual Old Fashioned Fish Fry and Silent Auction to benefit the Ostego Bay Foundation Marine Science Center this Friday, December 6, from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Cost is $12 for the fish fry. There is no cost to participate in the silent auction. Tickets will be sold for 50/50 raffles. Bonita Bills Waterfront Café is located at 702 Fishermans Wharf on San Carlos Island. For more information, call 765-8101 or email info@ostegobay.org.

Operation Pet Rescue’s (OPR) Pet Photos with Santa will be available outside City Tavern this Friday, December 6 from 6 to 10 p.m. Cost is $10 for the professional photograph provided by Al Larson Photography. Participants will be able to access the photo for printing at www.allarsonphoto.com a few days after the event. Ask the Trainer from Rescue Dog Trainers will also be available during the event.

City Tavern is located at 2206 Bay Street in downtown Fort Myers. For more information on OPR, visit www.operationpetrescue.us.com.

Goodwill Industries of Southwest Florida will present the 13th annual Festival of Trees from this Thursday, December 5 through Sunday, December 8 at the Sidney & Berne Davis Art Center (SBDAC). This year, Festival of Trees will have an outdoor ice skating on a synthetic ice rink located right in the center of the glistening tree display. On Friday, December 6, you can skate with Big Mama from B-103.9 from 4 to 6 p.m. during his live remote.

Throughout the Festival of Trees event, the public can view the trees, purchase raffle tickets and vote for their favorites. Area businesses decorate the trees with a retail value in décor and gifts between $1,500 and $2,000.

In addition to the tree raffle, Festival of Trees participants can enjoy the Holiday Stroll down First Street and official tree lighting by the mayor, a free outdoor concert with the Nowhere Band, Santa’s Block Party including a holiday vendor showcase, food trucks, entertainment, pictures with Santa and a children’s workshop.

SBDAC is located at 2301 First Street in downtown Fort Myers. Tickets to the event can be purchased in advance at www.sbdac.com. For more information and raffle tickets, visit www.goodwilltrees.com.

The Lee County Library System (LCLS) is hosting Fandom Fest, a free celebration of fandoms and geek culture for teens and young adults at the Fort Myers Regional Library this Saturday, December 7 from noon to 5 p.m. Cosplay is encouraged.

The Fort Myers Regional Library is located at 2450 First Street in downtown Fort Myers. For more information about Fandom Fest, including the schedule of events and volunteer opportunities, visit www.leelibrary.net/fandomfest. Among Lee County Parks & Recreation’s holiday events throughout December is Santa Fest, which will be held at 3 p.m. this Saturday, December 7 at Wa-Ke Hatchee Park, located at 16760 Bass Road in Fort Myers. The event involves games, bounce houses, food trucks, photos with Santa, face painting and a movie in the park - 2018’s The Grinch. Admission is free. Toy donations for Golisano Children’s Hospital are welcome. For more information, call 432-2154.

The 31st annual Fort Myers Beach Christmas Boat Parade is scheduled to depart Salty Sam’s Marina on Saturday, December 7 at 6 p.m. The dazzling lighted parade will be led by the chamber boat featuring Mr. and Mrs. Claus along with Grand Marshall and World War II veteran John Murphy, father of Fort Myers Beach Town Vice Mayor Ray Murphy.

Vessels will assemble in front of the docks at Salty Sam’s Marina at 5:30 p.m. At 6 p.m., the boats will begin to leave Salty Sam’s Marina and will proceed to pass Parrot Key Caribbean Grill heading northwest by Bonita Bill’s Waterfront Café and Doc Fords, then under the Matanzas Pass Bridge. They will travel in and out of Siesta Isles and toward Bowditch Point, turning in front of the Pink Shell Beach Resort and Marina. The boats will travel past Nervous Nellies and Matanzas on the Bay on the return. The parade will end at Salty Sam’s Marina for the Winners Circle Party and awards presentation.

VIP judges will ride along in the parade and will choose and announce the winners in each category. Prizes will be awarded to the winners in respective categories.


For more information and sponsorship opportunities, contact the Fort Myers Beach Chamber at 454-7500 or visit www.fmbboatparade.com.
Sand Sculpting Championship Winners Revealed

Officials from the 33rd annual American Sand Sculpting Championship presented by the Seminole Casino Hotel recently announced the winners of the masters competition and advanced amateur competition from the 10-day festival, which ran from November 22 to December 1.

The winners from the Master Sculptor Solo Division were:

1st Place – John Gowdy Soul Reunion It’s a Matter of Time
2nd Place – Maxim Gazendam Architecture is Frozen Music
3rd Place – Delayne Corbett LUVBUG
Sculptor’s Choice – Maxim Gazendam Architecture is Frozen Music

The winners from the Master Sculptor Doubles Division were:

1st Place – Delayne Corbett and Maxim Gazendam VR: A Grand Adventure into the Landscape of the Imagination
2nd Place – Melineige Beauregard and Seveline Beauregard Your Beauty is your Smile
3rd Place – John Gowdy and Laura Cimador-Gowdy Dream Catcher
Sculptor’s Choice – Delayne Corbett and Maxim Gazendam VR: A Grand Adventure into the Landscape of the Imagination

The winners from the Advanced Amateur competition were:

1st Place – Amanda Bolduc The Struggle is Real
2nd Place – Mitch Guerrero A Warrior Spirit
3rd Place – Darrel O’Connor 10 Years After

The event’s People’s Choice voting will be promoted and available through the event’s Facebook page and website at www.facebook.com/sandsculptingfestival and www.fmbsandsculpting.com.

The festival featured 30 participating sculptors representing eight nations, including 16 masters competing in solos, 10 masters competing in doubles, 10 advanced amateurs competing in the Florida State Championships and 50 total sculptures, making this the largest sand sculpting event of its kind in the United States.

For more information, visit www.fmbsandsculpting.com.
Non-Perishable Food Items

The Best Overall Thanksgiving display made of non-perishable food was provided by Hodges University faculty and staff who put their creative and construction skills to work with 14 Thanksgiving displays on the Naples and Fort Myers campuses. The displays were made of non-perishable food items for a Thanksgiving dinner, so that they could be donated after the displays were judged.

As a result, 665 pounds of non-perishable food items were delivered to the Bonita Springs Assistance Office for its food pantry.

Men’s Club Breakfast

You probably know about our next breakfast Sunday, December 8. Hoping you could please add a mention in our listing, that Bayside Estates Men’s Club will host its monthly pancake breakfast in the Bayside Recreation Hall on Sunday, December 8 from 8 to 11 a.m. All are invited to attend. The breakfast includes scrambled eggs, sausages, coffee, orange juice and all-you-can-eat pancakes for the cost of $5. For only $1 more, get a made to order omelet. During the December breakfast, the Bayside Socialites will be having their Christmas Bake Sale.

Bayside Estates is located on the corner of San Carlos Boulevard and Ridge Road. Signs are at two entrances. Breakfast get-togethers are held on the second Sunday of the month through March.

Morning Meander At Lakes Park

Take a nature walk with a bird patrol guide at Lakes Regional Park on Saturday, December 7 at 8 a.m. This easy walk along clear paths offers an opportunity to see birds in native vegetation with experienced bird patrol guides pointing out many species in Lakes Park, a Lee County birding hot spot and crucial nesting area for many birds. Wear comfortable shoes and dress to be outside. Bring water, sunscreen and binoculars.

This tour, which is free with paid parking, is provided in cooperation with Lee County Parks and Recreation. Meet at Shelter A7. After entering the Lakes Park gate from Gladisodle Drive, turn right and drive to the end of the road, continuing through the parking lot. Shelter A7 is located near the train station.

Lakes Regional Park is located at 7330 Gladisodle Drive in Fort Myers. For more information, visit www.birdpark.org or call 533-7580 or 533-7576.

Holiday Concert At Church

The Southwest Florida Concert Band will perform A Florida Family Christmas concert at Unitarian Universalist Church on Sunday, December 15 at 2 p.m. The 40-member community band will perform seasonal music and give the audience an opportunity to join in a sing-a-long of their favorite carols. The program will start with Christmas classics The Most Wonderful Time of Year and Leroy Anderson’s Sleigh Ride. The band will perform Christmas on Broadway and Irving Berlin’s Christmas as well as The Nutcracker, Christmas Music for Winds, Feliz Navidad, Festive Sounds of Hanukah, How the Grinch Stole Christmas and the narrated version of Twas the Night Before Christmas.

All concerts are FREE with donations accepted.

Unitarian Universalist Church is located at 13411 Shire Lane in Fort Myers. For more information on the group, scholarship program and other performances, visit www.swflconcertband.org.

From page 1

Churches/temples

ALL FAITHS UNITARIAN CONGREGATION
Service 9, and 11 a.m. Children’s RE, Adult Education Forum 10 a.m., www.allfaiths-uc.org, 2756 McGregor Boulevard, 226-0900.

ALL SAINTS BYZANTINE RITE CATHOLIC
Sunday 10:30 a.m., www.allsaintsbyzantine.org, 10291 Bayshore Road, 599-4817.

ANNUCATION GREEK ORTHODOX
Sunday 9 and 10 a.m., www.annunciationfl.org, 8210 Cypress Lake Drive, 481-2099.

BAY TAM-Temple of the Islands
Friday Shabbat at 7 p.m. www.batym.org, 2050 Periwinkle Way, 579-0296.

BETH YESHUA MESSIANIC SYNAGOGUE
Sunday 11 a.m. 15657 McGregor Boulevard, 267-3171.

BIBLISHARE
10 a.m. Sunday and Thursday, Tuesday, www.biblishare.org, 7050 Winkler Road, 437-2599.

CHABAD LUBAVITCH ORTHODOX
Friday 6:30 p.m., www.chabadswf.org, 5620 Winkler Road, 437-7708.

CHAPEL OF CYPRESS COVE
Sunday 10 a.m., www.revtedalighthouse@aol.com, 10200 Cypress Cove Circle, 850-3943.

CHRISTIAN CENTER
Sunday 9:30 a.m., Freshwater Lane, 768-2188.

CONGREGATIONAL
Sunday 10:30 a.m., www.taecc.com, 1619 Llewellyn Drive, 334-4978.

COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN
Sunday 10 a.m. 2439 McGregor Boulevard, 334-8933.

CYPRESS LAKE BAPTIST
Sunday 9:45 and 11 a.m., 7 p.m.; Wednesday 6:30 p.m. 8400 Cypress Lake Drive, 481-5442.

CYPRUS LAKE PRESBYTERIAN
Sunday 8, 9, 10 and 11 a.m. www.clpc.us, 8256 Cypress Lake Drive, 481-3233.

FAITH UNITED METHODIST
Sunday 8:45 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 15690 McGregor Boulevard, 482-2030.

FIRST CHURCH OF CHRIST, SCIENTIST
Sunday 10:30 a.m., 13549 American Boulevard, 938-2511.

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
Sunday 10:30 a.m., 13549 American Boulevard, 938-2511.

FORT MYERS CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
Sunday 10 a.m. 8210 College Parkway, 482-3133.

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF FORT MYERS
Sunday 11 a.m. www.fpcfortmyers.org, 2438 Second Street, 239-334-2261.

IONA- HOPE EPISCOPAL CONGREGATION
Saturday 5 p.m., Sunday 8 a.m. and 9:30 a.m.; Tuesday 9:30 a.m., Wednesday 9:30 a.m., 9650 Gladisodle Drive, 454-4778.

JESUS THE WORKER CATHOLIC
Friday and Saturday, 7 p.m.; Sunday, 8 a.m. and 6 p.m., 861 Nuna Avenue, 481-1143.

KINGDOM LIFE
Sunday 10:30 a.m. 2154 McGregor Boulevard, 218-9343.

LAMB OF GOD
Sunday 7:45 and 10 a.m. www.lambofgodchurch.net, 19691 Cypress View Drive, 267-3525.

NEW BEGINNINGS CENTER
Friday 6:30 and 7 p.m., 533-7580 or 533-7576.

NEW COVENANT EYES
Monthly 9 a.m., www.newcoveneysites.com, 1905 Park Meadows Drive, 220-8519.

NEW HOPE BAPTIST
Sunday 11 a.m.; Wednesday 7 p.m., 16120 San Carlos Boulevard, Unit 10, 985-8503.

NEW HOPE PRESBYTERIAN
Sunday 8:30 a.m. and 5 p.m., www.newhopefortmyers.org, 10051 Plantation Road, 274-1230.

PEACE COMMUNITY
Sunday 9 a.m. www.peacecommunitychurch.com, 17671 Pine Ridge Road, 267-7400.

PEACE LUTHERAN
Sunday 9 and 10 a.m., www.peacetfmyers.com, peace@peaceftmyers.com. 15840 Palm Beach Boulevard, 693-0818.

PEOPLE'S CHURCH
Sunday 9, 9:45 and 11:30 a.m., 21580 River Ranch Road, 481-5535.

REDEEMER LUTHERAN
Sunday 9 and 10:15 a.m. 3950 Winkler Ext., 274-0143.

RIVER OF LIFE ASSEMBLY OF GOD
Saturday 8 and 9 a.m., 10:00 a.m., 21580 River Ranch Road, 481-5535.

RIVER OF LIFE ASSEMBLY OF GOD
Saturday 8 and 9 a.m., 10:00 a.m., 21580 River Ranch Road, 481-5535.

SAMUDRABADRA BUDDHIST CENTER
Meditation classes. www.MeditationInFortMyers.com, 16225 Winkler Road, 433-0018.

ST. PETER'S HAVEN SYNAGOGUE
Monday 6:30 p.m., 15811 Sunset Plaza Circle #401, 481-5535.

TEMPLE BETHEL SYNAGOGUE
Friday Shabbat 7:30 p.m.; Saturday 9 a.m.; Religious School Wednesday 5:30 p.m. and Sunday 9:30 a.m., www.templebethel.com, 16225 Winkler Road, 433-0018.

TEMPLE JUDEA (CONSERVATIVE)
Friday 6:30 p.m. and Saturday 9 a.m., www. tswf.org, 14486 A&W Bulb Road, 433-0201.

THE FAITH CENTER
Sunday 9 and 10 a.m., Thursday 7:15 a.m.; 17650 South Tamiami Trail, Suite 212, 278-3638.

THE NEW CHURCH
Sunday 11 a.m., www.newchurchflorida.com, 10831 Sunset Plaza Circle #401, 481-5535.

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST
Sunday 10:30 a.m., www.ucf.org, 13411 Shane Lane, 361-2700.

UNITY OF FORT MYERS
Sunday 10 a.m., www.unityoffortmyers.org, 11120 Ranchette Road, 278-1511.

WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
Sunday 9, 9:30 and 10:45 a.m., 9065 Ligon Ridge Road, 481-2125.

WORD OF LIFE
Sunday 10 a.m., www.wordoflife.net, 2120 Collier Avenue, 274-8881.

ZION LUTHERAN
Sunday 8, 9:30 and 10:45 a.m., www.zionfm.org, 7041 Winkler Road, 481-4040.

Pop-Up Exhibition

cultural exchanges for muralists across nations. During U.S. residencies, the Fresco Exchange has connected Latin American artists with street art projects in Massachusetts, New Mexico, Kansas, California and now Florida. This diverse exhibition will feature artists Felipe Ortiz, Gabriel Mesek and Ivan Salazar.

The Sidney & Bernie Davis Art Center located at 2301 First Street in the historic downtown Fort Myers River District. For more information, visit www.sbdac.org or call 333-1933.

From page 1
Clinic, “said Dr. Robin Bast, CROW staff admitted over 50 baby bunnies to the summer. In the past month alone, we have height of baby season is spring into the year in Florida, but in general the cottontail and marsh rabbits) throughout around.

These eastern cottontail bunnies are being raised by CROW staff and volunteers until they are old enough to be released

"The eastern cottontail rabbit (Sylvilagus floridanus) is the most common cottontail rabbit in the country. Mainly, these long-eared mammals range from reddish brown to gray in color, but they all feature the distinctive “cotton ball” tail for which they are named.

Eastern cottontail rabbits tend to live in fields and meadows, or on the outskirts of farms. However, they are known to adapt to human habitats. Females give birth in shallow ground nests.

Each year, hundreds of baby eastern cottontail rabbits are admitted to CROW’s wildlife hospital. Reasons for admission include predator attacks or being found by a person’ cat or dog, but many of these bunnies are brought in by mistake after being found without an adult rabbit around.

“We get baby bunnies (both eastern cottontail and marsh rabbits) throughout the year in Florida, but in general the height of baby season is spring into summer. In the past month alone, we have admitted over 50 baby bunnies to the clinic,” said Dr. Robin Bast, CROW staff veterinarian. “Of the 50 bunnies admitted in the past month, approximately half of them were abducted, meaning they were unintentionally rescued when in fact they didn’t require any medical intervention and needed to be left in the care of their parents. The rest of the baby bunnies are usually admitted for trauma sustained by predator attacks.

Mother rabbits only return to their nest, usually a shallow burrow lined with grass and fur, during the dawn and dusk hours so as not to attract predators to their babies. Twigs placed in an “X” over the entrance to the burrow will show if the mother has returned overnight, as she will push them aside to enter. Rabbits leave the nest when they are just three weeks old, so even a seemingly small rabbit with its eyes open and ears standing up is self-sufficient and does not need assistance.

“Rabbits are crepuscular, different than nocturnal, which means they are most active at dawn and dusk, and that’s when they visit the nest to care for the babies,” said Dr. Bast. “They do not stay at the nest during the day to avoid attracting predator attention to the nest site. Because of this, well-intentioned people often mistake an unnerved nest of babies as being orphaned.”

CROW officials took in a pack of baby rabbits recently. The bunnies were not injured, and there is no knowledge of to where they were found.

“These babies were taken to a drop-off site with no information left as to the rescue site, which made a re-nesting attempt impossible. They are otherwise healthy, and are being raised by our rehabilitation staff and foster volunteers until they are old enough in a few weeks to be released,” said Dr. Bast. “Baby rabbits grow up quickly, but their best chance of survival is always with their true parents.”

Finders need to make sure these little animals are in need of help.

“If there is evidence of obvious injury: blood, history of predator attack, then the babies need medical treatment. If they appear healthy, but you want to check to make sure the mother is taking care of them, you can place light sticks on top of the nest or a circle of flour around the nest – these items will be disturbed the following day if an adult is returning to the nest,” said Dr. Bast. “If you have any questions about whether or not a baby needs care, please call us at CROW and we can help determine the appropriate action to be taken.”

CROW (Clinic for the Rehabilitation of Wildlife, Inc.) is a non-profit wildlife hospital providing veterinary care for native and migratory wildlife from our local area. The hospital accepts patients seven days a week from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Mail donations to P.O. Box 150, Sanibel, FL 33957. Call 472-3644 or visit www.crowclinic.org.

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Magical Childhood Creek

by Capt. Matt Mitchell

The weather during Thanksgiving week was as good as it gets in Southwest Florida. Waterways were busy with boaters and fishermen alike getting out during the holiday to enjoy the water. The slow, gradual warmup of our water temperature made the fishing improve everyday. Redfish and snook were our main targets. Redfish action has been on fire on what seems like either tide, while the better snook bite has been happening a little later in the morning as the water temperature slowly warmed.

I did catch fish all over the southern sound this week, but after finding fish in one magical creek from my childhood, I returned to it almost daily. This is the first time this winter I’ve found one of these creeks with fast-moving currents and clean clear water that’s just loaded up with fish. Many of these narrow feeder creeks that connect smaller bays can be amazing during our colder winter months. This creek was a hot spot all week long. The redfish action was impossible to ignore along with an exciting sight-fishing for snook once it warmed up.

Trying to get into this creek, which is protected by a sandbar, was challenging during the big minus low tides we experienced this week. Two days in a row, I had to get out of the boat and push it across this super shallow hump as I was not patient enough to let the tide come up. Once in the creek, the water is plenty deep no matter how low the tide was. During the first few hours of the low incoming tide, the redfish bite was amazing and the water so clear that you could see the fish.

The more time I spent in this creek, the more snook I began to see. We did manage to catch a few on free-lined shrimp. As conditions warmed later in the week, I knew I had to find some live shiners to take in here. Waiting until late morning, we slid into the creek and immediately saw the snook I’d been watching for the past few days. After pitching a few live shiners along the edges, it did not take long until the whole creek was filled with snook chasing and feeding on the live bait. We baited up and sight-casted, and the snook exploded on the surface. It was the best snook bite I have been on in quite some time. It made having to push the boat across the bar all worthwhile.

Capt. Matt Mitchell has been fishing local waters since he moved to Sanibel in 1980. He now lives in St. James City and works as a back country fishing guide. If you have comments or questions, email captmattmitchell@aol.com.

Send Us Your Fish Tales

We would like to hear from anglers about their catches. Send us details including tackle, bait and weather conditions, date of catch, species and weight, and include a photograph with identification. Email to press@islandsunnews.com or call 395-1213.
Florida scrub jay

Audubon Lecture Series Announced

A visual introduction to Florida's only endemic bird, the Florida scrub jay, will kick off the annual Sanibel-Captiva Audubon lecture series. Lectures will be held on Thursday evenings in January and February, commencing on January 9 at the new, earlier starting time of 7 p.m. at The Community House, located at 2173 Periwinkle Way on Sanibel. All are welcome to attend. Doors open at 6:15 p.m. and parking available at The Community House as well as across the street in the Herb Strauss Theater parking area. A $10 donation per attendee is appreciated with proceeds after costs being used to promote conservation on Sanibel and in Florida.

This year’s lineup also includes Sanibel-Captiva Audubon lecture favorites, Rick Bunting and Dr. Ken Meyer as well as SCCF’s Audrey Albrecht. For more information, call Bill Jacobson at 395-1878 or visit www.san-capaudubon.org.

January 9 – Brash, Boisterous & Blue – Meet the Florida Scrub Jay. Jacqui Sulek, chapter conservation manager of Audubon Florida, will introduce you to the Florida scrub jay, Florida’s only endemic bird. Unfortunately, its population has declined 90 percent in the past 50 years. Learn about the Florida scrub jay and what is being done to sustain the remaining population of this charismatic ecosystem indicator.

January 16 – Climate & Birds: Their Future & Ours. Like canaries warned coal miners of dangerous conditions, Audubon Florida Executive Director Julie Wraithmell will explain how birds are harbingers of the changing climate. Learn the latest in predictions about what the climate future holds for North America’s birds, what symptoms Florida is experiencing and how you can help Audubon address this threat.

January 23 – Tracking Shorebirds Through Banding. Sanibel-Captiva Conservation Foundation (SCCF) Coastal Wildlife Manager Audrey Albrecht will cover the history and origin of bird banding, the many methods of trapping and marking shorebirds, and the invaluable data gained as a result. Featured will be individual stories of some of the resident and migratory shorebirds.

January 30 – Chasing Rare Birds in the Lower 48. Discover how avid birders David and Tammy McQuade find and timely visit the exact locations, sometimes down to square feet, of the rarest birds in the lower 48 states. They will include many exquisite photos of the subjects of their quest.

February 6 – Birds’ Secret Lives. Dr. Ken Meyer, founder of Avian Research and Conservation Institute (ARCI), reports on how ARCI’s field and tracking studies reveal clues and uncover mysteries that help us protect the future of birds we love. Studied species covered will be reddish egrets, mangrove cuckoos and swallow-tailed kites.

February 13 – Birding Exotic Southern Africa. Peter Hawrylyshyn returns to lead attendees on a trip through this dramatic region using his photos of its many unique bird species. He will also elaborate on some of the remarkable avian bio-adaptation and evolution which has occurred in southern Africa.

February 20 – Florida Reflections. Sanibel-Captiva Audubon favorite Rick Bunting is back to again utilize his unique perspective and superb photos to visually elaborate on his activities in Florida, his favorite away from home location for observing birds and nature.

February 27 – Falcon Fascination. Barb Walker, president of Tampa Bay Raptor Rescue, will provide a unique learning experience about man’s epic relationship with peregrine falcons, their natural history, and the unusual adaptations that make them successful today. She will also have a live peregrine falcon in the room.

Plant Smart

Shoestring Fern

by Gerri Reaves

Native shoestring fern (Vittaria lineata) is a member of the shoestring fern family and one of the state’s most common ferns. Its natural habitat includes pinewoods, hammocks and swamps, where it typically grows on the trunks of cabbage palms, particularly at the base.

Like many other ferns, orchids and bromeliads, it is an epiphyte, or air plant. Epiphytes are not parasites, but they depend on a host plant as a platform from which to gather nutrients and moisture.

At first glance, this species resembles dense tufts of long hanging grass blades, thus another common name, grass fern. Other common names are ribbon fern and beard fern.

The very short stems are branched, creeping and scaly.

The narrow pendulous fronds are dark green, shiny and under-curved. Undivided and as long as three feet, they are very narrow – only a half-inch or less wide.

Reddish brown sori, or spore sacs, appear in two grooved lines on the undersides of fronds near the edges.

This fern prefers shade and moist conditions and is not drought-tolerant. It can be used as a hanging plant and can be propagated by division. The Seminoles used it to treat depression and senility by boiling it to make a potion or using it in a steam bath.


Plant Smart explores the diverse flora of South Florida.

Help SCCF Bring Back the Barn Owls

Poisoned rats can kill the eagles, hawks, bobcats and owls that eat them.

Tell your pest control professional to NOT use these rat poisons:

- brodifacoum
- bromailone
- difenacoum
- difethialone

Or consider not using any rat poisons at all. Instead, seal all entry points to your home.
More than 330 community supporters recently came together for the 2019 Tides of Change in support of PACE Center for Girls, Lee County’s vital counseling and academic programs.

Held November 8 at MarineMax Fort Myers, Tides of Change featured an evening of shoreside cocktails, dinner, dancing and a wave-making live auction to help chart a smoother course for at-promise young women in Lee County.

“PACE’s programs serve well over 100 girls each year right here in Lee County,” said Meg M. Geltner, executive director at PACE Center for Girls, Lee County. “Through impactful programs and counseling, 96 percent of our girls have improved academically and 95 percent have no involvement with the criminal justice system within a year of leaving PACE. We are so thankful for the tremendous community support seen at Tides of Change that will help us continue these lifechanging services for the girls and young women of PACE.”

Former PACE student Amy Iberger delivered the keynote address, highlighting the impact of PACE’s influential programs. Iberger transitioned from PACE in 2017 and went on to graduate from Riverdale High School. She is now attending Florida SouthWestern State College with a two-year scholarship that was donated at PACE’s 2018 Boo Ball.

“I learned leadership and how to work towards becoming the best version of myself every day,” Iberger said during the event about her time with PACE. “There’s a saying at PACE, ‘once a PACE girl, always a PACE girl.’ After watching my own personal transformation, I truly believe that and I am so proud to be a PACE girl.”

The signature Tides of Change event was led by co-chairs John Agnew and Suzanne Boy with Boy Agnew Potanovic Law Firm. Event sponsors included the Fort Myers Police Department as North Star Sponsor (title), Boy Agnew Potanovic Law Firm as the Anchorage Sponsor, Cushman & Wakefield Commercial Property Southwest Florida and Scott and Mary Fischer as Helmsman Sponsors, and Lee Health, Connie and Ed Lizak, Publix Super Markets Charities and Sanibel Captiva Community Bank as Compass Sponsors.


To learn more about how to support PACE Center for Girls and its programs, visit www.pacecenter.org/locations/lee or call 425-2366.
Attorneys Honored At Pro Bono Luncheon

Celebrating the significant work of dedicated attorneys who believe in giving back to their community, Florida Rural Legal Services honored 25 attorneys for their pro bono work at the recent FRLS Pro Bono Awards Luncheon at Sidney & Berne Davis Art Center in downtown Fort Myers.

The attorneys were recognized for giving of their time and talents to assist those who otherwise could not afford legal fees in the tax clinic, with family law issues and other legal work.

Attorneys honored were:
- Scott Atwood, Henderson, Franklin, Starnes & Holt, PA, Fort Myers;
- Shanthy Bala, Florida Rural Legal Services, Inc., Fort Myers;
- Albert V Batista, Naples;
- Norma H Brill, Fort Myers;
- Daniel Daleandro, Associates and Bruce L. Scheiner, Fort Myers;
- Theresa Daniels, Daniels Law Office, Bokeelia;
- Che Diz, Diaz Law Office, Fort Myers;
- Tina M. Dedtrick, Levins & Warnock Law Group, Fort Myers;
- Kelly Fayer, Fayer Law Office, Fort Myers;
- Cary Goggin, Goede, Adamczyk, DeBoest, Cross, PLLC, Naples;
- Kim E. Howard, Howard Law Office, Estero;
- Richard Johnston, Johnston Law Firm, Fort Myers;
- Jeffrey R. Kuhns, Kuhns Law Office, Punta Gorda;
- Lisa Musial, Musial & Musial, LLC, Cape Coral;
- Greg Nussbickel, Nussbickel Law Firm, Fort Myers;
- Christina O’Brien, Henderson Franklin, Starnes & Holt, PA, Fort Myers;
- Ryan O’Halloran, O’Halloran & O’Halloran Law Office, Fort Myers;
- Frank Pavese Jr., Pavese Law Office, Cape Coral;
- Richard Ricciardi, Powell, Jackson, Steven & Ricciardi Law, Fort Myers;
- Kayla Richmond, Henderson Franklin, Starnes & Holt, PA, Fort Myers;
- Alexis Sitka, The Law Office of Alexis A. Sitka, Fort Myers;
- Steven Spence, Spence Law Firm, LaBelle;
- David Steckler, ACT Shelter, Fort Myers;
- Joseph Trunkett, Trunkett Law Group, Fort Myers;
- John Webb, Webb Law Group, Fort Myers;
- Also recognized were several interns from Florida Gulf Coast University who worked with Naples Attorney David Steckler.

Local attorneys honored for their legal contributions at pro bono luncheon

Shoes And Socks Needed For Local Veterans

This is the third year for a unique opportunity for people on Sanibel and in Southwest Florida to help a homeless veteran change his or her life. Southwest Florida is in the Veterans Administration (VA) Bay Pines Healthcare District, which covers the area between St. Petersburg and Naples. The CW Bill Young Hospital in St. Petersburg houses a rotating 150 homeless veterans. These men and women come to the VA for help, and they are looking to turn around their lives. The VA can get them a place to stay, feed and clothe them, even get them job interviews, but they cannot provide them shoes and socks. The VA tells us that without proper shoes for interviews, it is hard for vets to get a job, earn a living and take care of themselves.

Again this year, residents have even more places to drop off their new shoes and socks. There are changes this year; we still need work boots, dress shoes and sneakers for men. However, we have been asked if we can help the growing population of homeless women vets by getting new sneakers and women’s socks.

The participating locations are Sanibel and Captiva Islands Chamber of Commerce, Bank of America on Sanibel, St. Isabel Catholic Church and five local radio stations. Outside the area is a radio and TV network in the Pacific Northwest: The Dove Network of Medford, Oregon. The network came up with a unique way for their listeners to help. Songs and Stories for Soldiers is a local 501(c)3 foundation that has been assisting vets for the last five years, right out of Sanibel. Their idea is to go to the www.songsandstoriesforsoldiers.us website and click on the Amazon Smile link. Go and shop for shoes and socks, and if you are an Amazon Prime member, you can ship the shoes and socks for free.

The shipping address is:
Sanibel Shoes for Homeless Veterans
1224 Kittiwake Cir.
Sanibel, FL 33957

By using Amazon Smile, a small percentage of your purchase will be donated to Songs and Stories, and you will be sending a message of support for the men and women who defended our country and now need our help.

All of the drop boxes will be out by Saturday, November 30 at the following locations on Sanibel:
- Bailey’s General Store; Bank of America; The Dunes Golf & Tennis Club, American Legion Post 123;
- St. Isabel Catholic Church; Sanibel & Captiva Islands Chamber of Commerce; Kingsfisher Real Estate; The Community House; Sanibel Fire and Rescue District; FISH of SanCap; Sanibel Public Library.

The drop-off location is Fort Myers is St. Columbkille Catholic Church, 12171 Iona Road; Port Charlotte drop-off location is WIKX Radio, 24100 Tiseo Boulevard, Ste. 10.

For more information, call 973-687-4826.
The holidays are often fraught with tension because expectations for happiness have been set at a ridiculously high standard. Movies, television, advertising and social media depict this season with so many images of “perfection” that many people and especially children become confused about what is real, appropriate and worthwhile for them. Expectations are then heightened, and the holidays can feel like a test of how happy and successful your family is. And, if you have children with psychological or learning disorders, even favorite traditions can turn into a test of stamina and patience. Here are some ideas to help minimize stress and make the holidays more fun and fulfilling.

- Talk with your kids about your traditions, which ones they love and which you might evolve to make them more fun or memorable for everyone. This is especially important when family dynamics have changed because of divorce, a new marriage or sibling, or a death in the family.
- When making holiday plans, be realistic. Remember your children’s limitations when you make plans and that will help to reduce stress on everyone. Kids who are anxious about meeting new people or even encountering the extended family will need support and realistic expectations. Kids who have trouble with organization will need help to succeed at gift-giving. Children who tend to be impulsive will need structure to minimize disruptive behavior. Not overestimating your kids’ patience and ability to focus will help you enjoy yourself more, too.
- Holidays represent a change in a family’s normal schedule and, for some kids, that’s unsettling. Preparing them for changes in their routines, what to expect and what you expect of them will help head off meltdowns. If you’re traveling, bring familiar toys and books, and make sure you have quiet one-on-one time like reading before bed.
- Give yourself a break as well. Don’t stretch yourself too thin trying to create the “perfect” holiday season. Decide what is important, prioritize and say “no” to what you can’t handle. Your kids will be fine with a less than perfect tree, cookies, decor, etc.
- Kids pick up their parents’ stress and tension, so they’re more likely to be irritable if you are. Have a sense of humor, enjoy your kids for who they are, and keep in mind that what you’ll all remember when it’s over is likely to be the unexpected moment when everybody was relaxed, not the perfectly choreographed party, dinner, or outing.

Shelley Greggs is adjunct faculty at Florida SouthWestern State College, where she teaches psychology and education courses. She is also a nationally certified school psychologist and consultant for School Consultation Services, a private educational consulting company. Questions for publication may be addressed to smgreggs@gmail.com. Not all questions submitted can be addressed through this publication.®

School District To Hold Vendor Open House

The School District of Lee County is holding its 2nd annual Vendor Open House in the Lee County Public Education Center on Thursday, December 19 from 9 a.m. to noon. This is an opportunity for businesses who would like to compete for contracts to work with the district to learn the proper procedure and make the necessary contacts.

The procurement services department will be hosting discussion topics such as:
- How to register for bid notifications
- The district’s purchasing policies and procedures
- How to complete a bid packet

RFQ process for construction projects
“We award large construction projects to general contractors who are qualified to manage projects valued up to $100 million, and these projects generate opportunities for smaller businesses to perform work locally,” said Frederick Ross, procurement services director. “During the open house, vendors can meet the district’s general contractors, share their firm’s qualifications and follow up on subcontractor bid opportunities.” A variety of non-construction related contract opportunities will be available at the open house as well.

The Lee County Public Education Center is located at 2855 Colonial Boulevard in Fort Myers. For more information or to register for free, visit www.leeschools.net/procurement.

School Smart

Dear Shelley,
Every year when the holidays come around, we all get stressed out at my house and often at my kids’ schools. My kids and I seem to be overwhelmed. Even their coaches and teachers seem frazzled. How can I help my kids, which in turn might help everyone else, to have less stress and enjoy this season.

Cheryl K, Fort Myers

The holidays are often fraught with tension because expectations for happiness have been set at a ridiculously high standard. Movies, television, advertising and social media depict this season with so many images of “perfection” that many people and especially children become confused about what is real, appropriate and
Saints Or Sages

by Craig R. Hersch, Florida Bar Board Certified Wills, Trusts & Estates Attorney; CPA

During the holiday season, it’s not just children who put forward their best behavior in hopes that Santa Claus delivers great bounty. The rest of us tend to reflect on our life’s journey. We try to be more considerate, patient and kind, while also being less judgmental of those around us. We try to be more “saintly,” don’t we?

Which got me thinking about what a saint really is. Is it the utmost in morality? I’m not sure that it is when you examine saintliness closely. Sainthood is individual in nature. In most major religions, a saint is a person of extremes. He is defined as loving kindness towards all. He lives in a world of self-denial, in that he doesn’t seek material rewards or outside praise.

A saint’s understanding of moral life is to give everything away to others in need. The saint may give all his money to the poor. But in so doing, what has the saint done to his own family? They suffer because of his extreme self-denial. A saint may refuse to fight in battle. But what about the saint’s country and its defense? A saint may forgive all crimes committed against him, at the expense of law and justice.

Saints are supremely virtuous people, yet you cannot build a society out of saints alone. Indeed, saints aren’t really interested in society. They have chosen a different, lonely self-segregating path.

Contrast this against a “sage” or “prophet.” When watching the news, we see all sorts of people who claim to prophesize about our coming destruction. These are today’s moral guardians. Their interest is in society at large as opposed to individual virtue.

We are told that we have lost our moral compass. Our prophets lament inequality, be it racial, religious, ethnic or monetary. Our modern day sages cry that the earth is dying beneath our feet, yet we continue to spew greenhouse gases, eat meat and throw plastics into the waters such that one day soon, we will be able to walk across trash streaming from Japan to California.

A true sage is a different kind of person altogether different than a saint. She follows the way of moderation and balance.

She avoids the extremes of cowardice on the one hand by speaking out about today’s wrongs and injustices, yet isn’t reckless about it, and thus acquires the virtue of courage. She avoids miserliness in one direction, prodigality in the other, and instead chooses the middle way of generosity.

The sage understands the twin dangers of too much and too little, excess and deficiency. She weighs the conflicting pressures and avoids extremes.

The saint and the sage are not just two types of people, but rather two different ways of understanding moral life itself. Is a moral life to achieve personal perfection? Or is it to create gracious relationships and a decent, just and compassionate society? Can one have both?

I recently attended a conference where attorney Stan Miller explained that there will likely be the largest intergenerational transfer of wealth in the next 20 years or so, unlike anything previously encountered throughout history. What are we to do with this wealth? Will our estate plans help heed our prophets’ warnings to correct society’s wrongs? Is that not saintly to do so within your estate plan?

What are the causes most important to you? How will your legacy work to promote those issues? Will it be through those you have raised or taught? Or will you leave generous amounts to those willing to raise the flag after your time here is over?

Are you the saint who heed the prophet’s warning? Or are you the prophet looking for saints to help your cause?

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 Lifetime Achievement Award Honoree

Alexandra (Alex) Bremner received the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Uncommon Friends Foundation at the annual Uncommon Evening gala at the Burroughs Home & Gardens on November 14. The award signifies many years of exemplary service to the locally founded non-profit organization.

Bremner was a teacher in the School District of Lee County for 35 years and saw firsthand the importance of teachers and the impact they have on the education and well-being of children. Her aunt, Berne Davis, provided the seed money to start the Uncommon Friends Foundation’s scholarship program. Bremner has served as chair of the scholarship committee for many years in addition to serving on the foundation board of The Florida Association of Counties (FAC) Calendar called Aerial Florida.

Lee County To Be Featured In State Calendar

Lee County will be featured as December 2020 of the 2020 Florida Association of Counties (FAC) Calendar called Aerial Florida. Lee County’s photo is one of 15 photos chosen for the calendar out of nearly 300 photos submitted during the annual calendar photo contest.

“The 2020 calendar offers a unique perspective of the state, one that few may get to see no matter how long they’ve lived here – a view of Florida from the sky,” said FAC President and Leon County Commissioner Nick Maddox.

“The calendar provides an opportunity for resident and visitors alike to showcase the beauty that every county has to offer.”

Each year the membership votes on a calendar theme and a photo contest is held over the summer. Now in its seventh year, the photo contest has gained popularity among both professional and amateur photographers. The 2020 FAC Calendar is available for purchase at www.fl-counties.com.

“Lee County is honored to have been chosen by the members of FAC to represent December in the FAC 2020 Calendar,” said Lee County Commissioner Chairman Brian Hamman. “This is a unique chance to show off why Lee County is such a great place to live, work and play.”

The 15 photos chosen to represent 15 different counties and showcase the views of Florida from above are:

Cover: Leon County
December 2019: Bay County
January 2020: Highlands County
February 2020: St. Johns County
March 2020: Broward County
April 2020: Lake County
May 2020: Miami-Dade County
June 2020: Okaloosa County
July 2020: Manatee County
August 2020: Palm Beach County
September 2020: Levy County
October 2020: Polk County
November 2020: Pasco County
December 2020: Lee County
Back Cover: Seminole County

Best Buddies Surpasses Goal At Inaugural Gala

Best Buddies Southwest Florida recently surpassed its inaugural Champion of the Year Gala fundraising goal by 63 percent, raising a total of $79,000. As the top fundraiser, Ken Coker of Cross Country Mortgage was named the 2019 Champion of the Year for the local organization.

The gala was recently held at the Forest Country Club in Fort Myers, which featured silent and live auctions, dinner and dancing.

Prior to the event, 11 Southwest Florida ‘champions’ raised funds and awareness for Best Buddies Southwest Florida, and generated countless opportunities for friendships, jobs and leadership development for children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

“We are so proud of Ken and all of our champions, who worked diligently to help us achieve our goal for the inaugural Champion of the Year event. Their collective efforts will make a tremendous impact on the lives of those with intellectual and developmental abilities,” stated Melanie Musick, area director of Best Buddies Southwest Florida.

“The Southwest Florida community has embraced our mission wholeheartedly, and we so appreciative to continue receiving support from community leaders, business owners and residents.”

Best Buddies South Florida Chairperson Brian Hamman.

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Craig R. Hersch
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“Will Power” Columnist, The Island Sun

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Ken Coker
photo provided

The champions also included: Andy Minoe, Starbucks at Miromar Outlets; Dale Earp, Earp Enterprises; Derek Newborn, Derek Newborn Fitness; Susan Christiano, Engel & Volkers; Amy Gaziano, mother of 2018 Best Buddies Friendship Ball queen; Steve Bray, Titan Restoration Construction; Jenna Marjigione, FGCU chapter president; David Oliver, Talking Bear Consulting; Elizabeth Salazar, Lehigh Senior High chapter vice president and Tim Dupre, Conditioned Air. Event sponsors included: FPL Home, Seminole Casino and Hotel, Modern Woodmen Fraternal Financial, Downtown House of Pizza, Zak’s Jewelry and Vein Specialists, Dr. Joseph Magnant.

Alexandra Bremner
photo provided

directors. She is currently serving as chair of the foundation’s Uncommon Evening.

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Selecting Your Trustee

Sheppard, Brett, Stewart, Hersch, Kinsey & Hill P.A.
Attorneys at Law

Ken Coker
photo provided
Invest In Your Family and Community

by Jennifer Basey

Why do you invest? For many people, here’s the answer: “I invest because I want to enjoy a comfortable retirement.” And that’s certainly a great reason, because all of us should regularly put money away for when we’re retired. But you can also benefit by investing in your family and your community.

Let’s start with your family members, particularly the younger ones. How can you invest in their future? One of the best ways is to help send them to college. A college degree is still a pretty good investment. The average lifetime earnings of a college graduate are nearly $1 million higher than those of someone with a high school degree, according to a study by the U.S. Census Bureau.

To help your children or grandchildren pay for any college, university, vocational school or other postsecondary education, you may want to open a 529 savings plan. With this account, withdrawals are federally tax free, as long as the money is used for qualified higher education expenses, including those from trade and vocational schools. However, if you withdraw some of the earnings on your account, and you don’t use the money for qualified expenses, it will be taxable and can also incur a 10 percent federal tax penalty.) Plus, you retain control with a high school degree, according to a study by the U.S. Census Bureau.

In addition, you may want to invest in the social fabric of your community by contributing to local charitable, civic, educational or cultural groups. Of course, now that we’re in the holiday season, it’s the perfect time for such gifts. Furthermore, your gift will be more appreciated than in years past because one of the chief incentives for charitable giving – a tax deduction – was lowered or made more stringent by changes, which raised the standard deduction so significantly that far fewer people chose to itemize deductions.

However, you might still be able to gain some tax benefits from your charitable gifts. To name one possibility, you could donate financial assets, such as stocks that have risen in value, freeing you of potential capital gains taxes. In any case, contact your tax advisor if you’re considering sizable charitable gifts.

Savings for your retirement will always be important. But don’t forget about investing in your family and your community – because these investments can provide satisfying returns.

This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones financial advisor. Jennifer Basey is a financial advisor in Fort Myers. She can be reached at jennifer.basey@edwardjones.com.

Superior Interiors
Try A Bold Color Scheme In Home Design

by Jeanie Tinch

Color theory is a complex take on what would traditionally be considered simple, choosing a color scheme. This decision involves considering how different shades work together in harmony based on certain context. In home design, you pick a theme and arrange different pieces of furniture based on the structure of the room and how the hues can flow together. Many often go for a neutral palette, one that uses traditionally soft shades that are keen to the eye and evoke natural calming sensations. While a neutral theme can be satisfying, it’s not always going to make a statement. If you’re on the fence about one of the color schemes in your home, or lack thereof, why not take a chance and go for something bold? Perhaps the room needs a new face.

Step inside the room you want to transform and think back to the last time you switched up the design. If you can’t remember when that took place, close your eyes, take a deep breath and imagine incorporating a color that could make the living space pop, giving the room the personality it deserves. Something as simple as a new shade on the walls can take an area in your home to the next level. Eccentric wallpaper can add a fun twist to your home style and give the room a new face as well.

Adding a fresh color in your home is a wonderful way to inject your personality in the space. There’s something so gratifying about transforming a room with a new bold color scheme. Just think about the opportunity – it’s endless. If it’s been a long time since you’ve expressed yourself and you need an outlet, redecorating with a daring color can help you express the feelings you’ve kept inside for years. That’s the beauty of transforming a room – it’s a blank canvas that you can convert into your own personal colorful haven using paint, furniture, accessories and pieces of decor.

Maybe you’ve been afraid to step away from the comforting neutral palette you’ve had for years. Or, perhaps you just can’t picture yourself taking a bold approach in home decor. There’s no use in saying you’ll try a bold color scheme in some point in your life – take the step outside of your comfort zone now. Think about a bold hue that you love (or simply catches your eye) and imagine it in that living space you retreat to every morning. Whether it’s something as simple as adding a single colored accent wall to your entryway or taking the plunge and purchasing the striking window treatments or area rug you’ve been eyeing for years, there’s no better time to go bold than now.

Making a big change in your home is a commitment that can be intimidating, but it doesn’t have to be. With assistance from a design professional, you can follow through with the bold theme you’ve been excited to try for years. He or she can help you incorporate that daring color in a way that pops without being over the top.

Jeanie Tinch is an interior designer on Sanibel/Captiva Islands. She can be reached at jeanie@coinedecden.com.

Tobacco-Free Policy At Quality Life Center

Quality Life Center of Southwest Florida, Inc. is being recognized for being the county’s first recreation organization to adopt a tobacco-free policy in the Dunbar community of Fort Myers.

The Quality Life Center of Southwest Florida, Inc. adopted a tobacco-free policy for staff, members, volunteers and visitors. The tobacco-free policy will prohibit the use of all cigarettes, cigars, pipes, smokeless tobacco and electronic cigarettes.

Quality Life Center youth participating in Florida’s statewide youth advocacy organization – Students Working Against Tobacco – collaborated with the Department of Health in Lee County to develop a policy that would protect the community, particularly youth, from the harmful and deadly effects of tobacco and electronic cigarettes.

“The Q is proud to provide a clean, safe and healthy environment for youth to enjoy and take advantage of recreational activities in the community initially,” said Katrina Shanks, teen program coordinator. This policy covers all Quality Life Center facilities at any time from “curb to curb,” including offices, grounds, adjacent sidewalks, parking lots/ramps, organization-owned vehicles and vehicles parked on owned or leased property.

Quality Life Center of Southwest Florida recognizes the hazards caused by tobacco products and exposure to secondhand tobacco smoke and aims to protect the health of their employees, youth members and all visitors to their facility. They are committed to assisting employees and community members wanting to quit smoking by referring them to Tobacco Free Florida’s free Quit Your Way cessation resources.

Animal Services Gift Giving Tree

Lee County Domestic Animal Services (LCDAS) will celebrate the upcoming holiday season with a Gift Giving Tree. The tree is decorated with ornaments containing a wish list of gifts for the shelter pets and can be found in the adoption lobby at Animal Services, 5600 Banner Drive, Fort Myers.

Visitors can pick up an ornament and return a gift to LCDAS by Saturday, December 21 to help make the shelter animal’s holiday a little brighter. The ornament is yours to keep for your tree.

The adoption center is open 10:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Monday through Saturday. Dogs, cats, bunnies and guinea pigs are looking for a home just in time for the holidays. Visit www.leetospets.com to see pets available for adoption.

Montage Women To Meet

The Montage Women’s Club, a social and philanthropic club open to all women residing in Lee County, will meet at The Landings Yacht, Golf, and Tennis Club on Friday, December 20 at 11:30 a.m. Lunch will be followed by an informative program.

The guest speaker will be Greg Parker, a news anchor for the local ABC television network. Parker is an expert guitar player and has agreed to bring his guitar to the meeting to lead attendees in some holiday carols.

To join the organization are various interest groups for members’ participation. Membership is open to both year-round and seasonal residents. Meetings are usually held on the fourth Thursday of each month. The Landings Yacht, Golf, and Tennis Club is located at 4425 South Landings Drive, Suite 100, in Fort Myers. For more information or to make a reservation, call 481-7765.

Military Group Dinner Meeting

The next meeting of the Lee Coast Chapter of MOAA (Military Officers Association of America) will be held at Crown Colony Golf and Country Club on Monday, December 9 at 5:30 p.m.

Guest speaker is David Santini, director of Hearts and Homes for Veterans. Reservations are required.

Former, retired or active duty uniformed officers who are interested in joining MOAA should contact Terry Robertson at 352-638-5838 or for membership information.
Employee Scholarships By Cypress Cove

Cypress Cove’s staff scholarship committee recently awarded 14 educational scholarships for the spring 2020 academic term to employees and dependents of the South Fort Myers Life Plan community. The recent scholar selections bring to 36 the number of employees and their dependents who have been chosen as scholarship recipients since the program began in fall 2017. Program scholars from Cypress Cove have been represented at 12 different institutions of higher learning.

The current class of scholars represent five different colleges: Aspen University, Florida Gulf Coast University, Florida SouthWestern State College, Rasmussen College and the University of South Florida.

This spring’s scholarship class, according to Cypress Cove Philanthropy Specialist Allen Abbott, includes 10 returning scholars. Of the 14 recipients, eight are employees of Cypress Cove and six are dependents of Cypress Cove employees.

Three recipients have been awarded specific named scholarships. They are Rasmussen College student Paul Denova, a licensed practical nurse at The Lodge who has received the Anne Tatler Family Scholarship; Florida SouthWestern State College student Abigail Saintheard, a licensed practical nurse at The Lodge; and a CNA at The Lodge, Marc Charles, a home health aid with Cypress at Home; Madison Cunningham, daughter of Lodge employee Tracey Cunningham; and Housekeeper Evelyn Alpizar.

Other scholarship winners were the mother-daughter awardees Nancy Gaspard, CNA at the Lodge, and her daughter, Sergine Gaspard. They both received scholarships for the second consecutive semester.

The remaining scholarship recipients are Shantee Gayle from Dining Services; Dapheline Jocelin, daughter of Yverose Jocelin, a CNA at The Lodge; Anne Laguerre, daughter of Welna Zamor of Dining Services; and Kimberly Scott, minimal data set coordinator at The Lodge.

First-time scholarship recipients receive $2,000 toward their education while employees having previously received scholarship program assistance were awarded $1,000.

May the only pain you have this holiday season be champagne!

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year! Wishing you all the best of health this holiday season and in 2020!

The Doctor & the Dietitian
Ross Hauser, MD & Marion Hauser, MEd, RD

Health Facilities Garner Marks For Term Care Quality

HealthPark Care & Rehabilitation Center has been listed as a 2019-20 Best Nursing Home by U.S. News & World Report, earning two top badges for quality care. The Skilled Nursing Unit (SNU) at Lee Memorial Hospital also earned top marks for short-term care.

New this year, U.S. News is assigning most facilities two ratings – one for short-stay rehab and a new long-term care rating. This new methodology is intended to provide prospective residents who need help with daily activities, and their families with specific information about the quality of care provided by nursing homes. The rating includes data on staffing, success in preventing ER visits and pneumonia vaccination rates, among other metrics. Out of 13,685 nursing homes that received a long-term care rating, 1,139 were designated as High-Performing, according to U.S. News.

“We’re proud to receive three ‘high-performing’ ratings from U.S. News for excellence in both short-term and long-term care,” said Dave Cato, Lee Health’s chief administrative officer of outpatient services. “Our compassionate team strives to be a national leader in quality skilled nursing, and this recognition shows that we are providing the highest level of care for our patients, whatever their needs.”

HealthPark Care & Rehabilitation Center is one of only two facilities in Lee County that earned a Best Nursing Home designation for both long- and short-term care.

Analyzing data provided by the federal Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), U.S. News provides each facility a rating ranging from one to five, with five being the highest. This rating evaluates a broad range of resident conditions and care at each nursing home, including both shorter-term rehabilitation and long-term chronic care.

HealthPark Care & Rehabilitation Center is a skilled nursing facility with 112 beds located adjacent to HealthPark Medical Center, where focused medical care is combined with personalized support services to help patients achieve their optimal health and independence. The SNU is an 18-bed unit within Lee Memorial Hospital that opened in 2017. Both facilities have also earned five-star ratings from CMS for top-quality care.

For more information, visit www.health.usnews.com/best-nursing-homes.
Frankly Speaking

by Howard Prager

Rivalries, old and new. One feature of Thanksgiving weekend is lots of football (and great eating). Our region has several football rivalries.

What rivalries do you follow? It seems like every team, NCAA and professional, has a team that just gets under their skin. Bears-Packers, Michigan-Ohio State, Auburn-Alabama, Army-Navy are all perennially great matchups and are always worth watching. Even though the Bears-Packers and Army-Navy games are a few weeks away, they are among the ones to savor. In fact, Navy is the most improved team this year, going from 3-8 to the Top 25. Air Force has also done well and is 10-2 this season, losing only to Navy and Boise State and most recently ranked No. 25. The Navy rivalry with Army goes back 128 years, and nearly 100 years for the Bears-Packers which started in 1921 and is the most played matchup in the NFL – 199 games. That’s a long time to turn up the heat. (If you remember from my column last week, the NFL started in 1920).

As for last weekend’s rivalries, Michigan-Ohio State is one of the oldest starting in 1897 and playing regularly since 1918. Unfortunately for this Michigan fan, Ohio State has owned the game over the last seven years, with this year truly being another slaughter and forgettable match. The Iron Bowl between Alabama-Auburn started earlier, in 1893, but was not played regularly until 1948. This year, Alabama was ranked 5th, and the lead went back and forth a lot before No. 15 Auburn clinched it with a game-winning field goal. The upset by Auburn knocked ‘Bama out of FBS contention for the first time in several years. A fitting farewell to Auburn’s first Heisman Trophy winner QB Pat Sullivan, who passed away last weekend. This opens up the possibility of Utah getting into the Top 4, as they are 11-1 and are ranked 5th. Georgia plays LSU next weekend for the SEC championship, with Utah conceivably jumping over one of them.

Other surprises from rivalry weekend was a spirited Indiana-Purdue game that went into double OT before Indiana pulled it out, strengthening the chances of Hoosiers going to a decent bowl game with an 8-4 record, which they hadn’t seen since 1993. Northwestern had nowhere to go, but still managed to beat bowl-bound Illinois with their first Big Ten win this weekend. And Minnesota, after going undefeated most of the season, has now lost two games to finish at 10-2 with their loss to Wisconsin and earlier to Iowa, both big rivalries. If Minnesota can win their bowl game, they will finish with 11 wins for the first time since 1904. It will be nice to see new teams at some of the better bowls.

As for the Super Bowl, both the Ravens and 49ers have been hot all season. The Ravens, with Lamar Jackson being a highlight-reel himself, won the first game with a second last field goal. The game had gone back and forth, featuring some big plays (the 49ers first TD was a bomb on 4th down and 2) and great stops by both teams. If this was a Super Bowl preview, football fans have a lot to look forward to.

Here is a good news story from Thanksgiving week. A previously unknown basketball player from Stephen F. Austin University, Nate Bain, hit a last-second shot to beat Duke during Thanksgiving week, and word quickly gets out that there is a GoFundMe campaign for his family, whose home and church were badly damaged when Hurricane Dorian hit the Bahamas earlier this year.

The water had risen more than 10 feet at the Bains’ home. The church where his father Norris is pastor was heavily hit as well. Funds went from $2,000 before the game to $137,000 afterwards. “This has been unbelievable,” his dad said in an interview Thursday, after he watched tens of thousands of dollars pour into the account in 24 hours. “It has truly been life-changing. It is nice to know that you can do something so you can legally distribute an unexpected philanthropic windfall to the family of a student athlete? Funds would be distributed to the Bains once they provide receipts for goods and services that comply with the NCAA guidelines. It’s not clear that the funds can be used to rebuild or refurbish Tabernacle Baptist Church where Norris Bain is minister. NCAA rules state that excess funds must be donated to a charity, and it is unclear whether the church would be considered a charity. But two things are clear: Nate Bain has definitely raised his profile on the court and, more importantly, his family home will be rebuilt. All because of “the shot that beat Duke.”

Howard Prager is the son-in-law of longtime columnist Ed Frank.

Prager is a sports enthusiast from the Chicago area who also writes and blogs about leadership. Email comments or questions to press@islandsunnews.com.

National Fishing Seminar Tour Opens in Area

The Salt Water Sportsman National Seminar Series will kick off its 2020 tour in Fort Myers on Saturday, January 4. The 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. event will be held inside the Cohen Center at Florida Gulf Coast University. The seminar series will involve a one-hour break at noon.

George Poveromo, host of George Poveromo’s World of Saltwater Fishing on the Discovery Channel and contributing editor for Salt Water Sportsman, will headline the program, along with co-host “Crazy” Alberto Knie, a legendary shallow water and land-based fishing specialist on catching trophy redfish, sea trout, flounder, bottom structures, including night fishing for snapper with Hawg Wild Charters and fishing the waters from Naples to Fort Myers.

Captain Steve Sewell – Renowned Fish Tale Marina-based pro specializing in wahoo and tunas.


Captain Coddy Pierce – Renowned expert on fishing artificial lures within the waters Bay, with Pierce Backcountry Adventures of Charlotte Harbor down through Estero

Captain Coddy Pierce – Renowned expert on fishing artificial lures within the waters Bay, with Pierce Backcountry Adventures of Charlotte Harbor down through Estero

Captain Anthony Backcountry Adventures of Charlotte Harbor down through Estero

Captain Harry Vernon III – Premier South Florida-based guide specializing in catching trophy redfish, sea trout, flounder and bottom fishing authority.

Captain David Wicker – Noted king mackerel tournament pro and specialist at using marine electronics to locate and catch more fish.

Captain Al Wenzel - South Florida-based authority on offshore live-baiting and trolling as well as conventional and deep-drop bottom-fishing.

Topics for the Fort Myers seminar will focus on inshore, near shore and offshore fishing, all saltwater and all related to the region. Featured species to include snook, trout, flounder, redfish, tarpon, permit, cobia, groupers, snappers, dolphin, whiting and more.

Cost for a ticket is $55, and includes five hours of instruction from the best pros in the business, a course textbook, a one-year subscription or extension to Salt Water Sportsman, one Rolfer’s Ocean Fishing Forecast Analysis, bottle of Ocean Water Treatment, bottle of Star brite Extreme Clean, bottle of Corrosion Block, a $10 discount card off any purchase of $75 or more from Bass Pro Shops, and chances to win thousands of dollars’ worth of door prizes.

The grand prize at the conclusion of the Fort Myers seminar is a Florida Keys fishing trip with one of several premier guides. The super grand prize, to be awarded two weeks after the conclusion of the 2020 series, is a new Mako Pro Skiff 17.

As an added bonus, attendees of the Bass Pro Shops seminar will be invited to the After Seminar Party at Bass Pro Shops in Fort Myers. A special area will be set aside for the 4 to 6:30 p.m. party. Guests must show their seminar series name tag to gain entry and are entitled to bring one guest. Food, drink and music will be provided. George Poveromo and several other faculty members will be present.

For more information or tickets, call 1-800-448-7360, or register online at www.nationalseminarseries.com.

SPORTS QUIZ

1. Who was the last pitcher before Arizona’s Zack Greinke in 2018 to have a hit, an RBI and a stolen base in at least two games in a season?
2. Name either of the major-league pitchers who led his respective league in shutouts a season.
3. It was

ANSWERS

1. Bob Gibson, in 1969. 2. Walter Johnson (A.L.) and Grover Cleveland Alexander (N.L.). 3. It was
Most of you have heard the term “greener pastures,” but what does that mean? I happen to think that there are many ways to look at this term, and they don’t always end up being greener, or better. As a matter of fact, in many cases, when people think the grass is greener on the other side, they find out that it is not, and where they were was not so bad after all.

You might love what you do as a career but feel like you need a change. Then one day, you look around to realize that you were much happier and in a better situation before.

What do you do now?

You may feel that you want to move away to experience new adventures in a completely different environment. You make a move, and then you look around and realize that this was not what you envisioned, or were hoping for your future. Now what?

Relationships can get trying at times and whether it is a long relationship or a short one, the challenges most definitely will arise. Regardless of the amount of time spent with someone, there will probably be a moment or two that you think about, “what if?” or “how can I be happier, more content, more fulfilled?”

There are always examples in life where a greener pasture is completely necessary to move to a better situation for your health, happiness, peace of mind, and overall beautiful life. But, the point is, regardless of whether you change your career path, start a new relationship or move to a new location, you still encounter challenges along the way.

Sometimes the need to find greener pastures lies within us. Making just a slight adjustment in our attitude, gratitude, and appreciation for the here and now will help you make the right decisions before looking to a new, plusher and greener pasture. You may find that the grass is pretty green right where you are, and if you listen to your heart, you may find a brand new love for all that you had yesterday, all that you have today, and all that tomorrow will bring.

My affirmation for you this week is: “I appreciate all that I have and will continue to follow my heart to live my beautiful life every day.”

Kay Casperson is a beauty and lifestyle expert, founder and CEO of Beautifulife by Kay Casperson. She owns resort spas on Sanibel and Captiva islands and manufactures beauty and lifestyle products sold across the country. To stay inspired, visit www.kaycasperson.com or follow on social media @kaycasperson.
Toxic Holiday Plants That Affect Children And Pets

by Suzy Cohen, RPh

Dear Readers: So you know how I love to use plants as “medicine” and frequently recommend herbs to you?

Well, there are certain plants that are dangerous, especially at this time of the year. Not all plants are medicine!

Holiday plants are sometimes poisonous. Many poisonings happen during travel because some people don’t realize that holiday plants are dangerous, and they decorate with them. Then you show up with your baby, your pet and something happens. Here are tips to stay safe.

Christmas trees – If you love the scent of a beautiful living Christmas tree, I recommend you feed it with plain water. Commercial preservatives are not necessary. Most brands induce stomach upset and vomiting when children and pets who crawl around the floor and take a sip of the water in the Christmas tree stand. Some commercial tree preservatives (or home-made versions) contain anything from harmless ingredients like corn syrup or soda to more dangerous ingredients such as bleach, whiskey or aspirin.

Holly Berries – Branches of the holly tree (often called “boughs” of holly) are beautiful holiday decorations and are frequently used to add color to mantles, table settings and even food. Be careful with this one because the berries are poisonous to both humans and animals. If you accidentally ingest the berries, it can cause local irritation in your mouth as well as severe diarrhea, vomiting, dehydration and weakness. There have been fatalities.

Keep holly boughs up and away from children and beloved pets or, alternatively, buy silk or plastic versions of holly for your home decor. If you insist on fresh holly boughs, you should remove the red berries before placing the bough if you have little visitors coming, or pets. Here’s why that’s a smart move: When the holly dries out in your home, which is pretty quickly, the berries fall off the plant and become a danger to children and pets.

Poinsettia – The poinsettia plant blooms with those stunning big red flowers. It also has varieties that bloom in white and cream. This plant is often considered deadly but it’s not usually fatal if eaten. The poinsettia sap in the leaves and flowers can be irritating if children and pets chew on it, especially because it causes a painful mouth, lip or skin rash. If swallowed, it will also cause cramps and stomach upset. But it doesn’t kill.

Mistletoe – The kissing sprig. If you pass beneath the mistletoe, you can get one planted on you. It’s a well-known holiday tradition and symbol of love. American mistletoe (Phoradendron serotinum) is different and safer, compared to its European cousin known botanically as Viscum album.

In a study examining 1,754 American mistletoe poisonings, almost all the cases were children (92 percent of exposures), and they were all cases from chewing and swallowing the plant. There were no fatalities. So again, American mistletoe is not toxic like European mistletoe, but here in the states, it’s come down to guilt by association. I do not recommend eating or consuming any part of the plant... however smooches are perfectly fine!

This information is not intended to treat, cure or diagnose your condition. Suzy Cohen is the author of The 24-Hour Pharmacist and is a registered pharmacist. To contact her, visit www.SuzyCohen.com.

The Lodge At Cypress Cove Earns Top Rating

The Lodge at Cypress Cove, one of Southwest Florida’s premier skilled nursing and rehabilitation facilities, has earned the prestigious Five-Star Overall Quality Rating from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS).

“We are extremely proud that the hard work and quality care provided by The Lodge’s dedicated staff has been recognized,” said Health Services Director David Gray of the rating for the 64-private apartment skilled-living community. “Each member of this team is to be commended for their continuous efforts to make The Lodge a special place.”

A Five-Star rating by CMS also was awarded to The Lodge in 2017 and has been continuously granted since then. The facility, part of the 48-acre life plan Cypress Cove community, reaches across all spectrums of nursing care – from private long-term care to skilled rehabilitation.

In 2016, The Lodge enhanced its service abilities with the addition of the 3,500-square-foot Mead Therapy Center. The state-of-the-art rehabilitation center also serves as an outpatient service facility.

CMS established the five-star rating system in 2008 to measure the quality of care and services within nursing facilities. Ratings are based on five categories of criteria including health inspections, quality measures (measurement that judge the quality of care given to residents) and staffing.

Last year, The Lodge completed a multi-million renovation and facility upgrade. The community’s 64 private resident suites and two restaurants were renovated and fitted with new modern conveniences and furnishings.

The Lodge’s goal, explains Gray, is to ensure and maintain the highest quality of lifestyle for our residents while providing peace of mind to their loved ones.

MSG Migraines

by Ross Hauser, MD and Marlon Hauser, MS, RD

I got my first migraine in graduate school. After the structural cause of the migraines was addressed with prolotherapy, I would still occasionally experience migraines after having eaten a food. The culprit: MSG.

MSG, a flavor enhancer most known in Chinese food, is widely used, often hidden on the ingredient list, typically found in highly processed foods. MSG or glutamic acid act as nerve stimulants and will change how taste buds perceive food, so even a bad-tasting food will taste good. MSG is also linked to high insulin, cholesterol and blood pressure, liver issues, as well as neurological, brain and gut issues. Glutamate in excess can cause nerves to fire excessively becoming neurotoxic.

The FDA does not require labeling as MSG unless that food contains 99 percent pure MSG. Unfortunately, MSG is produced as a result of protein hydrolysis or as a byproduct of protein processing in the form of free glutamic acid. While this may happen when consuming protein foods like meats, dairy and even vegetables, the glutamic acid is released with other amino acids rather than just in high concentrations on its own. Thus, non-processed whole foods do not cause a toxic MSG reaction.

Bottom line. MSG or its by-products are found in nearly every highly processed food. Even vegetable proteins are hydrolyzed to make veggie burgers, as well as other so-called “healthy” or “vegan” frozen foods.

Look for these common ingredients with MSG: hydrolyzed vegetable protein (or hydrolyzed anything), textured vegetable protein, yeast extract, glutamic acid, glutamate, monopotassium glutamate, calcium glutamate, gelatin, soy protein isolate to name a few.

Avoid carrageenan, bouillon, broth, stock, flavorings, maltodextrin, citric acid, anything pasteurized, enzymes or protein-fortified, seasonings, soy sauce, pectin, to name a few.

What to eat? Fresh. Fish, meat, vegetables, dairy, fruits and grains. Dump the junk!

This information is not intended to treat, cure or diagnose your condition.

Caring Medical Regenerative Medicine Clinics has two locations: one in Oak Park, Illinois, and one in Fort Myers.

It was established in 1991 by Ross Hauser, MD, and Marlon Hauser, MS, RD. They can be reached at info@caringmedical.com.

Got A Problem? Dr. Connie Is In

by Constance Clancy

Q: What are some codependent behaviors?
A: Codependent behaviors include trying to control others, perfectionism, approval seeking behaviors, the inability to express anger (ie, being passive-aggressive) and other feelings out of fear of being disapproved of, and overreacting.

If you or someone you know has these behaviors, often the person is unaware because they are so ingrained they become second nature. When a behavior is brought to our attention, perhaps we see ourselves as others see us. In order to change the codependent behavior, the first step is awareness.

In relationship, someone who is codependent may think to say, “I’ll do anything, just don’t leave me.”

It’s helpful to think of a more desirable behavior to shift to, for example, if someone is prone to eating unhealthy foods, he/she first becomes aware of this or it’s brought to one’s attention. A more desirable behavior can be put in place, such as eating healthy fruits and vegetables. Bring about awareness of this desirable shift, evaluate the outcome of how you feel and renew this healthy behavior with a commitment.

It can also be helpful to write the steps down to remember what you want to change and how to go about making and embracing the change. First, ask yourself what behaviors you want to change or modify, and ask what your options are. Write them down and follow through. You will be on your way to positive behavioral change.

Constance Clancy, EdD, LMHC, LPC, NCC is a licensed mental health therapist, hypnotherapist, author and holistic stress management instructor. If you have a question, email Constance at drconstanceclancy@gmail.com or visit www.drconstanceclancy.com.

Overeaters Anonymous

I food is a problem for you, Overeaters Anonymous can help. Meetings are held in Room 130 at Sanibel Community Church on Tuesdays from 5 to 6 p.m. and on Fridays at 4 p.m.

For more meeting information, visit www.southwestfloa.org.

Sanibel Community Church is located at 1740 Periwinkle Way.
Hello, my name is Mimi. I am a 3-year-old female domestic shorthair who is a beautiful calico cat that is very affectionate. I love to give head bumps and snuggle. Wherever you are in the room, that is where you will find me. I will follow you wherever you go. I get along well with my feline companions, so if you adopt me you can take advantage of the adopt one get a feline friend at no additional charge.

My adoption fee is $50 with the BOGO special.

Hi, I’m Charlie. I am a 1-year-old male chow/golden retriever mix who is a playful pup that is well with my feline companions, so if you adopt me. I will follow you wherever you go. I get along spayed and have all of our vaccinations. We are siblings, we’ve spent our entire lives together.

Baby Grey is familiar with the chow breed. This handsome golden retriever mix who is a playful pup that is feline friend at no additional charge.

The shelter is open to the public Monday through Saturday at 5600 Banner Drive in Fort Myers. Adoptions are available 10:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Monday through Saturday. For information, visit Lee County Domestic Animal Services at www.leegov.com/animalservices or call 533-7387.

Mimi & Charlie

Lee County Domestic Animal Services

Mimi ID# A800451

Hi! There! We are Baby Grey (grey and white) and Peloton (black and white tuxedo). While we aren’t biological siblings, we’ve spent our entire lives together so we would really like to get adopted together. Baby Grey is a 6-month-old male, and Peloton is a 5-month-old female. We’ve been neutered and spayed and have all of our vaccinations. We are very playful and sweet.

Baby Grey likes to give kisses, and will cuddle and sleep with you – just like a human child. Baby Grey needs a lot of attention and really needs to have another kitty around to help keep him company and play with him. Peloton is very easy going. They both get along great with other cats and would do well in a multi-cat household. Baby Grey has extremely soft fur and feels like a marshmallow, while little Peloton is sleek and shiny. Peloton has a white tip at the end of her tail.

Come see us at the PetSmart on Six Mile Cypress Parkway in Fort Myers. We are being cared for by Haven on Earth Animal League. For more information, call Diane at 860-833-4472 or email havenonearthanimalleague@yahoo.com.

Baby Grey

Haven on Earth Animal League

Charlie ID# A801723

My adoption fee is $50.

Lee County Domestic Animal Services will celebrate the upcoming holiday season with a Gift Giving Tree. The tree in the adoption lobby at Animal Services is decorated with ornaments with a wish list for gifts for the shelter pets. Visitors may pick one up and return them to Animal Services by December 21 to help make the animals’ holiday a little brighter. The ornament is yours to keep for your tree. Visit www.leelostpets.com to view all pets currently available and adoption fees.

and Peloton

Peloton
PUZZLES

WOMEN WITH A CONNECTION

ACROSS
1 Emanates (from) — 9 Diner fave
2 Get — on (ace) — 10 Girl coming out in society
3 Alaskan salmon — 11 Plume
ty to see — 12 Tough cookie
4 Safari — 13 Female
ticks — 14 Long-winded
talker — 15 Chain young
talkers — 18 Inquisitive
5 Linen — 19 In vitro
6 Tap — 20 Back in the day
7 Tulle — 21 Lion-hearted monster
8 Ductile — 22 Three-in-one
9 Organic — 23 ANNE
10 Cozy — 24 King

DOWN
1 Name of a
tap — 3 Name of a
tap — 5 Name of a
tap — 7 Name of a
tap — 9 Name of a
tap — 11 Name of a
tap — 13 Name of a
tap — 15 Name of a
tap — 17 Name of a
tap — 19 Name of a
tap — 21 Name of a
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tap — 31 Name of a
tap — 33 Name of a
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tap — 39 Name of a
tap — 41 Name of a
tap — 43 Name of a
tap — 45 Name of a
tap — 47 Name of a
tap — 49 Name of a
tap — 51 Name of a

PUZZLES Answers on page 28

King Crossword

ACROSS
1 Temperate 12 Sandwich treat
2 Owns 13 Final (Abbr.)
3 Loves' quarters 14 Small combo
4 Chicken and 15 "Desperate 16 Cincinnati
5 "Better Housewives" 17 Ingratiate
6 actress Eva 19 Warehouse
7 Cincinnati 21 Pippen
8 team 22 Deck for a
9 team 23 Wife of Saturn
10 team 25 Become one
11 team 26 Embrace
12 team 27 Favorable
13 team 28 Grad's "with
14 team 29 Vote
30 team 30 Caesar
31 team 31 Addict
32 team 32 Sholl game
33 team 33 "My Heart Will Go On!" singer
34 team 34 Ringworm
35 team 35 Egypt's boy
36 team 36 Toes in
37 team 37 Transmit
38 team 38 Afternoon party
39 team 39 "Jane Eyre" author
40 team 40 Do, re, mi, fa
41 team 41 Pants, up, do
42 team 42 Cover
43 team 43 Magic Maze

MAGIC MAZE

ELECTROSTATIC

POIHMKGEDBSCEZ
XRWXTURNINOSREP
LTEONLCARRYINGM
FEEFRFIGFDMCAU
NYXWVTSHTPEDPR
ONLKNILDNAHIT

Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all
directions forward, backward, up, down and diagonally

Admission Depth Handling Take
Carrying Electrostatic No extra Trickle
Cavalcade Finance Person in Trumped-up
Cover Free of Service
**SUDOKU**

To play Sudoku:
Complete the grid so that every row, column and every 3x3 box contains the numbers 1 through 9 (the same number cannot appear more than once in a row, column or 3x3 box.) There is no guessing and no math involved, just logic.

Answer on page 28

---

**FIND AT LEAST SIX DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PANELS**

Find differences: 1. Pillow pattern is different 2. Boy’s shirt is different 3. Piano is taller 4. Mom’s hairstyle is different 5. Black 3. Mom’s shoes are black 4. Flowers are added in vase 5. Pan is shorter 6. Mom’s hairstyle is different

Answer on page 30

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**SHRIMP SUCCOTASH AND SPICY CORN CAKES**

*Shrimp Succotash*
1 pound peeled shrimp
1 large tomato, diced
1 ear sweet corn, cut off the cob
2 tablespoons olive oil
1 tablespoon finely chopped garlic
1 tablespoon seafood seasoning
1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
1/2 cup scallions, chopped
Sea salt and fresh ground pepper, to taste

Heat the olive oil in a heavy skillet over medium-high heat until hot. Saute corn for 5 minutes, then add tomatoes, garlic, shrimp, and seafood seasoning and continue to cook for 2 to 3 more minutes. Stir in 1/2 the scallions and cook for 1 minute. Remove from pan and spoon over flatbread, sprinkle with remaining scallions.

*Spicy Corn Cakes*
1 large bell pepper, diced fine
2 cups self-rising cornmeal
2 tablespoons sugar
2 cups milk

2 large eggs
1/3 cup jalapeño, seeded and chopped
1/4 cup scallions, chopped
Butter or corn oil for frying

In a large bowl mix together cornmeal, sugar and salt. Add in bell peppers, scallions, jalapeños, eggs, and milk and mix until well blended. Let the batter rest for 10 or 15 minutes. Add oil to just cover bottom of skillet and heat over medium-high heat. Spoon even amount of mixture into skillet and cook 3 or 4 minutes (you will see air holes). Flip and cook until golden brown. Serve warm with the succotash.

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**SCRAMBLERS**

Unscramble the letters within each rectangle to form four ordinary words. Then rearrange the boxed letters to form the mystery word, which will complete the gag.

**Today’s Word:**

Answer on page 28

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**HOCUS-FOCUS**

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF

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PUZZLE ANSWERS

SUPER CROSSWORD

CAMES AN ABLT ACT DEB OVER BELARUS CHIMERA MEGARCHIC R Dict underestimated the power of Dr. Frankenstein, who was to airlift South Vietnamese Army officers and ground crewmen. Their assignment was to fly into Cambodia to study its complexities before you attempt to deal with it. Good luck.

Taurus (April 20 to May 20) A new relationship might not be responding quite as quickly as you’d hoped. Could you be expecting too much too soon? Try to ease up and let things happen at their own pace.

Gemini (May 21 to June 20) As we approach the frenetic pace of pre-holiday planning, take time out now to reconnect with the wonderful people who share your life, especially the one who also shares your dreams.

Cancer (June 21 to July 22) A misunderstanding should be resolved before you get caught up in the flurry of holiday preparations. Set your pride aside and deal with it, regardless of who might have hurt whom first.

Leo (July 23 to August 22) Being told that a colleague might have been trying to undercut your effectiveness might or might not be true. Get all the facts before you even think about acting on this so-called information.

Virgo (August 23 to September 22) It’s a good idea to start your holiday preparation plans early in order to avoid a time crunch if an unresolved workplace situation causes a problem. That old friend might have some welcome news.

Libra (September 23 to October 22) A family member’s actions continue to surprise you, but this time with positive results. Could be your wise counsel finally got through. It’s like having an early holiday gift, isn’t it?

Scorpio (October 23 to November 21) Your reluctance to act in a current situation could be traced to your inner self advising you to take more time to study its complexities before you attempt to deal with it. Good luck.

Sagittarius (November 22 to December 21) Soothing hurt feelings before they can ignite an angry outburst is the wise thing to do. And, of course, when it comes to doing the “wisdom thing,” you do it so well.

Capricorn (December 22 to January 19) Budget your time so that you can handle both your workplace duties and your personal holiday planning -- including travel arrangements -- without burning out on either end.

Aquarius (January 20 to February 18) You might find that you still need to firm up one or two of those still-outstanding decisions so that you finally can move forward as you had planned. Weigh the facts, then act.

Pisces (February 19 to March 20) You usually don’t carry grudges, but you might feel this is one time when you’re justified in doing so. But aren’t you spending too much energy holding onto it? Let it go and move on.

Born This Week: You have a way of using your quiet strength to persuade people to follow their better instincts and do the right thing.


4. History: Which Revolutionary War figure led the Boston Tea Party? 14. Television: What was the name of Lily and Herman’s son in “The Munsters?”

5. Bible: What was Abel’s occupation, compared with Cain’s? 15. Animal Kingdom: What is a group of frogs called?

TRIVIA ANSWERS

1. Anatomy: What is a common name for the “digitus annularis”? • Anatomy: Ankle

2. Movies: Which 1980s movie featured the song “Up Where We Belong?” • An Officer and a Gentleman


4. History: Which Revolutionary War figure led the Boston Tea Party? • Samuel Adams

5. Bible: What was Abel’s occupation, compared with Cain’s? • Farmer

6. Animal Kingdom: What is a group of frogs called? • Army

TRIVIA TEST

1. Anatomy: What is a common name for the “digitus annularis”? (A) Ankle

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4. History: Which Revolutionary War figure led the Boston Tea Party? (D) Samuel Adams

5. Bible: What was Abel’s occupation, compared with Cain’s? (E) Farmer

6. Animal Kingdom: What is a group of frogs called? (F) Army

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My Stars ★★★★★ FOR WEEK OF DECEMBER 9, 2019

Aries (March 21 to April 19) There could be an unexpected change in plans for your upcoming holiday travels. But keep in mind that a little flexibility goes a long way in resolving any disappointments.

Taurus (April 20 to May 20) A new relationship might not be responding quite as quickly as you’d hoped. Could you be expecting too much too soon? Try to ease up and let things happen at their own pace.

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Born This Week: You have a way of using your quiet strength to persuade people to follow their better instincts and do the right thing.

MOMENTS IN TIME

• On Dec. 13, 1577, English seaman Francis Drake sets out from Plymouth, England, with five ships and 614 men on a mission to raid Spanish holdings on the Pacific coast of the New World. Three years later, Drake’s return to Plymouth marked the first circumnavigation of the earth by a British explorer.

• On Dec. 10, 1901, the first Nobel Prizes are awarded in Stockholm, Sweden, on the fiftieth anniversary of the death of Alfred Nobel, the inventor of dynamite and other explosives. It is believed that Nobel created the prizes out of moral regret over the increasingly lethal uses of his inventions in war.

• On Dec. 14, 1911, Norwegian Roald Amundsen becomes the first explorer to reach the South Pole, beating his British rival, Robert Falcon Scott, by more than a month. Amundsen used sleigh dogs, while Scott employed motor sledges, ponies and dogs.

• On Dec. 15, 1945, Gen. Douglas MacArthur, as Supreme Commander of Allied Powers in the Pacific, brings an end to Shintoism as Japan’s established religion. The Shinto system included the belief that the emperor, in this case Hirohito, was divine.

• On Dec. 11, 1961, the ferry car ferry USNS Core arrives in Saigon with the first U.S. helicopter unit, including 33 helicopters and 400 air and ground crewmen. Their assignment was to airlift South Vietnamese Army troops into combat.

• On Dec. 9, 1979, a commission of scientists declares that smallpox has been eradicated. The disease, which
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Moments In Time

Carries a 30 percent chance of death for those who contract it, is the only infectious disease that has officially been eradicated.

On Dec. 12, 1980, American oil tycoon Armand Hammer pays over $5 million at auction for an almost 500-year-old notebook containing writings and detailed drawings by artist Leonardo da Vinci, all relating to water and how it moves.

Strange But True

It was Lebanese poet Kahlil Gibran who made the following sage observation: “I have learnt silence from the talkative, tolerance from the intolerant, and kindness from the unkind; yet strange, I am ungrateful to these teachers.”

Those who study such things have determined that one out of every four alcoholic drinks consumed in the world has vodka in it.

“Waste” is the empty vessel. “Kara” is “empty hand.” “Oke” means “voice” and “te” means “hand;” therefore, “karate” is “empty voice,” and “karate” is “empty hand.”

Half of all Americans live within 50 miles of their birthplace.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

“He who buys what he does not need steals from himself.” -- Swedish proverb

Of Sanibel & Captiva... Become white.

High school seniors should keep track of deadlines for applying for college financial aid. Here are some tips from the Kentucky Higher Education Assistance Authority (KHEAA).

Check with the financial aid offices of the schools to which you’ve applied to determine if they require any forms other than the FAFSA.

Look for scholarships using a free online scholarship search.

Attend any college fairs and financial aid seminars offered at your high school or in your area. If a company charges a fee for helping with applications, remember that you can do that yourself for free.

If you decide to pay for help, make sure the company is reputable by checking with the state attorney general’s office or the Better Business Bureau in your area, as well as the area where the firm is located.

KHEAA is a public, non-profit agency established in 1966 to improve students’ access to college. It provides information about financial aid and financial literacy at no cost to students and parents.
across the country. Exhibitors will showcase their fine art, sculpture, pottery, jewelry, photography, metal works and mixed media. Food will be available for purchase from a variety of vendors via Little Joe’s Special Events.

New this year, the Rotary Club is partnering with iHeart Music to bring musical acts from every genre to the stage. The Rotary Club of Cape Coral is also offering the opportunity for local businesses to expose their brands via business booths. These booths were added at the 2019 event as an extension to the existing festival vendors. For more information about getting a business booth, visit www.capecoralfestival.com/marketplace.html.

Volunteers are needed, and sponsorship opportunities are still available. For more information about or to participate in the Cape Coral Arts & Music Festival, call Jim Perry at 699-7942 or visit www.capecoralfestival.com.

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Event Kicks Off Holiday Season

Come celebrate the start of the holiday season at Babcock Ranch’s third annual Tree Lighting Event in Founder’s Square on Saturday, December 7 from 6 to 9 p.m.

NBC-2 News anchor Lisa Spooner will emcee the festivities, including the Babcock Ranch tree lighting ceremony. The family-friendly evening will feature electric train rides, face painting, balloon artists and holiday performances by Babcock Neighborhood Schools kindergarten through third grade classes and the Alva School Band and Chorus.

Santa Claus will be making a stop at Babcock Ranch via horse-drawn sleigh and posing for photos. Festive food and drink specials will also be available.

Attendance and parking are free. Wristbands are required for all children riding the holiday train and participating in activities. Proceeds support Babcock Neighborhood School and The Alva School. Visit www.babcockranch.com/events for more information and to purchase a wristband in advance.

Southwest Florida’s unique eco-centric, solar-powered town is located at northeast of Fort Myers at 42850 Crescent Loop in Babcock Ranch. For more information about Babcock Ranch, call 877-709-6620, or visit www.babcockranch.com.

Top 10 Real Estate Sales

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subdivision</th>
<th>City</th>
<th>Year Built</th>
<th>Square Footage</th>
<th>Listing Price</th>
<th>Selling Price</th>
<th>Days On Market</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Four Mile Cove</td>
<td>Cape Coral</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>4,262</td>
<td>$999,999</td>
<td>$945,000</td>
<td>275</td>
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<tr>
<td>Del Sega</td>
<td>Sanibel</td>
<td>1950</td>
<td>535</td>
<td>$842,000</td>
<td>$842,000</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Winkler Subdivision</td>
<td>Fort Myers Beach</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>1,540</td>
<td>$795,000</td>
<td>$782,000</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oaks</td>
<td>Fort Myers</td>
<td>1988</td>
<td>4,801</td>
<td>$785,000</td>
<td>$715,000</td>
<td>929</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tidewater Island</td>
<td>Fort Myers</td>
<td>2001</td>
<td>3,299</td>
<td>$784,900</td>
<td>$765,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Belle Lago</td>
<td>Estero</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>4,356</td>
<td>$700,000</td>
<td>$620,000</td>
<td>368</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cape Coral</td>
<td>Cape Coral</td>
<td>1985</td>
<td>3,248</td>
<td>$675,000</td>
<td>$639,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Serengeti</td>
<td>Alva</td>
<td>2018</td>
<td>2,953</td>
<td>$649,900</td>
<td>$635,000</td>
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<td>Cape Coral</td>
<td>Cape Coral</td>
<td>2002</td>
<td>1,732</td>
<td>$620,000</td>
<td>$612,500</td>
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<tr>
<td>Savona</td>
<td>Cape Coral</td>
<td>2018</td>
<td>3,089</td>
<td>$618,500</td>
<td>$590,000</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Courtesy of Royal Shell Real Estate
“FOR THE SUN-KISSED & SUN-DESIROUS ALIKE, A VACATION ON A PLATE.”

The New York Times Magazine
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