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pays off for Riverside. P20**

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Slice, dice and spice. P12**

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The sculpture of John Bisbee. P24**

32963 Insider

Wes Davis goes to Washington

When last we left our story, the County Commission was sending intrepid commissioner Wesley Davis rushing up to Washington, DC, to introduce representatives of a mystery company interested in opening a facility in Indian River County to Florida Senators Bill Nelson and George LeMieux.

Well, that all sounds pretty important. But once there, it turns out our special emissary never got to set eyes on either Sen. Nelson or Sen. LeMieux. No, he got to "introduce" the company representatives to the "staffs" of the two Senators.

As anyone who has spent much time around Washington knows, self-important staffers in their 20s are generally whom you get to see – not Senators.

And who is this company, and what does it propose to produce in Indian River County? Well, we don't know much more than we did last week (though the number of jobs is put at 150).

But company officials have already made some visits to Indian River County, Davis said, and like the area because (a) they think there will be a pool of scientists and engineers available once the NASA program winds down; (b) Indian River County's designation as a Hub Zone makes federal dollars and tax breaks available; and (c) company officials like the quality of life here.



PHOTO: TOM MCCARTHY JR.

Vero polo thrives at Pointe West

BY MICHELLE GENZ
STAFF WRITER

It is a modern-day Seurat sprung from its canvas – a deep blue winter sky, a ten-acre expanse of manicured lawn, 60 families or more picnicking from tidy rows of cars lining either side on a Sunday afternoon.

Suddenly, horses and their uniformed riders gallop onto the field, jerseys numbered and emblazoned with team names known to all: Charley Replogle's Ocean Grill; Mich-elob – Peter Busch's team;

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Amid gamesmanship, advisory panel picks water consultant

BY LISA ZAHNER
STAFF WRITER

The joint advisory committee established by Vero Beach, Indian River Shores and Indian River County to study joining forces on a water utility chose a consultant last week -- just not the one that could have gotten the job done six weeks earlier and tens of thousands of dollars cheaper than the others.

And all because the Vero Beach representatives on the panel didn't like the idea of hiring a consulting firm that planned to employ as a subcontractor the man who probably knows more than anyone about the local water systems, retired county public works director Jim Davis.

The winner, GAI Consultants of Orlando, and the runnerup, Post Buckley Shuh and

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Elizabeth Brooker ready to take on 'old boys' over Vero utility

BY LISA ZAHNER
STAFF WRITER

The hired gun of former Vero Beach City Councilman Charlie Wilson in his bid to get a referendum on the fall ballot calling for the sale of the Vero power plant is a longtime local attorney who has taken on City Hall before.

Elizabeth Brooker was on

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PHOTO: TOM MCCARTHY JR.

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**Vero Beach Book Center:
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Utilities

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Jernigan (PBS&J) of Orlando, which came to the meeting with Davis, both are clearly large qualified firms which have performed many similar projects. But the manner of GAI's selection – and the confusion and gamesmanship that surrounded initial efforts to explore whether a collective solution among the city, the town and the country can hold down rising costs of providing drinking water, reuse water and sewer service to the community – got the process off to a less than auspicious start. Because of that, advisory board

Chairman Tom Cadden of Indian River Shores told Vero and the county to go back to their respective council and commission, and make sure they're committed to finding solutions -- not just putting on a performance for the ratepayers. "I think it's a real opportunity for this county to do something," Cadden later told members of Indian River Shores Town Council. "But I told (the other two entities) that when they make this presentation, to find out if they're serious about this or they're just going to go their own way because, if so, it's a sham." Vero has been showing signs of planning to retract into its borders,

and the county is under serious pressure by constituents to pick up the South barrier island residents currently served by the city system. Indian River Shores –which currently gets its water from the city but possibly is ready to switch to the county -- wants more autonomy over its utilities. For Vero Beach, Indian River Shores and Indian River County, just coming together on a consultant to study the issue proved a monumental task. County Commissioner Wesley Davis, who got the three entities to finally come to the table and embark upon a joint study, has publicly stat-

ed that the Vero Beach and county utility staffs have personnel more than capable of performing the study without any need to hire consultants, but everyone agreed this was not possible because the two entities do not trust each other. The goal of the study is to get a fact-based, objective opinion and a strong recommendation from a consulting firm that would step outside the politics of the situation, and look at it from a feasibility and financial perspective. In a six-hour meeting, the advisory committee ranked GAI Consultants first, with Post Buckley Shuh and Jernigan close behind. "Our approach is not real fancy, it's personal," said Jerry Hartman, vice president of GAI.

"We sit down with you and gather the data," Hartman said. "We won't say send us this but don't talk to us about it." A qualified firm with a full complement of resources and personnel to put behind the project, GAI team members emphasized that they would be "good listeners." They even told the advisory panel they would work to protect the "sacred cows" during the process of studying the options. "It makes no sense to us to give a recommendation that is 180 degrees from the local goals," one team member said during questioning. They also said they had run up against situations in dealing with groups that don't get along well trying to consolidate, specifically the city of Orlando and Orange County, but in the end they determined that combining efforts of the two would not work politically. The second-ranked firm preferred by a majority of the advisory board, PBS&J didn't get chosen, even though its selection could have saved the process thousands of dollars because a significant amount of work is already done. PBS&J has been consulting on these types of projects for 50 years. They have 4,000 employees nationwide -- 1,100 of those at their 22 Florida offices. Their credentials include work on 1,000 water and sewer consolidation studies and projects over the past 10 years involving assets worth more than \$1 billion. To prepare for its presentation last week, PBS&J assembled mapping data of the Indian River County, Indian River Shores and Vero Beach city systems so they would be ready to start working immediately if selected. The team described itself as "poised and ready" to guide the three entities through the process of delineating the pros and cons of various consolidation

options and also of keeping the status quo. It even had, as a subcontractor, retained Jim Davis. With Davis having worked for the City of Vero Beach, and then for the county as the county's first licensed engineer, first utilities director and first public works director, his knowledge could have proven of immeasurable worth in determining the future of utilities for county, Vero and Shores residents. "Jim worked to collect 90 percent of the data for us and he would be here in Vero to work on the project as a subcontractor," Walch said. "Half the battle sometimes is knowing who and where to go to for the information, and Jim knows exactly where to go and who has the information." "He lives in Vero and works from home so we wouldn't have to include expenses for sending someone to Vero to be on site." PBS&J was the only group that made a commitment to do the job in five months with a final report by June 30, a timeline that would meet the goal Indian River Shores had set for decision making. "We have extensive databases already," said PBS&J Vice President Marc Walch, who presented as the potential project manager. "It is very unlikely that we would need more information," he said. "We've created a GIS (geographic information system) database already representing all the water and reclaimed water systems." When asked afterwards, outside the interview hall, how much time and money having all that work already in hand would have potentially saved the taxpayers, Walch replied roughly four to six weeks' time and "tens of thousands of dollars."

But oddly, Vero Water and Sewer Utility Director Rob Bolton – after a five-minute break taken at the insistence of Vero City Attorney Charles Vitunac -- ranked PBS&J next to last. This low ranking made it close to mathematically impossible for PBS&J to come out on top. Cadden ranked PBS&J third. During a break at the beginning of the meeting, Cadden had told a member of the audience he was very impressed with GAI's credentials. The other three members of the joint panel in attendance all ranked PBS&J as their top pick, with Vero's public works director Monte Falls ranking GAI and PBS&J equally at number one. PBS&J candidly told the committee that consolidation might lead to saving money through the elimination of highly paid, redundant utilities staff. The next step prior to negotiating a price and terms with GAI is for the

members from the county and Vero to take their recommendation back to their various elected officials. This is all scheduled to happen on or before March 16, but at the conclusion of the Feb. 25 meeting, Chairman Tom Cadden said he wasn't sure the group should hire any consultant to do anything. Cadden basically told the county and city officials to go back and re-evaluate their goals and their priorities.

"I think it's important for us, too, as we approach our respective boards that we've comfortable with the scope that we committed to in October," Cadden said, referring to all three entities being on board with at least opening the door to some regional solution. "If you read the minutes of the (Vero) Finance Committee and you watch the last County Commission meeting, you'd think we were all in a catfight," Cadden said.

Cadden emphasized that no budget had yet been set for the project, but consultants as specialized as these do not work cheap. Initial estimates were that the study would cost about \$75,000, but that figure may be on the low side, considering that a multitude of financial, regulatory, environmental and legal issues need to be addressed. "These people could come in at \$50,000 or at as much as \$500,000," Cadden said.

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Brooker

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the legal team that successfully represented her father, an employee of the Vero utility, in an age-discrimination lawsuit against the city in 1996. When Wilson introduced her at a recent City Council meeting, it was clear she was no stranger to the faces in the room.

Brooker's inside knowledge of the city and its electric utility can't hurt in this particular assignment – to secure wording for a legal referendum, gather the required signatures to place it on the ballot, and work with Operation Clean Sweep, an organization formed to find candidates to challenge sitting Council members in November.

"I know the city has had issues at the power plant for years," Brooker said. "My partners and I are not part of the old boys' club, I don't belong to country clubs and we're not afraid of losing our friends."

A principal at Brooker & Rooney in the old courthouse building on 14th Avenue in downtown Vero, Brooker is known to be a tough attorney and one not afraid of ruffling feathers.

When she takes on a case, her op-



Charlie Wilson and attorney Beth Brooker go over the necessary paperwork to start a political committee.

Photo: Tom McCarthy Jr.

ponent inevitably has more staff, more resources and more money to spend, so representing a group of citizens fighting City Hall to force the sale of the electric utility doesn't faze her at all.

"You're going to find that as a lawyer representing a client you're sub-

ject to personal attacks from others in the community disparaging your reputation, but that's nothing new," she said. "By taking on a client like Operation Clean Sweep, I'm putting the firm out there."

In the 23 years since she was admitted to the Florida Bar, Brooker has taken on city and county governments, school boards, the Indian River County Sheriff's Office, unions, healthcare providers, major corporations, big insurance companies including Allstate Insurance, and firms such as Ira Hatch's Coastal Title and Escrow.

She's also tried cases in family court involving messy divorces, custody battles and controversial adoption issues.

In the past two years, she's won two settlements from Wal-Mart for clients suing for negligence.

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Brooker

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On March 15, Brooker will face off against Embassy Suites in a Seminole County courtroom, representing an Indian River County woman injured at her son's wedding reception when the hotel dance floor collapsed.

"We take on difficult cases and we're not afraid of the extra work," she said. "Our firm has a reputation for taking on the odd and unusual types of cases. I enjoy unusual legal issues."

She said the partners at Brooker & Rooney routinely handle sticky malpractice and personal injury suits and fair labor practice and administrative disputes.

For his part, Wilson said he hired her because she knows the players and is eminently qualified. Indeed, Brooker has impressed from a young age.

"I've lived here since 1977 and consider myself from Vero," Brooker said.

Impatient with life in high school, Brooker passed her GED at age 15 and enrolled in classes at then-Indian River Community College.

She earned her degree in criminal justice in 1984 from Florida Southern College and went on to graduate with her juris doctorate degree from Mercer University School of Law in 1987.

Brooker has lectured on litigation and legal issues for organizations. Known as the champion of the underdog, she received the Pro Bono Attorney of the Year Award in 2002 from the 19th Judicial Circuit.

Admittedly part tomboy and all country girl, Brooker holds a U.S. Coast Guard Captain's license and is an lover of sports -- on and off the water.

Her passions are fishing, diving, travel and classic cars.

Public records show that Brooker worked on a legal team that sued the City of Vero Beach in 1996 over employment discrimination in a case involving her father, Craig Stewart.

A former General Electric employee who came to the city with decades of experience, Stewart worked as supervisor of maintenance at the Vero power plant for nearly 10 years and, as pleadings reveal, claimed he was the victim of age discrimination which started when he was 54 years old.

The case was settled in his favor, Brooker said.

With Wilson, Brooker said her most important job will be to comply with all the legal requirements for getting a referendum on the ballot and then make sure it sticks.

"On the legal side, my goal at this time for Operation Clean Sweep is to

make sure all the legalities of the referendum are sufficient, that the proposed charter amendment would be valid," Brooker said.

Brooker said she took on the case because this issue hit her in her heart, where she believes in the power of people to combat injustice, whether it exists in the halls of government or of industry.

"To represent a person or group of people against a big government entity or a corporation and to prevail is very rewarding, to let the peoples' voices be heard," she said.

"They need to start listening to the people," she said of Vero's leaders. "If scrutiny like this comes up, they might listen to the people earlier."

After news started getting around that Brooker was representing Operation Clean Sweep, she said she started getting anonymous information via email.

Tips from the public and from employees are common in cases dealing with government or a large corporation with a culture of being tight-lipped with information, she said.

Sure of her abilities, Wilson has asked her to become the face of the referendum going forward while he focuses on his run for county commission.

Former City Council applicant Tracy Carroll, who tried for Wilson's vacated seat, has agreed to serve on the board of Operation Clean Sweep and Wilson is looking for more people for the all-volunteer effort.

Local accountant and critic of the electric system Glenn Heran has also signed on as a volunteer with Operation Clean Sweep.

Wilson said Operation Clean Sweep will launch a media campaign with mailers, radio, print and outdoor advertising.

He said the organization will need to raise about \$5,000 to communicate its message, plus a small amount of money to pay for the processing of the petitions by the Supervisor of Elections' office.

Brooker is accepting donations for Operation Clean Sweep through her office.

Wilson urged those opposing the referendum to form their own organization so both sides of the issue will be heard.

"This referendum will give everyone the chance to debate and get both sides of the argument out," Wilson said.

"In 1976, both sides got all the information out, the pros and the cons, and it still passed 2 to 1."

Petitions are expected to be available in March.

At least 1,060 valid signatures from registered voters who currently reside in the City of Vero Beach are needed to put the referendum on the ballot.

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Current electric utility battle was previewed in 1976

BY LISA ZAHNER
STAFF WRITER

Whether or not to sell the City of Vero Beach electric system has been a 35-year battle.

What some may not know is that the sale of the system to Florida Power & light actually took place in the fall of 1976, when voters approved a referendum ushering in the change. Ultimately, city employees filed a lawsuit and federal regulators nixed the deal, but the twists and turns of

that sale struck some familiar turf. Former Mayor David Gregg and former City Manager John Little now depict the 1976 sale of the electric system as a fairly simple endeavor.

But according to reports of the times, it succeeded only by the overwhelming will of the people to take the running of an electric utility out of the hands of the city and give it to FP&L.

"All you need to do is use a little common sense and not waste your time talking to people other than FP&L, they just can't compete," Little

told city officials on Feb. 16 about their current efforts to engage various power providers about a potential sale. "That's common sense, gentlemen, it's not rocket science."

In 1976, the ratepayers are angry that they're paying "considerably more" than FP&L customers for electricity — about 24 percent more.

The City of Vero Beach produced all of its own power at the time, and though the system was much improved over the previous decade, there were still frequent outages.

Little found a kindred soul in Mayor David Gregg -- who was up for re-election and didn't mind taking on selling the electric utility as a campaign issue. The duo teamed up, negotiating a sale of the system to FP&L for \$42.6 million. A referendum was then placed on the September ballot for the voters to bless the sale and make it official.

But not everyone was happy that Little and Gregg had sold the electric system to FP&L, even if it would ultimately mean lower rates and being part of a large, investor-owned utility that was on the cutting edge of technology.

A camp formed to try to stop the sale, made up largely of city employees.

A political committee called "Employees and Citizens Against the Electrical Sale" began running full-page ads espousing all the reasons why the city needed to keep ownership and control of its own power destiny. The people trying to protect their jobs paired with people in town who were interested in protecting the transfers into the general fund from the electric utility.

"Since 1967, for example, the contribution to the City's general fund from the electric system has increased from \$284,000 to \$612,000 in 1975, and could be expected to increase in future years as it has in the past," the opposition ad stated. "The only reasonable conclusion is that aside from any other aspects of the sale, the city's general fund will be much worse off."

But people like Dr. Eugene Lyons saw the potential of the electric utility as a huge money maker for the city.

On Sept. 3, the superintendent of the Vero plant, Fred Gossett, joined with Lyons and retired utility attorney John Dawson and filed suit to stop the sale.

Dawson said at the time that if the city just waited and studied the issue some more, "it would be close -- if not equal -- to FP&L rates within three years."

Despite the fact that voters approved the sale by a 2 to 1 margin (the two barrier island precincts backed it by a 4 to 1 margin), certain elements in the community kept fighting the decision.

"Although the City Council was unanimous in its support for the sale, minority opposition stuck to its guns," stated a December 1976 year-end recap story. "The Florida Municipal Utilities Association requested a U.S. Justice Department investigation of FP&L to determine if the large utilities company was in violation of anti-trust laws."

After nearly a year of legal wrangling, the sale of the Vero electric utility ultimately collapsed under Florida Energy Regulatory Commission' demands that FP&L open up access to its cheaper power.



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PEOPLE

Chef Michele Hennessey from the River Grille begins the process of plating her dish for 160 diners at Vero's Top Chef Challenge.



People

Polo in Vero: Thriving as a family pasttime

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Rocking K, for the Kahle family; and Shamrock, John Walsh's team.

After two decades in Vero Beach, polo has become, if not plebian, a lot more accessible to players and spectators alike, thanks to a decidedly unstuffy crowd of old Vero friends working hard to ensure its survival.

Fears that the crown is slipping from the Sport of Kings have not materialized, though polo, long considered the domain of only the most affluent, has evolved into a family pastime here.

Drawing a growing crowd of tailgating spectators lining up their lawn chairs and blankets, it has maintained its base of participants, even while the recession has prompted some players to hang up their mallets in larger polo communities like Wellington.

Thanks to a core group of a dozen well-known Vero families, who combine sense of community with addic-



George, Devon and Dolph Kahle head off of the field after playing in The Children's Cup to benefit Childcare Resources and the Homeless Family Center. Photos: Tom McCarthy Jr.

every Sunday at 2 – barring inclement weather.

There, during a season that starts

in January and runs through Easter, the English-accented commentary of Dawn Garvey Redman often includes this assurance of action: After bullfighting and Formula One racing, polo, she claims, is the third most dangerous sport.

"It is not for the faint of heart," says George Kahle, the senior statesman of Vero polo, pointing to various bones he has broken "here, and here, and here."

"The Kahles have made a huge commitment to family polo," says John Walsh, whose national celebrity as host of "America's Most Wanted" falls away on the Vero field, where he becomes just one more polo fanatic. "They've done a tremendous job."

"George and Sandy Kahle are part of a great group of people," says Peter Busch, a member of the beer-brewing dynasty and father of Tiffany Busch, an up-and-coming player on the national scene. "That's been one of the driving forces to keep me out there – these are all my friends. The other is the all the children. I truly hope this club stays

with it."

Kahle is so blinded by the love of the sport that he is able to watch unflinchingly as not only his son Dolf plays, but also his 15-year-old grandson, Devon.

On this particular afternoon, the striking blond boy who has suddenly shot up and filled out into a serious presence on his thoroughbred horse was charging down the field with the ball in play and suddenly came off his horse, falling on to the field. He promptly got back in the saddle, and with a deft turn or two and a well-guided swipe of the mallet, proceeded to score a goal seconds after his mishap. A cheer rose up from the crowd.

Devon Kahle lives on a curving barrier island street dripping with live oaks and leading to the ocean, where his great-great grandmother, Grace Hopwood, kept a family beach house. (Her husband – Devon's great-great grandfather – and Pointe West developer Tom Jones's grandfather were partners in Calgon, the Pittsburgh-based water softener and bath products company.) Devon's great-grandfather is Dan Richardson, beloved Vero philanthropist and former citrus man.

In a sense, Vero's history in the dual rural pursuits of ranching and groves may be at the root of its unfussy embrace of polo today. Indeed, the land where the polo is played today was once planted in citrus trees; cattle still graze in adjacent pastures.

Devon remembers "hanging on to my dad's belt loops" when he first sat on his father's saddle as a four-year-old boy.

Devon's best friend on the field is Hayden Walsh, John's son. Father and son have played polo internationally, including in Morocco and Ireland. A love of horses follows both of Hayden's blood lines; while he was taking part in a practice the weekend before, Hayden's mom, Reve, was out leading a fox-hunt on the other side of the state. "Fox-hunting is more observational," the 15-year-old St. Edward's ninth-grader says. "Polo is more interactive."

That, of course, is gross understatement. If leaping over fences and ditches on horseback is "observational," imagine a whole herd racing down a field together, stopping almost simultaneously, doing a U-ey, and hauling tail back the other way. Imagine everybody hanging on with just the thighs – nothing opposable or prehensile there -- and deliberately smashing into other riders. That's called the "bump."

With one hand holding the reins, the other wields a goliath-sized bamboo-and-hardwood mallet. And they don't



John Walsh heads onto the field for a friendly game at The Polo Grounds at Pointe West.

tion to the sport, polo here has thrived. An ever-evolving league has managed to endure the tough economic times by volunteering to do chores it formerly hired out, and has ensured continued interest by encouraging younger players.

Polo was ushered into Vero Beach in the late 1980s by no less than nobility: Charles, Prince of Wales. With great fanfare and an international press entourage, Prince Charles came to play at the invitation of avid polo fans Galen Weston and Geoffrey Kent, founders of Windsor, the north-island community as elegant as the sport it championed.

From its roots at Windsor, Vero Beach polo trotted west around 2000,

to the similarly New Urbanist if considerably more affordable neighborhood of Pointe West, a mile or so beyond the city's mall on state road 60.

Today, public matches are played on the field at The Polo Grounds, a development adjacent to and south of Pointe West, with larger homes surrounding what doubles – once the divots are stomped -- as a well-groomed park, set off by the crisp white fences of a handsome equestrian center and boarding stable at its western edge.

With several families now saddling up their third generation for play, a sense of small-town familiarity overlays the Old World tradition pervading the field where play takes place

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CONTINUED ON PAGE 17

People

Vero's Top Chef Challenge...slice, dice & spice!

BY MARY SCHENKEL
COLUMNIST

The competition was fierce at Vero's Top Chef Challenge event to benefit the Homeless Family Center, as only one could take home the coveted title of Vero's 2010 Top Chef.

The five contenders -- Chef Andrew Keller from the Club at Pointe West, Chef Michele Hennessey of River Grille, Chef Neal Williams from the Lakes at Pointe West, Chef Ray Mumford from Oriente Restaurant at Costa d'Este and Chef Nick Bradbury from Quail Valley River Club -- had already bested seven other chefs at the remarkable Top Chef Qualifier event in January, so it was now down to the best of the best.

After winning in the qualifier, each chef submitted one seafood dish and one meat entree choice to Chef Joe Faria, Executive Chef at Quail Valley and the event's chef coordinator, who whittled the list down to a balanced menu of five entrees.



(back) Lynne Zande, Carmela Kelly, Susan Zimmer, Betsy Hanley and Julie Poter
(front) Patti Mitchell, Kathi Fusco and Daphne Hagan

Photos: Tom McCarthy Jr.

"A lot of them put a new twist on a classic dish," explained Faria, who admitted he was finding it difficult not to be biased towards his Sous Chef

Nick Bradbury, who was competing for Quail Valley. But when I asked who he felt would come out on top, he just smiled and said, "They're all very talented and have worked very hard to get where they are."

The heavy prep work had all been



Chef Nick Bradbury of Quail Valley constructs his dish of beef tenderloin, tri-layered scalloped potatoes, fried green beans and eggplant skewered with an infused bamboo stick and drizzled with Asian sauces.

touches on their creations. "For each dish, they have 20 minutes to plate and serve 160 dinners; that's seven plates a minute," explained Faria.



Lee and Suzanne Bertman, Kerstin Murphy, Liz Mayo, and Adam and Suzanne Bolinger

done in each individual chef's kitchen and was then transported to the Quail Valley River Club event venue for the final presentation. As we chatted during the cocktail hour, Faria said, "Right now there are about 20 of them in the kitchen. At times like this, I stay out of the way and spend more time in the dining room."

The whole process had to be carefully choreographed and the kitchen became a hub of organized chaos as chefs and their assistants put the final

Some loyal fans in the sold-out crowd were there to cheer on their favorite club or restaurant chefs, and had virtually cast their votes even before tasting all of the selections, but the majority were quite happy to wait and let their palates make the decision.

Karen Mechling from The Club at Pointe West was excited about Chef Andrew Keller, who would be the first one to present.

"I know he's doing salmon; he did some trial runs at the club and it went

People

over exceptionally well," Mechling said.

As the guests sat down to partake of the culinary delights, they looked forward with enthusiasm to devouring every tasty morsel. The innovative creations turned out to be epicurean perfection; the chefs all truly outdid themselves. And each entree was accompanied by a different wine, specifically chosen by the chef to compliment the dish.

Chef Andrew Keller, from the Club at Pointe West, was the first presenter. His cracked peppercorn studded roulade of Scottish salmon with baby spinach, wild mushrooms and teeny pea-sized cucumber balls, turned several salmon haters into salmon lovers.

Chef Michele Hennessey of the River Grille, and the only woman contender, served up a huge butterflied prawn stuffed with pine nuts and tangy goat cheese that was set atop a yummy risotto cake, paired with a savory salad.

Chef Neal Williams, from the Lakes at Pointe West, went with an ultra rich and delicious colossal lump crabmeat crème brûlée, served alongside little mounds of rosemary duchess potatoes and asparagus spears, topped with tarragon cream.

Chef Ray Mumford from Oriente Restaurant at Costa d'Este impressed the crowd with a unique presentation of deconstructed Coq au Vin, which even included little individual jars of onion, fig and lardon jam. Later in the evening my foodie friend Liz Mayo told us lardon was bacon fat; which of course just added to the richness of the dish.

The final presenter was Chef Nick Bradbury of Quail Valley River Club who wowed guests with his spectacularly constructed seared tenderloin of beef towers. The beef, tri-layered scalloped potatoes, fried green beans and eggplant had been skewered with an infused bamboo stick and drizzled with Asian sauces.

When I asked, author Debbie Macomber summarized her thoughts on the gastronomic creations in just one word, "Wow!"

With his usual flair, Commissioner Wesley Davis got some spirited bidding going on a number of live auction items after dinner, including a combination of hand-selected wines, various dining, entertainment, travel and sports packages, and a custom dinner for six by Chef Keller.

Guests each submitted one vote for their favorite entree into bright, shiny Cuisinart pots and pans from the Gifted Cook, which were whisked away for the final count. The votes tallied by a panel of five expert judges, Dr. Harold Cordner, Anne Devanney, Michael Fahy, Elizabeth Kennedy and Kitty Wag-

ner, accounted for 60% of the score, and were combined with 40% from guests.

While we waited for the results, Chef Faria displayed his own singular style with a rich chocolate and hazelnut torte for dessert, served with a delicious bright pink scoop that had everyone stumped; I'm pretty sure nobody guessed that it was beet ice cream.

Quail Valley COO Kevin Given had high praise for Chef Faria and for Julia Keenan, the center's executive director.

"She has greatly enhanced the repu-

tation and exposure of the Homeless Family Center in the community. And the committee is one of the best we've worked with," Given said.

Event co-chairs were Denise Finizio, Julia Keenan and Dan Kross; the presenting sponsor was George E. Warren Corporation.

The highly anticipated final moment came when Chef Faria, with a particularly big grin on his face, announced that Chef Ray Mumford of Costa d'Este had come in second, and that Vero's 2010 Top Chef was his own Sous Chef Nick Bradbury.

And, while we all went home satiated and satisfied, it was also with the thought that the money raised at the event will help the Homeless Family Center to provide programs and services for those in the community who are less fortunate.

According to Keenan, homeless numbers in our area are on the rise. Fundraisers and contributions help the Center to provide shelter as well as the tools that will empower individuals to find jobs and housing and to become contributing members of the community.



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People

‘Angels’ help Boys & Girls Clubs take flight



Allison Garrett with Wheatie and Bob Gibb

Photos: Tom McCarthy Jr.



John Spooner, Jean Oglethorpe and Doris Limbeck

BY BARBARA YORESH
CORRESPONDENT

The youngsters of the Boys & Girls Clubs of Indian River County were touched by angels thanks to the 350 club officials, board members, benefactors and guests who attended the “Angels Help Our Kids Take Flight,”

ninth annual gala fundraiser.

The event was most appropriately held in the Sun Aviation Hangar in Vero Beach, which was provided gratis, courtesy of Sun Aviation, Inc.

Board Chairman Jay McNamara noted that endeavors on behalf of children are rewarding and pay big dividends.



Jay McNamara and Wanda Lincoln



Monica and Shay Rowe

“It’s got a long-term pay-off when you invest in kids. It has a ripple effect.”

James Byrd, teen director of the Sebastian club, echoed the sentiment.

“Everything we do is about the kids. And when you invest in a child today, you’re investing in another child’s tomorrow,” Byrd said.

From its modest beginnings in 2000 in two rented classrooms at Thompson Elementary School in Vero Beach, the Boys & Girls Clubs of Indian River County has grown to locations in Vero Beach, Sebastian and Fellsmere serving more than 2,000 youngsters ages 6-18. More than \$6 million of an \$8 million capital campaign goal has been raised and by the end of 2010 there will be new clubhouses in Vero Beach and Fellsmere.

According to McNamara, one in nine children in Indian River County is a Boys & Girls Club member.

Chaired by Dr. Susan Blair Fries, co-chaired by Diane Archer and an event committee, the “Angels Help Our Kids Take Flight” gala provides summer

camp scholarships for club kids. Last year, more than 200 children received scholarships through \$70,000 contributed by 100 individuals and organizations.

“I’m very excited. When you see the kids involved it’s so touching. They are learning real and useful skills. It’s a very fulfilling cause,” Fries said.

Committeewoman Wanda Lincoln praised the support received by the club.

The event committee and volunteers transformed a voluminous aircraft hangar into a festive setting, replete with pale blue and white balloons and exquisite table settings that echoed the blue and white color theme.

Guests entering the hangar were met and warmly greeted by young club members. Clearly, the youngsters were pleased to showcase their clubs’ core programs.

Laurie Barrows of Windsor was impressed with the children’s own dedication to volunteerism as well as that of the benefactors.

Angel of the Year award-winner and board member Roger Lynch was feted for his successful fundraising efforts. “The kids are the beneficiaries and they should have a better shot at making it in the world,” Lynch said.

People

Ties that bind: Darby Gibbons remembered

BY MARY SCHENKEL
COLUMNIST

The late Darby Gibbons, educator and friend to thousands of students and their families, was remembered at a special Tie-Bration Celebration held last Thursday evening at Northern Trust Bank.

Gibbons worked as an English teacher, college counselor and Academic Dean at Saint Edward’s School, and passed away after a long battle with cancer in January, 2009. Gibbons had also served for many years on the board of Dollars for Scholars, and the event was a fundraiser to benefit a perpetual Morris A. “Darby” Gibbons Memorial Scholarship that was established in his honor.

Gibbons was well known for his extraordinary collection of ties -- the wilder the better according to his wife Patti -- and guests had been encouraged to wear some of their favorite Darby-like ties.

“My mother taught school for 40 years at Saint Helen’s and people would give her earrings; they gave Darby ties,” said Patti. “She’s wearing a Grinch tie,” Patti said of her mother Ollie Willmot. “They had a very special relationship since they were both teachers.”

Both Patti and Darby Gibbons grew up in Vero Beach and met on a blind date in 1966. “We went to Ocean Grill; a very special place for us. We went there for all special occasions, including my birthday right before he died.”

Although “pinned” in college, she eventually moved to Atlanta and he to teach at a boarding school in Massachusetts. “We didn’t see each other for seven years. We both came back for Christmas in 1976 and got married in July, 1977.” They lived in Massachu-



Bruce Wachter, Jon Sternbeg and Michael Mersky

Photos: Tom McCarthy Jr.



Karen VanDeVoorde, Carol Fischman and Mary Johnston

setts until returning to Vero Beach in the mid 1980s, when he began teaching at St. Edward’s.

Sandy Kahle, who had intertwined her soft pink and grey hued tie with matching multi-colored pearls, said that Darby had been her children’s English teacher. “He was a wonderful, wonderful teacher and had such a big heart for the students. He really drew

people to him,” she said.

Nancy Luther, wearing a Mickey Mouse tie that was from Darby’s collection, said she and fellow classmate Anne Replogle graduated from Vero Beach High School a year after Darby did. “He was absolutely brilliant and the most compassionate person I’ve ever known. He scored 1600 on his SATs; a perfect score. He could have

done anything, and he chose education. He gave of himself all the time; he was the most selfless person I’ve ever known.”

Of her festive jacket Alma Lee Loy said, “I don’t have a tie, but this is my Darby jacket because it’s so bright and colorful.”

Sporting a Gator tie, David Kanarek remembered Darby as his advisor. “He played an integral role in advising me towards school.” Kanarek ultimately received his Masters in Urban Planning from the University of Florida. His mother Carol Kanarek was wearing a Save the Children tie covered with children’s happy faces.

Michele Sternberg had borrowed a tie she gave to her husband that was adorned with photos of their three children. “Darby and I worked together for 16 years. He was my boss, mentor and best friend at St. Eds’.”

During a brief presentation, Dollars for Scholars board member Gaye Ludwig reiterated the theme of the event, celebrating “the things that tie us together” and added, “We all have a special place for Darby in our hearts.”

Sam Block, another long-time board member, said his ties with Darby went back to their childhood together in Vero Beach. “He went away to teach school, but came back to Vero Beach with a passion. He had great expectations for his students and tried to get them to think; to use their intellect.”

“We are saluting that passion so that we can help worthy students with a need who wouldn’t otherwise be able to pursue their own passions.”

Dollars for Scholars offers scholarship opportunities to students with financial need who demonstrate academic ability to succeed in pursuing a post-secondary education.

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People

McKee dino event raises money for exhibits



Doug Mayhew of Pure Magic Ice Cream uses liquid nitrogen to freeze a bowl of ice cream as children and parents watch at McKee Botanical Gardens. Photos: Tom McCarthy Jr.

BY MARY SCHENKEL
COLUMNIST

There was a nip in the air, but fortunately the heavy rains that deluged the area earlier in the day had come to a halt, giving way to a full moon that shined down on Expedition McKee.

Nobody enjoys dinosaurs more than children, so with the return of the McKee Dinosaur Invasion, organizers opted for a family friendly event in place of their customary, and considerably more formal, Orchid Ball.

To fund the dinosaur exhibit, McKee purchased real ostrich eggs, which



Carli Israel, 7, picks out a bead to add to her shark-tooth necklace at McKee Botanical Gardens.

were sold to individual sponsors. A calligrapher decorated the eggs with sayings, memorials, etc. (see page 22)

"Whatever each sponsor wanted was put on their egg," explained board member Susan Schuyler Smith, who chose the saying, "One generation plants the trees; another gets the shade" for her egg.

The ostrich eggs are currently displayed as a temporary "Nest Egg" exhibit nestled in the center of the famous mahogany table in the Hall of Giants. At the end of the dinosaur exhibit, the eggs will be given to the sponsors to commemorate their support.

Another group of exquisite "dinosaur eggs" were on display in the Garden Cafe and are available for sale. Intricate scenes of McKee, and beautifully detailed animals were hand-painted onto the ostrich eggs by local artists Gail Cohen, Emily Tremml, Rick Kelly, Lionel Ogilvie, Janveer Miller and Gail Cohen.

Artist Rick Kelly painted four scenes of McKee on his egg, and merged them all together for a lovely panoramic effect.

"It was a lot of fun, but it was difficult to hold it and paint and then try to turn it and put it down without putting my fingers into the wet paint. The best part is the way the paint went into the texture of the shell."

Children were the honored guests at the event, and there was plenty to keep them busy. Each child was given a Children's Guide, made possible by a grant from Quail Valley Charities, Inc.

They also had a scavenger hunt sheet, dinosaur trivia questions and miniature flashlights and happily went off on trails around the Garden to search for the various items. In addition to the dinosaurs, a lucky few were

able to view real owls perched up in the trees.

Carly Conboy had invited a group of her friends from St. Edward's School, to celebrate her 12th birthday. "I thought it would be a cool idea," said Carly. "It's been fun being with all my friends, walking around and seeing all the dinosaurs. It's a good experience we can all share."

Once back at the Education Building, kids could have their faces painted, get dinosaur tattoos, make their own shark tooth necklaces or chow down with their parents on the Dino Bone-yard Buffet, catered by Bono's. Dinner had a delightfully Jurassic slant, with Volcanic Extinction Coconut Shrimp, T-Rex Teriyaki Beef Skewers, Mesozoic Macaroni and Cheese, Crustaceous Chicken Tenders and Fossil Franks.

And dessert was Ice Age fascinating and fabulous, according all accounts. Liquid nitrogen was stirred into liquid ice cream ingredients and in about a minute, with a puff of icy mist, became smooth and creamy Pure Magic Ice Cream.

The verdict was "Awesome," according to Heidi Hartline, whose daughter Hope was shivering with the cold, but thoroughly enjoying her dish of strawberry ice cream.

McKee Executive Director Christine Hobart was busy managing the popcorn machine, getting things ready for the after dinner movie showing of, A Night at the Museum.

"It's the first time we've ever had a family friendly event as a major fundraiser. It's fun to see the kids in the garden, leading their parents and grandparents around. This is what the garden is about. We're here for the entire community and it's wonderful to see families enjoying it together."

Vero Polo

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11

Rocking K, for the Kahle family; and Shamrock, John Walsh's team.

After two decades in Vero Beach, polo has become, if not plebian, a lot more accessible to players and spectators alike, thanks to a decidedly unstuffy crowd of old Vero friends working hard to ensure its survival.

Fears that the crown is slipping from the Sport of Kings have not materialized, though polo, long considered the domain of only the most affluent, has evolved into a family pastime here.

Drawing a growing crowd of tailgating spectators lining up their lawn chairs and blankets, it has maintained its base of participants, even while the recession has prompted some players to hang up their mallets in larger polo communities like Wellington.

Thanks to a core group of a dozen well-known Vero families, who combine sense of community with addiction to the sport, polo here has thrived. An ever-evolving league has managed to endure the tough economic times by volunteering to do chores it formerly hired out, and has ensured continued interest by encouraging younger players.

Polo was ushered into Vero Beach in the late 1980s by no less than nobility: Charles, Prince of Wales. With great fanfare and an international press entourage, Prince Charles came to play at the invitation of avid polo fans Galen Weston and Geoffrey Kent, founders of Windsor, the north-island community as elegant as the sport it championed.

From its roots at Windsor, Vero Beach polo trotted west around 2000, to the similarly New Urbanist if considerably more affordable neighborhood of Pointe West, a mile or so beyond the city's mall on state road 60.

Today, public matches are played on the field at The Polo Grounds, a



Spectators watch the final of four chukkers in The Children's Cup at The Polo Grounds at Pointe West.

development adjacent to and south of Pointe West, with larger homes surrounding what doubles -- once the divots are stomped -- as a well-groomed park, set off by the crisp white fences of a handsome equestrian center and boarding stable at its western edge.

With several families now saddling up their third generation for play, a sense of small-town familiarity overlays the Old World tradition pervading the field where play takes place every Sunday at 2 -- barring inclement weather.

There, during a season that starts in January and runs through Easter, the English-accented commentary of Dawn Garvey Redman often includes this assurance of action: After bullfighting and Formula One racing, polo, she claims, is the third most dangerous sport.

"It is not for the faint of heart," says George Kahle, the senior statesman of Vero polo, pointing to various bones he has broken "here, and here, and here."

"The Kahles have made a huge commitment to family polo," says John Walsh, whose national celebrity as host of "America's Most Wanted" falls away on the Vero field, where he becomes just one more polo fanatic. "They've done a tremendous job."

"George and Sandy Kahle are part of a great group of people," says Peter Busch, a member of the beer-brewing dynasty and father of Tiffany Busch, an

up-and-coming player on the national scene. "That's been one of the driving forces to keep me out there -- these are all my friends. The other is the all the children. I truly hope this club stays with it."

Kahle is so blinded by the love of the sport that he is able to watch unflinchingly as not only his son Dolf plays, but also his 15-year-old grandson, Devon.

On this particular afternoon, the striking blond boy who has suddenly shot up and filled out into a serious presence on his thoroughbred horse was charging down the field with the

ball in play and suddenly came off his horse, falling on to the field. He promptly got back in the saddle, and with a deft turn or two and a well-guided swipe of the mallet, proceeded to score a goal seconds after his mishap. A cheer rose up from the crowd.

Devon Kahle lives on a curving barrier island street dripping with live oaks and leading to the ocean, where his great-great grandmother, Grace Hopwood, kept a family beach house. (Her husband -- Devon's great-great

CONTINUED ON PAGE 18

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People

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 17

Rocking K, for the Kahle family; and Shamrock, John Walsh's team.

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Devon Kahle lives on a curving barrier island street dripping with live oaks and leading to the ocean, where his great-great grandmother, Grace Hopwood, kept a family beach house. (Her husband — Devon's great-great grandfather — and Pointe West developer Tom Jones's grandfather were partners in Calgon, the Pittsburgh-based water softener and bath products company.) Devon's great-grandfather is Dan Richardson, beloved Vero philanthropist and former citrus man.

In a sense, Vero's history in the dual rural pursuits of ranching and groves may be at the root of its unfussy embrace of polo today. Indeed, the land where the polo is played today was once planted in citrus trees; cattle still graze in adjacent pastures.

Devon remembers "hanging on to my dad's belt loops" when he first sat on his father's saddle as a four-year-

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Arts & Theatre



A painted Ostrich egg by Lionel Ogilvie entitled "McKee in the Round"

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Arts/Theatre

The big risk: 42nd Street pays off for Riverside

BY MICHELLE GENZ
STAFF WRITER

With an unprecedented five-week scheduled run that ends this weekend, 42nd Street has become by far and away the largest-selling show in Riverside's 37-year history.

Kill the lights on a faltering economy. In a classic case of "The show must go on!" Riverside Theatre has defied the odds and triumphantly produced a show that some say will mark a turning point in the caliber of productions it can financially afford to mount.

Launching an innovative means of fund-raising that engaged donors in the very process of production, Allen Cornell, artistic director, tapped into a spirited group of supporters that seemingly can't wait to do the same thing next year.

"The extraordinary success of 42nd Street will propel our theater into a higher level of theater production, involving more large musicals, longer runs and wider audience appeal," said Richard Starke, longtime Riverside supporter, in whose honor the main stage was named. "It is a win/win for the theater and for the community."

Just three weeks into the five-week run, the show had been seen by 19,000 people. Last year's La Cage aux Folles, the previous record-holder that inspired staff to produce the block-busting "42nd Street" this season, sold 15,000 seats by the end of its four-week run.

Those numbers have been dwarfed by 42nd Street. By the end of the third weekend, individual ticket sales had already doubled the combined total of Riverside's three productions



(Back) Lorne Waxlax, Michael Pierce, Kathie Pierce, David Bardes, Dick Stark, Gail Williams, Bill Scully, Marlynn Scully, (Front) Heidi Waxlax, Bobbie Olsen, Cynthia Bardes, Barbara Stark, Ann Jones
Photo: Tom McCarthy Jr..

staged this season.

Even before the curtain rose on opening night, the box office reported 6,000 advance tickets sold, another record.

Those numbers are likely to be wildly encouraging to a special group of fans: the so-called "patron producers" who gave targeted donations to offset the expensive production. In exchange, the donors got a flyspace view of the entire staging process, from the thrill of group auditions at a Chelsea audition space last fall, to the first designer's run-through in sweat pants and pony tails as opening night neared.

Last October, setting in motion his

own Shakespearean play-within-the-play not unlike the premise of 42nd St., Cornell held a sort of casting call of donors who would in turn watch the kneading and prodding of the play take place over the next four months.

Knowing the show would be the most priciest the producing theater had ever mounted (though it casts its shows in New York, Riverside creates its own sets, costumes, and lighting, and rehearses the show here in Vero), Cornell asked a handful of Riverside's supporters and board members, including Judy Schneebeck, Dhuanne Tansille and Bobbie Olsen if they would help raise funds specifically for this one production. He asked them

to sign on 10 patron producers.

Within a month, the exuberant group had found him not ten – but 16. Their combined \$160,000 was a substantial chunk of the final tally it took to produce the show: \$500,000.

"It was a calculated leap off a cliff," says marketing director Oscar Sales. With the town still in the clutches of an economic downturn, Sales and others worried that seeing live theater would be a last priority for residents. But his publicity effort, along with a near-viral word-of-mouth – not to mention the contagion of an endlessly engaging cast -- had shows packed through last weekend. At press time, ticket availability for this last week-

Arts/Theatre

By the end of the third weekend, individual ticket sales had already doubled the combined total of Riverside's three productions staged this season.

end of performances could not be ascertained.

No one has been more effusive than the patron producers themselves.

"I came back after opening night and bought eight more tickets," said Gail Williams, as others chimed in with similar second thoughts.

Heidi Waxlax and her husband Lorne have seen the show three times, and last week, were debating a fourth.

"This is the most fun money I have ever given away," said Lorne Waxlax. "I think 'La Cage' was absolutely wonderful. But I think '42nd Street' has never been done better."

On opening night five weeks ago, Cornell presented each patron with a boutonniere that proved a beacon to audience members elated after the performance.

"People were coming up to us and tapping us on the shoulder to say thank you," said Marlynn Scully. "The best comment of all that I heard was, 'They could take this show and put it right in the middle of Broadway.' And it's true."

"Let's face it: this is a sophisticated group," said a radiant Sales. "These people are cultured; they know theater. These are people who probably paid top dollar to see 'The Producers' when it first came out on Broadway. And they're saying this production was better than what they saw in New York."

"Allen Cornell deserves a large share of the credit," said Starke. "But it takes a wide range of talents to bring a complicated musical to this high level of performance. There must have been 100 people involved. I lived in New York for many years, and I would not expect to see a better performance on Broadway."

The first hint of the fun came in New York in October, where several of the patron producers rendezvoused at an audition space in Chelsea. "We all thought we were going get our Christmas shopping done, but once we got to the audition, we never left," said an almost star-struck Ann Jones. "The amount of talent was incredible."

"Sixty-seven kids auditioned for the principal roles," said Marlynn Skully,

astonished at the turnout, and joking that the prospect of spending two months in Florida in winter may have lured some particularly talented prospects.

But times were hard for actors in other ways besides the weather. "On the third day, the choreographer had the whole ensemble sit down facing themselves in front of the mirror, and he said, 'Now I want you all to imagine you're in the middle of a depression.' And they all shouted back, 'We are!'"

"The toughest thing was watching

the people who weren't going to make it," said Bill Skully. "But then, you'd see them going down the hall and through another door – they were going to another audition."

For Kathie Pierce, the intimacy of the dry run, known as the designer's run-through, proved the most stirring. "You don't realize what the actors and the actresses go through" by only seeing the final production, she says. "To see it without costumes, without makeup, then to come and see the final production is an amazing experience."

"We thought they did a great job in the designer's run-through," said Heidi Waxlax. "But then when we heard them all say, 'Now the work begins.'"

And soon the work is over, at least for the cast. Sunday, while the crew breaks down the set, Gail Williams will be setting up the pool party for them to celebrate one last time together. "There'll be plenty of wine," she says. And if the music's right, she may get a encore – this is a group that loves to dance.

"They told us they tap dance four-and-a-half miles in one show," she

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Arts/Theatre

At McKee, there's art in those 'Dino' eggs



A painted Ostrich egg by Gail Cohen at McKee Botanical Gardens

BY ALINA LAMBIET
STAFF REPORTS

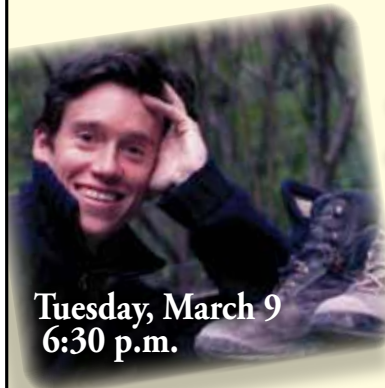
McKee Botanical Gardens purchased real ostrich eggs, which were painted and calligraphied with specific sayings and sold to individual sponsors as a fundraiser that was part



Painted ostrich eggs on display at McKee Botanical Gardens

Photos: Tom McCarthy Jr.

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A painted Ostrich egg by Rick Kelly at McKee Botanical Gardens



A painted Ostrich egg by Lionel Ogilvie at McKee Botanical Gardens



A painted Ostrich egg by Emily Tremml at McKee Botanical Gardens

of its Expedition McKee event last weekend. (see page 16)

About a half-dozen local artists painted the eggs, which sold from \$500 to \$2,500.

"Whatever each sponsor wanted was put on their egg," explained McKee board member Susan Schuyler Smith. The ostrich eggs are currently displayed as a temporary "Nest Egg" exhibit nestled in the center of the famous mahogany table in the Hall of Giants.

At the end of the dinosaur exhibit, the eggs will be given to the sponsors

to commemorate their support.

Intricate scenes of McKee, and beautifully detailed animals were hand-painted onto the ostrich eggs by local artists Gail Cohen, Emily Tremml, Rick Kelly, Lionel Ogilvie, Janveer Miller and Gail Cohen.

Artist Rick Kelly painted four scenes of McKee on his egg, and merged them all together for a lovely panoramic effect. "It was a lot of fun, but it was difficult to hold it and paint and then try to turn it and put it down without putting my fingers into the wet paint.

The best part is the way the paint went into the texture of the shell." Artist Lionel Ogilvie said he painted his egg in under two hours – a striking Monet-like miniature landscape of McKee in bloom.

He wanted to be sure he could get it ready and sent to the gardens for the event, all for a good cause.

Another group of exquisite "dinosaur eggs" are on display in the Garden Cafe and are available for sale.

For more information on the eggs, call McKee at 794-0601

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Arts/Theatre

A secret language: Sculpture by John Bisbee

L. L. ANGELL
COLUMNIST

He forges art from nails---the simplest of structures ordinarily used to hang art not make it. But in the sculptor John Bisbee's hands, the common carpenter's nail becomes something extraordinary. For the past 22 years, Bisbee has transformed nails and spikes of all sizes into original and compelling sculptures.

Stand quietly a moment and you can almost hear John Bisbee and his power hammer beating out a singular rhythm. Lift. Load. Bang. Lift. Load. Bang.

That's the sound Bisbee makes for hours at a time working in his open shed in Brunswick, Maine. That's where he created the flattened spikes that dance across the walls of the Schumann Gallery at the Vero Beach Museum of Art. Titled "Dendryte," the sculpture crawls across the wall like it's alive. Some viewers have compared it to a gigantic school of fish, a manatee, or seaweed. Others have seen spiders, hundreds of them, marching in rhythm.

"Dendryte" is one of six sculptures in "A Secret Language: Sculpture by John Bisbee" on exhibit at the museum through June.

Each individual piece in the sculpture consists of between nine and thirteen spikes. Using long tongs, Bisbee takes each red-hot spike out of a furnace and puts it in a power hammer. When he presses a foot pedal, the pneumatic device hammers the spike with the strength of 155 pounds. That's the lift -- load -- bang sound coming from his shed. Bisbee hammers away until he's got the shape he wants. Then he moves on to the next spike. Con-



"Helio", from "Ton" series, 2006, Stacked and flattened 12 inch spikes, Dimensions variable

sidering that "Dendryte" covers a fair amount of one wall and turns the corner spreading onto the adjoining one, that's a lot of spikes and hammering.

For this sculpture, as for all his art, Bisbee is inspired by nature. "Components of dendrite are like starfish meeting in the middle and they have to meet seamlessly. I weld in the back and each one gets a screw in the middle. That's how I attach them to the wall," he says.

Each individual sculpture is made so that Bisbee can disassemble, pack up, and move it on his own. For this exhibition, Bisbee's younger brother, Charlie, helped him drive the sculptures down from Maine. Upon arriv-

ing at the museum, Bisbee's next challenge is the installation, which takes days. There's no set order for the individual pieces that make up a particular sculpture and each one comes apart -- completely. In the case of "Dendryte," it had been installed only once before.

Bisbee was visibly excited when he saw the Schumann Gallery, telling staffers it was the first time he'd put it up using a corner. One docent said Bisbee walked around first, getting the feel of the gallery, then started looking through the pieces, unpacking them, to find the ones he could use along the corner.

"How I put it up is dictated by the gallery," he said later. "I have no pre-

conceived idea. I wanted "Dendryte" to make a wrapping gesture, going around the corner. The nails are definitely in charge.

"I call myself an aesthetic subcontractor. It's all intuition."

For most visitors to the museum, "Dendryte" appears to be alive and moving. That quality may be one of the most intriguing aspects of this unique sculpture exhibition. It is a refreshing and energizing experience just to be with these sculptures in an otherwise perfectly empty room. Moving from sculpture to sculpture, one word that keeps coming to mind is rhythm. Incredible as it may sound, each of these very six sculptures has its own individ-

Arts/Theatre

ual rhythm. In fact, each piece seems strangely alive.

Bisbee takes these plainest objects in the world -- nails -- and transforms them into a writhing sea creature of the imagination such as "Dendryte," then stacks them into one perfect ridge-backed circle in another, like the precisely formed "Helio."

According to Bisbee, it all started when he kicked over a can full of rusted nails. He was studying ceramics at Alfred University in western New York, planning to become a potter. He calls the day he quit the college lacrosse team, midway through his freshman year, his "declaration of action."

After quitting the lacrosse team, Bisbee went rambling along a desolate country road outside of Alfred, looking for materials for his art. He remembers the abandoned house where he experienced his nail epiphany. The roof had fallen in, and the inside was soaked. It looked like whomever had lived there had moved out in a hurry because the bed was still made. Beside the house, Bisbee saw a 5-gallon bucket of rusty nails. He kicked it over and the nails fell out in a clump, sticking together in the shape of the bucket.

"I just thought it was fascinating," says Bisbee.

That was the start of what can only be called an obsession. How else could he have created "Helio"? Measuring 84 by 84 by 9 inches, the sculpture is made up of 12-inch spikes. That's it. And they aren't welded together either. They're simply stacked. Part of a series called "Tons," "Helio" is made up of nails weighing a ton.

Bisbee says the circular shape of the sculpture is inevitable. "That's the shape the nail demands to make," he says. "When you stack enough of them, they have to become circles. The hard part is getting the first circle perfect and seamless and being on ones knees the whole time."

While on his hands and knees, in-

stalling "Helio" at the museum the last week of January, Bisbee did stop occasionally to rest, sitting in the corner to sing and play his guitar.

And once his sculptures are installed, Bisbee may have to go back for a tune up. At a previous exhibition at the Portland Museum of Art people kept kicking "Helio" over.

"They couldn't believe the nails weren't welded together. So the museum asked me to drive down once a week and put it back in order. They paid me with lunch," Bisbee says, sounding surprisingly good-natured.

From the alive and writhing "Dendryte," to the classic precision of the circular "Helio" on to "Scale," a heaping twisty mass of flattened twelve-inch nails, it's plain to see that Bisbee really does let the nails do the talking. At first glance, this sculpture could be a lumpy ball of fishing nets, or a whole lot of wire coat hangers gone psycho, or even a large and wooly dog curled up, fast asleep.

Like "Dendryte," "Scale" is another spontaneous installation-piece. It comes apart, going in a barrel for transportation, allowing Bisbee to pile it freely on the floor however he likes. Maybe it's all those repeating calligraphic curves, that make it seem so cuddly, but this one is especially hard not to touch.

Nothing could be more different from "Scale" than "Bloom". Made of bent, flattened and welded 12-inch spikes, "Bloom" has a 51-inch diameter.

It could be an icon for the perfect hurricane. It's a tight, black, vortex of energy on the wall. In the same school as the mathematically precise "Helio", "Bloom" is a flying ninja death weapon, a surreal swarm of bees, and reminiscent of Da Vinci's intricate botanical ink drawings. Each nail is hammered to a perfect curve.

Bisbee grew up in Cambridge, Mass., attending Milton Academy, where his

father taught math. He always wanted to be an artist. Though he thrived on the athletic field, Bisbee scraped by academically.

"I was very sad throughout high school. I wanted to make stuff, but they (the education system) took that away from me."

His mother, Ann Porter, a therapist who worked at Harvard University's counseling center for years, says, "Art saved his life."

After graduating from Alfred University in 1990, Bisbee wandered, living in an abandoned building in Wichita, Kan., then renting a basement in a drug-infested neighborhood in Spokane, Wash., but he never stopped sculpting. That devotion eventually led to a residency at the prestigious MacDowell Colony in New Hampshire.

That's where Bisbee met the chairman of Bowdoin College's visual arts department who hooked him up with a part-time teaching gig in 1996. Bisbee has been there, teaching in Brunswick, Maine ever since.

For Bisbee, making art is like breathing--essential. It's the day-to-day stuff that's difficult. He admits to having no savings account, or IRA, and for many years, no house. Describing that time,

Bisbee says, "I lived like a rodent."

Speaking of rodents, Bisbee's college students don't mind a bit, when his pet mouse, Pepper, pops out of his pocket in the middle of class.

Bisbee says he rescued it as an orphan. "It was after a huge rain, after a party," he says. "And here was this little hairless wonder in the driveway."

Since teaching at Bowdoin College for the past 14 years, Bisbee has developed some sage advice for struggling artists.

"The work will take care of you. If you do something you love long enough you will have great philosophical joy and you will have financial stability as well," he says. "No one does high quality work for over a decade without being recognized."

And for anyone who dreads Monday mornings, Bisbee says, "So many students tell me they're afraid to take the risk, that they can't support themselves at art. And I tell them that my true fear is having a crappy job that I go to day after day."

"A Secret Language: Sculpture by John Bisbee" is on exhibition at the Vero Beach Museum of Art through June 27. For information, call 772-231-0707 or visit www.vbmuseum.org.

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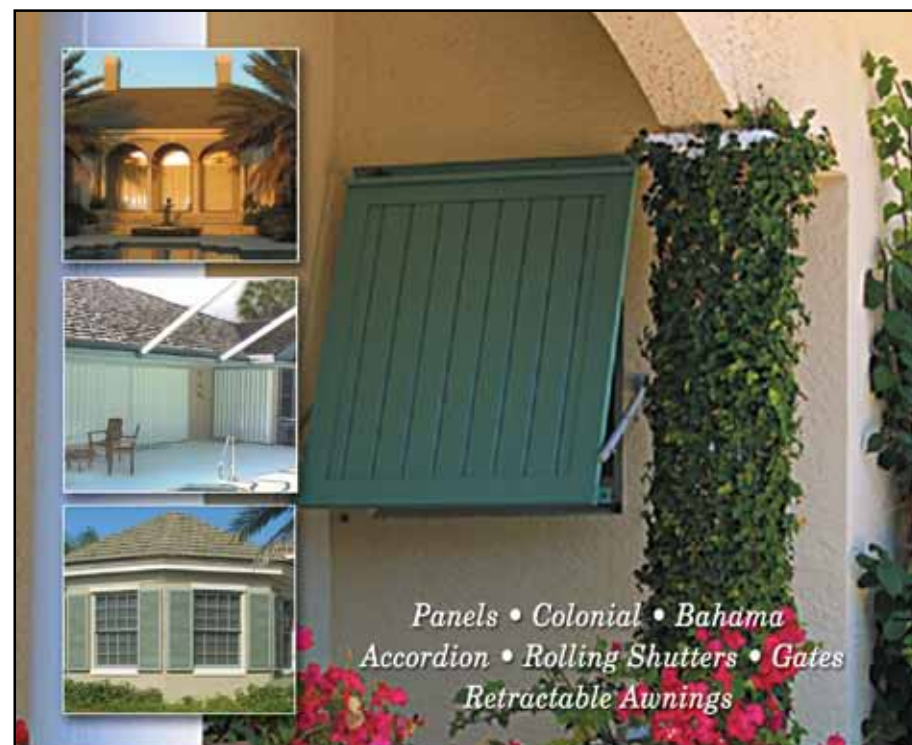
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Arts/Theatre

Cattle Barons' Ball to 'give cancer the boot'

BY BARBARA YORESH
CORRESPONDENT

It's a disease that engenders fear at the mere mention of its name: cancer.

The dreaded affliction personally touches the lives of one in two men and one in three women in the United States and claims more than 500,000 lives per year in this country. But there is treatment, there is survival and there is hope for a cure.

To that end, the American Cancer Society of Indian River County is set to present its 10th Anniversary Indian River Citrus Gala & Cattle Barons' Ball fundraiser entitled "Stetsons & Stiletos" on Saturday, March 6 from 6 – 11:30 p.m. at Paris Air, Inc. located at 3300 Airport West Drive in Vero Beach.

The gala is co-chaired for the second year by Vinnie and Diane Parentela and sponsored by the Egan Foundation and George E. Warren Corporation. Tickets are \$200 per person.

Western attire will be "de rigueur"



Elaborately decorated ceramic boots sit on display in the front window of the Cultural Council on 14th Avenue in downtown Vero Beach. Photos: Tom McCarthy Jr.

but whatever the manner of dress, attendees can be assured that whether they are wearing Tony Lamas or Manolo Blahniks, the evening will be filled with great barbecue food, thirst-quenching beverages, gaming, live music, dancing, and auctions to benefit a worthy cause.

A special feature will include an auction of handcrafted ceramic Western-style boots individually decorated by area artists to "give cancer the boot." Artists participating in the project in-

clude Ruth Ann Holt, Heidi Hill, Penny Aliyetti, Marjorie Bohler, Donna Bryan, Judy Burgarella, Freeman Davenport, Terri Finethys, Freddie Gibson, Mary Su Gibson, Deborah Gooch, Maggie Irvin and Barbara Sharp.

"It's our 10th anniversary and we wanted to depict this larger than life. Supporting the American Cancer Society through this gala can help us give something to ourselves, our children and grandkids because a world with more birthdays is a world with less cancer," said Nancy Madsen, area executive director for the American Cancer Society.

Vero Beach artist/sculptor Ruth Ann Holt – acclaimed for her stunning TurtleTrax mermaid-adorned turtles created to benefit the county Mental Health Association – was tapped to chair a "call to artists" who would hand-sculpt and adorn the ceramic boots for the auction. Like many involved with the gala, Holt's life was touched by cancer.

"My mother died from lymphoma cancer in 2008 and I wanted to help raise money for cancer. I loved the opportunity to meet with the other artists. They've done such a marvelous job and I hope the auction will be real successful. The word "cancer" just stops you in your tracks but you don't ever give up or lose hope. That's why it's so important to keep the fundraising going," Holt said.

Although one of her large-scale TurtleTrax creations netted \$25,000 at another fundraising auction, the affable artist decided not to decorate a boot but rather concentrate her efforts to coordinate the project which, after juried selection of about 40 submissions, netted 11 artists.

The ceramic boot "blanks" were

handcrafted by potter Heidi Hill, who, like many other artists involved with the effort, experienced cancer in her family. Other artists decorated the boots in a myriad of colors and motifs.

Sebastian artist Judy Burgarella's family was horribly afflicted with incidences of the disease; three of her siblings had lung cancer and one had melanoma. Two have since died of the disease, she said. Her daughter also suffered from thyroid cancer but is presently cancer-free.

Burgarella is drawn to Native American subject matter and chose related designs to adorn her boot which is called "Spirit of the Seminole." One side of the boot features a portrait of Seminole Chief Osceola.

"There is historic significance in every design I used on the boot and each element is taken from traditional Native American designs. This is a very good and worthwhile project," Burgarella said.

Boot artist Deborah Gooch of Vero Beach lost her grandfather and mother to lung cancer.

"I don't think there's anyone I know who hasn't been touched by cancer. It's such a horrible disease and I've been involved with cancer fundraising for 30 years. I collect cowboy boots and when I saw they'd be used for this project, I said 'this is perfect,'" Gooch said.

Her boot, entitled "A Local Legend – Chuck Dent" depicts the late Vero Beach Cowboy Hall of Famer riding a bull and bronco. Surviving Dent family members live next door to Gooch on acreage west of town and raise miniature horses.

For more information or reservations, call Nancy Madsen at (772) 562-2272, ext. 115.

My Vero

Wine and Spanish delicacies to flow at Costa

BY MARY SCHENKEL
STAFF WRITER

If you're looking for a Spanish adventure, you need go no further than An Affair to Remember Wine & Food Fiesta at Costa d'Este on Wednesday, March 10.

Epicurean delights highlighting the flavors of Spain will be complimented by more than 12 vintages at wine tasting stations throughout the ocean-front resort.

In keeping with the evening's Latin theme, Don Soledad will delight with musical entertainment and a number of silent auction items will feature weekend getaways, and a host of other items.

Funds raised benefit the American Red Cross North Treasure Coast Chapter. 562-2549

Bingo becomes a competitive sport at the Senior Resource Association's annual Box Lunch Bingo event, held this year at the Heritage Center, 11:30 a.m. Thursday, March 11. A "Purse

Game," akin to Monty Hall's Lets Make a Deal days, the famous "Re-gift Mountain" and a 50/50 drawing provide additional entertainment throughout the afternoon. It's open to all ages and skill levels. Proceeds benefit numerous Senior Resource Association programs. 569-0760, ext. 102.

Last year's Dancing with Vero's Stars to benefit the Indian River County Healthy Start Coalition was such a success; organizers opted to go with a larger venue this year.

Star Dancers, have teamed up with professionals and have spent hours perfecting their fancy footwork in hopes of winning the coveted mirrored trophy. The action begins at 7 p.m. Sat., March 13 at the Waxlax Center for the Performing Arts at Saint Edward's School. 563-9118.

Riverside Theatre will be gussied up as the "Old Las Vegas Strip" for an evening of Diamonds and Denim style fun, Saturday, March 13. Ante up for games of chance and Texas Hold'em,

enter the Flamingo Cabaret for continuous live entertainment, feast on vittles and shooters at the Golden Nugget and Silver Dollar Saloon or take to the dance floor for line dancing and two-stepping to The Dixie Highway Band. They promise, "What happens at Riverside Theatre, stays at Riverside Theatre!" 231-6990.

Arts and Culture

We may not have hills in Vero but we do have talent, and that talent will come alive once again March 11 to 28 with The Sound of Music, presented by the Vero Beach Theatre Guild. The lovely Leigh Seirafi, who you may remember as Eliza in My Fair Lady, returns to the stage as the effervescent Maria.

She is joined by James Mitchell, last seen in Cabaret, who plays the part of Captain von Trapp.

Talented young performers Erin McDonald, Ryan Roberson, Kelli Adams,

Taylor James Walker, Shae McDonald, Kendra Osborn and Julia Weinbrecht perform as the children, all under the direction of Tony Della Rocca. 562-8300

Tchaikovsky Competition Gold Medalist Elmar Oliveira will be the Atlantic Classical Orchestra's featured soloist, performing Beethoven's immortal Violin Concerto on Thursday, March 11 at the Waxlax Center for the Performing Arts at St. Edward's School. The presentation will also include Darius Milhaud's jazz-inflected masterpiece La Creation du Monde and contemporary composer Michael Torke's Adjustable Wrench.

Acclaimed by Florida Monthly Magazine as the "best arts and crafts show in Florida," and ranked number 57 in the top 200 shows in the nation by Sunshine Artist, the 59th annual Under the Oaks Fine Art and Crafts Show presented by the Vero Beach Art Club, takes place Friday, March 12 to Sunday March 14. 231-0303

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Heather MacIntyre,
marathon runner

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Arts/Theatre

Art in the Park at Humiston has record sales



Dave and Sue Cuddie walk past paintings by Sue Roby-Dinunno on sale at Art in the Park.
Photos: Tom McCarthy Jr.



Robert Fortuna looks at the Gloria Renneker's Unique Bottle Art wine bottle hors d'oeuvre plates at Art in the Park.

BY ALINA LAMBIET
STAFF WRITER

All it took was postcard-perfect skies and cool spring breezes this past weekend to bring the art lovers out for a record-selling Art in the Park at the new refurbished Humiston Park.

"It was a spectacular show," said

Vero Beach Art Club president Sue Dinunno. Though one show was held in January at the park, the weather was a miserable 39-degrees. Not many brave souls ventured out.

But with better weather, particularly on Sunday, Dinunno estimates some 600 people strolled along the new Ocean Drive promenade, picking up

some \$12,000 in art from 26 vendors.

"That makes it an excellent show – our best ever," Dinunno said. "I think people have been so cooped up that once you had a nice, sunny day they turned out in spades."

Dinunno sees art sales turning around after a tough couple of years in the depressed economy. People were



Marie Emerson and Betty Shepherd look through prints of paintings by artist Minakshi De at Art in the Park at Humiston Park.

buying lots of paintings, prints and ceramics, she said. "But everything seemed to do well."

"That's on items ranging from \$25 to \$2,000. I had some artists make in excess of \$2,000," she said.

The artists who display their creations at Art in the Park are still figuring out how to best show their materials in the park's new configuration.

"We're still getting used to it," said Dinunno, who added that some artists are still under tents, while others are not, and some portions of the promenade are narrower. She's not complaining, however.

"It's a great venue; the city really considered our needs in designing the park, and when the shops and restaurant at Ocean Park open, it's going to be even better," she said.

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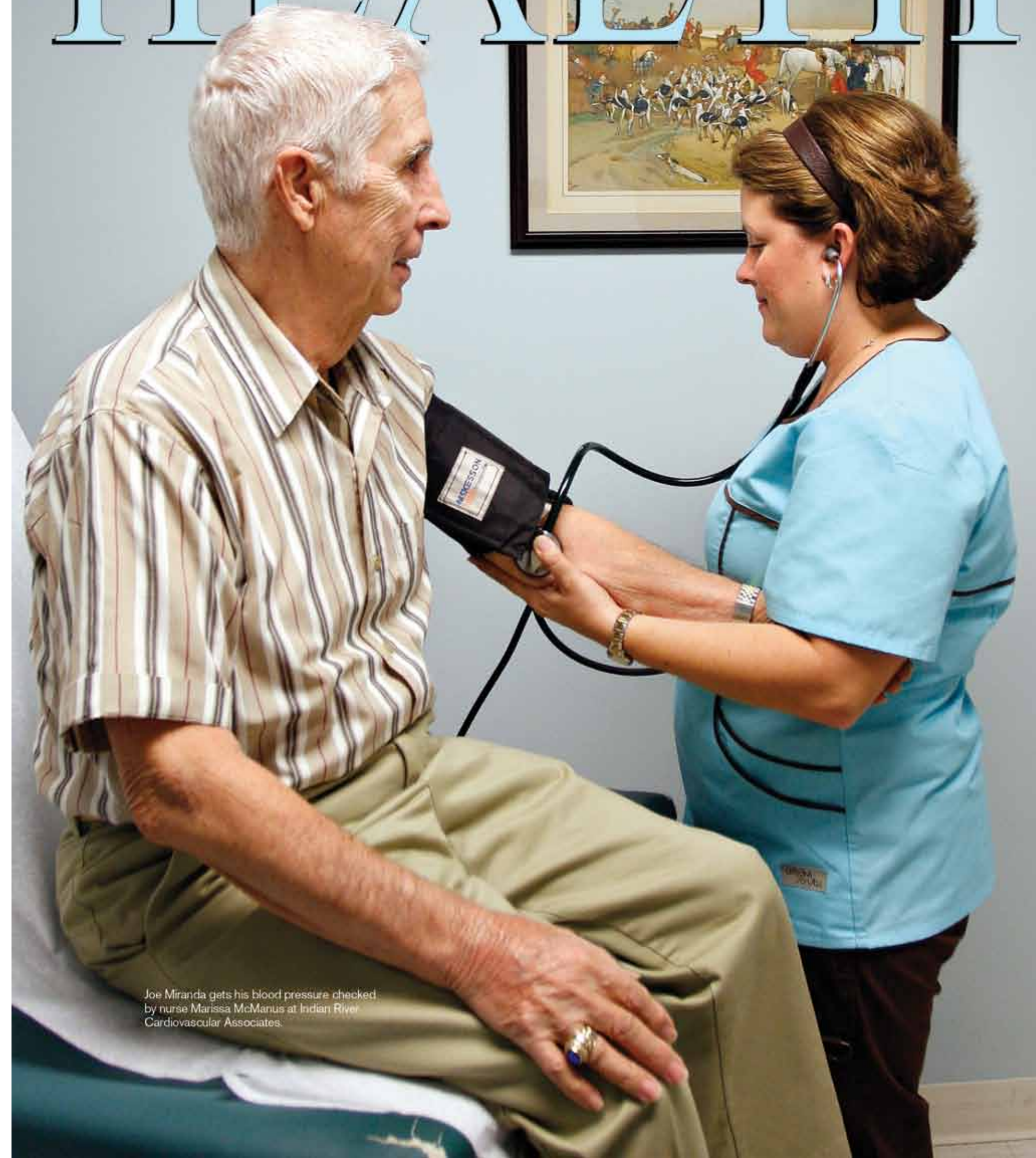


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32963 HEALTH



Joe Miranda gets his blood pressure checked by nurse Marissa McManus at Indian River Cardiovascular Associates.

Health

It's a silent killer, but hypertension is easy to treat



Barbara Foley tests her blood pressure using the free machine at the CVS in Indian River Shores. Photo: Tom McCarthy Jr.

SANDRA RAWLS
CORRESPONDENT

At Ocoola Home Care Pharmacy, business is brisk this time of year.

Blood pressure monitors are devices sold every day. Donna Morris, who handles ordering, expects to see at least 30 to be bought in March.

"People are trying to watch their numbers at home," Morris.

That's good news because according to a new report, the number of American suffering from hypertension has reached "emergency proportions."

Last week, a panel of the United States Institute of Medicine jolted reported that despite the relative ease in diagnosing and treating high blood pressure, doctors and patients aren't doing nearly enough to fight the pervasive disease.

They called on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to do more to address the problem.

According to the report, prevalence of hypertension, which causes more than 17 percent of all deaths due to disease now affects over a third of the population.

Only smoking produces a more preventable cause of death says Dr. David Fleming who headed up the panel. Calling high blood pressure "a neglected disease" that has become the second leading national killer behind

heart disease, he asked for a larger commitment for prevention from the CDC.

Currently, the CDC spends less than \$50 million dollars a year on programs to prevent hypertension, while it costs our health care system annually \$73 billion to treat it.

The way to prevent hypertension? Cut down on salt, lose some weight,

eat more fruits and vegetables and get more exercise.

These solid admonitions have been known for years, yet the number of American's who have high blood pressure has increased 25 percent since 2000. African Americans have seen the greatest increase with more than 35 percent of blacks suffering from hypertension.

Doctors generally prescribe beta blockers and ACE inhibitors to control blood pressure. Beta blockers reduce the effect of physical exertion on heart rate and the force of heart muscle contraction. ACE inhibitors lower the resistance inside arteries and increase the heart's output.

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There is some evidence that garlic and the herb hawthorne can aid in blood pressure reduction

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Some don't want to think about it."

The new report dropped another shocker.

Of those questioned, 86 percent who have high blood pressure have insurance and see a doctor yearly. But some doctors are not aggressive if readings are only slightly higher than the accepted "high normal" of 140 over 90.

If doctors sometimes relax guidelines and patients aren't vigilant about their own medications and readings, a little of the mystery of America's increasing high blood pressure numbers gets easier to understand.

"In our country, if you live long enough, you're almost guaranteed to get hypertension", says report's co-author Dr. Corinne Husten of the Partnership for Prevention, another non-profit.

What in our lifestyle equates aging with developing high blood pressure, since in other parts of the world – particularly poorer countries – this is not the case?

There is some complex chemistry to consider. We know our more sedentary lives along with higher body weights, high cholesterol, and smok-

ing fuel greater national blood pressure numbers. But beginning five years ago, medical researchers have known that a naturally occurring protein produced in the liver, C-reactive protein or CRP, is linked to high blood pressure.

A Harvard Medical study of 21,000 nurses, conducted over eight years, found higher blood levels of this compound are significantly related to developing hypertension.

CRP is produced as part of the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 32

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Health

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 31

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32963

Reading the fault lines under the world's cities. P.38

INSIGHT

MARCH 2010, ISSUE 10 - A Product of Vero Beach 32963





Rare edition: Vero Beach Book Center

BY MICHELLE GENZ, STAFF WRITER, PHOTO: TOM MCCARTHY JR.

And with no more consideration than that, the young couple chose their home for the next four decades – Vero Beach.

“Vero Beach was very much a small town,” says Tom. “I could smile and say ‘howdy’ and they would smile back and say ‘howdy’ back. It was a very, very pleasant place.”

Linda Leonard got a job as a nurse at the hospital, eventually going into the newly minted field of family planning; she became Florida’s first family planning health practitioner, and the first of ten in the nation. “My career was short-lived because I planned my own family,” she says with a smile.

Tom had worked in a different sort of planning – one of two people comprising the planning and zoning department here. When Linda became pregnant, he took an offer in Martin County; the couple bought a house in Stuart.

But when they decided to go into business for themselves, they moved back to Vero Beach. Vero seemed perfect for raising children, especially with grandparents nearby. The grandparents would turn out to be an invaluable presence a year after Tom and Linda’s second baby was born, when they decided to open a book store in the L-shaped strip of store fronts immediately to the west of where the Book Center’s children’s store stands today.

Their reasoning for starting a book store could not have been more simple. If their lives seem a fairy tale to this point, here it becomes the large print edition.

“We both liked to read, and we wanted our own business,” says Tom Leonard, as if it were as easy as that. They considered buying a franchise of the Little Professor independent bookstores. They went to Commercial Bank on Sixth Avenue, and asked for a loan. Right away, the loan officer questioned the need for a second bookstore – a shop called Waverly’s already existed downtown. Leonard responded: “Why do you need more than one branch?”

Their application was approved – at an interest rate of 17 percent. Soon after, they went to a convention of the American Booksellers Association in New York City. “When we asked questions, we realized, we didn’t need to spend \$10,000 on a franchise,” Tom Leonard says. By selling their house in Stuart, and -- despite their growing family -- downsizing to

a smaller house here, they took the difference, plus three mortgages (the third was from the builder), and opened the Vero Beach Book Center in 1975.

The business got off to a slow start. The Book Center’s inventory was small. “We started the business on a shoe string – something you couldn’t do today,” says Leonard. “It took a couple of months, but we began to get more traffic, and we started expanding right away.”

Before long, they knocked through one adjacent space, and then another, creating a special nook for children. Linda had toddlers on her mind – and in her life; a one-year-old and a two-year-old. They started staging events for children. Clifford the Big Red Dog was their first official celebrity; Linda’s late father was recruited to don the dog suit.

“I didn’t want to be anywhere where, if you say ‘Hello,’ people look at you, like, ‘What’s the matter with you?’”

The push to get more children reading was in full force nationally. Here, the slogan at the Book Center was “More Books in the Home.”

Despite Vero’s daunting older demographic, the concept clicked. Perhaps the store gave grandparents a surefire place to buy birthday and Christmas presents. Or it could be that parents, feeling isolated in a town of largely retirees, were desperate for a place to meet other young families. Against the odds, the place took off.

As their customer base swelled through the 1970s, children became key to their business plan. The awareness of the importance of reading to children coincided with improved printing processes that were making illustrated children’s books more beautiful – and irresistible. The Book Center made

It is the era of Kindles and eBooks, Amazon.com and Wal-Mart. The technology is changing, the competition is fierce. The economy is weak, the discounting a nightmare. Chain booksellers like B. Dalton’s are closing. The Waldenbooks in Indian River Mall is gone. Book superstore operator Borders is flirting with bankruptcy.

Then there is the Vero Beach Book Center, now celebrating its 35th anniversary as a locally-owned independent bookseller. It seems almost unimaginable.

How is this possible? How does an indie bookseller not only survive in a town of 30,000, but become so highly regarded in publishing circles that more writers include it on their book

tours than almost any other book store in Florida?

How does a bookstore in Vero Beach attract an astonishing 2,500 people to a signing by celebrity chef Emeril Lagasse, who then stays until 3 am to autograph 600 books remaining after everyone has finally left? How does the local bookstore so embed itself in the community that many almost feel sorry – *almost* – for the predators who sometimes seem to be giving away best-sellers as a loss-leader at Sam’s Club and Wal-Mart?

The answer lies in the story-book life of Tom and Linda Leonard. For four decades, they have been making what turns out to have been all the right moves. In the process, they have turned their Vero Beach Book Center into a rare edition: a success story?

Tom and Linda’s life together began like the opening chapter of a flower-child ‘60s novel – spring break and mini-vans, Daytona Beach and sunrise. Linda was a senior at Michigan State University, studying to be a nurse. Tom Leonard was at Rutgers, majoring in environmental sciences. He had grown up in New Jersey, and didn’t want to live anywhere between Washington, DC and New York. “I didn’t want to be anywhere where, if you say ‘Hello,’ people look at you, like, ‘What’s the matter with you?’”

So it was on that March 22nd morning in 1969, when a pretty blonde and her friends, who had hung out at the Steak and Shake and played Red Rover, Red Rover on the beach all night, trying to stay awake for sunrise before heading back north, scam-

pered up to his scraggly crew, emerging bleary-eyed from their minivan, and Linda immediately declared they needed a better place to sleep, Tom found it very friendly indeed.

Tom bought Linda breakfast that spring break morning, and they both knew they were in love – they can still look across the table from each other just retelling that simple fact. They corresponded for a year, and two weeks after college graduation, they got married.

“It was during Vietnam,” Tom Leonard points out. “And I had a low draft number. So I said to Linda, ‘We can begin our lives anywhere, but wouldn’t it be good for you to be near your parents, in the event I get drafted?’”

the most of it: they hired a puppeteer and built a little theater to bring to life the characters of best-selling children’s books. They developed their own theme song for children to sing, and characters that promoted the importance of reading, and took them out into the community not only as a public service, but as a marketing tool for the store.

As Linda Leonard put it, “You’re not going to get a children’s hour at Sam’s or on the internet.” Schools played into that support, delighted at having such enrichment available for free.

“The ultimate compliment is when you see the children kicking and screaming that they don’t want to leave,” says Linda Leonard. Grownups got what they wanted too. Linda Leonard saw to it that the adult section was well apart from that particular departure scenario.

In 1991, the bottom line of the Leonards’ business shifted drastically when they bought the 12,000 square-foot-building they are in today, situated near one of the city’s busiest intersections. Not having to pay rent proved key to their further expansion six years later, when the struggling theater that had served them so well during two years of jointly run

children’s summer programs, finally closed down, allowing them to acquire the two-story space now housing the children’s center, as well as discount books and a teen-oriented lounge area upstairs.

The extra 9,000 square feet of space was quickly merchandised with not only books but high-quality, often educational games and toys. Ambitious exhibits -- like one on dinosaurs and another on the sea -- were installed in the center of the space. The store busied in schoolchildren for visits, and organized art contests with art teachers. There were yo-yo competitions and karate demonstrations and magic shows, all linked to books and merchandise, of course.

Meanwhile, the Book Center was increasingly becoming a destination, with its leased café -- since closed, much to Tom Leonard’s relief -- and an expanding roster of authors traveling to Vero for book signings. Their seemingly effortless strategies were right on target -- expanding at critical junctures, capitalizing on Vero’s growth spurts, buying the building to avoid the profit-sucking burden of leasing.

They refused to franchise, despite numerous re-

quests, or to open branch stores -- they’ve always felt their presence in one store was far more important. “Celebration (the planned community near Orlando) called and wanted me to open a children’s store there,” says Linda Leonard. “But I thought it would take away from this store. We wanted to keep our efforts focused right here in our community.”

Over the years, their store turned into an institution -- born of that inexplicable charisma no business plan can predict, the patina of habit and nostalgia buffed of the raw-metal metrics of the buying experience. Among independent booksellers, it came to rank right up there with 77-year-old Haslam’s in St. Petersburg, which promotes itself as “Florida’s Greatest Rainy Day Attraction,” and the celebrated Books & Books, with three locations in greater Miami.

Over time, the Vero Beach Book Center has become one of the must-book sites on writers’ tours. The high caliber of authors -- names like George Stephanopoulos, Cokie Roberts, Deepak Chopra and John Glenn -- has become almost routine. The calendar of book signings is so jammed that Linda Leonard has signed on to her own mailing list, just to keep track of who’s coming next.

“We have a long-time relationship with the publishers,” says Linda Leonard. She tells the story of the time the CEO of Warner Books flew down in a corporate jet with mystery writer Sandra Brown, who was doing a signing. “He came because he could not understand why the little book store in Vero Beach was selling more books per event than New York, Chicago and L.A.”

Even for less famous authors, the center typically attracts fifty to 100 people.

Linda Leonard says it’s the diligent staff who have done their homework and read the author’s books that encourages sales at signings. “We make sure that when the author comes, someone on our staff has read the book and we can talk intelligently about it. That author has a very pleasant experience, and feels their book was taken seriously.”

But Tom Leonard suspects the good vibe doesn’t end there. “I can’t even put my finger on what makes us different,” says Tom Leonard.

Once, the Leonards were invited to dinner in Miami by a Random House rep who mysteriously would not explain the reason for the invitation. When they finally arrived at the agreed-upon location, they learned the venue had changed, to Madonna’s Blue Door restaurant at the Delano Hotel. Once there, they were escorted to a back room, where Tom took a seat at the table next to an empty chair. It turned out to be for Salman Rushdie.

“He came out of hiding under a world-wide death threat to personally thank the book sellers who had kept his books for sale,” says Leonard, who jokes about thinking twice about the seating arrangement once Rushdie arrived.

So what does the future hold for the Vero Beach Book Center?

The largest brick-and-mortar competitors to the Book Center are the Big-Box bullies: Wal-Mart and its sibling Sam’s Club. Those discounters drain publishers of inventory. As a result, when copy-counting merchants like the Leonards cautiously place their initial order, they often are told -- if sales prove brisk -- that no more books are available because they are sitting unsold on shelves at Wal-Mart, waiting to be returned. By then, the Leonards say, interest has waned and momentum is lost

Internet sales are an even larger concern, says Linda Leonard. “That’s what I lose sleep over,” she says.

But clearly, there is a passion for reading here. The Leonards hold workshops for leaders of the town’s 100-some book clubs. “Some of them come and talk to us, and we help them put together their lists, and then they leave and order off Amazon,” says Tom Leonard. “Then there are others who

make a list off Amazon, and come here to order all their copies.”

Meanwhile, the Leonards have begun a transition to the next generation, placing their son Chad, 35, in charge of the store while they enjoy a semi-retirement. The sailboat they bought in Africa in 2004, spending 49 days at sea getting it home to Vero, is now their chief source of pleasure. In it, they have sailed to Nova Scotia, to Bermuda and through

the eastern Caribbean. This year, they are heading to Block Island, off the coast of Rhode Island, while their staff of 22, some of them there since the store’s inception 35 years ago, takes over.

“They pick up the ball and run with it when we’re not here,” Tom Leonard says. “They make all the decisions, and they take it to the next level. We get back, and all we have to discuss is what a great time we had.” ●

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Reading the fault lines under the world's cities

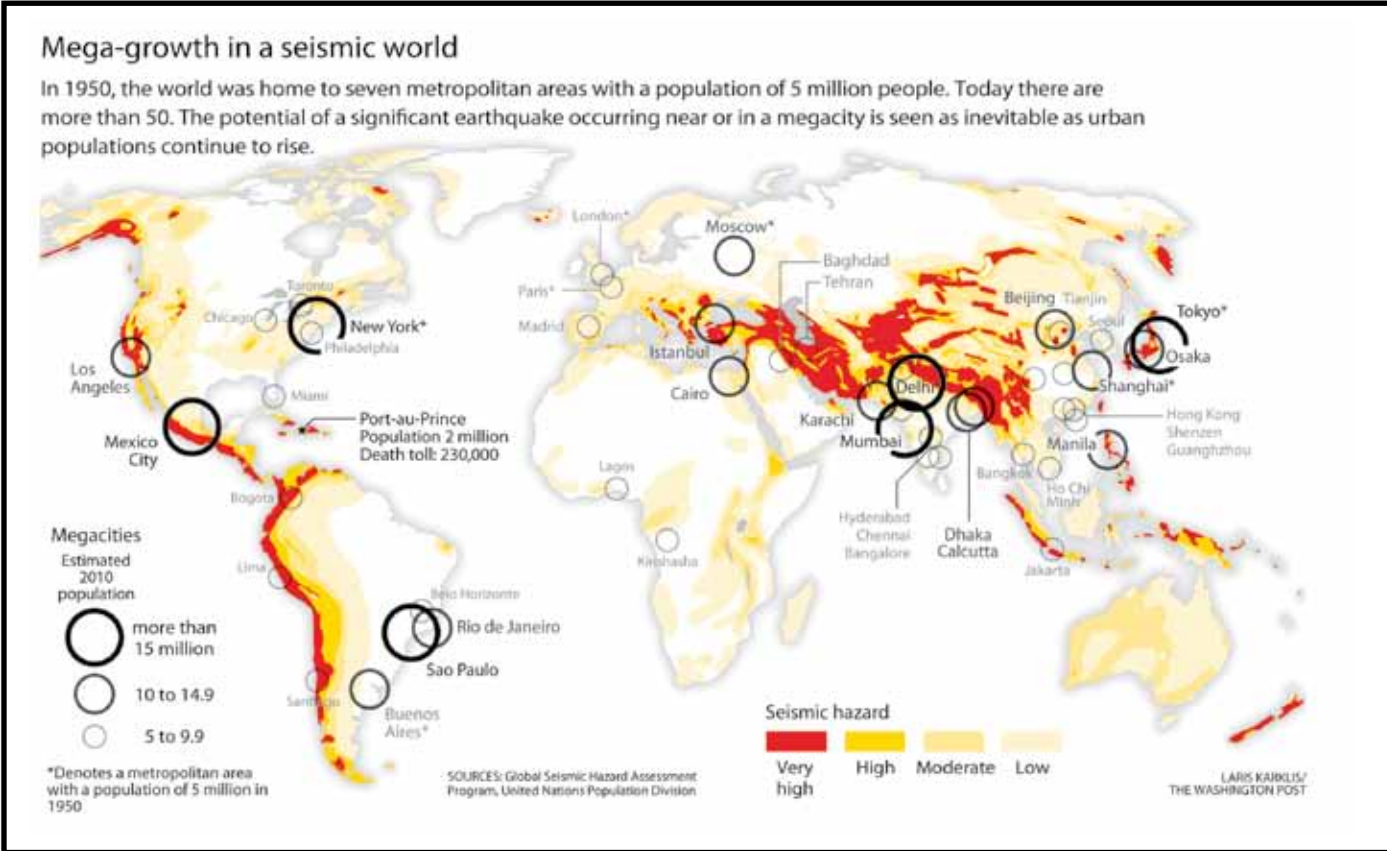
STORY BY JOEL ACHENBACH, WASHINGTON POST, PHOTO: EPA

Megacities are something new on the planet. Earthquakes are something very old. The two are a lethal combination, as seen in the recent tragedy in Port-au-Prince, where more than 200,000 people perished — a catastrophe that scientists say is certain to be repeated somewhere, and probably soon, with death tolls that once again stagger the mind. In 1800, there was just one city with more than a million people — Beijing. Now there are 381 urban areas with at least 1 million inhabitants. About 403

million people live in cities that face significant seismic hazard, according to a recent study by seismologist Roger Bilham, of the University of Colorado. The next Big One could strike Tokyo, Istanbul, Tehran, Mexico City, New Delhi, Kathmandu or the two metropolises near California's San Andreas Fault, Los Angeles and San Francisco. Or it could devastate Dhaka, Jakarta, Karachi, Manila, Cairo, Osaka, Lima or Bogota. The list goes on and on. "You can name about 25 cities that are like Port-au-Prince. They're not going to shake but every 250 years (on average). But if you can name 25 of them, you're going to have an event like this every 10 years," said David Wald, a seismologist with the U.S. Geological Survey. In many vulnerable cities, people are effectively stacked on top of one another in buildings designed as if earthquakes don't happen. That was fortunately not the case last weekend in Chile, where the country's experience with a massive, deadly earthquake in 1960 helped forge strong

building codes that enabled many buildings to survive a quake 500 times stronger than the one that occurred in Haiti. It is not the tremor that kills people in an earthquake but the buildings, routinely constructed on the cheap, using faulty designs and, in some cities, overseen by corrupt inspectors. The difference between life and death is often a matter of how much sand went into the cement or how much steel into a supporting column. Earthquakes might be viewed as acts of God, but their lethality is often a function of masonry. "In recent earthquakes, buildings have acted as weapons of mass destruction," Bilham writes in the journal Nature. For years, earthquake scientists have shouted their warnings about the strong likelihood that a major quake would level an impoverished city and kill hundreds of thousands of people. They have said, for example, that Nepal's Kathmandu, where masonry structures expand so hazardously that some eventually cantilever over narrow city streets, is every bit as vulnerable as the surrounding Himalayas are majestic. They have said that a million people could die in a major quake in Tehran, Iran. What's impossible, however, is knowing precisely which of these cities will be the next to crumble. Or when. For all practical purposes, scientists can't predict earthquakes. The theory of plate tectonics, largely developed since the 1960s, explains why earthquakes happen in general. The major plates of the earth's crust move

constantly, creeping along at about the speed of fingernail growth. They rarely move smoothly past one another but are usually locked in place. On a strike-slip fault of the type that ruptured in Haiti, strain builds on the fault line for decades or centuries. The fault in Haiti had not ruptured in 240 years. An earthquake is a sudden, stress-relieving event. The fault is said to "break." Scientists can map faults and estimate how much strain has accumulated since the last quake. What they can't do is say that a given fault will break tomorrow or next year or 10 years from now. Any calculation of earthquake probabilities has a lot of slop in the numbers. "The problem is, the slop is huge on a human time scale," said Susan Hough, a seismologist with the U.S. Geological Survey. "We're wired to deal with the immediate. We're not geared to plan and stress about things likely to happen in 30 years." Some large earthquakes have small precursors, called foreshocks, but others happen without warning. There is one famous case of earthquake prediction, in Haicheng, China, in 1975. A local official sounded the alarm after many foreshocks and reports of snakes emerging from hibernation. But no one foresaw the killer quake that took at least 240,000 lives in Tangshan in 1976. Port-au-Prince had not been hit with a major quake since the days of French rule in the 18th century. Only in recent years have scientists mapped the fault that runs near the city. "Just the beginning of work had been done. But enough was known that it could produce a big earthquake," said Carol Prentice, a geologist with the U.S. Geological Survey. "We knew it would be bad, but I didn't imagine that it would be this bad." Prentice had been to the island of Hispaniola and had studied a different, roughly parallel fault called the Septentrional, which runs along the island's northern edge. It had been difficult getting into Haiti, she said, so she and her fellow scientists focused their work on the Dominican Republic. That fault is another time bomb, threatening the Dominican city of Santiago, with a population of more than 1 million, Prentice said. The entire Caribbean is seismically active. So is much of Central America. The next Big One could be on the isthmus of Panama, where Panama City sits just six miles from a major fault that hasn't ruptured in four centuries, said Mary Lou Zoback, a seismologist who works for the California-based Risk Management Solutions. Or the next catastrophe could be in Caracas, Venezuela, where millions of people live in poverty near a boundary of two tectonic plates, including the one that created the fault that broke in Haiti. The last catastrophic quake was 198 years ago. Zoback said that relief groups have donated bricks to poor people in Caracas to help them build homes



but that unreinforced brick dwellings are death traps in an earthquake. Another seismic bull's-eye is Mexico City, which sits on the worst possible soil, a drained lake bed that will intensify seismic waves. The city also is in a basin in the mountains, which essentially traps the seismic waves. The devastating earthquake of 1985, which killed about 10,000 people, was centered hundreds of miles away but managed to ring Mexico City like a bell. Earthquakes can turn up closer to home than many Americans realize. Several major tremors have been recorded off the East Coast, including near Newfoundland in 1929 and Boston in 1755. Charleston, S.C., had a quake in 1886 that killed 60 people. Another hazard is right in the Mississippi River

small tremors that indicate that larger ones are possible. The good news is that a magnitude-6 earthquake should happen only every 670 years or so. A magnitude-7 tremor should happen every 3,400 years. That's the calculation by scientists at Columbia University who studied 383 much smaller tremors recorded in the New York area from 1677 to 2007. The bad news is that there is a massive amount of infrastructure built without earthquakes in mind. "A lot of old brownstones — they crumble well," Zoback said. Urbanization is a steady process. In the next half-century, the planet will add about 5 billion people and build about 1 billion housing units, Bilham estimates. The question is whether those people will live in buildings designed for a sometimes shaky world. ●

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The new U.S. Embassy in London



Having outgrown its 1960 embassy, a Kennedy-era modernist design by Eero Saarinen, the U.S. State Department has decided that London is too important to build one of its conventional insults to local sensibilities.

Sometime in 2013, a glass cube rising 12 tall levels atop a shrubbery-fringed mound and estimated to cost \$500 million will sprout on the south bank of the Thames.

U.S. Ambassador to the United Kingdom Louis Susman announced the selection of a design by the Philadelphia architect KieranTimberlake last week in London. The firm, known for adventurous, energy-conserving designs at Yale University and in Washington, beat big-name Pritzker Prize winners Richard Meier, Thom Mayne of Morphosis, and Pei Cobb Freed.

From renderings released by the State Department, the design looks like the architectural face of Obama-era diplomacy. The embassy is discreetly fortified and ambitiously, conspicuously green.

Diplomacy has been badly served by the last generation of embassies, in which security has trumped both utility and dignity. Repellent fortresses with pinprick windows set behind high walls in distant suburbs have become the rule.

Truck bombers dictate embassy design. To dissipate the force of explosions, the State Department insists on building setbacks of about 100 feet. No site large enough was affordable within central London, so State banished the embassy to an unglamorous



STORY BY JAMES S. RUSSELL, Bloomberg News

site on the south bank of the Thames near Vauxhall.

Amid a jumble of motley warehouses and isolated by a main rail line, the embassy will rise from a five-acre plot on Nine Elms Lane as the centerpiece of an 18-acre residential and commercial redevelopment by Ballymore Properties.

At least MI6, the British secret intelligence service, is close by.

Green is an easy architectural image-maker in a messy world, and firm principal James Timberlake pledges to deliver a building that is carbon neutral — an audacious goal.

The all-glass office block is a welcome contrast to the defensive crouch of most American embassies, though it looks as if it is covered in high-tech tufted upholstery.

The pliable plastic material, called ETFE, will stretch tent-like over rods projecting from the outside walls. It will form insulating pillows that taper into vertical and horizontal

tendency of birds to smash themselves into glass buildings has been taken into account.

With an additional array of PV panels on the roof and a heating and cooling system that uses organic matter for fuel, the building will be energy independent. It achieves carbon neutral status by supplying heat to the rest of the development at times and feeding surplus power into the grid.

The glass cube sits aloof on beefy columns atop a shrub-covered mound, which will be partly open to the public as a garden. The mound's mass can dissipate the explosive force of a car bomb, while avoiding the menacing walls and fences that deface so many consular facilities. A pond on the north side offers a pleasing amenity, while acting as another obstacle to would-be bombers and a heat sink for the biomass plant.

Visitors, guests, and visa seekers, some 1,100 a month, will enter through a security checkpoint in a grass-topped pavilion set into the mound to separate gun-toting wackos from the main building.

With so much attention devoted to the green features and security, the design does not coalesce into a persuasive statement about the United States. The beefy columns uneasily prop the cube's expression of technological prowess over the mound. The prettifying plantings can't fully disguise the mound's purpose as a bunker.

Even in less troubled times, embassy designs have tried on a variety of unconvincing architectural ideas of America, like anglicized Italian palaces or columned plantation houses. At Grosvenor Square, Saarinen unsuccessfully melded modernist openness, American informality, and old-fashioned dignity.

Of course, it's difficult to create a compelling statement when the United States's place in the world is hotly contested at home and its international intentions are debated everywhere. This ambivalent embassy perfectly sums up the extraordinarily difficult Obama moment. ●

Google's Trans-Siberian Express

Riding the exotic Trans-Siberian Express is one of those dreams that most of us have at some point, though few ever act upon it. But now, thanks to the convergence of Internet technologies and the seemingly boundless imagination of the folks at Google, time, distance, expense and logistical complications are no longer viable excuses for not trying it.

Seated at your own computer you can — figuratively — settle in to a first-class compartment, put your feet up, and watch as the vast land-ocean that is Russia slips by your window, along with its endlessly fascinating pageant of people and remote whistlestops.

Google-Russia's virtual, multi-platform Trans-Siberian experience covers the whole 150 hours, 5,753 miles and seven time zones, every inch of the journey rendered in glorious August daylight.

The entire route is geotagged, which means you can locate the train's exact spot at any moment on a Google map, or jump ahead to whatever point you desire. There's also an amazing photo gallery.

The magic moments are marked on the Website, like chapter headings. For many, these include crossing the Volga River at Nizhni Novgorod, coming into the Ural Mountains near Perm and, of course, the magnificent spectacle of Lake Baikal, the pristine lake at Asia's heart which contains 20 percent of the world's fresh water.

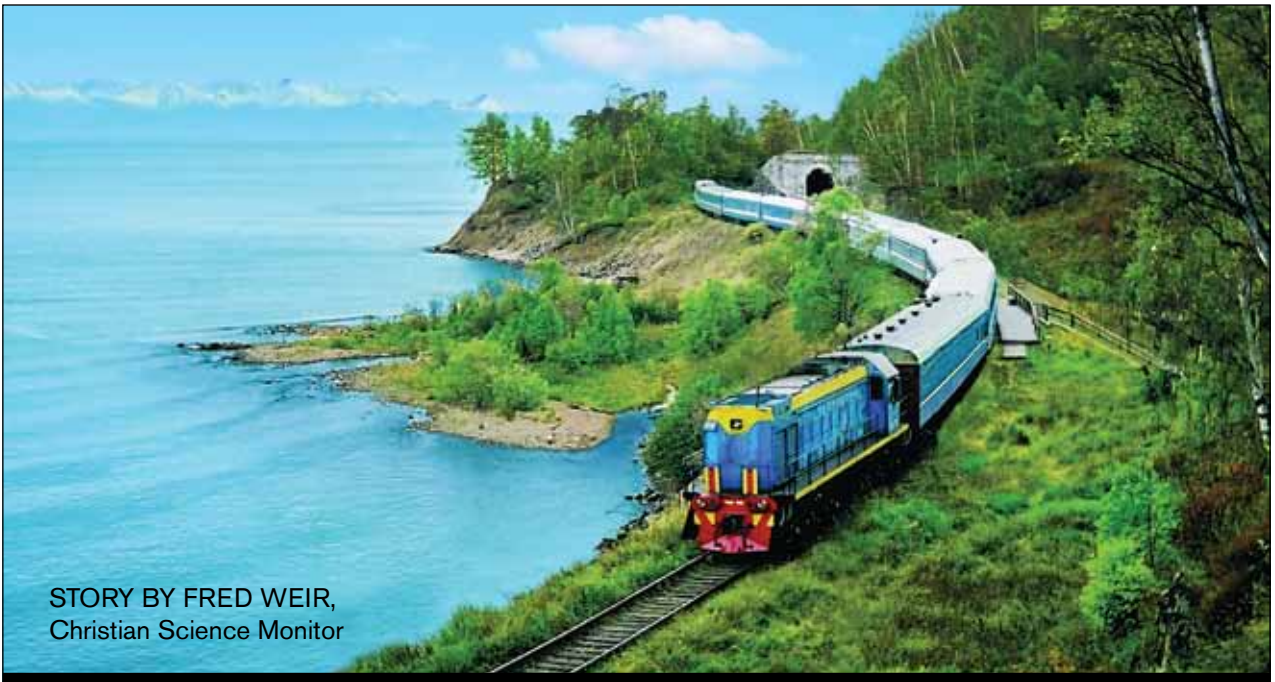
All the videos are archived on YouTube and accompanied by the soundtrack of rumbling train wheels.

The whole idea started as a scheme to interest Russians in traveling within their own country and English-language subtitles and directions were only added as an afterthought, says Google-Russia's PR manager Alla Zabrovskaya.

"Russians love to travel, but mostly they want to go to foreign countries," she says. "We thought it would be good to show them the beauties of Russia, and what better way than to recreate the world's longest train ride, which covers two continents and an amazing variety of natural wonders."

The whole thing took two Google teams a month to film last summer and Ms. Zabrovskaya says that, since they put it up earlier this month, the response has been overwhelming.

"We've gotten a lot of comment from Russian



STORY BY FRED WEIR, Christian Science Monitor

users, but we were a bit amazed when the reactions started pouring in from all over," she says. "Basically, people think this is really cool."

The train passes through 87 substantial Russian cities, and 14 of them have accompanying video tours conducted by a perky, but surprisingly erudite, blonde Russian DJ named Yelena Abitayeva.

Not so long ago it was illegal to make films from Russian trains, especially of strategic "objects" like bridges and ports.

But Russia's state-run railway company gave Google full assistance with this project, apparently in the hope that more Russians will decide to take the trip, which is one of the signature experiences of their own country. Currently, about three quarters

of the people who board the Trans-Siberian Express in Moscow each week are foreigners.

"This is the most famous train in Russia, it's the one we name the Rossiya, and we really hope that this Internet experience will be useful and inspirational for more people," says Sergei Slutskov, press secretary for Russian Railways. ●

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1. Going Postal

If there is one government agency whose health we worry about, it is the U.S. Postal Service.

The relationship between newspapers and the post office is as old as our country. Benjamin Franklin, the first postmaster general, was a newspaper publisher, and the U.S. postal system was created in large part to deliver newspapers.

We rely on the Postal Service to get more than 11,000 copies of this newspaper to every deliverable address on the barrier island every Thursday.

Because we do not charge a subscription fee for papers mailed to island residences, we are required to pay the more expensive Standard Mail rates rather than the subsidized Periodicals tariffs. Last year, we wrote checks to the Postal Service for more than \$120,000, which makes us one of Vero Beach's largest postal customers.

For the most part, our arrangement works just fine. We now bring the latest issue of **Vero Beach 32863** to the Vero Beach postal center each Wednesday, and it arrives in your mailbox each Thursday (if anyone reading this is not regularly getting it on Thursday, please let us know).

While we could save a fair bit of money by having independent carriers deliver the paper to you in those plastic bags you find in your driveway, many of you have told us you prefer the current method, and we plan to stick with the Postal Service.

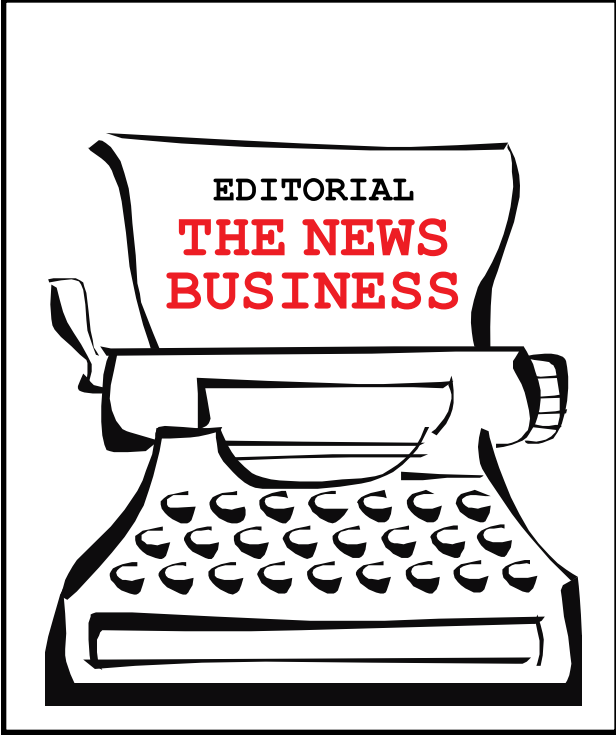
The big question, however, is how long the Postal Service will be sticking with us.

In case you missed the news, the U.S. Postal Service is in trouble. The government agency – which is required to support itself entirely from revenues it generates from postage and mail products and services – came up \$3.8 billion short in the last fiscal year.

One reason: Mail volume decreased by an unprecedented 12.7 percent – the largest single drop in history -- and is now back to 1964 levels. With email replacing old-fashioned letters, more and more people getting monthly statements and paying bills on line, and businesses hard hit by the recession cutting back on direct mail advertising, this trend – which began about eight years ago – is unlikely to reverse.

The U.S. Postal Service lost \$297 million in the last three months of 2009, and mail volume is projected to continue its decline at almost the same pace this year.

So what to do? The Postal Service is consoli-



2. On again, off again: Those red light cameras

Back a few months ago, we confused the Vero city government by supporting one of its ideas: namely, installation of red light cameras.

We think these may be the only hope of persuading drivers – one of whom almost nailed us Monday in a car that was as red as the light he ran at the intersection of the Barber Bridge and Indian River Boulevard – to pay some modest attention to traffic signals.

As recently as a couple of weeks ago, our understanding was that Vero was proceeding with plans to install them at four intersections – one of which apparently would have been the dangerous intersection of Indian River Boulevard and the Barber Bridge.

But now, we understand installation of the cameras is on hold – possibly a reaction to Circuit Court Judge Jerald Bagley's ruling last week in favor of a resident who claimed red light cameras in Aventura were unconstitutional.

That ruling, of course, holds no water anywhere outside of South Florida, but a number of cities are apparently planning to go slow on the cameras until they see whether the Legislature addresses this issue during the coming session.

But if, like County Commissioner and former Sheriff Gary Wheeler, you think these cameras are unnecessary and Orwellian, here are some interesting statistics from West Palm Beach – which just last week began fining the motorists it has been catching using red light cameras.

West Palm installed cameras at the same number of intersections contemplated by Vero – four – last November, and had been operating them on a demonstration basis since Nov. 21. In the subsequent three month period, these cameras recorded 17,349 events –which after the evidence was reviewed by police, resulted in issuance of 5,815 warnings.

We would find this number absolutely amazing if we hadn't for years marveled at the number of accidents one witnesses every day on Vero's city streets.

Now, we have some statistics that partially explain it. And if you believe that 5,815 motorists blasting through red lights at only four intersections in a three-month period isn't a problem, we hope we are not on the road when you next slide behind the wheel. ●

Class-size monster devours school budgets

BY KENRIC WARD, COLUMNIST

The \$16 billion gorilla known as Class Size Reduction is devouring school budgets across Florida.

Since the downsizing program was passed by voters in 2002, school districts have had to hire thousands of additional teachers and build hundreds of extra classrooms to meet the magical formula of 18 students per instructor in grades K-3; 22 in grades 4-8; and 25 in grades 9-12.

Though seemingly a well-intentioned way to manage classrooms -- and, naturally, a big hit with teacher unions who plumped their membership rolls -- the program has yet to prove its educational effectiveness. Research attempting to link smaller classes with greater academic achievement shows mixed results, at best.

But one thing is certain: Taxpayers are paying heavily for this experiment in scholastic engineering.

Adding to the insult, the state slapped Indian River County schools with a \$17,000 fine this year for missing the current class-size target by 0.44 of a student at Beachland Elementary. Yep, half a pupil.

Costs are scheduled to go up again next year if the formula ratchets up from a campuswide average to a classroom average. Officials estimate that tab will run at least \$350 million more statewide.

Superintendent Harry La Cava figures compliance will force the local district to expend an extra \$2 million to \$3 million for additional teachers next year (at a time of flat enrollment).

St. Lucie County schools have it even worse.

Superintendent Mike Lannon said the pending rules will require that more than 230 additional teachers be placed into classrooms and cost \$13 million.

"The only way to pay for this is to disassemble the current professional staff, reassign them and cost shift. Most of these teachers will not be experienced or qualified for these positions and the curriculum losses that will occur will destroy the arts, technologies, PE, career/technical and vocational programs, etc." Lannon says.

With the Legislature staring down a \$3 billion deficit and local property tax revenues tanking with the economy, it's time to stop the bleeding. Voters must apply the tourniquet.

Republican lawmakers want to put a referendum on the November ballot that would keep the current schoolwide averages in place and contain the cost spiral.

GOP leaders attempted to pass a freeze last year, but a solid bloc of Democrats (backed by teacher unions) and a half-dozen defecting Repub-

licans kept the measure from attaining the needed 60 percent of votes in the Senate.

The dynamics are different this year; two Democrats are co-sponsoring the modification and GOP members are more unified in support.

"Like the movie 'Groundhog Day,' the class-size issue keeps coming back every year," said Sen. Don Gaetz, R-Niceville, a former Okaloosa County school superintendent. "But what's different this year is that we've run out of years."

Gaetz figures to break last year's tie vote in the

Losing SROs would be scary, especially for teachers, who rely on uniformed officers to maintain a semblance of order at what might otherwise be chaotic campuses.

You'll recall that last fall three students were arrested for dealing drugs at the new Storm Grove Middle School. Another pupil was busted for wielding a 5 1/2-inch switchblade at Oslo Middle. And we're not even talking about the high schools here.

Ironically, class-size reduction was marketed as a magic bullet to improve schools. In reality, it's an



Senate and win over opponents by including a provision that prohibits individual classrooms from exceeding the caps by more than three students in K-3 and five in the higher grades.

As it is, only only 2 percent of schools statewide are out of compliance with the current standards.

Assuming Gaetz & Co. get the amendment on the ballot, Floridians should allow schools to take a breather -- and give themselves a break, too. Since schools consume more than half of local property tax collections, this is a no-brainer.

La Cava is bracing for the worst with proposed budget cuts that would, among other things, eliminate school resource officers.

ineffectual band-aid designed to cover up misguided policies that lump students of wildly divergent capacities.

Since "tracking" pupils by ability was no longer politically correct, teachers became overwhelmed by the dysfunctional diversity of their "heterogeneous" classrooms.

All the \$16 billion class-size initiative has done is raise the costs while perpetuating a failed experiment. But that, dear readers, is the subject for another column.

For now, the best Floridians can hope for is a reprieve from the class-size gorilla. Yet make no mistake: The monkey is still on our back. ●

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STORY BY JOE MATHEWS, WASHINGTON POST, PHOTO: EPA

The Hummer and Schwarzenegger: THEY PROBABLY WON'T BE BACK

General Motors' decision last week to shut down its Hummer brand is not merely one more sour note in a car-industry chorus of bail-outs and bad brakes. It also appears to be the final chapter of a star-crossed love story, an American marriage of one man and one machine that couldn't endure because of a hard truth: Even the biggest things don't stay big forever.

The man, Arnold Schwarzenegger, was responsible for bringing the machine, Hummer, to prominence.

Two decades ago, the movie star was instantly smitten as he watched a convoy of about 50 Humvees -- the Hummer's military forefather -- roll past the Oregon set of his film "Kindergarten Cop" on their way to a nearby military base.

Schwarzenegger identified with the vehicles. They were big, brash and boxy, and unapologetically so, and thus the perfect automotive avatar for Arnold. "Look at those deltoids; look at those calves," he would later say.

Schwarzenegger wanted one of his own, and he asked a friend who owned a body shop to purchase one on his behalf. But when the star's buddy tracked down executives at AM General, the military contractor that made the vehicles in a converted Indiana bus factory, they declined the request.

Humvees weren't street legal. AM General might be sued if the Terminator moved down some civilian as he drove to the grocery store in Pacific Palisades.

Unaccustomed to not getting what he desired, Schwarzenegger flew to South Bend and met with AM General executives. It was a complicated negotiation. Schwarzenegger wanted a military Humvee, with a camouflage paint job and a gun turret. Company officials balked.

Eventually -- and only after signing a very long waiver freeing AM General from liability -- the star bought a sand-colored Humvee that had been customized in Michigan to make it safe enough for L.A.'s boulevards.

Schwarzenegger wasn't satisfied, however, with procuring his own Humvee. He worked for months to convince AM General to redesign the vehicle for the civilian market. In October 1992, the first civilian Hummers were introduced. Schwarzenegger flew to Indiana to buy the first two off the assembly line.

In the beginning, the marriage of Hummer and Schwarzenegger was based on love, with mutual benefits. The star's fandom helped the big new vehicle gain attention, and the vehicle's popularity demonstrated the value of Schwarzenegger's judgment. Schwarzenegger and Hummer extended their brands together.

The relationship became less informal after General Motors bought the Hummer brand in 1999 and agreed to donate millions to Schwarzenegger's charitable foundation, which supported after-school programs in urban neighborhoods across the country.

An agreement around charity had obvious appeal. Each of the partners in the marriage -- Arnold and Hummer -- was trying to soften rough edges.

Schwarzenegger, through his work with after-school programs, was broadening his appeal to women and other demographics as he contemplated a political career. Hummer needed to sell more vehicles to women and quickly produced a new model, the H2, that was a little more comfortable and a little less rugged.

Schwarzenegger won the California governorship and Hummer sales grew rapidly, from about 20,000 in 2002 to more than 71,000 globally in 2006. But the pressures of political life strained the marriage.

The governor, seeking the votes of green-minded Californians, championed fuel efficiency and began converting his Hummers to run on alternative fuels. (He currently has four Hummers, three of which run on vegetable oil, biodiesel and hydrogen, respectively, according to a spokesman.)

By the end of his first term, Schwarzenegger was regularly being photographed with smaller, environmentally friendly vehicles and championing climate-change regulations.

There was no official divorce, but the man and the machine grew apart. The same political and cultural changes that made Schwarzenegger a jolly green giant undermined Hummer. GM sought to reinvent the brand with a new model in 2005, the H3, but the vehicle seemed diminished, so smooth and sleek that it was, by the muscular standards of the original Hummer, a bit girly.

With gas prices soaring, global sales for all Hummer models slumped to 66,261 in 2007 and 37,573 in 2008. GM tried last year to sell the brand to a Chinese company.

After the deal fell through, GM announced last week that it was killing the brand, barring an outside bid to buy it.

Schwarzenegger may need his own makeover. Just as Hummer lost its identity as its makers sought mainstream appeal, the governor became more political moderate than muscular star, a man of compromise in a time of partisan war. However responsible such a stance may be, there is a cost to giving up your horsepower.

In polls in recent months, majorities of Californians see Schwarzenegger as weak and ineffective. It's unclear what, if any, political future he may have. He will be forced from office by term limits at the end of this year, just as the last Hummers are being sold. ●

Is our political system broken?

On the day last week when President Obama was hosting his health-care summit -- and struggling to make a fractured political system work -- a quiet event was taking place on Capitol Hill that celebrated a moment when political will and idealism fused to produce the liberation of millions of people.

The gathering in the Capitol commemorated the address that Czech President Vaclav Havel made 20 years ago to a joint session of Congress in which he proclaimed his country's new freedom, and that of other previously captive nations of Eastern Europe, from the Soviet Union.

Havel gave a brilliant speech, perhaps most of all for its affirmation that political destiny is not fixed by material forces, as Soviet Marxists had claimed, but is a product of people and ideas.

At the center of the speech was this passage: "The salvation of this human world lies nowhere else than in the human heart, in the human power to reflect, in human meekness and in human responsibility."

I have in my study a little chunk of the Berlin Wall, which is a reminder that political life is not immutable. Empires, good and evil, arise in our world, and they fall, too, based largely on whether their political systems have the strength and suppleness to solve problems.

It was difficult last week to be sanguine about the health of American politics. Measured by the simple test of whether it can solve problems, the system isn't working.

Obama's struggle to pass health-care legislation is the most striking current example of this impasse. But the same dysfunction was evident when the administration of George W. Bush tried to pass a reasonably enlightened response to illegal immigration. Efforts to fix the system seem to vanish into the vortex of partisanship and special-interest corruption.

"History has accelerated," Havel said in his speech. That surely remains true, but it doesn't necessarily mean that it's moving forward. You can have reverse acceleration in politics, too.

This idea of accelerating decline is the subject of a powerful essay by Harvard historian Niall Ferguson in the latest issue of Foreign Affairs. His idea is that political empires are complex, adaptive systems in which small changes can produce disproportionately large differences in outcomes.

We think of the decline and fall of Rome, say, as taking place over a long period as decay rots through the system. But, in fact, says Ferguson, the process of decline can be sudden and convulsive.

The Roman Empire's final collapse "came within the span of a single generation," he says. The unraveling of the Ming dynasty "took little more than a decade." The Soviet Union's demise came less than five years after Mikhail Gorbachev took power promising to reform the system.

Ferguson's historical gloss is meant as an object lesson for the United States, of course. As the cover headline for his article warns ominously, "When the American empire goes, it is likely to go quickly."

I hear people worrying more and more that our political system is broken. Sen. Evan Bayh said it when he announced that he wouldn't run for reelection. Sen. John McCain said it often during his



STORY BY DAVID IGNATIUS
WASHINGTON POST,
PHOTO: EPA

President Obama
and Czech President
Vaclav Havel

long battle for campaign-finance reform. President Obama says it, one way or another, almost every week. It's the one thing that Democrats and Republicans seem to agree on.

And yet, it's the problem that nobody is able to fix: We've had waves of conservative and liberal resurgence over the past three decades. But the consistent trend amid these cycles, I would argue, is growing political dysfunction, no matter who is running Congress and the White House.

It's usually a mistake to bet against America, as financier Warren Buffett likes to say, given our flexible economy and adaptive political system. The American system seemed at an impasse in the years before the Civil War, and again during the presidency of Herbert Hoover, and once again during the presidency of Jimmy Carter. But it survived these crises and went on to prosper as never before.

Havel described America's special gift this way: "You

have thousands of problems of all kinds, as other countries do. But you have one great advantage: You have been approaching democracy uninterrupted for more than 200 years."

But the system doesn't guarantee success. Good nations can go into decline, too, when they lose their ability to respond to trouble.

Obama tried a new approach Thursday to breaking the logjam, gathering both parties around one big table. He makes a good prime minister, but the party of inertia is strong. ●

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The make-believe of U.S. politics

BY AMITY SHLAES, BLOOMBERG NEWS

There is a make-believe quality to modern American politics: People -- and this applies across the political spectrum -- say things that are stupid, misleading or unattainable and think (or pretend) that these very same things are desirable, candid and realistic. A disconnect between the language of politics and the nation's actual problems is growing. The politics of the budget offer a splendid example.

On the right, we have conservatives clamoring for tax cuts when, as a practical matter, today's massive budget deficits preclude permanent new tax cuts. With present policies and a decent economic recovery, the federal government could easily spend \$12 trillion more than it collects in taxes from 2009 to 2020, reckons the Congressional Budget Office.

So before reducing taxes, the tax cut advocates need to identify hundreds of billions of annual spending reductions -- or accept huge and hazardous annual deficits. Naturally, a comprehensive list

On the left, President Obama and Democrats have spent the last year arguing that, despite the government's massive deficits and overspending, they can responsibly propose even more spending. Future deficits are to be ignored (present deficits, to be sure, partially reflect the economic slump).

The proposal is "responsible" because it's "paid for" through new taxes and spending cuts. Even if these financing sources were completely believable (they aren't), the logic is that the government can undertake new spending before dealing with the consequences of old spending. Of course, most households and businesses can't do this.

Politicians can, because it's all make-believe. They pretend to deal with budget deficits when they aren't. Just recently, the Democratic Congress passed a new version of the "pay-go" budget rule. Under pay-go, if Congress cuts taxes or increases spending beyond present policies, it must find offsets by raising taxes or cutting spending elsewhere. This seems a prudent discipline, and Obama bragged about being "responsible."

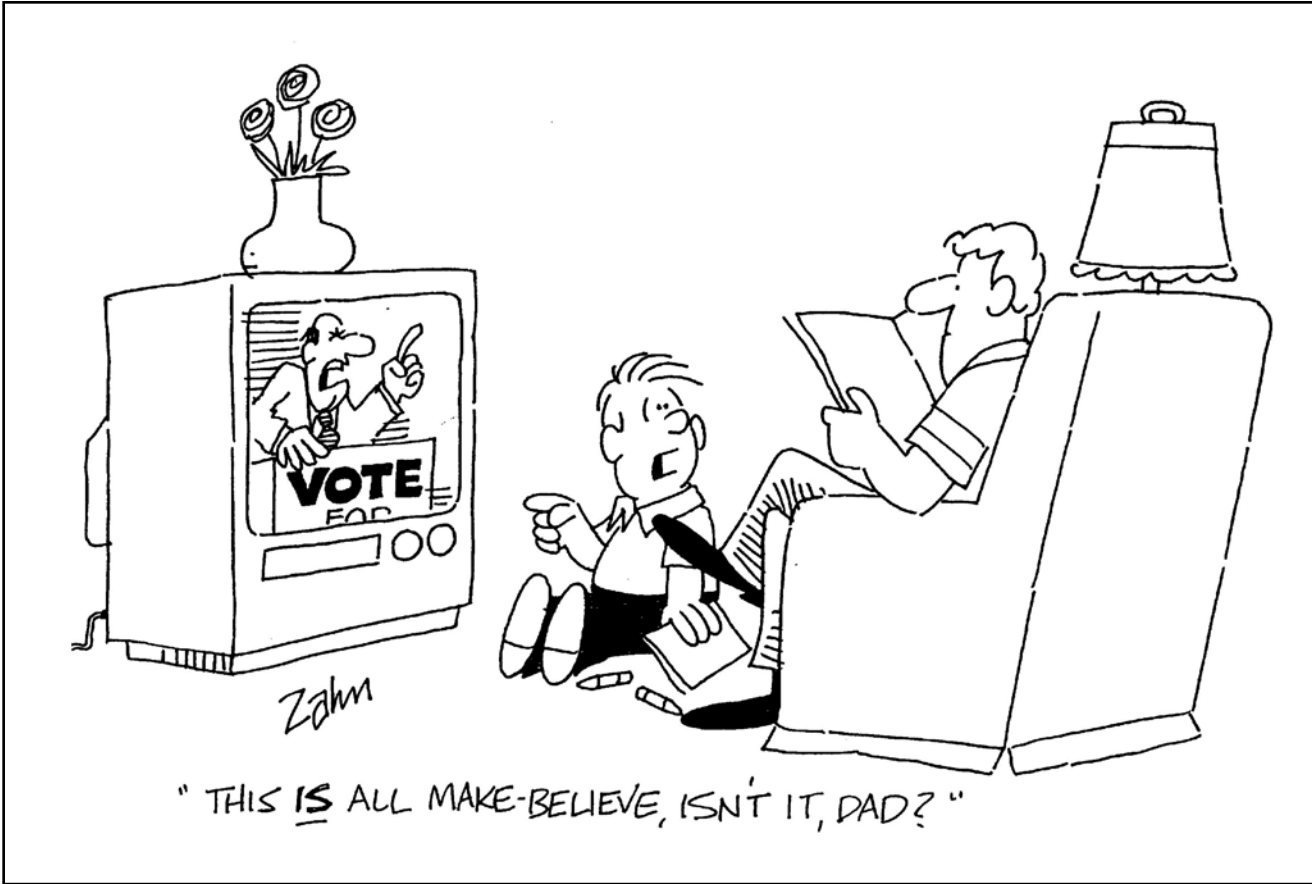
What he didn't say is that this new pay-go contains huge exceptions. These include the renewal of most of the Bush tax cuts, revisions of the alternative

minimum tax, higher Medicare reimbursements for doctors, and overhaul of the estate tax. Over the next decade, these exceptions could be worth about \$2.5 trillion, says Marc Goldwein of the Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget.

Or take the 18-member presidential bipartisan budget commission (10 Democrats and eight Republicans) charged with reining in the long-term deficits.

la-la politics of both left and right evade choices and substitute for them pleasing fictional visions. Despite a theoretical argument for focusing on the non-inter-est deficit, it's mostly an excuse for expediency.

It spares the commission from grappling with the huge growth of Social Security and Medicare -- the main causes for expanding federal spending and deficits. Similarly, the right's crusade for more tax cuts



If 14 members agree on a deficit-reduction package, Democratic congressional leaders have said they'd put the plan to an up-or-down vote. The obstacles to agreement are considerable. But if they're overcome -- and if Congress accepts the package -- you might reasonably conclude that, finally, we'd be suppressing chronic deficits. Not so.

The commission's official task is more modest: It's to eliminate the deficit in 2015, disregarding

interest payments. This makes a big difference. By the administration's projections, the budget deficit in 2015 will total \$752 billion. Of that, interest payments represent \$571 billion. Even if the commission succeeds, the deficit would exceed half a trillion dollars. It would almost certainly grow in future years.

Governing is about making choices. By contrast, the

conveniently ignores the savage cuts in these programs that would be required to justify lower taxes.

The common denominator is a triumph of electioneering over governing. Every campaign is an exercise in make-believe. All the good ideas and good people lie on one side. All the "special interests," barbarians and dangerous ideas lie on the other.

There's no room for the real world's messy ambiguities, discomforting contradictions and unpopular choices. But to govern successfully, leaders must confront precisely those ambiguities, contradictions and choices.

The make-believe of campaigns now increasingly shapes the process of governing. Whether this reflects cable TV and the Internet -- which reward the harsh hostility of extreme partisanship -- or the precarious balance between the two parties or something else is hard to say. But the disconnect between policy and the real world is harmful. Proposals tend to be constructed more for their public relations effects than for their capacity to solve actual problems.

The result is a paradox. This electioneering style of governing strives to bolster politicians' popularity. But it does the opposite. Because partisan rhetoric creates exaggerated expectations of what government can do, people across the ideological spectrum are routinely disillusioned. Because actual problems fester -- and people see that -- public trust of political leaders erodes. ●

Obama chases European mirage

BY AMITY SHLAES, BLOOMBERG NEWS

“That’s how they do it in Europe.” This is the biggest conceit behind the reform plans President Barack Obama took to the health-care summit with Republicans last week.

Democrats, for example, assume that even if their consumer-rules proposals such as creating a health-insurance rate authority are recognized as the price controls they are, the proposal is still passable.

That’s because European health-care systems have the equivalent of price controls -- namely, curtailments in supply. Yet the region’s hospitals still appear to be functioning, at least when viewed from the other side of the ocean.

Europe has also been on the minds of federal and state policy makers as they try to prune down commercial banks to a simple deposit-taking function like postal accounts in Germany or Japan.

But emulating Europe isn’t a worthy project. For one thing, Europe is in more trouble than its currency suggests. The region’s entitlement and pension burdens exceed those of the United States. Greece’s fiscal crisis reminds us that the euro is more vulnerable than our own challenged dollar.

But here’s the interesting reason copying Europe won’t work: Europe only functions as well as it does because it in turn copies the U.S. Their longstanding dance has had only two steps: the U.S. generates ideas, and then Europe implements them.

The person with perhaps the most insight into this is David Audretsch, who studies the quality of economic growth. Audretsch directs the Institute for Development Strategies at Indiana University and has been affiliated with Germany’s Max Planck Institute of Economics.

When it comes to Europe watching America, he says, “It’s monkey see, monkey do.”

Three data sets supply some evidence. Between 1980 and 2000, the United States consistently spent a larger share of its economy on nondefense research and development than France, Italy, Germany, or Britain. The gap in overall research and development between the U.S. and European nations has stayed constant during the past 10 years.

Patent rates are a second measure of innovation. Between 2002 and 2008, the annual number of patents granted in Germany was about 11,000. California alone produces twice as many.

In 2008, the U.S. saw 92,000 patents granted, about the same number as the rest of the world.

This fruitfulness benefits the rest of the world in meaningful ways. Non-governmental organizations complain about the prices U.S. companies charge for HIV drugs. But the NGOs wouldn’t be able to dispense AIDS drugs at all if U.S. pharmaceutical companies hadn’t invented them.



Why do Europeans want to go here... and not here? (Harvard vs. Cambridge)

Third, there’s the quality of European and U.S. universities, which is harder to quantify. Anecdotal-ly, we know the reality: nothing American -- not an East Side two-bedroom apartment in Manhattan, not a condo by the slope in Utah’s Deer Valley, not even U.S. citizenship -- is coveted more by Europe’s professional class than getting their children admitted into an Ivy League college.

The Times of London gives four British universities high spots in its ranking but the top of the field is dominated by U.S. schools.

Webometrics, a research group based in Spain, sought to measure universities’ influence and quality by analyzing their presence on the Web, looking at both research papers and less formal scholarly communication. In the Webometrics ranking, the top 26 schools are American. Cambridge University is No. 27.

There’s no point in bragging about any of this.

For one thing, the rest of the world is catching up to the U.S. in the patents department. In the future Japan and Korea might supplant the U.S. as the main source of Europe’s supply of innovative ideas.

Still the issue is now, not later, and preserving whatever innovative capacity the U.S. retains. That means that the federal government not tax consumers extra for purchases of brand name drugs, and not raise taxes on higher earners, as the Obama suggests. Higher earners after all are generally the same folks who develop patent-worthy products.

It also means keeping taxes low by abolishing tax-

es on capital gains and on interest and by adopting the lower tax rates proposed by Rep. Paul Ryan, R-Wis.

We also need to reaffirm the right to intellectual property. One related move that powered the U.S. economic engine over time was the little noticed passage of the 1980 Bayh-Dole Act, a law co-sponsored by Bob Dole and Birch Bayh that made it easier for academics and universities -- not the government -- to own ideas researchers developed while at publicly funded universities. Scientists cite Bayh-Dole as an event that changed their lives.

U.S. Democrats and European Social Democrats communicate in their closed circuit, not allowing facts like Greece’s implosion to penetrate. Still, the realities are ones even they eventually will realize.

Economic Europe is a mirage that fades even further even as we walk toward it. And that Euro economy the commentators covet was invented in the U.S. ●

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Punishing responsible borrowers

President Obama called it a landmark consumer protection measure that will put an end to credit card companies’ “deceptive, unfair tactics that hit responsible consumers with unreasonable costs.” The truth is, unfortunately, the opposite: The Credit Card Accountability Responsibility and Disclosure Act (CARD) rules that took effect last week will harm responsible consumers.

Once again, the law of unintended consequences will trump good intentions.

By limiting the lenders’ ability to charge higher interest rates and fees to riskier borrowers, the law will result in lenders treating borrowers with poor credit ratings and a history of late payments almost the same as borrowers with solid credit ratings who pay off their credit card charges on time. This will, in effect, penalize responsible consumers.

While the law limits a credit-card issuer’s ability to raise interest rates after a consumer becomes a customer, it does nothing to prevent lenders from charging high interest rates up front.

There is a reason why credit cards carry high interest rates. Credit cards provide loans that are convenient for borrowers and risky for lenders. Borrowers can get loans up to their credit limit on the spot.

On top of this, these loans are unsecured. Should a borrower default, the lender cannot seize any property for repayment. And credit-card bal-

ances can be completely discharged in bankruptcy. Even with credit reports, credit-card companies cannot distinguish bad borrowers from good ones with a sufficient degree of certainty before credit is granted. This was not a major problem for lenders when they could swiftly raise a cardholder’s interest rate after finding the borrower to be a higher risk



(when he or she makes a late payment, for example).

The Credit CARD Act, however, outlaws this “try and see” approach, but does nothing to change the risk associated with credit-card loans. To recapture this revenue, credit-card companies are making changes that affect all borrowers, both responsible and risky ones.

For instance, responsible consumers may face higher interest rates and fees than they paid previously. Some will have to pay new or increased annual fees. And some may see their credit-card bonus features, such as rebates or airline miles, reduced.

Many credit-card companies have already made these changes, in advance of the law going into effect. According to CreditCards.com, the national average interest rate on new credit-card offers topped 14 percent – the highest level since they began tracking rates in 2007 – in the weeks leading up to the law’s implementation.

A December 2009 survey by ComScore found that 53 percent of credit-card owners had been notified of interest rate increases, 26 percent had their credit limit decreased, 21 percent were told of increased fees, and 17 percent had rewards programs changed.

Citibank recently told cardholders to expect a \$60 annual fee starting April 1.

Credit-card companies also may raise merchant fees.

If they do, merchants will probably pass on their added costs to consumers by raising prices.

In the end, if there’s one thing you can bank on, it’s this: The Credit CARD Act – billed as a consumer protection measure – will strip away the benefits of being a responsible borrower and lessen credit availability for all. Laughably, Congress and the White House are taking credit for taking away your credit. ●



university he attended, in the town where he grew up. That’s about it for public speaking.

Princeton is McPhee’s “fixed foot.” From here, he has traveled the world writing stories about “real people doing real things.” On a winter afternoon, snow threatening, he gives a tour of the campus.

Nassau Hall, built in 1756, served as the United States Capitol for six months. George Washington presided over Congress here. Reunion Hall is where John F. Kennedy lived as a freshman, and here is a building where a

ghostly John Nash can still be seen. Then there’s the personal tour: the church where his mother took him after he was caught playing poker all night in college; John Henry House, where he has taught since 1975.

McPhee’s office is in a fake medieval turret high in the geology building. There are five vertical windows perfect for crossbows. One climbs past globes and rock samples and maps of the universe to arrive in the room where he writes most days and meets with students. “Don’t forget to lock your door when you leave to go home,” reads a note one of McPhee’s four daughters, Martha, wrote in 1975.

The geologist Eldridge Moores (about whom McPhee writes in “Assembling California”) worked on his PhD in this room in the 1950s. When McPhee first took possession, there was no heat but that was all right -- he just left the door open and the heat was sucked up from the lower floors. His computer, named Isobel after one of his grandchildren, looks like it might have come with the room.

McPhee admits that he is writing more about his memories. The new collection’s title essay, about his mother, was written in 1996, a year before she died at age 100. In 1984, within a few months of his father’s death, he jotted the words “bamboo rod” on a piece of paper, which became a folder, which became the essay that appeared in the New Yorker.

McPhee, who nor-

BOOK REVIEWS

mally bicycles 15 to 16 miles every other day for exercise and is rarely idle, blames recent hand surgeries, with the attendant resting and medication required, for the fault line that has opened up.

“I just started writing. I guess I’m not used to all that spare time,” he says, surprised. “I usually know where I’m going with a story. A novelist can feel her way with a story, but that’s not the case in nonfiction. It’s a central theme of the course I teach: Know where you’re going.”

Two of McPhee’s four daughters, Jenny and Martha, are novelists; Laura is a photographer; and Sarah is an architectural historian (“the real scholar,” he says). Martha, who has written quite a bit about her childhood, has encouraged her father to write more autobiographical pieces, to open up and enjoy himself.

He marvels at his writing daughters. “I’ll call Jenny up and say, do you have any ideas for your next novel? ‘I finished it last week,’ she’ll say. She’s like me. She believes in *fait accompli*.”

McPhee is slender, dressed in a deep blue button-down shirt, a fleece vest and running/hiking shoes. He can’t explain the memories. “Ideas go by by the zillions,” he reflects. “What makes us fasten on one?”

Many of his interests were formed at a summer camp called Keewaydin, where his father went each summer as camp doctor; McPhee would spend his time canoeing and swimming. He has written about Keewaydin in the past, and returns there in this new collection, in an essay titled “Swimming With Canoes.” Here, he remembers capsizing in fast water in a Vermont gorge, getting his foot stuck in the stern and riding safely in the air pocket created by the overturned canoe.

McPhee has described writing as “mind-fracturing, self-enslaved labor.” Each day, he says, brings a “new form of writer’s block.” He elaborates: “You suspend the normal world to reproduce the normal world. It is a suspension of ordinary life.”

And the writer loves language, strange words, the names of things. McPhee spent 20 years on his geological portrait of America, “Annals of the Former World,” for which he won the Pulitzer Prize in 1999. He has had a great deal of fun with the language of geology, as well as that of sports, which infuses his first book, “A Sense of Where You Are,” about basketball player Bill Bradley, and his 1969 book on tennis, “Levels of the Game.”

P52 ➔

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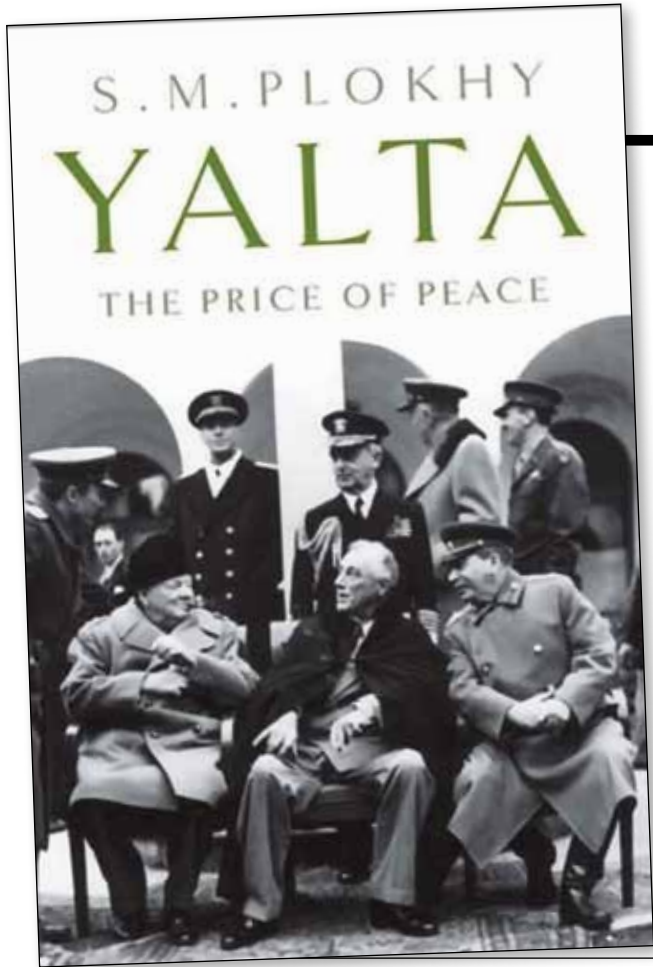
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BOOK REVIEWS

Beyond language, he hopes for good characters and a dramatic climax. He also places a high priority on getting the facts straight. “People say the line is blurred,” he says. “But a fact is either checkable or it isn’t.”

McPhee writes three or four drafts of each piece, spending about two years on the first draft, four months on the second, one month on the third and one week on the fourth. He writes everything down. During a visit to the Netherlands with Martha’s family, one of her children asked, “Why was granddaddy writing all those notes?”

“The creative person in this process,” McPhee says, “is the reader, by a long shot. The writer supplies three or four words, but the reader makes the picture.” And McPhee values his readers. He will not condescend to them. He has a horror of the obvious, the not subtle, the over-explained.





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This is one reason McPhee was fortunate to find a home, in 1965, at the New Yorker. He acknowledges his great luck, having William Shawn as his editor, for a magazine that had just published John Hersey’s “Hiroshima” and Rachel Carson’s “Silent Spring.” He has sympathy for today’s students who have fewer and fewer venues. As for newspapers: “Every morning I walk down the driveway to pick up the newspaper. I’m an older person. And I’m still walking up the driveway.”

As for posterity, “nothing is forever,” says the chronicler of geologic time. He doesn’t think about his papers or his legacy. “If everybody saved everything,” he says of his many drafts (which he calls “entrails”), “the world would be cluttered up with stuff.” He gets as close to heated as one could expect to see in a quiet man. “Preservation of the creative process,” he mutters. “Enough to sink a ship.”

He follows an elaborate warren of hallways through various buildings -- paleontology, microbiology, biology, and passes the building where Lewis Thomas worked. “He once wrote me a note,”

Like Munich, Yalta is much more than the name of a place: It’s shorthand for a pivotal historical event with all the loaded emotional baggage of its consequences.

While Munich stands for appeasement to Hitler, Yalta stands for, in the most charitable interpretation, the West’s reluctant acquiescence to Stalin’s takeover of Poland and most of Eastern Europe -- or, to harsher critics, outright betrayal. Either way, Yalta set the stage for the division of the continent and the ensuing Cold War.

Harvard historian S.M. Plokhy has provided a rich new narrative of the eight days of meetings in the Crimean resort between Joseph Stalin, Franklin D. Roosevelt and Winston Churchill in February 1945.

Drawing upon formerly secret Soviet documents and reports and memoirs from all three sides, he brings the conference and its key players to life, making a familiar story feel lively and fresh.

But he is far less successful in his goal of “peeling off the accretion of multiple layers of Cold War myth” about Yalta -- especially when it comes to his attempt to vindicate FDR’s performance there.

What Plokhy labels myth is, in fact, the conventional view of Yalta that is largely supported by his own version of events. As he points out, the ailing Roosevelt made a fundamental mistake on his way to Yalta. Meeting Churchill in Malta, he refused to discuss a common strategy since he didn’t want Stalin to think that the Western leaders had “ganged up” on the Soviet leader.

As Foreign Sec-

McPhee recalls, “describing a day when, as a young student, he thought he was dying and went to see my father, who examined him and said, ‘Thomas, you are hung over. Go back to your room.’ “

McPhee might be scornful of posterity and humble about longevity, but he remains awed by words. When his father lay dying in a Baltimore hospital, McPhee “began to talk,” he wrote in the New Yorker. “In my unplanned, unprepared way, I wanted to fill the air around us with words, and keep on filling it.”

“The thing that will not go away,” McPhee tells his students, when asked about the future of reading and writing, “is books. Everything I’m doing is rooted in the idea that there are no two writers alike; no one will write the way you do. You are dealing with yourself. The voice you are fighting to develop is your own.” ●

Silk Parachute by John McPhee, Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 228 pp., \$25. Reviewed by Susan Salter Reynolds Los Angeles Times

retary Anthony Eden complained to FDR aide Harry Hopkins, this meant that the Americans and the Brits went into the conference with no agreement on “how to handle matters with a Bear who would certainly know his mind.”

Roosevelt’s other miscalculation was his longstanding belief that personal diplomacy could make Stalin more accommodating. The Soviet dictator was only too happy to play the gracious host to reinforce his guest’s predisposition.

Roosevelt did secure two key commitments from Stalin: The Soviet Union would enter the war against Japan after Germany’s defeat, and it would join the United Nations. On the central issue of Poland, Stalin didn’t yield anything meaningful. The Soviet leader explained that, unlike tsarist Russia, he wasn’t seeking to wipe Poland off the map.

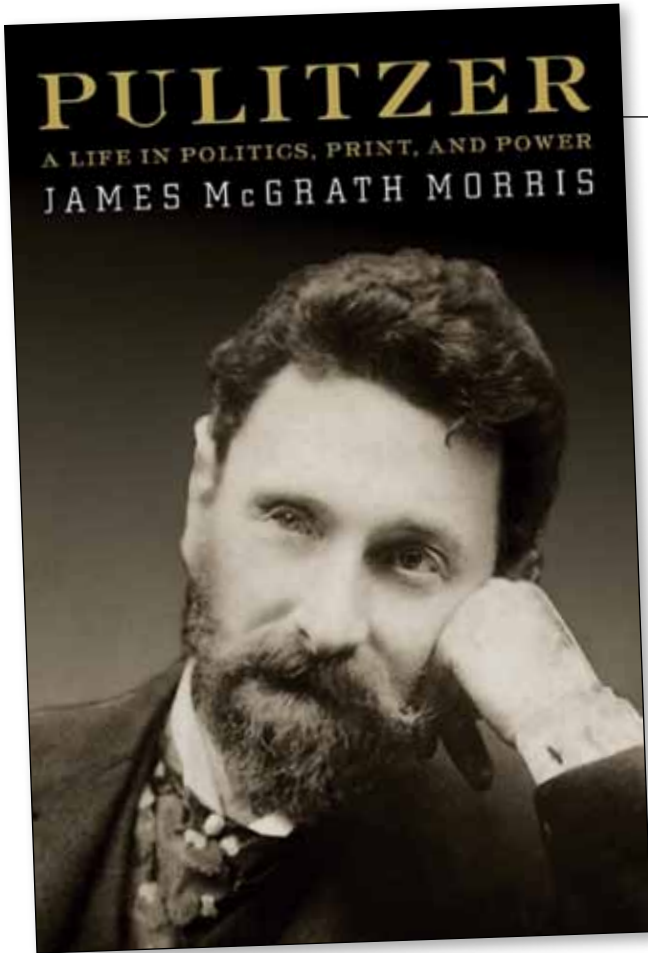
Instead, he would settle for seizing eastern Poland. And he insisted on installing a communist regime to replace the London-based Polish government-in-exile.

Plokhy maintains that there was little the Western leaders could have done to change that outcome, since Soviet troops were already in control of Eastern Europe. That’s a familiar argument, not easy to dismiss. Plokhy’s mistake is to go one giant step further by asserting that Yalta ensured “some elements of political pluralism” in Poland.

In reality, Poland’s new communist rulers, backed fully by their Soviet masters, ruthlessly persecuted opposition leaders, terrorized their supporters and falsified the results of the parliamentary elections of January 1947, proclaiming an “overwhelming” victory.

Elsewhere, though, he harbors few illusions about what the conference’s terms meant for Poland and others. His attempt to paint FDR in a more positive light looks more like a strained effort to offer a catchy new take than a serious revisionist thesis. Nonetheless, Plokhy’s book makes for compelling reading -- for its details and drama, not its conclusions. ●

Yalta by S.M. Plokhy, Viking, 451 pp., \$29.95. Reviewed by Andrew Nagorski, Book World



No doubt I will not be the only one to remark upon the timing of this excellent book: a thorough, possibly definitive biography of the man who shaped the modern newspaper more than anyone else -- being published at the precise moment when the modern newspaper is staring into the abyss.

Joseph Pulitzer is principally known now for the prizes he created in his own name, but during his reign at the New York World from 1883 until his death in 1911, he was the colossus of American journalism.

In time, William Randolph Hearst eclipsed him, and the legacy of Adolph Ochs, publisher of the New York Times, has been more constructive, but one can only wonder how Pulitzer would have responded to the crisis in which the business he loved is now embroiled. There have been other biographies of Pulitzer, most notably W.A. Swanberg’s published in 1967, but James McGrath Morris’s is the best.

It is authoritative, lucid and fair to its complicated subject, and it draws upon a certain amount of “items previously unavailable to other biographers,” most notably an unpublished memoir by Pulitzer’s younger brother, Albert, and love letters to Pulitzer’s wife, Kate. The first of these tells us a bit more about Pulitzer’s boyhood, and the second simply adds a bit of juice to his story.

Pulitzer was born Jewish in Hungary in 1847, but he soon left both Hungary and Judaism behind. His family was well-to-do, if not rich, and escaped much of the anti-Semitism that was widespread in Europe at that time, but at the age of 17 he set out for the United States.

He served in the Union Army during the last year of the Civil War, and at its end he made his way to St. Louis, which had a large, influential and prosperous German population. From the outset he was in thrall to “his sense of wonder at American politics, his absolute faith in democracy, and his youthful idealism,” and he found work at the German-language Westliche Post at a time when “politics and journalism were two

sides of the same coin.”

He was ambitious, driven and single-minded. He rose rapidly at the Westliche Post, by 1872 becoming a co-owner of the paper, and he had political successes as well: He served one term in the Missouri state legislature.

At the time, his politics were strongly Republican, but corruption in the Grant administration helped move him toward the Democrats, to whom he remained fairly consistently loyal for the rest of his life. His English quickly became fluent, though he spoke with an accent, and he developed a vigorous, at times bombastic prose style.

Not merely were politics and journalism intertwined in those days, but the line between reporting and editorializing was thin; Pulitzer always saw his newspapers as instruments through which to gain power, and he used them accordingly.

Inevitably, Pulitzer’s ambitions led him to the English-language press. In 1878 he purchased the Dispatch, “a struggling evening paper in St. Louis,” because “he was convinced that evening papers had a great future.”

That seems a cruel joke today, but Morris notes: “He was right. The advent of the telegraph and faster printing presses made it possible to publish an afternoon newspaper with news as fresh as that day, making morning papers look as if they were publishing yesterday’s news.”

Almost immediately, he maneuvered a merger with the Post, and thus was born what became one of the most famous and respected newspapers in the country, the St. Louis Post-Dispatch.

New York was “the center of American journalism and politics,” Morris writes, and “Pulitzer wanted in.” He risked everything he had to buy the World, and he made the gamble pay off, eventually making the World “the most widely read newspaper in American history.”

He did so by turning it into a people’s newspaper: “Pulitzer had an uncanny ability to recognize news in what others ignored. He sent out his reporters to mine the urban dramas that other papers confined to their back pages. They returned with stories that could leave no reader unmoved.”

He “pushed his writers to think like Dickens, who wove fiction from the sad tales of urban Victorian London, to create compelling entertainment from the drama of the modern city.” He was anything except a common man, but he had the common touch:

“In the Lower East Side’s notorious bars, known as black and tans, or at dinner in their cramped tenements, men and women did not discuss society news, cultural events, or happenings in the investment houses. Rather, the talk was about the baby who fell to his death from a rooftop, the brutal beating that police officers dispensed to an unfortunate waif, or

BOOK REVIEWS

the rising cost of streetcar fares to the upper reaches of Fifth Avenue and the mansions needing servants.

“The clear, simple prose of the *World* drew in these readers, many of whom were immigrants struggling to master their first words of English. Writing about the events that mattered in their lives in a way they could understand, Pulitzer’s *World* gave these New Yorkers a sense of belonging and a sense of value.”

Over the years, experience inclined him toward cynicism, yet he never lost his idealism. In 1889, at the dedication of the *World*’s new building on Park Row, he declared:

“God grant that this structure be the enduring home of a newspaper forever unsatisfied with merely printing news, forever fighting forms of wrong, forever independent -- forever advancing in enlightenment and progress, forever wedded to truly democratic ideas, forever aspiring to be a moral force, forever rising to a higher plan of perfection as a public institution.”

That he believed these words is beyond question, but soon enough he found himself dragged into the mud. In 1895 Hearst bought the anemic New York Journal and immediately made it, and himself, the champion of sensationalist, or “yellow,” journalism. He dragged the *World* into a price war, and he won it.

He also compelled the *World* into a screaming match that helped lead the United States into the Spanish-American War, a wholly unnecessary and foolish conflict but one that was very good for the Journal’s circulation.

By this time, Pulitzer was almost entirely an absentee owner-editor. Pulitzer’s marriage was unhappy -- he was brusque, demanding, often lacerating in his verbal cruelty to Kate and their children -- and so was his life.

For a while he had been something of a political kingmaker, but by the early 20th century that was in the past.

At his death, the newspaper he loved so much had less than two decades to live under its own name, and it finally died in 1967 as part of the pathetic *World Journal Tribune*. ●

Pulitzer: A Life in Politics, Print, and Power by James McGrath Morris, Harper, 558 pp., \$29.99. Reviewed by Jonathan Yardley, Book World

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Chess COLUMN

WOMEN'S WORLD CHESS CHAMP TO PLAY 50 GAMES AT THE SAME TIME
BY HUMBERTO CRUZ - CHESS COLUMNIST

How cool is that? The morning after her 26th birthday, Miami resident and reigning women's world chess champion Alexandra Kosteniuk will play 50 people at once during the 17th annual Space Coast Open Chess Festival next month.

Grandmaster Kosteniuk, known for her popular "Chess is Cool" podcasts at www.kosteniuk.com, will begin the simultaneous at 8 a.m. Saturday, April 24 at the Crowne Plaza Melbourne Oceanfront Resort and Spa in Indialantic. The event will take place during the annual Space Coast Open tournament that weekend.

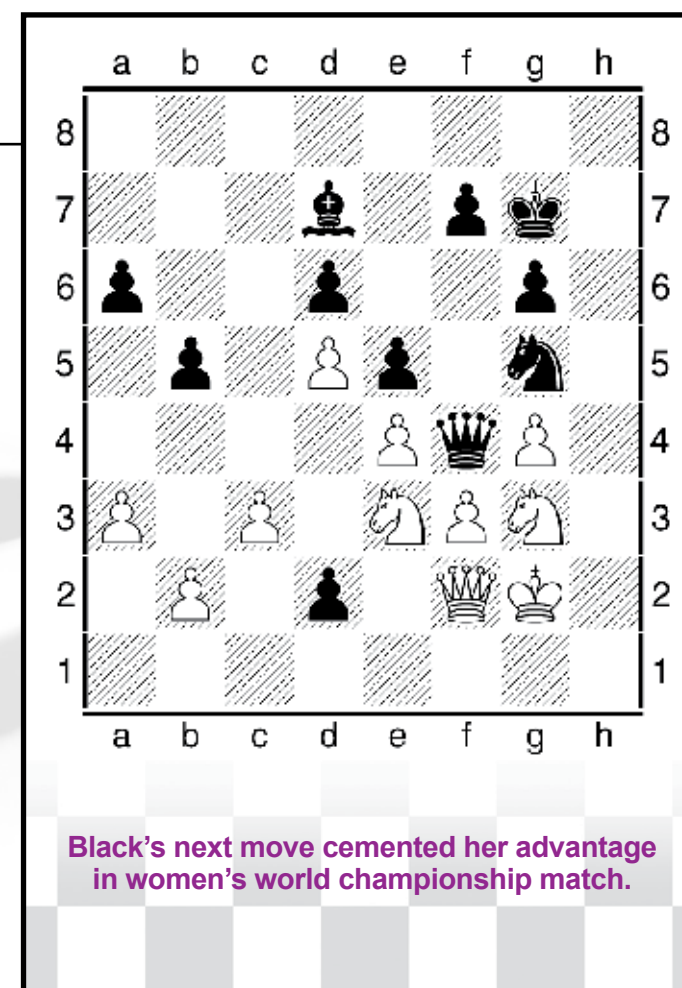
In a simultaneous, a strong player takes on many opponents at once, literally walking from board to board to make her moves. While the results do not "count" toward anything, a simultaneous gives amateur players a rare chance to play – and perhaps beat – a master or grandmaster.

Some of the 50 spots to play Kosteniuk are reserved for students. The rest are available first come, first-served for \$40 each. You can register for the simultaneous and/or the Space Coast tournament at <http://sco2010.eventbrite.com>.

The Russian-born Kosteniuk, a fashion model as well as chess journalist, author and world-class player, attracts many fans to her simultaneous exhibitions. But if the boards sell out, watching can be fun too and there is no charge for spectators.

Today's diagram is from a Kosteniuk victory against Hou Yifan of China during their world title finals match in 2008. Black won after 36...Nxf3 37. Qxf3 Bxg4 38. Qf2 d1(Q) 39. Nxd1 Bxd1 40. Qe1 Bf3+ 41. Kg1 f5 42. exf5 gxf5 43. Qf2 Kg6 44. b3 e4 45. c4 bxc4 46. bxc4 Qg5 47. c5 f4 48. cxd6 fxg3 0-1.

Humberto Cruz is a United States Chess Federation correspondence chess master and certified tournament director. He can be reached at askhumberto@aol.com.



Bridge COLUMN

WHEN TO BREAK THE RULES - IN BRIDGE
BY PIETER VANBENNEKOM - BRIDGE COLUMNIST

It's always exciting to play a Slam contract; it makes the adrenalin flow a little faster. Making a Slam lands any bridge player on Cloud Nine, while going down is a sure cause for teeth-gnashing and a few choice adjectives.

Flustered Flo is an elegant lady and not given to using obscenities. But she was sorely tempted to let off some steam when she failed to make a small Slam in the deal diagrammed below from a recent duplicate pairs tournament – of course she had to come up against her nemesis Smug Sam.

Neither side vulnerable. Flustered Flo sat South; her partner Loyal Larry was North; Smug Sam held the West cards and his partner Shy Shem was East.

As the South Declarer, Flustered Flo had to take the first trick with the Diamond Ace right away – otherwise she'd be down 2 tricks right off the bat. Then she thought for a while and made a plan on how to proceed: Draw two rounds of trumps hoping the outstanding trumps break 2-1, run dummy's three high Spades and slough the singleton Club from her hand. Play East for the Ace of Clubs, lead the King from the dummy, in effect finessing East's Ace (if West has the Ace of Clubs, she was doomed anyway).

If East put up the Ace, she'd ruff in her hand, get to the board with the last trump, and dump her two losing Diamonds on the board's two good high Clubs, and she'd even make an overtrick! If East held up the Ace, she'd start dumping her losing Diamonds anyway and end up with the same result.

Great plan, except that when Flo drew the first round of trumps, she got the bad news that East had all three missing trumps. Now her plan went out the window, because she couldn't afford to leave East with trumps in his hand as she started the Spades. He'd ruff the third Spade, forcing her to over-ruff, but now she wouldn't have gotten rid of her singleton Club so she'd still go down.

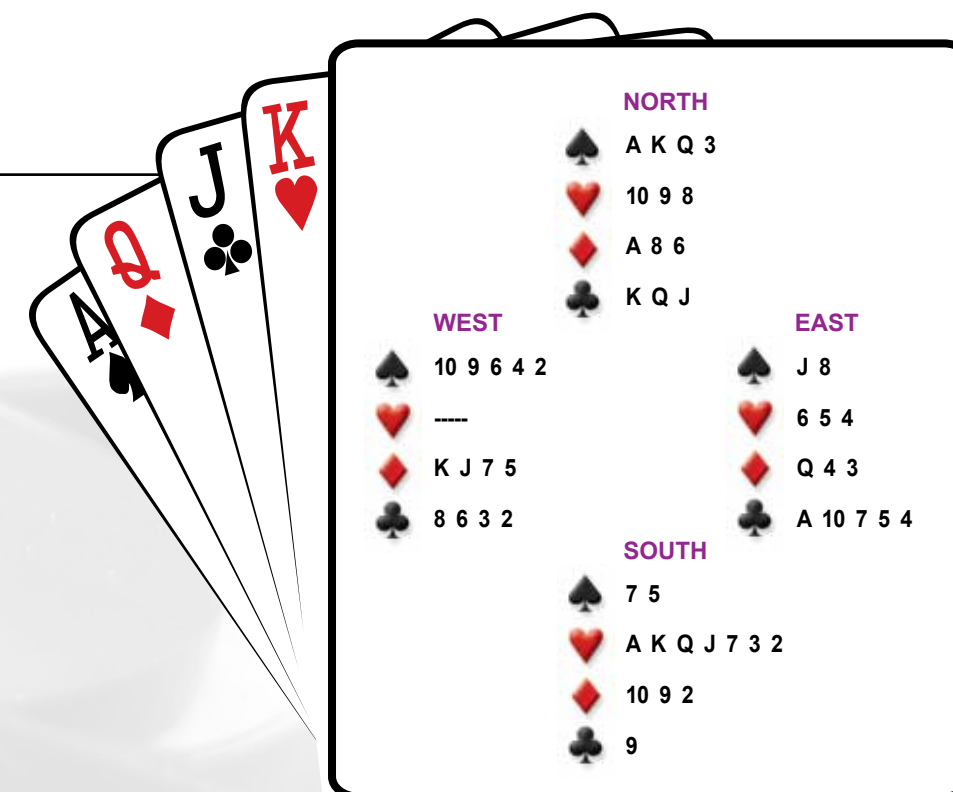
Flo was down to a desperation plan: Hope Sam would discard enough Spades as she drew trumps to make dummy's Spade 3 good (on which she could dump the last Diamond loser out of her hand).

Needless to say, the plan didn't work and Flo went Down One. Later she found out to her dismay that she and Larry got a bottom on the hand because all other pairs made the Slam contract. How was that possible? Further investigation revealed that Smug Sam was the only West who'd led a Diamond. All others led a Spade or a Club, after which South can easily lose his one and only trick to the Ace of Clubs and dump his Diamond losers on dummy's remaining good Clubs. Only the Diamond lead, which puts the knife at Declarer's throat right away, beats the contract.

"That was kind of an unusual lead," Flo asked Sam afterwards. "How did you dare lead from a King, and risk giving me a free finesse?"

"That's defensive thinking; thinking not to lose," Sam explained. "Sometimes you've got to break the rules to think offensively. Here's what I figured: Since North had bid No-Trump and jumped to Slam, he had to have the Ace of Diamonds. I had length in Spades and you indicating by bidding your great Heart length you were probably short in something, most likely Spades – so that wasn't a promising lead. And I had no reason to believe we'd have any business in Clubs. So our only chance was for my partner to have the Queen of Diamonds; it was the only suit in which we might do some damage. It's a simple matter of thinking offensively, not defensively."

Flo had to admit that Sam was right, as usual, and she gnashed her teeth some more.



The bidding:	East	South	West	North
	Pass	1 Heart	Pass	2 No Trump
	Pass	4 Hearts	Pass	6 Hearts
	All pass			

Opening lead: 5 of Diamonds.



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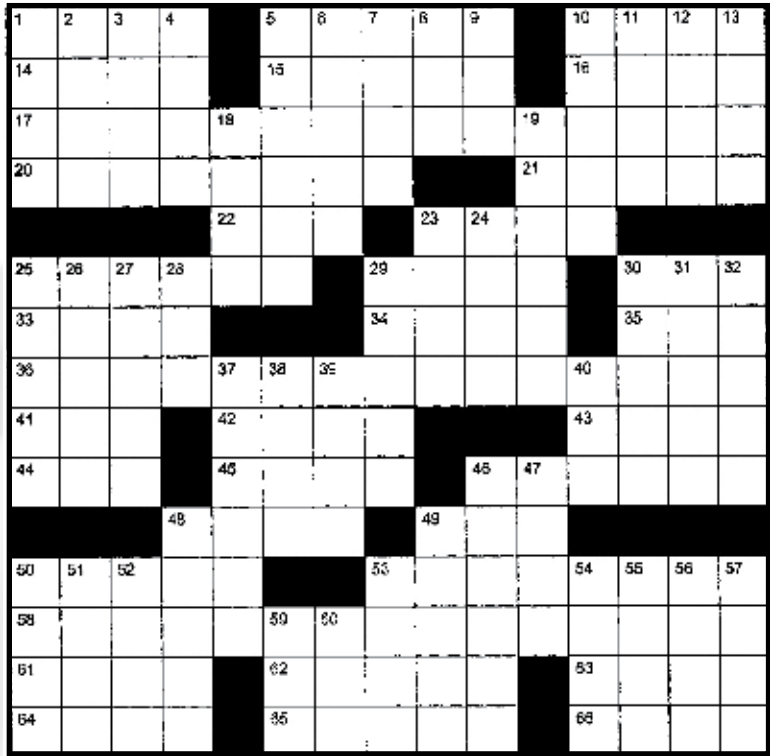
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"WHAT HAPPENS IN RIVERSIDE, STAYS IN
RIVERSIDE THEATRE!"

Crossword

SOLUTIONS TO LAST ISSUE ON PAGE 83

LITERARY LIGHTS



The Christian Science Monitor | By Judith Perry | Edited by Charles Preston

- ACROSS**
- 1 Reveal
 - 5 Monty Python's "Life of _____"
 - 10 Peas' places
 - 14 State, in France
 - 15 Eagle's home
 - 16 Kind of exam
 - 17 Author of "Guilty Pleasures"
 - 20 Afterword
 - 21 Improve
 - 22 Obtain
 - 23 Kingsley or Martin
 - 25 Curie and Osmond
 - 29 Costly
 - 33 "Pictures ____ Exhibition"
 - 34 Dry
 - 35 Part of to be
 - 36 Author of "A Bloodsmoor Romance"
 - 41 Hooray for the matorador!
 - 42 Press
 - 43 "South Pacific" girl
 - 44 "Kidnapped" author's monogram
 - 45 Ceased to exist

- 46 Jeeves and Bunter
 - 48 Tennis strokes
 - 49 Part of R.S.V.P.
 - 50 Eastern potentate: var.
 - 53 Accents
 - 58 Author of "Jurassic Park"
 - 61 Indian of Peru
 - 62 Asian capital
 - 63 Eugene's daughter
 - 64 Row
 - 65 "Cosi fan ____"
 - 66 Stinging bug
- DOWN**
- 1 Eliot's "Adam ____"
 - 2 At the apex
 - 3 Related to 50 Across
 - 4 Cousin of etc.
 - 5 Sheriffs' stars
 - 6 Oppose, in a debate
 - 7 "Dies ____"
 - 8 Melody
 - 9 Bottom line
 - 10 Sonnets and odes
 - 11 Architectural border
 - 12 Rhett's last word
 - 13 Winter vehicle
 - 18 Theater section
 - 19 Coiffure
 - 23 Plane starter
 - 24 Post
 - 25 Thatcher's successor
 - 26 Coral reef
 - 27 Martha and Lisa
 - 28 Business abbreviation
 - 29 Ventured
 - 30 Composer Erik
 - 31 Super!
 - 32 Trials
 - 37 Writer Welty
 - 38 Corn container
 - 39 Ripens
 - 40 Without exception
 - 46 Manly
 - 47 One of the Waughs
 - 48 "The Merry Widow" composer
 - 49 Swagger
 - 50 Discharge
 - 51 Kind of skirt
 - 52 ____ homo!
 - 53 Native of Aberdeen
 - 54 ____ and tell
 - 55 Greek portico
 - 56 Long, long time
 - 57 Speak sharply
 - 59 Superlative suffix
 - 60 Coin of Romania

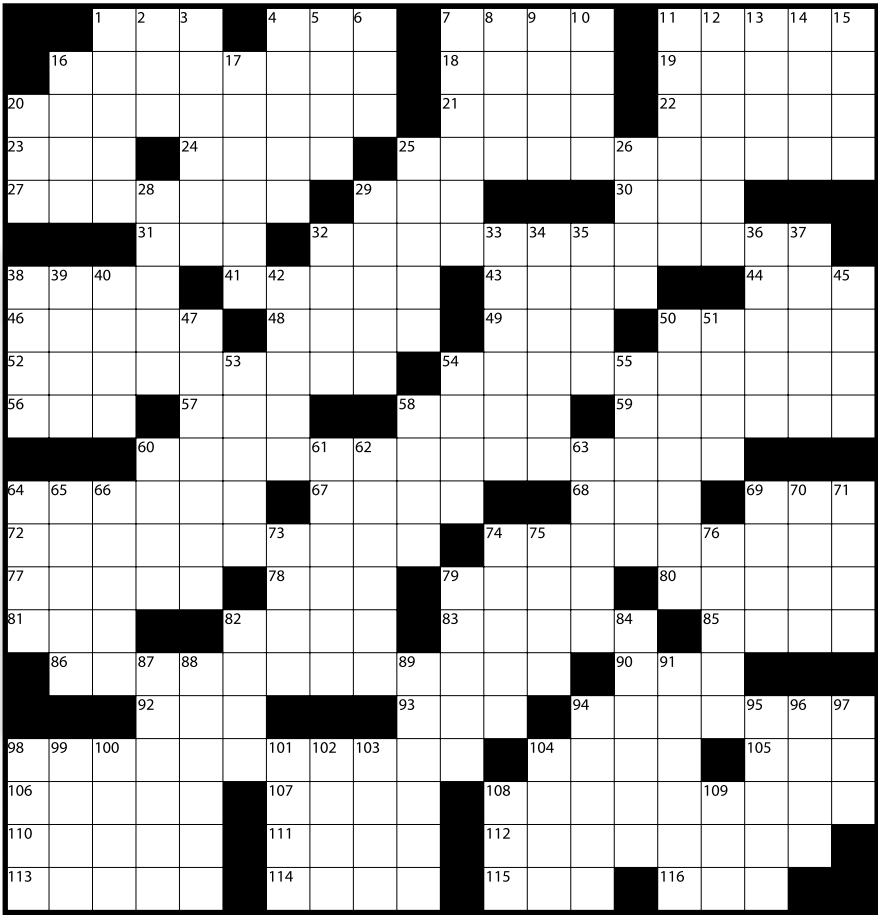
ACROSS

- 1 Like some projects
- 4 A singleton, in Sinaloa
- 7 Michael Caine film set in Africa
- 11 "Quo" follower
- 16 "Look, she's freezing! Put ____"
- 18 Underground discoveries
- 19 Circus section
- 20 "I can't believe ____ of mine is all grown up"
- 21 Have escargot, e.g.
- 22 Simple fellow
- 23 Oology concerns
- 24 Racetrack fence
- 25 "Oh boy, ranch! I love ____"
- 27 Order from the people
- 29 Extinct bird
- 30 Squealer
- 31 It means "outside"
- 32 "A defector? Not in ____"
- 38 Corner after "GO"
- 41 Elle in "Legally Blonde"
- 43 Goat protests
- 44 Formerly commercial-free movie channel
- 46 Go ____ pieces
- 48 Skip a turn
- 49 Pate warmer
- 50 Lesley Gore tune, "You Don't ____"
- 52 "As mattresses go, is ____?"
- 54 "You're closing down my speakeasy?"
- 56 Greek letter
- 57 Jukebox output: abbr.
- 58 Available
- 59 Classified information?

- 60 Q: "____?" A: "No, a paramedicum"
- 64 ____ and the same
- 67 Bloke
- 68 Gallic pal
- 69 Part of a peanut dish
- 72 "I'm allergic to cats, and ____ is no exception"
- 74 "____ is my mother, not my sister"
- 77 Lohengrin's love et al.
- 78 Meas. of interest
- 79 Robert who co-starred with Bill Cosby on "I Spy"
- 80 Partly frozen rain
- 81 Museum funder: abbr.
- 82 Millennium Falcon pilot
- 83 Robbery
- 85 Approximately
- 86 "____ album, but it's very good"
- 90 Lofty pts. of town
- 92 "A Fool Such ____"
- 93 1942 FDR creation
- 94 Plumb loco
- 98 "Relax, ____ a while"
- 104 Oats eater
- 105 Poe's meadow
- 106 Maternity ward news
- 107 Work
- 108 "I can't read your writing, ____?"
- 110 Rationed (out)
- 111 Shipshape
- 112 "Once I got the theme, ____ wasn't so tough"
- 113 Dwindle, as support
- 114 Janitor's pocketful
- 115 Juan's uncle

DOWN

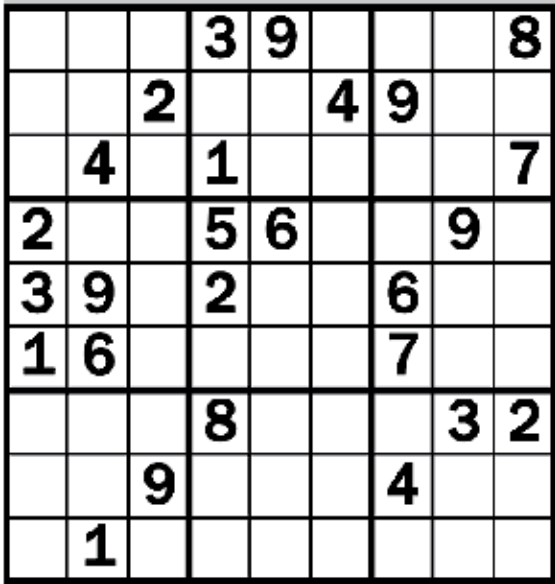
- 1 Galileo, by birth
- 2 Superlative ending
- 3 Insect section
- 4 Loosen
- 5 Christmas song
- 6 Hockey great
- 7 It has 12 signs
- 8 Literary Leon
- 9 Fast time
- 10 Insincere type
- 11 Medieval menial
- 12 Record label since 1975
- 13 Bruce's ex
- 14 Barge ____
- 15 Squealed
- 16 Aretha or Whitney, e.g.
- 17 Winner of a soapbox derby?
- 20 King add-on
- 25 Prescribed amounts
- 26 Cupid's cousin
- 28 Southwest rival
- 29 Bette, the Divine ____
- 32 Letter opener?
- 33 Short-lived "Tonight Show" host
- 34 Spin-ride result, perhaps
- 35 "Roots," for one
- 36 Singer Tucker
- 37 Actor M. ____ Walsh
- 38 Green gem
- 39 Landed
- 40 Rick's Paris amour
- 42 Of a church: abbr.
- 45 Grant (a point)
- 47 Former Interior agency, the Bureau ____
- 50 Decrees
- 51 Admonish
- 53 Printer part that melts toner onto the paper
- 54 Kind of coffee
- 55 "Spider-Man" director Sam
- 58 Egggy dessert
- 60 L-____
- 61 Eaves dropper?
- 62 Shutterbug
- 63 Harsh sounds
- 64 Mideast gulf
- 65 Ticked off
- 66 Opinion piece, in Nice
- 69 ____ pressure
- 70 Perfect serves
- 71 Bart Simpson's bus driver
- 73 Theater light
- 74 Tunes for two
- 75 "Would ____ to you?"
- 76 Dentist's directive
- 79 Hollywood ending
- 82 Bad mood
- 84 Some can beat it
- 87 Like vows or cows
- 88 Tristan's love
- 89 Awakens rudely
- 91 Actor Howard
- 94 Low voice
- 95 Broncos great John
- 96 Like Pinocchio, eventually
- 97 Seoul-based airline
- 98 Miami-____ County
- 99 "Young Frankenstein" role
- 100 ICBM's home
- 101 Hit the horn
- 102 Blunted blade
- 103 Dock's cousin
- 104 2010 + 2, minus 2
- 108 Outlawed spray
- 109 Bear, in Bolivia



A CROSSWORD GROWS IN BROOKLYN

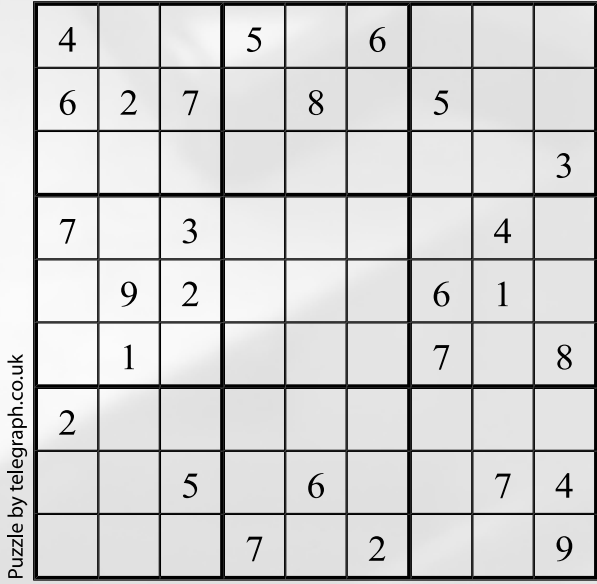
By Merl Reagle

Sudoku

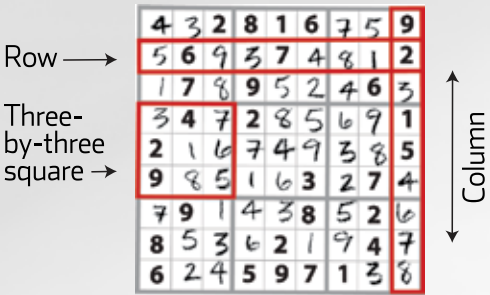


★★★★☆

How to do Sudoku:
Fill in the grid so the numbers 1 through 9 appear just once in every column, row and three-by-three square. See example (right).



★★★★☆



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GOLFERS LIVE LONGER BY JAY MCNAMARA

That’s right. According to the Scandinavian Journal of Medicine and Sports, in a study of 300,000 Swedes in 2008, golfers compared to non-golfers lived an additional five years. Imagine what the bonus would be for tennis players, who are actually getting exercise. As for those who go to gyms, we don’t know whether their lives will be longer, just that they will seem longer.

If exercise is not a factor in the lengthening of golfers lives, there must be other factors at work. That other shibboleth of the proper life style, a good diet, is not at work here either. I play golf mostly with men and frankly what they are eating prior, during, and after golf would not make anyone’s healthy foods list. Some of it may be because a wife is not there to observe.

So, what’s going on here to allow golfers to live longer? I have a few ideas, with no science or sophisticated studies to bear them out, just a lifetime of watching men at play. The first phenomenon is that playing golf gets one out of the house. This is bound to be a tonic to the golfer, and also to the spouse left behind. In this case, she is free to go about her day in untethered fashion. Hooray!

Everyone knows that too much togetherness is well, too much. A day of “freedom” can only improve relationships that have passed the honeymoon stage, in other words all marriages that are more than two weeks old.

Another reason is that, being with the guys is special even if you are not engaged in golf. It’s an end in itself and goes back to primordial times when guys used to get together for the hunt. Except now, they are hunting for lost balls instead of wild game.

Golfers know that every shot makes someone happy. This evokes laughter and high degrees of schadenfreude. Watching your competitor’s ball sail into the lake is high comedy and life extending. Whether you have to hide your amusement or are able to gloat in your glee depends on how friendly you are with the other player, but either way it’s great fun. There is also the happiness inherent in a good shot by oneself. A few in a row and bliss is in the air.

Golf provides golfers with something to talk about between rounds. Listen in at any cocktail party and you will hear tons of conversations beginning with “If I had made that putt on seventeen” and other such hypotheticals preceded by the critical word “if.”

In looking over the above list I believe it pretty much applies to women golfers as well. There is one big difference, however. One of the happy parts of men’s golf is their propensity to give putts. “That’s good” is one of the best sounds one can hear when faced with a putt longer than two feet. In my experience with women golfers, there are no given putts. And women live even longer than men. Hmm. That deserves a special study.

Western Sicily, where centuries and cultures converge

BY SUSAN SPANO
LOS ANGELES TIMES

A cracked concrete road spirals up to a lookout over Salemi in western Sicily, passing flimsy-looking apartment houses, weed-choked fields, rubble-strewn construction sites and a dilapidated villa with a sign that says it’s an insane asylum.

All along the way are views over the old hill town, with its echoing alleyways and stairs, ruined Baroque churches and roofless palazzos abandoned after the 1968 Belice Valley earthquake, a 6.0-magnitude shaker that killed 300 people and left 70,000 people homeless.

The historic center had been inhabited since Roman times, but the destruction was so massive that many people simply cut their losses and moved away, building an unlovely sprawl of new neighborhoods around the old town.

Beyond are the sun-blasted fields and bare hills of western Sicily that bankrupted land owners, turned peasant farmers into slaves and inspired mass emigration.

It is a dolorous landscape, “never petty, never ordinary, never relaxed, as a country made for rational beings to live in should be,” Giuseppe Tomasi di Lampedusa wrote in “The Leopard,” his classic 1958 novel about Sicily.

Standing here in the fall, I scanned the horizon for the fabled Doric temple at Segesta, Marsala’s windmills and the Aphrodite shrine at Erice.

But for the moment all the treasures that had brought me to this singular corner of Europe – across the narrow strait of Messina from mainland Italy and just 100 miles from the north coast of Africa– were concealed, like the images I sought in Hidden Pictures puzzles as a child.

To get here, I flew from Rome to Palermo’s Falcone-Borsellino International Airport, rented a car and headed along the island’s wild western coast, an Italian version of Baja outside the window.

Near Trapani, I turned and drove about 30 miles east to Segesta and its Elymian temple, first and foremost among western Sicily’s treasures. It stands out from the highway, with no tourist squalor to distract from its solitary splendor.

I arrived in the late afternoon, just in time to catch the last van up 1,200-foot Mt. Barbaro to a beautiful amphitheater, gouged out from the summit. By the time it was built in the 2nd



The temple at Segesta, thought to date from the 5th century BC, was built by the ancient Elymians, whose language and origin remain a mystery.



century BC, Segesta was a part of the Roman Empire, but the architecture is classic Greek. In the summer, plays by ancient masters such as Aristophanes are produced here, though the only Greek chorus performing when I visited was composed of noisy cicadas.

Afterward, I climbed a long flight of rustic steps leading to the temple, bordered by thickets of Sicilian agave so big and tree-like that people carve their initials in the leaves.

The Elymian language has not yet

nated Segesta, replacing its unknown deities with hungry gods and bringing human sacrifice to the island to appease them.

Excavation, exploration

When the news broke early last year about the sale of earthquake-damaged homes in the historic center of Salemi for 1 euro each, it sounded like the Italian version of a Hawaiian time-share scam. But I had to check it out, so I booked a room at the Hotel Villa Mokarta in Salemi, an easy drive to the sites.

Under this scheme, prospective buyers guarantee they will restore the properties in two years according to official specifications. Soon rumors swirled about international notables who had decided to take up the offer.

Stalled by legal complications, the 1 euro sell-off of historic homes in Salemi’s old town has yet to materialize. And even if it does, I’m not tempted because the properties are mostly empty shells, without roofs and walls.

But parts of old Salemi don’t need gimmicks to beguile: the Arabic *castello* on the Piazza Alicia; a collection of tender Sicilian Madonnas in the town’s 18th century Jesuit College, salvaged from churches destroyed in the 1968 quake; a small museum devoted to the intricately decorated loaves of bread baked every March to celebrate the Feast of San Giuseppe; and the ruined ethnic quarters of Salemi, the only town that offered safe harbor to Muslims and Jews after their expulsion from the island in 1492.

No one could complain that Salemi is too touristy. The historic center has a couple of cafes, one *enoteca* (wine bar) and a single street of shops. The

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Windmills on salt flats north of Marsala are turned by the North African sirocco.

A cracked concrete road spirals up to a lookout over Salemi in western Sicily, passing flimsy-looking apartment houses, weed-choked fields, rubble-strewn construction sites and a dilapidated villa with a sign that says it's an insane asylum.

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Beyond are the sun-blasted fields and bare hills of western Sicily that bankrupted land owners, turned peasant farmers into slaves and inspired mass emigration.

It is a dolorous landscape, "never



The southwest coast of Sicily is less than 100 miles from North Africa.

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Archeologists at work on the island of Motya, the site of a Carthaginian settlement around the 8th century BC. Motya is off the west coast of Sicily.

Roman Empire, but the architecture is classic Greek. In the summer, plays by ancient masters such as Aristophanes are produced here, though the only Greek chorus performing when I visited was composed of noisy cicadas.

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The Elymian language has not yet been deciphered so the gods worshiped at Segesta remain a mystery, though it's thought that the temple was built in the 5th century BC.

It is roofless but otherwise amazingly intact, with a cornice supported by 26 massive columns. The capitals are sterling examples of the simple, magisterial Doric architectural style brought to Sicily by Greeks who pushed westward to plant colonies all around the Mediterranean basin. A band of Greek pioneers settled on the southwest coast of Sicily at Selinunte and waged war on Segesta, forcing the Elymians to seek the support of powerful Carthage on the north coast of Africa.

"Trust no one" could be the moral of this story. Carthage ultimately dominated Segesta, replacing its unknown deities with hungry gods and bringing human sacrifice to the island to appease them.

Excavation, exploration

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Style

Modern Classics: Five trends for Fall 2010

BY BOOTH MOORE
LOS ANGELES TIMES

Blackout

moved and a bandeau left in its place.

For other designers, the trend was more about mixing hard and soft, tailored and ruffled in one outfit. Ralph Lauren paired a charcoal wool men's vest and "spat pants" that buttoned at the ankles with a romantic purple plaid blouse with puffed sleeves. Diane von Furstenberg put a rosette-embroidered bolero over a pinstripe suit with cropped, flared pants.

Designers put an emphasis on classic tailoring. In a logical extension of the boyfriend blazer and boyfriend sweater craze, Donna Karan described the oversized, man-styled coats in her DKNY collection as "boyfriend coats."

And it wasn't a fussy gown but a tuxedo that was the season's most viable evening option. The best? Phillip Lim's gold lamé version and Vera Wang's charcoal wool jersey tuxedo jumpsuit.

Black is the new black. (We had to say it.) In a season when retailers and shoppers alike are pinching their pennies, there's a premium on clothes with added value. And so designers knew they couldn't go wrong with the classic, goes-with-everything color. The resurgence of black also reflects an attempt to cut through the clutter of fast, celebrity-fueled fashion in favor of a less complicated way of dressing.

For some designers, this meant showing black on black. At Mary-Kate and Ashley Olsen's line the Row, slouchy black tie-front silk trousers were paired with a black silk blouse buttoned all the way to the top, and a black leather shell was worn over a long-sleeved, black chiffon shirt, with black full-legged pants. Ralph Lauren layered a short, black tulle Deco

CONTINUED ON PAGE 62



Alexander Wang, Ralph Lauren, DKNY, Phillip Lim and Vera Wang all had men's-styles pants and other garments in their collections.

The clothes that designers showed for fall during New York Fashion Week, which ended last week, invoked the classics, but with interesting, modern ideas mixed in. Among the trends we think we'll see women wearing come September are these five.

Menswear mash-up

Alexander Wang is the young New York designer everyone is watching right now, and his collection of sexy, deconstructed pinstripe suits set the tone for a season of creative menswear dressing for women. Among Wang's most memorable offerings: pinstripe pants with the waistband lopped off to expose a bare navel, and a morning jacket with the front re-



The cape came in a dozen permutations, from preppy sport to Russian czarina luxe.

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Style

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 61

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Mark Rodolico

Colorist / Stylist

www.askthehairguy.com

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Question: *My husband's beard is rough and irritates my sensitive skin is there such a thing as beard conditioner?*

- M.C. Orchid Island, Florida

Answer: Well M.C., I am not sure what we are talking about here, but I shall do my best. The Male beard is different than the hair on your head only by its diameter and texture. Yes, beards can get a bit rough in tender situations, but all is not lost. You gals out there should be somewhat sympathetic to our plight with your stainless steal leg hair! Imagine going through life with that stuff on your face! No, I'm not looking for a hug, but I am making a point. The idea of conditioning a beard is not foreign. Most men just don't cooperate. Using a high quality Conditioner with Emollients on the beard is a common practice amongst those in the know. The term "Conditioners" usually refer to "moisturizers" (something that adds moisture) and "emollients" (some-

thing that softens), but they describe different effects on the skin and hair. The term "emollient" is most often used to describe single ingredients, whereas "moisturizer" describes finished products. If you add a low PH and a sunscreen to it, you have a recipe for softer smoother skin and hair. One of my customers turned me on to the idea long ago. She said "The mark of a truly fine conditioner is how well it works as a shave cr me on my legs!" I could not agree more. Warning however: Too much fragrance could drive a man nuts and this could become a costly shave cr me. It will however make for nicer snuggles with a bearded man. My favorite is A/G Conditioner Light.

Thanks for asking The Hair Guy!
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Style



Painting and collage are an endless well of inspiration for designers.

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And it wasn't a fussy gown but a tuxedo that was the season's most viable evening option. The best? Philip Lim's gold lam  version and Vera Wang's charcoal wool jersey tuxedo jumpsuit.

Blackout

Black is the new black. (We had to say it.) In a season when retailers and shoppers alike are pinching their pennies, there's a premium on clothes with added value. And so designers knew they couldn't go wrong with the

classic, goes-with-everything color. The resurgence of black also reflects an attempt to cut through the clutter of fast, celebrity-fueled fashion in favor of a less complicated way of dressing.

For some designers, this meant showing black on black. At Mary-Kate and Ashley Olsen's line the Row, slouchy black tie-front silk trousers were paired with a black silk blouse buttoned all the way to the top, and a black leather shell was worn over a long-sleeved, black chiffon shirt, with black full-legged pants. Ralph Lauren layered a short, black tulle Deco beaded dress over a black



"Texture mixes, crushed cashmere, clouds of mohair." That was how Michael Kors summed up the tactile sensation of fall dressing.

cashmere turtleneck for a more understated evening look.

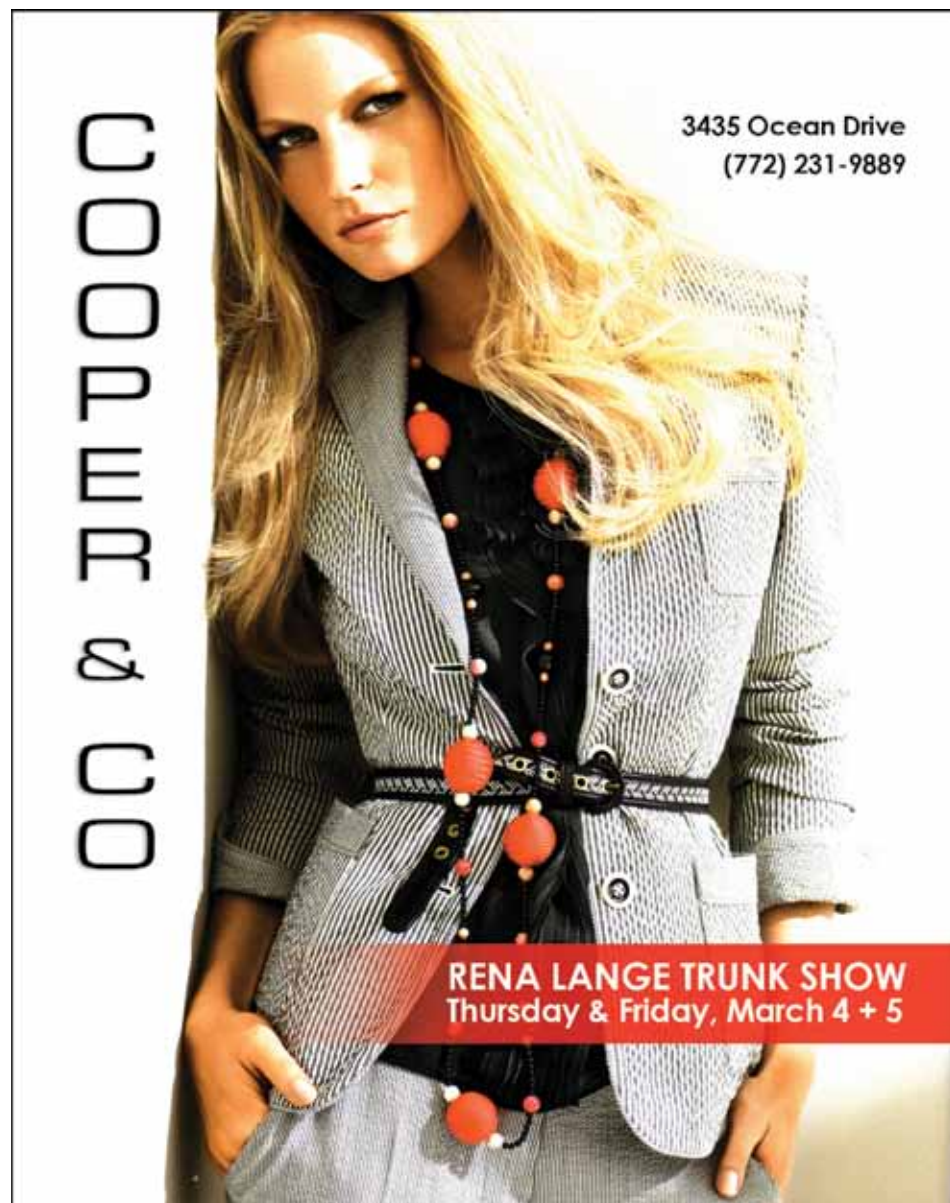
Donna Karan and Vera Wang presented entire collections that were almost all black, emphasizing texture and drape to bring out the richness. When it came to timelessness, you couldn't get much better than Derek Lam's plunge-front, long-sleeve silk jersey gown.

Caped crusaders

We started to see them on the streets this winter, but come fall you will be able to get your pick from nearly every New York designer. The cape came in a dozen permutations, from preppy sport to Russian czarina luxe.

Alexander Wang's camel-colored, ankle-sweeping cape had a military feel, while Zac Posen's camel-colored cape was shorter and sweeter, with an oversized collar.

Neither wind nor snow would ruffle Marc Jacobs' cape, in thick shearling with a bushy fur collar, which looked like it would be at home on a Bront  on the English moors, while Peter Som's cape, in deep blue broadtail with a fur hem, seemed suited for a



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Style

Egg-sized diamond sells for a record \$35 million



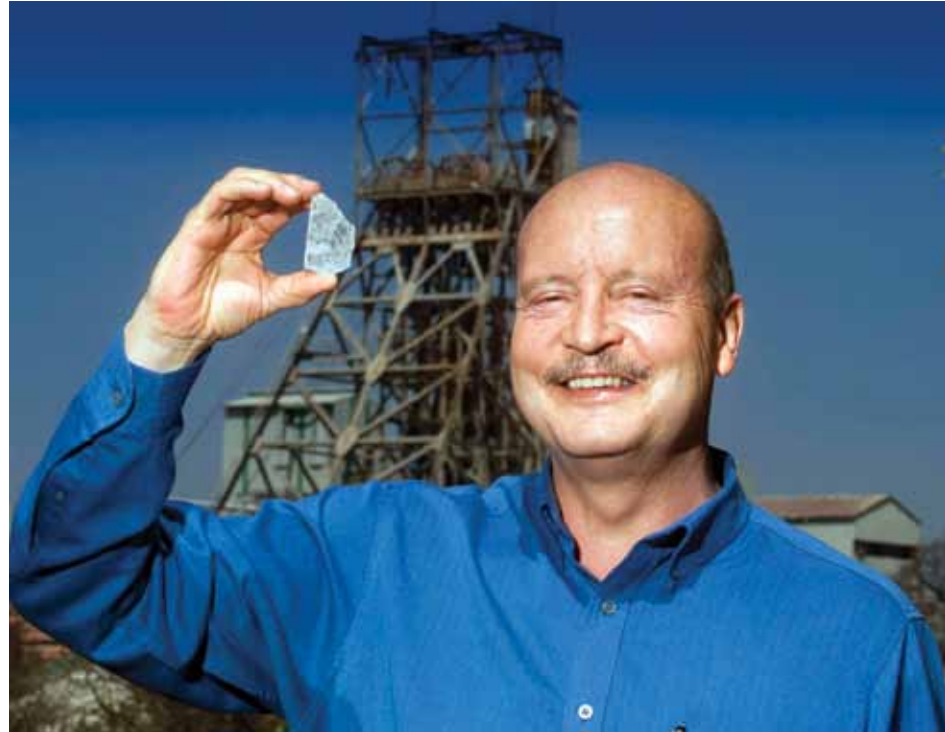
BY RON DERBY AND THOMAS BIESHEUVEL
BLOOMBERG NEWS

A diamond the size of a chicken egg unearthed in South Africa last year was sold for a record price to Hong Kong's Chow Tai Fook Jewellery Co., according to Petra Diamonds Ltd.

Petra said in a statement that it had discovered the gem at its Cullinan mine.

The 507.6-carat rough diamond, weighing more than 3.5 ounces, was sold last week for \$35.3 million, Petra said.

Petra says the stone is about as



Johan Dippenaar, chief executive officer of Petra Diamonds Ltd.

large as a medium-sized chicken egg.

Prices of diamonds are soaring as producers cut output after the credit crunch and dealers rebuilt stocks for Christmas.

The price of rough diamonds rose approximately 48 percent in the first 11 months of 2009, according to WWW International Diamond Consultants.

Demand in China, which overtook Japan as the second-largest gem market, added to gains.

Petra found the "Cullinan Heritage" stone in September 2009 at the same mine where the world's biggest diamond, the 3,106-carat Cullinan, had been discovered a century ago in 1905.

That was cut to form the Great Star of Africa and Lesser Star of Africa, set

in Britain's crown jewels.

Petra got \$9.48 million at a sale in May for a polished 7.03-carat blue gem from the Cullinan mine, east of Pretoria, setting a per-carat record. A carat is a fifth of a gram.

"It is fitting that the Cullinan Heritage should achieve a sale price of \$35.3 million, the highest sale price on record ever achieved for a rough diamond," Petra Chief Executive Officer Johan Dippenaar said in a statement.

He said the Cullinan Heritage has the potential to produce one of the world's most important polished gems.

PChow Tai Fook hasn't yet disclosed its plans for the diamond, according to the statement that was issued by Petra.

Style

Chanel goes retro: Clogs stand tall for spring



Chanel Spring 2010

MELISSA MAGSAYSAY
LOS ANGELES TIMES

Fashion is stepping back a decade this spring, away from fall's 1980s-style acid-washed denim and power shoulders to a season full of 1970s influences, including sun-bleached colors, fringed accessories and the "it" shoe made popular on the Chanel runway: clogs.

We're not talking orange rubber Crocs a la Mario Batali. These clogs are sexy and embellished, some with heels as high as those on your favorite stilettos.

At Chanel's spring 2010 show last fall, models flaunted their spindly legs in short tweed skirts and 4-inch platform clogs. The slip-on shoe with a high, stacked wood heel flatters the leg, and the '70s vibe suits the relaxed

look of our local climate, which might explain why clogs will be such a ubiquitous style for spring. "We saw a resurgence of clogs on the runway for spring, with Chanel leading the trend," says Holli Rogers, buying director for Net-a-Porter.com. For spring, the site will feature clogs from Pedro Garcia, Fendi and Jimmy Choo in styles including strappy sandals as well as chunky and traditional.

In the high-end and contemporary markets, several designers are doing clogs or clog-like shoes at varying price points and levels of extreme. Banana Republic has the "Rosita" clog in its spring collection for \$98. The neutral color and thicker heel make the shoe wearable for everyday. "The nude banded clog evokes a clean, fresh and modern look to elongate the leg without effort," says Simon Kneen, creative



Chanel Spring 2010

director and executive vice president of design for Banana Republic. "It's the perfect springtime accessory."

For a sexier approach, Steve Mad-

den's "Daynty" clog, \$89.95, has a pointed heel and slimmer shape that

CONTINUED ON PAGE 66



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Style



Steve Madden

platform clogs. The slip-on shoe with a high, stacked wood heel flatters the leg, and the '70s vibe suits the relaxed look of our local climate, which might explain why clogs will be such a ubiquitous style for spring. "We saw a resurgence of clogs on the runway for spring, with Chanel leading the trend," says Holli Rogers, buying director for Net-a-Porter.com. For spring, the site will feature clogs from Pedro Garcia, Fendi and Jimmy Choo in styles including strappy sandals as well as chunky and traditional.

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Denim clog, \$345 at Stuart Weitzman, Beverly Hills.

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director and executive vice president of design for Banana Republic. "It's the perfect springtime accessory."

For a sexier approach, Steve Madden's "Daynty" clog, \$89.95, has a pointed heel and slimmer shape that looks a little dressier than something with a thick heel. And Stuart Weitzman

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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 65

Fashion is stepping back a decade this spring, away from fall's 1980s-style acid-washed denim and power shoul-

ders to a season full of 1970s influences, including sun-bleached colors, fringed accessories and the "it" shoe made popular on the Chanel runway: clogs.



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Pets

Opposites make for good friends in Shores pooches



Maggie, the mini poodle, and her new friend, Coco, love snuggling together. As for music, they like the soundtrack to "Mama Mia."

BY CISSY SUMNER
COLUMNIST

Meet Maggie and Coco, two little dogs that light up the lives of owners Steve and Eileen Finestone.

Maggie was a lonely miniature poodle until The Finestones added Coco

while Coco is lively and adventurous. Steve and Eileen think that Coco benefited Maggie by helping her become more outgoing around strangers and new situations. Coco loves every one and Maggie does not want to miss the fun!

The dogs are inseparable, with a real bond between them. They like to rest

gie goes into the crate first, they tell Coco that Maggie is waiting for her and Coco bounds into the crate to be with her pal.

And they have some interesting musical tastes: While in the crate, the Finestones leave the pooches with the soundtrack of *Mama Mia* playing in the background -- which they particularly enjoy.

The dogs are comical. They love to play chase games where they race all about the house.

They share everything, including their toys.

After fun and games they are ready to snuggle with the grandchildren or rest together in comfort. They both "protect the house" by letting the Finestone's know if someone is jogging, walking, biking, or delivering something to their door. They are enthusiastic watch dogs!

Maggie and Coco are very loving dogs who bring their unique, funny personalities and joy to their owners' lives.

Is your pet an Island Pet? Email Cissy Sumner, CPDT-KA at bddogtraining@bellsouth.net to nominate your pet!



Fun and games, they even share toys.

(or Coconut) to their home for Maggie to enjoy. Maggie will be 3 years old in May and Coco just turned 2.

These dogs are proof opposites do attract. Maggie is shy and cautious,

together, touching each other with a warm closeness. They have a large crate to share when the Finestones have to leave their Indian River Shores home for an errand or outing. If Mag-

YOUR PET'S HEALTH

By Dr. Randy Divine and Dr. Laura Baldwin



Question: My dog has been scratching his front legs nonstop and he's developed a sore. What can I do to give him relief and do I need to be concerned?

Many skin conditions can look like this. The most common is what is commonly known as an acral lick granuloma. Acral lick granulomas can occur in any breed although large breed dogs appear to have a higher rate. The lesion is usually a hairless raised thickened plaque like area that may be ulcerated and oozing. Lick granulomas usually develop secondary to an allergic or infectious condition that result in local or general itching. There is also a behavioral component frequently as pets compulsively lick the area. This produces an inflammatory reaction leading to the development of plaque or nodule. Bacterial infections result over time.

Most lick granulomas do not resolve without veterinary care. Diagnostics are usually needed to rule out underlying causes and similar lesions. Skin cytologies are performed to rule out bacterial infections that often complicate healing. Skin scrapings may also be needed for Demodex (a parasitic mite), and fungal cultures may be necessary to rule out Dermatophytosis (ringworm). Advanced diagnostics including biopsies may be needed for lesions that do not resolve.

Treatment is aimed at breaking the scratch-itch cycle and resolving the lesion. Topical steroids or steroids injected into the lesion may be used to help relieve itching. Antibiotics or antifungals may be used based on cytology. Long-term antibiotic treatment may be necessary in severe cases. E-collars may be placed on pets in order to help prevent further trauma to the site. Compulsive licking may require at least temporary therapy with mild sedatives. Divine Animal Hospital offers laser physiotherapy to help heal lick granulomas without side effects of steroids. Laser therapy works to block pain and inflammatory mediators and promote tissue healing on a cellular layer.



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Dining

Restaurant Review

The 12A Buoy: Wish you were here

BY TINA RONDEAU
COLUMNIST

If you had already headed north last spring before my review of the 12A Buoy Offshore Grill in Fort Pierce, you may be missing out this winter on some of the best fresh seafood in these parts.

This restaurant, open just over a year at the foot of the South Bridge in Fort Pierce, is nothing fancy, even by “family restaurant” standards.

But white tablecloths and fancy silverware are about the only things the 12A Buoy lacks. You may be asked to keep your fork after finishing your salad, but even the simplest dishes are so good they make you wish this restaurant was here in Vero, rather than a 25-minute drive away in Fort Pierce.

One can start the raves with the appetizers. On our first visit, the bubbly waitress insisted that we try the lobster mac and cheese (\$9), a table-sized appetizer of macaroni and asiago cheese baked in a personal-sized skillet with chunks of lobster.

Having never been a big macaroni enthusiast, I tried unsuccessfully to demur. Suffice it to say that on subsequent visits, I have been sorely tempted to order this appetizer as an entrée. It is the best rendition of macaroni and cheese I have ever had in my life, bar none.

On our most recent visit, my husband amazingly passed up the creamy, clam-filled New England clam chowder (\$4), which he insists is the best he has found in Florida.

Our companion, however, tried a concoction which a waitress recommended several visits ago: a cup filled half with clam chowder, and half with conch chowder. The result is amazing – not quite as creamy as the clam chowder, not nearly as spicy as conch chowder. You really want to try this.

But for appetizers on this latest visit, my husband had the fried oysters (\$8) and I had the mini crab cakes (\$9). The oysters, lightly breaded and fried, were juicy and succulent. The crab cakes – lump blue crab meat again very lightly fried – were topped with a dollop of a spicy remoulade, and served on a plate lined with a roasted red pepper coulis. Delicious.

For entrees, my husband had one of my favorite dishes -- the blackened scallops (\$19), wonderful plump, juicy scallops dredged in blackened seasonings, pan seared and finished in a lobster ginger cream sauce. I ordered the offshore pasta (\$19), clams, shrimp,



The Blackened Scallops entree at 12A Bouy

Photos: Tom McCarthy Jr.

scallops and fish sautéed in wine, garlic and fresh tomatoes served over linguini.

Our companion enjoyed the crab stuffed shrimp (\$19), beautiful large shrimp stuffed with crab meat, broiled, and topped with a citrus beurre blanc sauce.

On previous visits, we have dined on the ahi tuna (\$19), a beautiful piece of sesame encrusted tuna, seared and served rare with ponzu sauce, wasabi and ginger; the yellowtail snapper (\$20), a butterflied snapper pan seared and then roasted in a lime basil oil blended with wine, garlic, olives, capers, scallions and sun-dried tomatoes; and the citrus snapper (\$20), pan-seared and topped with orange segments, sweet citrus glaze and homemade teriyaki sauce.

Incidentally, if you decide to visit 12A Buoy and one member of your party is not into fresh seafood, you should have no hesitation about the steaks. My husband has had the 12 ounce Black Angus New York strip (\$19) topped with compound butter, and pronounced it first rate.

That also augers well for the surf and turf, because our companion on several visits has enjoyed the Florida lobster tail (\$20), a beautiful tail which on both occasions appeared to well



12 A Bouy in Ft. Pierce

exceed the promised 9 ounces.

For dessert, if you are lucky, there are two choices: a homemade key lime pie and a homemade peanut butter pie (each \$4). But be forewarned: Some evenings, even if you dine relatively early, by the time you get to that stage of your meal, the desserts are all gone. Sold out. Finito.

That's the price you pay for dining in a relatively small restaurant where everything is made fresh.

One other item worth noting is the interesting, though very limited, wine list. Helped by the wine prices that top out in the mid-\$30s, a family of three can have an excellent dinner, including appetizer and dessert, for about \$100 before tip. A great value.

A final cautionary note. At present, the 12A Buoy is not accepting reservations, and some of your friends have found this restaurant (and are probably not telling you about their dining secret). At the risk of not being able to get in again without a wait until after season, my hint would be that you are more likely to quickly get a table if you go early.

But if you really like fresh seafood, go you must. The 12A Buoy is that good.

I welcome your comments, and encourage you to send feedback to me at tina@verobeach32963.com

The reviewer dines anonymously at restaurants at the expense of Vero Beach 32963.

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Dining

Wine Column

Pinot-gate may involve more brands of wine

BY DAVID MCINTYRE
WASHINGTON POST

The French wine fraud scandal crossed the Atlantic this week, as federal regulators said they are investigating U.S. importers who sold French “pinot noir” that was actually made from different grapes.

A French court on Feb. 17 convicted 12 people in the Languedoc region of southern France of passing off merlot and syrah wine as the more expensive pinot noir to the U.S. firm E&J Gallo. Gallo sold the wine as pinot noir under its popular Red Bicycleette label.

Gallo bought the wine from the French wine brokerage Sieur d'Arques. Although Gallo was not implicated of any wrongdoing in the French court case, U.S. officials are investigating whether the California wine giant violated any U.S. laws in selling the wine as pinot noir.

The Treasury Department's Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau



“has begun investigations to determine the appropriate actions to take regarding the American importers of these mislabeled wines,” the agency said on its Web site.

When the convictions were announced last week, Gallo said it would “continue to work with the appropriate U.S. authorities to determine any next steps required for potentially

mislabeled Pinot Noir in the marketplace.”

Importers must apply to the trade bureau for approval of wine labels, including the images and information conveyed on them. Bureau spokesman Arthur Resnick would not comment directly on the investigation or identify its targets. But he said that even if the U.S. importers were duped by their

French suppliers, they may have violated some U.S. laws.

“Under our laws, importers are responsible for label approvals [from the bureau], so they are responsible for what goes in the bottles,” Resnick said. He then used a classic Washington phrase: “We will be going to these companies and asking what they

knew, and when they knew it.”

These companies? The French court case centered on wine sold to Gallo, but the other U.S. wine giant, Constellation Brands, acknowledged last week that it had also purchased pinot noir from Sieur d'Arques and another supplier implicated in the French case.

Constellation, whose 200-plus brands include Robert Mondavi, Ravenswood, Clos du Bois and Blackstone, said it had independent experts test the wine before it was shipped from France, and they confirmed the wine was indeed pinot noir.

However, that does not convince the trade bureau, as it waits for official translations of documents in the French fraud investigation. Constellation is clearly part of its initial inquiries, and more companies could be involved. “I think there are others, but we won't know for certain until we see the French documentation,” Resnick said.

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Overnight cooking: Time to pull an all-nighter

BY BONNIE S. BENWICK
WASHINGTON POST STAFF WRITER

I missed Washington's double-whammy snow-in, but I wish I'd been there to cook in it.

It seems the rest of the country – including Florida – has seen temperatures drop into record lows, which makes it a perfect time to think about food, and cooking lots of it. Slowly.

Here's what I would have done, and what you ought to try before the spring warming: Set the oven at 225 degrees, go to bed and let the magic of very low, very slow food fill the senses.

I'm talking about cooking that transforms. It's as old as the hills and has roots in just about every nation on Earth. It goes beyond extreme braising in three or four hours: Vegetables collapse into pudding, meats achieve a succulence that makes chewing optional, and natural sugars triumph over the shape of the fruits that contain them.

These days, a gas range with a trusty autopilot can do the work of village ovens and ancient clay pots buried in embers. (I respectfully submit that the electric slow cooker, on the other hand, performs reliably but yields results that fall short of inspirational.)

The key ingredient is time -- just the kind you have when you're stuck at home. There is something wonderful about waking up to, or spending all day with, deeply savory smells that seem to have come about on their own.

Orthodox Jews are well versed in the ways of overnight cooking, as they are not permitted to do many kinds of work on the Sabbath. They have developed hundreds of recipes for one-pot stews, referred to as cholents or da-



finas depending on what part of the world they're in.

The dishes are constructed in advance with minimal fuss and reheated in a way that does not interfere with Shabbat observance, says Brooklyn's Arthur Schwartz, a.k.a. the Food Maven, former food editor of the New York Daily News and author, most recently, of "The Southern Italian Table."

"Cooking in low heat for a long, long time is how I do all my braises now," he says.

The moist meats of barbacoa remain some of Mexico's most famous and popular slow-cooked foods, done for centuries in underground pits built of stone, brick or wood. Meat traditionally was covered with adobo, then wrapped in maguey leaves (from an agave plant or cactus) before being placed atop a mixture of beer (or pulque, a traditional alcoholic drink), herbs and vegetables in an earthenware pot.

The meat's juices fell into the vegetables during cooking. The whole shebang might be sealed with a corn-dough masa. Today Mexican cooks

may use banana leaves but still most often let the cooking happen overnight.

Chinese dishes that took all night to cook date back thousands of years and often had medicinal properties. They were true comfort food; when someone in the house was sick, a mixture including beef, berries, dried fruits or vegetables would bake for hours in a clay pot (never metal) until it was reduced to a thick soup. Michael Chin, a senior executive of the Fireman Hospitality Group in New York, remembers his grandmother and parents making such concoctions even when he was growing up in the Bronx in the 1950s and '60s.

"From two quarts, the stuff would boil down to almost a cupful," he says. "If it contained rare herbs and was meant for someone who was trying to recover his or her strength, the smell could be --ooof!" But it always seemed to work. I don't doubt 5,000 years of Chinese medicine."

Sweetened meringues that were crafted for King Louis XIV in France needed the warmth of a low oven and long hours of residual drying heat. Today, an enterprising chef such as, say, Bryan Voltaggio prefers the precision of a whiz-bang dehydrator. He uses one at Volt, his restaurant in Frederick. "I can get a consistently timed, crisped product that way," he says. "But this is a good time of year to make [meringues] in the oven around Washington, because it's fairly dry. Don't try it in the summer."

The chef remembers how popular the overnight short ribs, slow-roasted tomatoes and pineapple chips were when he worked at Charlie Palmer's Aureole (1999-2003).

For making meringues at home,

Voltaggio says it's best to experiment by forming them in several sizes. That way you can arrive at one that will get uniformly crisp in a turned-off oven. The fan of a convection oven or the position of a middle oven rack will provide optimum airflow, he adds.

America has its own overnight cooking traditions, literally full of beans. Early adapters watched and cribbed techniques from Native Americans in Maine who coaxed tenderness into beans with bear grease and maple syrup; their pots were submerged in embers and earth from dusk till dawn.

Wagon trains had to keep moving westward, so chuck wagoners would put pots of beans on the fire overnight; travelers could wake up to a hot, hearty meal, then get going.

According to Sally and Martin Stone's "The Brilliant Bean" (Bantam, 1988), Boston's Saturday night supper of baked beans and brown bread owes its existence to the helpful city bakers who would pop their customers' bean pots into the still-warm ovens in the evening.

The pots were reunited with their owners the next morning, along with freshly baked bread.

Why the trip down history row? Just to show that we are hard-wired to hanker for foods cooked in such a manner. Their preparation might not fit so neatly into a modern existence, but cooler weather should be excuse enough.

Which brings me back to the beauty of the method. It warms the kitchen, the heart of a home, and fills the air deliciously. Main course, side dish and dessert can cook side by side. Its ingredients can be pulled from pantry and freezer. Its recipes are simple and link us to the past.

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On Faith

Admitting we're wrong is the gift of wisdom

BY REV. DRs. CASEY AND BOB BAGGOTT
COLUMNISTS

was scornful of Miller and opposed Miller on every possible issue.

This particular priest, it turned out, was no friend to the Colonial cause. And because Miller was sympathetic to the revolutionaries, the priest called for Miller and many others to be hung in the town square for treason against the King of England. But near the end of the war the situation changed, and the priest was himself arrested for treason and sentenced to die by the Colonial government for conspiring with British troops.

Rev. Peter Miller's response to this turn of events was remarkable. As soon as he received the news, he walked 60 miles to General George Washington's encampment. There he pleaded passionately for Washington to intervene and pardon the priest. Assuming Miller was the priest's friend, George

Washington shook his head and told Miller regretfully that he could not agree to spare his friend's life.

Rev. Miller then told Washington that the priest was not, in fact, his friend. Actually, the man was his very worst enemy. An amazed Washington then asked Miller why in the world he would have walked 60 miles to try to save the life of an enemy. Miller's answer gives us pause. He said he had come to plead for this man's life because on consideration, on several points of their disagreement, the priest may have been right!

The story goes that when Washington heard this explanation, he decided to spare the priest's life. Obviously, Washington admired the gritty determination of Reverend Miller to be an advocate for someone with whom he had never really seen eye to eye. He

apparently appreciated Miller's humility and his honesty. He seemed to agree that we may often be as indebted to our enemies, for what they teach us, as to our friends.

We wonder, could we be as generous with our compassion and our concern for an enemy's misfortune as Miller and Washington? It's hard not to exult in our enemy's downfall. But what if we could acknowledge that on a number of points, our adversary may, in fact, be right? Maybe our humility could end an on-going dispute, or begin a friendship, or even save a life.

Perhaps we aren't right about everything, after all. And, as people of faith, our uncertainty could sometimes be as faithful and loving as our certainty; and admitting our fallibility may be the beginning of the greatest wisdom of all.

'God gap' impedes U.S. foreign policy, study says

BY DAVID WATERS
WASHINGTON POST

American foreign policy is handicapped by a narrow, ill-informed and "uncompromising Western secularism" that feeds religious extremism, threatens traditional cultures and fails to encourage religious groups that promote peace and human rights, according to a two-year study by the Chicago Council on Global Affairs.

The council's 32-member task force, which included former government officials and scholars representing

all major faiths, delivered its report to the White House last week. The report warns of a serious "capabilities gap" and recommends that President Barack Obama make religion "an integral part of our foreign policy."

Thomas Wright, the council's executive director of studies, said task force members met with Joshua DuBois, head of the White House Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships, and State Department officials.

"They were very receptive, and they said that there is a lot of overlap be-

tween the task force's report and the work they have been doing on this same issue," Wright said.

The Chicago Council isn't as influential as the Council on Foreign Relations or some other Washington-based think tanks, but it does have a long-standing relationship with the president. Obama spoke to the council once as a state senator and twice as a U.S. senator, including his first major foreign policy speech as a presidential candidate in April 2007. Michelle Obama is on the council's board.

American foreign policy's "God gap" has been noted in recent years by others, including former secretary of state Madeleine Albright.

"It's a hot topic," said Chris Seiple, president of the Arlington, Va.-based Institute for Global Engagement and a Council on Foreign Relations member.

"It's the elephant in the room. You're taught not to talk about religion and politics, but the bumper is that it's at the nexus of national security.

The truth is the academy has been run by secular fundamentalists for a long time, people who believe religion is not a legitimate component of realpolitik."

The Chicago Council's task force was led by Scott Appleby, of the University of Notre Dame, and Richard Cizik, of the New Evangelical Part-

nership for the Common Good. "Religion," the task force says, "is pivotal to the fate" of such nations as Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, Iraq, Iran, Nigeria and Yemen, all vital to U.S. national and global security.

"Despite a world abuzz with religious fervor," the task force says, "the U.S. government has been slow to respond effectively to situations where religion plays a global role." Those include the growing influence of Pentecostalism in Latin America, evangelical Christianity in Africa and religious minorities in the Far East.

U.S. officials have made efforts to address the God gap, especially in dealings with Islamic nations and groups. The CIA established an office of political Islam in the mid-1980s. Congress passed the International Religious Freedom Act in 1998 to make religious freedom a U.S. foreign policy priority.

During the second Bush administration, the Defense Department rewrote the Army's counterinsurgency manual to take account of cultural factors, including religion.

The Obama administration has stepped up the government's outreach to a wider range of religious groups and individuals overseas, trying to

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On Faith

God gap

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connect with people beyond governments, said a senior administration official who spoke on the condition of anonymity.

The effort, he said, is more deliberate than in the past: "This issue has senior-level attention."

He noted that Obama appointed a special envoy to the Organization of the Islamic Conference and created a new Muslim outreach position in the State Department.

In the past year, he said, embassies in Muslim-majority countries have held hundreds of meetings with a broad range of people not involved in government.

To end the "episodic and uncoordinated nature of U.S. engagement of religion in the world," the task force recommended:

— Adding religion to the training and continuing education of all foreign service officers, diplomats and other key diplomatic, military and economic officials.

That includes using the skills and expertise of military veterans and civilians returning from Iraq and Afghanistan.

— Empowering government departments and agencies to engage local and regional religious communities where they are central players in the promotion of human rights and peace, as well as the delivery of health care and other forms of assistance.

— Address and clarify the role of religious freedom in U.S. foreign policy. Cizik said some parts of the world — the Middle East, China, Russia and India, for example — are particularly sensitive to the U.S. government's emphasis on religious freedom and see it as a form of imperialism.

St. Ed's girls lacrosse team builds momentum



The St. Edward's varsity girls lacrosse team does a group cheer before retaking the field in the second half of a game against Vero Beach High School.

Photos: Tom McCarthy Jr.

BY RON HOLUB
COLUMNIST

St. Ed's decisive 12-7 triumph over St. Andrew's on Feb. 18 bumped the record of the varsity girls lacrosse team up to 3-1 in the early going, and the way it was done just may have converted the coaching staff's "cautious optimism" into an outright conviction that team's foundation is now in place.

Head Coach Mike Perez "jazzed up" the schedule this year and knew that St. Andrew's would provide a stern test. His two assistants, Trina and Don Balch, agreed that the pivotal encounter with the Scots in the fourth game of the season would offer the most reliable peek at what could ultimate-

ly be in store for the 2010 campaign. The home field clash would gauge how much relative progress had been made since the Pirates were overpowered the year before in Boca Raton.

St. Ed's jumped out to a quick 4-0 lead and never looked back. Sophomore Maddy Blakeman continued her onslaught on the opponents' net with 4 goals. Younger sister, ninth grader Olivia, and freshman Chloe O'Haire chipped in with 2 apiece.

It was a game they needed to squash uncertainty related to a young squad that lost about half of its offensive firepower following a respectable 11-5 showing in 2009.

The girls followed that up with another solid performance when they traveled to Hobe Sound on Feb. 23 and defeated The Pine School 15-8 to move to 4-1 overall and even their district mark at 1-1. Blakeman recorded a double hat trick with six goals while Chloe O'Haire and Morgan Falkenhagen matched that total with three each.

The senior and junior classes are represented only three times each on the 17-girl varsity roster for 2010. That meant a youthful bunch of five sophomores, three freshman and three eight graders would form the core of the team.

"We have a very young team," Perez said. "We lost eight players from last year - six of them starters. Two of the seniors on the team now didn't play at all last year."

A team profile like that would ordinarily be a mandate for rebuilding, however Perez shied away from using that description. "I thought it would be (a rebuilding year), but I'm cautiously optimistic," he said. "The girls have been playing very well and I'm pleased with what I've seen. I've raised my expectations. We should be as good or maybe even slightly better than last year."

Progress will be contingent on how seamlessly the youngsters continue

CONTINUED ON PAGE 74

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St. Eds

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 73

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St Edwards' Chloe O'Haire charges up field during a varsity girls lacrosse match against Vero Beach High School.

team.

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Progress will be contingent on how seamlessly the youngsters continue to meld into the system. "We will definitely have one eighth grader and one ninth grader starting," Perez explained. "And I expect the other four (eighth and ninth graders) to see a lot of playing time. The standard is that an eighth or ninth grader has to be a

regular contributor to be on the varsity. These six girls have all earned the right to be there."

Through five games, the team has benefitted from the athleticism and offensive spark provided by eighth graders Falkenhagen (7 goals), Olivia Blakeman (4 goals) and Christina Butz (2 goals). Standout Chloe O'Haire (9 goals) leads the freshman trio, followed by Taylor Alber (3 goals) and Steph Kane (1 goal).

The four others who have put points on the board are senior Sydney O'Haire (3 goals), sophomore Sarah Brown (3 goals) and juniors Michelle Champalanne (4 goals) and Annie Simmons (2 goals).

Perhaps the biggest reason for an upbeat outlook is that Maddy Blakeman has retained her knack for piling up goals in clusters. The four-goal game vs. St. Andrew's and six more at Hobe Sound raised her total this year to 23, including six in a game three times. Nothing unusual about that.

Last year, she twice tallied six goals in a game and had five in another on her way to leading the team in scoring as a freshman.

"She's gotten even stronger and I'm looking for big things from Maddy," Perez stated.

Lacrosse has become more than just a springtime diversion for Blakeman. She played for the South Florida National Team that won its division at a tournament in Maryland last Memorial Day weekend. She also participates in club lacrosse during the summer and fall. But for right now, she is focused on applying the lessons learned from her parents - Trina and Don Balch - in a starring role on the varsity team.

"I think we're really coming together," Blakeman said. "We're doing pretty well so far and I think we're going to be all right. Everyone is really close, we're a tight knit group. My sister Olivia and Chloe O'Haire are my teammates on a club soccer team. Olivia really helps me. Chloe is really good, she is my partner and we work together on everything. Also, I love having my parents as coaches. Coach Perez is really good too. I'm excited about the rest of the season."

Though only a sophomore, Blakeman already aspires to play lacrosse at the Division I level in college.

A second sister duo comprised of Sydney and Chloe O'Haire will be counted on to boost team chemistry and add offensive pop. "Sydney has been a steady contributor throughout," Perez noted. "Chloe had a breakout season last year as an eighth grader. Like Maddy, she's gotten bigger, stronger, faster - and more skilled as well."

Senior Gracie Loesser steps in as the starter in goal. She last saw action with the varsity team three years ago and came back to fill a void created by the transfer of the number one net minder from a year ago. She has been

Living

Camp Grandma is a win-win for generations

WHITNEY FRIEDLANDER
LOS ANGELES TIMES

The 4-year-old had climbed onto the roof with his older cousins. More kids had taken over the kitchen to cook dinner for themselves. There were nine children total, four rooms in the house, just one bathroom — and no video games. For many adults, this would be a test of wits. But for Joan Brackin, 64, it's just another day at grandma camp.

Some parents may send their kids to sleep-away summer camps, but Brackin's three daughters bring their children to Grandma's for seven structured days of learning, playing and family bonding. Think of it as the usual visit with grandparents but with a schedule of activities and outings not only to keep the children occupied, but also to help the generations connect in a way that isn't possible through e-mail or Facebook.

"When my husband passed away, I was concerned how to keep his memory alive," says Brackin, a special education teacher in Grant City, Mo., who considers herself a bit of an Auntie Mame eccentric. "I just want to keep a little check on my grandchildren. I was trying to come up with a way so that they could come together as cousins and give me something positive to hold on to."

Brackin's teacher instincts help: Her camp is centered on a theme. Last year it was gems and minerals. This year she thinks it will be land and volcanoes.

Brackin shows videos and teaches lessons about the topic. Each night of camp, different cousins host a tea party or themed dinner based on a menu they create. Brackin gives them a crisp



\$100 bill to use at the grocery store, so that they can learn the value of money (and yes, she counts the change afterward). Dinner is served on a table that the kids have learned to set properly with Grandma's hodgepodge of cups and dishes.

On the last day of camp, the kids perform a play they have written about what they have learned. Despite the structure, the week definitely includes some grandma-style spoiling.

"If they want ice cream for breakfast, they can have it," Brackin says.

As relatives live farther apart, budgets remain tight and families look for economical ways keep kids occupied, camps like Brackin's are becoming more common, says Georgia Witkin, senior editor of Grandparents.com and a professor of psychiatry at

Mount Sinai School of Medicine in New York. Plus, says the grandmother of three, it helps that people are becoming grandparents at younger ages.

"The average age people become grandparents is 48," Witkin says, referring to results of a 2009 Grandparents.com survey. "If you become a grandparent around 48 and you live until your late 80s and early 90s, you're grandparenting for half of your life."

For parents, little can beat the peace of mind that comes from knowing that a child is with a safe guardian, says Ruth Himan, 59, a Chula Vista resident who spent Thanksgiving week running her first grandma camp for four of her 12 grandchildren. They focused on genealogy, and Himan documented their adventures on Genealogy's-RuthlessWithoutMe.blogspot.com.

For grandparents hosting children on spring break or planning a camp for summer, here are a few tips from Brackin and Witkin:

- Open the camp to the older kids. Brackin welcomes all of her grandkids who are out of diapers. Once they reach 13, they become her "counselors in training" and help care for the younger kids. Brackin says the high-school-age grandchildren help to maintain a well-supervised environment, but for safety reasons, other grandparents will want to limit their camps to a smaller number of children. Witkin adds that her grandchildren spend the night at her house "once they are old enough to talk so that they can tell me what's wrong."

- Try grandparent camp before aunt or uncle camp, Witkin says. The playing field is level because all the children have the same relationship to

the authority figure; there are no sons and daughters mixed with nieces and nephews. Plus, she says, "grandparents raised the children's own parents and there's a compatibility of child rearing."

- Keep the projects geared toward subjects that interest you as well, so you're participating as well as supervising. A bit of a geology buff, Brackin had her grandchildren make a papier-mâché globe and study the Earth's layers. Witkin told her grandchildren about her days as a high school basketball star while beating them in a game of horse. Avid tap dancers Lenore and Neil Stoller, both in their 60s and residents of Southampton, N.Y., took their granddaughter and her friend with them to the couple's tap lessons. Shelley Farrell Lamont, 54, of Coolidge, Ariz., holds an overnight summer camp out where she and her husband, Mark, teach on themes like wilderness skills.

- Keep activities short, and always plan more activities than you think time will allow.

- If you're doing something new, tell the kids about it ahead of time, Witkin says. "You tend to get a little more excitement and a little more control."

- Don't forget rewards. "Some grandparents think it's bribery, but I'm here to say it's an important education tool," Witkin says. "We give good grades, we give stars in school. Think of it as recognition, not payoff." The reward can be something the grandkids were going to do anyway, such as choice of dessert or what to have for dinner.

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Real Estate

Preparing your home to close up and head north

BY LISA ZAHNER
STAFF WRITER

Over the next two months, many of the barrier island's seasonal residents will be saying farewell and heading back to their abodes elsewhere for the summer. Closing up a home to weather whatever may come involves a great deal more than turning the key in the lock and forwarding the mail -- it can take time and effort.

To get some guidance about all the things that need to be done, 32963 turned to Pebble Bay resident and custom home builder John Huryn. As a spinoff of Huryn Construction, Huryn and his wife Maryellen own a company called The Caretakers. Many local residents who do not wish to or who cannot physically complete their close-up checklist themselves hire The Caretakers to do it for them, so the Huryns will be dispatching crews all over the island to work through these tasks over the coming weeks.

"There are some things that you just don't want to wait until the last minute to do," Huryn said.

Huryn said homeowners should have their trees trimmed before they leave, palm trees should get a "hurricane cut" removing any loose pieces with only a few fronds at the top. Any diseased or dead trees should be cut back or cut down and, in general, landscaping should be trimmed so it's a safe distance from the house.

"During a sustained wind, anything close to or touching the house can rub against the roofing material and cause damage," Huryn said.

Anything loose on the house should be removed or secured. Some common culprits are shingles, loose tiles, flashing, chimney caps, turbines and goosenecks on the roof. Gutters



Caretaker Jerred Lockwood adjusts the weather stripping on the front door to a home.

Photos: Tom McCarthy Jr.

should be tightly fastened to the house and they should be clean in preparation for rainy season.

"Dirty gutters are worse than no gutters at all," Huryn said. "Any areas of standing water under normal conditions should be taken care of because if there is standing water every time it rains, that is an area with potential for flooding."

Expecting the worst -- be prepared

Though hurricane season doesn't begin for several months, the time to think about protection is weeks before you leave.

"Right now, homeowners can be doing an inventory of their hurricane shutters and all the hardware need-

ed to put them up. If they have impact windows and doors, they can be checking all the locking mechanisms on their doors and windows, oiling them and making sure they work."

Whether you're closing up the shutters now or relying on someone to do it if a storm comes, they will need all the parts and instructions and the panels or parts need to be clean, organized and in good working order so someone in a hurry can manage them easily. Hinges on permanently installed functional shutters should also be checked and oiled, as the salt air of the ocean or from hard-water irrigation can make these fixtures tough to maneuver.

Huryn said impact windows and doors have a fairly complex system

of locking hardware that must be engaged in order to protect the home during a storm.

"If you just latch it like you do when you go out, that's not going to be enough," Huryn said.

Impact windows -- which Huryn wanted to remind people are tested to protect against flying debris, not necessarily against wind-driven rain -- have small holes on the outside of the window frame called weep holes. These weep holes allow water that collects in the tracks of the windows to drain.

"If the weep holes are dirty or clogged, that water will go inside your house," he said. "And sometimes you get someone who doesn't know what that hole is for and they will caulk it."

While many homeowners spend tens of thousands of dollars upgrading doors and windows and adding shutters, Huryn said many leave their home's largest vulnerability -- the garage door -- covered by a door that's not up to current building code. He said investing in a new, more rugged garage door can be well worth the cost.

It's also important to make sure any weather stripping is in good shape and securely affixed, as the Florida climate can play havoc with weather stripping. Since any missing parts or stripping will need to be purchased or ordered and non-operational locks or latches will need to be prepared or replaced, it could take some time, and there's no need to pay extra for a rush job or rush shipping on anything when you can plan ahead.

If your home is prone to attracting insects, arrange for an exterminator to visit while you're away, as summer is not only the wettest but also the buggiest season in Florida. A termite inspection at least once a year is also a

Real Estate



Caretaker Jerred Lockwood cleans off some ceiling light fixtures.

good idea.

Another thing that can be done well in advance, especially if you're a new homeowner and it's your first season closing up, is to make sure you know what the rules are in your community for what you can and cannot do. Some communities frown on having shutters or panels up all summer. If the home is for sale or for rent and go-

ing to be shown, it also might not be a good idea to close it up tight.

If anyone will be staying in the house for even one night in a closed-up house, they should have an exit plan.

"A closed-up house is a serious fire trap, if anyone is in the house, they should have at least one opening in the bedroom in case they need to get

out," he said. "When we close up a house, we put notes on every pillow letting anyone know that if they sleep in that room, it's at their own risk."

Propane gas should be shut off to any outdoor fireplaces or summer kitchen grills to prevent the possibility of an explosion.

Underground propane tanks which operate home generators are usually large enough to hold enough gas to power some or all of the house for about one week, but the tank needs to be filled before you leave, prior to a major power outage. During or after a storm when the power is already out, gas may be in short supply or trucks may not be able to or available to come out and refill your tank if it's only half full and runs out before the power comes back on.

In the event that something unforeseen does happen, there are certain things homeowners should have with them and other things that should be handy at the house.

Prior to leaving, it's a good idea to pack a binder with insurance and major warranty information, as well as several contact names and numbers for companies that might be needed to

repair damage. For example, a roofer, carpenter, plumber, electrician, tree company, pool company and possibly a carpet cleaner would be good resources to have in case of emergency.

Huryn said Caretakers customers hand all that worry and responsibility off to his staff, who would respond as soon as they could gain access to the home, but it's still helpful to have a basic selection of tools and equipment easily accessible in the house. He suggests a cordless drill, a wet-dry vac, a hand saw, a small generator, extension cords and a dehumidifier.

"They should buy the cheapest simplest dehumidifier, one with manual controls because the automatic ones will shut off if the power goes on and off," Huryn said. "They should get one with a hose that you can run into a sink or a toilet instead of one with a tray so no one has to empty it."

Huryn said this preparation can help prevent major water and mold damage in the home because with the demand for these things so great after a storm, there aren't enough to go around.

"Also, there have been occasions when the roads weren't passable and

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"There are some things that you just don't want to wait until the last minute to do," Huryn said.

Huryn said homeowners should have their trees trimmed before they leave, palm trees should get a "hurricane cut" removing any loose pieces with only a few fronds at the top. Any diseased or dead trees should be

cut back or cut down and, in general, landscaping should be trimmed so it's a safe distance from the house.

"During a sustained wind, anything close to or touching the house can rub against the roofing material and cause damage," Huryn said.

Anything loose on the house should be removed or secured. Some common culprits are shingles, loose tiles, flashing, chimney caps, turbines and goosenecks on the roof. Gutters should be tightly fastened to the house and they should be clean in preparation for rainy season.

"Dirty gutters are worse than no gutters at all," Huryn said. "Any areas of standing water under normal conditions should be taken care of because if there is standing water every time it rains, that is an area with potential for flooding."

Expecting the worst -- be prepared

Though hurricane season doesn't begin for several months, the time to think about protection is weeks before you leave.

"Right now, homeowners can be doing an inventory of their hurricane shutters and all the hardware need-



Jerred Lockwood from The Caretakers and Huryn Construction does some general maintenance on the back door of a home.

ed to put them up. If they have impact windows and doors, they can be checking all the locking mechanisms on their doors and windows, oiling them and making sure they work."

Whether you're closing up the shutters now or relying on someone to do it

if a storm comes, they will need all the parts and instructions and the panels or parts need to be clean, organized and in good working order so someone in a hurry can manage them easily. Hinges on permanently installed functional shutters should also be

Real Estate

checked and oiled, as the salt air of the ocean or from hard-water irrigation can make these fixtures tough to maneuver.

Huryn said impact windows and doors have a fairly complex system of locking hardware that must be engaged in order to protect the home during a storm.

"If you just latch it like you do when you go out, that's not going to be enough," Huryn said.

Impact windows -- which Huryn wanted to remind people are tested to protect against flying debris, not necessarily against wind-driven rain -- have small holes on the outside of the window frame called weep holes. These weep holes allow water that collects in the tracks of the windows to drain.

"If the weep holes are dirty or clogged, that water will go inside your house," he said. "And sometimes you get someone who doesn't know what that hole is for and they will caulk it."

While many homeowners spend tens of thousands of dollars upgrading doors and windows and adding shutters, Huryn said many leave their home's largest vulnerability -- the garage door -- covered by a door that's



Jerred Lockwood lubricates the locks and hinges on a door.

not up to current building code. He said investing in a new, more rugged garage door can be well worth the cost.

It's also important to make sure any weather stripping is in good shape and securely affixed, as the Florida climate can play havoc with weather stripping. Since any missing parts or stripping will need to be purchased or ordered and non-operational locks or latches will need to be prepared or replaced, it could take some time, and there's no need to pay extra for a rush job or rush shipping on anything when you can plan ahead.

If your home is prone to attracting insects, arrange for an exterminator to visit while you're away, as summer is not only the wettest but also the buggiest season in Florida. A termite inspection at least once a year is also a good idea.

Another thing that can be done well in advance, especially if you're a new homeowner and it's your first season closing up, is to make sure you know what the rules are in your community for what you can and cannot do.

Some communities frown on having shutters or panels up all summer. If the home is for sale or for rent and go-

ing to be shown, it also might not be a good idea to close it up tight.

If anyone will be staying in the house for even one night in a closed-up house, they should have an exit plan.

"A closed-up house is a serious fire trap, if anyone is in the house, they should have at least one opening in the bedroom in case they need to get out," he said. "When we close up a house, we put notes on every pillow letting anyone know that if they sleep in that room, it's at their own risk."

Propane gas should be shut off to any outdoor fireplaces or summer kitchen grills to prevent the possibility of an explosion.

Underground propane tanks which operate home generators are usually large enough to hold enough gas to power some or all of the house for about one week, but the tank needs to be filled before you leave, prior to a major power outage. During or after a storm when the power is already out, gas may be in short supply or trucks may not be able to or available to come out and refill your tank if it's only half full and runs out before the power comes back on.

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MARCH

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Baseball returns to Dodgertown's Holman Stadium on a cold, rainy day as St. Lawrence College takes on Essex Community College. Photo: Tom McCarthy Jr.

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Every Woman is My Sister Luncheon to benefit SafeSpace, 11:30 a.m. at the Oak Harbor Club. Tickets \$125. 772-223-2399

March 20

17th Annual Tour of Homes presented by the Junior League of Indian River, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tickets \$35.00 or four for \$120.00 in advance; \$40.00 event day. www.VeroTourOfHomes.com.

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Solutions from Games Pages in Feb. 25th/2010 Edition, Issue 9

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

Sudoku Page 56

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

Sudoku Page 57

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

Crossword Page 56 (TIMBER)

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

Crossword Page 57 (PUN CLEARANCE 2)

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MAY

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32963 Passages

NAME	AGE	SUBDIVISION	DATE
Byers, G. Ellsworth	92	Central Beach	2/24/2010
Yagobi, Ray	74	Central Beach	2/20/2010
McBride, Thomas	57	Treasure Cove	2/20/2010
Parks, Lewis	95	The Moorings	2/19/2010
Brown, Catherine	82	John's Island	2/19/2010
Caldwell, Richard Clark	65	John's Island	2/19/2010
Copeland, John	73	John's Island	2/12/2010
Paterno, Charles	90	Indian Trails	2/11/2010
Larson, Oscar	95	Smuggler's Cove	2/10/2010
Christoffers, Walter 'Dutch'		Old Orchid	2/9/2010
Staunton, John	87	Sea Cove	2/7/2010
Backus, Lucille	96	River Oak Estates	2/6/2010
Ramundo, Thomas 'Tommy'	81	Marbrisa	2/3/2010
Begley, Thomas	83	Vista Del Mar	2/1/2010

At your request, we now will provide an updated list each week of island residents who have passed away during the past month. If you know of seasonal residents who passed while out-of-town, we would appreciate being informed so we can include them in this list. Please email this information to passages@verobeach32963.com.

Featured Real Estate Sales on Barrier Island

Real Estate

Here are some of the top recent barrier island sales

Subdivision: Silver Shores, Address: 725 Shore Drive



Listing Date: June 15, 2009
Original Price: \$675,000
Sold: February 19, 2010
Selling Price: \$620,000
Seller's Agent: Michael Thorpe
 Treasure Coast Sothebys
Buyer's Agent: Paul Kitchen
 Starfish Realty

Subdivision: Sea Cove, Address: 1700 Ocean Drive, #101



Listing Date: January 21, 2010
Original Price: \$329,000
Sold: February 24, 2010
Selling Price: \$310,000
Seller's Agent: Cliff Lamb
 Dale Sorensen Real Estate
Buyer's Agent: Cliff Lamb
 Dale Sorensen Real Estate

Subdivision: Bethel Isle, Address: 4825 Bethel Creek Drive



Listing Date: October 20, 2009
Original Price: \$260,000
Sold: February 23, 2010
Selling Price: \$260,000
Seller's Agent: Bobbie Holt
 Coastal Signature Properties
Buyer's Agent: Ann Darling
 Coastal Signature Properties

Subdivision: Central Beach, Address: 415 Greytwig Drive



Listing Date: August 12, 2009
Original Price: \$299,000
Sold: February 24, 2010
Selling Price: \$220,000
Seller's Agent: Peter Robinson
 Laurel Agency
Buyer's Agent: Claudia Johnston
 Treasure Coast Sothebys

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Real Estate

Real Estate Sales on the Barrier Island: Feb. 18 to Feb. 24



In another week with relatively few barrier island closings, our featured sale this week was of a 10-year-old home at 740 Marbrisa River Lane in the Indian River Shores community of Marbrisa.

This two story home, built in 2000, was listed on January 6th for \$500,000. The sale for \$490,000 closed on February 24th.

The seller of the home was represented by Sally Woods of Dale Sorensen Real Estate. The buyer was represented by Nilla Lauberts of Peters, Cook & Company.

SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENCES AND LOTS					
SUBDIVISION	ADDRESS	LISTED	ORIGINAL ASKING PRICE	SOLD	SELLING PRICE
MARBRISA	740 MARBRISA RIVER LN	1/6/2010	\$ 500,000	2/24/2010	\$ 490,000
VERO BEACH	415 GREYTWIG RD	8/12/2009	\$ 299,000	2/24/2010	\$ 220,000
VERO BEACH ESTATES	638 BANYAN RD	1/8/2010	\$ 153,900	2/22/2010	\$ 153,900
SILVER SHORES	725 SHORE DR	6/15/2009	\$ 675,000	2/19/2010	\$ 620,000

TOWNHOMES, VILLAS AND CONDOS					
SUBDIVISION	ADDRESS	LISTED	ORIGINAL ASKING PRICE	SOLD	SELLING PRICE
SEA COVE	1700 OCEAN DR #101	1/21/2010	\$ 329,000	2/24/2010	\$310,000
BETHEL ISLE	4825 BETHEL CREEK DRIVE	10/20/2009	\$ 260,000	2/23/2010	\$ 260,000

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70 BEACHSIDE DR, #202—2,236 A/C SQ. FT.
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420 INDIES DRIVE—GOLF ESTATE
3BR/2 Study/3BA+2 1/2BA exquisite estate with verandahs overlooking golf vistas and sparkling lake on 18th hole. **\$2,350,000 New Listing**



698 GROVE PLACE—GOLF COTTAGE
Charming 3BR/3BA residence on spacious, lushly-landscaped corner homesite with golf views. Lanai, summer kitchen, heated pool. **\$980,000**



931 ORCHID PT WAY—COURTYARD LIVING
Lovely 4BR/Study/3BA residence includes separate 2BR/1BA guest cabana. Intracoastal access via kayak/canoe. **\$1,250,000**



547 WHITE PELICAN CIR—PRESERVE ESTATE
3BR/Study/3.5BA residence on estate-size homesite enjoys scenic views and Intracoastal access via kayak/canoe. **\$1,775,000**



906 ORCHID POINT WAY—GOLF ESTATE
3BR/Library/3.5BA estate with golf & lake views, exquisite architectural details, lush landscaping. **\$1,950,000 (Furnished)**



424 INDIES DRIVE—GOLF ESTATE
Classic 3BR/Study/3.5BA West Indies inspired estate. Spectacular lake and golf views, high-end finishes. **\$1,995,000 (Furn. Avail.)**



60 BEACHSIDE DR, #302—3,309 A/C SQ. FT.
3BR/Study/3.5BA oceanfront penthouse with southern exposure, exquisite finishes, French doors and stone terrace. **\$2,175,000**

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