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search for romance. P22**

**Vero interior designer's work
featured in Architectural Digest. P74**

32963 Insider **Tapas at Fuegos; Silence at Stella's**

David Rodriguez, who brought Cuban-fusion cuisine to Vero at the Oriente restaurant, is forging ahead with plans to start his new wine and tapas bar, and said he hopes to enter into a lease shortly for the space until recently occupied by the Roberto Coin Boutique.

The Bougainvillea Lane location was twice previously a restaurant, first as Tangos and later as the Blue Starfish. Rodriguez says his restaurant will be named Fuegos (the Spanish word for "fires,") and will feature two outdoor firepits in the courtyard seating area in front of the restaurant.

"I think fire brings a lot of adrenaline to a restaurant, gives it a lot of energy," said Rodriguez. Even as he continues to shoot for a summer opening, other restaurants are planning to cut back to get through Vero's slowest time of the year.

Stella's Italian Bistro actually plans to shut down for the summer, according to sources. Pearl is still working on plans for its summer hours, but is said to be considering closing one or two days a week when the slowdown comes. Melissa Lausch, co-owner of Carmel's, said right after Easter the restaurant will go to a five-days-a-week schedule.

One restaurant bucking the trend is The Tides, which used to shut down during part of the summer, but last year went with a limited schedule of Thursday, Friday and Saturday. It is planning to do the same this year.

No good news for Vero Council on 2011 budget

BY LISA ZAHNER
STAFF WRITER

There is very little good news for residents as Vero Beach enters the next budget cycle, where it is under pressure to consolidate utility systems, cut skyrocketing employee pension costs and trim staffing to levels it can actually sustain.

At its quarterly "special call meeting" Monday, with an agenda full of every controversial issue facing the city, the council took little action but got the bad news full force:

- Pensions will need to be revamped as the city is spending more on them than revenues will bear – and already the unions are flinching.



Paul Tripaldi and Tom Kiernan set out on Vero Road Rally Magnifique ahead of Gary Hartley and Dexter Warrington (top). Story on Page 12. Photo: Tom McCarthy Jr.

- Costs for health benefits are also on the rise, prompting Councilman Sabe Abell to resurrect the little researched,

and widely panned, option of an employee health clinic.

- An effort the Council dreads

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Deal on beaches may save jobs of 2 commissioners

BY LISA ZAHNER
STAFF WRITER

Trucking-in sand for the current beach replenishment project – rather than pumping it onto beaches from the sea -- was designed to inject \$7.3 million into the local economy and provide 100 temporary construction jobs, but last week's deal upping the price tag by \$3 million may help save two additional jobs: the County Commission seats of Peter O'Bryan and Joe Flescher.

Should the project have fallen apart due to an impasse in contract negotiations, the whole commission -- but especially Flescher and O'Bryan

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Rising again: Indian River Neighborhood Association

BY LISA ZAHNER
STAFF WRITER

It is considered the most powerful political organization in Indian River.

The Indian River Neighborhood Association, 7,000 members strong, has been behind every significant effort to curb growth in Indian River County over the past six years.

It has successfully backed candidates for office, strategically placing like-mind-

ed candidates on boards, among them County Commissioners Gary Wheeler, Joe Flescher and Peter O'Bryan, as well as former Sebastian City Councilwoman Dale Simchick, who is now running for county commission.

It was the driving force behind the effort to move Indian River to a charter-form of government, where all major decisions would require referendum approval by voters. The fight was long and pro

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IRNA's Brian Carman, Honey Minuse and John Higgs.

Photo: Tom McCarthy Jr.

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IRNA

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tracted and failed in 2007, when Flescher broke ranks and voted against the IRNA and Wheeler, who had made him a viable candidate. That loss has cast a pall over the group's identity since. In 2008, the IRNA endorsed Honey Minuse to run against incumbent Sandra Bowden and former Vero City Council member Bob Solari in one Republican Primary for a County Commission seat, and relative unknown Susan Boyd to challenge Wesley Davis for another. Neither IRNA candidate won. Davis and Solari, both opponents of charter government, won their pri-

maries and coasted to election. Perhaps because of its losses in 2008, bring up the IRNA with local politicians today and most are likely to distance themselves publicly, while simultaneously courting its members behind the scenes for both votes and contributions. Though contributions to its political efforts over the past year have plummeted (a sign of the economic times, say board members), it is preparing to endorse two County Commission -- and possibly some Vero City Council candidates -- this election cycle. It stands a good chance of ending the year with three IRNA-friendly votes on the County Commission.

The group has started the election cycle in earnest with an ad campaign in local publications, including *Vero Beach* 32963, reminding snowbirds to request their absentee ballot -- which in this heavily Republican county, is a sure-fire way to gauge support for its candidates even before the primary election polls open. So how did a group that began in quiet, historic Riomar become so powerful in just six years? The answer lies in how it courted wealthy donors, and stuck to the one issue that wealthy retirees in Vero Beach cared about -- keeping growth in check.

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Founded in March 2004 and

morphed out of the Riomar Neighborhood Association, the Indian River Neighborhood Association's numbers surged as it went county-wide and expanded its scope of influence, mostly by supporting efforts to curtail explosive growth during the tail end of the boom years, said Executive Committee Member Honey Minuse and President and Founder John Higgs.

At the beginning, the IRNA took on the causes of neighborhoods and brought in volunteers with legal, financial and technical expertise to help individuals and resident groups get problems solved. Severe drainage issues in Rockridge were among the first complex policy fights taken on by IRNA volunteers. "We have a vital role in this community, people depend on us," Minuse said.

But it wasn't long before the group moved into politics. It quickly began taking on bigger issues and backing kindred souls for public office and key committees, organizers said. And it sought the dollars of the financial heavyweights in town, largely those on the barrier island.

A good portion -- roughly 80 to 90 percent -- of the IRNA Political Committee's funding comes from residents in the 32963 zip code, records show.

But critics say that is only a small window into who belongs to the IRNA and how it funnels money to the candidates it wants elected or issues it wants to push. Its membership roster is kept confidential. The movers in the organization are clearly influential, and members are free to back candidates and issues as individuals.

Higgs said the match between the IRNA and affluent communities on the beach is a natural one.

"The people who live in 32963, particularly in John's Island, are community minded and public spirited," he said.

"There is a little bit of selfishness involved," Higgs continued. "If the county population doubles, which it's projected to do, there is only one A1A and there is only one stretch of beach."

Just as its main topic -- growth -- tapered off, so has the organization's revenues. In 2008, reports filed with the Supervisor of Elections show the IRNA took in \$37,000 in contributions, most of which it spent on issue advertising. The annual receipts for 2009 amounted to only \$12,000. At the same time, the group added a paid staffer, Executive Director Brian Carman, to the mix. The first-quarter report for 2010 won't be available until late April.

Former Vero Councilman Charlie

Wilson, who is running for a County Commission seat, is probably the most vocal opponent of the IRNA. He called the group elitist and anti-business. He blames its anti-growth stance as being partially responsible for the high unemployment and general economic malaise of Indian River County.

"The Indian River Neighborhood Association started out as an organization who wanted to preserve our quality of life. Unfortunately, their plans have led to a quality of life for some but misery for many others," Wilson said.

Higgs, however, describes the IRNA as not anti-growth, but a proponent of "managed growth," which he defines as sustainable development that is not based upon residential home building. Higgs added that the IRNA is pro-tourism and that it did not oppose any of the recent hotel projects on the beach, and that it sees huge potential in developing Dodgertown into a sporting destination.

Higgs said the IRNA, by putting pressure on government to be accountable and follow its own development rules and regulations to the letter, has protected homeowners or businesses.

"We're not threatening anyone's survival, we just changed the way business is done," Higgs said. "I think what's happened is when we started to become effective, the old boys couldn't walk into any office and get the permits they wanted because someone was watching and a lot of people got upset."

Ask about the IRNA in Fellsmere, where the organization fought for changes when the city tried to annex thousands of acres of desolate pasture, scrub land and groves, and you'll hear the east versus west, haves and have-nots undertones.

Fellsmere City Councilman Joel Tyson said the IRNA has what he called a "moat mentality."

"It's like they think, 'We're here now, close the drawbridge and don't let anybody else in,'" Tyson said. "If we would have all done that 15 years ago, most of them wouldn't be here."

Higgs said that because the IRNA was involved, the approved plans were "vastly better" than what was originally proposed and planned.

The IRNA's efforts to change the county's government to a charter form would have given voters control over large expansion plans.

The fact that the IRNA -- at the time working hand in hand with County Commissioner and former Sheriff Gary Wheeler -- pushed for a charter form of government marked that as the IRNA's issue.

Every so often the talk of charter

government rears its head.

"I say it's dead, let's not waste time discussing it," Higgs said. "It failed and we decided not to bring it up again. I don't know anyone who is talking about it."

Higgs said the IRNA is inherently political. "If the IRNA wants to have an impact on what takes place in the county government, we have to have people in office who are sensitive to our issues and who understand the importance of managed

growth," he said.

With its controversial positions and its secretive membership, critics say the organization is most adept at taking a position that might not be popular, then pawning the blame off on individual members, not on the organization.

For example, the IRNA took a position supporting Ocean Park but not Humiston Park. Yet, individual members came out strongly against the plan.

"We're split on things sometimes and still take a position, but when we're split on something and we have members passionately on one side, even if they're in the minority, sometimes we'll just not take a position as an organization," he said.

On April 15, the IRNA will announce which candidates it is endorsing in two County Commission races at its membership luncheon to be held in the Tiffany Room at Captain Hiram's in Sebastian.

First two-pounder



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Vero City Council

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

-- laying off employees -- will surely have to be addressed. Vero has bloated staffing levels, with 22 employees per 1,000 residents -- far more than any other Florida city its size.

Ultimately, Monday's meeting was one of taking baby steps toward June, when the tough decisions will have to be made on a final budget by a council that will have four seats up for grabs in November.

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Under pressure to consolidate utility systems with the county, the Council approved a smaller rate hike to water and sewer bills than it had approved late last year. The vote came down 3 - 2 with Councilmen Ken Daige and Brian Heady voting against the measure because they opposed any further increases in utility rates.

Heady pointed to the nearly 60 percent increase projected for city water and sewer rates over the next five years, which is putting the city utility in the precarious position of possibly losing nearly 40 percent of its customer base -- those who live outside city limits -- by 2017.

"I think if the rates were in line, we wouldn't have county residents ready

to bolt the minute the franchise agreements are up," Heady said.

Looking to the future, Heady warned his fellow council members -- and anyone else who would listen -- that City of Vero Beach taxpayers will be left holding the tab if county and Indian River Shores customers leave the system in search of stable and affordable rates.

"If we keep raising to the point where the county customers bolt, we're going to leave the debt to a smaller group, to the city taxpayers," he said, referring to all the debt service payments on the city's capital investments to build, maintain and improve the system, including payments on the \$11 million deep-well injection plant currently being built at the airport.

"I have a hard time voting for anything that places the debt on my grandchildren or places the debt on a smaller group of people."

Originally, water rates were set to go up 7.5 percent and sewer rates 29.5 percent last October. To cushion the blow, the city split the difference, passing a phased-in 18 percent increase on October 1, coupled with another 18 percent on April 1, which, staff projected, would shake out to what it needed to balance the budget over a year's time.

Customers have been paying the

first step of the sewer rate hike, along with higher rates for drinking water, for six months now, but the second half of the sewer increase will now only be about 10 percent of the total bill.

The revised increase raises the rate from \$2.93 to \$3.59 per 1,000 gallons, instead of the \$4.06 per 1,000 which was scheduled. Water and sewer director Rob Bolton said that, instead of the scheduled \$6.78 increase, typical water and sewer customers using 6,000 gallons (or 6 kgal as it's listed on the bill) of service would see an increase of \$3.96 per month.

To offset the loss of revenue, the city has eliminated six positions from the water and sewer department, trimmed capital expenditures and figured in delayed payments on debt service budgeted for the current year but not due until next year. About 87 percent of the operating costs of running the system are fixed, making it tricky to drastically reduce costs over the short term.

The good news is that the water and sewer system, which ran in the red most of the prior fiscal year, is now scheduled to actually have some operating cash on hand. The number of days' operating cash on hand is one factor used in determining the fiscal health of a utility.

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At the same meeting the council got status reports and projections on pension and health benefit costs for the current and coming years.

In 2010, the City of Vero Beach will contribute about \$4.6 million toward underfunded city employee and police pensions. In 2011, if no changes are made to the plan, that contribution is projected to rise to about \$5 million.

Finance Committee member Pilar Turner spoke during public comment, seeking to put these costs into perspective in terms of the city's revenue stream.

"Our ad valorem (real estate) tax revenue for this year is around \$4.6 million," she said. "Keep that in light that pension costs are \$4.3 million for a year and healthcare costs are \$5.5 million for a year."

The city's contributions, as a percentage of payroll, have increased and are expected to increase for at least the next two years, provided that the stock market remains steady, allowing equities to recover.

The city's defined benefit plan assumes an 8 percent rate of return on investments over a 10-year period and the average rate of return over the past five years has not even come close to that, hovering somewhere between 1 and 4 percent.

This has resulted in steadily increasing contributions by the city and the fund being about 22 percent unfunded as to future liabilities.

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"The rates of return I don't think are feasible," said Vice Mayor Sabe Abell.

"I can just tell you that I don't have anything like a defined benefit plan, but I do know that the market is down 15 to 20 percent from high and was down 30 percent for people with even conservative retirement plans," he said.

"Something has to be done," Abell said. "Defined benefit plan is not possible."

Vero resident Richard Winger also spoke in support of changing the plan.

"I agree with the vice mayor's comments, you're not going to be able to maintain a defined benefit plan, it's impossible," said Winger.

The alternative to defined benefit is a defined contribution plan, where the employer contributes a certain amount per year, and the employee also contributes and accepts the risk of those funds going up or down in market value prior to their retirement.

Under the current defined benefit plan, general employees contribute 2.25 percent of their salaries and the city makes up whatever the difference is to achieve the defined benefit.

To back up his position that the city needs to change its plan, Abell quoted an expert study stating that defined benefit plans are "almost impossible to support."

The actuary will come back with options for the council in June, which can be incorporated into the 2010-2011 budget in July.

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The city is also reviewing various options of getting the cost of employee health benefits under control. The proposal on the table is for the city to support a base health plan, with the employees having the ability to choose and pay for upgrades to the base plan. A formal proposal with firmer cost estimates is expected at the June quarterly budget review.

"We've targeted, we're trying to find \$1 million," said Gabbard. "When the issue of the (proposed employee health) clinics went by the wayside, we knew we had to do something."

Any change in employee pension or health benefits would need to be negotiated with the Teamsters local union, and Teamsters representative Steve Myers said that employees already on 5 percent furloughs cannot afford to have more taken out of their paychecks to fund pensions or health premiums.

In the current year, the Teamsters negotiated a deal to accept furloughs in exchange for the city picking up a 14 percent increase in healthcare costs for union employees.

"I would object to and I'm going to object to any employee increase in contributions," Myers said. "Employees have agreed to sacrifice and con-

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tinue to sacrifice taking furlough days. There's no way the employees can sustain their way of living with all these reductions."

Local resident Joseph Guffanti, wearing a Communication Workers of America union t-shirt, respectfully disagreed.

"I don't want to see them lose their jobs, but the people are hurting," Guffanti said.

Guffanti said that city employees can't be immune to the economic suffering being experienced by the people who are paying their salaries through their taxes and utility bills.

"Some of that hurting has to be shared," Guffanti said.

Abell then told the Council he thinks a city-run health clinic for municipal employees is still a viable option.

"With the health plan, I think there are other options, and I still haven't given up on the option of the clinic sit-

uation where we can save \$250,000," Abell said.

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The City of Vero Beach started out the year with a budget calling for 508 full-time and 41 part-time employee.

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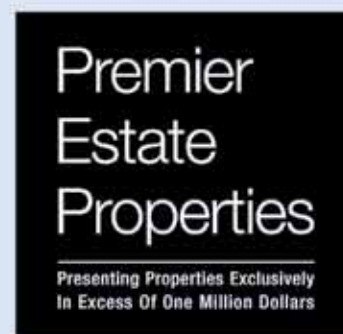
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Vero City Council

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Actual employment as of Monday was 483 full-time and 25 part-time employees.

The actuary reminded the Council that, despite recent efforts to begin to trim the number of employees, the city's payroll keeps growing, that it increased by \$2.3 million in one year recently on a chart he was presenting at the meeting. He said those increases in payroll alone accounted for \$280,000 in pension contributions this year.

Mayor Kevin Sawnick, who floated an idea last month that the city should plan for a 10 percent reduction in staffing next year, asked the Council to bring forth cost-cutting ideas and started the discussion with a few of his own.

Sawnick said he is researching what it would cost to have a "functional capacity evaluation" of the city staff to determine if the taxpayers are getting their money's worth from every employee.

"I know the city gets some flack from people about the staffing levels," Sawnick said. "I think we need to have someone come in to look at our staffing levels and to look at certain positions."

Secondly, he suggested resurrecting and revamping a long-defunct program that the city used to have, which provided economic incentives to employees who offer tangible ways to cut the budget in their own city departments.

"I'm confident that employees are always looking for ways to save on the budget but sometimes it helps to have a monetary incentive," Sawnick said.

Thirdly, Sawnick said he wanted the staff and council to take a hard look at changing or reducing the amount of money the city transfers into the gen-

eral fund from utility receipts.

"Hopefully we can come up with some good ideas to make everyone happy," Sawnick said, adding that he was optimistic about finding ways to make cuts internally and maintain an optimum level of service to residents.

"No crazy idea should be left out," Sawnick said.

Former Councilman Charlie Wilson reminded members of the Council that he intends to have a referendum placed on the ballot that would amend the city charter, disallowing an electric utility as a permitted city function.

"One of the questions that perhaps you should ask yourselves, is what the result would be, what the impact would be of dissolving the department that operates the electric utility?" Wilson said.

Wilson cited an example of a deal brokered by the City of St. Cloud in which the Orlando Utilities Commission took over all of its employees and, after a period of time, its pension liabilities.

"You may want to consider that in your deliberations," Wilson said, urging the Council to have the actuary crunch numbers which would take this into account.

The Council members had no comments on Wilson's reference to the referendum.

Sawnick asked his fellow officials to take everything they had heard and received into consideration, and come back in June to set policies that will determine how the city crafts its budget going forward.

"You've given us a lot of homework to do between now and our next budget hearing," Council member Tom White said. "We can really cut some corners next year and still bring the quality of life that we're used to."

Deal on beaches

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

-- would have had a great deal to answer for.

O'Bryan, who serves as liaison to the county's Beaches and Shores Preservation Committee, went against the panel's recommendations and backed the use of upland sand as a way to save millions now and in future projects.

Flescher, who represents the replenishment area, will have to answer to constituents in Indian River Shores and Orchid in November, taking either the credit or the blame for the outcome of the project.

Under pressure from contractors who are desperate to recoup the mounting costs of the ever-shifting specifications for the inland sand replenishment, the county agreed to changes that now bring the project to a \$14.6 million tag, which includes

engineering work and an artificial reef expected to be required to be built in 2013.

The turning point came only after threats from a sand mine owner that he would back off on production, supply only what was in the original contract, leaving the county about 50,000 cubic yards short -- meaning that some oceanfront residents would not get their sand.

"If we can't make a deal and I don't start getting paid for it, I will turn off the third dredge and go back to working eight hours a day," Ranch Road Lake sand mine owner Steve Smith told Vero Beach 32963 the day prior to coming to settlement with the county.

But even with the deal sealed, the project is running behind.

With 60 percent of the allotted time gone, only 44 percent of the sand delivered, and a mere 15 percent of

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Deal on beaches

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

the project actually constructed, the neighborhoods most in danger of getting left out are Baytree and Marbrisa, according to the county's coastal engineer James Gray. They're slated to be done last.

This does not seem like a strategic plan, as those very communities were forced to chip in their own cash to fund emergency sand replenishment after the 2004 hurricanes. Marbrisa was declared an area of critical erosion, with the east end of its community swimming pool left bare to the elements with no sand underneath.

Flescher said a lot of things have gone against progress of the project, from changes in the specifications to tight regulation to bad weather.

"The work must stop on April 30 due to sea turtle nesting season and that's a reality," he said. "If we didn't get those last two points done, some would say the mission failed, but the mission didn't fail. There have been significant changes and delays."

Even if Phase One ultimately falls short of its goal Flescher said he still stands behind his vote for upland sand.

"The simple truth is that, had the upland sand providers not come into the picture and we had gone with

the original process, we would not have been able to do the project, we wouldn't have had the funding," Flescher said.

"The upland sand came in at a much cheaper cost factor and then the offshore bidder even lowered his bid. I have a problem with someone lowering his bid by \$9 million all of a sudden."

The project was originally slated to cost \$21 million, which was reduced to \$19.7 million and then down to \$13.1 million after the upland sand bid came in at the original \$7.3 million.

That kind of bargain bidding may or may not be the case in the future, now that sand miners know the full cost --

in time, equipment, manpower and aggravation -- involved in keeping and doing a large-scale beach replenishment job.

Commissioner Wesley Davis, who has family ties to the sand mining business in both his brother, owner of Brian Davis Sand Mine, and his cousin, who happens to be Ranch Road Lake mine owner Steve Smith, had been urging commissioners to settle before the dispute got nasty.

Commissioner Gary Wheeler voted for the \$3 million fix because he thought the impasse between the county and Ranger Construction had reached a point where fairness dictated a solution.

"I want the best deal for the county that we can get, but I don't want to take advantage of a vendor to get a better deal," Wheeler said.

Wheeler said that he didn't feel any political pressure to vote for the compromise. But then, he knew there were already three votes -- Davis, Flescher and O'Bryan -- to approve.

Yet, faced with the prospect of a shutdown that would be far more costly at this point, Commissioners opted for explaining to the voters why they had to spend \$3 million more of their tax dollars on sand.

O'Bryan did exactly that last week in an appearance before the Indian River Shores Town Council.

"I asked for an explanation about the \$3 million overrun and he went through three separate change orders and worked out to be the \$3 million and explained how we got there," said Mayor Bill Kenyon said.

When asked if O'Bryan thought to mention that Baytree and Marbrisa, two upscale Shores communities, might not get their sand if Ranger runs out of time to complete Phase One, Kenyon said it did not come up.

"He didn't mention that, but we didn't talk a whole lot about the limited time that was left," Kenyon said. "He didn't suggest that they would possibly run out of time."

Overall, Kenyon said the town and its constituents have been left with a bit of a hangover from all the ups and downs of beach replenishment in recent years.

"This thing, it has been a real bummer from the word 'go' and now if they don't finish it this year, these people are going to get upset," he said.

The Beaches and Shores Preservation Committee meets on April 19, and the county should have a pretty clear idea of whether or not Ranger Construction will be able to finish the project by April 30.

When it comes down to the wire, if it appears that anyone may be left out, Gray said there may be an opportunity to prioritize exactly what the last place to get its sand will be.



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PEOPLE

Vero Road Rally Magnifique

P12

People

Humane Society's event brings out animal lovers



Paula Gibson, Joanna Salina and Cornelia Perez

Photos: Tom McCarthy Jr.



George Nagy and Kristen Yoshitani



Hal Oberkotter and Gloria Allen



Randall and Sharon Flinchum with Chuck Sullivan

BY BARBARA YORESH
CORRESPONDENT

It's a lavishly staged two-night gala that willingly goes to the dogs as well as cats and other needy animals.

For 26 years, "Cause for Paws" has

benefited the Humane Society of Vero Beach and Indian River County through the enthusiastic generosity of event sponsors and supporters who have compassionate hearts for homeless, neglected or abused animals.

Proceeds from the event go towards

helping more than 7,000 animals cared for by the two organizations each year.

A preview party held March 23 from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. at the elegant Orchid Island Golf & Beach Club set a stunning seaside locale to feature a tempting array of silent auction treasures

which were available for bidding as well as a "buy now" option for those who wanted to be sure to obtain a coveted item.

The preview "sneak peek" was presented by Sally Anderson, JoAnn Becker, Sandy Crowell, Betsy Forrester,

Ginny Schwerin, Jean Shropshire and Maria Whittle.

But amid the impeccably dressed assemblage of some of the area's kindest philanthropists as well as auction items, the real stars of the evening were an irresistible trio of "only a mother could love" faces belonging to tiny terrier-mix young canines named Lilo and Stitch and a jowly English bulldog named Lilly. All three were ready to find new adoptive homes.

The Cause for Paws event was capped by the Live Auction held Saturday evening, March 27 at the Vero Beach Museum of Art.

Event organizers, bidders and human society officials were enthusiastic about the annual event which is among the county's most prestigious and popular fundraisers.

Executive Director Chalmers Morse noted that present economic conditions have affected the need for additional Humane Society services. Through donations, the organization has established a food bank which has helped 1,300 area families feed and keep their animals, he said.

"I think the Humane Society is absolutely wonderful and I have such deep respect for them," said Marlene Evans Putnam, an accomplished Vero Beach artist who donated a painting for the auction and who has two adopted Chihuahua and Chihuahua-mix dogs.

Keith Hinton, humane society director of development, praised the efforts of Cornelia Perez who, with a team of dedicated volunteers and supporters, has ably guided the event since its inception.

"It's got to be a Guinness Book of world records for chairing this. She's got something special.

"People are having financial difficulties and we've seen increased situations of foreclosure where people have to give up their pets because they have to move. It's a really unfortunate thing. But this community has been so caring for the animals," Hinton said.

Board president Debbi Vickers noted that each year's Cause for Paws fundraiser "tries to beat what we did the previous year."

"The costs of doing business keep going up and there is a constant need for our services. But we have so many who help in many ways in addition to fundraising.

"We have a very educated, dedicated staff and this community is very supportive with all the funding that they give us," Vickers said.

Destinations Travel located beachside donated a dream vacation of a seven-night Caribbean cruise aboard the largest full-rigged sailing ship in the world which went to a lucky bidder for less than half its \$7,000 value.



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People

Exotic cars, cool road trip benefit Sun Up



Teresa Hilton uses a stop watch to space out the start times of the Vero Road Rally Magnifique racers.

MARY SCHENKEL
COLUMNIST

The excitement grew as one spectacular car after another pulled into the parking lot of the Sun-Up Center

for the Developmentally Disabled, gearing up for the inaugural Vero Road Rally Magnifique. Polished and buffed to perfection, the 56 participating cars ran from exotic, as in Ferrari, Maserati and Lotus, to a vintage 1959 Studebaker.



John and Kathi Schumann



Elaine Jones, Nicole Arraya, Elizabeth Milton, Sheila Milton, Deidre McDonagh, Tammy Adams, Adie Ward, Jameson Ward and Danny Licata
Photos: Tom McCarthy Jr.

er and even a most unusual two-story dune buggy.

A tuxedoed James Bond, aka PNC Bank's Paul Tripaldi, hoisting a Gatorade "martini" had decorated his classic Porsche 911 Targa, with a large 007 decal. And Klaus Fisher had enrolled four Amalfi Racing Team cars, piloted by family members and friends.

Event chair Karl Steene likened the event to an old fashioned drive in the country, and it was certainly a perfect day for one. Susan and Ed Smith had graciously invited me to ride along with them as a co-navigator, to get the full experience, so we took Ed's Lexus

SUV Hybrid rather than Susan's sporty little two-seater BMW Z4.

Cars were not given their route packet until just before being released, at one-minute intervals. Then, with a wave from flag girl Dr. Susan Fries, we were off. Directions were interspersed with questions along the way about things observed and historical trivia.

The route took cars along Old Dixie and at the historic Hallstrom House; we came to the first checkpoint. Members of the Antique Car Club served as checkpoint marshals, and a question at each of the seven stops was to identify the make and model of their

People



Gregor Downey jokes with Judi and John Osteen before driving his 1959 Studebaker Lark to the starting line.



Participants in the Vero Road Rally Magnifique end their ride at John and Kathi Schumann's west-side residence for food and drink and live auctions.

superbly preserved cars.

Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institution and then what is now the Antique Mall building, where we learned Al Capone and Gloria Swanson reportedly stayed, were the next stops.

Cars then headed back north to Vero Beach, crossing over the 17th Street Bridge, heading back along Ocean Drive and then east again on the Merrill Barber Bridge. We phoned a friend to learn that Merrill Barber had served one term as Mayor of Vero Beach and two terms in the Florida Senate.

Then on to the old Vero Railroad Station, home of the Indian River County Historical Society, through the Indian River County Administration Complex and past the Vero Beach Theatre Guild, to Aviation Boulevard and over to the Vero Beach Municipal Airport. The final lap took us southwest, along Route 60 to the Polo Grounds and then southwest again for a Finish Line Party at the residence of honorary co-chairs Kathi and John Schumann.

Guests enjoyed reliving the experience with their friends over wine and hors d'oeuvres, viewing some of the

Schumann's rare and exotic cars and watching famed Formula One Driver Brian Redman tear up their test track.

A live auction featured several luxury trips, to the San Francisco Wine County, Ireland, Monaco and Tuscany, jewelry, collectibles and two immediate driving experiences with Kathi Schumann in her Ferrari and with Redman in John Schumann's Dodge Viper.

Earlier in the day, prior to navigating with her husband, Jerome, in their 2007 Corvette, Laura Atchison mentioned that the rally had been on her bucket list.

They were also the high bidders on the Tuscany trip and Atchison said, "That was another one on my bucket list. My father recently passed away, and I decided I'm not going to put things off."

Gary Ball won the bid for the drive with Kathi Schumann. When they returned, a beaming Ball said enthusiastically, "It was fantastic!"

His wife Susan added, "He can't stop smiling. He's just grinning ear to ear."

In the end, driver Jack Illare and

navigator Jeff Greer won the First Place Rally trophy in a 2005 Ford Expedition.

"It proves there was no advantage in having a \$100,000 car," announced Karl Steene.

Actually, the Expedition held the advantage; Nancilee Wydra, Trish Burke, Stacey Greer and Shelly Lyn Rostovsky all went along for the ride. "If it hadn't been for the women answering all the questions, and the crazy driving of this guy, we never would have won," said Greer.

Second Place went to the only sports car in the top three spots, Dick Patton,

driving a 1996 Acura NSX, and his navigator Ray Brown.

Third Place was awarded to driver Lacey Rice and her navigator mother Barbara Rice, driving a Honda Element, large enough to hold the other family members on their team.

Susan Smith, pleased at being high bidders on the fabulous Swarovski necklace and earring set, said,

"We would absolutely do this again. The trip got us driving all over town, finding out more about Vero Beach, the clues were creative; the whole rally was fun."



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People

Planned Parenthood: 'Cocktails with a Twist'



Toni Hamner and Sandy Kahle

Photos: Mary Schenkel

MARY SCHENKEL
COLUMNIST

Planned Parenthood supporters gathered at the Vero Beach Country Club last Tuesday for an entertaining evening of Cocktails with a Twist. As guests mingled in the lobby over cocktails, they had a chance to review items that would be sold later on during the live auction, catch up with old friends, and meet a number of new like-minded individuals.

When I asked her how she initially became interested in the organiza-

tion, co-chair Suzy Bromwell replied, "I first got involved in Planned Parenthood 25 years ago in Lakeland and became president of the Central Florida board. I think all young people should have access to the same services I have through my gynecologist; quality, affordable, reproductive health care."

The cocktail party eventually moved into the dining room, where Bromwell welcomed guests and introduced Lillian Tamayo, President/CEO Planned Parenthood of Greater Miami, Palm Beach & Treasure Coast. Tamayo stressed the importance of sex edu-



Maya Peterson, Donna Lindsay and Silvia Cancio



Don and Sandy Mann, Dr. Larry and Diana Castleman and Pam Director

cation in the schools and reiterated Planned Parenthood's commitment to the reproductive health and rights movements adding, "It's 2010 and we're still fighting to protect women's rights."

Tamayo presented the Champion

of the Year award to Dr. Harold and Rose Marie (Rosie) Schulman, calling them Planned Parenthood ambassadors and champions of choice. "They have been dedicated to the mission of Planned Parenthood in New York and in Florida. Dr. Schulman is my hero;

People



Lillian Tamayo, President/CEO Planned Parenthood of Greater Miami, Palm Beach & Treasure Coast, presents Champion of the Year award to Rosie and Dr. Harold Schulman



Michael Beechem, Susan Kamer, Les and Suzy Bromwell



Elsie Visel, Otis Pike and Barbe Bonjour

a leader in gynecological care. He has never stopped supporting women's rights."

After thanking co-chairs Suzy Bromwell and Pam Director, Tamayo turned the microphone over to Joe Tessier who presided over the live auction, highlighted by a fabulous Ezulwini African Safari.

Four showcase dance performances were led off by last year's Dancing with Vero's Stars top dancer Pam Director, who proved that she hasn't lost any of her dancing skills as she wowed guests with her partner Joe Tessier from the 14th Avenue Dance Studio. Later in the evening, Tessier got everyone else into the act with some energetic group

dancing lessons.

Proceeds from the event will help provide education, health care and advocacy programs in Indian River County.

Said Tamayo, "The biggest challenge in Indian River County is a deep-seeded opposition to good public health policies. We need to invest in reproductive health care in young people. They're our future."

She also noted that Planned Parenthood is currently working to pass two essential pieces of legislation.

The Healthy Teens Act would require public schools to provide scientifically based, medically accurate, age appropriate information on family planning and sexually transmitted diseases. The Prevention First Act would help women and families prevent unintended pregnancies through access to emergency contraception and birth control.

Added long-time supporter Gloria Wood, "It's important to plan pregnancies so that all children are born into safe, loving families."



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People

‘Touch a Truck’ benefit helps local families



Truck enthusiasts walk around the fairgrounds looking at the different vehicles during Touch A Truck at the Indian River County Fairgrounds.

Photos: Keith Carson

BY BARBARA YORESH
CORRESPONDENT

It was a truck-lovers dream: More than 60 antique and new hauling vehicles of all sizes, shapes and colors –

some including towering cranes and others easily recognizable as rescue and emergency vehicles – were assembled at the Indian River County Fairgrounds last Saturday for the Second Annual Touch A Truck Family Festival presented by Childcare Resources of

Indian River.

The organization founded in 1994 provides early education program tuition and other assistance and programs for children of working families. More than 1,000 children and their families have benefited from Child-

care Resources programs.

A sunny, breezy day was the perfect backdrop for the affordable event which drew hundreds of area families to enjoy vehicle displays plus a myriad of games, prizes and food. Proceeds of the event support early education programs for working families.

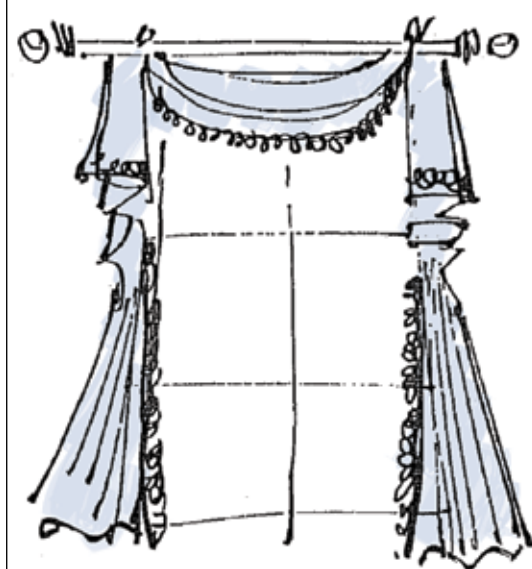
An army of individual volunteers and business supporters gave tirelessly of their time and efforts to plan and present the fun-filled event which included building many creatively inspired games from scratch, according to Kathy Leingang who serves as chairman of truck exhibitor recruitment and helps plan games and other activities.

“Our supporters ask what they can do to help. This is something we can’t do without these people,” Leingang said.

Jeffrey Arnold, owner of a property management company and the father of four, invented and fabricated several indoor games.

“I want to see families helped and I want to give back to the community. It comes back to me a thousand-fold,” Arnold said.

Attendees were greeted at the admission gate by the circus-like music of an antique 1922 Tangle calliope which was mounted on a 1926 Model T Ford Truck owned by Vero Beach resident Marv Horovitz, who collects antique trucks, cars and air-driven instruments such as the calliope and band organs.



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People



Hayden Farrow, 2, sits behind the wheel of an antique fire engine as his mother Kim watches during Touch A Truck at the Indian River County Fairgrounds.



Ian Benson, 2, explores an Indian River County fire truck during Touch A Truck at the Indian River County Fairgrounds.

“I donate my time providing calliope music for non-religious charitable events,” Horovitz said.

Childcare Resources of Indian River Executive Director Pam King was on hand greeting visitors and staying busily involved with all aspects of the popular event. When asked about the origins of Touch A Truck, she explained that a similar event was held in Connecticut.

“It’s been done elsewhere and we borrowed the idea and made it our own,” King said.

Just inside the admission tables was a display of raffle items including lots of desirable toys, an Easter basket and a barbecue grill for dad.

“These are all donated items and we have things like X-Box, Guitar Hero and all that cool (video game) stuff,” she said.

Steps beyond under a covered pavilion – and evident by the succulent aromas emanating throughout the

area – was a food court of vendors which are personally selected by event organizers for their quality and variety of food.

Trudie Rainone, a Childcare Resources board member, was in charge of the food court vendors which offered well-priced treats for every palate.

“Touch A Truck is great for the children and adults. Everyone loves the trucks and

there’s a little something for everyone. It’s really amazing and wonderful

how the owners of the trucks on display are so supportive of this event,” said Rainone.

There was, unquestionably, a profusion of every type of truck imaginable, from the Old Model T Fords with horns sounding like duck quacks to huge 18-wheel rigs with state-of-the-art cabs.

However, the variety of trucks may have been matched by the types of strollers wheeled by parents and grandparents throughout the fairgrounds.

The day seemed to be a celebration of things on wheels.

Clearly, this is a popular event – particularly for young families and children under age 10. Air horns were repeated blaring as youngsters climbed high into truck cabs and delightedly, with adult permission, blew the horns to their hearts’ content. Broad smiles were the order of the day for young and old.

Nicholas Dimitrov, 9, had been transformed via face paint into a Batman-like persona, although the young hero seemed to enjoy vintage vehicles more than a Batmobile.

“I picked it,” he said of the black-painted face design and added that he enjoyed seeing an 84-year-old car and red trucks.

Indian River County Sheriff’s Office Deputy Teddy Floyd was having fun showing kids “Big Bertha,” the sheriff’s military-type transport truck that is used in emergencies and to help demolish abandoned houses.

“This is awesome and we’re having fun with this event and Big Bertha,” Floyd said as he easily hoisted Sebastian Burlage, 3, into the truck while mom Krysten and grandmother Virginia watched with smiles.

“I think it’s wonderful. Sebastian’s loving it,” Virginia Burlage said.

Perhaps Leingang best summed up the goal of the Touch A Truck festival:

“If this event makes a difference in even one kid’s life amid so much out there that is negative, then this is positive. We want to bring to the public the people who make society run and who

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People

Choosing Vero for reasons other than retirement



Attorney Rebecca Emmons and new owner of Vero Insurance Todd Emmons

Photo: Tom McCarthy Jr.

BY MICHELLE GEN Z
STAFF WRITER

It was attorney Rebecca Emmons' Cha Cha chase turns that last month earned her the top prize in Dancing with Vero's Stars. But it was a flat-out

180-degree turnaround that brought her to Vero in the first place. After vowing she could never live in such a quiet town, she changed her mind in one panic stricken instant, when a traffic jam in Broward County stopped her cold on I-95, as her husband Brad

rushed their baby, blue and unresponsive, to the emergency room from the opposite direction.

Her baby survived – now in first grade at Beachland Elementary, she's running 5-K races, in fact. And her four-year-old brother Jake is nipping

at her heels – he can run a mile, his parents say. Their mom's dancing was to benefit other babies, through the Healthy Start Coalition. And their dad, attorney-turned- insurance executive Brad Emmons, makes sure his crowded schedule includes plenty of intensive

Incoming Tide

People

play time with his kids. Happily, the Emmons family is part of Vero's Incoming Tide. Here is their story.

Until the moment her parents put her on a plane bound for law school, Rebecca Emmons had never flown before. Raised in a rural Pennsylvania town, she grew up with a strong sense of family, she says, with an aunt across the street and her grandmother "one hollow over."

Rebecca Emmons was the first in her working-class family to go to college, paying her way through grants, scholarships and part-time jobs. After graduating from Clarion University of Pennsylvania, she had picked Cleveland-Marshall College of Law because it was closer to home than the other schools she had been accepted to – she never considered which was more prestigious.

Her husband Brad Emmons had grown up in Norwalk, Ohio, a town of 15,000, where his father, married at 19, was the self-made president of an insurance agency, a beloved success story in their small community.

Brad and Rebecca met in law school, both high achievers, finding their stride in a competitive pack. Now both 36, they are at the fore of a growing group of ambitious and altruistic young families choosing Vero for reasons other than retirement, spending their free time not playing golf but playing with preschoolers at the park, and their after- hours networking for good causes.

Rebecca Emmons was the first in her working-class family to go to college, paying her way through grants, scholarships and part-time jobs. After graduating from Clarion University of Pennsylvania, she had picked Cleveland-Marshall College of Law because it was closer to home than the other schools she had been accepted to – she never considered which was more prestigious.

There she blossomed in the litigation appellate program, competing on winning teams at the national level in various moot court and mock trial competitions.

Wanting to make herself "market-

able," as she puts it, she took a job working in the tax department of Ernst & Young in Cleveland, which assigned her to work on the pension plan of the Teamsters of Ohio.

Her drive was matched by Brad Emmons. Ironically, Brad had been recruited as a high school tennis star to go to college at Penn State, 30 minutes from Rebecca's tiny hometown. He turned them down, however, and ended up at the University of Toledo, on a full tennis scholarship; his freshman year, the school's team came in first in the mid-American conference.

"We both saw the world as somewhat small," says Rebecca.

When they decided to marry, they knew they were embarking on a series of defining compromises. Their views of where they wanted to live were very different. Brad wanted to move south to warmer weather; Rebecca despises the heat. "I'm a northern girl," she says. "I saw myself in a big Victorian on Main Street."

When Brad bought an interest – what he calls "a significant upside entrepreneurial opportunity" -- in Vero-based Orchid Insurance, an insur-

ance brokerage firm doing business in 17 states, Rebecca agreed to move to Florida. But she took one look at Vero Beach and said, "No way." Instead, while Brad continued as Orchid's only employee, the couple moved to Fort Lauderdale where he began working in retail insurance.

Then Rebecca had a huge career break. In 2000, she was hired at the prestigious 1,000-member Miami-based law firm of Holland and Knight.

The couple were married in September of that year. Their honeymoon was spent hop-scotching from the

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borrowed homes of business associates – in Italy, in the south of France, and in London. There they took a break from honeymooning, and while Rebecca shopped, Brad dropped in on Lloyd's of London -- Orchid is now one of Lloyd's largest binding authorities in the U.S.

Two years later, with their careers in what seemed like an unstoppable full swing, a nagging pain in Rebecca's back sent her to the emergency room. Chronic and misdiagnosed since childhood, the pain turned out to be a non-functioning kidney, swollen to the size of a football. The kidney was removed; a week later, she discovered she was pregnant.

Daughter Morgan was six months old when another medical emergency arose. Rebecca had taken her to the pediatrician for her routine inoculations, and dropped her off at the home of her care-giver. Then she headed down to Miami, an hour-and-half commute. Once there, she got a panicked call from the sitter: baby Morgan was having a reaction to the inoculations.

"Morgan was turning blue and unresponsive," says Emmons. The sitter rushed her to the emergency room, while Brad and Rebecca each left their respective jobs and headed to the hospital from opposite directions.

"As soon as I got on I-95, there's an accident, and I can't move. I was freaking out," recalls Rebecca. Brad got to the hospital, Morgan was treated for

her allergic reaction, and both made it home ahead of a frantic and frustrated Rebecca.

"Two days later, we put our house on the market," she recalls. "Holland & Knight was a great job and I was making great connections and a lot of money. But I just said, I can't do this. I can't be away from my children. Once you become a mother, things that were important to you are not that important."

So it was that Rebecca Emmons gave Vero a second chance. Once she

"We want to be good role models for our kids," says Brad. "Our parents struggled. We don't, but we remember what that was like. The tougher times you go through, the tougher you become. And it could all be taken away tomorrow."

did, the breaks kept coming. Brad Emmons' three partners in Orchid Insurance were all well-connected locals, among them, Jim Schwiering, whose wife Jane introduced Rebecca to attorney Bill Stewart.

She soon became the first woman partner at the firm, and one of only a handful of women in beachside law firms, expanding her tax law experience to include real estate and tax exempt law.

She also expanded her civic involvement. Soon after her arrival, she joined

the Junior League, an invaluable experience, she says, in that it trained her in the basics of volunteerism. She went on to join the boards of Riverside Children's Theatre, the Mardy Fish Foundation and the Children's Home Society.

Her recent effort, benefiting the Healthy Start Coalition, came about on a trip with her girlfriends to participate in a new passion: relay racing. Among the group was Mandy Robinson, whose husband Joe was recruiting participants for the Dancing with

Meanwhile, Brad Emmons had gone through his own I-95 moment. Only instead of a traffic jam, it was two hurricanes that turned his world around. Squarely in the eye of the storm, he saw in one month in 2004 just what his industry meant in real life.

"It was humbling," he says. "We had had Charley that same year, and we thought that was it."

"Then we had Frances, then Jeanne, and we were just inundated with claims, 1500 on the retail side, 400 on the wholesale side."

He and Rebecca, pregnant with son Jake, had stayed through Frances. But they evacuated to Melbourne for Jeanne.

"After two weeks with no power and an 18-month-old who wanted pop-sicles, I knew better," she says. "But as soon as he got the all-clear, he had to hit the ground running."

Brad Emmons and his partners fired up a generator at their offices, then on Ocean Drive. Their view across the street had once been the Gables condominiums; now, it was a view of the ocean.

"It was a tough time. It was very emotional, not just for our employees who were trying to get through their own problems, but trying to help people and service their claims, ten or twelve hours a day. That's when it gets personal," he says.

While Rebecca Emmons, in her law offices down the street, was handling lawsuits regarding real estate under contract, Brad Emmons stopped selling policies for four months post-hurricane, so swamped was he with claims.

In the bigger picture, the insurance industry itself was shaken to the core. "It was a time of real uncertainty," he says. "We had over \$1 billion in exposure. It was scary."

When the debris was cleared and the tarps folded up, a building boom broke out all over the area, and with it, success for his business.

"Following 2004, we grew in an unprecedented way," says Brad, who watched over the expansion of Orchid Insurance.

Like his father before him, Brad Emmons has found continued success in insurance.

In 2008, he became president of Orchid Insurance. In February 2009, he became a shareholder in the 50-year-old Vero Insurance, and today serves as its CEO.

"We want to be good role models for our kids," says Brad. "Our parents struggled. We don't, but we remember what that was like. The tougher times you go through, the tougher you become. And it could all be taken away tomorrow."

Incoming Tide

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Arts & Theatre



Stetson University Opera Theatre performs Puccini. P.24

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Arts/Theatre

Riverside's 'I Love You, You're Perfect' is fresh fun

L. L. ANGELL
COLUMNIST

Whether you are currently in or out of it, desperately seeking it, or have just sworn off it, love is something none of us – and certainly not the craft of musical comedy—can do without.

Riverside Theatre's newest production, "I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change" has a sexy, boisterous energy that's contagious. It's the longest running off-Broadway musical of all time—for good reason.

Here in Vero, a cast of four superb actors, an enchanting street scene of multi-colored brownstones, an original score performed by live musicians in a tiny loft, and the graceful direction of Stephen Bourneuf, make "I Love You", a perfect night at the theater for just about everybody.

The comedy has been compared to "Seinfeld" and its meditations on neurotic love. In a nutshell: love is what we all want, but once we've got it, we're determined to change it. This surpris-

ingly witty script by Bob DiPietro and Jimmy Rogers is pungent, poignant, and provocative.

In the first scene, four "monks" in terry-cloth bathrobes and fuzzy slippers stand on a darkened stage. Behind them are three stained-glass church windows. The monks sing the story:

First, the Lord God said, Let there be light, and there was. He said, Let there be man and woman and there was. That night, man asked woman if she was busy and she said she'd have to check.

Leaping thousands of years forward into the present moment, our four monks rip off their bathrobes to reveal two men and two women in their underwear, including dorky black socks on the guys.

They are getting ready for their first dates, the men stand at clothing racks, the women sit at dressing tables and all four sing about their hopes and the night's almost certain pitfalls.

For the guys it's "First date, new ro-



The cast of "I Love You" is terrific -- four people playing more than 30 wildly different parts, each character searching for elusive, neurotic love.

mance, clean shirt, pressed pants." And for the girl's, "Facial crème from a spa, lingerie, Wonderbra."

The title of each scene appears on one of two monitors on either side of the stage. Between these two screens is the street itself, looking a lot like Greenwich Village. Up top, a violinist and pianist exuberantly perform the entire score. It's amazing how much music one violin and piano can produce.

The set designer, Cliff Simon, explains that they didn't want the two musicians hidden in the orchestra pit, opting instead for a cocktail lounge with a city skyline.

"We wanted that violinist on the

rooftop as an homage to 'Fiddler on the Roof,' " says Simon.

While it may be the oldest story going, "I Love You" is a fresh musical riff on romance and relationship.

How is this possible? The book and lyrics author Joe DiPietro describes the subject matter as "people trying to connect."

Sounds simple enough. But, as director Stephen Bourneuf points out, "the journey is anything but simple."

Presented as a series of quick stand-alone scenes connected by the central theme of love, the play presents an overall arc to the relationships through life. Act I deals with the trials of dating, while Act II deals with mar-

Arts/Theatre

riage, children, the death of a spouse, and starting over.

The real fun, according to director Bourneuf, is "the morphing cast of four as they fumble their way through life ... dating, romance, marriage, lovers, husbands, wives, in-laws, etc."

We identify with these characters, as they grope their way through life's obstacle course. Says Bourneuf: "This infectious human appeal catapulted the show into a hit that ran 5,003 performances from 1996 through 2008."

Bourneuf, director of Riverside's 2009's surprise hit, *Altar Boyz*, calls the play contemporary, edgy and sexy. It's all that, plus hilarious with several poignant moments in Act II.

"I Love You" works so beautifully because each of its parts is just about perfect.

The cast is terrific. They have to be. Four people playing more than 30 wildly different parts means lightning fast character and costume changes, plus a bevy of accents, and a whole lot of kinetic energy.

The cast of four plays characters from their twenties to their eighties. Gregg Goodbrod, Mamie Parris, Jason Dula and Maria Couch are generic man and woman on their quest for true love.

These four sizzle, synching up beautifully, as they change roles in each of the eighteen different scenes.

For example, in Scene 2, "Not Tonight, I'm Busy, Busy, Busy," Couch and Dula, meet on a city street on a blind date.

But Couch quickly points out that she is busy, busy, busy, suggesting they avoid wasting time and move straight to their second date. That done, it's easy to skip straight to sex and they're about to hail a cab when Couch observes that they might as well go straight to their first argument, then break up, then meet again, all in a whirlwind until they've experienced an entire virtual relationship in less



The cast gels together so well, it's hard to believe they are not part of a touring company, but an entirely original cast. The actors had never appeared in this play before arriving from New York a month ago to begin rehearsals.

than five minutes.

Scene 7 presents completely different pairings. Couch plays opposite Goodbrod as a young unmarried couple visiting his doting Brooklyn-style parents.

Parris and Dulas are hoping for an engagement announcement and eager to make toasts, but, alas, the son isn't ready to commit and the girlfriend has a challenging career.

Disappointed, the parents sing, "Have you just lost your way? Repressed, confused, or gay?"

These four work so well together that it's hard to believe this is not a touring company but an entirely original cast. The actors had never appeared in this play before arriving here from New York a month ago to begin rehearsals.

And Cliff Simon's clever set with its multiple doors and different facades, rooftop musicians, and inviting double bed that pops in and out with sheets turned back, was all created here at Riverside Theatre by the excellent local crew.

reading the paper. Goodbrod sings a moving "Shouldn't I Be Less In Love With You?" to his wife of 30 years. The testament to mature love is a nice counterpoint to all the comedy.

Maria Couch is marvelous in Scene 1, "Always a Bridesmaid." In her outrageous orange sherbet colored dress with gobs of bouncing roses, she sings plaintively about walking down the aisle as much as Liz Taylor.

"Each bride has me dressed in a gown I detest," she whines. And, appalled: "The groom tried to stroke me while we danced the hokey pokey."

Instead of being sad about it, Couch sings of her happiness at escaping all the bad marriages that have followed so many weddings.

A truly stand out moment occurs in Scene 7, "The Very First Dating Video of Rose Ritz." Sitting alone on stage, Parris portrays a woman making her first dating video.

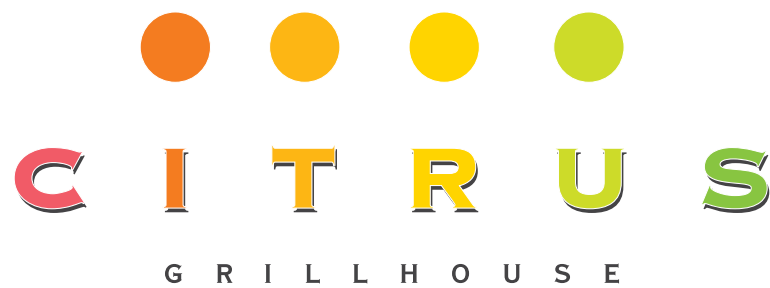
We see her face projected on the two screens on stage as Parris lays out her story of the husband who left her for an older woman. This monologue is equal parts poignant and sardonic.

Musical director Ken Clifton and opening night pianist Kim Steiner and violinist Jeremy Miller managed to produce amazing music that runs virtually ever second.

Don Mangone's costumes capture every character from the geeky plaid golf pants to the chic black cocktail dress.

Cliff Simon and the Riverside crew have created a witty, working set. As always, Karl G. Kern, lighting designer, and Craig M. Beyrooti, sound designer, make everything work as does Riverside regular, Lara Terrell, stage manager.

"I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change" runs on Riverside's Main Stage through April 11. For tickets call 772-231-6990 or visit www.riversidetheatre.com.



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Arts/Theatre

Puccini operas conclude Vero Beach Opera's season

MICHELLE GENZ
STAFF WRITER

In a public high school auditorium, the curtain rises on 100 college kids, barely old enough to vote, with 55 more students in the orchestra pit, engaged in one of society's most complex and often inaccessible arts: opera.

Sunday afternoon, the Stetson University Opera Theatre performed two Puccini one-act operas at the Vero Beach High School Performing Arts Center, the final performance in the Vero Beach Opera's season.

And while the audience was more in keeping with the expected – older, affluent, educated – the goal of the Vero Beach Opera was nonetheless met: giving up-and-coming opera singers a chance to perform, thereby sustaining the art for another generation.

Indeed, the season started with a similar spectrum of ages, and 900 in attendance: billed as a “musical extravaganza,” it included a performance by members of the high school's orches-



Jenna Siladie plays the title role of Suor Angelica in the final scene of the opera by Giacomo Puccini at the Vero Beach Performing Arts Center. Photos: Tom McCarthy Jr.

tra, who then filled seats to watch the rest of the acts.

Last year, the Vero Beach Opera brought in 800 public and private elementary school children to see the Orlando Opera performing The Billy Goats Gruff, with 15 costumed students from Beachland and St. Edward's schools joining the professionals on stage for the finale.

The Vero Beach Opera's effort at enlightenment into opera isn't limited to the young. Opera scholar Wayne Kleinstiver offers six three-hour seminars at the Vero Beach Museum of Art in opera studies (two remain this season).

Two VBO efforts involve huge stars in the opera world, and as such, are circulating word of the local opera literally around the world. For the second year, legendary soprano Deborah Voigt, a part-time resident of Vero, is choosing a young apprentice to shadow her through the staging of an opera – this year, at the Lyric Opera of Chi-

cago. The Protégé Mentoring Program of the Deborah Voigt – Vero Beach Opera Foundation just sent out this year's letters to music schools around the country in search of next season's recipient.

And the Italian tenor Marcello Giordani, who performed here last month with this year's Foundation protégée, Christina Borgioli, offered two days of master classes at Vero's Emerson Center for 15 qualifying opera students. All performed arias in addition to receiving individualized instruction by Giordani, while an audience looked on.

“He would critique them – ‘drop your jaw, put your tongue in front of your teeth’ – and then they would sing again, and you could hear the difference,” says Joan Ortega-Cowan, president of the opera. “It was fascinating. Everyone in the audience was learning techniques, and hearing Marcello sing, too.”

For \$100 fee, in addition to instruction, the students also had lunch both

Arts/Theatre



The Stetson University Orchestra, conducted by Anthony Hose, accompanies players from the Stetson University Opera Theatre in the opening scene of Giacomo Puccini's Gianni Schicchi.

days with Giordani.

Marcello Giordani was the headliner, so to speak, of the season's main performance, with the Brevard Symphony Orchestra led by guest conductor Steven Mercurio, former music director of Charleston's Spoleto Festival, and principal conductor of the Opera company of Philadelphia. (Vero missed Deborah Voigt this year; she was too heavily committed elsewhere.)

Giordani, who sang at the opening of the Beijing Olympics, and for the pope in 2008 at Yankee Stadium, was called “the greatest leading tenor of his generation” by Opera News magazine last year. He flew in from Sicily for a week – with wife, sons and even a nephew in tow – baritone Giovanni Guagliardo, who performed with Giordani and protégée Borgioli here last month.

Next year, Giordani will sing opposite Deborah Voigt in a Met Live performance in January.

“Part of our mission is to support, encourage and provide opportunities for young artists to perform,” she says. “Stetson has one of the best music schools in the South.”

Included among the performers with the Stetson Opera Theatre was Vero Beach's Danya Etter, a 21-year-old singer who won the Vero Beach Opera Scholarship in 2007.

Meanwhile, the riveting Met Live HD simulcasts, brought to Vero at the suggestion of Ortega-Cowan by Rick Starr, owner of the Majestic movie theater, have been expanded to two screens now, with multiple encore showings during the week. The Saturday simulcasts are typically a sellout.

The evidence may be only anecdotal, but when Joan Ortega-Cowan

says the Vero Beach Opera is world renowned, she feels she has the goods to back up the claim.

Just recently, she and her husband Roman were in New York for a gala. They stepped out of their hotel room and faced the legendary baritone Shirrell Milnes.

“The greatest Scarpia who ever lived!” cried Roman Ortega-Cowan, referring to the character in Puccini's “Tosca.”

The Ortega-Cowans introduced themselves, and at the words, “Vero Beach Opera,” Milnes declared, “Oh! I

want to talk to you!”

Later at the gala, he approached them. “He wants to work with us,” says an exuberant Ortega-Cowan, breathless at yet another star in the Vero constellation.

And last summer, in Dresden, one of the Vero Beach Opera's directors ran into a tenor performing there, who immediately recognized Vero Beach Opera.

“It's because of Deborah,” says Ortega-Cowan, referring to Deborah Voigt, one of the world's greatest sopranos and a part-time resident of Vero Beach.

“It's because she connected with us. And now we have Marcello.”

Connections work the other way as well, and not all the good the opera does is for the young.

Recently, Joan Ortega-Cowan made a phone call to Deborah Voigt to see if longtime VBO supporter Joe Steinitz could come backstage to see her following her performance in Wagner's “The Flying Dutchman” later this month in New York.

“I'd love to meet him,” said Voigt. Steinitz just celebrated his 100th birthday.

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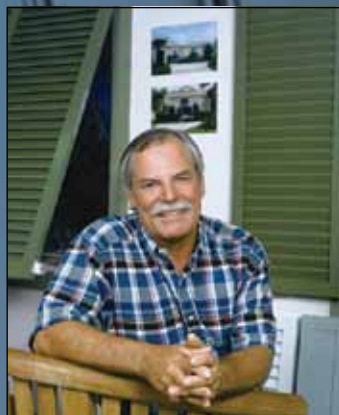
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Sitting L-r Rebecca Allen; Ann Marie McCrystal; Susan R. Hopkins; Dace B. Stubbs. Standing L-r William L. Frick; Edward Michael; Scott E. Alexander; Kerry A. Bartlett, Executive Director; Samuel A. Block; Alma Lee Loy; David C. Brown; Henry (Bugs) Wurzer; and, Richard G. McDermott.

Photography: Martina Photography

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Arts/Theatre

Pianist and ACO captivate full house at Waxlax



British pianist Tom Poster made his American debut in Vero Beach last week.

BY RICHARD ARMITAGE
COLUMNIST

The outstanding young British pianist Tom Poster made his American debut in Vero Beach last week, with an impressive display of keyboard bravura in his performance of Schumann's "Piano Concerto in A Minor."

As part of the Atlantic Classical Orchestra final performance of the season, Poster riveted the packed house with his brilliance and interpretation of this Romantic-era masterpiece which combined power, color and lyricism.

In the piece, the soloist and parts of the orchestra engage in a musical conversation, based on a dominating melody that is frequently transformed in the first movement and includes a particularly beautiful duet between the solo piano and the clarinet. The movement ends in a lyrical coda that lingers with the listener for a long time.

A second movement continues the dialog in a more playful, happy ambi-



The Atlantic Classical Orchestra's final performance of the season brought British pianist Tom Poster's interpretation of Schumann's "Piano Concerto in A Minor" to a packed house.

ance until the third movement soars in, without pause, with a musical proclamation of considerable force. More musical dialog follows, then a long

coda leads the orchestra and soloist to the work's dramatic conclusion.

A very exhilarating performance by Poster and the ACO brought the au-

Arts/Theatre

dience to its feet, for enough curtain calls to prompt Mr. Poster to play an encore: Schubert's beautiful and melodic "Impromptu in E Minor."

Poster's premiere was preceded by another rare treat: the presence of the composer himself as his work was performed. Paul Dooley's "Pomo Canyon Air," impressionistic music that captures the composer's feelings for the Sonoma Coast in northern California. Descriptive and fast, the music is punctuated by unexpected percussion, the sound of rain falling in the sequoia forest, and sounds and views from ancient Indian trails. The music is modern and interesting, an excellent starting point for the rest of the evening, with composer Dooley explaining his work and its intent to the very appreciative audience.

After the intermission, the evening's main event, Schubert's "Symphony Number 8," commonly called the "Unfinished Symphony" was presented. This time it was "finished" with four movements, two new ones added to the two movements Schubert wrote. The existence of a few bars of a scherzo led musicologists to speculate that Schubert intended to write a scherzo and finale but never got around to it.



The Atlantic Classical Orchestra's last concert included a performance of Schubert's "Symphony Number 8," in its "finished" state, with four movements.

The prodigious Schubert, who died at age 31, left over 1,000 works to posterity, including some he never heard performed.

The fact that Schubert, an unquestioned genius, could leave a two-

movement symphony was hard to accept by musical historians, since at the time symphonies were believed to require four movements. So the search for the missing movements started. Based as it is on the key of B

minor -- an unusual key for the time, some scholars have suggested that the two missing movements have actually been found in some of his other music.

It is this tentatively "completed" version of Schubert's "Eighth" that the ACO's Maestro Stewart Robertson offered for our consideration to let us judge if those scholars had found a solution to the mystery.

The orchestra played the first two movements with great skill and feeling. It is a rare blend of gentle, melancholic power that defines the Unfinished Symphony as one of the greatest in the classical repertoire.

After the performance, some in the audience, including a few professional musicians, thought the additional movements detracted from the spell cast by the first two, and that they lacked a clear connection to them. Some thought the new movements did not even sound like Schubert's music -- though of course they were.

If this reviewer's informal poll were to count in any speculation, it could probably be assumed that Vero Beach listeners would vote in favor of leaving the magnificent work "unfinished," just as Schubert wrote it.

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Arts/Theatre

My Vero

Free reception set for Colors of Nature show

BY MARY SCHENKEL
COLUMNIST

Arts and Culture

On Friday, April 2 from 5 to 7 p.m., the Artists Guild Gallery will host a free opening reception for its latest show, which runs through April 30. The Florida Collection: Colors of Nature, Life and Beauty, features the colorful acrylic and oil works of guest artist Louise Jones-Takata. A part-time Vero resident, Louise studies here with Carol Mann and paints in New York City at the Stacy Studio; her work has been exhibited in shows at museums in both cities.

Take advantage of the nicer temperatures and get out for the Spring Stroll in the Downtown Dine & Design (3-D) District from 5 to 9 p.m. Tuesday, April 6. As always, galleries and other businesses in the 3-D District will be open for browsing and shopping and refreshments, and artists and merchants will be on hand to greet the public. Maps for the free event are available at art galleries and participating businesses. 562-5525.

Light and Sound Eternal, featuring masterpieces by Monteverdi, Haydn, Brahms and Lauridsen, will conclude the Vero Beach Choral Society's 25th Anniversary year. Concerts will be performed at Trinity Episcopal Church on Friday, April 9 at 7:30 p.m. and Sunday, April 11 at 3:00 p.m. Under the direction of Conductor and Artistic Director Daniel Koh the 37 choristers will be accompanied by organ, piano and a Viennese string trio.

Fundraisers

Ladies will be out in full force for the Hibiscus Children's Center Blue Ribbon Luncheon and Fashion Show, Wednesday, April 7 at the Oak Harbor Club. The Catwalks & Cupcakes themed luncheon begins at 11 a.m. to give you time to sip on champagne and purchase some last minute raffle tickets. The top \$800 raffle prize is a Trina Turk Tote from Sassy Boutique, a spa treatment donated by Quail Valley, and a Michelle Carousell watch from Veranda. New this year will be some boutique shopping from The Dori Collection of Beverly Hills, tea room modeling by Veranda, makeup applications by Chanel, and guest fashion appearances by G.T. Rhodes and Twirl. WPBF's Christi Knight returns as the mistress of ceremonies for the show, featuring premier fashions from Co-

per and Co. The luncheon commemorates National Child Abuse Prevention Month and money raised will help care for children removed from their homes due to abuse or neglect. Luncheon tickets are \$125. Raffle tickets, \$5 each or 5 for \$20, are available even if you can't make the luncheon.

An elegant evening of arias and light chamber music, hors d'oeuvres and

champagne, all in a magnificent setting await music lovers at Opera on the River, 6:30 p.m. Friday, April 9.

Kurt and Marilyn Wallach are opening up their lovely home, Palacio del Rio, as a benefit for the Cultural Council of Indian River County and have arranged for presentations by soprano Angela Mortellaro, appearing this season at the Sarasota Opera; lyric




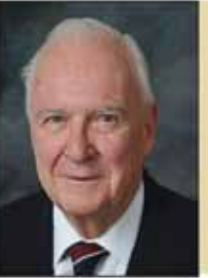

baritone Sean Stork, who recently performed with the Central Florida Lyric Opera; accompanist/soprano Karen Zarandona and emcee/tenor Joshua Zarandona.

The Sarasate Strings will perform between arias, featuring Matt Stott, Violin I; Tom Fritz, Violin II, Wendy Karabensh, Viola; and Joe Loehnis, Cello. Tickets are \$100. 770-4857

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Gastrointestinal technician Donna Schreiner and Dr. William McCormack perform an Upper Endoscopy on patient Mildred Bueschel at the Live Oak Endoscopy Center.

Fighting GERD P.30
Acid reflux and esophageal cancer hit record numbers

Health

Acid reflux and esophageal cancer hit record numbers

SANDRA RAWLS
COLUMNIST

Local lab manager Mindy Montford remembers when her voice became a whisper and her throat hurt so much it kept her awake at night. Her vocal chords were eventually so inflamed she lost her voice completely.

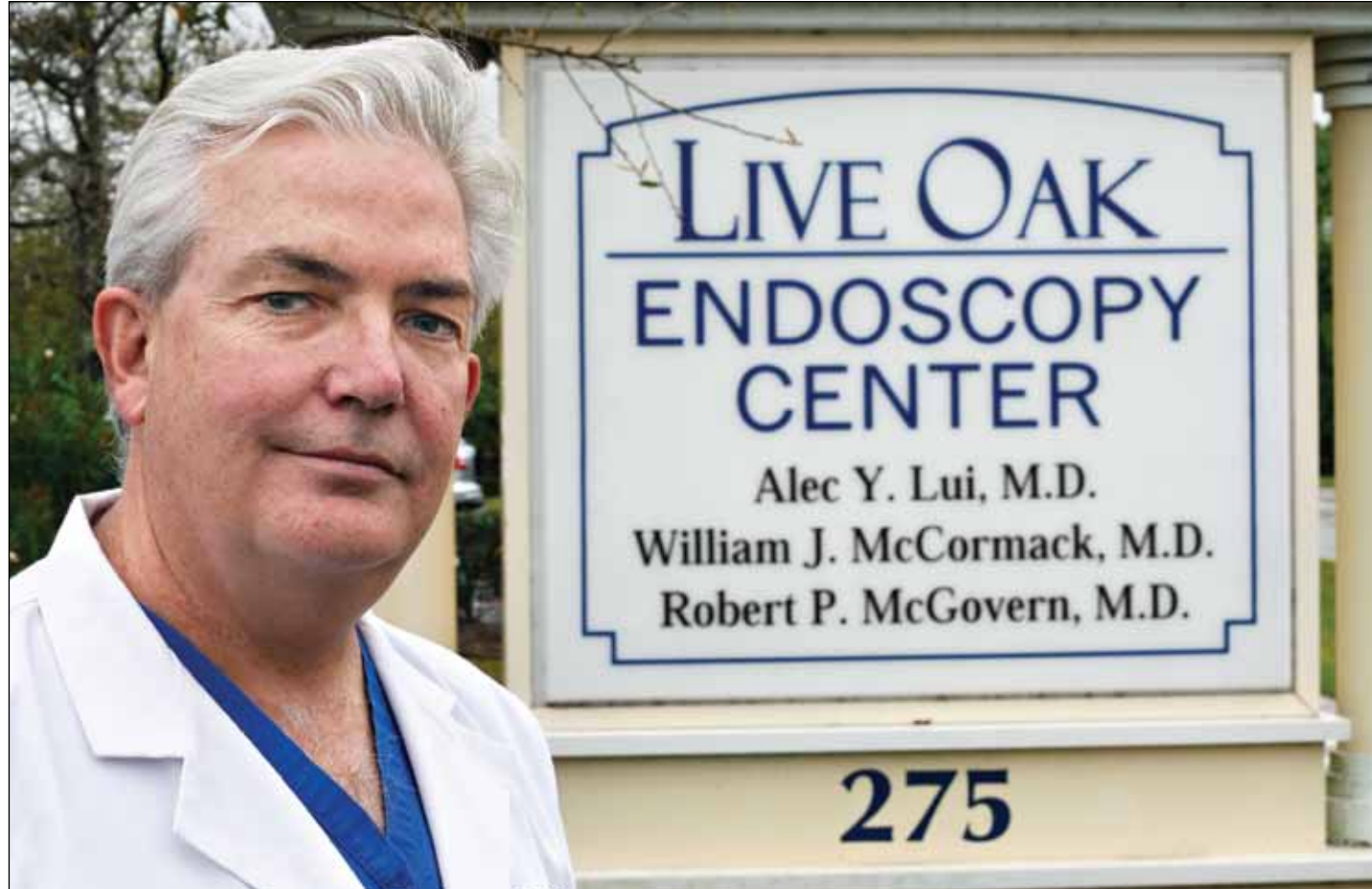
"My throat burned so badly, I would just sit there in my chair and feel it throbbing," she remembers.

Montford learned she was suffering from a severe bout of gastroesophageal reflux disease, a condition that has become an epidemic in the last 15 years, according to a well known Vero doctor. That condition can lead to worse – including cancer of the esophagus.

Aggressive drug therapies and dietary changes have returned Montford's life to normal. But she must always be vigilant in managing her condition, including a yearly check of her esophagus at an outpatient center.

Dr. Gregory MacKay of Vero Gastroenterology has seen plenty of acid reflux. "The incidence of esophageal cancer is rising now each year. In fact, it is the fastest increasing type of cancer, absolutely a kind of epidemic. And the longer you have (gastroesophageal reflux), the more likely you are to develop the more serious conditions. The likelihood of the cancer goes up about .5% percent each year you have GERD."

"Twenty-five percent of my new patients are now coming in because of this condition," says Vero Beach gastroenterologist Dr. Robert McGovern, co-owner of the Live Oak clinic. "There is definitely a greater trend to develop it and the more serious con-



Robert P. McGovern, M.D. of the Live Oak Endoscopy Center.

Photos: Tom McCarthy Jr.

sequences, Barrett's esophagus and adenocarcinoma of the esophagus."

At the center of all this trouble is a muscle, the lower esophageal sphincter, where the esophagus enters the stomach just below the thin, flat muscle of the diaphragm. This sphincter muscle becomes weaker and more open, causing a "stew" of stomach acid and partly digested food to spray up through the partial opening, inflaming the delicate lining of the esophagus leading up to the back of the throat.

Although some weakening of this important muscle is normal due to aging, for an increasing number of us the heartburn, sore throat, or coughing produced by acid reflux symptoms is a condition that never fully goes away.

Ten to fifteen percent of those with reflux will develop a more serious problem, Barrett's esophagus, where the cells lining the long tube to the stomach are changed and become pre-cancerous. The only way to check for this development is with an endoscopy, allowing close examination of the tissue.

There may be secondary effects of reflux brought on by stimulation of nerves at the base of the esophagus. These nerves can produce a coughing reflex. Some of the irritated nerves lead to the lungs. Their irritation can cause smaller breathing tubes in the lungs to narrow and produce asthma attacks in those prone to that disease.

If this weren't enough trouble, the lower esophagus sometimes pulls a small part of the stomach through an enlarged opening in the diaphragm into the chest cavity when swallowing occurs. This small portion of the stomach falls back after swallowing. This arrangement, called hiatal hernia, increases the amount of reflux

that is allowed backward into the esophagus. "It's like any hernia," says Dr. Mackay. "We can't be sure why every hernia develops. Hiatal hernias often have a family history."

It should come as no surprise the increasing gastroesophageal reflux cases are largely a product of our current American way of life. Yes, another one of those.

Obesity, diabetes, heart disease and their treatments, as well as our busy lives on the go, all have influences on the action of the stomach.

What causes the original weakening of the muscle ring where swallowed food enters the stomach and acidic reflux moves backward into esophagus? Pressure on the stomach from extra fat around the waist and pressure from the pushing downward during childbirth are two culprits. Fatty, fried, and spicy foods, large meals, especially at night, create extra acid production and contribute to the problem.

What we drink can aggravate acid production, too. That brew in the bottomless coffee pot in your office, acid cola drinks, even acidic fruit drinks, merrily tumble down to our stomachs throughout the day.

Beer, full of carbonation, can double the amount of acid in your stom-

Health

Ten to fifteen percent of those with reflux will develop a more serious problem, Barrett's esophagus, where the cells lining the long tube to the stomach are changed and become pre-cancerous. The only way to check for this development is with an endoscopy, allowing close examination of the tissue.

Diet to alleviate gastro-esophageal reflux

Reflux is worse following meals. Enjoy smaller and earlier evening meals.

Certain foods are known to promote reflux. These foods should be avoided.

- chocolate
- peppermint
- alcohol
- caffeinated and carbonated drinks

Reduce consumption of fatty foods. Stop smoking.

Patients with reflux may find that other foods aggravate their symptoms.

Examples are spicy or acid-containing foods, like citrus juices, and tomato juice.

Source: medicinenet.com

ages, the numbers will continue to go up.

Some drugs may play a role in the increases too.

Dr. Robert McGovern points out we live in a very medicated society, where some medicines delay digestion. "We have more treatment for diabetes and heart disease. Some drugs like beta blockers delay the emptying of the stomach contents."

Gravity is the other player in this drama of digestion. During the day, while we are standing or even sitting up driving, gravity helps pull fluids

back down the esophagus. At night refluxed acids are more likely to remain there, possibly causing more damage.

"Raising up the end of your bed by your head 6 to 8 inches is really important," advises Dr. Mackay. This simple change can reduce the reflux that remains in the esophagus at night and is one of the most significant changes a patient can make in fighting GERD.

There is some good news. Acid reflux is a highly manageable condition.

"We have some very good drugs," say Dr. McGovern. "We don't have a human face for this problem in the

media the way Reagan was for colon cancer. The drugs are the stars. They have been tested extensively and they are safe for long term use. They have to be. We have people using these medications for 20 or more years."

He's right about that, of course. We all know the little purple pill of Nexium. Zantac and Prilosec are household names. Over the counter antacids are available everywhere and neutralize stomach acid, although their action is brief. They are most effective when taken one hour after a meal, then taken again an hour or

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Health

two later.

Calcium containing products like Tums and Rolaids are not good for reflux because they stimulate release of small amounts of additional stomach acids. This effect comes after their initial action neutralizing acid.

Some of the drugs that are effective in combating reflux contain histamine blockers. Histamine stimulates stomach acid production. Tagamet, Zantac, and Pepcid all work this way.

The most popular drugs are proton pump inhibitors or PPIs. They block

the secretion of acid into the stomach by shutting off the cells producing it in the stomach lining. Their effect is longer lasting than other medications and include Prilosec, Protonix, and Nexium. Each has minor side effects and results vary with individuals.

"Prilosec didn't seem to do a thing for me," says Mindy Monford, "but Nexium took care of it. I also eat small meals and have a yearly exam."

A new idea is to produce a foam barrier that floats on the contents of the stomach and acts as a physical barrier



Dr. Gregory MacKay of Vero Gastroenterology

to reflux. An antacid is bound to the foam. The drug Gaviskon works in this way, but is usually prescribed to work in addition to another medication.

Another simple idea is chewing gum. Saliva production is stimulated and when swallowed it neutralizes

some of the acid in the esophagus.

"Acid reflux is a disease," says McGovern, one with potentially life threatening consequences.

"Good treatment is available and you should get it. It's something you can manage."

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32963 INSIGHT

APRIL 2010, ISSUE 14

BLOW

based on a true story.



P.34
**Vero looks back on
drug smuggling past**



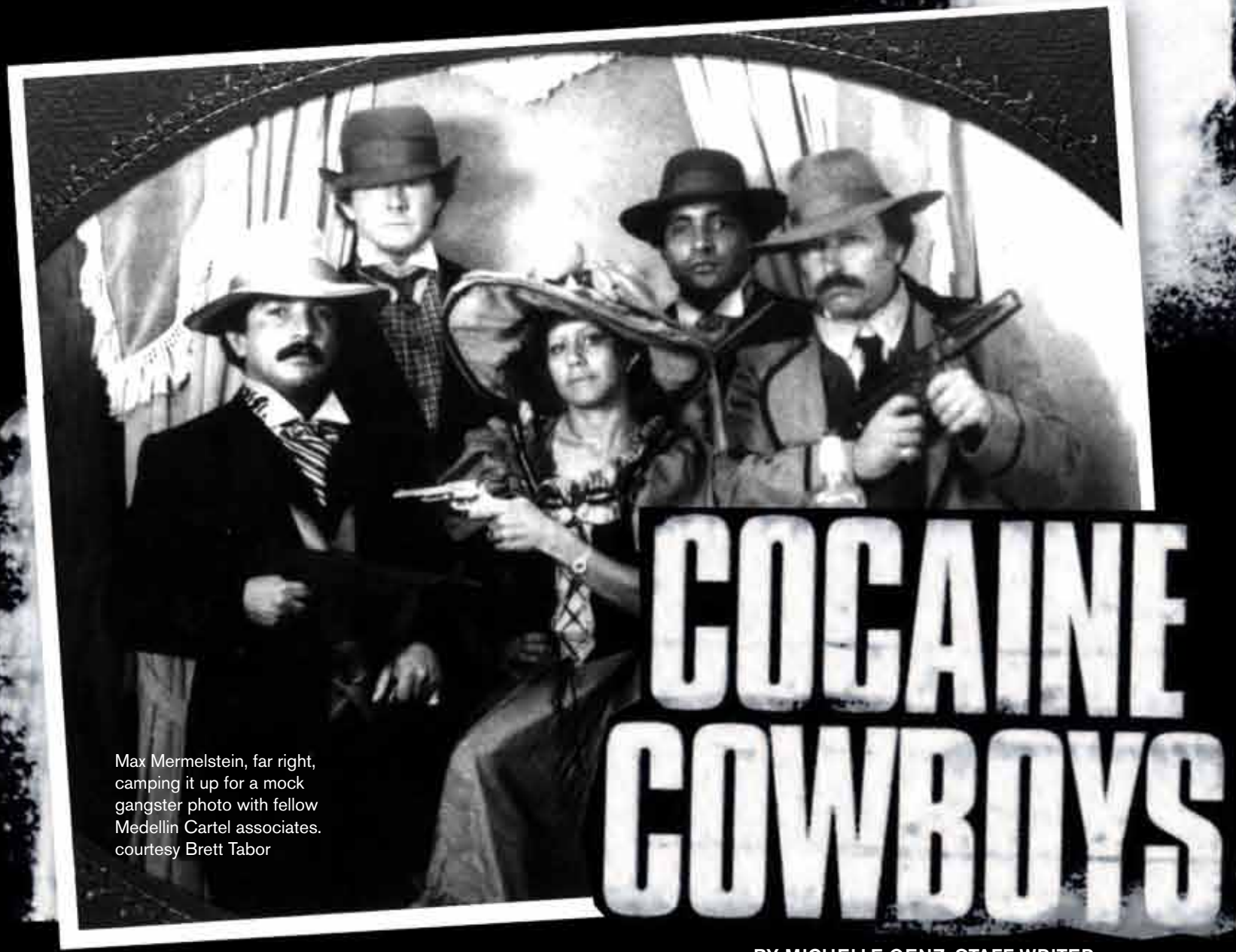
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Max Mermelstein, far right, camping it up for a mock gangster photo with fellow Medellin Cartel associates. courtesy Brett Tabor

BY MICHELLE GENZ, STAFF WRITER

From the top shelf of the study of his stylish Indian River Shores home, Brett Tabor, actor and now aspiring screenwriter and producer, pulls down a DVD of “Blow,” the 2001 movie starring Johnny Depp as a hapless drug smuggler.

Tabor, a diehard movie buff, knows by heart when the word “Vero” is uttered. He can download a script, and scroll right to where the scene is set in Vero Beach, and a twin-engine Cessna loaded with duffle bags of cocaine lands on an unknown airfield.

Medellin cartel honchos, discussing details of the flight:

“Where are you coming in?”

“Vero.”

“It’s good,” answers a third smuggler. “It’s small.”

It certainly is. So small that when the subject of the screenplay Tabor is writing, Medellin mastermind Max Mermelstein, heard that this was Tabor’s new home, he laughed at the irony. “He says, ‘Vero was one my biggest windows,’” according to Tabor.

Mermelstein, a former hotel engineer turned cocaine king turned federal informant, told Tabor he had been here himself more than once, Tabor says – scouting for entry points and arranging coke drops and distribution routes, his planes landing on remote access roads or local ranches.

Sleepy Vero, it turns out, was a key pushpin on the map of the Medellin Cartel, which authorities estimate brought in 80 percent of the cocaine for the entire United States from 1979 to 1985.

“I said, ‘Come on, you’re kidding me.’ He said,

“No. Vero was one of my biggest spots,” relates Tabor, recalling the first moments of what turned out to be hours of conversation with the highly secretive informant, who lived with a \$3 million bounty on his head.

The fact that the name “Mermelstein” rings no bells with local law enforcement is proof that for Max, Vero was apparently a good business decision.

“That’s why they called it ‘Zero Beach,’” says Tabor. “Vero Beach was unwatched.”

Mermelstein spent more than two decades hiding from his enemies, only to be tracked down by a fledgling filmmaker living in the very town where he had once run drugs.

Indeed, Vero is so small that it pains a retired FBI agent, who like Tabor also lives on the island, to think about the families still hurting from convictions back then, including that of a high-ranking figure in this district’s state attorney’s office.

So small that well-respected residents still wince about friends dying in plane crashes, wondering if they were involved in something illegal.

At the time, so much was happening in the area that people listened to police scanners for entertainment, including the smugglers themselves.

“It was a blast,” says a former pilot and convicted drug runner, now a successful businessman. “It was so wide open that you could go in a bar and have a celebration that you got a load in,” he says. “And sometimes, yours wasn’t the only load being celebrated. There’d be a couple others in there, too.”

He recalls the reckless sense of adventure of those days with something close to nostalgia. “Back then, if you had a boat, or you had a plane, you were smug-

gling. Everybody was doing it. That’s an exaggeration, I know. But not by much.”

Another convicted smuggler turned legitimate entrepreneur here speaks with pride at how intensively he worked in his former career, as if recalling the days of a successful Wall Street trader. Those formerly involved in the drug trade agreed to speak to *Vero Beach 32963* on the condition that their names not be used because they fear how the news of their involvement would be received in their new social circles.

He gestures down a pristine beach at sunset, himself marveling at the unimaginable scenes that once transpired there.

“There were cigarette boats coming in all over the place,” he says, referring to the signature go-fast boats of smugglers. “They were pulling up their Zodiacs right on the beach.”

From the air, the former pilot says, the key was finding a ranch to make the drop. “The way it worked was if you could find a property owner that was co-operative. Some of those ranches had 6,000 foot runways. You could land a DC3 in there and bring in 20,000 pounds at a time. The person who owned the property got paid a goodly amount. That’s what made it work, is money.”

Over time, the memory of Vero’s involvement in the rampant drug smuggling of the ‘70s and ‘80s has receded like a wild adolescence. The gator-hunting cowboys off-loading coke for Colombian kingpins and pot-hauling pilots kicking bales out of planes and ersatz fisherman hauling in square grouper in inflatable boats not far from the lifeguard stands of South Beach Park are the stuff of Carl Hiassen novels for most of

us. But a few of the colorful characters on both sides of the story – both smugglers and law enforcement -- remain in our midst, with razor sharp memories.

No one locally remembers Max Mermelstein. He was too successful here. Vero was literally under the radar, and unlike other operations -- involving mostly marijuana -- that made the news with bales on beaches, boat seizures or plane crashes, the “Kings of Cocaine,” as the *Miami Herald’s* Jeff Leen dubbed the Medellin Cartel, in a Pulitzer-Prize winning series, rarely made headlines locally.

Today it is Brett Tabor who is making headlines. His movie project earned a cover story in *New Times*, the Miami weekly, and a prospective publicist in New York claims to have received interest from the *New York Times*, he says.

And that is prior to production. Once he finishes the screenplay – which he insists on writing himself, unlike the vast majority of producers -- he intends to build himself a blockbuster production, figuring on a budget of \$35 million-plus.

It is precisely because few people are building anything else that Tabor has turned to film.

Tabor’s father, developer Marty Tabor, started buying land around Vero in 2002 -- 165 acres near the outlet mall, then two tracts on 58th Avenue: 80 acres near Bent Pine in 2004, and 100-plus acres at 49th Street in 2005.

“Buy land in the path of progress,” was his motto, Tabor says, and it served him well when he developed Doral, the sprawling golfing community in south Dade County. Tabor remembers learning to drive his dad’s jeep there, when it was nothing else but cow pastures.

“We did what’s called ‘building from the ground down,’ ” Brett explains. “We would get it zoned to get the permits and get the infrastructure in place, then bring in the home builders.”

With the purchase of the land in Vero, Marty Tabor brought son Brett to Vero to help get permits for the project.

A graduate of Boston University, studying both business and acting, Brett Tabor had lived through a frustrating – if artistically fulfilling – few years, trying his hand at first film then theater. In Miami, he had played a bartender in a scene with Dennis Hopper. His confidence soaring, he moved to L.A., camping out at a friend’s apartment “on some ratty mattress” – clearly not his style.

He says he came close to getting a big role in a movie opposite Robert DeNiro. But then actor Mark Wahlberg suddenly showed up and got the part – though the project was ultimately canned. Eventually Tabor moved to New York, in 2000. There he took some serious acting classes with a renowned acting coach, acted a little off-Broadway, and directed some plays for an acting company.

But finally, Tabor had to concede he might not make the big time, and moved back to Florida with his wife and children, to work with his father on the Vero projects.

Then everything ground to a halt: developments to the west of Vero Beach took on the same ghost-town appearance as the stalled developments in Port St. Lucie where miles of paved roads served as runways for drug planes.

Tabor, married to a stunning Spanish-Swede, An-

drea, has two perpetually dancing young daughters, and an exponentially more exuberant Boxer puppy, a surprise gift from a friend who delivered it after hearing his old Boxer died.

With the tanking economy, Tabor stopped frequenting the planning and zoning department and started dreaming. “Build in the path of progress,” rang in his head: if he could write a screenplay, then produce it, he might ring up the same returns.

“I realized, if I develop the script, it’s more money. You see, the script is a blueprint for a movie, just like a site plan for a piece of property.”

His inspiration came in 2006 as he watched a low-budget documentary, *Cocaine Cowboys*, now legendary in Miami lore. There on the screen, he got his first glimpse of Max Mermelstein. Not as an interviewee; only as a photo. Mermelstein had long since vanished under a new identity, after spilling the goods that brought down his cartel colleagues.

“I thought, I’m going to have to find this man,” says Tabor. “I knew he was still around – the government pays him up to \$200,000 a trial. This is the man who made it snow in Miami. I wanted to know this guy’s story.”

In the past, Max had successfully fended off requests for interviews by no less than “*60 Minutes*” and *Time* magazine. He had been the lone Anglo amongst the Medellin’s masterminds; clearly he played a key role, Tabor gleaned from the film. Yet why had such a powerful figure gotten so little attention, as the film traced the collapse of the cartel: incarceration, assassination, emigration – or, as in Mermelstein’s case, erasure of identity?



BRETT TABOR AT HIS HOME IN INDIAN RIVER SHORES. PHOTO: TOM MCCARTHY JR.

By the time Tabor had his answer, he was eulogizing Mermelstein at a Catholic church in Homestead. Tabor apparently knew Max better than the two dozen friends and family in the room, though he had only met him four weeks before.

Only one man knew more about the deeply protected witness, considered one of the most valuable in the history of the U.S. war on drugs. That man, the renowned Miami federal prosecutor Dick Gregorie who had helped send Manuel Noriega to prison, sat next to Tabor at Mermelstein’s memorial, blinking back tears, not for the irascible Mermelstein, but for the font of information that dried up when he died.

Tabor has a trace more sentiment, at least as he develops the character in his movie. He sees Mermelstein as a more or less ordinary guy, who allegedly was forced by his wife’s drug-smuggling cousin to witness a murder, and threatened with death himself if he didn’t immediately go to work for the cartel.

“Guys, I’m the Oz behind the curtain,” Max used to say,” according to Tabor. “But he was duped – he was duped into engineering all the transportation and distribution of the cartel. And eventually, this insanely intelligent man who completely misused his talents

grew that industry into a multi-billion dollar business that was rivaling the likes of General Motors. Billions of dollars passed through his hands.”

When he turned federal witness, Mermelstein, with an IQ of 162, Tabor says, had a near-perfect recall of dates, addresses, names, and procedures, astounding the courts in which he would testify for years to come. Again and again, Tabor says, attempts to discredit him with lists of the violent crimes he had committed would be met with candor. Yes, I am a smuggler. Yes, I witnessed this murder. But nearly always, his testimony proved convincing.

Tabor appreciates both the bad and the good in the man, who nearly destroyed his family by forcing them into hiding but ultimately wanted to right his wrongs by helping the government stem the tide of drugs. In a cardboard box of file folders on the floor of Tabor’s study is a letter, written by Mermelstein to Nancy Reagan, about how to make her war on drugs more effective.

Tabor pins his hopes for his film not on portraying Max as a good guy, but rather, as an ordinary man from an ordinary life, son of a Brooklyn grocer, with remorse for his actions and a love for his family.

“I met a man who was dying,” says Brett. “Honestly, I had never seen anything like it before. It was somebody who wanted to not necessarily set the record straight – if the movie’s going to get made, it’s going to get made -- but to talk about the regret he had at exposing his family. It was like he was making a confession to get into heaven. It was like ‘Tuesdays with Morrie,’ only triple-X.”

So thoroughly does Tabor know his subject that even federal prosecutor Dick Gregorie defers to his recollections. “I’d have to ask Brett to refresh my memory,” Gregorie replied, when asked of Mermelstein’s connection to Vero Beach.

Tabor will not be the first to out Mermelstein, who lived in the Witness Protection Program for years before leaving its perpetual shadow to assume his own alias and secret life. Max himself made his story public, in a memoir, “The Man Who Made it Snow,” written with Richard Smitten and Robin Moore. It is that book that Tabor needed rights to, and after settling on a sum from Smitten and Moore, he realized he had one more necessary sign-off: from Max himself.

With Gregorie’s help – the federal prosecutor called Max on Tabor’s behalf, and Max called Tabor -- he finally met up with Mermelstein in Kentucky, and found him dying of lung cancer. Over the course of five days, Mermelstein, chain-smoking all the while, talked into Tabor’s tape recorder in the conference room of a hotel in Frankfurt.

In the end, he sold the rights to his story to Tabor for \$3,000 – the same as the two co-authors of his memoir. A month later, he was dead.

As odd as it was to find a Jewish boy, son of a Brooklyn grocer, spearheading the most notorious Colombian cocaine smuggling ring, so it is nearly unthinkable to imagine sleepy Vero Beach having a role in his work.

Tabor says Mermelstein told him the ranches and access roads west of Vero Beach were among his favorite drop points, along with Ocala, in the center of the state. Planes would circle into the state from the north, throwing off law enforcement expecting incoming flights from the Caribbean and Latin America.

Vero in that era was part of broad dark zone in terms of radar, pock-marked with “holes,” as a retired FBI agent put it, from Port St. Lucie north to Sebastian.

That agent, David Callan, says planes would cross the coastline at the St. Lucie Nuclear Power Plant, and follow power lines into ranch lands.

Callan did not recall ever hearing of Max Mermelstein, or of Max’s favorite means of transport – perhaps because it worked too well.

Once the coke was offloaded in a field or access road, Mermelstein told Tabor, waiting local ranchhands would pack it into the false floors of wrecked cars, and the cars would then be hoisted onto tow trucks for the ride to South Florida.

Along the way, another car would tail the operation, with a driver willing to deliberately slam into any police car that pulled the tow truck over. A bottle of whiskey was at the ready so that the cop would be distracted with a possible DUI. Meanwhile, the tow truck could make a getaway.

It’s a scene Tabor wants to use in the movie. Only once did the DUI play have to be used. Countless other times, the plan worked perfectly, according to Tabor.

In all, it is estimated that Max Mermelstein managed to smuggle in 56 tons of cocaine, delivering \$300 million in cash back to Medellin. He served just over two years in prison before being released into the Wit-

ness Protection Program in exchange for his testimony.

He left the program after the death of Pablo Escobar, the cartel’s leader. But he always lived under an alias, and apparently told no one about his former life. Today, some of his family members still live in central Florida.

Meanwhile, Brett Tabor pounds away at his screenplay. Tabor is relieved that the project has fi-

nally been announced; until recently, he has shared one small element of Mermelstein’s existence: keeping his work a secret. Now the word is out as to what he has been up to for a year-and-a-half. He can come out of hiding, and put an end to whatever speculation might have been whirling about him.


And the ghost of Max Mermelstein may be walking Vero’s beaches again. Just a few months back,

several kilos of cocaine were found bobbing in the waters off the coast by local fisherman. The fishermen brought the coke back to shore and called the sheriff.


It seems people haven’t thought about smuggling here in a very long time; maybe group amnesia has turned this into Zero Beach again. “Who knows?” says sheriff’s department spokesman Jeff Luther. “It may be starting up again.” ●

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NASA's \$500 million launch pad missing a rocket

BY JOEL ACHENBACH,
WASHINGTON POST,
RENDERINGS: NASA

BUSHNELL - ZEITERS

Anyone need a \$500 million, 355-foot steel tower for launching rockets into space? There's one available at NASA's Kennedy Space Center just up the road from Vero in Cape Canaveral. Brand new, never been used.

The mobile launcher has been built for a rocket called the Ares 1. The problem is, there is not yet any such thing as an Ares 1 rocket -- and if the Obama administration has its way, there never will be.

President Obama's 2011 budget kills that rocket, along with the rest of NASA's Constellation program, the ambitious back-to-the-moon effort initiated under President George W. Bush.

People here were shocked when they heard the news last month. They were already facing the imminent retirement of the aging space shuttle, and the likelihood of thousands of layoffs in the contracting corps but many hoped to find a Constellation job, stay on site and essentially just switch badges.

Now suddenly, they're looking at no shuttle, no Ares 1, no NASA-owned spaceship of any kind in the near future. American astronauts for years to come will hitch rides to space on Russian rockets.

"It's almost like losing manned space flight," said Michele Kosiba, 44, a quality inspector for United Space Alliance.

But the decision to kill Constellation has shrouded this part of the world in an unfamiliar gloom. People are dismayed and bewildered. Obama has gotten the message and will fly to the Kennedy Space Center on April 15 to hold a space conference and a town hall meeting.

He is certain to point out that his budget actually boosts funding for NASA. The new NASA strategy shifts the task of launching astronauts to low Earth orbit from traditional government contracts to commercial contracts. If the private sector can create a taxi to space, NASA can focus on new technologies and longer journeys in the solar system.

"We think it's exciting," NASA Administrator Charles F. Bolden Jr., a former astronaut, said in an e-mailed response to questions. "It will enable us to do things we can only dream about today. It will foster new industries, spur innovation, create jobs and lead to more missions, to more destinations, sooner, safer and faster."

'Cancel Constellation?'

A presidential commission, led by former aerospace executive Norman Augustine, reported to

Obama last September that the Ares 1 would have limited use and that the heavy-lift rocket necessary for a moon mission probably wouldn't be ready until 2028.

At that point, the panel said, there'd be no money left in the program for a moon lander or moon habitat. In effect, the Augustine committee said Constellation, which has already cost \$9.4 billion, was destined for a (metaphorical) crash landing.

"We could get to the moon and do what?" said Dale Ketcham, a University of Central Florida professor who runs a think tank called the Spaceport Research and Technology Institute. "The taxpayers would really be ticked off: Sixty years later we go back and plant the flag and go home."

Lawmakers in Congress in both parties, particularly those in districts with space jobs, have given the Obama plan a cold reception. Congress still must approve Obama's budget. Until that happens, Constellation maintains a ghostly existence as "the program of record."

Which means that, every day, workers are still adding elements to the mobile launcher. Across the country, work continues on Ares and the new crew capsule, Orion. The Orion launchpad abort system will be tested later this spring in New Mexico. Even if Congress sanctions Obama's plan, the administration expects to spend \$2.5 billion just closing out contracts and shutting down Constellation.

NASA employees and contractors on the Cape say they were caught off guard by the new strategy.

"We just pulled the rug out from human space flight," said Jim Bolton, a NASA manager for shuttle processing. The morning of the announcement, Bolton said, "People were just truly shocked. 'How can that be? Cancel Constellation? What are you talking about?'"

Bolton spoke as he stood directly beneath the shuttle Atlantis, which was jacked up in its processing bay and completely shrouded in scaffolding and fuel lines. The orbiter is being prepped for its 32nd, and most likely final, journey to and from orbit. From below, some of the gray thermal tiles that keep it from burning up upon reentry are slightly scuffed, but it's still a pretty spiffy spaceship.

"It's such an awesome machine," said Tim Keyser, a mechanical lead in another orbiter bay. "It's not old. I go in the midbody, it's pristine. It looks like it rolled off the assembly line."

People here talk of the orbiters -- Discovery, Atlantis, Endeavour -- as if they are beloved members of the family. There are only four shuttle flights left, with the last scheduled for September, though the timetable could slip a few months. Some lawmakers are scrambling to keep the shuttle flying, perhaps with a drawn-out flight manifest.

Howard DeCastro, shuttle program manager for United Space Alliance, the primary shuttle contractor, said the shuttle is flying better than ever. The main challenge for shuttle extension is restarting supply contracts that have already shut down. It would take two years, for example, to produce a new external fuel tank for an additional shuttle flight. Still, DeCastro said, "there are no showstoppers in flying the shuttle longer."

What will really hurt, workers say, is the disappearance of the know-how accumulated over decades here at the Cape.

"We lose that knowledge base, it's very hard to get that back," adds Chris Loines, 43, a United Space Alliance contractor who has been launching rockets his entire adult life.

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Soon, a taxi to space

The administration has promised to spend \$2 billion upgrading the Kennedy Space Center. But workers here said they don't know what that means, exactly. They don't want to work on facilities, they want to work on spaceships. Terry White, a United Space Alliance worker who supervises the thermal protection system on the orbiters, said that putting money into KSC without a spaceship is like having a fancy showroom with no cars to sell.

Ketcham said the decision to retire the shuttle has only recently hit home.

"There was this communal epiphany -- 'Oh my

God, they're going to cancel the shuttle.' And then we plunged into the classic five stages of grief. And rational thought is not one of the stages of grief," Ketcham said.

NASA isn't the only game in town. The Cape is shared by NASA, the Air Force and commercial rocket companies. On the Air Force-controlled side of the Cape, one will find the commercial rockets named the Delta IV and the Atlas V, each with a dedicated launch complex. And there's a newcomer on the block: the Falcon 9.

This is the rocket built by SpaceX, a private company founded by Internet tycoon Elon Musk. SpaceX has a contract with NASA to launch cargo to the space

station. The Falcon 9 has never flown. Framed by lightning towers, the 143-foot rocket is poised on an old Titan rocket pad, having been raised to the vertical position by two hydraulic jacks.

The scene is rather calmer than what you'd find at a NASA site. A low building holds cubicles and a couple of dozen workers. A few technicians in hardhats can be seen poking around

the base of the rocket. In a hangar where the rocket is built, a lone figure sits at a desk. The commercial route figures to be cheaper than the traditional government route to space.

SpaceX would like a modified version of the Falcon 9 to become the commercial taxi to space. The first test flight could be mid-April, right about the time Obama visits the Space Coast. Musk has estimated the chance of success on the first try at between 70 and 80 percent. The final preparations include the installation of an auto-destruct system, said Scott Henderson, mission assurance director for SpaceX.

If it blows up, Henderson said, "It's not going to get outside the fence here."

From the SpaceX pad, looking west across the scrub of the Cape, the visitor can see the new NASA mobile launcher, parked for now near the huge Vehicle Assembly Building. Could SpaceX use that launch tower? Conceivably, Henderson said. But it's not really designed for a rocket like the Falcon 9, he said. SpaceX certainly doesn't need it at the moment.

NASA officials insist that they could still find a use for the half-billion-dollar tower even if the Ares 1 never materializes. But space technology tends to be highly customized. A worker on his way to the cafeteria the other day was overhead saying he wanted to climb the mobile launcher "before it becomes an artificial reef."

DeCastro, the United Space Alliance executive, said he doubted the mobile launcher could be useful without the Ares 1.

"It's just a big old tower now," DeCastro said. "I guess you could sell it to SeaWorld or something and put a big ol' slide on it." ●

China moves into space with 'Heavenly Palace'

BY PETER N. SPOTTS, CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR



The crew of the International Space Station (ISS) may want to draw up a large "Welcome to the Neighborhood" sign. China has announced plans to launch a modest space station of its own next year.

Initially, the 8.5-metric-ton module will be unmanned, providing a target that China's budding human-spaceflight program can use to practice on-orbit dockings. If all goes well, however, taikonauts (Chinese astronauts) will move in.

After launching its first taikonaut into space in October 2003, China is now moving methodically and deliberately to catch up with other major space-faring nations.

China's module, floridly named Tiangong 1 (Heavenly Palace), represents the first step in the country's three-stage plan to assemble an orbiting lab. This first step is more akin to NASA's Skylab, a converted second stage from Apollo-era Saturn V rockets that was launched in 1973. It hosted three crews between 1973 and 1974.

As currently envisioned, China's final facility would be a collection of modules comparable to Russia's Mir space station. Moscow took the 10-year-old Mir out of orbit in 1996 after becoming a partner in the NASA-led ISS project.

To some extent, China may be driven by station envy, suggests Dean Cheng, a specialist on Chinese space and security issues at the Heritage Foundation in Washington.

At the time, Russia had Mir in orbit. The United States and its Western partners had embarked on a space-station program and were only a year away from bringing Russia into the partnership. China wasn't invited.

"If you don't have a car, you might want one, even though your neighbor has a very nicely tricked-out Cadillac or BMW," Mr. Cheng says.

That desire has been fueled by the role human spaceflight has played in helping to establish a country's international standing, he adds.

"When you look at what China has said about space, one of the issues that's very important is the role of advanced science and technology in building what the Chinese call comprehensive national power," Cheng explains. "Are you derivative, or are you self-sufficient" in science and technology?

"Space, rightly or wrongly, is one of the crown jewels" in China's effort to strive for scientific and technological self-sufficiency, he says.

Others, such as Gregory Kulacki, a senior analyst with the Union of Concerned Scientists who focuses on China and national security issues, note that in discussions with Chinese scientists and engineers, they cast the country's space program in terms of ensuring "a place for one's mat" — the Chinese version of a seat at the table — on the global space-exploration stage.

One potential place for China's mat is to join the ISS. Under President Obama's proposed overhaul of NASA's human spaceflight program, the US would remain active on the station through at least 2020.

But many in and out of Congress worry that closer cooperation could lead to US space technologies finding their way to China's military or to rogue states via China. China's human-rights record also comes up, as well as concerns over the US losing its superiority in what many military strategists see as the ultimate high ground.

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City Council 1: Healthcare costs

Now that President Obama has solved America's healthcare problems, Vice Mayor Sabe Abell has stepped forward to solve the City of Vero Beach's problem with soaring healthcare costs for its municipal employees.

"I still haven't given up on the option of the clinic situation where we can save \$250,000," Sabe declared at this past Monday's special call City Council meeting.

For those who thought this ill-conceived scheme was long-dead, Abell was referring to last year's proposal by city staff and their consultants to set up a new city health clinic where municipal employees and their families could get free medical treatment and prescription medicines on a voluntary basis.

The idea was that this municipal health clinic would be so popular, city workers and their families would flock to it instead of going to their family doctors, thus reducing the amount Vero pays to private physicians under its employee insurance program.

The problem with this idea at the time, however, was no one could provide any real numbers demonstrating that this scheme -- with its estimated half-million-dollars in start-up costs -- would actually save the city any money.

The big savings, we recall, were going to come from getting city employees with acid reflux who now are on high-priced Nexium to switch to the low-cost generic version of Zantac. Good luck persuading them that is an exciting new benefit.

Ultimately, in the face of mounting skepticism and total disinterest by either Indian River County or Sebastian in joining Vero in this venture, the scheme died a quiet death.

But Sabe appears to be hoping to bring the plan

back from the grave, and stated as fact at Monday's Council meeting that "we can save \$250,000." Wonder who whispered that in his ear?

But before one more second is wasted considering this idea, if Sabe brings it up again, we would urge the other four City Council members to demand detailed financial backup -- not self-serving claims by consultants.

City Council 2: Pension costs

Many months ago, when the City Council was last wringing its hands over employee pension costs that are threatening to bankrupt Vero Beach, we suggested the sooner the city ends its defined benefit pension plan the better.

Once the Lincoln of retirement plans, defined benefit plans are now the Edsel of employee benefits.

The majority of existing defined benefit plans are significantly underfunded, and the Vero Beach plan is no exception. Part of the problem is the growing number of retirees receiving defined benefit pensions. The other part is Vero's plan assumes an 8 percent rate of return on investments, while the average over the last year has averaged somewhere between 1 and 4 percent.

The city then has to make up the difference between what is generated by investments and what is needed to pay the pensions -- a gap of \$4.6 million this year which is expected to rise to \$5 million next year.

While the city's obligations to retirees who participated in the defined benefit plan will continue to burden Vero Beach for years, every day's wait in switching to a defined contribution plan adds to the crisis. So why the continued delay?

Well, Steve Myers, a representative of the Teamsters Union, which represents more than half the city

employees, told the City Council a switch to a defined contribution plan -- which works like a 401K -- is "a move in the wrong direction," and said he would fight any such effort.

If there is to be such a fight, Vero Beach may as well have it sooner rather than later. The Teamster's contract expires in September, and it would be insane to let a defined benefit plan remain part of a new contract.

"Something has to be done," Sabe Abell said. "Defined benefit plan is not possible." This time, Sabe's right.

City Council 3: Electricity

From what we hear from beachside residents, no one thus far has noticed their electric bills "falling like a rock" as a result of the new contract with Orlando Utilities.

In fact, electric bills seem more or less the same as they were at this time last year, when we were assured they were going to be 20 percent lower in 2010.

The reason is simple. There is no way to significantly reduce Vero Beach electric rates as long as the Utility is required to contribute millions to the City of Vero Beach General Fund.

But at Monday's Council meeting, Mayor Kevin Sawnick said he wanted city staff to take a hard look at reducing the money the city transfers into the General Fund from utility receipts.

"Hopefully we can come up with some good ideas to make everyone happy," Sawnick said, adding that he was optimistic about finding ways to make cuts while maintaining an optimum level of service to city residents.

"No crazy idea should be left out," Sawnick added.

From personnel to paper clips: room to save

BY KENRIC WARD, COLUMNIST

Florida has whacked its budget by \$7 billion over the past three years. That's not just slower growth; that's a real decrease in spending.

Has Tallahassee cut all it can? Gov. Charlie Crist apparently thinks so, as he proposed a \$2.7 billion hike this year.

But where the governor sees an uptick in revenues, others see rising costs and a shrinking economic base (including a record 12.2 percent state unemployment rate) that make an overall spending increase impossible.

"The governor based his budget on December numbers that are no longer valid," says state Sen. Don Gaetz, R-Niceville. "We have many more people unemployed and fewer people contributing to the coffers."

House Speaker Larry Cretul, R-Ocala, and Senate President Jeff Atwater, R-North Palm Beach, have pledged that the Legislature will live within its means. That means more cuts will have to be made.

Containing costs in the two biggest areas -- education and Medicaid -- will be crucial, since they constitute roughly two-thirds of state spending. But the remaining third of the budget offers potential areas of economy, too.

Florida Tax Watch weighed in last month with a list of more than \$2 billion in budget cuts and revenue enhancements that don't even touch schools and Medicaid. Among them:

- * Increase the use of state term contracts for se-

lected goods and services. (Estimated first-year savings: \$200 million.)

- * Re-negotiate non-client-service contracts, such as those for internal or administrative purposes. (\$215 million).

- * Index tolls on the Turnpike to inflation (\$49.9 million). This is mandated by state law, but has not been implemented.

- * Dispose of unneeded state facilities and land holdings (\$43 million).

By far the biggest driver of state spending is personnel. And employee unions representing 55,000 state workers were "elated" that Crist's budget didn't ask them to share in the budgetary sacrifice. The governor's spending plan envisions no layoffs of state workers and no increase in insurance premiums.

Critics say Crist missed an opportunity to give state government a dose of market reality.

Tax Watch estimates that cost-sharing arrangements for health insurance would save the state \$160 million a year.

"State health plans utilize a co-payment, which is a set fee per doctor's office visit or other transaction, paid by the employee. It does not incentivize beneficiaries to behave like rational consumers because it removes their financial stake in cost-benefit decisions related to medical treatment," Tax Watch says.

Similarly, Tax Watch advocates requiring all classes of state employees to pay the same premiums for health insurance.

"While most state employees pay a monthly pre-

mium for their state-subsidized insurance coverage (\$50 per month for individual policies and \$180 per month for family coverage), more than 30,000 workers pay no premiums at all, including nearly all of the governor's staff, the 160 legislators, 1,800 legislative employees, senior exempt service, and senior management service employees."

Also on the personnel front, Tax Watch recommends reducing the Florida Retirement System employer contribution rate by requiring employee contributions for new hires (\$255 million) and changing the 3 percent automatic cost-of-living adjustment increases for at least future pension recipients and tie it to inflation with a 3 percent ceiling instead (\$150 million).

Senate Democratic Leader Al Lawson accuses the GOP-dominated Legislature of being selectively economical.

He condemns Republicans for giving out more than \$11 billion in corporate tax breaks over the last eight years while doing little to help poor Floridians.

Florida Trend magazine recently cited statistics that suggest further budget reductions would be cutting into the bone and sinew of state operations.

"Forty-seven states have more government workers per capita than Florida," wrote executive editor Mark Howard. He also reported that Florida has the lowest payroll cost per taxpayer at \$36 (vs. the U.S. average of \$56).

"The inconvenient truth is that Florida is pretty efficient already," he states. ●

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Vero Beach 32963 Media

President and Publisher
Milton R. Benjamin, 559-4187
milt@verobeach32963.com

Marketing Director
Mark Schumann, 696-5233
mark@verobeach32963.com

Art Director
Dan Alexander, 584-0870
dan@verobeach32963.com

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Vero Beach 32963

Managing Editor
Alina Lambiet, 492-9024
alina@verobeach32963.com

Associate Editor
Michelle Genz, 226-7924
michelle@verobeach32963.com

Staff Editor
Lisa Zahner, 584-9121
lisa@verobeach32963.com

Staff Photographer
Tom McCarthy Jr., 205-0262
tom@verobeach32963.com

VeroNews.com

Managing Editor
Ian M. Love, 226-7924
ian@verobeach32963.com

Online Editor
Debbie Carson, 584-9083
debbie@veronews.com

Society Editor
Mary Schenkel, 563-4881
maryelz@veronews.com

Visual Journalist
Keith Carson, 584-9125
keith@veronews.com

Columnists

L.L. Angell (Features), Richard Armitage (Music), Robert & Casey Baggott (Faith), Samantha Baita (Features), Humberto Cruz (Chess), Ron Holub (Sports), Jay McNamara (Life), Sandra Rawls (Features), Tina Rondeau (Restaurants), Cissy Sumner (Pets), Pieter Vanbennekorn (Bridge), Kenric Ward (Op-Ed)

Corporate Staff

Graphic Designer
Tania Donghia-Wetmore, 584-0870
tania@verobeach32963.com

Advertising Representative
Martine Fecteau, 696-2004
martine@verobeach32963.com

Invite us to cover social and charitable events or talk to us about news stories by calling 492-9024 or E-Mail us at editor@verobeach32963.com.

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Russia’s science prowess going downhill fast

BY FRED WEIR, CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR

Nikolai Podorvanyuk works by day as a scientist at Moscow’s prestigious Institute of Astronomy and moonlights as an editor at an online newspaper by night. If you guessed that the science job is his big breadwinner, you’d be wrong. He lives on his journalist’s income.

“For me the most important thing is my career in astronomy, but unfortunately it doesn’t pay much,” says Mr. Podorvanyuk.

A recent comparison between Podorvanyuk’s institute and the Max Planck Institute for Astronomy in Heidelberg found that the Russian organization had twice the staff but received one-sixth the funding of its German counterpart.

“If you take any scientific institute in Russia and measure it against a comparable foreign one, I’m sure you’ll get a similar picture,” Podorvanyuk says. “The core of our problems is chronic underfunding.”

Russia’s once-vaunted scientific establishment looks to be going the same way as its Soviet-era athletic prowess: downhill fast, that is, and for much the same reasons.

“Russia has been a leader in scientific research and intellectual thinking across Europe and the world for so long,” says a new report by the global think tank Thomson-Reuters, “that it comes not only as a surprise but a shock to see that it has a small and dwindling share of world activity as well as real attrition of its core strengths. Russia’s research base has a problem, and it shows little sign of a solution.”

Though most scientists cite lack of funding as the key problem, others say the crisis runs much deeper and may not be solved even if government science budgets were restored to Soviet-era levels.

Russian state financing for science rose when Prime Minister Vladimir Putin was president to a post-Soviet high of about \$2 billion in 2008, but has since



fallen back slightly. That’s barely 2 percent of what the United States government spends annually to support scientific work.

“It’s not just about money, it’s also about motivation,” says Andrei Ionin, a scientific philosopher, who works in the space industry. “The profession of scientist is not prestigious anymore, and the government does not define scientific tasks that would attract talented people.

“Money matters,” he says, “but social recognition is also a very important factor in choosing a career. And that’s what’s missing these days.”

One 2006 survey cited in the Thomson-Reuters report found that just 1.6 percent of students viewed science as a worthwhile career. “Out of 15 of my fellow postgraduates, only five are still in science,” says

Podorvanyuk. “The pressures are such that either you have to leave science or go abroad to make a living.”

The average age of Russian scientists now hovers at over 50, says Andrei Petrov, chair of President Dmitri Medvedev’s council to promote greater youth participation in science. Mr. Medvedev has made “modernization,” including boosting scientific research and innovation, the signature theme of his presidency.

“Young people are gradually trickling back into science, and salaries have grown,” says Mr. Petrov, “but now we urgently need to see investment in scientific infrastructure like laboratories and equipment.”

The Kremlin is also pressing for reform of the science establishment, including sharp staff cuts, and shifting the workload away from the country’s hundreds of Soviet-era research institutes to universities and corporations, as is common in the West.

The government needs to take a stronger hand, some argue, not only in funding but also organizing scientific research. Centralized control over scientific research, which was a great strength of the Soviet system, has evaporated, says Yevgeny Velikhov, president of the Kurchatov Institute, Russia’s leading nuclear science center.

“We have no counterpart to the Department of Energy,” the cabinet-level agency that coordinates and funds a wide range of US scientific research, he says.

The Kremlin has recently taken steps to amalgamate some major sectors, such as thermonuclear and particle physics research, Mr. Velikhov says. Although Russia was a pioneer in nuclear-fusion research, it has been reduced to being just one of seven partners in the huge International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor project, based in France.

Russia’s once mighty space program, which gave the world Sputnik and Yuri Gagarin, the first man in space, still has a few grand plans. But for now it ekes out a living by working as a taxicab to the International Space Station and playing host to high-paying “space tourists.” ●

No buddies abroad for President Obama

BY HOWARD LAFRANCHI, CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR

When French President Nicolas Sarkozy and his wife, Carla Bruni, arrived for a sit-down dinner with the Obamas in the White House family dining room March 30, it was a rare occasion for Barack Obama: a private, personal, perhaps even chatty evening with another world leader.

Fourteen months into the Obama presidency, one striking feature of an American president who took office to a swooning world is the absence of any strong personal ties – or even a go-to working relationship – with any other world leader.

Where Ronnie had Maggie, and Bill and even George W. had Tony, Mr. Obama has no one leader. Instead, the former law professor has what seems to be a preference for big-themed foreign speeches (think Cairo; Prague, Czech Republic; Moscow; Accra, Ghana) and policy gatherings (his UN nuclear summit, the Pittsburgh Group of 20 economic summit, a White House nuclear nonproliferation summit in May) bereft of the warm and fuzzy.

Even the Sarkozy dinner seems to be more an amendsmaker than a familiar, “Hey Sarko, why don’t you come on over for dinner and some one-on-one conversation?” When the Obamas were in Paris last year, Obama turned down a dinner invitation to the Elysee Palace, ostensibly so he could take Michelle out for a private night on the town.

Obama’s cool, all-business demeanor with his global peers is all the more striking because it follows the polar-opposite style of George W. Bush. President Bush’s policies were widely reviled overseas, and he was not particularly articulate. But he strove to forge personal links with a few key leaders.

He cultivated Tony Blair’s friendship on Iraq, and he developed a hierarchy of visit venues – White House, Camp David, his Texas ranch – that signaled where a leader stood in his estimation. He walked hand in hand with the Saudi king, and even tried massaging German Chancellor Angela Merkel’s shoulders – although the latter gesture fell particularly flat.

Bush’s comment about “looking into his soul” upon meeting Russian President Vladimir Putin suggested a desire to know and understand the leader, whereas Obama has yet to find his soul mate on the world stage – and may not be inclined to find one.

“It really is striking about Obama: Most presidents have had a special or close relationship with a foreign leader they could turn to,” says Thomas Henriksen, a US foreign-policy scholar at the Hoover Institution in Stanford, Calif.

The question is, does it matter? Stephen Hess, an expert on the US presidency at the Brookings Institution in Washington, is inclined to play down the importance of what he surmises may be a media fixation, saying leaders in the end act on behalf of their own countries. “Each head of state is ultimately and overwhelmingly operating based on interests” – his own and his country’s, he says.

Hess, who served in the Eisenhower White House, recalls that President Eisenhower had “a deep affection” for British Prime Minister Anthony Eden. “But when it came to the Suez crisis [of 1956], he had to cut [Eden] down at the knees. Friendship or no,” Hess adds, “he did what he had to do.”



President Obama and French President Sarkozy

But others say leader-to-leader friendships can provide important moral support, a valuable sounding board outside the White House cocoon – and have bucked up more than one president.

“When Margaret Thatcher told the first President Bush, ‘Now don’t go wobbling on me George,’ it might have stiffened his backbone a little precisely because it was a friend saying it,” says Hoover’s Mr. Henriksen, referring to a remark the British prime minister famously made to Bush in the run-up to the Gulf War.

Henriksen also notes that French President Sarkozy, who has tried in more ways than last year’s spurned dinner invitation to cultivate a close relationship with Obama, has refused to send additional troops to Afghanistan despite the American president’s request.

“Who knows if Sarkozy would have made the same decision if he hadn’t suffered some of these slights on the part of Obama,” he says.

Some foreign-policy experts see something even deeper in Obama’s aloofness toward European leaders in particular.

“There’s a general concern among European leaders that America under Obama is not interested in Europe,” says Reginald Dale, a senior fellow at the Center for Strategic and International Studies here. “More striking still is a dawning perception that Obama is the first [postwar] American president not to take on the role of leader of the West,” Mr. Dale says. “He’s just president of the United States.”

But those deeper concerns start with what might seem to be the mundane, Dale says – the lack of a rapport with any Western leaders, a White House “regret” that attending a US-Europe summit later this spring will not be possible, Obama’s focus on Asia and his declaration in Tokyo last year that he sees himself as America’s “first Pacific president.”

Dale says he still has ringing in his ear the words of a senior European diplomat, who recently told him, “[Obama] talks to his enemies. Why can’t he talk to his friends?”

Those words struck Dale as a cry of concern rooted in Obama’s neglect of America’s core allies. “Obama is demonstrating a different vision of the world by paying significantly more attention to China, Russia, and also India and Brazil,” he says.

“Even in a multipolar world you’d think it would make more sense to have a community of Western allies defending their own interests,” he adds, “but you’re not going to do that by snubbing your old friends.” ●

CHINA’S SPACE STATUS CONTINUED FROM P.41

And while decisions about the future of the program are made politically, the program’s day-to-day operation is in the hands of China’s military, a rather opaque institution, several China specialists note.

Yet more US-Chinese space cooperation, at least for now, could be a nonstarter within China, too.

People in China’s space community are uneasy with more US cooperation, despite the first overtures from Washington in “a very long time,” says Joan Johnson-Freese, a specialist on China’s space program at the US Naval War College in Newport, R.I.

China has carefully set out a path for human spaceflight, and despite some delays in the timetable, it’s sticking to that program, she says.

“They are more comfortable with a tortoiselike, incremental-move-forward approach as opposed to Mr. Toad’s Wild Ride,” Ms. Johnson-Freese says.

Dr. Kulacki agrees. In discussions

he says he’s had with Chinese involved in the space program, the Chinese take offense at the US holding out cooperation as some kind of carrot in exchange for policy changes more to Washington’s liking.

“They say they don’t need our money or our technology,” Kulacki says. “If they do cooperate with the US, it will only be because the political authorities in China force them to.”

China’s initial module would host three crew members once the country has demonstrated an ability to dock on orbit. Taingong 1 would be replaced between 2012 and 2017 with a more capable module and a cargo carrier. By 2020, the country plans to loft a station with a 20-metric-ton core, a pair of labs, and an ability to dock four craft at the station simultaneously. It would give China almost as much working space as the ISS.

China appears aimed at laying the foundation for living and working in space for long periods of time, as is the case with the ISS. Experiments are expected to focus on human, plant, and animal adaptation to microgravity and materials research.

What happens after 2020 is unclear, Kulacki says. He suspects landing humans on the moon is being hotly debated at the moment, assuming a decision is still pending. ●

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Justice impossible for cybercrime victims?

BY ROBERT McCARTNEY, WASHINGTON POST

A loathsome computer scam crippled my laptop, and I wanted revenge. It began nearly three weeks ago. While I was browsing the Internet, a scary red alert popped up on my screen. Viruses and worms had been detected on my computer! I must “click here” for a full security scan!

It looked legitimate. The logo and page design reminded me of my own antivirus program. I clicked.

Big mistake. I had fallen for a rogue security program, or “scareware,” called “Antivirus 7.” Once entrenched, it sent a relentless stream of pop-up warnings that my computer was about to crash or my identity be stolen. The constant alerts made my computer unusable. They offered only one solution: Pull out my credit card and pay \$51.95 for Antivirus 7.

The cyberswindlers didn’t get my money, but they cost me a heap of frustration. It took two weeks and four visits to The Washington Post’s IT department to get my computer back to normal.

The Zen thing would have been to let go of my anger and move forward. But I was so peeved that I resolved to hunt down and confront the creeps who did this to me.



“Scareware” Antivirus 7

Quixotic? You bet. Bad hackers can route viruses and other malicious programs through multiple sites from anywhere in the world. But I figured it might be possible to “follow the money,” because the lowlifes relied on credit card payments.

I began my quest by reading the official-looking “terms” for buying Antivirus 7. It said the agreement had been made “in accordance with Dutch law.”

The Dutch? But they always seem so nice and civilized. Surely they couldn’t be behind it. I called the embassy anyway.

Some e-mail traffic across the Atlantic showed it was a false trail. The Dutch government’s anti-cybercrime agency was aware of the program and said it was indeed scareware. Moreover, it was designed to look like a genuine, award-winning antivirus program, called Antivir 7, sold in 2006 by the Dutch firm Avira.

Next I went to the Federal Trade Commission (FTC). It’s supposed to protect consumers against computer fraud, among other things.

Ethan Arenson,

coordinator of the FTC’s spam enforcement program, confirmed that tracking the money is the best way to catch such crooks. But they put up lots of roadblocks. They hire other companies to process the credit card payments. They work with shady foreign banks.

The FTC has had some success against them. Last month it obtained a \$163 million federal court judgment in Baltimore against three men for distributing more than 1,000 varieties of bogus security software. “We spent about a year tracking them down. We sorted through the shell companies,” Arenson said.

That’s great, but what about Antivirus 7? Arenson suggested I file a complaint on the FTC’s Web site. It took 33 minutes. I felt virtuous.

But I despaired when I read the description of what the agency would do with the information. Although such input “can help us detect patterns of wrong-doing,” the site says, “The FTC does not resolve individual consumer complaints.”

I turned to the private sector. A site called Malwarebytes.org seemed promising. Its business is fighting rogue software, and it had put out a detailed consumer warning about Antivirus 7.

At my request, the company did some technical digging into the scareware’s origins. It found that the same servers used to distribute Antivirus 7 are also used for lots of other crooked software.

“These guys are definitely professionals. They have a huge block of sites that they’re using to spam people, to push out malware, to basically just be bad guys,” said Robert Hafner, network administrator for Malwarebytes.

Even better, Hafner said that contact information for the domains registered most recently to distribute Antivirus 7 came from ... China.

“While he claims to be in the U.S., it’s clear from his registrar, phone number and e-mail that he is actually somewhere in China,” Hafner said.

He gave me the phone number, for a landline in Guangxi province in southern China. My heartbeat sped up. Success was near.

Hafner said even the Chinese phone number could be phony, but I didn’t care. This was as close as I could probably get.

I dialed. I don’t speak Chinese, but I thought a savvy international cybercrook was likely to speak some English.

No such luck. A woman answered the phone and responded at length, but only in Chinese, before hanging up.

It sounded as though I’d woken her up. It was after midnight in Guangxi.

I wasn’t deterred. Fortunately, a Post Web editor seven steps from my office speaks Chinese. I enlisted her to dial again.

“Do you sell software?” No answer. “Do you sell Antivirus 7?” Nothing. Then it got interesting.

“Can you hear me?”

“Yes, I can hear you.”

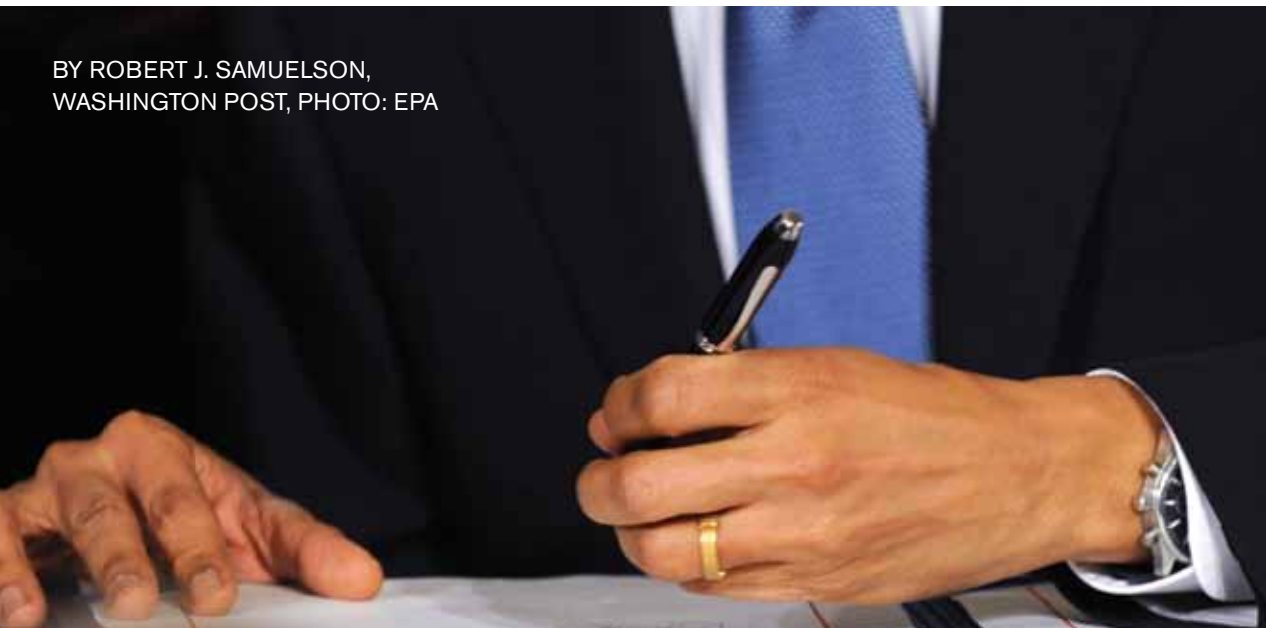
“I’m from the U.S. newspaper Washington Post. Do you know it?”

“Grunt.”

“Some software you sell has harmed my computer. What do you say about that?”

She hung up. I hope a guilty conscience kept her awake all night. ●

Sowing the seeds of a budget crisis



When historians recount the momentous events of recent weeks, they will note a curious coincidence. On March 15, Moody’s Investors Service -- the bond rating agency -- published a paper

warning that the exploding U.S. government debt could cause a downgrade of Treasury bonds.

Just six days later, the House of Representatives passed President Obama’s health-care legislation costing \$900 billion or so over a decade and worsening an already-bleak budget

Should the United States someday suffer a budget crisis, it will be hard not to conclude that Obama and his allies sowed the seeds, because they ignored conspicuous warnings. A further irony will not escape historians.

For two years, Obama and members of Congress have angrily blamed the shortsightedness and selfishness of bankers and rating agencies for causing the recent financial crisis. The president and his supporters, historians will note, were equally shortsighted and self-centered -- though their quest was for political glory, not financial gain.

Let’s be clear. A “budget crisis” is not some minor accounting exercise. It’s a wrenching political, social and economic upheaval. Large deficits and rising debt -- the accumulation of past deficits -- spook investors, leading to higher interest rates on government loans. The higher rates expand the budget deficit and further unnerve investors.

To reverse this calamitous cycle, the government has to cut spending deeply or raise taxes sharply. Lower spending and higher taxes in turn depress the economy and lead to higher unemployment. Not pretty.

Greece is experiencing such a crisis. Until recently, conventional wisdom held that only developing countries -- managed ineptly -- were candidates for true budget crises. No more. Most wealthy societies with aging populations, including the United States, face big gaps between their spending promises and their tax bases. No one in Congress could be unaware of this.

Two weeks before the House vote, the Congressional Budget Office released its estimate of Obama’s budget, including its health-care program. From 2011 to 2020, the cumulative deficit is almost \$10 trillion.

Adding 2009 and 2010, the total rises to \$12.7 trillion.

In 2020, the projected annual deficit is \$1.25 trillion, equal to 5.6 percent of the economy (gross domestic product). That assumes economic recovery, with unemployment at 5 percent. Spending is almost 30 percent higher than taxes. Total debt held by the public rises from 40 percent of GDP in 2008 to 90 percent in 2020, close to its post-World War II peak.

To criticisms, Obama supporters make two arguments. First, the CBO says the plan reduces the deficit by \$143 billion over a decade. Second, the legislation contains measures (an expert panel to curb Medicare spending, emphasis on “comparative effectiveness research”) to control health spending. These rejoinders are self-serving and unconvincing.

Suppose the CBO estimate is correct. So? The \$143 billion saving is about 1 percent of the projected \$12.7 trillion deficit from 2009 to 2020. If the administration has \$1 trillion or so of spending cuts and tax increases over a decade, all these monies should first cover existing deficits -- not finance new spending.

Obama’s behavior resembles a highly indebted family’s taking an expensive round-the-world trip because it claims to

have found ways to pay for it. It’s self-indulgent and reckless.

But the CBO estimate is misleading, because it must embody the law’s many unrealistic assumptions and gimmicks.

Proposals to control health spending face restrictions that virtually ensure failure. Consider the “Independent Payment Advisory Board” aimed at Medicare.

“The Board is prohibited from submitting proposals that would ration care, increase revenues or change benefits, eligibility or Medicare beneficiary cost sharing,” says a summary by the Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation.

What’s left? Similarly, findings from “comparative effectiveness research” -- intended to identify ineffective care -- “may not be construed as mandates, guidelines or recommendations for payment, coverage or treatment.” What’s the point then?

So Obama is flirting with a future budget crisis. Moody’s emphasizes two warning signs: rising debt and loss of confidence that government will deal with it. Obama fulfills both.

The parallels with the recent financial crisis are striking.

Bankers and rating agencies engaged in wishful thinking to rationalize self-interest. Obama does the same. No one can tell when or whether a crisis will come. There is no magic tipping point. But Obama is raising the chances. ●

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Rich Perrine explores the bow of a Grady-White



Dick Eyler and Terry Byard check out a Key West 196 Bay Reef from Top Notch Marine



Gloria and Normand Marois look over a 2010 Grady-White 330 Express

Attendance up at Vero Beach Spring Boat Show

BY IAN M. LOVE, STAFF WRITER, PHOTOS: TOM MCCARTHY JR.

The rain held off all weekend and instead warm, breezy weather greeted local boating and water enthusiasts, bringing a brisk business to the Vero Beach Spring Boat Show at Riverside Park this past Saturday and Sunday.

The show is free to the public and so it is difficult to get a head count, but show organizer Brian Cunningham said his unofficial counters, who were handing out maps at the front entrance, told him it

was perhaps the busiest Saturday they remember in 10 years of working the show.

"We had four guys working the booth and from 10 (a.m.) when we opened until about 2 (p.m.), we never got a chance to talk to one another," said Cunningham, who is also the General Manager at Vero Marine Center. "We were that busy."

Cunningham said what makes the Vero show unique compared to others is that he keeps the focus local.

"I think it is important that the people you meet to sell you the boat are the people who will be taking

care of you and the boat when it needs servicing," he said. "For that reason I don't market this in West Palm, or Tampa or Orlando."

One of his boats getting a lot of foot traffic was a Grady-White Express 330 with twin 350 horsepower V-8 Yamaha outboards and all the bells and whistles, including air conditioned helm, diesel generator, freezer, microwave, DVD and 15-inch flat screen TV.

Grady said many of the vendors were in a rush to get out Sunday to beat the oncoming thunderstorms, but that all of them reported either making some sales at the show or had follow-up demonstrations set up for coming week.

"Attendance was way up this year and both the exhibitors and attendees were as enthusiastic as I can remember," Cunningham said. "The kayak guys reported numerous sales."

In all, there were 24 vendors on hand for the show selling items including canoes and kayaks, deck boats, pontoon boats, shallow water skiffs, offshore fishing machines and cruisers, marine accessories and services, and other nautical goodies. There were even representatives on hand to offer financing and insurance.

One of the busiest vendors was Malcolm Allen, owner of Orchid Island Bikes & Kayaks. By Saturday afternoon he was dealing with interested customers sometimes two at a time.

"Things are going very well," said Allen, who thought he was ahead in business compared to the same time last year. "The weather has really cooperated."

Cunningham said he was thankful the weather help up throughout the two-day event, bringing out customers wanting to put the Winter of 2010 in the past and get ready for the spring and summer.

One such person was Bill Carbone, a seasonal resident who just came to see what the show had to offer and ended up buying a floating dock that he may also use as a raft.

"I'm always interested in seeing what they have," he said. ●

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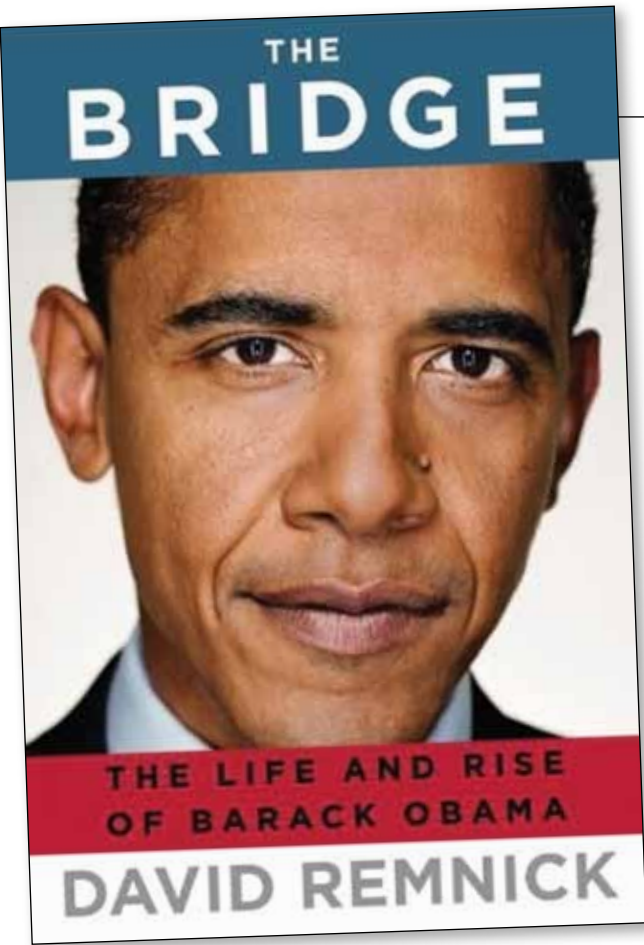
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On Oct. 9, 2009, White House Press Secretary Robert Gibbs woke up at dawn and received startling news from Oslo. President Obama, only 48, had just received the Nobel Peace Prize. Usually, this most prestigious of awards honors lifetime accomplishment (read septuagenarian) or recent diplomatic triumph (read Woodrow Wilson and the Treaty of Versailles). But not this time.

Dutifully, Gibbs called his boss with the mind-boggling international development. Using swear words unprintable in a family newspaper, a curt, disbelieving Obama told Gibbs to essentially "Shut up." It was too early for scuttlebutt. It took Obama a few minutes to realize that Gibbs wasn't yanking his chain.

For "The Bridge: The Life and Rise of Barack Obama" -- a brilliantly constructed, flawlessly written biography -- Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist David Remnick interviewed our 44th president about winning the Oslo honor.

"It was not helpful to us politically," Obama matter-of-factly recalls. "Although [David] Axelrod and I joke about it, the one thing we didn't anticipate this year was having to apologize for having won the Nobel Peace Prize."

When Obama delivered his acceptance speech, many European pacifists were baffled at his quasi-martial words. Did he have to use the word "kill"? Or talk of the righteousness of war in Afghanistan? Obama clearly wasn't trying to sound like Mother Teresa or the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.

The Nobel speech, he told Remnick, reflected his "fundamental view" that the world was a "dangerous place" with terrorists who will do vicious deeds and therefore "have to be fought." This wasn't the inheritor of Gandhi's practice of nonviolence. Here was the ghost of Lincoln pledging that war was sometimes moral.

"The Bridge" is a towering monument to Obama's hyper-professionalism when it comes to

the art of politics. The president is an unflappable Zen master with a belly full of audacity. Hard work, endurance and civility are inherent in his personality. His greatest strength is that the opposition always underestimates him.

In "Alice in Wonderland" terms, he's the Cheshire Cat, the magical creature who saves the day just as the guillotine is about to drop.

Witness how, earlier this month, Obama managed to pass the most sweeping change to America's healthcare system since the creation of Medicare in 1965. Many pundits thought Obamacare, as Republicans called it, was roadkill. When Scott Brown won Ted Kennedy's Senate seat in January, even more conservatives heard the death knell. But by dodging lions and leapfrogging potholes (plus a little Chicago-style arm-twisting), Obama, bruised and battered, pulled out a New Deal-like victory.

Road to the presidency

How exactly did Obama become America's first black president? Remnick tells the astounding story of Obama's rise through the prism of the civil rights movement. When John Lewis marched across the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, Ala., in 1965, getting badly beaten by police for promoting equal voting rights for African Americans, he was Moses opening the door for the up-and-coming Joshua generation. As Lewis himself put it last year: "Obama is what comes at the end of that bridge in Selma."

Remnick has a genius for placing Obama in the wider context of the black liberation movement. There are allusions to Frederick Douglass, Sojourner Truth, Joseph Lowery, Malcolm X and many others in this anecdote-rich narrative.

Yet by book's end, Remnick declares that Obama, as president, believed it was best to "internalize" race talk because there was "no winnable percentage" in a national dialogue as a White House initiative. His lifetime ambition was to be an American leader, not a Black History Month poster.

Anybody who tries to pigeonhole Obama is bound to get frustrated. Remnick, who has previously written a fine biography of Muhammad Ali, navigates all of Obama's creative rope-a-dope tactics when confronted with racial prejudice, old-style jealousy and new-style (post-Great Society) urban politics.

Although operating from left-center, Obama is a consummate result-oriented pragmatist who early in life developed an earnest, open-minded consensus-seeking style. A one-man polyglot, he shuttled among Hawaii, Kansas, Kenya, Indonesia, Los Angeles and New York. He hated making enemies.

His smile was radiant. He frowned on triumphalism. Nobody could ever accurately satirize

him as an angry black man. Rage has been exorcised from his demeanor. Although blessed with a wry, mocking wit, Obama enjoys helping foes find their better nature.

"Barack is the interpreter," his friend Cassandra Butts says. "To be a good interpreter means you need fluency in two languages as well as cultural fluency on both sides. As a biracial person, he has had to come to an understanding of the two worlds he's lived in. . . . Living in those worlds, he functions as an interpreter to others."

Peter Osnos recalls how, as publisher of Times Books, he had "mid-list hopes" for marketing Obama's "Dreams From My Father"; it was aimed at "multicultural" readers. But Obama delivered a manuscript far richer in universal appeal than was expected, and that eventually became a contemporary classic.

According to Remnick, Obama tapped into every possible type of black politics, including liberal integration, black nationalism, Afrocentrism, apathy, activism and even a bit of conspiratorial thinking for good measure. (Remnick does the same in "The Bridge.") Certainly, other American politicians had written excellent books before Obama, but only Obama, whose memoir became a nationwide bestseller, had the courage to describe himself with such raw openness.

The Obama that emerges from "Dreams" and "The Bridge" is that of a calculating opportunist who believes that knowledge equals power, that fortitude overcomes expediency. Unflappable in the extreme, his personal sky knows no limits.

How did Obama achieve such a cult of personality at an early age? Turns out his big ears -- which have been compared to many things, including Mr. Spock's and an elephant's -- are more than a cartoonist's gag. As Remnick makes clear, Obama is an extraordinary listener. He picks up on conversational nuances and hesitations as if he's endowed with radar.

One evening at Occidental College in the late 1970s, for example, a besotted Obama sprawled on a sofa in the wee-morning hours listening to Billie Holiday's "I'm a Fool to Want You" on the stereo.

When it was over, he listened to the various clinks and clanks down the hall as if studying a mu-

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BOOK REVIEWS

sical composition: “I could hear someone flushing a toilet, walking across a room,” Obama recalls. “Another insomniac, probably, listening to his life tick away. That was the problem with booze and drugs, wasn’t it? At some point they couldn’t stop the ticking sound of the certain emptiness.”

Obama also became a master of human syntax. He could tell by a mere voice inflection what somebody was feeling and learned to mimic his friends with unnerving accuracy. But being able to soul-catch friends’ personality tics was a far cry from achieving personal authenticity. Obama went on a post-Occidental quest to find himself: Barry became Barack, and the rest is history.

Remnick dutifully explains the year-by-year processes that led to the 2008 presidential election -- only “First in His Class,” David Maraniss’ 1996 biog-

raphy of Bill Clinton, is as profound on a sitting U.S. president. With great verve, Remnick explains why Obama was accepted by black culture (as black) when Clarence Thomas wasn’t.

There are love stories revealed in “The Bridge,” but none greater than his courting of Michelle Robinson. There are vivid details about how Obama won Illinois’ 13th District in 1996 to become a state senator, and how he lost a 2000 bid for the U.S. House of Representatives to Bobby Rush. A chapter on the Rev. Jeremiah Wright imbroglio -- complete with the roles played by Rolling Stone, Tavis Smiley and Cornel West -- is riveting.

There are clownish appearances by Alan Keyes and Louis Farrakhan; the Rev. Jesse Jackson doesn’t fare well. Remnick interviewed a telephone book’s worth of notable figures in Obama’s life; they’re all roll-called in the back pages. Someday they’ll form the nucleus of a marvelous Obama Presidential Library oral history collection (if they were taped).

Except for a tack-on epilogue aimed at keeping

“The Bridge” as up-to-date as possible, Remnick has written a near-definitive study of Obama from 1961 to 2009. If “The Bridge” fails in any regard, it’s in recycling a lot of shopworn stories -- but this, of course, can’t be helped.

When Obama gets carried along by the flux of his own ideas, it’s crystal clear that he feels only tangentially connected to the black power movement of the 1960s.

Like Albert Murray in his seminal book “The Omni-Americans,” the president finds black people as American as Valley Forge -- after all, they’ve been here since the beginning. King has a national holiday. Obama has a Nobel Peace Prize, and now he is aiming for Mt. Rushmore -- for a spot right beside the four presidents he so admires. ●

The Bridge: The Life and Rise of Barack Obama
by David Remnick, Knopf, 672 pp., \$29.95.
Reviewed by Douglas Brinkley, Los Angeles Times

ences and succeeds in keeping us on our toes.

But what makes Smith’s book genius isn’t just the ability to lay out an interesting, eloquent, and relevant piece of work -- which he admittedly does. No, the kicker for “Breakfast with Socrates” is that it’s just plain funny.

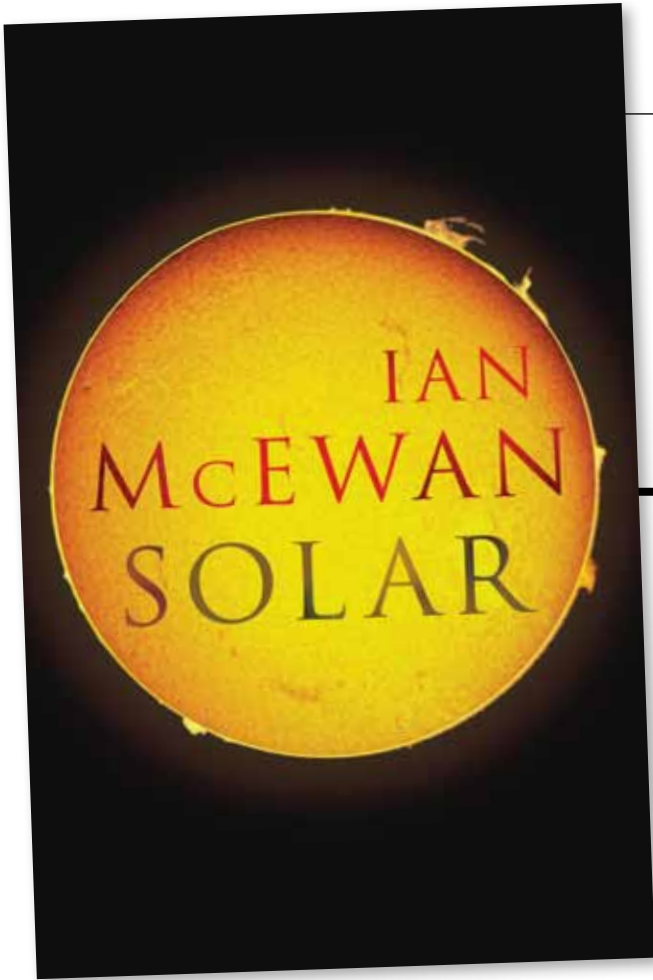
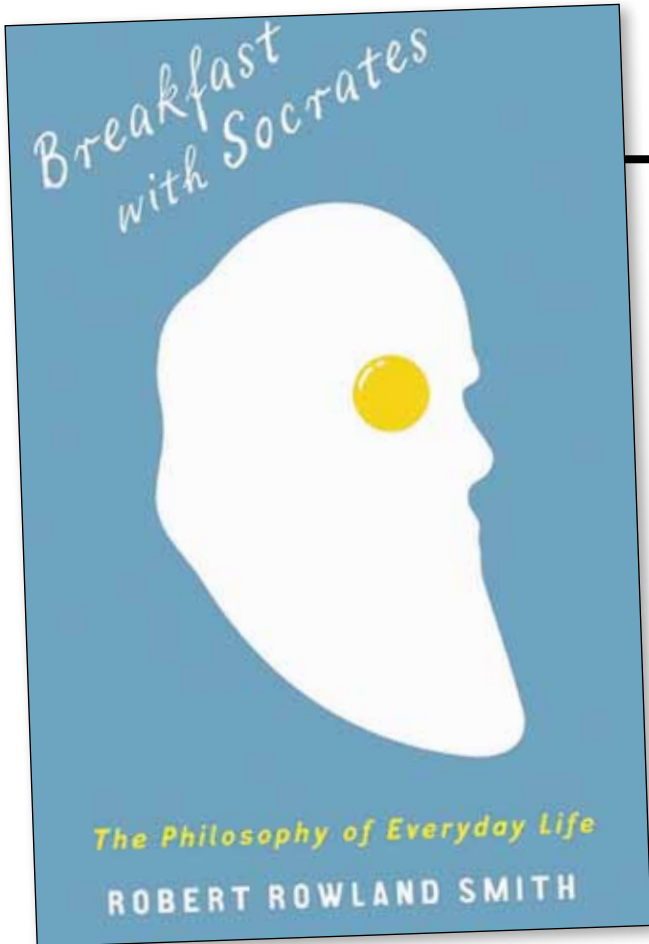
Smith has humor in spades: he uses the song “It’s My Party (And I’ll Cry If I Want To)” to describe the politics of friendships, explains how watching TV might just prove “how smart you are,” compares fictional characters to Schrödinger’s famous cat, and likens commuters traveling to work to brutal savages stopped by the one thing calling them to order -- a red light. (The authority of which is more powerful than that of a traffic cop who, Smith explains, is “only one of us, after all.”)

The humor does not dumb down the philosophy Smith interjects. While it’s obvious we will not leave the reading of Smith’s book with a thorough understanding of Karl Marx’s most fundamental beliefs, we still leave knowing a bit more, becoming more aware of our surroundings, and thinking twice about many of the things that have become second nature to us.

If humor is the best part of Smith’s book -- and it might just be -- then eloquence and neutrality tie for second place. It’s rare to see so many competing ideas on the same page, not just for the sake of summary, but in order to make a point. Smith completely wins us over to one way of thinking -- and then turns us on our heads and makes us see things in a completely different light.

It’s a tribute to Smith’s own purpose for writing the book -- to get us to think -- that it’s impossible to pin down what he himself is thinking. His ability to convince us of the validity of two polar opposites without injecting his own beliefs is commendable. Many controversial topics play out in his book -- socialism, idealism, religion, the ethics of food -- but we never feel as if we are being chastised. In this way, Smith gains our trust.

As Smith sifts through the 18 chapters of our day, we gain a bit of distance from ourselves and are better able to understand how we operate. As the day



In 2006, Ian McEwan survived a minor scrape with the plagiarism police. A British newspaper pointed out the resemblance between passages in his celebrated 2001 novel, “Atonement,” and those of a 1977 memoir by the late romance writer Lucilla Andrews.

McEwan serenely dismissed the matter in the Guardian two days later. He hadn’t copied Andrews, merely referred to her book for hard facts about a 1940 London hospital, and he’d cited it in “Atonement’s” acknowledgments. A small army of big shots (Pynchon, Updike, Amis, Ishiguro) sprang to his defense. Case closed. The world moved on.

Did McEwan? Nominally a hot-button story about a theoretical physicist confronting climate change, his mischievous, darkly entertaining “Solar” better resonates as a tale of intellectual property theft.

Nobel laureate Michael Beard has a brilliant mind, a nimble wit and a debilitating weakness for women, liquor and junk food. In other words, he’s empathetically human. He also happens to be a cheat and a fraud -- but just try rooting against him.

We meet Beard, 53, in 2000, humiliated by his younger wife’s dalliance with their blue-collar contractor and by his own reflexive adoration for her. Suddenly, there is no woman in the world he desires more than Patrice, who cheerfully admits and carries on with her affair.

Beard has been an adulterer his whole life -- Patrice is his fifth wife -- and yet the position of cuckold leaves him emotionally deranged. Thank goodness for the arid, rationalist landscape of his profession. As Beard puts it to himself, “physics was free of human taint, it described a world that would exist if men and women and all their sorrows did not.”

The rest of McEwan’s novel will boisterously, comically demolish the notion that any such world exists -- or, anyway, lies within reach. In “Solar,” which skips from London to the North Pole to a New Mexico desert (finely realized settings all), there is

and the book draw to a close, it’s hard not to regret that Smith’s moments of introspection are over. We are now left to our own devices.

But not to worry, says Smith. He assures us, his readers, that, we will file his book away, “both literally,” on our bookshelves, and also “metaphorically, in the possibly more chaotic library” of our minds, where it will mix and mingle with everything else we

no human endeavor, least of all physics, uncontaminated by foible, appetite and ego.

The author of 13 previous works of fiction, McEwan is a writer of ideas who is gratifyingly committed to the old-fashioned pleasures of plot and suspense. His intelligent novels tend to be corkers -- “Solar” is no exception, and giving away the story line spoils the fun.

So here’s a pencil sketch: Longing for distraction from his marital mess and “always on the look-out for an official role with a stipend attached,” Beard takes a post as head of a British research center on renewable energy. One of the younger postdocs on staff, Tom Aldous, has groundbreaking ideas about solar power, but Beard can’t abide his save-the-planet peppiness.

Beard knows the science on global warming, but he’s a hedonist who likes heated tile in his bathrooms and jumbo SUVs. Still, Beard hasn’t had any genuine ideas since the calculations that won him the Nobel Prize two decades before, and when an opportunity presents itself, he’ll claim Aldous’ work as his own.

That work involves applying quantum theory and nanotechnology to replicate the natural process of photosynthesis via a solar panel, drawing hydrogen from water and creating liquid fuel. It all sounds terribly convincing to an English major like me, but I’d bet the scientific passages would pass muster among novel-reading physicists too.

McEwan famously performs deep research -- he shadowed a brain surgeon for weeks before writing “Saturday” -- but he also has the good sense to avoid clogging his narrative line with Tom Clancy-esque excerpts from his notebook.

Could Beard’s (really Aldous’) next-generation solar panels reverse climate change? “Solar” zips along and turns bracingly of the moment in its final third, set in 2009, a year of “sclerotic credit markets” and insurgent skepticism about global warming. Alas, a rushed and contrived climax mars the novel’s last pages. What a surprise to see plot ace McEwan struggle to integrate his several narrative strands, stage a persuasive finale and go home.

BOOK REVIEWS

know and become just one more lens through which we perceive the days of our lives. ●

Breakfast With Socrates by Robert Rowland Smith
Free Press, 256 pp., \$18.95.
Reviewed by Kate Vander Wiede
Christian Science Monitor

The happier surprise and the reason why “Solar” succeeds in spite of its creaky finish is McEwan’s sense of humor. Here’s a writer who began his career more than 30 years ago with grim, perverse novels and short stories about incest and violence. His recent work has skewed less macabre, but still -- not a lot of laughs in the McEwan backlist.

In fact, he recently told an audience that he hates the comic novel, saying “it’s like being wrestled to the ground and being tickled.” And yet “Solar” offers both high-minded amusement in its skewering of environmentalist, postmodern and objectivist pieties, and, in the North Pole scenes in which Beard braves subzero cold and a hungry polar bear, something awfully close to slapstick.

A comic global warming novel? Well . . . why not? After December’s fiasco in Copenhagen, the story line on climate change is looking a bit like a tragicomedy. Can individuals, corporations and governments all go outside self-interest and do the responsible, painful, self-preserving thing? “Solar’s” answer runs something like: Are you kidding?

Instead, the novel reminds us that even our most illustrious figures can’t resist dark urges: to lie, to cheat, to steal. I’m not sure what this tells us about the “Atonement” affair. Michael Beard certainly is no McEwan stand-in. And yet I also can’t shake the sense, presumptuous as it may be, that the character has sprung from something like the author’s conscience. ●

Solar by Ian McEwan
Nan A. Talese/Doubleday, 294 pp., \$26.95
Reviewed by Taylor Antrim
Los Angeles Times



Chess COLUMN

BEACHLAND ELEMENTARY TO HOLD FIRST-EVER RATED SCHOOL TOURNAMENT

Starting this month, the Beachland Elementary School Chess Club will hold its first-ever United States Chess Federation-rated tournament.

Sixteen Beachland students have joined the federation and signed up for the tournament. Listed from oldest to youngest, they are Spencer James Toll, Alden Carson Findley, Martin James Walker, Matthew Hughes O'Connor, Sean Hoggatt, Ryan Christopher Nelson, Joshua Tucker, Royneshia Andrea Sullivan, Cameron David Shearer, Blake Eugene Moree, Bronson Edward Evere Grinstead, Connor Riley, Jackson Mathew Jennings, Thomas Barker, Luc Granitur and Trey Olmstead.

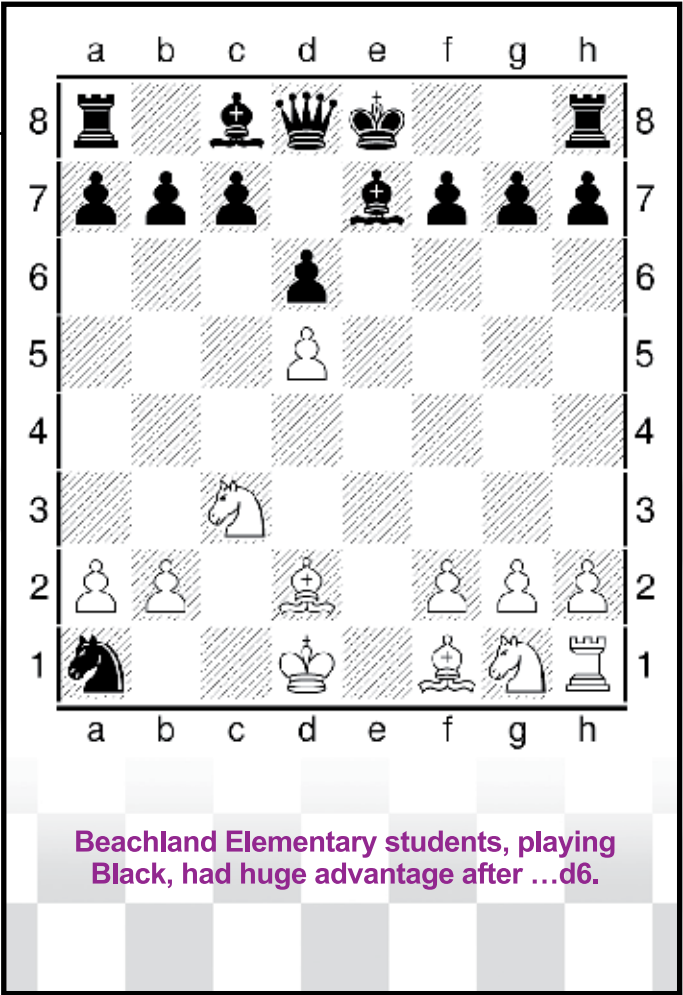
The tournament will be played as a four-round "Swiss." Under this type of tournament format, nobody is eliminated. After the first round, players with similar scores play each other in subsequent rounds, but nobody will face the same opponent more than once. A victory counts as one point and a draw as half-a-point. The player with the most points after four rounds will be the winner. Rounds are scheduled for April 19, May 3, May 10 and May 24.

The tournament will be played under standard chess federation rules, with players required to use a chess clock, write down their moves and observe the touch-move rule. Players who complete all four games will receive a provisional chess rating from the federation, which is the not-for-profit governing body of organized chess in the United States.

As much as a chess competition, the tournament is designed as a learning experience in good sportsmanship and conduct for the children, all of which had their federation memberships paid for one year (\$16 each) through a generous donation of the Beachland PTA.

Today's diagram shows the final position of a game Beachland students played via e-mail against students at Laurel Ridge Elementary School in Fairfax, Va. With time running out in the school year and Beachland holding a huge advantage, the game was discontinued at this point.

The moves to the game (Beachland was Black) were 1.e4 e5 2.d4 exd4 3.Qxd4 Nc6 4.Qd1 Be7 5.Qh5 Nf6 6.Qd5 Nxd5 7.exd5 Nb4 8.Bd2 Nxc2+ 9.Kd1 Nxa1 10.Nc3 d6.



Bridge COLUMN

WHEN ESTHER BECAME A DIS-ESTHER

BY PIETER VANBENNEKOM - BRIDGE COLUMNIST

Flustered Flo's regular bridge partner, Loyal Larry, became unavailable for their customary Wednesday night duplicate club tournament at the last moment because of a family emergency, so she called her neighbor Esther to play with her for once.

Flo often wondered why Esther didn't have a regular partner, but she appeared glad to get the invitation and said she'd hurry out of the house to make it on time. Esther would have to skip dinner altogether because there wasn't even time to stop at a fast-food drive-through window, but she was willing to make that sacrifice.

Hungry Esther and Flustered Flo were doing quite nicely until they came up against Flo's eternal nemesis, Smug Sam, in the diagrammed deal.

Smug Sam held the South hand and his partner, Shy Shem, was North. Flo had the zero-points West hand and her partner Esther as East was the Dealer; East-West vulnerable.

The redouble by Shem, who for once wasn't shy at all, was one of those bids of a Riverboat Gambler who goes for either tops or bottom, or a bid born out of the philosophy, "Hey, I don't have to play it; my partner does" – or a combination of both.

Sam found the correct counter-intuitive play on the first trick, resisting the urge to ruff the opening Heart lead in dummy (with that line of play, he'd eventually have to lose a Heart anyway plus the Ace of Spades and the failed finesse to the King of Clubs for Down One).

Instead, he let the Heart ride, ditched a Club from dummy and East's Ace won (ducking the Ace achieves nothing for East, since South would then have enough Trumps in dummy to ruff all his remaining Hearts). After cashing the Ace of Spades, East returned a Trump, the best lead since he saw that Declarer would try to use trumps in dummy for a cross-ruff. Sam with the South hand took the Trump trick in his hand and collected his winning King-Queen of Hearts, dumping dummy's last Club and a Spade.

He then ruffed his last Heart in dummy, ruffed a Spade in his hand, got back to the dummy with the Ace of Clubs, ruffed another Spade in his hand, ruffed his last remaining Club with dummy's last Trump, ruffed another Spade in his hand and claimed.

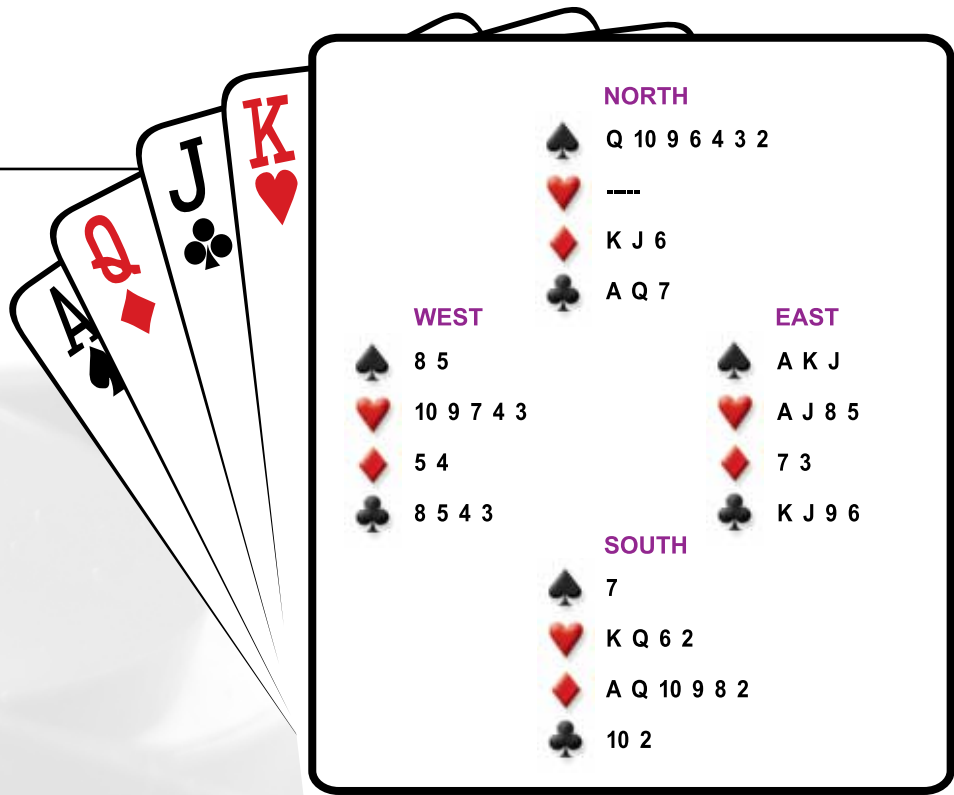
A tricky transition game but doable. The hands were computer-dealt and the computer's own analysis confirmed 5 Diamonds should be made by South (if somehow North gets to play the hand, he can even make an overtrick for 6, the computer said).

It would have been a mistake to draw another round of Trumps on Trick Four since Sam needed all dummy's Trumps for ruffing. And as Declarer he really didn't care if the Trumps split 2-2 or 3-1. With his continuous cross-ruff, all his remaining Trumps were higher than anything the opposition had – so eventually they'd be forced to under-ruff.

That minus-1,000-plus score doomed Flo's chances in the tournament, and she wasn't very gracious to her partner responsible for the disaster with her ill-advised double. "I've heard it said that when you make a mistake, you turn from an Esther into a Dis-Esther," said Flo. "Now I think I know why you haven't been able to find a regular partner."

"Give me a break," said Esther, "I rushed out of the house to play with you and missed dinner. I was so hungry I couldn't think straight. And it didn't help that Sam recounted in great detail how this was his second tournament of the day, but he hadn't gone home in between. He'd stayed in town to eat a delicious drippy French melt, even though it wasn't exactly on his diet program."

"So it's all your fault," Flo said, looking daggers at Sam again, "as usual."



The bidding so far:

East	South	West	North
1 No-Trump	2 Diamonds	Pass	2 Spades
Pass	3 Diamond	Pass	5 Diamonds
Double	Pass	Pass	Re-double
All pass			

Opening lead: 4 of Hearts.

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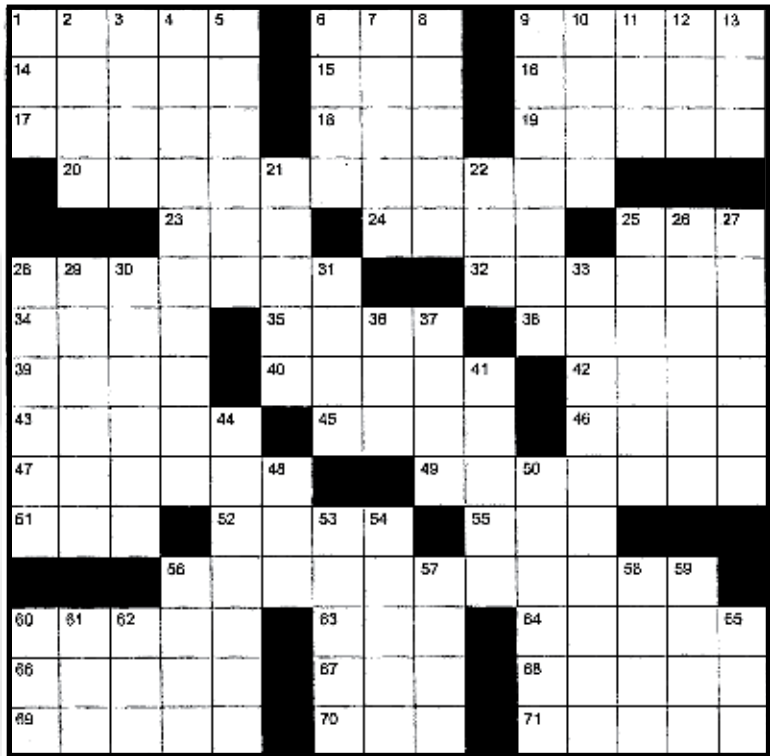
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Crossword

SOLUTIONS TO LAST ISSUE ON PAGE 83

ONE-ON-ONE



The Christian Science Monitor | By Anne Rustin | Edited by Charles Preston

ACROSS

- 1 German woods?
- 6 Exercise judgement
- 9 ___ incognita
- 14 Rig
- 15 Gullet
- 16 Locale of Rigel and Betelgeuse
- 17 Oil center on Arkansas river
- 18 Single
- 19 Sylvan
- 20 Liquidators
- 23 Stream type
- 24 Taro root
- 25 Easy as ___
- 28 Laid back
- 32 Washer, at times
- 34 Clapton
- 35 Flaky mineral
- 38 Launder
- 39 Cloister resident
- 40 Lurk
- 42 Hurls a shot
- 43 Revoke a legacy
- 45 Therefore
- 46 Lane
- 47 Nairobi is his capital
- 49 Diamond patterned

hose

- 51 Argot: suffix
- 52 Ready to eat
- 55 Secondary: abbr.
- 56 Increasing rapidly
- 60 Welsh ___
- 63 Unique
- 64 Implied
- 66 Hasta luego
- 67 Beginning of a dead end
- 68 Firmament
- 69 Leavening agent
- 70 Accompanies hers
- 71 Thin sounding

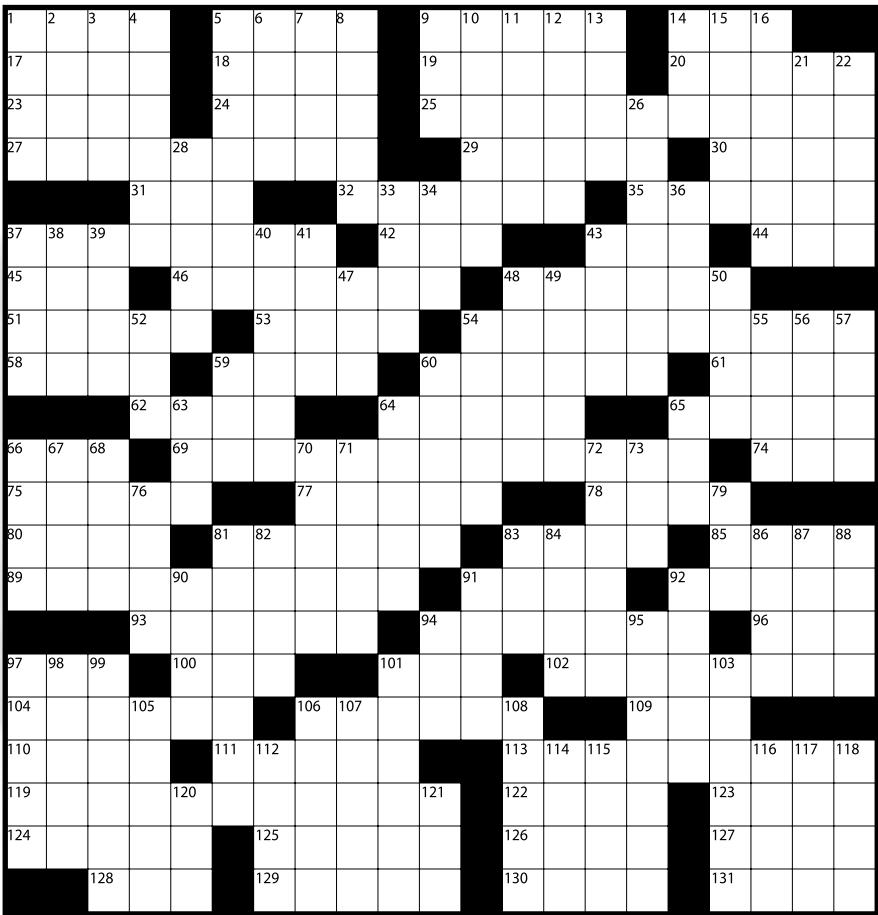
DOWN

- 1 Blanket type
- 2 Turquoise
- 3 Marge Buell's cartoon character
- 4 Radio record spinner
- 5 Outpourings
- 6 Melville work
- 7 Velvet or satin fabric
- 8 Suiting
- 9 Hawser
- 10 Cupid to some
- 11 Branco or Bravo
- 12 Bar
- 13 One or more
- 21 Articles
- 22 Begley and Bradley
- 25 Not fabulous
- 26 Scarab
- 27 Combs and manes
- 28 New version
- 29 Weathers
- 30 Turpentine-oil ingredi-ent
- 31 Sea wall
- 33 Smother
- 36 Coward
- 37 Pond scum
- 41 Ayatollah's guide
- 44 Collective believer
- 60 Across's bite
- 50 Sewer feeder
- 53 Pup
- 54 General apathy
- 56 Multiple selves
- 57 Some are electric
- 58 Yearning
- 59 Swore falsely
- 60 Low island
- 61 Prosodic form
- 62 Estuary
- 65 Sample

NOTE: This is a rebus puzzle, so you'll need to draw a certain appropriate squiggle in exactly 13 of the squares.

ACROSS

- 1 Theater prize
- 5 Work like a work
- 9 Motorist's datum: abbr.
- 14 "Jeopardy!" clue: abbr.
- 17 Cooling-off period?
- 18 Waikiki wiggle
- 19 Smart as ___
- 20 Arkansas city
- 23 Noted nasal nanny
- 24 Counter's cousin
- 25 "Cover Me" composer
- 27 "December Bride" star
- 29 Ferrell's frequent "SNL" collaborator
- 30 Simple
- 31 Easter preceder?
- 32 Natural drink
- 35 Tennessee created her
- 37 Comes up, idea-wise
- 42 "So ___ heard"
- 43 Not camera-ready?
- 44 Comic-page cry
- 45 Jigger joint
- 46 "___ pulling thread ..."
- 48 "Captain from Castile" co-star (1947)
- 51 Like Humpty Dumpty
- 53 City near the Air Force Academy
- 58 "Songs in A Minor" artist
- 59 Chalet settings, freq.
- 60 Engine-additive target
- 61 News you can use
- 62 Introduction to art?
- 64 Picked
- 65 "The Third Man" zitherist Karas
- 66 High return?
- 69 Optimistic Pope quote
- 74 Access ending
- 75 Hebrew letter
- 77 Rigging, mostly
- 78 Qatari VIP
- 80 Extensive
- 81 Northern Mariana Islands capital
- 83 Fun
- 85 Declines
- 89 Not as young as one used to be
- 91 Country star Hall
- 92 "Buddy boy"
- 93 Author Rushdie
- 94 Maria in "West Side Story"
- 96 Clock number
- 97 Buying channel, briefly
- 100 Sailor's realm, to the Dutch
- 101 Service-related: abbr.
- 102 Cincinnati mayor-turned-TV host
- 104 Blackjack combo
- 106 May gala
- 109 Wall-E's love in "Wall-E"
- 110 ___ me tangere
- 111 Floor worker
- 113 Lemmon's description of Monroe's walk in "Some Like It Hot"
- 119 "I Only Want To Be with You" singer
- 122 James's "East of Eden" director
- 123 Letters
- 124 Asian appetizer
- 125 Ohio city
- 126 N.Y. neighbor
- 127 Saber alternative
- 128 Land in a Verne tale
- 129 "Lovegirl" singer ___ Marie
- 130 Having no loose ends?
- 131 Uncool one
- 3 "Now ___ me down to ..."
- 4 Weather-affecting current
- 5 Mortification
- 6 Litter's littlest
- 7 Hymn part
- 8 Watch part
- 9 "Monster Mash" setting
- 10 "Know it? ___ it!"
- 11 Rodeo holding pen
- 12 Less naughty
- 13 Phone fig.
- 14 Satisfied sounds
- 15 Denier's words
- 16 Early Brosnan role
- 21 Anise-flavored cookies
- 22 Furtive sort
- 26 March announcement?
- 28 Land rover
- 33 Sly
- 34 Forum greeting
- 36 Banks on TV
- 37 High-flying gazelle
- 38 Pay less
- 39 Where Aeneas fought
- 40 "Coming after the break," in TV lingo
- 41 Bruce or Laura
- 43 Skyline obscurer
- 47 Summation VIPs
- 48 Shake awake
- 49 Less callow
- 50 Thor's dad
- 52 Sex suffix
- 54 Stops bleeding
- 55 Aware of
- 56 Treat one to
- 57 It took over the old MGM lot
- 59 Bossy comment
- 60 Luster
- 63 Lyndon's VP
- 64 Political buff's channel
- 65 Liston lick, 5/25/65
- 66 Croquet setting
- 67 Grab bag
- 68 Boon to sleep
- 70 Slezak of soaps
- 71 Jack-in-the-boxes do it
- 72 Big name in chocolate
- 73 Total: abbr.
- 76 Bench presser's pride
- 79 Bench presser's unit
- 81 Rachel Carson book
- 82 Zenith
- 83 Write quickly
- 84 Easy guitar chord: abbr.
- 86 Mattress type
- 87 Party cheese
- 88 Recipe verb
- 90 Skyline obscurer
- 91 Shower powder
- 92 Type of motor
- 94 Palindromic writer
- 95 Yeats's home
- 97 Tumbling feat
- 98 Search every inch of
- 99 Trafalgar victor (1805)
- 101 He played Sky in "Guys and Dolls"
- 103 Some petty officers
- 105 Championship
- 106 Like beautiful weather, perhaps
- 107 John of equipment fame
- 108 Throw out
- 112 "___ first you don't ..."
- 114 Morlock menu candidates
- 115 Propositional phrase?
- 116 Neck part
- 117 More bouncy
- 118 Husky burden
- 120 Mutual fund stat: abbr.
- 121 Forensics focus



IT'S THAT TIME OF YEAR AGAIN

By Merl Reagle

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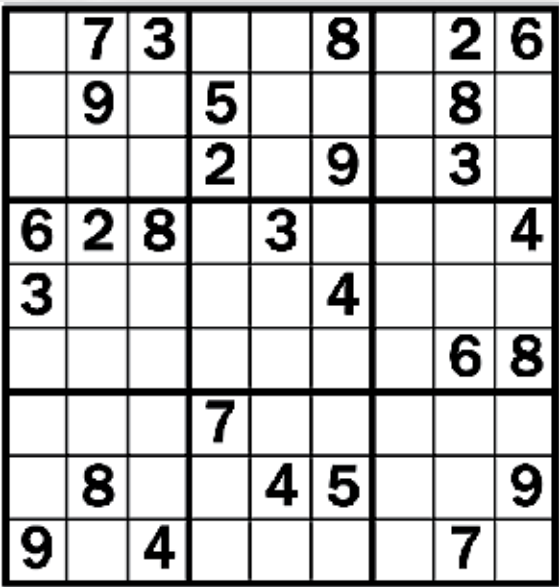
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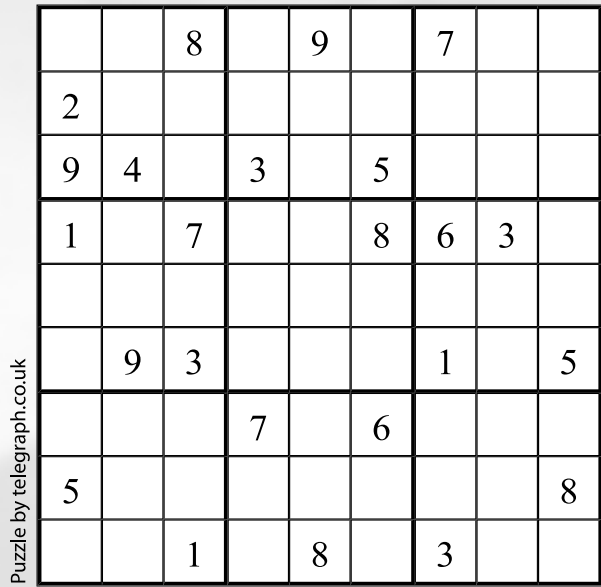
Sudoku



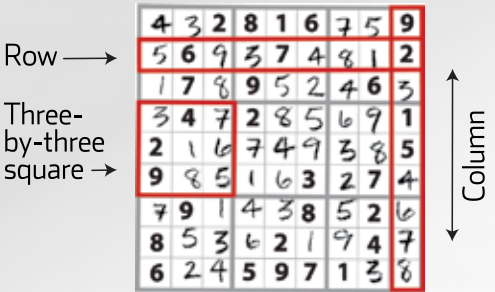
★★★★☆

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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BY JAY MCNAMARA

EAST MEETS WEST ON THE HIGHWAY TO HEALTH

My mother, who lived to be 100, was skeptical about visiting doctors. She knew that as part of my employment I was required to have a comprehensive physical annually. "If you keep having those, sooner or later they will find something wrong," she would say. Ultimately, they did, and they saved my life.

How one defines one's health is somewhat subjective. If you do so in the traditional way by determining it by the way you feel, you may be taking your chances. Not everyone has the genes and the good fortune of my mother.

So, if you say "I feel fine, and therefore I am fine," you may be at risk. Western medical thinking indicates that your health is defined not necessarily by how you feel, but rather by the absence of any irregularity as defined by Western measurement techniques. Put another way, you are not in complete health if one of the many indicators of health say that you are outside the norm.

A good example of that might be high blood pressure which isn't necessarily going to make you feel unhealthy. However, measured by the norms established for good blood pressure, half the people have high blood pressure. This would indicate that they should be doing something about the problem, either through life style changes or through medication. Many are not.

Western medicine, as I have learned firsthand, is brilliant and technologically leading edge. It is able to fix a broken body and extend life to considerable lengths. Eastern medicine is something I also learned about first hand. It is able to prevent the breakdown of the body before it is broke. I think of Eastern medicine as the nix-it approach and Western as the fix-it approach.

Long ago, a well known doctor from the Baltimore area came back into his office after examining me and my test results, and asked me a poignant question. "Are you a religious man, Mr. McNamara?" I still remember my response twenty years since. "Increasingly so, Doctor."

Judged by one of the parameters of prostate cancer measurement, the PSA test, I had achieved an eye-popping score, triple digits in a system where a score of 5 can be worrisome. In the conversation that ensued, I asked if the doctor had any ideas at all for someone in my situation, other than prayer.

He did. And it was the beginning of an adventure that saved my life. I soon found myself in the capable hands of the prostate cancer team at Stanford Medical Center, part of Stanford University in Palo Alto, California.

Although I had lived in the Far East, it had been as a younger man. At the time, I didn't absorb knowledge related to health. However, at Stanford, and in the San Francisco Bay Area in general, there was considerable Eastern medicine underway even twenty years ago.

Spending ten minutes each morning in the Stanford Medical Center, receiving what was then a break-through radiation treatment, left me with plenty of idle time to pursue the many interesting alternatives available on a leading university campus.

There were seminars related to diet and health, exercise, yoga, transcendental meditation, and Tai Chi, as part of an Eastern curriculum of sorts. None of the disciplines came with the precision and clinical testing associated with Western medicine. Evidence was anecdotal.

Mostly, they were thought of as interesting, but not necessarily helpful pasttimes. However, there did not appear to be any downside to these practices. Since I had time to investigate, I did so.

What I learned had life changing impact then. And it still does today. Not only was my cancer arrested by Western medicine, but also I learned some Eastern disciplines that are still useful. One in particular, yoga, I will comment on in future columns. It cured my aching back!

East Africa: Fun and philanthropy in Kenya

AMANDA JONES
LOS ANGELES TIMES

Patrick Nyaleta was a cow herder by the time he was 6. Like many rural Kenyans, his father measured his wealth in cattle and needed his children to tend them.

One day, Patrick threw a rock at a wayward cow, killing it — the Kenyan equivalent of wrecking your father's roadster. His father beat the 8-year-old boy, yelling, "You will never again touch my cows!" Patrick was packed off to school in disgrace.

"I was a skinny boy with no shoes, and I couldn't read or write," says Patrick, who now speaks German, Italian, English, Kiswahili and several tribal languages. "But for years I had watched other kids walk past carrying books while I spent all day alone talking to cows. Oooh-wee, I thank that dead cow today."

Patrick today is a safari director for Nairobi- and New York-based Mico Safaris. He accompanies guests, including my 11-year-old daughter, Indigo, and me, on their East African adventures. As a guide, Patrick also provided instant insight into Kenya's people, politics, history and humor.

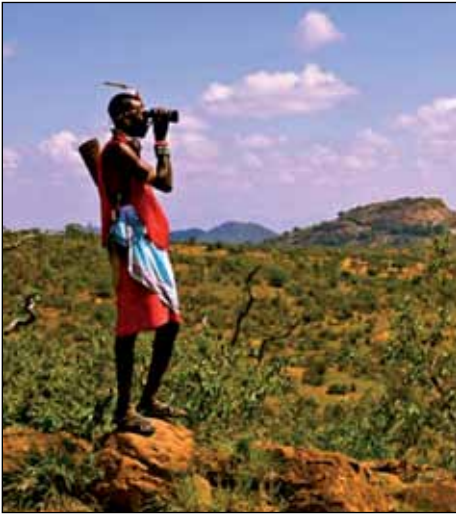
Despite the U.S. State Department travel warning on Kenya, my research and reading indicated Kenya was safe for a trip that was part indulgent fun, part philanthropy. We would spend 10 days on safari and two more visiting orphanages and a community center in Nairobi's Mukuru slum. For the safari part of the trip, the tour company suggested activities varied enough to keep a child and her mom fully engaged.

Sabuk, Samburu

I'd always hankered to go to northern Kenya's Samburu country, an area that's remote and thus less visited by tourists. The Samburu people dress traditionally and live in villages, as they have for centuries, and unlike some other places in Kenya, none of this is done for tourists.

Our destination was Sabuk, a family-friendly lodge on a private game reserve. It has eight open-air rooms built around tree trunks and boulders and overlooks the dramatic Ewaso Nyiro River valley.

After arriving, we took a sunset walk, something I had requested we do often. Many of Kenya's national parks and reserves frown at walking safaris because of wild animals, but private



Ngasakwe "Gus" Kipise, a Samburu warrior and guide, keeps watch for wildlife on a walking safari in Kenya.

reserves allow it by sending you out with askaris, or native armed guides.

Ngasakwe "Gus" Kipise, Sabuk's Samburu guide, introduced himself in hesitant English. Samburu people are like the Masai to whom they are related; their language, customs and diet are similar, and both are tall and thin with fine, narrow features. Gus wore a traditional shuka, or cloth tied diagonally at the shoulder, abeaded head-dress, necklaces and sandals made from tire treads. He also carried a heavy stick and rifle and exuded such competence that we felt at ease.

The Samburu area is light on the exotic animals such as lions, but there are plenty of elephant and buffalo, the most dangerous animals in Africa, some would say.

One morning, we climbed on Sabuk's trained camels for a safari with a twist. Brought from Somalia and used as pack animals, camels do well in Kenya's hot, dry climate. Gus refused to ride. "Gus' legs better," he said. For Samburu, like Masai, walking is as natural as sleeping. They can cover hundreds of miles in a few days.

Patrick, who is no longer the skinny kid he once was, sat astride one ornery beast dutifully answering my questions about the tumult that is Kenyan politics and the relationship among Kenya's 47 tribes.

In 2007, post-election riots broke out in Nairobi, morphing into several months of inter-tribal warfare. The city ground to a halt. Tourism dried up. It wasn't until 2009 that visitors returned in numbers. Kenya is peaceful again, and it seems more organized and Nairobi safer than during my previous visits in the late '90s.

Having lived through several political upheavals, Patrick was matter of fact in his explanations of tribal fric-

tions. He did, however, look tortured on a camel. Having come here to learn more about the Samburu tribe, I was eager for a village visit, which happened one orange-lit afternoon. Lobarishereki, the closest village, was a 40-minute drive from Sabuk, and its school was the only one within a 50-mile radius. It had three cinderblock classrooms for 250 children. Outside, a group of scrawny boys played soccer on a dusty playground with a ball made from plastic bags tied with string.

The Samburu have suffered from three years of drought, and the children, while thin, were in uniform, no matter how torn or ill fitting.

"Some of these children walk nine

coming to school because their cows had died of starvation.

Down the road at the boma, or village, shave-headed Samburu women, who wore wide beaded necklaces and headdresses, swarmed out to greet us. Pushing aside baby goats, they invited us into their dark, smoke-filled huts, which have neither electricity nor running water.

Outside the village, moran, young warrior men, gathered to dance. This involved impressive displays of jumping to great heights from one spot. The warriors wore their hair either in long braids or decorated with ocher, feathers, metal objects, buttons and fabric roses. In this society, it's the boys who primp and fall prey to vanity while the



On camelback is an excellent way to see animals and the landscape in Sabuk in the Samburu region.

miles each way to come to school," said Maina Kiboi, the headmaster. "But they feel lucky to be here."

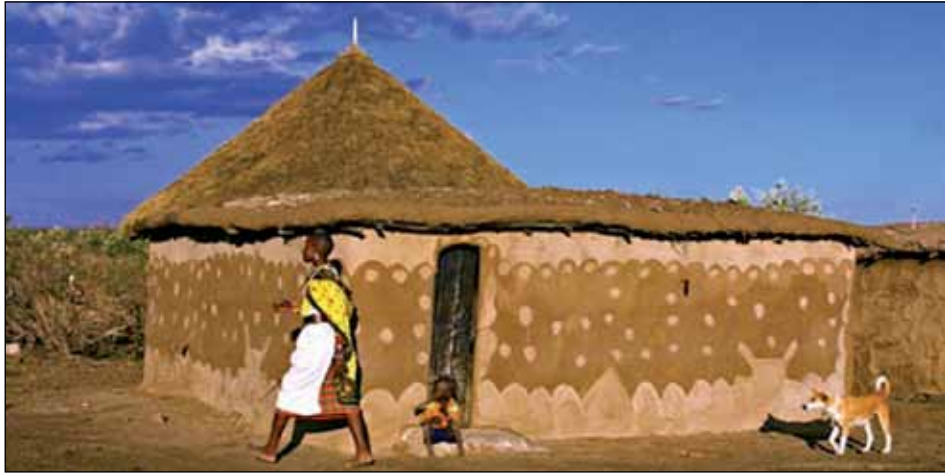
Two 18-year-old boys sat like Goliaths among the third-graders, finally

teens girls help run the household.

Having danced with the women and narrowly escaped the ownership of a baby goat, we said farewell. It was, as all

CONTINUED ON PAGE 60

Travel



A Masai woman in a traditional boma, or village. This is a classic Masai dwelling.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 59

village visits in Africa have been for me, the happiest of human encounters.

Elsa's Kopje, Meru National Park

Elsa's Kopje is a lodge built on the former site of George and Joy Adamson's camp, the setting for the 1966 film "Born Free." Far from the Adamsons' rough canvas tent camp, Elsa's Kopje is now an elegant retreat perched atop a hill with a 360-degree view.

The 340-square-mile Meru park,

recognized for its lions and a rhino sanctuary, remains one of the wildest and least visited of Kenya's parks. Unlike the flaxen plains of the south, the landscape here was green and lush, dotted with doum palms — a tall, graceful, bifurcated tree. There were lions everywhere, hunting, eating, playing, mating and observing us closely.

It was in Meru that Elsa became the first lion to be released successfully into the wild. The release went well, but life for the Adamsons was full of tragedy. They divorced, George's brother was killed by one of the "pet"

lions, and later Joy and George were slain, she by a former employee and he by poachers.

None of that specter hung over our house on the kopje (hill). It was so lovely, with such expansive views of the plains below and a family of rock hyrax (imagine a corpulent guinea pig) living in the rocks outside that we skipped a couple of game drives just to swim in the pool and observe the droll hyrax.

Basecamp, Masai Mara

In these days of blatant greenwashing, it's refreshing to stay at a place that really is eco — so eco, in fact, you wish they'd consider using more chemicals in the composting loo in your tent.

Set outside the southern end of the Masai Mara Game Reserve, Basecamp has 12 basic safari tent-rooms. The power is solar, and everything that can be recycled or composted is. The camp also employs the local Masai and has a women's cooperative making stylish beaded accessories that sell globally. It's not the most luxurious place on the Mara, but it feels good to stay here.



A young male lion yawns in the rain in Meru National Park in Kenya.

Indigo and I sat at the table with Patrick and Amos Ole Tininah, a young Masai and the head naturalist at Basecamp. When I first started coming to East Africa 16 years ago, I rarely had the chance to dine with Africans so I had missed hearing the stories about what it was like to grow up in Africa.

On our final morning, we woke at 4:30 to take a dawn hot-air balloon ride. As the balloon rose, the new sun



A room at Sabuk Lodge in northern Kenya's Samburu region.

The Masai Mara, on the southern border with Tanzania, is the most visited park in Kenya, probably because it has plentiful game and the archetypal "Lion King" golden grass and flat-topped tree landscape.

One night, Patrick shepherded us into our vehicle and would not tell us where we were going. It was dark, and the bush looked empty and daunting. Eventually, we rounded a corner and saw a campfire in a clearing, flanked by the shadowy figures of Masai askaris leaning on spears. Off to one side was a dining table illuminated by hurricane lamps. Beneath a tree a chef prepared dinner on a camp stove. I laughed, thinking perhaps I knew how charmed author Karen Blixen ("Out of Africa") must have been when Denys Finch Hatton brought her to the Mara.

cast the world purple, then yellow. The air was still and silent but for our blasts of hot air. Below us wildebeest, antelope, kudu and giraffe fled from our shadow, a lion pride looked up annoyed, jackals disappeared into holes and outraged ostriches ran in circles flapping their wings.

Later that day we were back in Nairobi eating lunch at the Karen Blixen Coffee Garden Restaurant, a historic house near her farm. We sat in the garden under 100-year-old trees, and I peppered Patrick with final questions. "So what does your father think of you now?" I asked.

He paused and smiled, "Well, I suppose he's proud. But he still has cows and still needs help herding them. That is the old Kenya, and I am the new."

Style

Fashion diary: Taking ideas from runway to rack

BY BOOTH MOORE
LOS ANGELES TIMES

Toss the leggings and pick up a pair of boot-cut pants. Replace the bateau stripe shirt with an olive drab tee. Give the boyfriend jacket back to the boyfriend, and pick up a military jacket instead.

Now that designers have shown their collections for fall in New York, Milan and Paris, department store fashion directors and boutique owners have to figure out how to translate the big ideas to the racks.

Chanel's faux fur fantasy, Junya Watanabe's military march and Celine's luxe vision of minimalism were memorable on the runway, but what do they mean for a woman's wardrobe? And what about Alexander McQueen, whose untimely death cast a shadow over the season? His final runway pieces, with their ecclesiastical references and couture-like details, were extraordinary. But can the brand live on without him?

Here, retailers offer their take-aways from the season, and how the trends might trickle down to you. Those from stores stocking the McQueen runway collection share their opinions on that as well.

Stephanie Solomon, fashion director, Bloomingdale's

Big idea: Military. It's the most pervasive and salable trend. While it's more about safari at the moment, it's going to segue into military for fall.

Must haves: Olive drab anorak jacket, preferably with a fur trim hood. Shearling flight jacket as seen at Burberry Prorsum. Military jacket, nipped at the waist, with brass buttons or epaulets that can be worn as part of a suit or on its own. Boot-cut pants as seen at Gucci, Balmain and Akris. Knits — slouchy caps, blanket-sized scarves, hand warmers, knee socks and leg warmers. Fur evening bag.

Will the new minimalism sell? Slowly. We've been in a cycle of more is more for seven years now. But I do believe it will influence fashion with A-line skirts, shift dresses and pants suits becoming more popular.

Ken Downing, senior vice president and fashion director, Neiman Marcus

Big idea: Contrast between masculine and feminine in a 1970s, Charlie



It's an invasion! Stephanie Solomon, fashion director at Bloomingdale's, says the military look is the major theme to take away from the fall collections and points to jackets such as this one by Burberry.



Menswear-inspired clothing for women was a theme in the fall collections runway shows. Ken Downing, senior vice president and fashion director at Neiman Marcus, says pants are a must-have from the new collections, "whether they be narrow, high-waisted or menswear-inspired." This ensemble is from Marc Jacobs.

girl sort of way.

Must haves: Pants, whether they be narrow, high-waisted or menswear-inspired. A feminine touch, such as a Chantilly lace blouse, something shimmer or velvet to juxtapose with the masculine. A boyfriend coat, as seen at Lanvin (it's the evolution of the boyfriend jacket). Anything olive green, for a military influence. Fur, real or fake. Vests, fur or plaid. Structured bags and pointy-toed shoes.

Will the new minimalism sell? It's

the newest message and it's happening for fall, but we'll see more of it going into spring 2011.

McQueen's final collection: It was spectacular. McQueen's tailoring and dressmaking skills were so superlative; he challenged everyone at every moment. We didn't buy all 15 of his final pieces, but we bought some. Beyond a designer leaving this world, he left behind a sewing team and a design team. It's a business, and I assume they will move it forward.

Colleen Sherin, fashion market director, Saks Fifth Avenue


Big idea: Outerwear and building a coat wardrobe for every aspect of your lifestyle and every time of day. Coats are pieces you can get a lot of use from because you can wear them day after day like a handbag.

Must haves: A coat (anorak as seen at Rag & Bone, duffel coat as seen at Pro



Colleen Sherin, fashion market director at Saks Fifth Avenue, calls a new knit piece a must-have and mentions this lace knit turtle-neck from Ralph Lauren as an option for those shopping for a lighter-weight knit.


CONTINUED ON PAGE 62



Otter Brown

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Style

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 61

enza Schouler, embroidered shearling as seen at Roberto Cavalli or a camel coat as seen everywhere). A new knit piece, whether it be Fair Isle, patchwork or a lighter-weight knit such as the lace knit turtleneck seen at Ralph Lauren. A fur accessory such as a bag, shoe, bootie or shawl collar.

Will the new minimalism sell? For a certain woman interested in investment dressing, luxurious fabrications and tailoring.

McQueen's final collection: It was the highlight of the season, like couture. We ordered all 15 pieces, which range from \$12,000 to \$50,000. The commercial collection in the showroom was very solid too. I am confident they have a strong team in place to carry on the tradition.

Julie Gilhart, fashion director, Barney's New York

Big idea: Less is more — less about ornamentation and more about a de-



If the fashion directors we talked to are right, fur will fly in the coming season. Several declared fur items, whether faux or real, as must-haves. Here, a handbag from Marc Jacobs

signed silhouette in terms of great tailoring, and heavier or more structured fabrics to create shape, as seen at Celine and Stella McCartney.

Must haves: Army green jacket as seen at Junya Watanabe. Anything leather as seen at Altuzarra. A leopard or cheetah print accent (Dries Van Noten had great scarves and Rochas had flat boots). An amazing sweater, such as Stella McCartney's camel-colored cardigan. Fringe — Rodarte had knitted fringe skirts. A tote bag from Celine or Proenza Schouler and a lace-up shoe boot.

Will the new minimalism sell? Yes, the pieces we bought are beautifully cut in fabrics that can be worn year-round. I think a woman who is stylish will take a Celine tunic and put a great necklace or bangle with it or an amazing pair of boots and create her own look.

Elyse Walker, owner, Elyse Walker boutique in Pacific Palisades

Big idea: Girlishness as seen at Nina Ricci, Valentino, Miu Miu and Stella McCartney.



Elyse Walker, owner of the boutique in Pacific Palisades that shares her name, cited "girlishness" as the major trend she took away from the fall collections and listed a "Miu Miu turnlock belt to accessorize a plain black dress," seen above, as one of her must-haves.

Must haves: A fur from J. Mendel, Prada, Blumarine, Isabel marant or Wyler Designs by Jennifer Fisher, which looks like a lot for the money. I ordered 50 to 70 furs for a store that's a mile from the beach. But it gets cold at night, and it's a fashion statement that will be in every ad and editorial. Fur trims on sweaters (Brunello Cucinelli) and scarves (Gucci). (We will have faux fur as well.) A little bit of lace (Alexander Wang dresses with lace insets). A little bit of leather (time to invest in a pair of leather leggings if you haven't already). A touch of burgundy or bordeaux, as seen at Halston and Givenchy. Lanvin also has a great pair of bordeaux ballet flats with a rhinestone bow. Camilla Skovgaard shoes, a Stella McCartney vegan handbag and a Miu Miu turnlock belt to accessorize a plain black dress.

Will the new minimalism sell? I don't see it.

 Pineapples 

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Style

Orange and coral are hot in makeup this spring



A fresh spring look – A mix of glosses in shades of coral, peach and pink creates a glowing, romantic effect.

BY MELISSA MAGSAYSAY
LOS ANGELES TIMES

The idea of orange makeup may conjure up images of circus clowns or overly tanned women sporting neon coral lipstick on a sweltering day. But this spring, orange and coral hues are looking fresh, modern and totally wearable.

From highly pigmented poppy lip lacquer to sheer and lightly sparkled coral blush, orange and coral beauty products are everywhere. Bobbi Brown has a coral collection that includes numerous variations of the hue, from earthy to ultra-feminine sheer with a pink cast. Make Up For-

ever's orange lip gloss and lipstick are an extreme take on the trend but can be diluted with softer shades or used as is to make a real statement.

For an example of how orange is making a splash this spring, just peek inside the front pages of a fashion magazine and you can't miss the electric orange pouts on the models in Prada's current advertisements. With the season's minimalist nude and white clothing trend, a vibrant orange lip or nail polish provides a nice balance between subtle and strong color.

But slapping on some opaque orange gloss and coral highlighter isn't going to get you the right look. It's about picking the right shade and applying it sparingly when choosing to



Bua contours cheekbones and eyes with an earth-tone bronzer.

The key to wearing these vibrant colors is to pick the right shade and apply it sparingly.

wear these juicy colors. Chanel celebrity makeup artist Kara Yoshimoto Bua breaks down the tricks and techniques for wearing the season's hottest makeup shades.

"The easiest way to work with orange and coral tones is by using it as blush," she says, noting that she likes the way coral can bring out blue eyes and also flatter olive and tan skin. "Corals on the lips are also really nice to brighten the skin, but make sure the gloss is more sheer and not something with too much shimmer."

Focusing on the cheeks and lips, Bua gave a step-by-step lesson on how to wear coral in a soft and everyday

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Style



Individualized colors, Bua is a big fan of mixing colors such as sheer pink-peaches and coral to get the right shade.

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way and also how to pump up the lip color to a bolder shade if you're looking for more impact.

For a peachy-coral glow, Bua starts with a clean face consisting of natural, "everyday" foundation, a light application of brown eyeliner in the outer

corners of the eye for definition and brown mascara applied sparingly to lashes for a clean look.

Using a nude lip liner pencil, she defines the outer rim of the lip and then fills in the entire lip with the pencil to create a base that makes lipstick and gloss last longer.

Bua is a big fan of mixing colors. "I'm



A pretty palette--"I'm like an artist," Bua says. "I like to mix things like paint."



Layering, Using a nude lip liner pencil, she first defines the outer rim of the lip. Then, she dabs the color in the center of the lip, patting and working the gloss onto the lips lightly with her finger.

an artist. I like to mix things like paint," she says, combining two colors of lip gloss — a sheer pink-peach and coral — to get the right shade. Bua uses the back of her hand as a palette and dabs the combined colors in the center of the lip, patting and working the gloss onto the lips lightly with her finger. "You want the color to start from the center and work out to the edges of the mouth," she says. "This way, excess gloss doesn't gather at the edge of the lips."

On the cheeks, Bua first contours with an earth-toned bronzer that contains no shine or shimmer. She hits the cheekbone area but also swipes the bronze hue across the eyelids and down the nose to add more warmth to the face.

Then, using a coral blush with hints of gold flecks, Bua brushes the apples of the cheeks to get a pop of coral that complements the lips and gives an overall sheer coral glow.

To pump up the lip color to a juicy orange stain, Bua mixes two lip colors, using a strong coral-pink Rouge Allure lipstick in Genial and a Gloss Fluo de Chanel in Pop. Again using the back of her hand to get a perfect shade, she dips a lip brush into the color and applies it directly to the center of the mouth. Patting the color out from the center to edges of the lips works especially well with a brighter color to ensure the lips aren't just one solid block of orange. Instead, the technique gives them a glowing, romantic stain that stands out much more than the average lip color.

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Style

Reflections on Los Angeles Fashion Week

BY ADAM TSCHORN AND MELISSA MAGSAYSAY
LOS ANGELES TIMES

This season, thanks to a fractured all-spokes and no-hub calendar, Los Angeles Fashion Week felt a lot like panning for gold: much sifting through muddy water resulting in just a few valuable nuggets, all the while hoping to hit the mother lode. But there were some finds that made it worth wading into.

It wouldn't be a true Los Angeles Fashion Week — the twice-yearly effort to showcase clothing designers' wares on the runway for the benefit of retail buyers and fashion press — without some manner of celebrity clothing line hitting the catwalk. This time out it was White Trash Beautiful, a new contemporary women's line by designer Nikki Lund and Bon Jovi guitarist Richie Sambora that unspooled as part of Los Angeles Fashion Weekend at Sunset Gower Studios on March 19, an event which also happened to mark the runway modeling debut of Sambora's 12-year-old daughter (with Heather Locklear) Ava Sambora.

It's too early to tell if Concept, a two-day fashion week event that was cobbled together in just a few short



Jen Awad, Fall2010

Monday. Newcomer Kyle Ing's line Farm Tactics was neatly presented among taxidermied llamas and other barn-like accoutrements. The 26-year-old Bay Area native's collection of pants, vests, button-down shirts and moccasins is a strong nod to American heritage labels. Ing said he manufactures everything in down-

town L.A. and sources vintage fabrics to make one-of-a-kind backpacks and messenger-style bags that look like a cross between an army rucksack and a horse saddle.

On the runway, the most impressive point of the evening was the B Scott show. Designer Brandon Scott's line of well-tailored wool jackets, understated

waxed denim pants and double shawl collar cardigans had a hip-hop edge and street sensibility and are ultimately what every guy wants to wear, as did a few stylish women in the audience who expressed the desire to don the jackets in smaller sizes.

Although the second-night line-up at Concept was decidedly dark (note: while severed pig heads make a state-



ment, it's not necessarily a fashion statement), there were some bright spots.

Jen Awad, who launched her namesake collection at the BOXeight shows a year ago, mixed moody, "Matrix"-style futurism with 1940s Vargas girl looks — which translated into faux leather dresses, coats and boleros dripping with fringe made from strands of faux pearls. The young designer went even more literal with her '40s references with a series of fit-and-flare dresses with deep sweetheart necklines done up in eye-popping jewel tones (styled with those big, curled '40s bang and fingerless leatherette gloves). The overall effect was slightly jarring -- should those two genres ever collide? But Awad should be commended for giving it a go, and pulling out some memorable looks.

Veteran L.A. brand MartinMartin followed the same goth-inspired path it has been on for a few seasons -- and if the designers had forced themselves to edit the massive collection to around half its current size (the show went on for ages), they



White Trash Beautiful, fall 2010

weeks (and of which the Los Angeles Times was one of several media sponsors) will turn out to be a rare, precious metal or fool's gold, although organizers said they are already planning a sophomore outing for October).

Menswear was the standout at Concept's first-night hodgepodge of presentations and runway shows on

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Style



Battalion, Fall 2010



would have ended up with a tight array of dramatic, post-apocalyptic-ified pieces.

Models (male and female) strolled the catwalk in black- and eggplant-hued maxi-dresses, rigged with all manner of thin cords that (when tied) created interesting architectural elements. There were tons of chopped-

off-looking cropped pants for guys, paired with statement-making jackets (though it's unlikely that the average customer will want to wear a huge funnel collar or a bright purple shroud), and long taffeta skirts (for men and women) bunched up in places, à la Comme des Garçons.

If there was one show that perfectly

captured the cacophony and circus-like atmosphere of the week, it was local label Alternative Apparel, which staged its first-ever runway show on Monday night at its new downtown Fashion District headquarters and showroom space on Spring Street.

Against a big top backdrop that included a striped circus tent, trapeze ladder and tables piled with popcorn and caramel apples, Alternative's fall/winter collection mixed Depression-era silhouettes with modern fabrics and styled the looks with equestrian

ternative Apparel has steadily been moving beyond the fashion T-shirts with which founder and chief creative officer Greg Alterman started the label in 1995.

There were T-shirts to be sure, including thermal crewnecks, heather-gray racerbacks and spaghetti-strap tanks, but there were also black floral-print dresses, sleeveless cardigans, rumpled henleys, satin tap pants, overalls, wool pinstripe trousers and several styles of leggings – including the traditional thermal texture and



MartinMartin, Fall 2010



boots, bowler hats, tweed newsboy caps and corsets. The result was a runway show that ended in a top-of-the-runway tableaux that managed to meld "The Grapes of Wrath" with HBO's short-lived series "Carnivàle"

The show also underscored the value of staging an old-school fashion show -- to communicate the theme and vision of a brand, but also to get it out there in a way trade shows and showroom appointments don't. Al-

the aforementioned black florals, which marked the brand's first foray into prints.

All in all, Fashion Week's offerings yielded just enough ore to sustain the eternal hope of the prospector that a rich vein is buried out there somewhere, just waiting for the right swing of the ax, or rending of tectonic plates, to spark a gold rush.



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Pets

A rescued Labrador gets royal treatment at Dunmore



Duke poses on the beach.



Duke and little Elizabeth.

would wag his lethal tail clockwise enthusiastically.

"And last but not least, yours truly, would say that although he got a free dog (the-

oretically, anyway), he is priceless!"

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

BY CISSY SUMNER
COLUMNIST

Jim Welles had a broken heart. After 12 years, Jim had lost his beloved Labrador, Red.

In search of a new companion, Jim placed an ad through Labrador Retriever Rescue. In the parking lot of the Palm Beach County Zoo, Jim and Duke, a large black Labrador, met and fell in love.

The Welles home is Duke's third

a smile to your face.

In Jim's words "Duke is a regular at the Riverside off-leash park and still reigns as the gold medal winner of the Olympic Tugathon, vanquishing a Yellow Lab from Penobscot Bay, Maine. He is also an ambassador of goodwill with a Havanese, cementing Cuban/American relations."

Some words of advice from Jim:

"The moral of my story is for those who have also lost a long and cherished canine member of their family.



One on One, Duke is the undisputed champion.

placement. He was known in his previous lives as Godzilla and Zulu. Jim gave Duke his name because he lives in the development Dunmore which is named after a castle in Ireland. Perhaps the new, civilized name of Duke helped this dog find a permanent home. Duke, also called the Duke of Dunmore, has a joie de vie that brings

I've heard a lot of people, including me, say they could never have a dog as good as their last dog. My previous dog was a wonderful dog also, but I am so glad I adopted another.

"I think I provided some consolation for the former owner who felt Duke was going to a good home. Duke, if asked whether he liked his new home,

YOUR PET'S HEALTH

By Dr. Randy Divine and Dr. Laura Baldwin



Keeping Pets Safe Over Easter

Many pet owners are aware of the toxic effects of chocolate; however, there are several dangers present at Easter that owners need to be aware of. One of the most dangerous is lily toxicosis. Several species of lily may cause acute kidney failure in cats including the Day Lily, Easter Lily, Rubrum or Japanese Showy Lily, Stargazer Lily, Tiger Lily, and Peace Lily. Symptoms usually begin within hours to days of ingestion with vomiting, anorexia, and lethargy. Renal failure signs including increased urination and thirst, blood in urine, passing small amounts of urine or not urinating, and straining occur within 36-72 hours. In some cats, seizures and neurologic signs are seen and pancreatitis may be present concurrently. Only one bite of lily or exposure to pollen is sufficient to cause signs.

Renal failure can be prevented if we see cats within a few hours of ingestion so vomiting may be induced and necessary treatment started. Cats may need hospitalization and intensive supportive care and IV fluid therapy for several days and weeks in cases of less recent exposure. Blood work will need to be run in order to determine if damage to the kidneys has occurred and track improvement in renal function. If we do not see cases quickly, damage to the kidneys may be irreversible without dialysis or kidney transplant.

Easter grass present in many Easter baskets also is enticing to pets and when eaten may cause obstruction and even perforation of the intestinal tract leading to peritonitis or hemorrhage. If ingestion is suspected, we need to see pets as soon as possible to take plain or contrast x-rays as surgical removal may be necessary. Divine Animal Hospital offers complete health care for your pets and doctors are on-call 24 hours for emergency services. Digital x-rays, laboratory services, video endoscopy, ultrasound, and a surgery suite equipped with full cardiovascular monitoring are offered in-house. Happy Easter from the doctors and staff!



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Dining

Restaurant Review

First Bites: Finally, h-e-e-e-re's the Citrus Grillhouse



The dining room of the restaurant, with its pale blue walls, wood plank floors and open kitchen, give it a classy, minimalist feel. An outdoor patio adds additional seating – oceanside.

Photos: Tom McCarthy Jr.

BY TINA RONDEAU
COLUMNIST

Only a few weeks ahead of the seasonal exodus from our beachside community, the Citrus Grillhouse has finally opened its doors – and the island's newest restaurant shows every sign of being worth the wait.

This is not a full-fledged review. As regular readers of this column know, I feel it is grossly unfair to review new dining spots in their opening weeks. If a restaurant gets off to a great start, a rave review may trigger a rush that overwhelms it -- leaving diners disappointed and restaurateurs frustrated. And if it is not yet ready for prime time, well, no need to kick it while it is struggling to get off the ground.

Yet, curious minds (and palates) want to know – particularly when a restaurant has been as highly anticipated as the Citrus Grillhouse, which originally expected to debut much earlier in the season. So starting today, we occasionally will pen columns called “First Bites,” in which we provide a taste of recently opened restaurants, with a full review to follow a few months down the road.

Look & Feel: As the centerpiece of the new Ocean Park complex, perched atop the dune where Crusty's once stood, the Citrus Grillhouse's pale blue dining room – with a wood plank floor and open kitchen at one end -- has a classy, minimalist feel.

But with no drapes or carpeting to muffle the sound, the noise level makes table conversation a challenge. The owners say it will be quieter soon. Outdoors, a covered patio with tables overlooking the Atlantic Ocean is a spectacular option for warm-evening

dining.

Food: Executive Chef Scott Varricchio describes the dishes as Mediterranean and Italian inspired.

On our first visit, I had the orecchiette (\$17) and my husband had the braised short rib of beef (\$22). The orecchiette pasta was prepared with rock shrimp and arugula in a parmesan broth -- a light dish with a little tang. The short ribs were served atop a creamy polenta with a horse radish cream and garlic confit. Exquisite.

On our second visit, I ordered the wild Montauk striped bass (\$25), my husband had the seared U-8 diver scallops (\$20), and our companion tried the organic free range breast of chicken (\$19).

The beautiful striped bass filet was served atop red lentils with a sauce of lardons and white balsamic vinaigrette. An excellent dish.

The scallops (U-8 means that “under 8” of the scallops would make up a pound) consisted of two huge succulent scallops, one poised atop the other, centered on a bed of pureed white beans flavored with bacon and veal jus. The scallops and bean puree were perfectly suited for each other.

The chicken was just a speck dry, caramel-colored delicate skin on the outside but moist and juicy in the very center. The seasoning contained a little bit of heat, but that spiciness was not overpowering and suited the dish just fine.

For appetizers, on the two visits we sampled the citrus crab salad (\$11), the endive salad (\$7), the baby heirloom tomato and haricots verts salad (\$7), and the fire roasted baby squid (\$8).

The citrus crab salad was the best of these, a three-layer concoction of



Braised short rib of beef, creamy polenta, horseradish cream and garlic confit

spicy avocado on the bottom, crab in the middle, and topped by Indian River red grapefruit. A very light appetizer that we are sure will be a refreshing start on many hot summer nights.

The endive and blue cheese salad was perhaps the second best, a very tasty blend of flavors in a Dijon vinaigrette dressing. I might note that the portion size of this salad could be halved and it would still be a generous appetizer.

The baby heirloom tomato and haricots verts salad also came with a sprinkling of blue cheese, but this time with a red wine vinaigrette dressing. Another fine salad. The fire roasted baby squid, rings of squid in a spicy sopressata (dry-cured salami) sauce, was okay – but probably our least favorite appetizer. It would also not get my vote for favorite entrée (\$16).

For dessert, the hands-down winner was the lemon cheese cake (\$6).

Drink: The Citrus Grillhouse offers a full bar, and drink prices – as well as wine prices – are extremely reasonable. Top-of-the-line martinis are \$9, and a bottle of Sonoma Cutrer Russian River Ranches chardonnay goes for \$35. Our big complaint on the drink side

is that the Citrus Grillhouse inexplicably does not offer espresso, and apparently doesn't plan to. I can't imagine lingering on the porch this summer after a meal without an espresso.

Service: Managed by Bob Moulder, whom Vero veterans will remember from Elle's and more recently from brief stints with 3 Aves and MT Chophouse, the service is everything you would expect. Staffed largely by veteran servers hired away from some of Vero's better restaurants, the restaurant seems poised and ready for the busy evenings sure to come.

While the number of reservations accepted has wisely been curtailed during the shakedown phase, the Citrus Grillhouse seems ready to ramp up the number served in the nights ahead.

Initial impressions: This is going to be one of the beachside's most in-demand restaurants. If you don't get in before you leave for the summer, the Citrus Grillhouse not only will be here waiting for you in the fall – but undoubtedly will be even better. Meanwhile, try not to envy those who stay behind, who will have the entire summer to savor the island's new dining hot spot.

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

Impressive wines from California's Santa Rita Hills



Photo: Mark Gail -The Washington Post

BY DAVE MCINTYRE
WASHINGTON POST

Talk to any Santa Barbara County winemaker, and before long he or she will probably remind you that when you stand on the beach at Santa Barbara and gaze at the Pacific Ocean, you are facing south. The Santa Ynez Mountains behind you run west to east, unlike most of California's coastal ranges and river valleys, which are oriented north to south, parallel to the coast.

A few miles west of Santa Barbara, where the coast makes a northerly right turn at a promontory that locals fondly call “Reagan's Nose,” the mountains funnel the cool ocean air and fog inland through the Santa Ynez Valley, moderating the Southern California temperatures and creating

The next thing your winemaker friend might tell you is that as you head east from the town of Lompoc, near the ocean, through Buellton, Solvang and Los Olivos (made famous in the 2004 film “Sideways”), the average temperature rises one degree per mile.

That's a dramatic change in the world of wine, and it influences a grower's decision about which grape varieties to plant.

Pinot noir and chardonnay thrive at the western, cooler end of the Santa Ynez Valley, a region known as the Santa Rita Hills, while the warmer areas to the west are hospitable to Rhone varieties such as grenache and syrah.

The county's other major wine area, the Santa Maria Valley to the north, also benefits from ocean influences guided inland by the San Rafael Mountains.

This unique microclimate gives winemakers exceptional fruit to play with, and the best are producing wines of great intensity and focus.

During a recent visit to Santa Barbara County, I was particularly impressed with wines from the Santa Rita Hills, a place that received federal recognition as an American Viticultural Area in 2001. (The appellation is



Fiddlestix Vineyard in Santa Barbara drops downhill onto the benchlands of Santa Ynez River.

spelled Sta. Rita Hills on wine labels, a compromise reached with the Santa Rita wine empire of Chile.)

The SRH, as winemakers also call it, stretches west to east between Lompoc and Buellton.

Its northern border follows State Route 246; at the southern end is the Santa Rosa Road, twisting among the canyons of the Santa Ynez Mountains, where it is not uncommon to drive around an outcropping of rock and brush and be confronted with acres of stunning hillside vineyards.

Richard Longoria makes wine with grapes from throughout the county, including pinot noir from Fe Ciega Vineyard in the SRH and Spanish varietals such as albariño and tempranillo from the warmer end of the Santa Ynez Valley, about 25 miles to the east. The grapes' expression varies from region to region, he said.

“In the Santa Maria Valley, pinot noir has a more pronounced herbal quality, with red-fruit flavors. In the Santa Rita Hills, pinot has more of a black-fruit character,” he said.

Think blackberries instead of strawberries or plums.

Greg Brewer makes some of the best chardonnay and pinot noir in the Santa Rita Hills. His wines -- whether under his Brewer-Clifton label; under the label of Melville winery, where he is the winemaker; or under his own separate label called Diatom -- pulse with energy and somehow convey a sense of purity.

Brewer credits his minimalist winemaking style. For his chardonnay, he

mentation and lees stirring, two techniques that yield California chardonnay's traditional rich, buttery profile.

“I get a lot of inspiration from sushi chefs,” Brewer said.

“They say that every time you touch the fish, you take something away from it. Stirring the lees would be like banging the fish against the table,” he added.

Richard Sanford of Alma Rosa Winery is celebrating his 40th year as a winemaker in the Santa Rita Hills. And though he makes some of the region's best chardonnay and pinot noir, he is also producing some top-notch pinot blanc, an underappreciated variety wherever it is grown. Like Brewer, Sanford expressed a Zenlike appreciation for his wine.

“I like the emptiness pinot blanc has, with a modest varietal flavor,” Sanford said as we tasted his pinot blanc from the Santa Rita Hills.

He was the one being modest. The wine seemed pretty mouth-filling and delicious to me.

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Dining

Homemade Easter candy, an old-fashioned treat

BY LIZ PEARSON
LOS ANGELES TIMES

Every spring as a kid, I reveled in the same Easter basket filled with store-bought candy that all of the other kids in the neighborhood tore into: plastic eggs stuffed with foil-wrapped, peanut butter-filled chocolates, marshmallows machine-molded into pink bunnies and yellow chicks, and jelly beans nestled with tiny, speckled malted milk eggs in whorls of green plastic grass.

But somewhere along the path to adulthood, I realized my basket could be so much more.

No doubt fueled by the memories of those toothache-inducing mornings, I've since become an avid candy maker.

It's no wonder then that Easter – nearly as synonymous with candy as Halloween – now signals the time to skip drugstore sweets and celebrate old-fashioned candy making at home.

This year, I've decided to make three



Photo: Jay L. Clendenin - Los Angeles Times

of my favorite candies for our Easter baskets: sugar-dusted marshmallows, cream cheese mint straws and hand-dipped chocolate eggs with almond butter centers.

My kitchen will soon smell like a candy store. And when I'm done, I'll load them into woven baskets for my nieces and nephews and scoop the rest into the candy dish.

Candies like these seem to get more tempting each spring even though I'm not getting any younger. I'll bet the Easter bunny has the same problem.

Recipe: Chocolate-dipped almond eggs

Total time: 40 minutes, plus chilling and setting time

Servings: Makes about 2 1/2 dozen

Note: The dry milk in these eggs makes for a light, malty crunch. For a grown-up version, use smoked instead of toasted almonds and sprinkle the eggs with a few grains of flaky sea salt.

- 1 cup smooth almond butter
- 3/4 cup nonfat dry (powdered) milk
- 1/2 cup powdered sugar (2 ounces)
- 1/4 cup honey
- 3 cups milk or semisweet chocolate chips
- 1/2 cup finely chopped toasted almonds

1. In a medium bowl, mix together the almond butter, dry milk, sugar and honey until combined; you should have a stiff mixture.

2. To form each egg, roll a scant tablespoon of the almond butter mixture in your palms to make a ball, then roll one end gently back and forth to taper the ball into an egg shape. Transfer the eggs to a wax- or parchment paper-lined baking sheet when done. Gently insert a toothpick through the center of the egg, at the tip, and push the toothpick through almost the entire length of the egg. Freeze the eggs, uncovered, until firm, about 1 hour.

3. Melt the chocolate in a bowl set over simmering water. Transfer the melted chocolate to a small deep bowl (this will make it easier to coat the eggs), and place the chopped toasted almonds in a separate small, deep bowl.

4. Working with about 4 almond butter eggs at a time (keep the rest frozen until ready to coat), quickly dip the eggs in the chocolate to coat, firmly tapping the toothpick on the rim of the bowl to shake off excess chocolate. Place the eggs on a wax- or parchment paper-lined sheet for a minute or so to allow any excess chocolate to settle at the bottom of each egg and form a footprint, then lift the egg and dip the base partially into the almonds to form a nest. The chocolate should harden quickly; if it takes awhile to set, place the eggs back in the freezer just until the chocolate is hard.

5. Remove and discard the toothpicks from each of the eggs, then add a small dollop of chocolate to seal the holes. Set the eggs aside in a cool, dry place to set completely.

Each egg: 217 calories; 5 grams protein; 19 grams carbohydrates; 1 gram fiber; 15 grams fat; 3 grams saturated fat; 4 mg. cholesterol; 24 mg. sodium.

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On Faith

An Easter message that gives us hope and faith



BY REV. DRs. CASEY AND BOB BAGGETT
COLUMNISTS

The Gospel of Mark tells the Easter story in its own inimitable way – more sparing of words and explanations than the other Gospels. Even the closing of the Gospel is concise. Near the end of Mark's Gospel, for instance, we read that Jesus has been crucified and buried.

But three days later, when the women go to the tomb to anoint his body, they find the body gone. Instead of a dead body, they see a figure dressed in dazzling white who tells them to go to Galilee, because Jesus has gone ahead and will meet them there.

We aren't told why he's gone ahead to Galilee, or just what the significance of his return to that region means.

Why would Jesus go ahead of them to Galilee? True, Galilee was where they had first met Jesus, where they had first come to feel the power of God in their lives, and where they had first glimpsed the dawning of the kingdom of God among them. But Jesus' followers had left Galilee.

When they left they believed they were following Jesus to a place where the kingdom of God would be realized and justice would flow like a river. And those dreams had been shattered with Jesus' crucifixion.

To go back to Galilee now was to face disappointment, heartbreak and emptiness. Yet the Gospel of Mark says that Jesus' followers were instructed, nevertheless, to go back to Galilee, for it would be there that they could encounter the risen Christ.

As author Debra Bowman has said, we all have our own Galilees – not cities on a map, but landscapes in our souls. Our Galilees are places where hope turned to heartbreak, where joy turned to grief, where love became resentment, and life became death. Our Galilees are the places or experiences from which we flee and to which we have no desire to return.

But the Easter message is that these are precisely where the risen Christ will be. These are where he is hoping for us to meet him. These are where new life is waiting to be discovered. These are where resurrection is sure to be revealed. Where the risen Christ goes, we are called to follow. And he's not going just anywhere, he is going ahead to Galilee.

Yes, the gift of Easter is to say that we can go back to those places of darkness, of grief, and of despair, but with hope and with faith.

We can go back to the places where our hearts have been broken, and trust that Christ is there. And then, joy of joy, knowing that Christ's loving spirit is inextinguishable and inexhaustible, we can even move forward into situations that unnerve us or terrify us.

Nothing has the power to overwhelm us when we know we've discovered the risen Christ.

Now, the Gospels may not thoroughly explain this mysterious truth to us. Surely Mark's Gospel doesn't spend time trying. It simply tells us to get up and go find the risen Christ – and rejoice! What a gift.

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St. Eds

Weighlifting at St. Ed's rounds out training in other sports



St Edward's senior Michael Lamos performs clean jerk during his work out with the weightlifting team.

Photo: Tom McCarthy Jr.

BY RON HOLUB
COLUMNIST

Under the direction of Head Coach Les Rogers, the varsity boys weightlifting program at St. Edward's School has attracted 21 candidates this spring for an opportunity to train the mind and body for a push at ever improving individual power performances - and then to apply that style of self-discipline as a member of a team in competition against other schools.

Whereas weightlifting could simply be a means to an end for some athletes, it often becomes a lifestyle

choice for its obvious health and fitness benefits.

Coaches routinely encourage athletes to hit the weight room for in-season and year-round training. Football coaches in particular like to see their guys pumping iron.

There is good news on that front for St. Ed's varsity football coach Bill Motta. A dozen football players signed on for the weightlifting team in 2010, up from six last year. All six football players returning from 2009 happen to be seniors. Some will play football in college, but for those who don't, weight training may stay embedded for a lifetime.

Senior Matt McKnight talked about weightlifting as a major element for confluent extracurricular activities at school over the past four years. "I was born and raised a football kid," he explained. "Football is infectious and that's why I began weightlifting."

Lifting in the 219 lb weight class, McKnight established personal records in both the bench (265 lbs) and clean-and-jerk (255 lbs) in a gold medal 520 lb total performance at a meet in Fort Lauderdale on March 20th.

Senior John Gollery has been on the school team for three years and credits weightlifting for contributing to his success in the classroom. "I've been a lot more disciplined personally, so I could better focus on my goals for college and the future," said Gollery.

Gollery lifts at 183 lbs and placed third in two meets earlier this season,

with combined bench and clean-and-jerk totals of 385 lbs and 390 lbs respectively.

He upped that to a 395 lb total at Fort Lauderdale, establishing personal records in the clean-and-jerk and total. Gollery will continue weight training on a club level in college.

Junior Dave Cicco dove right into the sports scene in his first year at St. Ed's. He started with basketball this year and weightlifting seemed like a steppingstone in his plan to give football a try next fall. The quality of the training program and the sense of belonging to a team have taken him one step further.

"I first started weightlifting to get stronger for football, but now it has become a separate competitive sport for me," Cicco said. "It's really fun, everyone is really motivated."

In the 169 lb weight class, Cicco posted personal bests of 175 lbs in both lifts at Fort Lauderdale.

The youngest member of the team,

seventh grader Clark Oujevolk, was plucked from a strength conditioning gym class when the coach recognized potential. "I was asked to join the varsity team and how could I say no," Oujevolk recalled. "Now that I've started, I don't think I'm going to be able to stop."

Oujevolk will garner valuable experience lifting in meets on an exhibition basis. "It was a bit nerve-racking at first with everyone cheering you on," he said. "You don't want to mess up. It inspires you to work and train much harder."

The team itself nearly doubled in size from last year. "We've got a bunch of new lifters this year," Rogers noted. "The number of football players coming out really boosted our numbers. As a result, I'm teaching a lot of technique, especially with the clean-and-jerk."

"They're going with it and doing very well. The guys are picking it up quickly and making big gains."

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Living

Local interior designer's work reaches new heights



Susan Schuyler Smith, owner of Spectrum Interior Design, sits in the entryway to the Quail Valley River Club clubhouse.
Photo: Tom McCarthy Jr.

BY MICHELLE GENZ
STAFF WRITER

If there is one phrase that makes interior designer Susan Schuyler Smith cringe, it is that a building "has good bones."

But she could hardly deny that was the case, when Italian workers tore up the floor of the latest project of her Vero-based design firm, Spectrum: a thousand-year-old chapel in Tuscany being recast as a home for a Vero couple.

There, within a cross-shaped crypt,

were carefully laid out skeletal remains.

There wasn't a moment's doubt as to what to do: cover them back up, and work around them.

As a result, there, unseen in the recent spread in Architectural Digest, beneath the beautiful clay-tiled floor and in between two massive stone altars, those souls still lie, permanent housemates of the Vero couple in the formerly sacred space.

Her clients have a good sense of humor, she says.

shortage of other names to drop from her client list of 34 years: from Jack Nicklaus to Galen Weston to Pete Peterson, co-founder of the private equity firm, The Blackstone Group; former Texaco chairman and CEO Peter Bijur; and West Palm philanthropist Alex Dreyfoos, for whom she designed interiors for homes and yachts.

For the past three years, Smith has been travelling back and forth to Germany, working on Dreyfoos's Silver Cloud II. It is the second yacht he hired Smith to decorate, this one, a



In remodeling a 1,000-year old chapel in Tuscany into a home for a Vero couple, Smith tried to convey the place's history in the design while making it feel like a home.

They prefer not to be named, however, though last month, they offered a stay at the extraordinary home to be auctioned off at a benefit for the Children's Home Society. But Smith has no

41-meter expedition yacht, believed to be unique in the world.

Under great secrecy, the boat was built in dry dock under a huge hangar over the course of two years, unveiled

Living



Smith's work locally includes the Quail Valley Golf Club which was designed to feel like summer hotel on the Jersey Shore --comfortable and low key, no flash, no glitter.

only late last year. Smith and Dreyfoos were there snapping pictures when it was slowly wheeled out on scaffolding and lowered into the water.

During that same time frame, Smith was travelling a half-dozen times to Tuscany, working on the church project. The last visit was when Kim Sargent, her friend and long-time photographer from West Palm, came to shoot the spread for Architectural Digest. Smith and the owners were there to stage the shoot, setting the tables, picking out the flowers and plumping the pillows on couches custom built by Vero's K & F Upholstery, and shipped to Italy, as were all the window treatments, done by Unique Drapery.

Like that Vero couple and Dreyfoos, many clients seem to want to sign on

with Smith for life. "We're working on the sixth or seventh homes of a lot people. They've bought and sold, and moved back up north, or bought a little place somewhere else."

So many clients come to her with multiple moves that she recently created a separate company, "The Spectrum Collections," offering a catalogue of pre-selected furniture and fabrics in various motifs as a more affordable, less intensive quick-fix to get them into a new house in a hurry.

As for more public spaces, Smith has designed the offices of Lily Pulitzer, Golden Bear Inc., and Tropical Shipping, all in Palm Beach County, as well as West Palm's City Hall. She has designed for banks – including U.S.Trust in Vero, hospitals, and even

the Montreal Expos baseball team.

In leisurely Vero, where "corporate offices" translates to country club, she designed Orchid Island, Oak Harbor and most recently, Quail Valley.

"Quail wanted it to look like it might have been more like a summer hotel on the Jersey Shore, worn in to begin with," she says. "So it looks kind of familiar. It's not flash and glitter, because Quail wasn't appealing to just one group, they were appealing to a lot of people."

Smith believes Vero's island attracts a particular type – tasteful, philanthropic people, many of whom are

not looking to retire here so much as add a second or third home to their active lives elsewhere. "They take a little extra time to get here, but have a little more privacy once they do."

Each of the main gated communities has its own personality, she says. "I have some clients who all live on the same street in a city up north, but one lives in Windsor, one lives in John's Island, and one lives in Orchid," she says. "People in Windsor are usually people who love architecture, and they never intended to own a place in Florida, but they love Windsor. Orchid is so casual, and golf-oriented. And John's Island is all those things. That's what keeps my business so fascinating."

As for designs within the city limits, Smith is the lone non-architect (apart

from one alternate) on Vero's Architectural Review Committee, which takes a close look at preliminary drawings for all construction projects, residential and commercial, being undertaken in the city.

Smith got her start in design in West Palm Beach. The product of a small town -- Monroe, NY, Smith grew up in a family that was very involved in civic good. Her father, who worked in laundry and linen supply, was president of the local school board, and raised money for the volunteer ambulance corps, while her mother, a homemaker who had studied fashion design, helped raise funds for the public library. "Philanthropy and being civic-minded was part of my family," she says.

Smith went for a year to Wheaton College before moving to Germany, where she lived for two years before returning to enroll at the University of Florida. There she studied architecture and interior design, graduating in 1970.

Her first job out of college was with a firm in West Palm Beach. Eventually she opened her own firm, Spectrum, first in a high-rise on Flagler Drive, and then in a renovated building on Olive Avenue, a gesture in support for the redevelopment of West Palm's historic downtown.

She served as president of the downtown association, and lived not far from where she worked.

Working with the late Pat Pepper as mayor, one of her best friends, in 1981, she became director of the Chamber of Commerce of the Palm Beaches, serving on the city's planning and zoning review committee, and on the board of the Downtown Association, just as the city struggled with a series of failed efforts at urban renewal where CityPlace now stands.

While that complex scenario played

CONTINUED ON PAGE 76

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Living



Orchid Island is more casual and golf-oriented than other communities in Vero, says Smith, who designed the Orchid Island Golf Club. They all have their own personalities, she said.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 75

out, Smith looked beyond the borders of West Palm as well, and saw a richly diverse county with disparate needs – from the sugar cane fields of Belle Glade to the mansions of Manalapan. Inspired, she created Leadership Palm Beach County, a program that selected 40 individuals each year from eleven different chambers of commerce to undergo leadership training, eventually generating a diaspora of civic activists now 1000 strong. That effort was recently acknowledged by Gov. Charlie Crist.

Following her work with the chamber, she signed on to the board of directors of SunFest, the city's signature May music festival along Flagler Drive, and worked on that massive project through 1988.

Around that time, her focus turned increasingly to the north, to Vero

Beach. "I was doing a lot of work for people in Palm Beach who were moving here," she says. In 1986, she bought a home in Vero Beach, and in 1990, she reversed her commute by moving here permanently.

"I just loved it here," she says. "Every time I came up here, I just felt relaxed. I loved the small-town atmosphere."

She also saw potential for a particular esthetic beginning to take shape in the growth-wary community of Vero. "I was arriving in a community that was just beginning its development," she says. "West Palm was the same way in the '70s. A lot of the things the city of Vero was going through were very similar to what I was doing in West Palm Beach."

It was one landmark design commitment, though, that set the pitch for the town's visual harmony.

"This community made a stand when they determined the height

limits," says Smith. "That was a defining moment for Vero Beach, and has forever stamped it for what it is. With that sense of scale, a human scale, it will not be West Palm Beach. It can't be any of those south Florida cities, because here, you can see the ocean."

Smith's interest in design extends to outdoors as well. In 1993, Smith signed on with the initial push to save historic McKee Jungle Gardens. Closed since 1976, the former tourist attraction from the 1920s had been bought by Vista Properties, with an eye to expanding the condo community next door. Smith and others working with the Indian River Land Trust raised \$10 million to buy and restore the gardens over a 10-year period. She continues to work to maintain the park today.

"It's not just a pretty garden with a gate around it," she says. "We appeal to the entire community."

That sort of hands-on involvement seems to please the down-to-earth designer – she points to her clients in Tuscany with respect for having been intensively involved in the church-conversion project. The couple, who have a great love for Italy, had worked with Smith before, with a home in Vero and another in the North Carolina mountains.

Sharing a great love of Italy, they had bought the property, part of which dates from the 11th century, in 2000, bringing Smith in in 2005, to re-do not only the church but its adjacent apartment, and a connecting loggia. At the time, the place lay in near ruin, in a walled enclave of buildings, a little more than a mile away from where da Vinci painted the Mona Lisa.

The church hadn't functioned as such in decades, abandoned in the 1950s, the sacristy was full of rusting farm equipment.

All that was left in the chapel were two altars, the confessionals and a baptismal font. Smith signed on to the project knowing she would have

guidance through the morass of Italian historical preservation codes with the help of an excellent local architect with experience in restoring churches.

When the flooring was pulled up, and the cross-shaped crypt revealed, Smith took respectful note of one skeletal figure laid to rest with the head facing the altar.

"That must have been a bishop," she says. The remains left in place, the wiring and heating were installed around the crypt, and the floor replaced with clay tiles.

As with the tiles, many of the myriad design decisions were made centuries earlier for Smith.

"The architect and I both agreed we were going to match colors as closely as we could to the originals," she says.

The wooden confessionals were painted their original dark green; the stone altars on either side of the room were restored, and faux-panels on the walls were precisely replicated, down to the composition of paint and plaster.

The result has "just enough religiousness," Smith says to convey its history, while still feeling like a home.

The fact that the project landed her in Architectural Digest is huge, she says, though her award-winning work has been appeared in dozens of magazines including Veranda and Metropolitan Home and Southern Accents, from whom she won a national Grand Prize for design three years ago.

Of 3,000 to 4,000 annual submissions to Architectural Digest, editors choose only 120 to feature. There are very few designers in the state of Florida who have ever been featured in the magazine, she says.

The owners are as pleased as she is with the national attention to their home. "It was a labor of love," says Smith.

"It was a huge undertaking, to do something that big, that important, that far from your home."

Real Estate

Realtors get creative: Mix art, charity and maybe a sale



Visitors to the Visions of the Sea: Visions of la Mer evening of art and architecture gather by the pool where Lange Sykes' "Tarpon on the Line" is one of the art pieces on display.

Photos: Tom McCarthy Jr.

BY LISA ZAHNER
STAFF WRITER

When Treasure Coast Sotheby's International Realty rebranded itself in February, its leaders promised to find creative ways to market their listings to a discriminating, high-end audience.

sell, since 250 people showed up for the fine art show, silent auction and cocktail party at a spectacular spec home at the Orchid Island Beach Club. Whether or not the attendance results in finding a buyer for this home – or for others for sale on the island – remains to be seen.

The event was the brainchild of Treasure Coast Sotheby's Realtor-Associate



Angel Pate and Terry Paterson with Carla and John Michael Matthews

If Friday's Visions of the Sea fundraiser for the Coastal Conservation Association is any indication, barrier island residents are receptive to the socially and artistically focused soft-

Lange Sykes, who is also an artist.

One of his fish sculptures graced the center of the swimming pool and several of his pieces were on display inside the house, along with work from



Rita Ziegler and Paul Davis

three local galleries.

"The idea started at the Vero Beach Museum of Art. I put a tarpon in the show there and invited Michael Thorpe to see the show and see the people who were there," Sykes said. "Then I suggested that I would like to do an art show for charity in conjunction with Treasure Coast Sotheby's."

Sykes mother, Carolyn Lange, also a Realtor with Treasure Coast Sotheby's, was happy to lend a creative hand with the planning as she also works with home design and the staging of homes for sale.

The beneficiary of all this hard work, the Coastal Conservation Association of Florida, has worked for 33 years to conserve, promote and enhance the present and future availability of these coastal resources for the benefit and enjoyment of the general public. A member of CCA and supporter of environmental causes, Sykes said he thought they were a natural choice for a barrier island venue and art portraying all the various features and moods of life by and on the sea.

Sykes said Treasure Coast Sotheby's advertised the event widely and mailed out 3,000 invitations to the clients on its mailing list to get the word out about Visions of the Sea.

"I think some people wondered at

CONTINUED ON PAGE 78

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Real Estate



Guests at the Visions of the Sea: Visions de la Mer art and architecture evening view pieces by different artists in the living room of the Orchid Island residence.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 77

first what we were doing, but I think it's pretty evident what we were trying to accomplish," Sykes said. "To showcase this beautiful home and bring together artists in support of the CCA."

Pieces of artwork from Admiralty Gallery, Stephen Komen Gallery and Emily Tremml's Palm House Gallery were widely admired by the patrons in attendance. Artists Rita Ziegler and Paul Davis chose the artwork, coordinated with the artists and galleries and placed and hung all the work – miraculously without making one hole in a wall thanks to revolutionary adhesive-hook systems. By 9 p.m. when the party was over, a number of hooks lay empty as the paintings had found new homes.

At the end of the evening, surveying the fact that a large number of art buyers – and potential real estate buyers – came and had a good time, Broker-Owner Michael Thorpe declared the evening an unqualified success.

"Part of our new mission is to combine the arts and real estate with charitable and civic activities," Thorpe said. "This particular event was to benefit the CCA and to portray the work for the artists. This is the first art-related event for us and the CCA and we're going to partner with them and do this again next year."

CCA, which has a Treasure Coast Chapter that meets in Vero, received the proceeds from the paid reservations and a portion of the sale of art displayed in the home and sold in a silent auction.

"This is the first time we've ever participated in an event like this involving art, it exposes people to the CCA and hopefully we can get them to join as members," he said.

"Treasure Coast Sotheby's invited us to participate and chose us as the beneficiary and we want to thank them and to thank all the artists who displayed their work."

Thorpe's partner Kimberly Hardin, who handles marketing for the brokerage, described the turnout as wonderful for a first-time event.

"It is a pretty fabulous event," she said. "So many pieces of art sold, it was the perfect combination of Sotheby's, art and our real estate company."

Though the available spec home merely served as an exquisite backdrop for the art, the jazz and the charitable cause, Thorpe and Hardin said they had many guests ask them about the price of the house and the details such as square footage.

"It's natural for people with an appreciation for fine art to also have an appreciation for great real estate," Thorpe said. "Quite possibly, a buyer



Joan and Lee Weeks listen and watch as artist George Beckman (center) demonstrates his kinetic sculpture "Silent Tango."

"We do this to remind people that we're Treasure Coast Sotheby's International Realty and that Sotheby's started as an art auction house," Thorpe said. "What we're trying to do is to use this reminder to do something for the community and to market properties."

Brian Gorski, chief operating officer of CCA of Florida, said he was thrilled with the results of two back-to-back successful events in Vero Beach -- Friday's art party and a banquet at Bent Pine Country Club the night before.

of this home got introduced to it tonight."

The residence, listed for \$3.39 million and built by Bob McNally and his team at Palm Coast Development, was a picturesque setting for the festive evening of art, architecture and live jazz music poolside.

"This house looks like a museum," said Ziegler, who was one of nearly 20 local artists with work on display.

Art appraiser Sharon Theobald of Indian River Shores admired the architecture of the home, the symmetry of

Real Estate



The Ryan Larson Quintet plays jazz by the pool.



Caroline Lange, Lange Sykes, Kimberly Hardin, Michael Thorpe and Sharon Theobald

the design, the columns both upstairs and down and the generous windows, allowing natural light to pour into the home during the day, providing an aesthetically pleasing venue for an event featuring fine art.

"There really is a lot of interest in the artists of this area and the architecture of our area," she said.

The massive wrought-iron chandelier, extensive millwork and breathtakingly high cathedral ceilings give a gallery feel to the great room of the four-bedroom golf course home on Seaspray Lane in Orchid. The space was put to good use, displaying

paintings and sculpture in every room of the sprawling ground floor. The event could also be enjoyed by the balconied walkway overlooking the great room from the second floor, where the guest bedrooms and a loft with balcony are located. Spanning the back of the house is a huge covered veranda large enough for a complete outdoor living and entertaining. The area was set aside as the contingency

what I've seen of it, it's beautiful," she said, as she and her friends arrived and gravitated toward the inviting

palm-lined poolside patio most of the evening.

"I think anything that benefits a charity is well worth it, plus this is in a beautiful home and combined with the artwork."

Taylor said prospective buyers find Orchid very attractive, which adds to the lure of the home.

"It's a great community with an amazing gold course and friendly neighbors," Taylor said.

Orchid is known as a very young and social community where lots of entertaining happens -- especially during season -- and the host home of the event proved its mettle Friday as the epitome of the party house.

With the gourmet indoor kitchen with walnut island, wraparound bar, breakfast nook and adjoining family room, a summer kitchen equipped with gas grill to the cross-shaped swimming pool and the design of the house, which curves around the outdoor living area, there is plenty of room inside and out for guests to wander and mingle.

The only problem with owning the house at 161 Seaspray Lane is that houseguests might get too comfortable and never want to leave.

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Calendar

APRIL

Through April 11

Riverside Theatre presents Off-Broadway's longest running musical, I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change, on Stark Mainstage. 231-6990

April 1 – 30

The Artists Guild Gallery presents The Florida Collection: Colors of Nature, Life and Beauty, featuring guest artist Louise Jones-Takata. Free opening reception, 5 to 7 p.m. Friday, April 2. 299-1234

April 4

Meet the Easter Bunny at McKee Botanical Garden and enjoy lunch at the Garden. Noon to 5 p.m. 794.0601 or www.mckee garden.org

April 4

Fossil Fuel documentary next Social Justice Film, 7 p.m. at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Vero Beach. Free admission; discussion follows.

April 5

Riverside Theatre's Distinguished Lecturer Series features former Massachusetts Governor Mitt Romney, at 4 p.m. and 6 p.m. on the Stark Mainstage. 231-6990



A 2008 Ferrari 430 FI Spider is reflected in the side of a classic Porsche as both cars wait to run in the Vero Road Rally Magnifique.

Photos: Tom McCarthy Jr.

April 6

Spring Stroll Open House in the Vero Beach Downtown Dine and Design District, 5 to 9 p.m. Maps available at galleries and participating businesses in the 3D District. 562-5525.

April 7

Catwalks and Cupcakes Blue Ribbon Luncheon and Fashion Show 11 a.m. at Oak Harbor Clubhouse to benefit Hibiscus Children's Center. Tickets \$125. 978-9313 x 313

April 7

Dr. Reed Noss, Professor of Conservation Biology at the University of Central Florida, will bring life to the sea rise issue and its effect on biodiversity with his talk, Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea at the Environmental Learning Center at 5:00 pm. Tickets are \$15 per adult (\$12/Member). 589-5050

April 7

Retired Navy Vice Admiral Conrad C. Lautenbacher, Ph.D., former administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), will lecture on Global Earth Observation and Climate Change at Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute at 7:00 pm. Lecture is free and open to the public.

April 8

The free Emerson Center Humanities Series presents From Hard Times to Hard Rock, with Patsy West, relating the history and stories of Seminole Indian Tribes. 7 p.m. 778-5249

April 9

Opera on the River, 6:30 p.m. at a beautiful Saint Andrews Island riverfront home, with arias and light chamber music, to benefit the Cultural Council of Indian River County. Tickets \$100. 770-4857 or www.cultural-council.org.

April 9 – 10

Relay for Life of the Beaches, 6 p.m. Friday until 11 a.m. Saturday at Riverside Park to benefit the American Cancer Society of Indian River County. 562-2272

April 9 & 11

The 25th Anniversary Year for the Vero Beach Choral Society will end with two Light and Sound Eternal concerts, on Friday, April 9 at 7:30 p.m. and Sunday, April 11 at 3:00 p.m. at Trinity Episcopal Church. Tickets, \$20 for adults, \$5 for students, are available one hour before concerts or by calling 563-0627.

April 10

Saint Edward's School will host a 12-hour Swim-a-thon for Life, 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. at the St. Edward's Becker Pool to benefit the American Cancer Society. Entry to swim is free; all ages encouraged. 532-5969 or 559-0607.

April 10

Sustainable Living Expo at the Vero Beach Community Center, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

April 10

All day Latin Festival with Latin music, food, film and dance, beginning at 11 a.m. at the Indian River County Fairgrounds to benefit the Sebastian Charter Junior High School and several other local

Calendar

charities. 321-8545

April 10

Oceanside Business Association's free beach concert series, 5:30 – 8:30 p.m. along Ocean Drive

April 11

The Vero Beach Art Club presents Art in the Park, Outdoor Art Exhibit & Sale, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. by Humiston Park on Ocean Drive. 231-0303 or www.Vero-BeachArtClub.org

April 11

A Beach Wedding Bridal Show, 1 to 4 p.m. at the Surf Club Hotel on A-1-A. Suggested \$5 donation to benefit the Gifford Youth Orchestra. 539-7041

April 11

The Indian River Symphonic Association presents the Brevard Symphony Orchestra with conductor Christopher Confessore; Postcards from America theme includes pieces by Smith, Dvorak, and Grofe, and features cellist Julie Albers. 7:30 p.m. at the Community Church of Vero Beach. 778-1070

April 15

Fifth Annual Dan K. Richardson Humanitarian Banquet to benefit Gifford Youth Activity Center honors Dr. Hugh and Ann Marie McCrystal, 5:30 p.m. at Holy Cross Catholic Church Parish Hall. \$125 per person. 794-1005 x 34

April 15

Kaleidoscope VII dinner and concert, presented by the Academy for the Performing Arts at the Community Church of Vero Beach. Free concert at 7:30 p.m.; pre-concert dinner is \$12 adults and \$6 children. 562-7265

April 16

9th Annual Holy Cross Knights of Columbus Golf Tournament, 1 p.m. Friday, April 16 at the Bent Pine Country Club (men, women and seniors) to benefit the Backpack Program. Registration \$125. 794-9965

April 16 – 17

Hibiscus Festival presented by Main Street Vero Beach and Vero Heritage, Inc. on 14th Avenue in historic downtown. Friday, April 16 Miss Hibiscus Pageant, Saturday April 17 all day festival and evening 60's Party with Beatles Remembered band. www.mainstreet-verobeach.org

April 16-17

Overnight Florida ranch experience at Quail Creek Plantation with Audubon Warden Chop Lege, hosted by Friends of Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute. \$195 members; \$225 nonmembers. 772-465-2400 ext. 559

April 16 – May 2

Disney's Mulan, Jr. at Riverside Children's Theatre. 231-6990

April 17

Windsor's private gun club, Platt Station, hosts the 10th Annual Charity Shoot to benefit the Education Foundation of In-

dian River County. The event opens with breakfast at 9:30 a.m. and concludes with lunch at Noon. Participation fee is \$150; watch activities and enjoy lunch for \$35. 564-0034

April 17

Environmental Learning Center's Gala, ELC in Wonderland, 6:30 p.m. at the ELC with Mad Hatter cocktail party, Alice's un-birthday buffet and dancing to Think Big. Nonsensical cocktail attire. Tickets \$175. 589-5050 x 105.

April 18

In recognition of National Crime Victims

Rights Week, local singers and musicians will participate in Vero Sings for the Victims, 3 p.m. at the Waxlax Theater for the Performing Arts at St. Edward's School to raise money for victims of crimes. Tickets \$20. 231-4262

April 18

The Atlantic Schola Cantorum, joined by the Atlantic Children's Chorale, will perform the Best of the Atlantic, a joyous compilation of memorable choral selections, at 4 pm at the Community Church of Vero Beach. Tickets are \$15. 778-1070.

April 19

Ducks Unlimited annual Fabulous Hunt Feast to raise funds for Wetlands Conservation, 5:30 p.m. at the Vero Beach Country Club. Tickets are \$100. 633-3936

April 21

Homeless Family Center's First Spring Benefit Luncheon, 12 p.m. at Bent Pine Golf Club will feature best selling author Debbie Macomber and her new Cedar Cove Cookbook. Tickets \$50. 567-5537

April 23

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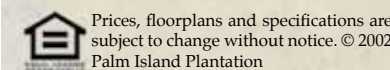


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Calendar

2010 Laurel Awards, honoring cultural leaders in the community, will be presented at a cocktail party from 6 to 9 p.m. at Riverside Theatre. (postponed from March 19) Tickets \$50. 770-4857

April 23

Bags and Bubbly Luncheon with silent auction at Grand Harbor Golf Club to benefit the Willow School and Youth Guidance. Tickets \$75. 770-0758

April 23 - May 23

The 25th annual Indian River County Student Juried Exhibition at the Vero Beach Museum of Art, in the Museum's Studio Gallery in the Hazel Education Wing. Awards ceremony and reception, open to friends, family, and VBMA members, will be presented at 6:15 pm on Friday, April 23.

April 24

Faith communities, including the Community Church, Holy Cross Catholic Church, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, and Unity Center will gather at 8 a.m. at the Indian River Mall for assignments for the Vero Beach Second Annual

Day of Service. All are invited; projects are listed on www.ircdayofservice.org.

April 24

The Vero Beach Museum of Art will present its 29th annual Children's Art Festival from 10 am to 4 pm throughout the Museum and outside in Riverside Park. Free event. 231-0707

April 24

Vero Beach National Little League's Croom Dodgers baseball team (ages eight to 11) will take on the Senior Resource Association (SRA) Codgers (made up of notable businessmen), at 4 pm in Holman Stadium at historic Dodg-



Boats lie at anchor in the Indian River north of the Merrill P. Barber Bridge.

ertown to benefit SRA programs. \$5 tickets are available at Bobby's Restaurant, Quail Valley River Club, the Alexis Agency and Frostings. 231.5999

April 24

The Latin themed Tumba La Casa to benefit the Children's Home Society will be held from 7 to 11:30 p.m. at Rock City Gardens, featuring live music, food and dancing. Tickets are \$100 per couple or \$60 per person. 713-1774.

MAY

May 1

2nd Annual Bounce-Tacular Family Fun Day at Riverside Park to benefit the Samaritan Center for Homeless Families. 770-3039

May 1

11th annual Pioneer Family Dinner, this year honoring the Carter family, 6:30 p.m. at the Heritage Center. Tickets \$45. 770-2263

May 1 - 2

Treasure Coast Kennel Club AKC All Breed Dog Show, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Indian River County Fairgrounds. Parking fee of \$5 per car. www.treasurecoast-kennelclub.com

May 2

Treasure Coast Chorale, songs of faith and inspiration, 7 p.m. at the First Baptist Church. Free (772) 567-4311

May 2

The 21st Annual May Pops Concert at Windsor Polo Field to benefit Indian River Medical Center Foundation features the Brevard Symphony Orchestra with conductor Christopher Confessore and Tony Award winning soloist Debbie Gravitte. Gates open at 3:30, concert

at 5:30. Lawn Tickets \$25 in advance; VIP tickets \$125. 226-4974 or www.maypopsinvero.com.

May 3

VNA's 20th Annual Golf-A-Thon will be held at The Moorings Club. Twelve local golf professionals tee off at sun up and play 135 holes to benefit the VNA and Hospice. .

May 7 - 8

Sixth Annual Offshore Big 3 Fishing Tournament to benefit Hibiscus Children's Center leaves from the Ft. Pierce City Marina. Captain's party 6 p.m. Friday, tournament Saturday. \$225 per boat. 978-9313 x 313

May 8

Oceanside Business Association's free beach concert series, 5:30 - 8:30 p.m. along Ocean Drive.

May 13 - 23

The comedy It Runs in the Family will be performed at the Vero Beach Theatre Guild. 562-8300

May 20 - 21

Riverside Children's Theatre Spring Dance Festival, 7 p.m. Tickets: \$6. 231-6990

Solutions from Games Pages in March 25th/2010 Edition, Issue 13

7	1	6	2	9	8	5	3	4
8	5	9	3	7	4	2	1	6
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Sudoku Page 56

7	8	9	4	5	6	3	2	1
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Sudoku Page 57

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Crossword Page 56 (CAP THIS)

Crossword Page 57 (BEWARE!)

May 22

Riverside Children's Theatre Spring Fiesta, 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. Free event. 231-6990

May 22

RIDES, a motor sports and collector event, presented by the Indian River County Chamber of Commerce at the Indian River County Fairgrounds. 567-3491 or www.RidesExtravaganza.com

May 22

Exchange Club of Indian River Foundation's 34th Annual Blue Water Open

"Dolphin Mania" Charity Fishing Tournament. 532-9375 or www.bluewateropen.org

May 31

The Senior Resource Association 5K Run/Walk, location TBA. 469-2060

June 5

33rd Annual Tropical Night Luau to benefit the Youth Guidance Mentoring & Activities Program, 7 to 11 p.m. at the

Quail Valley River Club. Tickets \$50 (\$60 after June 2). 770-5040

June 8

Oceanside Business Association's free beach concert series, 5:30 - 8:30 p.m. along Ocean Drive

June 25

Downtown Friday Bike Nite, presented by Main Street Vero Beach on 14th Avenue in historic downtown. 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. Free street party. www.mainstreetvero-beach.org

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This directory gives small business people eager to provide services to the beachside community an opportunity to make themselves known to island readers at an affordable cost. This is the only service directory mailed each week during season to all 11,000+ homes on the Vero Beach barrier island. If you are interested in a listing in the Vero Beach 32963 Service Directory, please contact marketing representative Martine Fecteau at martine@verobeach32963.com or call 772.696.2004.

32963 Passages

NAME	AGE	SUBDIVISION	DATE
Farrington, Paul	82	Vista Spires South	3/26/2010
Hicks, Lawrence James	82	Sea Oaks	3/21/2010
Goade, Mary	88	Sea Oaks III	3/18/2010
Flaherty, Thomas	85	John's Island	3/15/2010
Marsden, Jeanne	89	Central Beach	3/14/2010
Christy, F. Leonard	91	River Mews Condominiums	3/11/2010
Lideen, Mildred	89	Castaway Dunes	3/6/2010
Marriott, Phillip	73	Seagrove	3/5/2010
Gillick, Anne	92	Coquina Place	3/5/2010
Cummings, Charles	95	John's Island	2/28/2010
Ehlinger, John	92	Indian River Shores	2/27/2010
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

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.

Vero Beach 32963 / April 1, 2010

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Featured Real Estate Sales on Barrier Island

Real Estate

Here are some of the top recent barrier island sales

Subdiv.: Caledon Shores Condo, Addr.: 4600 Highway A1A, #306



Listing Date: December 11, 2009
Original Price: \$549,000
Sold: March 22, 2010
Selling Price: \$510,000
Listing Agent: Dale Solin
 Dale Sorensen Real Estate
 Tripp Hernandez
 Dale Sorensen Real Estate

Subdivision: Silver Shores, Address: 904 Shore Drive



Listing Date: December 28, 2009
Original Price: \$495,500
Sold: March 19, 2010
Selling Price: \$450,000
Listing Agent: Lori Davis
 Dale Sorensen Real Estate
 Karen Smith
 Alex MacWilliam Real Estate

Subdiv.: Porpoise Bay Villas, Addr.: 300 Harbour Drive, #400A



Listing Date: December 11, 2009
Original Price: \$318,000
Sold: March 22, 2010
Selling Price: \$300,000
Listing Agent: Terri McConnell
 The Moorings Realty Sales Co.
 Judy Roberts
 Alex MacWilliam -
 Charlotte Terry

32963 SERVICE DIRECTORY

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<p>Valvoline Expresscare of Vero Beach Quick Lube Owned and Operated by Superior Auto Service 1212 23rd Street Vero Beach, FL (Corner of U.S.1 and 23rd St) 772-778-6645 UNDER NEW MANAGEMENT</p>	<p>The Dock ReBuilders A TrendBuild Company Even if you are down to your last piling... we can ReBuild your dock! Call 772.234.6445 today for a free estimate! Docking - Structure - Piling - Repairs - Accessories - Lifts - ReBuilds - Maintenance Licensed & Insured CGC1505897 Vero Beach www.thedockrebuilders.com</p>	<p>Computer Limits Indian River County's Only Complete Computer Service Center Since 1999 518 21st St. (Miracle Mile), Vero Beach 772-569-9978</p>
<p>M-maison Furniture • Gifts • Soap • Lotion Clothing • Stationary • Accessories Linens • Vintage Items • Candles 23 Royal Palm Pointe • 770-5848</p>	<p>Coastal Quality Concrete (772) 770-2094 No Job To Small Concrete Restoration • Decorative Stamped Concrete Spray Deck • Pool Deck Restoration • Concrete Reseal Plus New Concrete Patios, Driveways, Sidewalks</p>	<p>Giving you peace of mind & PROFESSIONAL service while you are away Home Watch We organize and monitor regular maintenance of your home as determined by the homeowner. Owners, Brad and Allison Goodbread OCEANSIDE Property Management Personal Concierge We offer a wide range of unique services for homeowners. Opening & Closing Up Home prior to arrival & after departure (772) 766-4580 www.oceansidepm.com</p>
<p>Beach Barber Shop CLASSIC BARBERING TAILORED TO YOUR NEED COME IN ANYTIME & MEET OUR STAFF Caron, Bill & Janine, Phone: 234-4707 2855 Ocean Dr. & Flamevine, Vero Beach Shop Hours: Mon.- Fri. 8:30-4:30, Sat. 9:00-2:00</p>	<p>PANDA ROOF CRRS, Inc. SAME DAY SERVICE 24 Hour Emergency Repairs 110% Satisfaction Guarantee! All types of repairs & Replacements. www.pandarooft.com 231-5959. Ask about PV Solar Systems to lower your utilities.</p>	<p>Servicemaster Clean Water & Fire Restoration Mold Remediation Carpet & Tile Cleaning Oriental Area Rug Cleaning BY GLENN'S (772) 567-4435 1505 10th Ave., www.waterdamagespecialists.com</p>
<p>Indian River Private Duty Nursing ...the care you deserve Homemakers • HHAS • Complimentary Supervisory Visits 24 Hour On-Call Nurses • Licensed, Bonded & Insured 3201 Cardinal Drive 231-4442 Lic#NR30211405</p>	<p>Surfaces INCORPORATED STONE & CONCRETE Specializing in the Design, Installation & Restoration of stone, tile and wood floors. 3954 US Highway One, Vero Beach, FL 32960 (772) 778-2622 * (772) 778-2644 fax</p>	<p>TRUSTED NEIGHBOR HOME WATCH Vacation & Seasonal Watches • Vacant Home Monitoring Return Preparations • Home Improvement Coordination There when you can't be YourTrustedNeighbor.com Licensed (772) 978-9392 Bonded</p>

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Real Estate

Real Estate Sales on the Barrier Island: March 18 to March 24



Once upon a time, hopes ran high for Village by the Sea – the cluster of 16 Mediterranean-style villas built on Vero’s South Beach by developer Mark McIntosh.

The six units on the beach side of Ocean Drive quickly sold out in 2004 for prices in the mid-\$800,000s, and one of the two ocean-front units even sold in 2005 for a breathtaking \$2.8 million.

It seemed like the sky was the limit – and the second section of 10 villas on the western side of Ocean Drive was aggressively priced and attracted a lot of early interest. A couple of the villas sold in 2007 for more than \$1 million.

But in recent weeks, the price has been slashed on two standalone villas on the western side – which have unfinished interiors – to \$485,000, and a third villa – also with unfinished interior -- is now priced at \$450,000.

Barbara Martino-Sliva of Treasure Coast Sotheby’s on her website estimates the cost of completing these villas at “between \$100,000-\$200,000.”

Last week, the villa at 1513 Ocean Drive, which was being used as a finished model and had been listed at one point for \$949,000, was sold for \$775,000.

Both the seller and the buyer in the transaction were represented by Kimberly Hardin of Treasure Coast Sotheby’s International Realty.

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SUBDIVISION	ADDRESS	LISTED	ORIGINAL ASKING PRICE	SOLD	SELLING PRICE
SILVER SHORES	905 SHORE DRIVE	12/28/2009	\$ 495,500	3/19/2010	\$ 450,000
VILLAGE BY THE SEA	1513 OCEAN DRIVE	12/8/2009	\$ 949,000	3/19/2010	\$ 775,000

TOWNHOMES, VILLAS AND CONDOS

SUBDIVISION	ADDRESS	LISTED	ORIGINAL ASKING PRICE	SOLD	SELLING PRICE
CALEDON SHORES CONDO	4600 HIGHWAY A1A #306	12/11/2009	\$ 549,000	3/22/2010	\$ 510,000
PORPOISE BAY VILLAS	300 HARBOUR DR. #400A	12/11/2009	\$ 318,000	3/22/2010	\$ 300,000

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716 GROVE PLACE—COURTYARD LIVING
Charming 3BR/Office/3.5BA residence includes separate 1BR/1BA guest cabana, exquisite details, panoramic views. **\$1,295,000 New Listing**



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**



60 BEACHSIDE DR, #301—3,309 A/C SQ. FT.
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609 HERON PT COURT—GOLF/LAKE ESTATE
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