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Philanthropy without borders. Insight. P29

Vero residents begin getting H1N1 vaccine. P22

Leslie McGuirk serves up playful pups, good manners. P18

Beach bridal bust: Left at the altar

BY MICHELLE GENZ
STAFF WRITER

Every bride's worst nightmare – organizing an elaborate wedding, the extravaganza of a lifetime, and then having almost no one attend – was played out as performance art this past weekend at the Caribbean Court Boutique Hotel.

Boris Gonzalez, the hotel's owner, had come up with the idea of holding a Boutique Bridal Showcase that would include not just a mock wedding as the highpoint of a weekend of bridal brouhaha, but a mock "rehearsal dinner" and "reception" at the adjacent Maison Martinique.

The idea was that brides and the parents who foot the bills for these extravaganzas would be eager to attend. In an early burst of enthusiasm, admission to all of the weekend's bridal activities was priced at \$220 per head.

As part of the plan, Gonzalez lined up retailers from around town — who think their products would serve a woman well on her wedding day — and talked them into paying \$1,000 each to display their wares on five-foot white plastic tables in a tent in the hotel's parking lot.

Gonzalez and Liz Kennedy, the local caterer, themselves a couple as yet unmarried, had envisioned throngs of brides-

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St. Ed's adjusts to challenging times

BY MILTON R. BENJAMIN
STAFF WRITER

Coming soon (hopefully) to a beach near you



Real estate developer Stephen Smith, co-owner of Ranch Road Lake LLC, on the site of his sand mine with the dredge equipment that has already spewed out most of the sand needed for barrier island beach replenishment. Story on page 8
Photo: Tom McCarthy, Jr.

Faced with the reality of challenging economic times and slumping enrollment, St. Edward's School has decided to proactively take a giant step into the future by adopting a more selective admissions policy, shrinking the size of the school, selling the historic Riomar Lower School and moving all grades onto the south A1A campus, and aggressively proceeding with a five-year plan to retire all debt.

"We are going to get where we need to go to be that great independent school in this region," said head of school Michael Mersky, who joined St. Ed's only six months ago. "This plan will ensure that we are here to serve families and children for generations to come."

The plan, first presented to members of the St. Ed's faculty and staff at a meeting this past Monday, was subsequently outlined in a letter that families of students started receiving on Tuesday.

The plan calls for:

■ Reducing enrollment over the next couple of years by 10 to 20 percent from the current 728 students, and then holding it at that level.

■ Closing the Lower School in Riomar, probably at the end

Vero Council's brain brownout

BY LISA ZAHNER
STAFF WRITER

Of the five-member Vero Beach City Council serving in April 2008, only one claims to have actually read the entire 68-page, multi-billion-dollar contract with the Orlando Utilities Commission.

The other four were offered a copy of the new 20-year agreement and declined to take it, according to City Manager Jim Gabbard. Mayor Tom White said he had already read a complete copy during contract negotiations.

In an interview last week, Gabbard told Vero Beach

32963 that each of five members was given a one-hour general briefing on how Vero Beach officials and their consultant had chosen OUC, and was shown a copy of the contract with 13 pages that had portions blacked out.

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Spirits aplenty on Halloween at the Ocean Grill. Story and photos, Page 10.

St. Edward's

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of the current school year, and selling the property.

- Moving the Lower School into what is currently the Middle School on the south campus.

- Moving the Middle School into a retrofitted building on the northwest quadrant of the south campus.

- Limiting annual increases in tuition to approximately 4 percent.

- Reducing the financial aid currently offered to students to a level that is sustainable.

- Increasing faculty compensation.

- Negotiating a plan with a bank by the end of January 2010 to retire the school's \$15 million in debt over the next five years.



Photo: Mark Schumann

All of these steps – which Mersky sums up as “constriction, conservation and consolidation” – are going to “strengthen St. Ed's core – our own

school design.”

While the school expects to get down to an enrollment of between 580 and 650 over the next two years, Mersky says admissions to the smaller St. Ed's will become “significantly more competitive.”

“It's no secret that St. Ed's enrollment has been declining,” he said. “Now, we are going to create our own smaller learning community. And in the next three to five years, St. Ed's will become as strong as it has ever been.”

As part of this reduction in enrollment, Mersky said St. Ed's would be cutting back on the amount of financial aid it currently provides to students unable to afford the private school's tuition.

“We intend to proceed with the financial aid commitment we have

made to our older students,” he said. “But we need to constrict overall financial aid to a level that better reflects independent school norms and is sustainable.”

He declined to provide numbers on how many students currently are on scholarship, or the extent to which this may be cut back.

One part of the plan that no doubt will cause some twinges of nostalgia among St. Ed's estimated 2,000 alumni is the decision to vacate the Lower School building in Riomar, where St. Edward's opened in renovated facilities of the old Riomar Club in 1965.

In recent years, this oak-shrouded facility on the edge of the Riomar County Club golf course has housed an estimated 220 pupils in pre-kindergarten through fifth grade.

After the Lower School pupils are relocated to the south campus – probably next September, but possibly not until after the Christmas break – the prime real estate will be sold. “Our hope is we can get in the area of \$4 million for the property,” Mersky said.

The current plan calls for the Lower School pupils to move to what is now the Middle School building, which will be renovated next summer. “It will be perfect for the Lower School,” Mersky said. The lower grades will be on the ground floor of the two-story building, with grades three to five on the second floor.

“But I know all the things that can go wrong with construction,” Mersky said. “If we need extra time, we will move the Lower School at midyear. The key is to do this well.”

In the course of an interview with Vero Beach 32963, Mersky repeatedly talked of the strengths of a smaller school – and said once the school size had stabilized at its new level, there would be no immediate growth.

In the Lower School, for example, he said that while St. Ed's currently has three sections in some grades, it intends to “go to two sections in all grades.”

The strategic plan that led to these decisions is the result of an intense year of work by the school's Board of Trustees chaired by Ron Edwards. “The Board and I have worked feverishly since June,” Mersky said. The five-year financial model was approved by the Board of Trustees on September 16.

“The plan itself is very realistic,” Mersky said. “Our goal is to consolidate as we go into next year. It will make us a more selective and stronger school. One of the things we want to do is be great stewards of our own resources. Ultimately, we may grow again – but it will be with a strategic mission tied to it.

“We want to be the independent school of choice.”

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Council utility brownout

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

When asked what was blacked out, City Attorney Charlie Vitunac said "it was just the numbers"—the rates and penalties and fuel costs delineated in the contract — and Gabbard said Council members were told the contract mostly contained "stuff put in there by the lawyers" that they did not need to focus on.

Nevertheless, at the conclusion of each briefing, Gabbard said "we offered to give them a copy of the (unredacted) contract" to take and review.

"None of the Council members took one," Gabbard said.

Since no members of the City Council took a copy to read, one of the key questions that remains unanswered is whether any were aware — prior to signing the contract — that a blacked out section on page 12 provides for up to a \$50 million penalty should Vero Beach break or seek to renegotiate the contract within 10 years.

"That was a surprise," said Fish. "You know you have to trust the staff on these things."

White said he didn't take the contract because, as mayor at the time, he was privy to the negotiations and had read it both in parts and as a whole document.

"I don't remember a one-hour meeting, there were so many hours of meetings," he said. "I never had the contract in my possession due to confidentiality reasons. I reviewed it in my office at City Hall. I didn't want to take it home because, in my view, it would then become public record and as long as it stayed with the city manager and the utility director, it wasn't public record."

White said there had to be confidentiality in making the selection.

"Look, when you open things like this up to the public, other parties can know what's going on and there's a lot of problems when you do that, corporate raiders and other bad things," he said.

Other than White, the members of the City Council at the time were Sabe Abell (then vice mayor, now mayor); Debra Fromang and Fish, who are both currently seeking reelection; and Ken Daige, who subsequently lost a reelection bid but who is seeking to return to the Council in next week's election.

Council didn't know who else submitted utility proposals

Almost as surprising as the fact that City Council members would approve a huge contract that four of them had not fully read is the fact that none, according to Gabbard, was told the identity of any of the dozen other parties interested in the Vero Beach contract, or any details of the half dozen other formal proposals.

According to leaks since, Florida Power & Light and Progress Energy were among the others expressing interest and at least one option -- which was quickly dismissed -- included selling the city's power plant.

Vitunac said Sue Hersey, the consultant from Boston-based Energy Advantage Consulting who managed the process and recommended OUC, did not look closely at all the proposals committing Vero Beach to spend billions of dollars because, at her hourly rate of \$400, the city could not afford the time to scrutinize all of them.

Instead, Vitunac said, Hersey devel-

oped a ranking process of the seven companies who had "executed confidentiality agreements and became qualified bidders" but only conducted a full review of the three top-ranked bids.

Abell, then vice mayor, said he was very comfortable with the information he was given in his one-hour meeting on April 7, which he recorded in his diary. Abell said he did not take a copy home from the April 7 meeting and does not remember a copy being offered to him prior to the Council vote to contract with OUC.

"To me it was like Piper and the Ori-

oles, where you were allowed to take notes but you couldn't take them with you because of the confidentiality," Abell said.

When the full contract was released this fall, Abell obtained a copy and went through it. He said he feels like he didn't miss anything by not reading the entire contract prior to voting.

"Frankly, the contract language, that's something for the lawyers and the individuals who are experts to look at," Abell said. "We need to know what the contract means and that's a matter

CONTINUED ON PAGE 5

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Left at the alter

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

to-be, their beaming moms and envious bridesmaids strolling through the tulle and garlands, happily adding to

riage to stick.

Problem was, there were no wannabe brides to be found, at least not on Friday when the wedding weekend started, according a vendor stationed by the front of the tent, who was there for the entire time. Saturday, he said,



Boris Gonzalez brings a bouquet to the mock wedding on the beach. Photos: Tom McCarthy, Jr.

the endless checklist that while leveling the family liquidity, would pile on the pressure for the pending mar-

there were a total of two.

Between their entourages, who to vendors were just decoration, and



Elizabeth Kennedy checks out her new hairdo for the Boutique Bridal Showcase.

friends of vendors, there for moral support, the crowd likely never topped 20. At its zenith, there were still more vendors than guests. Best estimate for Sunday's champagne brunch: six people.

Vendors were seething through their sales pitches to their only audience: their fellow vendors. Even the special red-vested parking valets – hoping to get booked for the weddings, too — were making lousy tips.

Boris blamed homecoming at St. Ed's. What, there's a bevy of child brides-to-be there? Parents shelling out \$23,000 in tuition are surely hoping for a little earning potential out of their offspring, and maybe a college degree before they start their families.

Liz and Boris should have known better: with the barrier island's median age hovering around Medicare eligibility, this is not a town crawling with twenty-somethings anyway. How many prospective brides can there be plotting their big day on any given weekend?

Could it be that in Vero Beach, all the brides-to-be have already been brides, like me?

When I told a co-worker I was headed out to cover this event, and I wanted a mask lest someone think I was dreaming of a new walk down the aisle, she suggested a sure-fire disguise: a mother-of-the-bride dress.

It didn't matter. By the time I got there, no one was even hoping for a bride to show up. The owners of our local beach businesses – jewelry stores, the cupcake shop, the Bonanno sandal store, the florists, the stationery store, the darling little dancers from Royal Ballroom, even the Kayak rental guy (hoping to book a bridal canoodle on the river?) — all were twiddling their thumbs.

Shannon Britt's shoes, by the late local designer, took center stage

manned by Shannon's mom and twin sister, Shelby. The line specializes in bridal slippers.

All spluttered theories about what Boris had done wrong that had cost them \$1,000 and two evenings of their free time. Not enough advertising came up every time.

As far as we could tell, there was one big ad in the September issue of Vero Beach magazine – Beth Moulton, the magazine's publisher, is a dear friend of Liz's and Boris's, and word had it she had promised a 16-page spread before it turned into a non-event. Perhaps the ad appeared a tad early.

By Saturday evening, things looked a bit desperate. Vendors had already declared they weren't coming back Sunday. They had had it. Left at the altar.

Maybe Boris and Liz should have targeted a demographic more like themselves. Come to think of it, Liz was looking awfully bridal, having skipped out to Studio Gabriel for an updo. She also had her makeup done at the makeshift Dior cosmetics counter (Boris had said Dior and Saks were coming; who knew he meant make-up and not spectacular designer gowns?)

Heading down to the beach with her mini-dressed bridal model, Liz herself looked pretty beachy bridey, in a white gauze tunic and pants.

I had been ready to leave since I got there. Clearly things were winding down, with the only two actual brides-to-be distracted by the sand and waves. I started to sneak back to my car.

Right about then, I got a text message. I was fumbling with my cell phone trying to reply, when, looking up, I saw a stunning sight: Boris Gonzalez, in coat and tie, tripping down the sandy path toward the beach, carrying a bouquet of ivory roses.

He looked positively radiant.

Council utility brownout

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

of interpretation.”

Then Council member Daige remembers the April 7 meeting well, but his version of the story is a little differ-

ent than the one presented by Gabbard and Vitunac.

“If I could have taken a copy of the OUC contract without any legal repercussions, obviously I would have taken it to review,” Daige said. “But I was told that the situation was very delicate.”

Daige said he asked that that Finance Director Steve Maillet be brought in at one point. He was surprised to learn that Maillet had not been asked to review the contract, or provide input on the financials.

“I found that very peculiar, that

they wouldn't bring the finance guy in on it,” Daige said. “He came into the meeting and looked it over and, though he hadn't read the whole thing, he did say that, based on what he saw

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Council utility brownout

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

of the numbers, it looked okay.”

Staff did not make clear the stipulations about the early exit penalties, Daige said, something he raised as a concern.

“The management team knew that I did not want to have the same problems we had with the FMPA contracts,” Daige said.

Administrators keeping the council in the dark?

The flap over whether the Council members fully understood what they were voting on has only fueled more questions about how the city’s top bureaucrats manage Council members who are supposed to independently represent the public.

The Council, under the city charter, does not work for staff. Conversely, staff does answer to the City Council.

The controversy resurfaced two weeks ago when Council Member Fromang said at a candidate forum hosted by the Indian River Taxpayers’ Association that she hadn’t read the OUC contract.

Fromang, an attorney who handles mediation in foreclosure cases, subsequently said in an email to Rosemarie Spytek, vice president of the Indian River Taxpayers Association, that the contract was “presented to her,” but she still did not go so far as to say she had read it.

Shortly after that forum on Oct. 14, Fromang sought the advice of Gabbard and city attorney Vitunac to refresh her memory.

“It was two years ago,” Gabbard said. “And Ms. Fromang was in a very stressful situation being questioned and she forgot.”

County Commissioner Bob Solari, who served on the Vero Beach City Council from 2005 to 2007, said the culture of staff leading the Council is nothing new.

He said Council members were often called in for private meetings with Gabbard on issues – ostensibly to prevent Sunshine Law violations.

“It seems to me that a lot of information is being passed on from Gabbard one-on-one rather than in the arena of a Council meeting in open and frank discussion,” Solari said. “It’s been clear to me for a long time that policy is being made by the staff.”

Under Florida’s Sunshine Laws, no two elected members of a public body can meet privately to discuss matters before their board. The laws were passed to prevent back-room deals without public scrutiny. Calling Council members in for individual pre-meeting meetings with top staffers, though perfectly legal, tramples on the spirit of the law.

Solari said not only electric, but major decisions regarding the water and sewer utilities have been handled in the same way.

“If they’re (Council members) only getting a limited amount of information and it’s coming from the staff, then they’re a whole lot more likely to vote with the staff recommendation,” Solari said. “It’s a lot easier to vote with the others than to be singled out in a 4-1 vote.”

Daige remembers the one-on-one meetings with Gabbard during his term on the Council, which ended in November 2008. He didn’t like them, he said, and often opted out.

“I felt that Gabbard did a lot of consensus-building before the meetings,” Daige said.

“The council needs to take the control of the city, the city manager is not in charge,” Daige said. “The public has a right to know what’s going on and how their money is being spent.”

Sloan: City Council had no need for ‘too much information’

Gabbard and Vitunac did not address why they didn’t just give the Council members a complete copy of the contract in the first place. All top managers repeatedly point to advice by their Boston-based consultant that bidders would insist that “trade secrets” be kept confidential.

In an email on Oct. 17, Sloan responded to questions about the way Council members were provided with the contract. He believes they didn’t need to know too much.

“This was my fifth power supply contract of my career, and I’d learned over the years you cannot give the approving body too much information. I’d like to think that experience gave me good insight into what needed to be done to inform the Council.”

Sloan has resigned his position as of Nov. 6, after about two and a half years with the city, to take a job in Virginia. He has said he would help the city through the transition to the OUC arrangement.

City leaders say that contract will wash out to a nearly 20 percent decline in electric bills, despite the 12.5 percent increase in base rates the city is planning to approve in November.

Sloan has been a vocal supporter of the confidential nature of the OUC contract.

He believes the city got a better deal because power providers who submitted proposals would not have participated unless their trade secrets were protected from other competitors – and, by default, the public was left in the dark, too.

So two years after it was signed, on Sept. 30, 2007, the contract was made public last month.

Columnist Mary Beth McDonald contributed to this report.



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Sand for beach project ready; permit still needed

BY LISA ZAHNER
STAFF WRITER

Hundreds of thousands of cubic yards of sand compatible with the Vero barrier island's beaches have been dredged out of mines and are piled up west of town.

All the county needs now is for a permit to arrive in time. It might take a bureaucratic miracle — and working seven days a week -- to get the beach renourishment project done this season.

The county is relying on an ambi-

tious timeline that assumes the various state and federal agencies will give their blessing to the project in record time, which would allow for completion by May 1 — the start of turtle nesting season.

The situation is so tenuous that county commissioners and sand mine operators are asking barrier island residents with properties on precarious stretches of the 6.6-mile project to snap erosion photos and email them to elected officials with pleas to help secure state and federal permits so the project can be done this year.

“That would hopefully make a difference, that's the only thing that will get this project done this season within the time constraints of sea turtle nesting,” said Stephen Smith, co-owner of the Ranch Road Lake sand mine.

County Commissioner Bob Solari is not convinced that the updated timeline is based on the realities of the regulatory process.

“I definitely have significant concerns that there is a high probability that we can't meet what the staff thinks is a reasonable schedule,” Solari said.

He plans to find out before the board

meets again Nov. 3 so commissioners can make better decisions.

Among other things, the updated timeline assumes that Florida's Department of Environmental Protection will only take 30 days to issue the permit, when they legally have 90 days to work on it. It assumes the same tight deadlines for other agencies who must also issue approval.

Replenishment project has been on the rocks for weeks

The past couple of weeks have been a rollercoaster ride for barrier island residents from Treasure Shores Park to John's Island who have been waiting nearly a decade to get sand on their storm-weary shoreline.

Earlier this month, reports showed that the use of upland sand would, in time, cover up an offshore reef, so less sand would have to be used in the project. That would force the county to reduce by 26 percent — and in some parts as much as 88 percent -- the amount of sand that could be placed on the beach.

The cold snap Vero Beach received on Oct. 17 brought erosion that took some three to six feet from the shoreline, making the call for immediate relief more urgent. With winter's turbulent season coming up, and some condominium buildings and homes perilously close to the edge at high tide, hundreds of millions of dollars in property could be at stake if there is more erosion.

On Oct. 19, sand mine operators submitted new sand samples — comparable to those collected from offshore sources -- in an effort to rectify the design changes and get permitting through to put more sand in place. Those new samples passed muster with the computer models and county staff is now making the changes to the permit requests.

If everything goes smoothly -- even with Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's holidays in the mix -- permits may be issued the last week in February for a start date of about March 15, leaving 45 days to get nearly 500,000 cubic yards of sand onto the beach by May 1.

This will require hauling about 600 truckloads of sand per day, possibly six or seven days per week.

On Monday, county staffers and engineering consultants met to redesign the project so every area can get its full complement of sand. A more coarse sand material will be strategically placed on the flat part of the beach, which is subject to the most wave action, and less coarse sand will be used to stabilize the dunes, resulting in the full 472,000 cubic yards of sand being



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placed on the beach.

Rep. Ralph Poppell, who chairs the Natural Resources Appropriations Committee in the Florida's House of Representatives, has pledged his support as has Sen. Joe Negron and Sen. Mike Haridopolos. Congressman Bill Posey's office said he would work with the local officials to do anything he could to expedite the process.

Economics — not expediency — drove upland sand choice

Faced with 15 percent unemployment and lobbying from local businesses to keep more than \$7 million in taxpayer dollars in the local area, commissioners voted to forge relatively new ground and complete the project with upland sand.

Approximately 150 to 200 jobs -- the vast majority temporary, contractor jobs which offer no benefits or long-term employment prospects — are expected to be generated from the \$7.2 million contract the county hopes to execute with Ranger Construction within five days of securing permits.

Sand from mines has been used for beach replenishment projects in Indian River County on an emergency basis to prop up structures after storm damage, when the quantity needed and the urgency did not permit a large-scale dredging operation.

Brevard County did a beach project in the Indialantic area with upland sand from Ranch Road Lake Mine, one of the three mines providing the sand for the upcoming Indian River project. Ranger Construction has also completed a few small beach jobs related to construction projects, such as around the Florida Power and Light facility in Martin County.

It's common for the beach to be stabilized to mitigate new ocean-front structures and upland sand is used for this purpose.

The project that seems to be causing the permitting queasies in this case is a St. Lucie county replenishment project using unprocessed upland sand, which had to be removed after it was placed on the beach because it was not compatible and started caking and clumping up on the beach.

Different sand suppliers will be working on our north barrier island project and have assured the county that the sand will be processed to specifications.

Once the sand is installed, the dunes will be stabilized with native plants and consultants will monitor the beaches, reef impact and sea turtle nesting activity for years and report back to Florida's DEP.

Contact information for state and federal officials regarding the Indian River County Sector 3 Beach Renourishment Project:

Fla. Rep. Debbie Mayfield
Phone: (772) 778-5077
email: debbie.mayfield@myfloridahouse.gov

Governor Charlie Crist
Phone: (850) 488-4441
email: Charlie.Crist@MyFlorida.com

Fla. Rep. Ralph Poppell
Phone: (321) 383-5151
email: ralph.poppell@myfloridahouse.gov

Congressman Bill Posey
Phone: (772) 778-3534
email: go to <http://posey.house.gov/Contact/>

Fla. Sen. Mike Haridopolos
(321) 752-3131
email: mike@senatormike.com

U.S. Sen. Bill Nelson
Phone: 561-514-0189
email: go to <http://billnelson.senate.gov/contact/email.cfm>

Fla. Sen. Joe Negron (barrier island)
(772) 219-1665
email: negron.joe.web@flsenate.gov

U.S. Senator George LeMieux
Telephone: (561) 842-8300
<http://lemieux.senate.gov/public/?p=EmailSenatorLeMieux>



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People

Spirits aplenty on Halloween at the Ocean Grill

BY MICHELLE GENZ
STAFF WRITER

About the only way to get a table at the Ocean Grill's legendary Halloween party is if someone drops dead from fright.

The big tables at the Grill have been booked for two years, management says. The death-by-dining confabulation has been an annual affair for over 25 years.

Then again, cancellation by collapse is not impossible. Consider the effort the restaurant's crew puts into the terrifying décor, starting three weeks in advance.

What better place to turn into a haunted house than Waldo Sexton's legendary montage of ancient-mariner-meets-pirates'-booty decor, with its jangling wrought iron gates, ram-shackle wood floors predisposed to creaking, darkened beams begging for cobwebs, and enough spirits behind the bar to spook many a local into calling the Klub Kar for rescue.

Besides the decorations – enough to give Michael's a major shot-in-the-arm — the big night includes a costumed wait staff hoping for votes from guests in the annual cash-prize contest. Inevitably, guests dress too, and their competition, documented in a photo album out front for everyone to see, has traditionally been fierce.

The decorating started on a Saturday two weeks ago, when piles of decorations formed a quivering mound on the huge circular table at the center of the dining room: ghoulish heads, skulls, fangs, strings of eyeball lights, spiders, bats, and the occasionally wholesome pumpkin.

The crew came in early to dress the place up before the dinner crowd rolled in.

They giggled as they yanked, untangled and otherwise examined the creepy foam and latex concoctions, that spilled like a giant sea monster over the table normally reserved for plates of stuffed snapper and pompano.



Ryan Sandgren helps situate a large pirate skeleton atop an urn so that it can loom over the dining room at the Ocean Grill.

Photos: Tom McCarthy, Jr.



Tom Hope adjusts some of the spooky light in effort to help out the other staff members as they decorate the restaurant for Halloween.

They awkwardly maneuvered ladders past chairs, up the stairs, into the bar, to string flickering orange lights, hang rubbery flapping wings, and strew scary creatures where guests would least expect them.

Over it all, a gigantic crimson pirate in a plumed hat rose up high into the rafters, rattling a massive chain.

Another year of spooky revelry had begun.

Said manager Beth Erickson: "Those big tables are sold out always at least a year out. I mean, you've got to leave it in your will!"

That is precisely the effect some diners pull off – staff says about a third come in ghoulish costumes of their own.

Mary Replogle, whose family took over the Ocean Grill's management in 1965, only vaguely remembers when the Halloween fest began — she thinks it was sometime in the early '80s. But she takes it deadly seriously.

Replogle was commanding the crew of decorators, as she herself gave intensive scrutiny as to how best to hang an imposing leathery spider.

"It started with the costume contest, and creating an incentive for the servers to dress up," she recalls.

Asking the wait staff to buy costumes to wear at work didn't seem entirely fair, she says.

"That was asking people to spend their own money to come to work," says Replogle. "So we created the

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People

contest right at the beginning with a chance to win prizes.”

That the concept would spread to the guests came as a surprise.

“The customers loved it,” she recalls. “Immediately they wanted to vote for the costumes, so we started giving them a ballot. Right away we had people competing seriously. And the customers started dressing up too. It just took off.”

Replogle has been known to appear, along with a group of friends all dressed alike, as leader of a witches’ coven. Their dramatic entries are timed for just when the atmosphere reaches fever pitch, around 7 pm.

Where does Replogle unearth the monstrosities that fill the room? The maven of macabre says she collects the swooping skeletons, grinning monsters, and goblins with red glowing eyes on her trips to Atlanta several times a year and a September visit to the Expo in Orlando.

From the mid-month transformation of the Grill through Halloween night, new spooks keep appearing. Like a hell-wrought Advent calendar, the dark nooks of Sexton’s eclectic space daily reveal freshly-added effects – a newly risen vampire, say, or someone recently deceased.

As for costumes, they run the gamut.

“I plan to be a deviled egg,” says Molly Cigala, tending the gift shop where a display shelf sports Halloween merchandise. She describes her just-ordered outfit, raising her hands to her forehead to mimic the little deviled egg’s horns.

“I’m totally stoked,” she adds.

Deviled or no, she is praying for a prize, though she is not as secretive as the others can be. “I don’t mind saying, but a lot of people don’t want anyone to know what they going to be. It gets pretty competitive.”

Chef Timm McGraw is in charge of finding the giant pumpkin every year. Whoever comes closest to guessing its weight wins dinner for two.

Long-time bartender Annette Karnatz has learned a few things about dressing up and working. “You have to think about your job when you’re figuring out your outfit,” she says. “One year I did a very nice Elvira the Vampire girl black dress. But the long wispy sleeves that hung down got all tangled in the bottles and almost in the drinks. I never wore long sleeves again.”

Such entanglements don’t scare off adventurous staff members. “They’ll try anything. You can’t believe how many big guys have been in fairy costumes and how many sets of wings show up.”

Server Mel Hartford, busy hanging

pumpkin lights from a wagon wheel, had issues that are thankfully behind her.

“My first year I was a clown. I had a pillow in my pants that made me stick out behind, and I knocked a couple of people over when I turned around.”

High on a ladder by a door, server Andrea Fecteau is attaching spiders to a wooden beam. She makes her own outfits, including one year when she came as a nightstand complete with alarm clock. Creation comes easy to Fecteau: she likes to sew.

“I even made my own wedding

dress,” she says. “Now that’s the ultimate Halloween costume.”

Among the guests will be Chuck Enloe and Howard Anderson: they’ve been sitting at one of those reserved tables for years.

“I wouldn’t miss it,” Enloe says. “I think it’s one of the best events on the beach. The decorating they do is intense.”

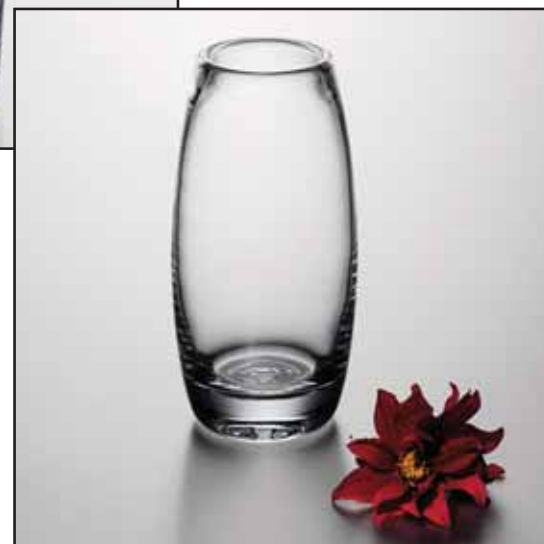
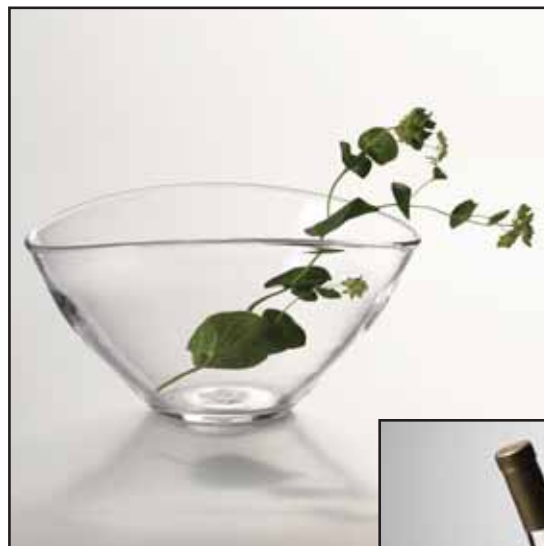
Hilde Tripson also has a long-standing reservation. She comes with husband Mark and a circle of friends that often includes Waldo’s son Ralph Sexton and wife Chris Dale.

“It makes you relive how it was to be a child,” says Tripson.

Though the restaurant’s main tables are booked, day manager Tom Hope says they keep the smaller tables open for walk-ins, and suggests splitting up your party to two or three or four, and getting there after 8, when things slow down. “Just be a little patient,” he says. “You can be a part of Halloween at the Grill.”

Correspondent Sandra Rawls contributed to this report.

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St. Edward's celebrates Homecoming

St. Edward's celebrated its homecoming weekend with a 35-6 win against Lighthouse Christian Academy. The homecoming festivities included an alumni barbecue, a presentation of some members from the class of 1989 football and cheerleading teams, and a full-blown fireworks display after the game.

The football win upped St. Edward's record to 4-4 on the year.

"We have so many seniors on this team, and they've all worked so hard," said head coach Brad Fotjik. "To get a win here in front of the home crowd tonight was special for all of us, but especially for those seniors."

Photos: Tom McCarthy, Jr.



St. Edward's School alum Chris Hill at the alumni barbecue before the game.

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Fans watch a fireworks display from the field at St. Edward's following the game.



The ladies of the St. Edward's homecoming court stand at midfield with their fathers during a halftime presentation.



St. Edward's School students watch the opening kickoff of a 36-5 game win.

Indian River Shores hosts first Soup Bowl

BY MICHELLE GENZ
STAFF WRITER

For the first time in the 16-year history of the Soup Bowl benefit for the Samaritan Center for Homeless Families, Indian River Shores will have a site to gather at midday next Thursday.

Shores town manager Robert Bradshaw donated the use of the newly refurbished community center of Town Hall for the event, and the Rotary Club Oceanside chapter agreed to stage it.

"We don't have a big enough staff to staff it, but the least we could do is donate the space."

"This really gives Indian River Shores a chance to define itself as a community," says Shotsi LaJoie, Soup Bowl co-chair, along with Shores resident Kristin Ashcroft.

"Most people here are seasonal," says Ashcroft. "Along with people only being here a certain amount of time, the area is chopped up into a lot of little neighborhoods that are all distinct entities. There's no real glue that ties them all together. People may not even know each other unless they run into each other at the Post Office."

Rotary Oceanside president Karl Steene gladly grabbed the ladle handed off by Bradshaw, calling up his members in the newly chartered club and recruiting volunteers.

Four key players on the Rotary team are coming up with 20 gallons of soup to serve.

Tammy Adams is making five gallons of her mother's vegetable beef soup, made with leftover pot roast, added vegetables and an extra sloshing of red wine. "My mother used to eat it with peanut butter on crackers," she says. "My sisters and I are fighting over the pot she uses for the roast, because no matter what we do, none of us can duplicate it."

Meanwhile, Maureen Ladaviz, long-time owner of Central Window on U.S. 1, is making a chicken and white bean soup and watching the community's collective waistline at the same time. The recipe, based on a Weight Watcher's cookbook, includes carefully skimming a homemade stock of all traces of fat, breaking up pieces of chicken and adding white beans for fiber, and fresh carrots and onions that she has roasted separately for added sweetness and flavor. "I cook a potato and mash that into the broth for thickening," she says. "That way I don't have to add flour."

Figuring out a way to manage



Tammy Adams, Karl Steene, Chef Leanne Kelleher, and Debrah Agnello are all part of the team working to put on a Soup Bowl in Indian River Shores.

Photo: Tom McCarthy, Jr.

enough to fill up a five gallon bucket has been the daunting part, she says.

"Frankly, I've never made five gallons of soup before. There's a certain amount of winging it going on here," she says.

She's already made three gallons of the soup, enhanced with a special seasoning she buys at the beachside Farmer's Market. It has been safely socked away in the freezer.

"The smell was incredible," she says

lovingly. "Normally we would have eaten it all by now, but I've said, No, we've got to stockpile."

She has also poached and boned "two gigantic four-and-a-half pound chickens I got at Sam's," and frozen those as well.

"We've got a little kitchenette at the community center to work from," she says. "The batch that I make that morning will still be warm, and I'm going to start defrost-

ing the rest a day and a half before." The soups will go into assorted stock pots on the stove top, as well as crock-pots on the side. "We're all aware of all the safety requirements. We're not going to let anything stand."

The Soup Bowl will be staged from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. on Thurs. Nov. 5. A \$5 donation is asked in exchange for soup and bread. Bowls made by volunteers at the Vero Beach Museum of Art will be on sale as well to benefit the cause, as well as raffle tickets for a tureen made by instructors there.

"This is a phenomenal opportunity for there to be community-building here in Indian River Shores," says Ashcroft. "I'm blown away by that."

Other island locations serving soup at midday are Holy Cross Catholic Church and Christ-by-the-Sea United Methodist Church, both on A-1-A, Coldwell Banker Ed Schlitt Realty on Ocean Drive, and St Edward's Upper and Lower Schools, though both are closed to the public.

Anyone interested in staging a Soup Bowl at their workplace, or at home for friends and family is urged to do so, and checks can be sent to the Samaritan Center, 3650 41st St., Vero Beach, FL 32967-1758. Call for (772) 770-2900 for information regarding other sites and available serving supplies.

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Incoming Tide

Kristin Ashcroft: It's one thing after another

BY MICHELLE GENZ
STAFF WRITER

Incoming Tides is an on-going look at newcomers to the barrier island. This week, we look at Vero native Kristin Ashcroft, for whom the tides turned, and took her across the oceans to Europe and the Far East. After more than a decade abroad she has returned to our shores and brought the best of the island community's essence — its legendary largesse — home, and even enhanced.

"You go through the markets in Thailand or in Bali, and you see people smiling from ear to ear, but they have absolutely nothing. You hear of children having their limbs cut off so that they will have to drag themselves through the streets to beg and they will get more sympathy. What can you do?" she asks.

Back in Vero, with that broadened world view, she looks around at her hometown.

"It's great to help the world's community, but start with your own backyard. If a kid is homeless, they are compromised, because they have no life skills. They've lived in a car, or with no adults. They are incapacitated."

To that end, Ashcroft, co-chair of this year's Soup Bowl for the homeless, is looking for 50 people to promise to gather up contributions to the home-



Kristin Ashcroft brushes down the horses before going for a ride with her two daughters at Pointe West.

Photos: Tom McCarthy, Jr.

less totaling \$1000 and thereby forming a coterie of caring she is calling the Soup Bowl 50.

Here is her story:

The aromas of the dinner hour at the John's Island beach club rose in piquant contrast to the conversation of Kristin Ashcroft, as it turned ever more

earnest.

Ashcroft, 43, in her third year as co-chair of the Soup Bowl benefit, these days lives under this mandate: rich or poor, humanity has a right to be fed.

For the past three months, and for a similar chunk of time over the past three years, Ashcroft has given immeasurable energy to helping the Samaritan Center address that need. The transitional homeless shelter, whose families commit to training in life skills as well as employment skills, sits just across the river from where she relaxes, after a Sunday afternoon of playing polo.

Still sporting her boots and riding britches, two hours after a lesson (she has only played for a year and a half, though her daughters are avid equestrians), Ashcroft carries off the field the sport's aura of the royals. Indeed, she is part of Vero's landed gentry, on Florida's compressed timeline, at least: the slowly expanding second generation of Vero islanders.

The daughter of a prominent builder and realtor, who grew up in 31 homes around the barrier island, Ashcroft has returned to Vero after spending her adulthood in Geneva and Tokyo to raise her young daughters here.

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Incoming Tide

berry's stain as her passions rise, Ashcroft discusses her latest cause with a worldly education, a philanthropic bent, and a heart aching for those in need.

She would adamantly urge us to set aside any impression of elegance. Of all the causes she could have chosen to champion, and all the methods of raising funds, from benefit grand balls to rare wine auctions, Ashcroft has decided to join in promoting the most humble of gestures: sharing simple soup and bread with friends and neighbors. To her, it is a way of pausing to think of those forced to live on less than that. For the meal, the Soup Bowl asks only for a \$5 donation at the door.

The sharing of soup in this 16th year of this community ritual has swelled to include 30 official sites, plus dozens more in various workplaces and clubhouses, staffed by more than 700 volunteers, serving a bowl with bread to 4000 guests who each makes a small donation to Vero's Samaritan Center.

Last year, one of Ashcroft's best friends, Lee Moore, another passionate volunteer, came up with the idea of private individuals hosting Soup Bowls in their homes. Her own she called Leelee's SoupBowl-a-palooza. The concept took off like steam off a stock pot; on that same fall Thursday, people were inviting friends over for \$5 suppers of soup in their own kitchens all over town. They served another 1000 people, and sent their checks in to Samaritan.

The gesture provokes generosity in all who witness it.

"It brings people together who wouldn't know each other otherwise," she says. "It doesn't discriminate - it's not a black-tie event." As far as the organization of the fundraiser, there are so many involved, Ashcroft says, that no one tries to claim credit, or be territorial, a huge relief for her. "Nobody seems to have an ego with Soup Bowl. Everybody remembers it's not about us."

All told, the Soup Bowl raised \$50,000 last year.

This year Ashcroft adds to the collusion: though she admits to hating to ask for money, she is reaching out for members who will form The Soup Bowl 50, a group of donors each committing to raise \$1000 on their own, boosting the fund-raiser's dollar totals to double last year's.

Not that Ashcroft wants to alter the tone of the event. It is precisely the democratic, community-wide nature of the tradition that appealed to her when she first signed on.

On her return to Vero Beach not quite five years ago, Ashcroft had been approached by dozens of causes

to volunteer. Samaritan Center held sway, largely because of the appeal of the Soup Bowl event.

"It's because everybody's invited to the party, and you don't need a fancy dress," she says. "You don't have to buy an auction item. There's no fluff and there's no waste. You don't need a fancy party that eats up profits. It gets the resources to the people who need it."

Ashcroft returned to Vero Beach in 2004, after college, a stint in Geneva and 12 years in Tokyo, where her two children were born.

Here to tend to husband David's

mother, recovering from cancer, the family spontaneously decided to stay. Vero felt like home again. But a home they had bought as an investment in John's Island in 2001 was rented for five more months, and the family golf cottage there had just sold. So the couple, their two children and the family dog found temporary quarters with her parents, builder Paul Parent and wife Merry, a realtor.

They are a very close-knit family, Ashcroft says. She has a sister one year younger, Alain, who kept in touch with her St. Ed's friends in her absence - a

favor that would prove fortuitous in Kristin's falling in love with David Ashcroft. During the time abroad, Kristin and her father talked nearly every day, she says.

Kristin Ashcroft, who was born in Vero's old hospital near downtown, had always been "serious and painfully shy," she says. Schooled at St. Edward's, and interested only in studying, babysitting and ballet, she considered it "a gift from God" that she transferred to the public high school for her senior year. A high-achiever, though

CONTINUED ON PAGE 16



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Incoming Tide

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 15

young for her grade, the point was to take a wider range of AP classes. But the result, she says, was that her horizons expanded exponentially.

"That was a great experience. The teachers there were amazing. It was such a good experience to be still living at home, but in kind of the real world – if you will."

By the time she got to college – she began at Tulane in pre-med – she was a different person, she says. The college experience further knocked down

barriers, and her focus broadened as her academic pursuits expanded.

"I could never have predicted the effect college would have on me," she said.

In fact, she was "horribly homesick" at Tulane, with its Northeastern cliques that made her feel "like something out of Little House on the Prairie." After her freshman year, she transferred to the University of Florida, abandoned pre-med, and instead studied all sorts of subjects: art history, architecture, French, pre-law. Ultimately she graduated in communications, intending



Kristin Ashcroft goes for a ride with her daughter Blake, 12

to go to law school. Then a job offer came up through a college classmate, the daughter of Senator Bob Graham, that would take her abroad where she could use her French.

Kristin took the offer and moved to Geneva three days after her college graduation. What was supposed to be a six-month stint, translating databases for an electro-chemical engineering firm, turned into three years.

During that time, she says, she poured herself into her work, and apart from perfecting her language skills, rarely went out to socialize.

One day, on a trip to Los Angeles when her boss came to the states, she finally asked for vacation time, her first in three years.

She booked a stay at a women's retreat, but still had a two-hour window on Friday free to fill. There was only one person she knew in L.A., and that was David Ashcroft, the handsome schoolmate from 7th and 8th grade, who then moved away to Connecticut. She had briefly dated him in high school, when he came back to visit, but she had not reconnected with him since then.

Ashcroft had just started a high-powered job in finance in LA. He worked in derivatives, and had lived the previous four years in Tokyo.

Too shy to call, her sister Alain threatened to call him for her if she didn't, so she dialed the phone. "Of course I remember you," he said, and invited her to dinner.

That night, Ashcroft called her father and told him, "Dad, I have met the man I'm going to marry."

To which a startled Paul Parent responded: "Which daughter is this?"

Soon after reconnecting with Kristin, David Ashcroft returned to Tokyo; she went back to Geneva. They saw each other once more in Geneva, again in

New York and once in Vero, when he proposed.

Their wedding reception was at the old John's Island beach club. The couple went back to Tokyo, and for the next 12 years, Ashcroft worked as an editor at Estee Lauder, taught French and raised her two daughters, Lane, now 13, and Blake, who is 12.

Then, in the summer of 2004 came a call that David Ashcroft's mother, Mary Lou Becker, a 20 year resident of Bermuda Bay married to retired cardiologist David Becker, was seriously ill with cancer. Nearly overnight, they returned to the U.S.

Though her mother-in-law successfully battled the disease, the Ashcrofts never went back. In December of that year, David Ashcroft gave his notice in Tokyo, and took a position with John's Island Real Estate.

"We dropped very abruptly back into Vero," Ashcroft says. "I had never lived here as an adult, and now I'm a mother with two kids."

Soon after her arrival, organizations began asking for her help in fundraising. She chose carefully. "It's not like I was twiddling my thumbs eating bonbons. I have two children, and I was busy."

At the urging of a friend, she agreed to have lunch with Julia Keenan, Samaritan Center administrator. As she reviewed the goals of the center, and counted off various fundraisers that kept it afloat, Ashcroft stopped her at Soup Bowl.

"So many things speak to me," she says. "In Vero Beach, it's one thing after another. I'll be sitting there in my pretty dress and I'll be thinking, all I want to do is tuck in with one of my kids and read a story out loud. But I can't because I'm going out. Enough. I need to be by myself, with my family. This fits me to a tee."



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Arts/Theatre

*Spelling Bee at Riverside Theatre funny and easy to like*BY L.L. ANGEL
COLUMNIST

A knock-out of a play opens the season at Riverside Theatre: *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*, a sensationally funny, fast-paced, impeccably cast musical. It's just impossible not to like it.

Allan D. Cornell, producing artistic director at Riverside, knew what he was doing when he selected this play for the season's kick off.

He knew what he was doing when he hired Bill Castellino to direct, too. Last year, the talented Castellino directed the season's runaway hit *La Cage Aux Folles*. They are two completely different works in many ways: *La Cage* is gorgeously over the top, whereas *Spelling Bee* is small and stalwart, a bit reminiscent of *The Little Engine that Could*.

Even before the first actor appears on stage, the set tells us right where we are. It's a chillingly familiar sight: the notorious multi-purpose cafetorium with bright blue bleachers, a pokey table with two chairs for teachers, and at the back, those institutional double doors leading out to some linoleum-floored unseen hallway. It's an all-American scene that carries with it a thousand collective memories -- some joys, some nightmares -- of school.

In this deceptively simple story, six actors portray quirky adolescent spelling bee contestants on the day of the final contest. Three equally quirky adults are running the competition. Castellino's sublimely talented cast milks this slender premise for all the humor it's worth.

It's a musical with a boisterously clever script (music and lyrics by William Finn).

The 2005 Broadway production of the play was nominated for six Tony Awards, winning two.

First on stage is an attractive, capable-looking woman, tastefully dressed -- Sarah Palin-esque, you might say, with a big smile on her face. The number-one Realtor in Putnam County, and a champion speller herself, Rona has acted as spelling bee moderator for the past nine years. She loves the competing children, and occasionally has to protect them from the strict



vice-principal Douglas Panch.

Panch (Jeff Talbott) has been called in to judge at the last minute, and he looks quite prim about it too. Apparently, there was an incident at the 20th Annual Bee and this is Panch's first time back. A firm-chinned WASP, Panch insists that he's in a better place now and it's easy to see that he will make these contestants play fairly. He squints at them, hand poised above the bell, eager to slam it the instant one of them makes a mistake.

The contestants, eighth grader-ish, have all the unavoidable, awkward goofiness and aching vulnerabilities at

the heart of adolescence.

There is one more, slightly mysterious adult. It's Mitch Mahoney, (J. Cameron Barnett) the Official Comfort Counselor. Mitch is an ex-convict performing his community service with the Bee. He struts and glowers, offering a juice box to losing students as they leave the stage. Most of all he wants them all to know that life is painful, random, and pandemonium. (Barnett delighted audiences last season with his portrayal of Jacob, the

continuously pronounce it. Poor William repeatedly explains to them that "there's an accent *aigu*" but they never hear him. In the end, he falls for another contestant, the winsome young Olive Ostrovsky.

There's even the added twist of inviting four volunteers from the audience to join the act and participate in the Bee. This works surprisingly well. Prior to each night's performance, Rona Peretti (Janna Caida) and Vice-Principal Panch (Jeff Talbott) go over the list of volunteers' names and improvise their introductions. These are lines delivered *sotto voce* like sportscasters at golf matches.

The talented actors sing, dance and improvise their way through a very winning script. All nail their parts with a dexterity that made it impossible for this reviewer to imagine anyone else ever playing the part.

The musical comes with a live band playing in the rafters above the stage. The lighting and sound are exceptionally fine in this production. Hats off to Karl G. Kern, lighting designer and Craig M. Beyrooti, sound designer for achieving some very fine slow-motion effects. Stage manager Lara Terrell sets the production's perfect pace.

The musical is based upon C-R-E-P-U-S-C-U-L-E, an original improvisational play created by Rebecca Feldman and performed by The Farm, a New York-based improvisational comedy troupe. *Spelling Bee* premiered on Broadway at the Circle in the Square in 2005 and closed in 2008 after 1,136 performances.

The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee is playing on Riverside Theatre's Stark Stage through Nov. 1. Call 772-231-6990 or 1-800-445-6745 or visit www.riversidetheatre.com

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Arts/Theatre

Leslie McGuirk serves up playful pups, good manners

BY L.L. ANGEL
COLUMNIST

Leslie McGuirk, the Vero Beach author, illustrator and designer, has done it again. The creator of a hit series of children's books about Tucker the terrier, McGuirk, along with co-author Alex von Bidder, an owner of The Four Seasons Restaurant in New York, will be at the Vero Beach Book Center next week, signing their newest book, *Wiggens Learns His Manners* at The Four Seasons Restaurant.

According to McGuirk, the evening is really more for adults than children. "It's wonderful that Alex is flying down from New York because his manners are so exquisite. It's really an opportunity to talk about manners and why they're so important," she says.

Von Bidder is also co-author of *The Four Seasons: A History of America's Premier Restaurant* and a columnist for *Best Life* magazine. So he knows a thing or two about manners.

McGuirk puts it this way: "If you teach your child good manners, especially in the form of kindness and compassion, your child will have a better life."

Since its publication in New York in mid-August, the book has received rave reviews. Certainly all the right people were at September's launch party for the book at The Four Seasons. There was Dick Parsons, former head of AOLTime Warner, now head of Citigroup, Pamela Fiori, editor in chief of *Town & Country*, and Michael Ovitz, the former head of Disney to name just a few.

In fact, Fiori was so impressed with the book's whimsical illustrations, that McGuirk says she invited the author/

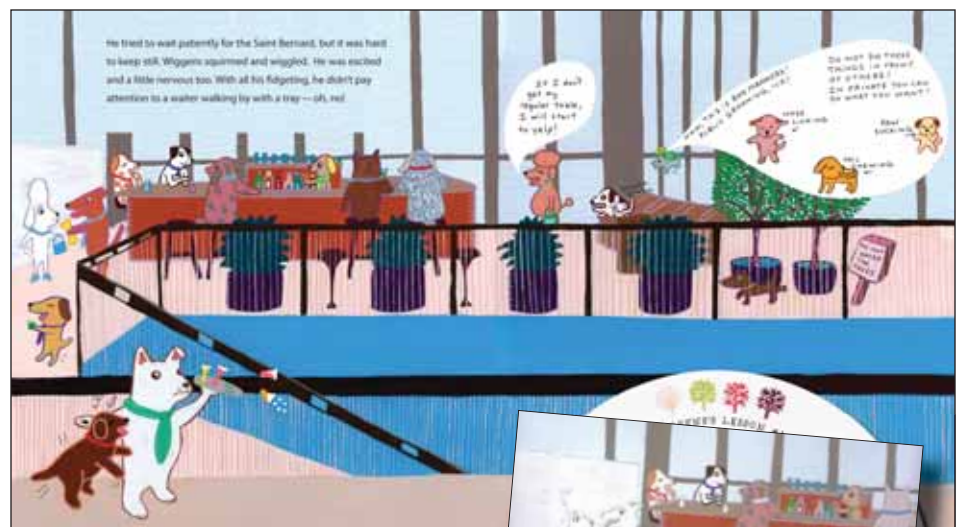


Author/illustrator Leslie McGuirk with co-author Alex Von Bidder at signing for *Wiggens Learns His Manners* at the Four Seasons Restaurant

illustrator to create some artwork for the magazine. It also featured *Wiggens Learns His Manners* in its July 2009 issue.

Judging from the stellar reviews on the back of the handsome book, members of New York's power elite agree.

From entrepreneur Martha Stewart: "This enchanting book serves up delightful illustrations with a generous dollop of humor to teach important



It takes a lot of detailed work and layering to create the finished illustration

An unfinished illustration, interior of The Four Seasons Restaurant—Wiggens bumps into waiter.

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Arts/Theatre

lessons to youngsters...”

Best-selling author, Mary Higgins Clark, says, “I’m so glad Wiggins found the perfect place to learn that kindness and manners will open every imaginable door to a happy life for him.”

Wiggins is a rascally, rowdy Chocolate Labrador puppy whose manners are simply atrocious. His parents are at their wits’ ends when lo and behold, they learn of a special etiquette class at the world-renowned Four Seasons Restaurant. With the help of a Saint Bernard, he and the three other puppies learn ten important lessons and enjoy some delectable food too.

McGuirk, who has been ensconced with her three dogs at Summer Place in a charming artist’s bungalow since May 2000, has written and illustrated a slew of well-received children’s books and had remarkable success with them, as well as with her design work. Some years ago, McGuirk designed over 800 products for the Japanese design company and retailer Takashimaya.

Her popular children’s series featuring Tucker the terrier includes Lucky Tucker, Tucker’s Spooky Halloween, and Ho, Ho, Ho Tucker!

A native of Bronxville, New York and a graduate of Sarah Lawrence College, McGuirk moved here from Maine to escape the winters and to be near her mother in Hobe Sound. McGuirk fell in love with the laid-back beach style of Summer Place, on the north island.

“We don’t mow lawns in Summer Place,” says McGuirk. “It’s like living in a jungle with sandy roads. It’s an enclave of people who love nature and the beach.”

McGuirk has just finished her 14th book and has several more in the works. She is also creative director for the Alexis Agency, an advertising/PR agency specializing in luxury products and services. She also teaches a number of creativity workshops.

That’s how she met von Bidder. McGuirk was teaching a workshop at the Rancho la Puerta spa in Baja, Mexico more than six years ago and von Bidder was there with his family. He took her workshop and the two realized they were kindred spirits.

“I found his spirit to be very similar to mine — playful, yet wise,” she says. “Later, when a friend suggested I do a book on manners, I immediately thought of Alex.”

Fortunately, von Bidder loved McGuirk’s idea of an ill-behaved puppy learning his manners at The Four Seasons and the two of them began working together in earnest. McGuirk made many trips to New York absorbing the extraordinary ambience of The Four Seasons.

Designed by Phillip Johnson and Mies Van der Rohe in 1959, it is the power-lunch place of Manhattan.

McGuirk says it may be the most famous restaurant in the world. Von Bidder told her Jackie Onassis called it the most intimidating and elegant restaurant she’d ever been in. “When you walk up the stairs, to enter, said Jackie, it’s like entering a cathedral.”

“When I would go there to draw it, I would have panic attacks,” says McGuirk. “Trying to capture the ambience of this place with its Picassos and its pool in the dining room had me

acing the floor at night.”

Back home, she worked from photos; she and von Bidder phoned, emailed and worked together for a solid week at the Rancho Puerta spa in Mexico.

They agreed that the book needed four characteristics: to be a great, funny story for kids, to playfully teach manners, to include humor for adults, and to present life lessons for adults as well as children.

Ten lessons are served up on Four Seasons signature plates, emphasizing courtesy, respect, kindness, pa-

tience, restraint, and the importance of expressing gratitude.

McGuirk’s charming narrative is accompanied by her playful gouache illustrations, depicting whimsical dogs in vibrant watercolors. Her talking dogs nimbly cavort across the pages — poodles in blue heels with matching handbags, pups doing their morning yoga poses, even guardian angel dogs whispering encouragements to the three lab pups.

McGuirk and Von Bidder will be signing their book at Vero Beach Book Center at 4 pm Saturday, Nov. 7.

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Festival of Trees set for Nov. 20-22

BY L.L. ANGEL
 COLUMNIST

A lot is happening this week at the Riverside Theatre. The final five performances of the funny *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* will run Oct. 29 through Nov 1. Call 772-231-6990, 1-800-445-6745 or visit riversidetheatre.com

There is one last chance for ghoulish horror at Riverside Children's Theatre's two very scary houses. Every year RCT's fiendishly creative staff turns the children's theatre into a spooky maze in celebration of Halloween and this year there is the Very Creepy and the Not So Creepy from which

to choose. For younger children, there is Scary Schoolyard and for the bigger ones there is the chilling Horror High on Oct. 30 from 5p.m. to 8 p.m. Tickets are \$5 per house or \$8 for both.

The nightingales will sing on Nov. 7-8 when Hans Christian Andersen's classic tale, *The Nightingale*, about an em-

air is the perfect reminder for Riverside Children's Theatre's twelfth annual Festival of Trees on Nov. 20-22. The elves have joined forces with the festival's major sponsor, George E. Warren Corporation, to perform their seasonal



Riverside Children's Theatre's 12th annual Festival of Trees

magic creating a Winter Wonderland with decorated trees, wreaths, gingerbread houses and more. The popular Family Night is Sat., Nov. 21 at 6 p.m. Children are invited to participate in a scavenger hunt — a Reindeer Seek-n-Find. For information and tickets, call 772-234-8052.



Riverside Children's Theatre's Festival of Trees features decorated trees and gingerbread houses

peror who prefers a mechanical bird to a real nightingale, plays at Riverside Children's Theatre. Performances are at 1:30 p.m. both days and tickets are \$6. For the Haunted House and *The Nightingale* call 772-231-6990.

The singing continues on Nov. 12. It's Riverside Theatre's Friends Committee's annual luncheon fundraiser featuring International Chef Andy Lo Russo, singing and preparing delicious Italian recipes for a unique four-course meal. Tickets are \$125. Call the special events office at 772-231-5860 extension 260.

That invigorating tang of fall in the

The production of *It's a Wonderful Life: A Live Radio Play* running from Nov. 19 - Dec. 6 on the Stark Mainstage is a must no matter how you feel about the holidays. Call 772-231-6990 or 800-445-6745 or visit www.riversidetheatre.com.

And, if all of the above isn't enough, it's now possible to take belly dancing lessons at Riverside. Judy Cornell (stage name, Aisha) is teaching a belly dancing

class Saturdays from 12:30 p.m. to 2 p.m. The class runs through Nov. 21 and each session costs \$25. Belly dancing is fabulous for strengthening abdominal muscles and core strength as well as for increasing stamina. Aisha has performed abroad in Canada, Hungary, and Egypt, and stateside in Florida and California. Call 772-234-8052 for information.

For the classicist, there's nothing better than ballet. Adam Schnell teaches ballet for adults Mondays and Wednesdays from 9:30 a.m. to 11 p.m. and Tuesdays and Thursdays from noon to 1:30

My Vero

p.m. Admission is \$15 per class or a class card is available for \$130 that provides admission to 10 classes. Admission is ongoing. Call 772-234-8052.

And here's exciting fillip for Vero thespians. Riverside is now offering acting master classes to be taught by resident actors. This means New York actors who are here performing in specific productions will teach acting classes. The next classes will be taught on Dec. 1 in conjunction with *It's a Wonderful Life: A Live Radio Play*. More specific information will come nearer the date. For information about adult classes, call 772-234-8052.

Three exciting workshops take place at the Vero Beach Museum of Art this November. Joel Johnson will teach a workshop in Modeling Form in Watercolor for three days, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, Nov. 6 - 8 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. The workshop will emphasize value as it relates to the relationship of light and dark in developing form. Cost is \$175 or \$165 for museum members.

If your jewelry box is cluttered with broken jewelry or you want to be part of the beaded jewelry crazy, Linda Kline has the workshop for you. In Klein's Basic Jewelry Assembly and Repair, students will learn about composition, technique, method and design as well as the basics of assembly and how to make minor repairs. The workshop is Sat., Nov. 7, 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and costs \$55 or \$35 for museum members.

Linda "Lulu" Badgley will help you get ready for holiday gift giving in a workshop entitled Book-Making--Folded Books. Students will learn a sampling of small, folded books that can be used as greeting cards, journals, scrapbooks, and photo albums. Illustrations, demonstrations and guided practice will give the student a collection of template books that can be developed into finished works of art. The class will be Sat., Nov. 14 from 10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. The cost is \$75 or \$65 for museum members.

No matter what the medium, all artists agree that drawing is essential and John Cullen is teaching three different classes in drawing at The Vero Beach Museum of Art this November. His first class, Drawing, is primarily for beginners and uses the "block in" method of drawing.

It is a time-tested approach, which emphasizes the logic of structure in design and composition. The class is offered Mondays, Nov. 9 - Dec. 7 from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. The cost is \$75 or \$65 for museum members.

Cullen's Drawing with Mixed Media introduces students to new and experimental techniques along with a variety of mixed media. Classes meet

Wednesdays, Nov. 11-Dec. 9 from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. The cost is \$75 or \$65 for museum members.

Cullen's Advanced Drawing class is for seasoned students who wish to extend their skills in drawing. Classes meet Tuesdays, Nov. 10 to Dec. 8 from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and costs \$125 or \$115 for museum members.

Moving from two-dimension to three is a great adventure in George Paxton's Portrait Sculpture class. Paxton guides students in creating a single portrait sculpture using a model as a reference to create an accurate like-

ness. This course is appropriate for beginner to advanced students. Classes meet Mondays, Nov. 2-30 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and costs \$150 or \$140 for museum members.

Maybe creative people just attract clutter. For all the creative-types out there struggling to overcome the clutter in their lives, here's the answer. Suzanne Fox teaches De-Clutter Your Creativity in two classes, on Tuesdays, Nov. 10 and 17, 6-8:30 pm. Fox says that "the beginning of the holiday season is the perfect time to explore ways to prevent internal and external

"clutter" from acting on our creative dreams." The two classes are \$75 or \$65 for museum members. For information or to register for classes, call 772-231-0707, ext. 116.

The Vero Beach Art Club will hold the Art Trail Tour of 10 talented artists' studios/homes on Saturday, Dec. 5 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. According to Christina Mordenti Tascon, office manager of the Vero Beach Art Club, this event has been very well received in the past. So save the date and for more information call Tascon at 772-231-0303 or visit www.verobeachartclub.org.

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Health

Vero doctors begin administering H1N1 vaccine to patients

BY ALINA LAMBIET
STAFF WRITER

Unlike neighboring counties to the South which have begun holding swine flu clinics, the Indian River County health department has decided to hold off on mass inoculations until mid-November and has begun distributing the limited supplies of H1N1 flu vaccine it has received to Vero Beach doctors to administer to their patients.

"We're just trying to get it to the target groups as quickly as possible, and by giving it to those primary doctors, we think it will reach the public faster," said Larry Macke, spokesperson for the health department.

But the local health department said it only received about 4,000 doses of the vaccine in the past week, less than half of what it expected to have on hand by now.

The vaccine it has received has been distributed to doctors who deal with the groups the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention consider to be



Taylor Smith, 8, inhales an H1N1 nasal spray vaccine.

Photo: Tom McCarthy, Jr.

at high-risk for contracting the virus, said Macke. Additional shipments of the vaccine, which comes in a nasal

mist form or a shot, are expected to arrive weekly.

The high risk groups are children, pregnant women, people caring for infants under 6 months and adults 25 to 64 with underlying health conditions.

optimistically, that some 120 million doses of the vaccine could be available by mid-October. But only about 11 million has reached health departments around the country, according to the CDC.

More than 1,000 deaths have been attributed to the H1V1 strain nationwide and since April of 2009, some 95 children have died of the strain. Indian River County has not attributed any deaths to swine flu, said Macke, but it has stopped tracking the number of cases, assuming that 99 of every 100 cases is H1V1.

The number of visits to doctors, and hospitalizations, attributed to flu symptoms has climbed sharply over the past several weeks, far higher than what medical professionals see during peak flu season, according to the CDC. Flu season typically runs November to May.

Macke said the health department had hoped to have about 9,000 doses by now, but since it received far less than expected, it is waiting until mid-November to hold mass vaccinations. The first target for those: Indian River County school-aged children.

"Every county has chosen to do this



Madison Smith, 3, receives the H1N1 nasal spray vaccine from nurse Jackie Klock while her mother Janie Smith and Dr. Susan O'toole-Evans look on at Island Pediatrics.

Healthcare workers are also among the first to receive the vaccine.

With last week's declaration of a national emergency by President Obama, the government now has the power to allow hospitals to move emergency rooms off site and increase steps to protect the healthy.

The move comes as 46 states now report the virus is widespread and production of the vaccine is lagging. The federal government had expected,

a different way. Some have decided after receiving vaccine to hold it back until they can have clinic," Mackey said. "Our policy has been to get it out, targeting the highest-risk groups. We find that in seeking to reach those high-risk groups best, the solution is to get it to the doctors first."

On Oct. 24, St. Lucie County held its first mass vaccination for high-risk groups which was marked by long lines and some 2,500 doses adminis-

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tered. Two other clinics are expected in November.

This week, Martin County offered free vaccinations for the same groups at two schools. More clinics are planned in November.

Indian River County, with a population of about 132,000, reflects the dire situation facing health officials around the country as they manage the first flu pandemic in 40 years. They have promised to provide vaccine to anyone who wants it but the companies making the drug have had production delays and not enough of the vaccine is yet available.

At the same time, they're trying to persuade a still-reluctant public to get vaccinated. A Washington Post/ABC-News poll last week found that while Americans were increasingly worried about contracting the virus, about a third of the population still had concerns about the safety of the vaccine.

Convincing people of the importance of getting the vaccine, especially for those high-risk groups, is paramount, said Macke.

He said in at least one instance in another Florida county, they held a clinic with 300 doses but just 100 people showed up.

"It is hard to tell at this point what the demand is going to be like," Macke said. "We won't have a strong sense until we start having these clinics. We may get a great flurry of activity at first, and then the next one may be not have as many people. We're just asking people to be patient as we try to get the vaccine out there."

Of the doses the health department has received, Macke said, the majority is in shot form, which is the killed virus. The FluMist vaccine, the nasal spray, is a dosage of the live virus.

Some doctors are opting out of giving the mist, but are on waiting lists for the shot form. The mist is recommended for children age 2 and older.

Dr. Genevieve Mallon, a Vero Beach pediatrician, has received about 100 doses of the mist form.

"We do have a lot of people who really want it," said Mallon, who has been in practice for the past nine and a half years in Vero. "Lots of people are calling for it. While we're hoping some of our kids who are at high risk come in and get it, we're not holding it back. We're giving it to anyone who wants it."

Mallon said she tells parents reluctant to give kids the vaccine that she is so certain it's safe, she's already given it to her two young daughters.

"I tell them seasonal flu vaccine is new every year, that they change the strain that it protects," Mallon said. "H1N1 is no more new than the seasonal flu vaccine, and I feel the benefits far outweigh the risks."

Getting the H1N1 vaccine:

The CDC has identified several target groups to be the first to receive the H1N1 vaccine:


- Pregnant women
- People who live with or care for children younger than 6 months of age (because children less than 6 months of age aren't eligible to receive the H1N1 vaccine)
- People between the ages of 6 months through 24 years of age
- People ages 25 through 64 who are at higher risk for H1N1 because of chronic health disorders or compromised immune systems
- Health care and emergency medical services personnel

The Indian River county health department is asking that those in the high risk groups contact their primary care physician to receive the vaccine. Health clinics are expected sometime in mid-November, with the first one likely to involve school-age children. For more information, search the health department's website at www.myirchd.com or through the state's flu website, www.myflusafety.com or call 794-7400, ext. 2430.

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Health

Patricia McQueen honored with scholarship

BY LISA ZAHNER
STAFF WRITER

By all accounts, Patricia McQueen was a caring respiratory therapist.

Known as "Trish" to her friends, McQueen knew her craft well. She was an asthmatic and died of complications of the illness at age 50 this past May.



McQueen worked the night shift at Indian River Medical Center, so she did a lot of the behind-the-scenes duties and was part of the 30-member respiratory therapy staff for 23 years.

She touched the lives of patients and those of the many students she trained. She took better care of everyone else than she did herself, a trait that could be the downfall of someone

with serious pulmonary illness.

Not being able to breathe is a scary thing, and treating patients with chronic diseases which affect their breathing goes beyond book learning. It's a very personal type of medicine, from taking blood samples to determine the oxygen level in the bloodstream to monitoring critical patients on ventilators to suctioning out their lungs so the air can flow.

After her death in May, McQueen's co-workers sought to establish a meaningful and fitting memorial. Since she was especially adept at patiently training the four students each year who complete their respiratory therapy studies at IRMC as part of the Indian River State College program, they decided to raise \$10,000 to start a scholarship in McQueen's memory.

The scholarship is for local students who want to make a career of respiratory therapy. In addition to taking donations, co-workers in the Respiratory Therapy Department, led by Rebecca Abbott, are coordinating a 5k run/walk to take place at South Beach Park on Halloween morning.

Abbott remembers McQueen as "a devoted employee, dedicated to her profession," and said she owes a great debt to her for her own training as part of her coursework at Indian River State College. No matter how tired she was or how she might have been struggling that day with her own asthma, Abbott said McQueen flashed a perennial, sincere smile to all who encountered her.

The scholarship effort gives Abbott and the other organizers the opportunity to tell people about Trish and to educate them about asthma, a disease which claims more than 6,000 lives each year nationwide.

Chronic illness requires diligent attention

Asthma is defined as "a chronic, inflammatory disorder of the airways characterized by wheezing, breathing difficulties, coughing, chest tightness and other possible symptoms" by the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America.

Affecting more women than men and about 4 percent of school-age children, asthma can occur at any stage of life and can either be triggered by a reaction to allergens or by a non-allergy factor such as an inhaled irritant.

Most people have heard of or seen asthma inhalers, which aid patients experiencing an asthma attack, but

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according to barrier island resident and board-certified pulmonologist Michele Maholtz, the effective treatment of asthma requires diligent, daily care and medication.

In Florida, Maholtz said, she finds that patients have the most trouble with their asthma during times of extreme temperatures. She said the hot, humid and oppressive summers are tough, as are the cold snaps we experience throughout the winter. Anyone who experiences difficulty breathing during these times, or other signs of asthma such as chest tightness or a nagging cough that just won't go away, should get checked to see if they have asthma.

Though she sees a great number of patients with other chronic lung diseases such as emphysema, lung cancer and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease — which she said are overwhelmingly caused by smoking — Maholtz said her asthma patients have the greatest potential for having

work they do in the hospital setting. “Respiratory therapists do so many things with the patients that help us as physicians, from giving nebulizer treatments to taking blood gas tests and monitoring people who are on a ventilator,” she said. “But probably the most important thing they do is that they play a huge role in educating patients about asthma, about their medications, the equipment and their treatments.”

“Respiratory therapists also work in conjunction with home health care and in skilled nursing and assisted living facilities. Hospital officials said the

you have to take it every day, they like to rely on an emergency inhaler when they get into trouble.”

Maholtz not only worked with McQueen since 1993, but also treated her as a patient, so she's participating in the 5k and helping support the effort. She praised the members of the Respiratory Therapy Department for the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 26



Michele Maholtz Photo: Tom McCarthy, Jr.

a “normal” life with the advances in asthma medications available today, especially the maintenance medications or inhaled corticosteroids that patients can take to prevent attacks.

“I think treating asthma is the most rewarding thing I do because you can actually make people feel a lot better if you can get them on the right medication and they take it,” she said.

Sticking to a plan is key

The biggest problem, Maholtz said, is that too many asthma patients do not stick to their asthma action plans. She calls them non-compliant patients.

“When people are feeling good, they don't want to take their medication and we have trouble convincing them why they need to do it,” she said. “Patients don't want to take their maintenance medication because it's expensive and



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Health

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 25

job prospects for respiratory therapists are pretty good.

Abbott and the other members of the staff train students from the college so they get the hands-on experience they need to pursue certification and then join them as professional respiratory therapists. She said some of

the procedures respiratory therapists perform can be tedious and difficult to master, but that McQueen was the best teacher ever, especially with students who were very young and inexperienced or nervous during training.

"Sometimes we would work with a student to do something and, when it wasn't working, Trish would come over and put both the student and the pa-

tient at ease and walk them through it, with that smile," Abbott said. "She had more patience than anyone with the students and she worked with them as long as it took because that's the only way to learn."

For more information about the 5k run/walk on Saturday, go to the Runner's Depot website at www.runnersdepotvb.com or call 772-

567-4311, ext. 2409.

Donations made payable to the Patricia McQueen Scholarship Fund can be sent to Indian River Medical Center, Respiratory Therapy Department, 1000 36th Street, Vero Beach, Fla., 32960 and will be deposited with the Indian River State College Foundation towards the scholarship endowment fund.

Asthma Facts

What is asthma? Asthma is a disorder of the lungs that causes intermittent symptoms.

In the airways there is:

- Swelling or inflammation, specifically in the airway linings
 - Production of large amounts of mucus that is thicker than normal
 - Narrowing because of muscle contractions surrounding the airways
- The symptoms of asthma include:
- Feeling short of breath
 - Frequent coughing, especially at night
 - Wheezing (a whistling noise during breathing)
 - Difficulty breathing
 - Chest tightness

Asthma Attack, Early Warning Signs

- A runny nose, headache, or itchy chin often precedes an asthma attack.
- Trouble sleeping and feeling tired are other typical signs.
- So are dark circles under the eyes and less tolerance for exercise.
- Frequently, people get moody before an asthma attack starts.

What is adult-onset asthma? When a doctor makes a diagnosis of asthma in people older than 20, it is known as adult-onset asthma. Among those who may be more likely to get adult-onset asthma are:

- Women who are having hormonal changes, such as those who are pregnant or who are experiencing menopause
- Women who take estrogen following menopause for 10 years or longer
- People who have just had certain viruses or illnesses, such as a cold or flu
- People with allergies, especially to cats
- People who are exposed to environmental irritants, such as tobacco smoke, mold, dust, feather beds, or perfume. Irritants that bring on asthma symptoms are called "asthma triggers." Asthma brought on by workplace triggers is called "occupational asthma."

What is the difference between childhood asthma and adult-onset asthma?

Adults tend to have lower lung capacity (the volume of air you are able to take in and forcibly exhale in one second) after middle age because of changes in muscles and stiffening of chest walls. This decreased capacity may cause doctors to miss the diagnosis of adult-onset asthma.

source: Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America, www.aafa.org

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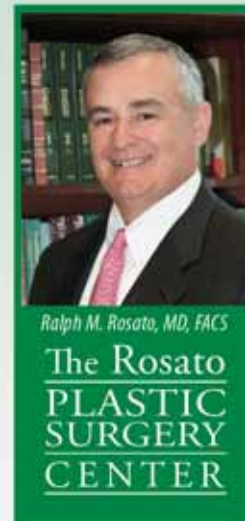
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Health

Hundreds run in Beachside Half Marathon



Shiny medals await runners at the finish line of the Beachside Half Marathon.

The Beachside Half Marathon was held October 17 with hundreds running to raise money to benefit the Healthy Start Coalition. The event also included a one-mile fun run.

Female winners were Gina Discenza of Sebastian in first place, followed by Talita Argenio of Fort Pierce and Margie Ritchey of Vero Beach, in second and third place, respectively.

Male winners were Mark Swart of Jensen Beach in first place, followed by Eddie Branigan of Vero Beach and Robert LaSalle of Port St. Lucie in second and third place, respectively.

Photos: Tom McCarthy, Jr.




Lisa Terry-Colket heads under the Merrill P. Barber Bridge as she enters the home stretch.




Getting off the line before the sun comes up, runners begin the Beachside Half Marathon.

MORE PHOTOS ON PAGE 28





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Health

BEACHSIDE HALF MARATHON FROM PAGE 27



Rounding the corner out of Royal Palm Point, Christie Pietrosante and Shanon Matheny stick together early in the Marathon.



Over halfway through the Beachside Half marathon, Amy Colclough keeps her pace up running east down Camelia Lane.

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"I thought I would never run another marathon. My varicose veins had become very painful and I just felt I did not have reason to run 26 miles. In March, my mother was diagnosed with lung cancer, although she had never smoked a day in her life. Her Oncologist said she was about to run a marathon in order to beat lung cancer. Unfortunately, she did not win her marathon, but her courage gave me the reason I needed to get back in the race. In her honor, I'll be running with a life-saving mission in the NYC marathon as part of Fred's Team. Dr. Beckett has removed my varicose and spider veins and keeps my legs feeling good enough to run, my Mom's memory gives me reason to run!"



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Where is everybody? Not in Mexico.

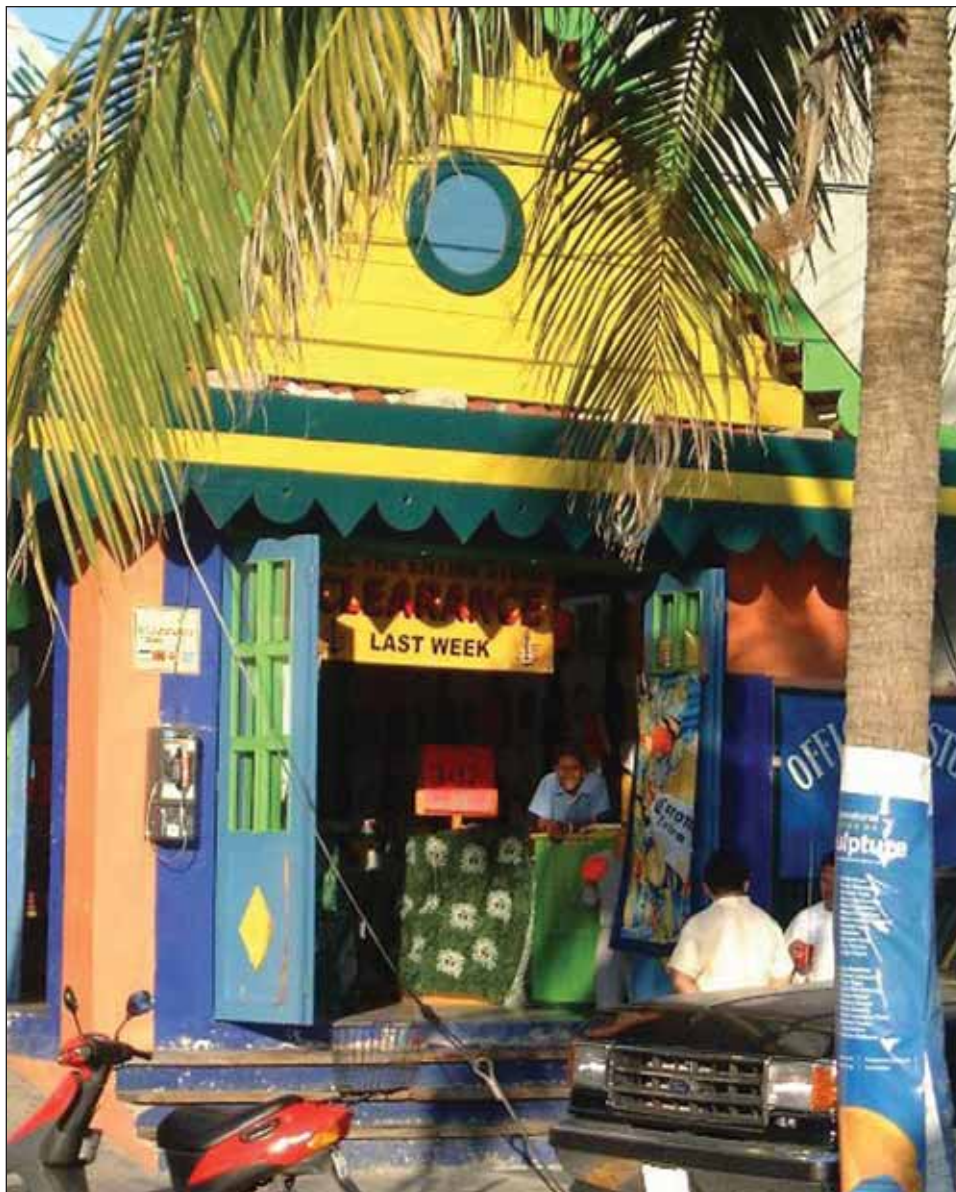
BY TIM CARMAN
THE WASHINGTON POST

My wife and I had the cabbie drop us in downtown Isla Mujeres so we could polish off some croissants and a plate of chilaquiles, that Mexican breakfast staple, before wandering over to Playa del Norte, the island's most popular beach.

As we sat at the outdoor cafe, the early-morning sun still formulating its plan of attack on our cubicle-pale bodies, we couldn't help noticing that aside from the wait staff and the steroidal lobster lolling in a nearby tank, we were about the only creatures around.

Our sense of being the last tourists on the island only intensified as we walked those few quiet blocks to the beach. The narrow streets, crowded with shops and restaurants and hotels, were almost deserted, too. The browned, weather-beaten men and women who stood vigil outside their stores viewed us, I felt, less as tourists than as sheep that must be trapped, and not released, until sheared of our wool.

The come-hither hustle, of course, is nothing new to Mexican tourist centers, but the relentlessness, even desperation, of these street pitches underscored a sad truth about Isla Mujeres this past August: The place was dead, and merchants had far fewer opportunities to make a buck.



Shopkeepers waiting for a customer in Isla Mujeres

try, but I still wanted to hear it from shopkeepers' mouths. Everywhere I went, particularly if I didn't have to converse in my embarrassing pidgin Spanish, I'd ask the owner why the island was so devoid of tourists.

Their answers were always the same: the global economic downturn and swine flu.

The country widely viewed as the epicenter of H1N1 virus was obviously paying the price for it. During the height of the swine flu hysteria in late April and early May, both the U.S. State Department and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention advised against all nonessential travel to Mexico.

Some companies outright banned business trips to the country, cruise ships avoided Mexican ports of call and airlines cut back flights. The warnings and restrictions took a quick toll on tourism, the nation's third-leading source of revenue after oil exports and

money transfers from Mexicans working abroad.

Some news sources during the spring pegged the drop in tourism dollars in Cancun at 82 percent, requiring the layoffs of tens of thousands of hotel employees.

A truism of information is that good news never travels as fast, or penetrates as deeply, as bad news. By the summer, long after media outlets began reporting that H1N1 wasn't as deadly as feared and that the number of new cases in Mexico had dropped precipitously, tourists were still hesitant to return to the country.

Tourists, in fact, were keeping their distance despite such tantalizing offers as Real Resorts' bold "flu-free guarantee," which promised a free vacation for three straight years if you could verify that you came down with H1N1 while vacationing at one of the chain's hotels.

Even if the "swine flu discounts,"

as my wife and I started referring to them, aren't as generous as they were earlier this year, Americans still have a built-in discount these days. The dollar's exchange rate against the peso is approaching all-time highs. A

t current rates, each dollar exchanged will return you about 13 pesos, far better than the nine- or 10-peso rate you got during the late '90s.

Your cash will go a long way on Isla Mujeres, particularly if you know where to spend it. Few tourists come to the island for its night life or Mayan ruins, since the skinny strip of land pales in comparison with other destinations on the Yucatan peninsula when it comes to those kinds of attractions.

Your focus on Isla Mujeres, in fact, will almost always be away from the island -- toward the clear, multicolored water that grows gradually darker from shore to sea, from pale powder blue to turquoise to royal blue.

Ninety percent of your pleasure will be derived from the outer edges of Isla Mujeres. It might come from lounging on the pristine beaches of Playa del Norte or gobbling down the Mayan fish plate known as *tikin xic* on Playa Lancheros, or strolling the pathways of Punta Sur as they wind around and through the rugged cliffs on the southern side of the island, offering close encounters with a still-untamed section of the Caribbean as its waves slam hard against rock and land. All these



Beach furniture sits empty on Isla Mujeres

The European backpackers who usually descend upon the island at that time of year were mostly absent. So were diners at some of Isla's finest restaurants, including Casa O's, where one Friday evening we were the only two customers sitting beneath the circular palapa with the gorgeous sunset views of Mujeres Bay. And Playa del Norte? We had the run of the sugar-white beaches once we made it through the gantlet of street hawkers.

It wasn't hard to pinpoint the troubles afflicting the local tourism indus-



Fish are plentiful, but tourists aren't, on Isla Mujeres.

are cheap thrills in the best sense of the term.

Guidebooks will try to persuade you to lay down serious cash for a chance to snorkel at another attraction on the island's fringes: Garrafon Natural Reef Park. (Garrafon's fees vary, depending on your preferred activities, but expect to spend nearly \$30 just to enter the place.)

CONTINUED ON PAGE 54

Travel



Beaches of Isla Mujeres are relatively empty.

The park is, without a doubt, a gorgeous spot with access to the island's best coral reefs. It also has zip lines and a climbing tower and kayaking and

restaurants. But here's what it doesn't have: a sense of connection to the island itself. Garrafon looks like a rusty slice of Kings Dominion on a strip of

land that still feels, in many ways, like a rustic old fishing town.

If it's snorkeling you want, locals will tell you that the place to go is just up the street from Garrafon: a private beach with the similar name, Garrafon

They — the kids, that is -- will just flee in terror as they see a massive school of fish rushing right toward them.

What do you, the adult traveler, have to fear on Isla Mujeres? Not a lot. Mexico has prepared for the fall and winter seasons with millions of swine flu vaccine doses, and you certainly don't need to sweat all the latest State Department warnings about drug-cartel-related violence, which is relegated mostly to the northern border towns.

But you do have to worry about petty crime. On an island where the average wage can be less than \$20 a day, a few discontented souls may have no problem levying a "tourist tax" on visiting Americans; locals will warn you, repeatedly, to keep your valuables locked away while enjoying the island's beach culture. You should listen.

You also need to worry about something else: that this quaint little island might one day aspire to be the next Cancun. Isla Mujeres Palace, a luxury property, is already open there, and more fancy-looking properties are under construction on the south end of the island, not far from Garrafon.

And just as worrisome to someone like me: Taco Campos, the island's best taqueria, has vanished from the baseball field where it was once located. I momentarily panicked at the thought of missing those tacos, but then the

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Not many tourists on streets of Isla Mujeres

de Castilla. For about \$5 per person, you can enjoy a beach chair and an umbrella and, for a few bucks more, get the proper equipment for snorkeling.

You can even buy a small container of pellets and quickly find yourself surrounded by hundreds of hungry fish, each seemingly ready to nibble the flesh right off your hands. Don't worry. They want the pellets. One tip, though: Don't feed the marine life around nervous kids at this family-friendly beach.

cabbie said that he was related to the owner, who had renamed the institution and moved it to a spot much farther south.

Within minutes, we were sitting at a table at El Cachirul, under a TV playing "Charlie and the Chocolate Factory" in Spanish, and enjoying a platter full of the freshest corn-tortilla tacos, each brimming with meats and tomatoes and onions and cilantro. It's one of Isla Mujeres' few pleasures not found on a beach.

Touring the graves of the famous and historical

The west is filled with cemeteries you can visit with historical celebrities and other well-known folks.

WHITNEY FRIEDLANDER
LOS ANGELES TIMES

When Patricia Brooks was visiting her son Jonathan in California, he told her he was going to take her to see celebrities. Excited, she imagined a glamorous dinner at Spago. Instead, he took her to Pierce Bros. Westwood Village Memorial Park.

The final resting place of Marilyn Monroe, Billy Wilder, Jack Lemmon, Walter Matthau and Natalie Wood, the Westwood cemetery may have more stars per square foot than any place in Los Angeles. Brooks has since written three books on the subject, including "Laid to Rest in California," which she co-wrote with Jonathan, a freelance journalist.

"Ironically, it's a way to see history come alive," says Steve Goldstein, who runs BeneathLosAngeles.com with his brother Ken and is the author of "L.A.'s Graveside Companion." We asked Brooks, Goldstein and other history buffs to tell us about their favorite cemeteries of the West.

Rosedale Cemetery, Los Angeles

One of the oldest cemeteries in Los Angeles, Rosedale celebrates its 125th anniversary in November. "It's full of Egyptian-style pyramid mausoleums, loads of marble angels and weeping figures and stone," Brooks says.

Although actress Hattie McDaniel ("Gone With the Wind") wished to be buried at what is now Hollywood Forever, its owners forbade it, so the pioneering African American actress was interred after her death in 1952 at this West Adams location, the first cemetery in Los Angeles County open to all races and creeds. (Hollywood Forever now has a monument honoring her.)

There's also Chinese American actress Anna May Wong, serial killer Louise Peete, who was executed at San Quentin State Prison, and jazz great Art Tatum.

Boothill Graveyard, Tombstone, Ariz.

It's only fitting that Tombstone, which gained fame for a shootout, has a rough-and-tough gunslinger grave site. Check out the political commentary on the epitaphs of Billy Clanton, Frank McLauray and Tom McLauray, killed as they battled Wyatt Earp and his posse at the O.K. Corral. For a taste of headstone humor, there is "Here lies Lester Moore / Four slugs for a 44 / No



Boothill Graveyard, Tombstone, Ariz.

Les / No more" and George Johnson (wrongly sentenced to hang for buying a stolen horse): "He was right / We was wrong / But we strung him up / And now he's gone." Who says you can't be a quick draw with a pen?

Cypress Lawn Memorial Park, Colma, Calif.

It might be more accurate to include the entire city of Colma, because the Bay Area suburb is known as "The City of Souls" for its high dead-to-living ratio. Around the turn of the 20th century, when San Francisco officials realized that its space was at a premium, authorities created new burial grounds in nearby Colma.

Complete with a small forest of trees, a fine-art collection and stained-glass mausoleums, this is the final resting place for Northern California aristocracy such as William and Phoebe Hearst and San Francisco Chronicle co-founder Charles de Young, who was shot dead in the newspaper building in 1880 by a politician's angry son.

Hollywood Forever Cemetery, Los Angeles

One of the few cemeteries in the area known for its intricate statues and marble architecture, Hollywood Forever was founded in 1899 as Hollywood Memorial Park and is on the National Register of Historical Places. Its famous tenants include Douglas Fairbanks, Cecil B. DeMille, Rudolph Valentino and Mel Blanc. Founders Isaac Lankershim and son-in-law Isaac Van Nuys wouldn't deign to be buried with such riffraff and are in Boyle Heights' Evergreen Cemetery.

Inglewood Park Cemetery, Inglewood

"Why is Betty Grable in Inglewood?" Goldstein asks. "At the time she died, it was a nice suburb. Cesare Cardini, who [is credited with creating] the Caesar salad, is in Inglewood. The guy who tracked down Butch and Sundance is

there. I found the mother of [author] James Ellroy [in Inglewood], right by Big Mama Thornton." Goldstein also found the grave of "Little Mouse," Charlie Chaplin's son Norman, who lived just three days, in Inglewood Park.

Kit Carson Park and Historic Cemetery, Taos, N.M.

Don't know a lot about New Mexico history? Not a problem. The markers in this tiny cemetery reveal added details about some of Taos' permanent residents. Padre Antonio José Martínez "was the son of a prominent local land owner," Brooks says. He was excommunicated and had quite an adventurous, rascal type of life. The placard on his grave reads, 'He retired from the pastorate due to the stress of his time,' which was really because he was kicked out."

Lake View Cemetery, Seattle

Situated on Capitol Hill, the literally named cemetery was incorporated

in 1872 as Seattle Masonic Cemetery. Most visitors come to the lush, serene landscape to pay respects to martial artist Bruce Lee and his son, Brandon, who were laid to rest in the vicinity of a department store magnate (John W. Nordstrom), an Indian princess (Chief Seattle's daughter Princess Angeline) and others who helped shaped the city.

Linwood Cemetery, Glenwood Springs, Colo.

Doc Holliday, Wyatt Earp's famous shooting buddy, died destitute in Glenwood Springs in 1887, a year after Linwood was incorporated. The good dentist was "most likely buried in a county plot in the potter's field section of the cemetery," says Cindy Hines, executive director of the Frontier Historical Museum in Glenwood Springs. While there, you can visit Harvey "Kid Curry" Logan, who ran with Butch and Sundance and who committed suicide after a posse tracked him down after robbing a train.

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Style

Fashion flap:

Yes, thin is in . . . but are we surprised?

BY ROBIN GIVHAN
THE WASHINGTON POST

The fashion industry just finished its twice-yearly round of runway shows and like clockwork the voices of discontent rise up to complain about the excessiveness of the clothes, the high prices and, most vociferously, the skinny models. The industry has been unveiling its wares in the same manner for decades and each time, it opens itself up for attack by a culture that has turned bitterly — and in some cases, irrationally — against it.

It's always a bit discomfiting when people raise their voices in anger because they've gotten wind that designers are making and selling \$25,000 dresses. After all, it's not as if the existence of a dress that costs as much as a car negates the availability of cute \$25 frocks at Target. And it isn't as though edicts have been issued that all women must now dress like one of the superheroes on Balenciaga's runway.

For personal and sometimes tortured reasons — *I can't have it so no one else can!* — observers declare that they just don't understand the attraction of these strange and expensive clothes. That would be

a fair argument if those same complainers lashed out at people who spend thousands of dollars on Redskins season tickets, vintage wines, first-edition books or midlife-crisis cars. But those industries don't stir nearly as much ire from people who are uninterested in them.

Everyone has a passion that is lost on others. And to be fair to the fashion industry: It may be struggling, but so far, no government has had to bail it out.

But the latest spate of complaints about the models being too thin are something else entirely. They've been a seasonal frustration ever since the era of the super-model ended in the 1990s and the industry turned to waifs. Everyone intimately responsible for employing these wispy mannequins typically deflects criticism by declaring the skinny young women part of a fashion cycle that mysteriously churns all on its own.

The size of the models came up this season, in part, because one of the most widely read German women's magazines, *Brigitte*, announced it would stop using professional models in its pages beginning in January and would replace them with women from its staff or those who audition online, which is to say, it would replace professional models with amateurs.

Then there was the recent flap over Polo Ralph Lauren model Filippa Hamilton. A photograph of her in an advertisement was retouched into what amounted to a cartoon. She looked like a big-headed doll with a noggin larger than her derriere. The design house said, in a statement, that the altered image was a mistake. Then the former model said she was fired by Polo Ralph Lauren because she didn't fit the samples. The design house called her beautiful and healthy but unable to fulfill her contractual obligations.

The story of Hamilton, and the often-repeated detail that she is 5-foot-10 and 120 pounds, makes for a perfect rallying point for anyone concerned about the impact of the fashion industry on impressionable girls, disconsolate women and the culture in general. But something more complicated is going on than just the insensitivity of designers who want to drape their wares on hangers with legs.

It is true that aesthetics are cyclical and the fashion industry's preferences for models has shifted from Mayflower society ladies to girl-next-door blondes to Brazilians to Eastern Europeans to jolie laide -- often for no clearer reason than

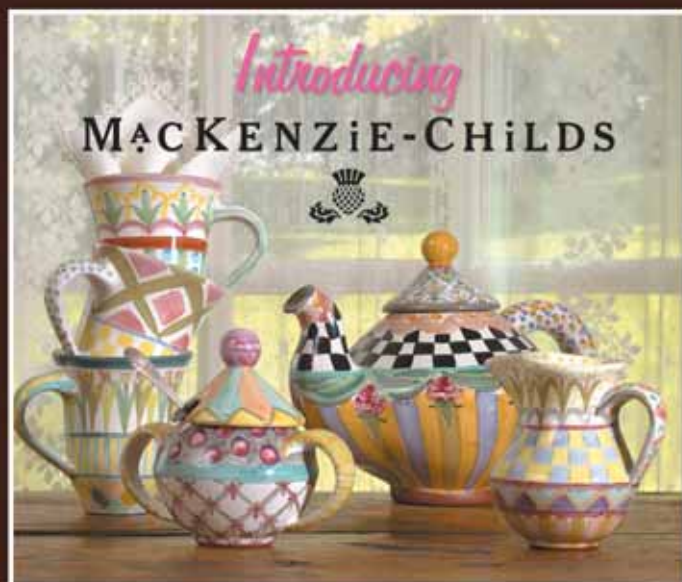


Model Filippa Hamilton was made freakishly thin by digital tinkering. Here, she's normal size.



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Digitally altered photo of Hamilton in the Ralph Lauren ad.

the zeitgeist. Black models, who have become a cause celebre because there are so few of them on the runways, had a moment of stardom in the 1970s. But in one respect, preferences haven't changed in the last decade. The stubbornly celebrated fashion body has remained extremely thin to gaunt. Why?

All those emaciated models have to be seen against the backdrop of a population that is overwhelmingly afflicted with obesity. It has to be viewed in the context of a first lady who has taken up the cause of healthy eating and exercise because nearly one in three children in the United

States is either overweight or obese.

The fatter the general population, the thinner the idealized woman. And for all the public posturing and blogging, the only force that stopped people from buying clothes and magazines was the souring economy, not righteous indignation over skinny models.

By its very nature, fashion is a business of falsehoods and costumes, all in service to self-definition. The uncomfortable truth about the fashion industry is it has a knack for tapping into unspoken cultural obsessions and taboos. Fashion sets up a rarefied world of perfection that is, in many ways, defined by how much it differs from the mundane, from the norm. And all indicators suggest that as a culture, we hate what we are becoming: fat.

Fashion doesn't just reject the overweight and the obese. It also gives the average a hard time, too; it makes them worry about every cookie eaten at the end of a meal or every exercise commitment that goes unmet. Fashion is a test of willpower and determination. It is a measure of good fortune. It is a purveyor of status. It is a badge of honor for having outrun, outlasted saddlebags -- unless, of course, they are floral-printed and made by D&G. Those who can indulge in fashion -- and do -- feel their prize is that much more valuable.

A moment in pop culture history comes to mind that underscores that value system. When Oprah Winfrey appeared on her talk show in 1988 looking startlingly thin after a liquid diet and wearing a pair of size 10 Calvin Klein jeans, she joked that because they were fancy *designer* jeans, they were really more like a size 8. The implication, of course, was a size 8 was an even better result.

NBC's "Biggest Loser" isn't a success because contestants lose 50 or 60 pounds and improve their health. It's a popular show because they lose *tremendous* amounts of weight; they become svelte and buff. The men strive for a six-pack. The women aren't aiming for an average size 14, they're passing out and throwing up in the gym to become size 8 or 4 or 0. They are competing to be thin. And we don't blame them; we embrace their agony.

There's plenty to be said about whether the models on the runway are healthy. Most definitely, some of them are not. But most folks aren't demanding to see a doctor's note. The focus of the concern is aesthetics. And some horribly airbrushed photos notwithstanding, the main focus of the complaints isn't that the look is unpleasant but that it's unattainable for most people.

With that in mind, maybe all of the protesting about deluded designers has been wrongheaded. Maybe all of the demands that edi-

tors and photographers just use heavier models have been misguided. Because before fashion models will get any bigger, people in general will just have to get smaller.

Fashion tells us something about ourselves and our culture. It does that by reflecting a heightened or twisted reality. It may be that the only way to change the fashion industry's portrayal of women is not by trying to make sense of the funhouse reflection but reconsidering the original subject matter.



Another model whose image was altered to make her appear thinner.



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Style

What might make it from the runways to store racks

BY BOOTH MOORE
LOS ANGELES TIMES

After logging thousands of miles over the last month, going from one fashion capital to the next, one runway extravaganza to another, it's time for a reality check.

Alexander McQueen's Atlantis fantasy and Chanel's high-class hoe-

down were something to look at — and blog and Tweet about. But come spring, what will they mean to a woman's wardrobe? And will they mean enough that she will buck the retail trend and actually spend on clothes?

That's the challenge for the store buyers who hit the designer showrooms after everyone else has gone home, for photographers who spin visual fantasies to sell clothes in advertising campaigns and glossy magazines spreads, and for editors and stylists who will ultimately try to teach women how to wear what's new when it hits the racks in four months' time.

Here are five of the top trends straight from the New York and European runways, and how they might actually trickle down to you.



Alexander Wang



Balenciaga

Sexy sport

There was an urban sportiness to many of the spring collections, including motocross leather vests and sheath dresses at Balenciaga; neoprene, scuba-inspired jackets at Emilio Pucci; relaxed fleece pants and jumpsuits at Alexander Wang; anoraks and leggings with athletic mesh details at Gucci; and Lycra bike shorts everywhere.

An anorak is a no-brainer, but Spanx as outerwear — really? Store buyers say yes — it's a logical extension of the current leggings craze. They also make spring's sheer layers and super-short pouf dresses wearable.

Shorts of all kinds are key for spring, according to Ken Downing, Neiman Marcus' senior vice president and fashion director, as part of a trend he dubs "gymnasium chic." They could be "city-tailored-to-the-knee shorts — the pencil skirt of the season," he says, or relaxed, rolled-up shorts, as



Ask the Hair Guy

Mark Rodolico
Colorist / Stylist
www.askthehairguy.com

A word from The Hair Guy: I would be remiss if I did not thank all of you that helped us put together my New Salon & Boutique. *I am the luckiest Hair Guy on the planet. From clients to friends and even the young women from church, Thank you for all your hands on and behind the scenes work you did for Mark's At The Pointe Salon & Boutique.*

Question: *I have psoriasis on my scalp and now my curl has gone away and I cannot do anything with my hair. - E.S. Vero Beach.*

Answer: Hello E.S., Well, not so much a question as an implied question, but I can help nonetheless. For those that may not be familiar with Psoriasis, Psoriasis is a chronic disease of the immune system that appears on the skin, usually in the form of thick, red, scaly patches. Work with your doctor to find a treatment — or treatments — that reduce or eliminate your symptoms. What works for one person with psoriasis might not work for another. Hair however is another story. You can work with me on this one. The acronym is A.M.P., Amino, Magnesium, Panthenol. That is the basic ingredient combination that has long been a standard amongst bio-chemists that create hair care products for fine lifeless hair. The reactivation of curl is in most

cases a question of locking in hydrogen. This said, if your hair has some curl while wet but none after it dries, you are a perfect candidate for strong Humectants (draw in atmospheric water) to rebalance your hair's moisture. However, in most cases, if topical treatments are the culprit or internal residue of the hair shaft due to oral medication, then I recommend first a deep clarifying shampoo or treatment then, A.M.P. it up with: Moroccan Oil curl crème as a topical supplement every day and A/G shampoo and conditioner for curl reactivation as your regular in shower regimen. Come on in and I'll give you a free bag of what you need and a consultation to pin it down better.

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Stella McCartney



Erdem Moralioglu



Versace

seen at DKNY — layered over a pair of bike shorts, of course.

“Off the runways, all the models in Paris are already wearing shorts over tights,” notes Stephanie Solomon, fashion director of Bloomingdale’s. She also sees the sporty trend manifesting itself in the striped bateau shirts that are already a craze on the streets. “We caught 35 striped shirts in the audience at one show in New York.”

Stripes and shorts, get ‘em while they’re hot.

Lingerie layers

So you’re not enamored of cone bras à la Lady Gaga, and you don’t work in a profession in which peekaboo skirts and exposed bras are an asset. That doesn’t have to mean a total dismissal of the sheer tulle, chiffon and organza layers shown on the runways at Marc Jacobs, Vera Wang, Mario Schwab, Gianfranco Ferré, Dolce & Gabbana and Valentino.

Many of spring’s sheer dresses and skirts will be shipped to stores with linings, reports Colleen Sherin, fashion market director for Saks Fifth Avenue. For pieces that are not lined, it’s all about layering and how to wear a slip or camisole underneath.

Still too risqué? She points out that at the Chanel show (one of the strongest of the season), some of the tweed suits and dresses were styled with sheer coats or jackets on top, so that you can get the look without the exposure. So, a sheer layering piece in a pale boudoir-inspired shade — or black — could also be a good buy to update what you already have in your closet.

Military tailoring

It was inevitable that the one-two punch of Michael Jackson’s death and fashion’s 1980s redux would bring back the military look — Army green jackets with fringed epaulets and cargo leggings at Balmain, crisp safari dresses and lace-up ponchos at Celine and camp shirts buttoned all the way up at Chloe.

Here’s a trend that’s tailor-made for trickling down. If it’s not already at Zara, you know it’s at the Army Navy store.

Denim dress-up

When Ralph Lauren sent models down the runway in ripped jeans and crystal-studded sandals, tailored three-piece denim suits and blue ombre silk charmeuse carpenter pants, it was a shot heard ‘round the fashion world. Critics denounced it -- how dare he cite work wear

as his inspiration during a recession? But even in this economy, one thing that’s still selling is jeans. And, as it turned out, Lauren wasn’t the only designer to riff on true blues.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 60

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Style



Michael Kors



DKNY



Emilio Pucci

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 59

The news was denim with a softer touch, whether by design or through styling. At Stella McCartney, that meant a button-front, stonewashed denim skirt worn with a white lace plunge-front camisole and a crisp khaki blazer. At Jean Paul Gaultier, it was a button-front dark denim shirt with corset stitching (part of an upcoming collaboration with Levi's).

At Dolce & Gabbana, the trend turned up in a group of black lace-trimmed denim pieces, including a blouson-sleeve denim jacket. In the designers' lower-priced D&G line, the mood came through in the finale of chambray shirts tucked into cream tulle ballerina skirts, some worn with beat-up brown boots.

Dressed-up denim is "valid within the designer collections," said Saks Fifth Avenue's Sherin, "but also inspirational for the contemporary market."

Translation: Knockoffs are sure to abound.

Piled-on prints

Sherin described it as "ethnic"; Downing as "tribal." In New York, Thakoon Panichgul and Diane Von Furstenberg mixed animal prints and florals on single dresses. In London, Erdem Moralioglu and Peter Pilotto draped prints into couture-like

dresses. In Milan, Versace brought back her brother's famous Baroque prints on micro-minis. And in Paris, Alexander McQueen and Givenchy's Riccardo Tisci took the print story in a psychedelic, Op Art direction (you can bet they'll be splashed on plenty of wallet-friendly silk scarves too).

But nobody has mastered this trend quite like Belgian designer Dries Van Noten, the auteur of the multi-culti look, whose sumptuous show was a global patchwork of Ikat print silk coats, striped jackets, paisley-print dresses and block-print pants.

The improvisational styling approach is part of the overall message of the season: It's not about a total look; it's about the mix. In other words, if you are going to wear cargo pants, pair them with a refined, boxy tweed jacket (seen at Louis Vuitton), and if you are going to wear a lacy slip skirt, pair it with a tailored safari jacket (seen at Chanel).

"I see the entire spring season as a study in contrasts," said Bloomingdale's Solomon. "Tender/tough, white/black, good/bad. It's about wearing a ruffled dress with aggressive platform shoes, or an aggressive, sexy dress with a demure flat shoe or sandal, even shorts paired with a tailored blazer. It's a beautiful contrast, and it's also unique."

Think of it as a fashion mash-up.

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New knits are flexible friends

BY SUZY MENKES
INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE



PARIS — Woolly, hairy or feather light, autumn knits have one thing in common: They cover the body like falling leaves.

Softly, softly is the story, whether a sweater is filmy and vaporous or a cardigan dense with cable stitching.

Your flexible friend is often relatively shapeless, a shelter to keep the wearer in the comfort zone. But so much research now goes into the yarns and micro-stitches that what once used to be called the “boyfriend” sweater has become ultrasophisticated.

Colors are other-worldly, off-tones that might give to a winter woolly an eerie glow. Sour-apple

green, an angry-wound pink or russet too bright to be rustic are just some of the unexpected colors on this new palette.

There is a touch of the 1970s, especially in the plethora of Fair Isle patterns. But this is not knitwear like granny used to make. Now that the computer has taken over from the knit-one, purl-one paper pattern, an apparently plain sweater can have complex switches between yarns, giving a three-dimensional texture to the surface.

For most people, a knit starts with the basic shape — and that is now big, barely touching the contours of the body. Mohair, with its lightweight filaments, is a favorite for those apparently shapeless sweaters that roll roundly over the shoulders and then stand slightly away from the torso in a soft boxy shape. Since it is contrast that makes the fashionable look, the loose sweater teams with a slim, narrow skirt or pants.

Cardigans might be drawn with a straightedge or a compass. The most prevalent look is ultralong and lean, part of the geometry that is imprinting current fashion. The low-button cardigan, V-necked and boyish, might extend to a tunic length, to be worn with pants or with a long skirt for that look of Diane Keaton in early Woody Allen movies.

The round cardigan is much shorter, even ending at the waist like a blouson jacket. But the look is cozy rather than sporty, perhaps with the cable effects snaking and twisting the rotund silhouette. Inevitably, this shape has to go with a slender bottom half or the wearer would look like a perambulating balloon.

The appeal of knitwear is its flexibility: Not just that it is comfortable and unrestricting, but also that it is more adaptable to work and leisure than more formal cloth tailoring.

That is why jersey, knitwear’s first cousin, is making a strong return. This might be the first time since Coco Chanel reworked the polo sweater, taken metaphorically from her lover’s back, that wool jersey has had such a passionate fashion following.

The jersey dress, an elongated tube or fully fashioned with seaming to the body, has become a wardrobe staple. Now designers are having fun with the malleable material, making dresses in ballet shapes, turning a skirt into a tutu or a mini-crinoline — but always with enough weight to lower the fluff quotient.

Contrary to the feather-light woolens, jersey is substantial, even heavy, and therefore gives an outfit the power to contour the silhouette and also to serve as formal office wear. Not since the pantsuit took over as a uniform has there been such a universal champion in the working woman’s wardrobe.

Yet wool pieces never have the sobriety of tailoring. And even the most severe jersey jacket could be lightened up with the ubiquitous woolly accessories.

The cowl — that knit circle that you pull over your head to settle around the neck — last found fashion favor when snooty giraffe-necked models wore them on magazine covers in the golden era of haute couture.

But now the cowl is a fun variation on the familiar scarf. It can add a dash or a clash of color or be useful during the winter when worn as a bandeau or hood to protect ears from the cold or as a snug neck warmer. It also can be seen as a literal extension of the pervasive roll neck on a sweater.

The more familiar knitted scarves are fighting back. Those elongated accessories have never been longer, trailing toward the ground, even when wound once round the neck. They serve as snug wrappers or colorful decoration, offering all the fashion flexibility of those other winter warmers.

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Pets

Champion Lamarde Perro Benson of Bermuda Bay

BY CISSY SUMNER
COLUMNIST

Champion Lamarde Perro Benson, a handsome Rhodesian Ridgeback, is the king of Kay and Allan Mattson's castle in Bermuda Bay.

Benson, ironically called "little feller," joined the Mattson family from a breeder in Los Angeles, Calif. Benson began his life with the Mattson's in a private community surrounded by a huge assortment of toys. As he grew, his beauty became apparent. Benson brought recognition to his owners and breeder by becoming a conformation champion on the American Kennel Club dog show circuit.

"He traveled all over the United States with his (dog show) handler. Whenever he saw her motor home cruise up, he would run directly for it and jump right into his crate, said Kay Mattson. "He never even said goodbye to me!"

In 2007, the Mattsons decided to take "little feller" off the show circuit and keep him home.

"I was the one who had separation anxiety—not Benson," laughs Kay Mattson.

Benson, now 7 years old, loves walks on the beach and is very social with other dogs, she said. And, he loves staying in hotels, too.

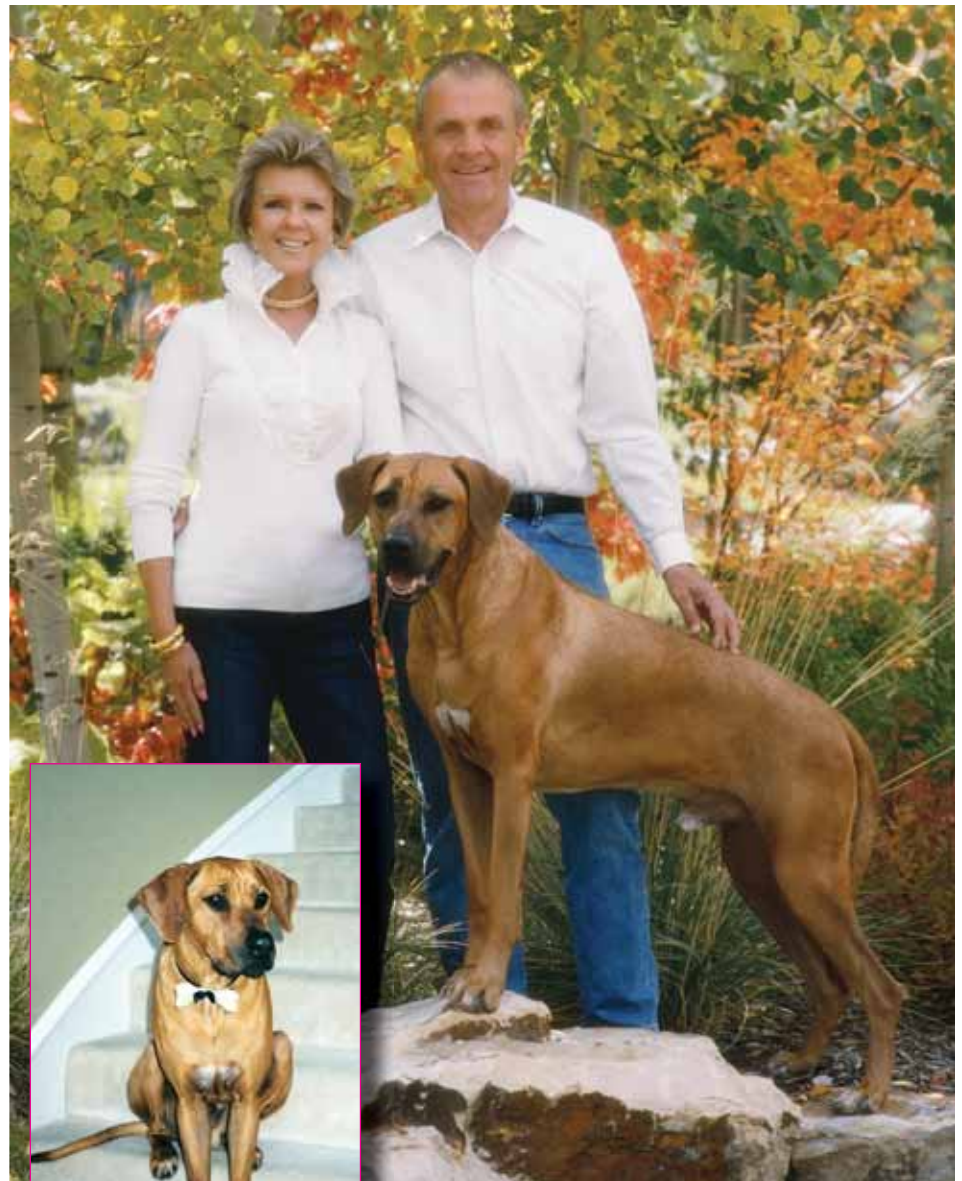
"He really causes a stir when he strolls in looking like he owns the place," said Kay Mattson.

And don't let all of that muscle and tone fool you. The Mattsons said Benson is really a softie.

"Benson's favorite thing to do is to find the absolute softest spot in the house and curl up for a nap," said Kay Mattson. "It is so amazing to me that Benson looks like he lifts weights, but truly he is a couch potato after my own heart!"

When asked why the couple chose a Rhodesian Ridgeback for a companion, Kay Mattson replies: "I wanted a big dog that did not require calisthenic exercise every day. While Benson loves to run and play, he is equally content to curl up in soft warm spot."

Champion Lamarde Perro Benson



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Cissy Sumner, CPDT-KA
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sons many years of absolute joy and love. Both Allan and Kay think their dog is the best dog, not just on the island, but on the planet.

I would like to invite you to nominate *any* pet as an island pet. Maybe your cat or parrot brings joy to your life. Contact me with pictures and your pet could be an island star!

YOUR PET'S HEALTH

By Dr. Randy Divine and Associates



Your Pet's Health: Avoiding Scary Moments for your Pets at Halloween

Halloween is the perfect time of year for pets and their people to dress up and have fun, but the season also brings dangers for pets. Whether the pets go out and trick or treating with the kids or just stay home, owners need to make sure pets have a safe Halloween. The most important thing is to make sure the kids carry closed trick-or-treat bags that pets cannot get into. Make sure children are told not to feed pets candy.

Chocolate is one of the most toxic household substances found in homes and ingestion requires immediate veterinary care. Chocolate contains chemicals called methylxanthines including theobromine and caffeine which are both toxic. Methylxanthines at low doses cause mild GI signs; however, cardiac arrhythmias, seizures, and even death can result from higher doses. If a pet ingests any product with chocolate, please contact Divine Animal Hospital rapidly, so vomiting can be induced. If the exposure is less recent, anti-seizure drugs, heart medications, and IV fluids may be needed. Your pet needs intensive cardiovascular monitoring after exposure which we provide with state of the art equipment and may need to be hospitalized. Signs of intoxication include excitement, tachypnea, tachycardia, hypertension, hyperthermia, and seizures, and collapse. The high sugar and fat content of chocolate may cause GI upset and pancreatitis. White chocolate and milk chocolate contain less methylxanthines than baker's chocolate and cocoa powder.

Another toxin is found in gum, candy, and mints sweetened with xylitol. Xylitol can cause blood sugar to suddenly drop causing signs including seizures, depression, confusion, and stumbling. The window of time to induce vomiting is brief, and immediate veterinary care is the only way to prevent life-threatening complications including coma and death. Xylitol has also been linked to liver failure in dogs. Pets need cardiovascular monitoring and fluids with dextrose as well as management of seizures and other complications.

Seasonal decorations can cause obstructions and even perforations of the gastrointestinal tract. Surgery is often necessary as tinsel and sharp objects can cut through the wall of the intestinal tract resulting in peritonitis.

Pets may experience anxiety from changes in routine, strange people, and noises. Creating a "safe zone" in the home where pets can escape and feel comfortable helps keep them calm and safe. If anxiety is severe, pets may be placed on a mild tranquilizer. We have several options available. Our staff and doctors are trained to provide excellent emergency and routine care 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.



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On Faith

When the answer is more compelling than the question



BY REV. DRs. CASEY AND BOB BAGGOTT
COLUMNISTS

music. There is a mystery about music. Yet Bernstein said he personally had come to the point that he no longer cared what this question was, or how to ask it. He simply knew that his answer was, "Yes!"

Fascinating notion, isn't it... to know an answer with certainty, but be unsure of the question? It strikes us that there's maturity in Bernstein's admission. Perhaps the quality of faith ma-

turity in our lives is demonstrated by a similar admission. You see, just because we are faithful people does not mean we automatically eliminate all important questions from life. Few of us can claim that.

It's simply that as faithful people, the answer becomes so much more compelling than the questions. If faith in God is the answer we affirm, tough questions lose their power to frighten

and confound us. We can offer a confident, resounding "Yes" to the beautiful, puzzling gift of life, because of God's presence in it.

Rev. Dr. Robert Baggott is Senior Minister of Community Church of Vero Beach. Rev. Dr. Casey Baggott is Executive Minister. The Baggotts write a regular faith column for Vero Beach 32963.

Anyone who has parented or grandparented, or even baby-sat, has undoubtedly encountered the simple question which is always on the lips of the very young ...

"Why?!"

Our grandchild came to visit us a few months ago and asked this question so many times that we finally decided our best defense was a good offense. So, one night during a barrage of her "whys," one of us interrupted to ask her a question.

We asked, "Why are you always asking us 'why'?"

I guess we should have anticipated her response. With a thoughtful blink and a tip of the head, she responded, "I don't know. Why?"

Fortunately for parents and grandparents whose ability to answer endless "why" questions grows strained, school and maturity eventually arrive to channel kids' curiosity. And then the whole field of inquiry expands.

Growth, learning, and absorption into life's activities raise so many new questions: How can I best succeed in my work? Who loves me for just who I am? Where will I be able to find the right niche in life for me? What does the life I am leading amount to? When will my trouble (or pain, or concern, or fear) end?

Life can be full of such puzzling questions. Some say, in fact, that we each have one or two lifelong questions — questions that we never quite succeed in answering satisfactorily for ourselves. Maybe we could understand the desperation of troubled young people, or the crisis of meaning that can hit at mid-life, or even the depression that sometimes comes in late years, as painfully related to important, unanswered questions.

Years ago we were watching composer Leonard Bernstein's televised lectures on music theory and he spoke about debates which had raged over the great "unanswered questions" of

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Dining

Restaurant Review

Miami: A tasty weekend getaway

BY TINA RONDEAU
COLUMNIST

While a growing number of Miami residents are weekendening at Costa d'Este, the Vero Beach Hotel & Spa, and the Caribbean Court on our barrier island, a number of beachside residents occasionally get a hankering to head off in the opposite direction for a short visit to the Big City.



Michy

While spending a little time in Miami recently, we had an opportunity to sample a variety of highly-rated restaurants, and can report there are definitely some great meals to be had there.

When in Miami, we search out dining experiences not found in Vero. There unquestionably are fine Italian restaurants in Miami, but why try one of those when there is excellent Italian cuisine back home.

But what about wonderful upscale Mexican? Great Spanish tapas? Greek cuisine from a Michelin star winner? European restaurants run by celebrity chefs? None of those in Vero, last time we checked, and that's the kind of dining adventure we would suggest focusing on if you opt for a Miami getaway.

Our favorite restaurant find on this most recent visit to Miami was an outpost of *Rosa Mexicano*, which started a quarter-century ago in New York. This

restaurant – which also has been a big hit in Washington, DC – was open for a couple of years in Palm Beach Gardens, but never really caught on. The Miami restaurant is now the only *Rosa Mexicano* this side of Atlanta.

While the décor, vibrant hues highlighted by an illuminated blue-tiled water wall, is not what one would expect to find in your average Mexican restaurant, the food is not your average Mexican cuisine either. *Rosa's*

takes avocados, cilantro, chiles, onion, jalapeños and chopped tomatoes and whips them into a luscious guacamole that is then presented in a lava molcajete. A good show, and a great taste.

On one evening in Miami, we tried *Ariston*, a restaurant opened a year and a half ago by Thanasis Barlos, proprietor of the highest Michelin-rated restaurant in Greece. We went there intending to try the suckling piglet roasted in a wood-burning oven or the lamb aromatically spun in a charcoal rotisserie, but shifted to seafood when we heard some branzini (European sea bass, unrelated to Chilean seabass) had just been flown in from Greece.

The whole fish was grilled with olive oil, lemon juice and oregano, filleted at the table, and served without so much as a sauce or a garnish except for an accompaniment of dandelion greens. Delicious, and perfectly complemented by a light, fruity Greek white wine.

Another evening saw us visit *Chef Allen's Restaurant*, named after Allen Susser, winner of the esteemed James Beard Award for Best American Chef in the Southeast. In keeping with the times, a recent update of this venerable Miami restaurant saw Chef Allen revamp his menu, moving toward a smaller plates approach with an emphasis on local ingredients and sustainable fish.

to match at \$20-\$25). On this evening, my husband prevailed on me to share the Grand Marnier soufflé, and I concede it was wonderful – but I won't be happy until I return for Chef Allen's signature double Valrhona chocolate soufflé.

Two other dining experiences we would have no difficulty recommending involve creations of Michelle Bernstein, Miami's hottest chef whose new tapas restaurant, *Sra. Martinez*, just made Esquire's list of 20 Best New Restaurants in America.

Sra. Martinez serves small plates of big-flavored foods, some labeled appetizers and others entrees, that all are intended to be shared among the table. We started with jamon serrano, Spanish-style cured ham (yum), and things just kept getting better. Perhaps the best of the dishes we sampled was the Gallegian specialty, pulpo a la pancha, grilled octopus with crispy panisse, charred chickpea vinaigrette, and garlic chips.

If *Sra. Martinez* is, as some currently suggest, the best Spanish restaurant in Miami, Bernstein's other restaurant, *Miche*, is more of a classical European restaurant in a cozy, unpretentious setting.

The dinner menu is a compilation of two dozen dishes, many of which change daily, offered as either half or

showcases the rich flavors and aromas of Mexico by using traditional ingredients to create a variety of eclectic dishes.

On one of our visits, I ordered my entree from the "chocolate" menu, which they offer for several weeks each year. This is not chocolate in the normal dessert sense, but chocolate used to impart unique flavors. My entree was Pescado Cocido al Vapor, steamed fresh halibut served with a chocolate Diablo sauce with lime, epazote, habanero onions, and plum tomatoes. Perfection.

My husband enjoyed the Tablones, grilled boneless beef shortribs that melted in your mouth served with a mestiza sauce (tomatillo-tomatillo-chipotle) and rajas (slow-cooked Mexican peppers).

Worth trying at least one time at *Rosa Mexicano* is the unique tableside guacamole experience, where a waiter



Rosa Mexicano

But unchanged are the soufflés — perhaps the biggest and best you will find anywhere in Florida (and priced

full orders (we like this trend that we hope soon may reach Vero -- offering small portions at a reduced price; one

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doesn't always feel like a supersized meal even in a great restaurant).

Michy's cuisine is simple, comforting, and rustic, with bold, quality flavors. For starters on our recent visit, we tried a small plate of the Peruvian ceviche — a combination of seafood marinated in ginger, lime, chilies, and served with popcorn — as well as a tasty tempura lobster appetizer.

My husband then enjoyed the braised Alaskan Cod, a delightful dish served with Argentine chorizo and served in a tomato broth with petite gnocchi. I had the whole yellowtail snapper served with a Malaysian curry, green and ripe mangoes, and hearts of palm. Wonderful.

If these dining possibilities haven't



Sra. Martinez

put you in the mood to book a weekend in Miami, there is a closer way to sample Chef Michelle's creations. Only half the distance from here, she has just opened a new restaurant, *Michelle Bernstein at the Omphoy*, in Palm Beach's new Omphoy Ocean Resort.

We haven't tried that restaurant yet, which focuses on fresh seafood. But based on *Sra. Martinez* and *Michy*, it is hard to imagine you will be disappointed.

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.

Food

Eggs deserve a little coddling

BY DAVID HAGEDORN
THE WASHINGTON POST

Most chefs I know refer to brunch disdainfully as the b-word. Aside from the fact that they generally are not morning people, their aversion comes down to this: Eggs can mean trouble.

party fare. On the contrary, they represent a good way to strut your skills, provided you prepare the eggs in a way that allows for some kind of control.

The inspiration for today's fall brunch for eight came to me at a sunny lunch last June in the courtyard terrace of Le Relais du Parc in Paris, a colony in acclaimed chef Alain Du-

water bath for 10 minutes or so.

I resolved right then and there to plan a Real Entertaining brunch menu around them, making a mental note to include some version of Ducasse's dish.

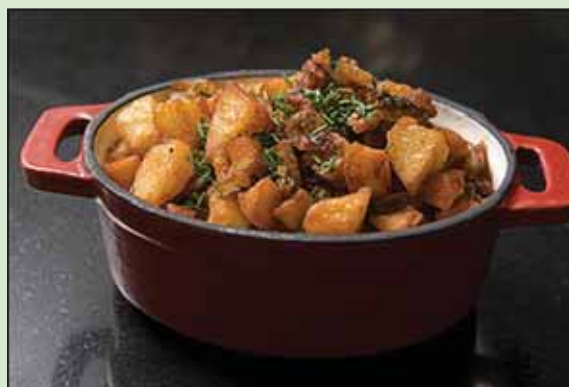
That would be the story behind the meal, the kind of conversational reference point that makes a gathering more interesting. It was also a conve-

the moisture in the onions will make the potatoes too soft. Saute the onions until golden brown, then mix them with garlic and thyme.

The potatoes should preferably be day-old baked, cubed russets; deep-fry them in canola oil until crisp. Then unite the main components and finish with smoked and sweet paprikas, onion and garlic powders, cayenne



Eggs en Cocotte Two Ways



Hash browns



Radicchio and orange salad

Diners are ultra-picky about eggs. Coordinating their preparation (two at a time, in various styles, to precise degrees of doneness) requires finesse and the kind of patience that usually is in short supply after an arduous Saturday night.

Eggs and the people who eat them can be unforgiving; the former might go from great to awful in an instant, and the latter might have no problem sending back mistakes with the flick of a hand. If you want to test a chef's mettle, hand him eggs, not steaks.

The same goes for a host. That eggs are tricky doesn't disqualify them as

casse's restaurant empire.

For a first course, the waiter brought an oeuif en cocotte baked with spinach and chanterelle mushrooms. With its pumpkin-colored yolk, perfectly set white and earthy accompaniments, the egg was certainly delicious. And its cunning presentation—in a glass canning jar with a hinged lid—was an effect I planned to borrow.

I had forgotten how good baked eggs could be and how easy they were to make. My grandmother called them shirred. Just put some fillings, if desired, in ramekins, top them with eggs and a bit of cream, and bake them in a

nient ploy to brag about my summer vacation.

To make the brunch more manageable, I let the hinged-jar idea go. Originally I thought it a good plan to use tall eight-ounce jars and serve individual eggs with three kinds of fillings. That was a way to offer a vegetarian option and mix things up, but it proved unwieldy (and painful; I burned myself on the rims of the too-tall jars while trying to scoop out the eggs).

For the redo, wide-mouth eight-ounce jars with two-egg servings worked perfectly. Two options, one vegetarian, sufficed: curried spinach-shiitake mushroom and bacon-leek-Gruyere cheese.

For a side dish, I opted to serve hash brown potatoes. Have you noticed how many bad renditions of them are out there? I know it's a matter of personal taste, but I like the potatoes crispy, not mushy, and chunky, not shredded. No peppers, please. The onions: slightly caramelized but not burnt and not white. The whole lot needs to be seasoned far beyond salt and pepper.

It has taken me 20 years to get hash browns just right. Here's what I have figured out: The onions and potatoes must be cooked separately to ensure both are spot-on perfect. If you cook them together, you run the risk that

and black peppers, and salt. Optimally, hash browns should be served immediately after they're made.

A meal that features eggs has to be timed correctly, because eggs cannot wait. That means either having the eggs and potatoes working at the same time or, if you must, cooking the potatoes first and keeping them warm (either held in a warming drawer or reheated quickly in a separate skillet). So don't hesitate to ask for help.

Brunch should be casual and interactive but still do-ahead where possible. For this one, I started with a small cheese, fruit and charcuterie assortment. Mimosas to drink. I served a side salad of radicchio, oranges and pepitas (toasted pumpkin seeds) with the main course and ended with a dessert of poached pears. All of that was prepped in advance. Before guests arrived, I assembled the jars of eggs and their fillings so they were ready for the oven.

Because the eggs are the stars of this show, buy the very best farm-fresh variety you can find. I procured organic omega-3 large brown eggs from my local high-end grocery store.

But if you can find great local organic eggs, that is likely to be better. Even if they wind up costing \$5 per dozen or more, spring for it. The texture and taste difference will be worth it.

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Holding serve with St. Ed's Andrew Butz

BY MICHAEL BIELECKI
CORRESPONDENT

The search is on for Andrew Butz, one of the top-ranked under 18 tennis players in the country.

Standing at over 6'-3", he should stand out from most of the student body at St. Edward's.

But he doesn't.

Upon finally meeting Butz, he gives a sheepish grin and offers a handshake. This is the 26th ranked 18s player in the country?

Let's see here, better make sure it's him.

Trademark floppy late 60's Beatles haircut? Check.

Sporting a snappy Gator polo? Check.

Tall and athletic in appearance? Check.

Connor Pickering, No. 2-ranked boys singles player at St. Edward's, provided the introduction and he couldn't say enough about his teammate.

"Andrew gives inspiration to us," said Pickering. "The great thing about Andrew is that he isn't in an academy. He goes to school just like all of us, and he's still *that good*."

Butz is at a loss for words, so he just shrugs his shoulders and looks away bashfully. He's the fourth best player in a state that breeds tennis stars.

South Florida is the tennis Mecca of the United States, and many of the very best players in the world are sent here at a young age to become tennis stars. These kids are sent off to Bradenton, Tampa, and Boca Raton as early as elementary school to start on the path of being a tennis professional.

Nick Bollettieri's Tennis Academy (Bradenton) and Saddlebrook Tennis Academy (Tampa) have prep schools to meet the educational needs of these kids. Evert Tennis Academy (Boca Raton) has a couple of different schooling options available to kids.

The alumni lists of these academies read as a tennis A-list: Andre Agassi, Pete Sampras, Mardy Fish, Monica Seles, Serena and Venus Williams, and most recently, Chase Buchanan.

Does Butz ever feel like he's missing out by not being at one of these tennis factories? "Not at all," said Butz. "I wouldn't get the education I am now if I was at a place like that."

"I wanted to keep a social life and go to a regular school. All you really do in an academy is play tennis, and there's a very small social aspect to it. I think it hurts you in a lot of ways."

Butz, the reigning state high school



Photo: Tom McCarthy, Jr.

tennis champion, is enjoying his last year at St. Edward's. Currently ranked the No. 4 18s player in the state, he feels like it's the kids at the academies that are missing out, not him.

"I've played Alexander Domijan (No. 1 in 18s in the country) before, and he's huge (6'-7")," said Butz. "We've played, and it's not like he kills me out there. But he doesn't do anything else but play tennis."

While Butz has been a tennis player for a long time, it wasn't the only sport he played. "He played all the sports growing up," said SES Dean of Students Kristine Fojtik. "He had the ability to play anything but really settled in when he chose to only play tennis. He's really a great and down-to-earth kid."

To say he's modest is an understatement.

So, you're ranked 26th in the country in 18s...

"I am?" said Butz, as he raises his eyebrows. "I've been busy with school and haven't looked."

What, might you ask, does impress Andrew Butz?

In August, Butz played No. 2 ranked Chase Buchanan in the 2nd round of the USTA Boys' 18s singles (Kalamazoo, MI). Butz lost to the prodigy in straight sets (6-1, 6-1), but he counts it as a learning experience.

"He's the best kid in the nation," said Butz. "I'd only been to Kalamazoo to play once before, and never on center court. I was like a deer in headlights."

It's easy to understand how Butz could feel that way in that given situation. Buchanan was the No. 1 player in his age group for most of his teen

nis in America by some circles, so that should give perspective to the magnitude of what Butz was facing.

Kalamazoo was one of the very few stumbling blocks for Andrew this year. Butz started 2009 off with a surprising 3rd place finish at the USTA National Winter Championships (Scottsdale, AZ). Moving on to April, he captured the boys singles State Championship and his doubles team earned state runner-up. He's the school's first ever state champion in tennis, and his goal is to elevate the entire team to that level in 2010.

"I want to do whatever I can to help the team win at States this year," said Butz.

More recently, Butz gave his verbal commitment to University of Florida to attend school on a tennis scholarship.

A lifelong Gator fan, Andrew is excited about his future in Gainesville. "I'm looking forward to the team environment," said Butz. "There are some kids I know up there, and the transition will be easy."



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Living

Energy use falls when neighbors compete

BY MARK CLAYTON
CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR

One of the best ways to save energy and cut carbon emissions isn't the much-touted "smart grid," low-watt light bulbs, or high-tech appliances – it's a little neighborly competition.

Just ask Sacramento resident Kat Kelly, who last year began getting a new "home energy report" from her utility company that compared her family's electricity use directly with her neighbors'.

On the report, one bar chart rated her family's electricity use against the average of 100 neighbors with similar sized houses – and also of her 20 most energy-efficient neighbors. The report had three rating levels: "below average," a smiley face for a "good," or two smileys for a "great!" average.

A self-described "competitive person," Ms. Kelly says she was shocked to learn that her family not only failed to get a smiley, it received a "below average" rating. That same day, she began turning off lights, changing the thermostat, and switching off her power strips – anything to save juice and win future smiley faces.

"It got my competitive spirit going," Kelly says. "I wanted to be one of the



Kat Kelly and daughter, Ava, who have cut their energy use since seeing how their neighbors conserve.

energy conservers in my neighborhood."

Her reaction is not unusual. Some say it's the power of competition –

the desire to keep up (or in this case "down") with the Joneses. Others say it's just logical decisionmaking. Whatever it is, the simple act of informing

residents about their neighbors' power use can be like firing a starting gun in a race to save energy, researchers say.

Improving residential energy efficiency is critical to combating climate change since it equals about 35 percent of total US energy use and 15 percent of total US greenhouse-gas emissions, federal data show.

Over the decades, Americans have become more frugal with energy. But thousands of tiny personal choices around the house could substantially cut energy use.

How much? The "human dimension" in energy consumption could whack household energy use 22 percent nationwide – a 12 percent reduction in overall US energy consumption, according to a new American Council for an Energy Efficient Economy (ACEEE). By comparison, all solar, geothermal, and wind power consumed last year amounted to about 1 percent of US energy use.

Yet human impact has been largely ignored by electric utilities. Instead, their efficiency programs have focused mostly on "widget based" programs that pay rebates for efficient appliances, for instance.

But with new state laws boosting efficiency requirements, widget programs are reaching their limits. That's pushing dozens of utilities to experiment.

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“Energy is very much an invisible commodity for most people,” says Karen Ehrhardt-Martinez, an ACEEE researcher. “It’s not like pumping gas into your car. It flows invisibly into the house, and you don’t know anything until you get the bill. We need people to have all the information so they can make better choices.”

Widely used on college campuses today to combat binge drinking, a “social norms” approach surveys and then publishes data to make plain to students that campus drinking levels are (almost always) far lower than they think. Less binge drinking is the frequent result.

The social-norms approach has also been applied to curb gambling and environmental pollution, and to promote health choices. Online retailers use it to encourage purchases when they tell visitors that “customers who bought the items in your shopping cart also bought...”

“The middle is a magnet for behavior,” says Robert Cialdini, professor emeritus of psychology at Arizona State University and a pioneer on the social-norms impact on energy use. “What you find is people who are in the outlying areas as violators of the desirable behavior will move to the middle when they learn they’re outliers.”

That’s what the Sacramento Municipal Utility District (SMUD) in California found when its social-norms pilot tests over the past year cut energy demand by 2 percent – just by telling folks how their energy use compared with their neighbors’. That drop may sound puny, but SMUD saved 9.5 billion watt-hours, equal to the electricity use of 1,000 average homes for a year.

The Kelly family, for instance, cut its energy use 10 percent – and have yet to win a smiley face. But Kat Kelly and thousands like her have SMUD officials smiling.

“Even those folks who received the ‘You are below average’ message from us saved, and actually saved the most

of any other group,” says Alexandra Crawford, a SMUD project manager. At least two dozen utilities nationwide are experimenting with saving energy this way.

“You aren’t born knowing what your utility bill should be or ‘Am I using more than I need to?’ ” says Daniel Yates, president of OPOWER, in Arlington, Va., which analyzes SMUD

showers, adjust thermostat settings, or hand-wash dishes.

“We’re like Weight Watchers for your energy use,” says Mr. Frank, Efficiency 2.0’s executive vice president for business development. “Most Americans would like to lose weight, but they don’t do it because they don’t get feedback. We provide that feedback [to cut energy use].”



customer energy use and pioneered using smiley faces. “You know people think a Prius is a good thing and a Humvee is bad,” he says. “Well, a lot of Prius owners have Humvee houses and don’t even know it.”

While OPOWER focuses on developing reports like those SMUD sent by mail, others are putting it on the Internet.

At Efficiency 2.0, a New York-based software provider to utility companies, Andy Frank’s team is working with the Western Massachusetts Electricity Company to create a Facebook-like community where people can help one another save energy and compare results in a friendly, yet competitive way.

Online comparisons come with frowny or smiley faces and also give people highly customized tips about how they can reduce their energy use. It offers, for instance, a calculator tallying myriad decisions – take shorter

Wendy Penner loves that feedback. Her website profile tells the community of users that she has chosen to hand-wash her dishes in cold water, saving 238 pounds per year of carbon dioxide and knocking \$45 off her energy bill.

When those results didn’t satisfy her, Ms. Penner further pledged to dial down her water heater temperature from 135 to 115 degrees F, saving 626 pounds of CO2 and \$92 worth of fuel annually. Overall, she’s lowered her personal energy use by 1.4 percent and is on track to save \$190 per year and 1,120 lbs. of CO2.

That hasn’t won her a smiley face yet, though. Until recently, her page sported a frowny face because she’s doing better on energy use than only 25 percent of the community at large. She would like to be competing against a group of “energy friends,” but doesn’t have any since the site has only been running a month.

“This is really a very powerful tool and I like it a lot,” Penner says. “The motivation from it is pretty strong. People really don’t like getting the frowny faces.” (In fact, SMUD and others have nixed frowny faces after some negative reactions.)

Commonwealth Edison, a Chicago-area utility, is pleased overall with its program, which is similar to SMUD’s.

“In a few cases we’ve been accused of being agents of some secret service spying on them,” says Val Jensen, vice president for marketing and environmental programs for Commonwealth Edison.

“But that kind of reaction has been in the low single digits. Only one homeowner has said, ‘Stop sending me this.’ ”

When Dennis Boland, a stock-index trader from Glenview, Ill., got his new home energy report from Commonwealth Edison last month, he was aghast.

The report showed that the 20 most efficient homes in Mr. Boland’s neighborhood used about 587 kilowatt-hours (kWh) per month, while his group of 100 neighbors used 1,150 kWh per month. And Boland’s home? Try 1,987 kWh monthly – 92 percent more than the average.

“My first observation when I read the report was: ‘I am a pig!’ ” he says. “I knew I was paying a lot every month for electricity, but I thought everyone was. I didn’t know I was such a glutton.”

Even though it made him feel guilty, Boland says he was also grateful. Now he’s changing his thermostat setting to reduce his air-conditioning load and looking for other ways to save energy – and money.

He’s eager to see the next report to determine if he’s off the “below average” list. “I hope more power companies will pick up on this,” he says, “and not be afraid to tell their users: ‘You’re below average’ or maybe, ‘You’re a pig!’ ”



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Real Estate

Island taxpayers increasingly appealing property taxes

BY LISA ZAHNER
STAFF WRITER

The number of taxpayers appealing the assessed value of their homes has tripled or quadrupled over the past four years, says Property Appraiser David Nolte.

reduce their bill.

Nolte, who has been on the job for two decades, said the historical average for residents petitioning their assessed values is about 200 per year. In the past four years, three to four times that many people per year have filed the paperwork to formally petition

can only increase in value by 3 percent per year, or the rate of inflation, whichever is lowest.

He said most of the residential taxpayers who appeal are the owners of second or third homes with tax bills substantial enough to go through the hassle — and possibly the expense

disagree about how much their property is worth.

Assessed property values have only dropped about 6 percent from the end of 2006 to the end of 2008, while sale prices are between 20 and 40 percent lower than prices a few years ago. It takes at least two years for assessed values to catch up to downturns in the market, but it seems that the decline in assessed values is lagging way behind what's happened to the "value" of real estate on the barrier island.

Nolte said his department is "the only government agency that is assumed to be wrong until proven otherwise," and said property value appeals take an enormous amount of staff time and resources to defend.

Barrier island property owner and real estate investor Lynne Baldwin is one of those willing to appeal.

She disagrees with Nolte, saying the appraiser's office is assumed to be right and that residents have a steep hill to climb to prove otherwise.

Baldwin owns eight properties in Indian River County and has been through the appeal process. A former Assistant State Attorney who now handles adoption cases, Baldwin lives in West Palm Beach but saw Vero Beach and Sebastian as great investments for her retirement.

"It was my dream to move to Vero Beach, I love the area and I love the people," she said. "I love the restaurants and the art shows, but I don't think so highly of the local government as far as the Property Appraiser's office goes."

Baldwin owns property in Palm Beach and Brevard counties and said she's had much better luck negotiating with those county officials than with the staff in Indian River County.

"Some of them are very nice in the



Home in Ambersand Beach which just sold for \$874,900.

Photos: Tom McCarthy, Jr.

Next week as Indian River County homeowners receive their property tax bill, more may choose to continue through the appeals process that could, where successful, significantly

the county for a second look at what their property is worth.

Nolte said petitioners are generally those not eligible for homestead exemptions, as homesteaded properties

of hiring an attorney, gathering the evidence and getting an independent appraisal.

This combination means that barrier island residents are more apt to

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Real Estate



Smaller home in Ambersand Beach appraised at more than \$1.1 million.

way they say no, but they still say no and some of them are just plain adversarial," she said. "They tell you that if they lower yours, they'll have to lower everyone else's. If they take your money, that's noble and correct, but if they lower your taxes, it means that you're just greedy."

Except for the house in Ambersand Beach on the north barrier island where her husband lives full time, she purchased the properties in lieu of having a pension plan and now, overburdened by the taxes, feels that wasn't such a great idea.

"I can't even rent them out and get enough to cover the taxes," she said. "I feel very badly because I think that the property values in Indian River County are inflated way beyond the market values."

During her appeals on the Ambersand Beach property and also on one in Sebastian, Baldwin said she felt she met the burden of proof that should have been required to win her case. She found sales and values of comparable properties near her home.

"The county picked out comps 10-12 miles away in Vero Beach that are much more expensive," she said. "The house just a few doors down from me just sold on Oct. 19 for \$874,900 and it's 4,400 square feet. Mine is 1,400 square feet of living space and they've got it valued at nearly \$1.2 million."

During the appeal of one of her Sebastian properties which has a single-family home built on it, Baldwin said she was taxed based on the "highest and best use" of the property, which, according to the county, would be bulldozing the house and building an eight-unit condominium on the site. She didn't agree with being taxed based on the potential of the property instead of

its current use and improvements, but her argument didn't fly.

Though Baldwin said she would rather "light her hair on fire" than to go through what she describes as an "exercise in futility" again, she also admitted that she will probably appeal again next year and hopefully go back better prepared.

"I tried to appeal this year but I mailed the check two days before the deadline from West Palm and they said it got there too late. I asked them to consider the postmark but they wouldn't," she said. "They kept the money, but refused to hear my appeal. If I try again next year, I plan to have a bona fide appraisal when I go in. You can get an appraisal for about \$250."

Because Indian River County has more than 75,000 people, residents' cases are not heard directly by the Value Adjustment Board, but instead by an attorney with experience in real property law called a Special Magistrate.

The Property Appraiser's office defends its valuation and has its own attorney present. Petitioners are permitted to hire an attorney or other tax representative and to bring independent evidence such as an independent appraisal or sales of comparable properties to be heard by the magistrate. Of the cases which get to the point of a hearing, about 98 percent are won by the Nolte's office. Many petitioners drop their appeals at some point in the process after the appraiser reduces the valuation somewhat, in effect settling the case, at least for one year.

"If 98 percent of the appeals fail, it's not because 98 percent of them deserve to fail," Baldwin said.

Commissioner Peter O'Bryan serves on the Value Adjustment Board, which

CONTINUED ON PAGE 72

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Real Estate

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Indian River County, October 2009

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- Indian River County real estate sales are 16.6% ahead of last year.¹
- An average of 188 detached residential homes are selling every month in Indian River County. In the period January through June 2009, 1,126 residential properties (homes & condos) were sold.¹
- 1,000 people move to Florida every day. More than 82 million people flock to Florida each year to visit.²

The worst is over — buyers are back.

Some homeowners who grew discouraged during the recent downturn, and put off listing

their property or even pulled their homes off the market, are discovering that this is now an opportune time to sell. If you're planning on moving to a retirement community, delaying the selling of your home could actually cost you more money in the long run.

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1. Source: Realtors® Association of Indian River County. Sales figures are for Indian River County

2. Source: www.visitflorida.org

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Number of property owners who appealed their assessments

2009	645
2008	790
2007	659
2006	750

Source: Indian River County Clerk of Courts

Assessed value of real property in 32963 zip code by year

Year	July 1 Value	Final Value
2007	\$7,543,481,853	\$7,602,057,719
2008	\$7,558,188,665	\$7,559,315,815
2009	\$7,222,196,620	\$7,183,722,082

Source: Office of David Nolte, Indian River County Property Appraiser

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 71

ultimately rules on whether to accept the recommendations of the Special Magistrate. O'Bryan said he encourages residents to file petitions if they think their property values are out of whack with reality.

"It only costs \$15 and it gives you the opportunity to keep negotiating with the Property Appraiser right up to the date of your hearing," he said.

O'Bryan said it's worth the staff time and the months-long process to give property owners the chance to be heard and to make their case with the special magistrate. Since the failure to

pay property taxes can result in a lien on the person's home, it is an avenue and a remedy which he feels the taxpayer should always have.

It's too late to file a new petition for this year, that has to be done within a couple of weeks after receiving tax notice from the Property Appraiser. Those notices are issued in August and provide property owners with an estimate of what their tax bill will be, based on the maximum millage rates approved by the Board of County Commissioners, the School Board and all the other municipal boards and taxing authorities which get a piece of the taxes residents pay.

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3206 CARDINAL DRIVE, VERO BEACH

Calendar



OCTOBER

October 29

The Vero Beach Hotel & Spa, will host a Top Dog Competition and Leash Cutting Ceremony, 5 – 6:30 p.m. to benefit the Humane Society of Vero Beach & Indian River County. www.verobeachhotelandspa.com

October 31

The Dan K. Richardson and William L. Marine Dollars for Scholars Golf Classic, with 8:15 shotgun start at the Grand Harbor Golf Club. \$175 includes a buffet lunch. 569-9869

October 31

The Environmental Learning Center will host a Green Living Workshop, Are there Bats in your Belfry? Participants will build bat boxes. 10:30 a.m. – noon, \$30 per family (\$25 for ELC members).

October 31

The Humane Society of Vero Beach and Indian River County will host its first Tricks, Treats & Tails Howl-O-Ween, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

October 31

Ghosts and Goblins at McKee Botanical Garden, \$10 adults, \$5 children. 794-0601

NOVEMBER

November

Return of the Dinosaurs Invasion Exhibit at McKee Botanical Garden. 794-0601

November 4

Riverside Cafe will host a Wine and Whiskers adoption social to benefit the Humane Society of Vero Beach and Indian River County, 6:30 – 8 p.m. 772-388-3331, x26.

November 4 – 6

Indian River Charter High School fall dinner theatre fundraiser, Caravan Across the Ancient Lands. Tickets \$35. 567-6600 ext. 110.

November 5

Artist and author JoAnne Berkow will present How to Approach Galleries and Build a Portfolio at the Vero Beach Museum of Art. 6:30 p.m. reception, 7 p.m. Vero Beach Art Club meeting, 7:30 lecture. Free and open to the public. 231-0303

November 5

17th Annual Soup Bowl at various locations throughout the county to benefit the Samaritan Center for Homeless Families. 770-3039

November 5

Girl's Night Out shopping extravaganza to benefit Hibiscus Children's Center 6 to 9 p.m. at Holy Cross Parish Hall. Tickets \$25. Call Angela Astrup 978-9313 x 313

November 5

Gallery 14 welcomes new season with a gala Let the Season Begin reception, 4 – 7 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 5. 562-5525 or www.gallery14verobeach.com.

November 6 – 8

Sebastian Clambake at Riverview Park in Sebastian, 2 – 9 p.m. on Friday, 10 a.m. – 9 p.m. on Saturday, and 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. Sunday.

November 6 - 7

Chairman's Club Dinners at the Vero Beach Museum of Art. 231-0707

November 6 - 7

Saint Edward's Theatre Department presents The American Clock; A Vaudeville by Arthur Miller. Nov. 6 at 7:30 p.m., Nov. 7 at 2 p.m. & 7:30 p.m. at the Waxlax Center for the Performing Arts. (877) 725-8849 or www.ticketalternative.com.

November 7

LoPresti Aviation Charity Breakfast & Fly In, 9 a.m. at Sebastian Airport to benefit Love Doctors' Charities. 562-4757

November 7

Book signing, 4 p.m. at the Vero Beach Book Center with Alex Von Bidder, owner of New York's Four Seasons Restaurant and local artist Leslie McGuirk, authors

of Wiggins Learns His Manners at the Four Seasons Restaurant.

November 7

Habitat for Humanity Cracker HoeDown, under the big tent at Riverside Park. Tickets \$75. 562-9860

November 7 – 8

Santa Paws Photos at the Humane Society of Vero Beach & Indian River County, Saturday 10 a.m. – 3 p.m., Sunday 11 a.m. – 4 p.m. 388-3331, x 20.

November 7 - 8

Fiesta Pops Concerts, 7:30 p.m. Saturday and 2 p.m. Sunday at the Vero Beach High School Performing Arts Center. \$10 & \$12 tickets. 564-5537.

November 9

The Indian River County Healthy Start Coalition Luncheon, 11:30 a.m. at the Club at Pointe West features guest speaker Kyra Oliver, who launched a nationwide This Side Up campaign to reduce the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS). Tickets \$25. 563-9118

November 9

Opening Night – A red carpet evening of dinner, mystery and intrigue to benefit the Homeless Family Center, 6 p.m. at the Quail Valley River Club. Event features the Sleuths Mystery Dinner Show from Orlando. Tickets \$125. 567-5537

November 10 – December 7

Women's Lives Art Film Studies Course at the Vero Beach Museum of Art, "Trends in International Cinema: Feminine Mystiques. 1:30 or 7 p.m. Tuesday afternoon sessions, \$55 or \$45 members. 231-0707 ext. 136

November 11

Veteran's Day Celebration and Rededication Ceremony at 11 a.m. on the Veteran's Memorial Island Sanctuary at Riverside Park.

November 12

The Riverside Theatre Friends committee's annual luncheon fundraiser, 11:30 a.m. at the Theatre, features International Singing Chef Andy LoRusso. Tickets \$125. 231-6990

November 12

Land, Water Wildlife: Along the Greenway Trail to benefit Indian River Land Trust, 6 p.m. at Rock City Gardens presents an evening of natural wonders and wildlife under the stars. Tickets \$125. 794-0701

Nov. 12 - 29

The award winning musical Cabaret will be performed at the Vero Beach Theatre Guild. 562-8300

November 13 – 14

6th Annual Indian River County Firefighters' Chili Cookoff at Pointe West. New Friday night International Fest-of-Ale and Fine Cuisine (21 and older) event, 5 – 9 p.m., \$25 advance, \$30 at gate. Firefighters Chili Cookoff on Saturday



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12/1- 12/8 (2 Tuesdays) 2:00pm – 4:00 pm	"Cultural Journeys – Egyptian Odyssey & Southeast Asia"	Ruth Kalish, Ph.D.
12/1 – 12/15 (3 Tuesdays) 10:00am – 12:30pm	"Healthcare: Reform, Repair or Ruin?"	Ruth Kalish, Ph.D.
12/15 Tuesday 2:00pm – 4:30pm	"Voyage of the Dammed – Steamship St. Louis"	Ruth Kalish, Ph.D.

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Calendar

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 75

December 5

LoPresti Aviation Charity Breakfast & Fly In, 9 a.m. at Sebastian Airport featuring LoPresti Fury, Corkey Fornof and Patty Wagstaff. 562-4757

December 5

Vero Beach Art Club's Art Trail, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., presents a tour of 10 artist studios. Tickets \$25 each or \$45 for two. 231-0303

December 5

Illusions Annual Winter Gala, 6:30 p.m. at The Moorings Club to benefit Hibiscus

Children's Center. Tickets \$250. Call Angela Astrup 978-9313 x 313

December 5

Pioneer Christmas at the Hallstrom Farmstead, noon to 3 p.m. Bring a picnic lunch and enjoy entertainment, beverages and dessert provided by the Indian River Historical Society. \$7 IRHS members, \$10 non-members; children under 12 free. 778-3435

December 5

Christmas parade on Ocean Drive, 5:30 p.m., sponsored by Oceanside Business Association and Vero Beach Rotary Club.

December 9

Gatekeepers of the Garden Dinner at McKee Botanical Garden. 794-0601

December 9

Author Larry Baker presents A Good Man, 7 p.m. at the Vero Beach Book Center. 569 2050

December 11 - 12

Mardy's Tennis & Jake's Music Fest to Benefit the Mardy Fish Foundation returns to Vero Beach December 11 & 12. December 11 features a Kids Clinic 4 - 5 p.m. at Grand Harbor Golf Club and the Jake Owen Concert at 8 p.m. at

the Vero Beach High School Performing Arts Center. December 12 begins at 12:30 p.m. with a Barbeque Luncheon, followed at 2:30 by a Tennis Exhibition. (866) 333.7623

December 13

The Vero Beach Art Club presents Art in the Park - Outdoor Art Exhibit & Sale, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Humiston Park on Ocean Drive. 231-0303

December 13

Author Debbie Macomber presents The Perfect Christmas, 1 p.m. at the Vero Beach Book Center. 569 2050

December 18 - 21

Holidays at McKee at McKee Botanical Garden. 794-0601

December 31

New Year's Eve Celebration at Riverside Theatre with food, fun and live entertainment on the Waxlax Stage and in the Orchid Lobby begins at 10:30 p.m. Tickets \$100. 231-6990

December 31 - January 17

Riverside Theatre presents Ella, featuring over two dozen of Fitzgerald's biggest hits, on the Stark Mainstage. 231-6990

JANUARY

January 3

The Vero Beach Art Club presents Art in the Park - Outdoor Art Exhibit & Sale, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Humiston Park on Ocean Drive. 231-0303 or www.VeroBeachArtClub.org

January 7

The Emerson Center Humanities Series presents Gary Mormino's Emmy-winning PBS documentary, The Florida Dream, a history of Florida since WWII based on his book Land of Sunshine, State of Dreams. 7 p.m. lecture is complimentary. 778-5249

January 7

Atlantic Classical Orchestra presents Vaughn Williams Overture to The Wasps, Ravel La Tombeau de Couperin and Mahler Symphony #4 (Chamber Version). 8 p.m. at the Waxlax Center for the Performing Arts at St. Edwards School. (866) 310-7521

January 7 - 10

18th Annual Antiques Show & Sale to benefit the Vero Beach Museum of Art. Preview Party is 5 - 8:30 p.m. Jan. 7, tickets start at \$100. Show & Sale is 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. Jan. 8-12, tickets \$10. 231-0707

January 9 - 16

Quail Valley Charities Fundraising Week. Jan. 9 - 5K Walk/Run and Kids fun-run, Jan. 10 - Gourmet Wine & Guest Chef Dinner, Jan. 13 - Duplicate Bridge Tournament & Luncheon, Jan. 14 - 16 - Tennis Tournament, Jan. 15 & 16 - Golf Tournament, Jan. 16 - Grand Gala Cocktail Buffet, Auction and Awards Night. 492-2020



GRAND RE-OPENING NOVEMBER 7th

Dear Golfers,

Indian River Club, the course described by many golfers as "the best in Vero Beach," is now even better. Come see for yourself. You will absolutely love "The New" Indian River Club, which will celebrate its Grand Re-Opening on November 7.

Over the past few months this Ron Garl designed 18 hole champion course has undergone a complete restoration. Renovations to this, the third course in the world to be designated an "Audubon Signature Sanctuary," features Mini Verde grass on the new greens, and Celebration grass on the tees and fairways. These new grasses are more cold weather tolerant, and will use less water, fertilizer and pesticides, making Indian River Club even more environmentally friendly. Members and guests will enjoy a redesigned practice area including a full driving range, short game area, and putting green.

Indian River Club offers many other advantages to potential new members:

- A maximum of 250 full golf memberships
- A golf club with no debt
- Low Country Clubhouse with private meeting room, men's and women's locker rooms and lounges, cart and club storage, and on-site lodging available.
- Swim and Fitness Centers
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- Walking golfers welcome
- Junior golfer friendly, summer camps, etc.
- Full practice facility
- Private carts
- Reciprocal programs with local oceanfront hotel properties
- The area's friendliest staff and membership.

Indian River Club membership is limited to 250 full golf members. So, if you are interested in joining, or would like additional information about "the best private golf course in Vero Beach," please call 772-770.0757, or email membership@indianriverclub.com. Membership is limited, so call today!

Sincerely,
DeWitt Cox
Board of Directors



Classifieds

Real Estate

Featured Real Estate Sales on the Barrier Island: Oct. 7 to Oct. 21, 2009



A spectacular new home constructed on a private stretch of John's Island Sound is our final featured real estate transaction for October.

The home at 401 Indian Harbor Road, which had been listed for \$6.95 million, closed on October 1st for \$5.58 million.

The 6,874-square-foot home was designed with indoor and outdoor entertaining in mind, with covered lanais and panoramic water views from nearly every room.

John's Island Real Estate Company represented both the buyer and the seller in the transaction.

Single-Family Residences and Lots

Subdivision	Address	Listed	Original Asking Price	Sold	Selling Price
AMBERSAND BEACH	12730 HIGHWAY A1A	7/15/2009	\$939,900	10/19/2009	\$850,000
MARINER VILLAGE	141 MARINER BEACH LN	7/15/2006	\$3,995,000	10/19/2009	\$2,350,000
BERMUDA CLUB	1180 GOVERNORS WY	3/27/2009	\$489,000	10/15/2009	\$425,000
SEA MIST COURT	2171 SEA MIST CT	4/18/2009	\$635,000	10/14/2009	\$555,000
CASTAWAY COVE	1241 INDIAN MOUND TRAIL	8/8/2008	\$1,849,000	10/13/2009	\$1,175,000
SILVER SHORES	725 TIDES RD	10/1/2008	\$525,000	10/12/2009	\$500,000
OCEANAIRE HEIGHTS	9415 FRANGIPANI DRIVE	5/11/2009	\$385,000	10/8/2009	\$330,000
SUMMERPLACE	1800 PEBBLE PA E	8/4/2009	\$899,000	10/8/2009	\$860,000

Town Homes, Villas & Condos

Subdivision	Address	Listed	Original Asking Price	Sold	Selling Price
OCEAN CORP	924 COQUINA LANE (THE BEACH HOUSE) #1	1/29/2009	\$365,000	10/19/2009	\$300,000
JOHN'S ISLAND	400 BEACH ROAD, #214	11/5/2008	\$165,000	10/16/2009	\$115,000
BAYTREE OCEAN VILLAS	8416 OCEANSIDE DR., F-32	1/5/2009	\$640,000	10/15/2009	\$540,000
VISTA DEL MAR	5400 HIGHWAY A1A, #9	11/13/2008	\$154,900	10/15/2009	\$105,000
RIVER MEWS CONDO	2164 VIA FUENTES	8/30/2008	\$299,000	10/13/2009	\$195,000

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547 WHITE PELICAN CIR—PRESERVE ESTATE

3 bedroom plus study, 3.5 bath residence on estate-size homesite enjoys scenic views and Intracoastal access via kayak/canoe. **\$1,775,000**

"BOOT LAKE" ESTATE



403 INDIES DRIVE—LAKEFRONT ESTATE

4 bedroom plus library, 4.5 bath estate on nearly .5 acre homesite. Canoe/Kayak on Orchid's beautiful Boot Lake. **\$2,695,000 (Furn. Avail.)**

GRACIOUS OCEANFRONT LIVING



40 BEACHSIDE DR, #202—3,810 A/C SQ. FT.

Exquisite 3 bedroom plus study, 4 bath residence with luxury finishes, southern exposure, and stone terrace with summer kitchen. **\$2,350,000**

PRISTINE & ELEGANT



311 WESTWIND COURT—GOLF ESTATE

4 bedroom plus office, 6 bath, golf residence situated on nearly 3/4 acre homesite. Exquisite details and magnificent views! **\$2,195,000**

ESTUARY & SUNSET VIEWS



909 ORCHID PT WAY—COURTYARD ESTATE

4 bedroom plus study, 3.5 bath residence with separate 2-story guest cabana, courtyard. Intracoastal access via kayak/canoe. **\$1,595,000**

ESTUARY SETTING & VIEWS



945 ORCHID PT WAY—COURTYARD LIVING

4 bedroom, 4.5 bath residence includes separate 2-story cabana and oversized, lushly landscaped courtyard. **\$1,595,000**

LAKE & GOLF VIEWS



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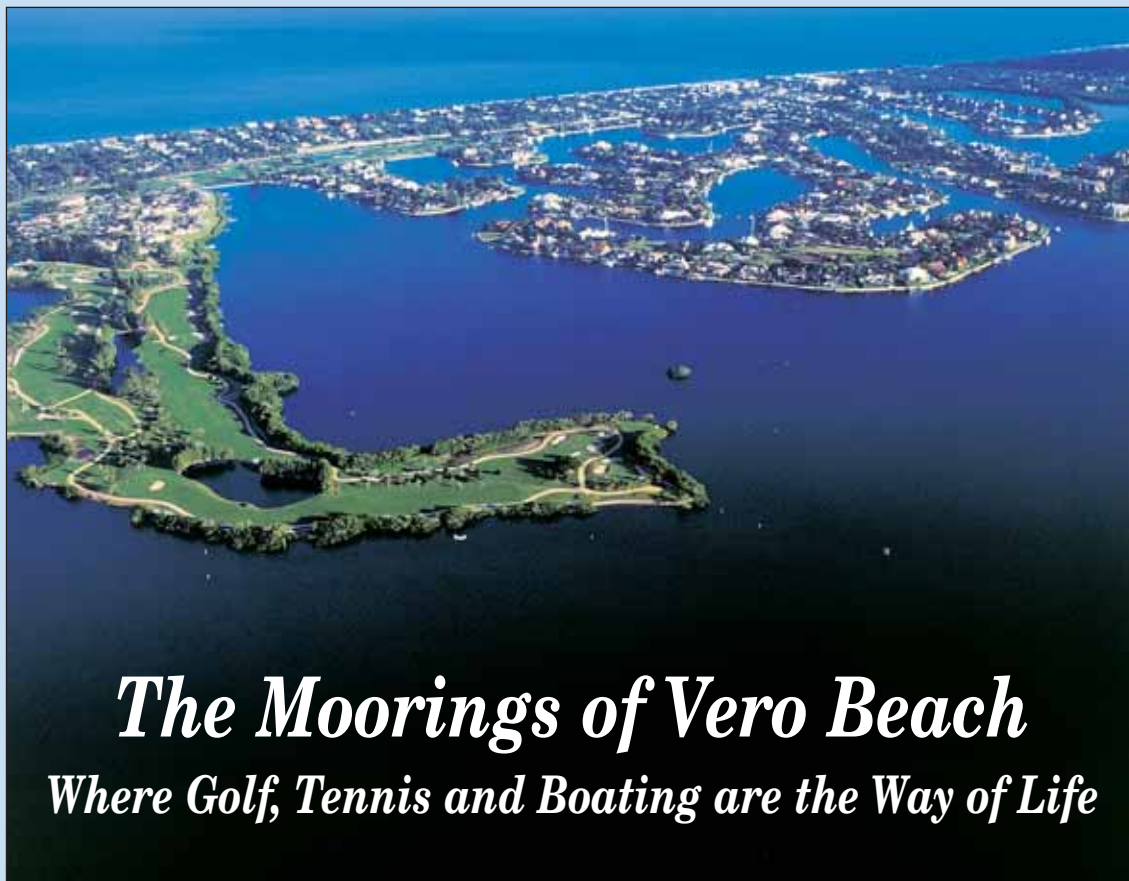
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