

VENICE Gondolier Sun

LOCAL NEWS COVER TO COVER FLORIDA'S NO. 1 WEEKLY NEWSPAPER

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WEDNESDAY-THURSDAY EDITION, JUNE 4-5, 2008

AN EDITION OF THE SUN

In park

On the trail of a fun day with nature

1B



City buys itself time over Sunshine lawsuit

Lawsuit is expanded to include two more city council members.

BY GREG GILES
NEWS EDITOR

Eleventh-hour negotiations over access to the personal e-mail accounts of city council members failed Tuesday.

"It has come to our attention there has apparently been some deletion of e-mails that are the

subject of our complaint," said Attorney Andrea Mogensen, who filed a Sunshine Law lawsuit against the city, Mayor Ed Martin and Council Member Sue Lang on behalf of Sarasota resident Anthony Lorenzo in late May. "This is to prevent further deletions."

She and City Attorney Bob Anderson were scheduled to appear before a Twelfth Judicial Circuit Court judge at the South County Administration Building on Tuesday to address Mogensen's emergency motion for

temporary injunction. The injunction's intent was to halt further deletions of city-related e-mails.

Late Monday the city contacted Mogensen with an offer to negotiate. They met Tuesday, but didn't reach an agreement.

The sticking point appeared to be over access to personal e-mail accounts. The city offered to assure the plaintiffs no more e-mails would be deleted. The plaintiff wanted that and more.

Mogensen asked for access to the personal computers of



Moore

Simmonds

could not agree to the stipulation for all members.

Last week Council Member John Simmonds offered to grant city experts access to his home computer to recover his previously deleted e-mails, but apparently that position isn't shared by all members on city council.

Spared

The negotiations spared Simmonds and City Clerk Lori Stel-

Please see CITY, 5A

council members, or for a forensic computer expert to take a snapshot of the computer's contents for judicial review.

The city's response was no, it

Todora: County property values drop 17 percent

BY STEVEN J. SMITH
STAFF WRITER

County Property Appraiser Jim Todora unleashed some bleak property value numbers Monday for Sarasota County and its cities.

Todora's office reported that since valuations were last certified in October 2007, they have fallen 17 percent in Sarasota County as a whole. They went down a whopping 33 percent in North Port, while dropping 18 percent in Venice, 13 percent in the city of Sarasota and 10 percent in Longboat Key.

"You must remember these June numbers are estimates only," Todora said. "They are likely to be changed before being certified (on July 1)."

Historically, however, certified property value numbers change only a percentage point



Todora

Staub

or two from initial estimates, he said.

So why such a dramatic plunge in North Port?

"The biggest drop we saw overall was in vacant land," Todora said. "And that was in the lots North Port has. Those lots were selling for upwards of \$30,000 (in the past) and this year we saw a number of sales that were less than one third of that."

Please see DROP, 5A

Residents want protection from mining operations

BY GERALD ROGOVIN
CORRESPONDENT

Venetian Golf & River Club residents want Venice and Sarasota County to act immediately to stop air pollution coming from the operations of Venice Mining and Minerals LLC.

Four individual homeowners and the community's homeowners association complained that neighbors had become ill from dust and fumes originating from the company's property, which abuts their northern border.

The company's operations in-

clude mining, excavation, rock-crushing, sand and aggregate stockpiling. Conveyor belts and trucks add noise to the dust and fumes.

Venice Mining, APAC Southeast Inc., Cemex Inc., and Miami Valley Ready Mix of Florida Inc., have for several years made and recycled asphalt and concrete in the area. Their operations run from 7 a.m.-6 p.m., Monday through Saturday. County approval is required for work conducted after 6 p.m.

Noise from the operations,

Please see MINING, 4A

Help available for job hunters

BY ANNE KLOCKENKEMPER
STAFF WRITER

Regional job assistance programs are extra busy in these tougher economic times, seeing more and more job seekers looking for any kind of employment.

The programs — which help with career planning and counseling, interviewing and assessments of a job hunter's interests and abilities at no cost — are doing everything they can to help place people. Some are finding that the news isn't all bad.

Barbara Short, of the Career and Service Centers of Southwest Florida office, said the number of job seekers coming through their doors is up.

"People are pretty depressed; many of them have never lost their jobs before and they don't know what to do," Short said. "We make sure people have a great resume and know how to interview correctly. And job placements are up actually. In January and February, I was really nervous because we weren't matching job seekers. Now we are, and we're getting some really nice job orders."

Short said the positions coming in are more than just food service jobs.

"We're getting some management positions in here, and we had a real estate job open up, which surprised me," Short admitted. "Maybe things are shaking loose a bit, because a company wouldn't hire in that position if it wasn't. And banks are hiring loan officers, maybe just for refinancing, but things are changing."

Some of that could be put down to natural attrition with people moving away or being promoted, leaving job openings behind.



SUN PHOTO BY KHARLI ROSE, krose@sun-herald.com.

Janice Riccio, center, and Kitty Douglas receive assistance from the Mobile Career Opportunity Center during their job searches.

Where the jobs are

Marc Epton, an IT technician with the Suncoast Workforce Board, recently helped a job seeker on the Jobs, Etc. bus set up an e-mail account so she could receive messages from prospective employers.

Part of Epton's job is to help seekers navigate the world of online job hunting. And the number of job seekers the Jobs, Etc. bus is seeing is up, too.

"At all three of our offices, Bradenton, Sarasota and Venice, we're getting about 1,000 more people a month extra than we

did over a year ago, because unemployment is so high," he said.

Locally, with layoffs and manufacturing and construction down — in addition to budget cuts at nearly all government levels — there is less funding available and more people requiring job assistance services.

Epton said there are jobs available in Mississippi, Louisiana and Texas, where construction and infrastructure jobs are booming in the wake of Hurricane Katrina.

Please see JOB, 4A

Two teachers end long Venice High School careers

BY AUDREY BLACKWELL
STAFF WRITER

AND JESSICA MILLER
INTERN

Sharon Lord and Carolyn Simmons are retiring after teaching at Venice High School for nearly 60 years.

Principal Candace Millington said each of the teachers is well-respected and made a tremendous contribution to the school.

"They will be hard to replace," Millington said. "They are so knowledgeable with curriculum and instruction. They helped our students earn awards because of their expertise. They are professionals in every sense of the word."



SUN PHOTO BY JESSICA MILLER

Carolyn Simmons retired from teaching at Venice High School on June 3.

Carolyn Simmons

If you walked into Carolyn Simmons' classroom on the first day of school, you might have seen her wearing a T-shirt with a

history theme.

For 28 years Simmons began her American history class, whether it was Advanced Placement or Honors, teaching the time period in which her students were born.

Over the next several weeks of class, Simmons would wear an outfit that coincided with her daily lesson plan.

"I warned my students in the beginning to pay attention to what I wear," Simmons said. "It could have certainly been on the exam."

Simmons retires this year after teaching American history at VHS since 1980.

"I came here in a presidential election year, and I am now leaving in a presidential election



SUN PHOTO BY AUDREY BLACKWELL

Sharon Lord is retiring after a 30-year teaching career at Venice High School.

year," said Simmons.

Along with her outfits representing American culture, Simmons wore a different watch every school day of the semester,

which emphasized her lesson of the day. Although some no longer tick, her collection now includes more than 180 watches.

Simmons thinks it is important for students to understand the history of their lives.

"History helps to better understand who you are," she said.

In order for her students to picture a certain era or event in history, Simmons incorporated movies into certain lessons.

Movies included were "The Patriot," "We Were Soldiers" and "Forest Gump," which her students appreciated.

"The way Ms. Simmons taught through movies made me excited to come to class every

Please see TWO, 4A

Good morning,
Gondolier Sun
subscriber,
MARGERY PELLICCI

FRONT SECTION

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DEATHS

Stella Alden
John McCormack



Florida Lottery

CASH 3	PLAY 4
June 2N751 June 2D844 June 1N384 June 1D194	June 2N ...8673 June 2D ...5327 June 1N ...4413 June 1D ...2149
D-Day; N-Night	D-Day; N-Night



FANTASY 5	MEGA MONEY
June 22-14-21-31-36 June 14-12-17-24-30 May 313-11-19-26-31 May 304-12-25-26-32 May 293-5-6-22-26	May 309-10-21-31 MegaBall5 May 271-5-21-32 MegaBall21
Payoff for June 1	Payoff for May 30
1 5-digit winners: \$266,906.28 457 4-digit winners: \$94 13,062 3-digit winners: \$9 2-digit winners: Quick Pick ticket	1 4 of 4 + MB: \$1.6 million 6 4 of 4: \$1,656 65 3 of 4 + MB: \$335 1,558 3 of 4: \$41.50 2,049 2 of 4 + MB: \$22
LOTTO	Payoff for May 31
May 313-14-18-27-28-47 May 281-14-17-32-40-46 May 2419-30-36-41-44-52 May 2112-13-17-22-41-53 May 177-8-40-41-44-45 May 149-17-30-36-45-49	0 6-digit winners: \$— 113 5-digit winners: \$4,365.50 6,202 4-digit winners: \$64.50 125,094 3-digit winners: \$4.50
Drawings occur Tuesday, Friday evenings	
Drawings occur Wednesdays, Saturdays	
The estimated jackpot is \$25 million	

BACK IN TIME

TARPON CENTER MARINA, 1960s



PHOTO COURTESY OF VENICE ARCHIVES

An aerial view of Tarpon Center Marina at the South Jetty. Small homes in the picture make up the Inlet Circle Development Co. housing project by Kingsbury Curtis and were built in the early 1930s. Some houses were moved here from Groveland Avenue in Englewood in the 1930s. For more on this and other historical materials, visit Venice Archives and Area Historical Collection at 351 S. Nassau St., across from West Blalock Park. The mission of Venice Archives is to collect and preserve historical and archeological material relating to Venice and the communities of Nokomis, Laurel and Osprey, whose histories have been interwoven from 1867 to the present. Hours are 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Monday and Wednesday. Call 486-2487 for more information.

ABC-7 WEATHER

VENICE OUTLOOK



Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue
90	91	90	91	90	91	90
71	73	72	72	71	72	72
20%	20%	20%	30%	30%	30%	40%

ABC-7 ALMANAC

Temperature	High	Low
Yesterday	88	71
Normal	89	69
Record	95	55
	(1989)	(1984)
Rainfall		
Yesterday	0.00"	
	Actual	Average
Month	0.00"	0.36"
Year	9.99"	14.00"

MARINE

Cape Sable to Tarpon Springs:
(Sarasota and Charlotte counties)
ESE winds at 7 to 14 knots.
Seas 1 to 2 feet, light chop.

Tarpon Springs to Apalachicola:
SW winds at 3 to 6 knots.
Seas 1 to 2 feet, light chop.

VENICE TIDES

EASTERN STANDARD TIME

DATE	HIGH P.M.	HIGH A.M.	LOW P.M.	LOW A.M.
WED 4		11:53	8:58	
THU 5	12:43		9:42	
FRI 6	1:36		10:33	
SAT 7	2:34		11:21	

*STRONG TIDE
a — A.M. p — P.M.

SUNRISE, SUNSET

Sunrise/set		
Tonight's sunset	8:22 p.m.	
Tomorrow's sunrise	6:35 a.m.	
Moonrise/set		
Moonrise	7:07 a.m.	
Moonset	9:47 p.m.	

Area among highest on drought index

BY JASON WITZ
STAFF WRITER

The ground is rife with fuel for a huge brush fire, a wildfire official said Friday.

In fact, Southwest Florida has some of the driest soil in the state. And it is only going to get worse with the limited rainfall forecast for this week.

The Keetch-Byram Drought Index, which measures the moisture deficiency in soil on a scale of 0-800, rates Charlotte, DeSoto and Lee counties as areas in dire need of rain.

As of Friday afternoon, Charlotte

County had an average drought index rating of 546 — up nine points just from Thursday. About 25 percent of the county measured in the 600-700 range. At this time last year, the drought average was 550.

"Any type of spark right now will create a good fire," said Patrick Mahoney, wildfire mitigation specialist for the Florida Division of Forestry.

DeSoto County had a drought index rating of 549, an increase of 10 from Thursday. Lee County has the state's highest drought index rating, at 647.

Sarasota County is the only spot in the region that benefited from

rain last week, as its rating remains less than 500 at 483.

The area — like most of Florida — has suffered from a rainfall shortage this year.

To date, the region has received about 8.5 inches of precipitation for 2008, according to the National Weather Service. The normal average should be about 11.8 inches.

With no end to the drought in sight, Mahoney warned residents to expect more brush fires.

"It's just going to continue to get drier," he said.

jwitz@sun-herald.com



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VENICE Gondolier Sun Photo Contest

Submissions Accepted May 15 to June 15

The Venice Gondolier Sun is looking for unique photos that proudly represent what is unique about Venice as a place to live and a place to visit. The photos have to be different and creative in showcasing our community. Photos in the following categories will be accepted for judging:

- Community Scene & Education
- Sports & Recreation
- Arts & Nature (No family photos)



Rules: Contest open to anyone: residents, visitors, students and professionals. Photo submissions will be accepted from May 15 through June 15. Entrants must submit TWO (2) of each color or black and white photograph. Nothing larger than an 8"x10" should be submitted. Digital images will be accepted ONLY as follows: Digital image MUST BE at least 300dpi, at least 4" in width, submitted on disc and accompanied by TWO (2) color printouts. Digital submissions not adhering to these standards will be disqualified. **INKJET PRINTOUTS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.** All entries must have name, address, telephone number and category affixed to each submission. Photos must be copyright free and submitted by the rightful owner. All entries will become the property of the Venice Gondolier Sun and will NOT BE RETURNED.

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Please affix entry form to each photo that your submit. This form may be copied. WAIVER: I certify that I am the rightful owner of the attached entry, that it is copyright free, and I waive all rights. I understand that all entries submitted will become the property of the Venice Gondolier Sun, will not be returned and may be used at any time, in any publication produced by the Venice Gondolier Sun with no further compensation other than a photo credit given. Under 18 requires parents signature.

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Address: _____ City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

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Signature _____

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Thousands turn out for veterans cemetery dedication

BY STEVEN J. SMITH
STAFF WRITER

Serendipitously situated between Memorial Day and D-Day observances, June 1 was a fitting day to dedicate the new Sarasota Veterans Affairs National Cemetery at 9810 State Road 72.

Several thousand veterans, dignitaries and well-wishers braved temperatures in the upper 80s and clogged the 4-mile route, just off exit 205 on Interstate 75, all the way to the site of the groundbreaking ceremony.

The unexpected throng delayed the event's start time by nearly half an hour and overflowed the seating area of the tent, set up to accommodate only about a thousand people. No one seemed to mind, however, as the ceremony went off without a hitch.

According to the Department of Veterans Affairs, the 295-acre site will serve veterans' needs for the next 50 years. An administration and public information center complex there will soon offer an electronic gravesite locator, public restrooms and a memorial walkway for visitors.

"When the 60-acre first phase is complete, the



SUN PHOTO BY STEVEN J. SMITH, ssmith@sun-herald.com

Unveiling the dedication plaque for the new Sarasota Veterans Affairs National Cemetery are former U.S. Rep. Katherine Harris, left; Sandra Beckley, director; William F. Tuerk, Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs; and U.S. Rep. Vern Buchanan.

cemetery will provide space for more than 38,000 gravesites and 7,000 columbarium niches for cremated remains," said Sandy Beckley, cemetery director.

Beckley added that the entire cemetery, when completed, will accommodate burials for nearly 400,000 veterans and eligible family members.

Perpetual obligation

Sunday's featured speakers for the dedication

included former U.S. Rep. Katherine Harris, U.S. Rep. Vern Buchanan and key-

note speaker William F. Tuerk, Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs.

Harris, who obtained initial authorization for the cemetery, paid tribute to the organizers of the event and those who dedicated their lives in service to America.

"Soon enough on this ground we'll see the headstones that will remind us of those who followed the hedgerows of Normandy or island-hopped the Pacific in World War II," Harris said, adding that we must not forget the veterans of Korea, Vietnam and, more recently, Iraq and Afghanistan.

Buchanan extolled the creation of the cemetery, noting there are about 1.9 million veterans in Florida alone — and veterans across the United States are passing away at the rate of about 1,800 a day.

Tuerk promised actual construction of the cemetery would begin in July and the first burials would take place in December. He

invited the crowd to visit the site from time to time as the cemetery takes shape, to reflect upon the values of honor, selflessness and service personified by those who will rest there.

"Wars begin and end, but caring for the nation's warriors is a perpetual obligation," Tuerk said.

Ralph Breeden of American Legion Post 159 in Venice was "very impressed" by the ceremony — and the site.

"It's the place where I'm going to be and the place where all my buddies are going to be," said the 82-year-old veteran of World War II and Korea. "And maybe where my children and grandchildren might come by and see me when I'm gone."

ssmith@sun-herald.com

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By Vicki Connell, M.A., CCC/A
ASHA Certified Audiologist

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JOB from Page 1A

"When people hear the government say the economy isn't that bad, and you're here, you think, 'what the hell are they talking about?'" he said. "But there are some places where they're dying for people."

Flexibility

The Jobs, Etc. bus — operated through the Suncoast Workforce Board — provides tools job seekers need to look for work on their own. Those who have filed for unemployment benefits can log onto a state Web site called EmployFlorida.com. After providing their name, address, job title they're seeking and a resume, the site will assign them a six-digit code and the site will match job hunters up with available positions. They will even receive e-mails from prospective employers.

"Imagine, being out of work and coming home and having an e-mail from someone who wants you," Epton said.

Most job seeking these days is done online, and Jobs, Etc. helps prospective employees learn the best way to do that.

"That way, they can sit in their boxers on a Sunday night when the kids are in bed and look," he said.

Short said, at first, most job hunters are looking to find a job similar to what they had before.

"But for some, they're not going to get that, like with construction. Say you're a framer. Some commercial construction is going, but most are going to have to look at something different," she said. "And people *are* (looking at different jobs) when we do an orientation. We look at transferable skills. You might have

been a roofer, but could have driving experience, or could be very organized. Maybe one of the local hardware stores is hiring. Maybe you're a plumber, but you can explain what this elbow-shaped pipe is. We don't want to put someone in a job that they're not happy with."

"People are pretty depressed; many of them have never lost their jobs before and they don't know what to do. We make sure people have a great resume and know how to interview correctly."

— **Barbara Short, of the Career and Service Centers of Southwest Florida**

Getting there

The Career and Service Centers of Southwest Florida offer a number of free assessments — many of them computer-based — and classes to help job seekers of all ages improve their chances of landing a job. Shore said there are sometimes other factors that put job hunting in the back seat.

"We give them a mini-assessment of what they need — 'do you have transportation, or food for tonight?' and then give them referrals to our community partnerships,"

JOB ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

Suncoast Workforce Board
897 E. Venice Ave.
Venice, FL 34285
486-2682
www.swdb.org

Jobs, Etc. Employment and Training Centers
897 E. Venice Ave.
Venice, FL 34285
486-2682

Short said. "You've got to take care of some basic needs before you can get them a job."

Both Epton and Short agreed transportation in the area is an issue. Epton said many companies won't hire someone if they know the employee doesn't have a reliable way to travel to and from work.

"Lee County and Sarasota have transportation," Short said. "We kind of have it, but we need something that's reasonable."

Jobs, Etc. also helps people write resumes.

"(That) will help you get an interview, which will help you get a job," Epton said. "You used to be able to walk down the street and knock on doors and ask if anyone needed help," said Epton. "Now, people won't even take (job applicant) calls now. Everything is online. And it's a numbers game. Out of 200 people that apply for a job, if a company sees a viable candidate, they will call the 10 best. It's not uncommon for the job seeker not to be contacted unless it's for an interview."

"It's not an etiquette thing so much, it's an efficiency. Companies will pick the cream of the crop."

aklockenkemper@sun-herald.com

MINING from Page 1A

dust and silica particles, a known carcinogen, carried by the wind from 50-foot-high mounds of mining residue, have annoyed residents of the development since it was established.

All the operators except Venice Mining have air permits and are monitored regularly by the county Department of Environmental Protection. County consultants test for pollutants in the air.

Venice Mining operates under an earth-moving permit administered by the county Resource Protection Department. Its enforcement has been limited to land leased from the county

by the company.

A parcel of land annexed by the city has not been monitored, however.

Demands

The omission was discovered last month in a meeting convened by County Commission Chair Shannon Staub. She had sought a gathering of VGRC residents and mining operators to allow them to discuss the proposed rezoning of 288 acres of land north of the development that would extend the mining.

But the operators did not attend. They had met earlier with city staff.

The second reading by the city council of the proposed rezoning has been

postponed since those meetings were held.

The homeowners association asked the city and the county for: the installation of "a significant buffer" on its northern border; relocation northward, away from the community, of mining operations; a reduction in the size and height of the mounds of mining residue; and watering and covering of those mounds.

An immediate answer to the requests was asked for in a May 23 e-mail. Neither the city or the county had responded as of May 31.

The association also asked that the e-mail be made part of the record in the rezoning petition.

LEGAL NOTICES**16 NOTICE OF ACTION****NOTICE OF ACTION**

BEFORE THE BOARD OF NURSING

IN RE: The license to practice nursing of

Ashley Elizabeth Foster, LPN
5304 Ithaca Lane
Sarasota, Florida 34243

Case No.: 2007-22092
License No.: LPN 5168452

The Department of Health has filed an Administrative Complaint against you, a copy of which may be obtained by contacting, Megan M. Blanco, Assistant General Counsel, Prosecution Services Unit, 4052 Bald Cypress Way, Bin #C65, Tallahassee Florida 32399-3265, (850)-245-4640.

If no contact has been made by you concerning the above by June 25, 2008, the matter of the Administrative Complaint will be presented at an ensuing meeting of the Board of Nursing in informal proceeding.

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, persons needing a special accommodation to participate in this proceeding should contact the individual or agency sending this notice not later than seven days prior to the proceeding at the address given on the notice. Telephone: (850)-245-4640, 1-800-955-8771 (TDD) or 1-800-955-8770(V), via Florida Relay Service.

PUBLISH:
MAY 21, 2008
MAY 28, 2008
JUNE 4, 2008
JUNE 11, 2008

16 NOTICE OF ACTION

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE TWELFTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT IN AND FOR SARASOTA COUNTY, FLORIDA CIVIL ACTION

Case No. 2008-CA-7559-SC

SHANLEY INVESTMENTS, LLC Plaintiff,

VS.

ATLANTIC GULF COMMUNITIES CORPORATION f/k/a GENERAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION, c/o J. D. Block Services, Inc., Jon N. Block, Director, former President of Atlantic Gulf Communities Corporation, NATIONS-BANK OF FLORIDA, N.A., Successor to NCNB National Bank of Florida, as Trustee under provisions of such Trust Agreement dated as of January 17, 1991, known as Trust Number 06-01-009-6081954, c/o Bank of America, Legal Department, BANK OF AMERICA, c/o C T Corporation System, Registered Agent, UNITED STATES OF AMERICA ON BEHALF OF INTERNAL REVENUE, c/o Paul I. Perez, U.S. Attorney for Middle District Of Florida, PAULETTE DIXON, RONALD KEELING, PEARL KEELING, YVONNE MYERS As Trustee of the Estate of Elizabeth E. Veerman and YVONNE MYERS, Individually, Defendants.

NOTICE OF ACTION

TO: ATLANTIC GULF COMMUNITIES CORPORATION f/k/a GENERAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION, c/o J. D. Block Services, Inc., Jon N. Block, Director, former President of Atlantic Gulf Communities Corporation, NATIONS-BANK OF FLORIDA, N.A., Successor to NCNB National Bank of Florida, as Trustee under provisions of such Trust Agreement dated as of January 17, 1991, known as Trust Number 06-01-009-6081954, c/o Bank of America, Legal Department, BANK OF AMERICA, c/o C T Corporation System, Registered Agent, UNITED STATES OF AMERICA ON BEHALF OF INTERNAL REVENUE, c/o Paul I. Perez, U.S. Attorney for Middle District Of Florida, PAULETTE DIXON, RONALD KEELING, PEARL KEELING, YVONNE MYERS As Trustee of the Estate of Elizabeth E. Veerman and YVONNE MYERS, Individually, if alive, or if dead, their unknown spouses, widows, widowers, heirs, devisees, creditors, grantees, and all parties having or claiming by, through, under, or against them, and any and all persons claiming any right, title, interest, claim, lien, estate or demand against the Defendants in regards to the following-described property in Sarasota County, Florida:

Parcel #1: Lot 7, Block 2591, of 51st Addition to Port Charlotte Subdivision, a Subdivision according to the Plat thereof, recorded in Plat Book 21, page 8, of the Public Records of Sarasota County, Florida. Parcel ID No. 1142-25-9107.

PARCEL #2: Lot 24, Block 751, of the 12th Addition to Port Charlotte Subdivision according to the Plat thereof, as recorded in Plat Book 13, Page 8, of the Public Records of Sarasota County, Florida, Parcel ID No. 1143-07-5124.

Notice is hereby given to each of you that an action to quiet title to the above-described property has been filed against you and you are required to serve your written defenses on Plaintiff's attorney, Sandra A. Sutliff, 3440 Conway Blvd., Suite 1-C, Port Charlotte, FL 33952, and file the original with the Clerk of the Circuit Court, Sarasota County, P.O. Box 3079, Sarasota, FL 34230, on or before **June 30, 2008**, or otherwise a default judgment will be entered against you for the relief sought in the Complaint.

THIS NOTICE will be published once each week for four consecutive weeks in a newspaper of general circulation published in Sarasota County, Florida.

DATED this 21st day of May, 2008.

KAREN E. RUSHING
Clerk of the Court
G. Bates
Deputy Clerk

PUBLISH:
MAY 28, 2008
JUNE 4, 2008
JUNE 11, 2008
JUNE 18, 2008

TWO from Page 1A

day. The class was a lot of fun and made me want to learn more about American history," said student Michael Felix. "Ms. Simmons is definitely one of the best teachers I have ever had."

Simmons, who always wanted to teach, said the thing she will miss most about being in the classroom is interacting with her students.

"Probably the best way Ms. Simmons teaches is how she always gets feedback about the lesson she is teaching," said Daniel Herrera, another student. "I will miss her."

Besides teaching, Simmons has great interest in the environment and, as her students know well, animals.

Simmons has had a total of 13 cats named after U.S. presidents and three dogs named after pop figures.

Over the years Simmons has been involved with homecoming, prom and the honors society at VHS.

Faculty members held a surprise retirement reception in honor of Simmons before school ended.

"I cannot imagine a VHS American History Honors class without her wisdom and insight," said Elisha Jennings, both a former student and a colleague of Simmons. "She will truly be missed by the staff and students of VHS."

Barbara Farrar, VHS Social Studies Department chair, believes that Simmons has put her heart and soul into making American history relevant and important to her students.

"She has been an inspiration to students and staff, not only in her dedication, but also through her enthusiasm for learning," she said. "There is no way to replace Ms. Sim-

mons."

Sharon Lord

The last day of school for teachers, June 3, was the last time Sharon Lord had to get up at 5 a.m. to get to Venice High School from her home in North Sarasota County. She is retiring at the end of the school year — again.

Lord has retired twice before, only to be called back to help teach Advanced Placement English to high school juniors and seniors. She retired last August and again in January, but each time her skills were still needed, so she rejoined the teaching force.

Her motive for retiring? To stop getting up at 5 a.m. for the long drive to Venice.

"I just live a block south of Manatee County. I could have changed to another district, but I like this school district and this school. And I like the kids," Lord said.

"I'm teaching what I wanted to teach," she said, adding that she would have had to start all over again in another district and would have been the new kid on the block.

Much of her retirement will be filled with enjoying family, travel and playing games, such as duplicate bridge, crossword and Sudoku.

"Oh, I'm a crossword addict," she said jokingly. "I'm a game player. Have been all my life."

Lord has been teaching English at VHS for 30 years and taught before that in other states for six years. She and a colleague wrote the AP English curriculum in the mid-1980s at VHS, and she credits the program and the students for having kept her here all this time.

"I have run into a number of retired teachers who

retired because they were burned out. But I don't feel that way — except for getting up so early," Lord said.

"It has been my privilege to teach some of the intellectually gifted students for 19 years. During the course of that time, I have had students go to Yale, Harvard, MIT and military service academies. That speaks to the caliber of students I have taught."

She said the students were highly motivated and she thinks that is why she did not feel burned out.

Lord grew up in a small town in North Georgia. She earned her master's degree at Tulane University in New Orleans after having received her undergraduate degree from Georgia College in Milledgeville, Ga. The city was formerly the Civil War capital of Georgia. She was a double major in English and French at the all-girls school, where she and classmates had tea in the garden while wearing hats and gloves.

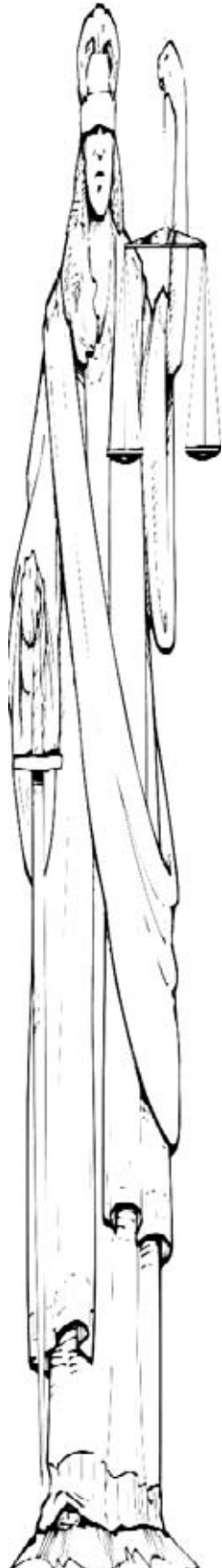
"It was very formal," she said.

The college town was home to author Flannery O'Connor, who wrote the short story, "A Good Man is Hard to Find," and a book titled "Wise Blood," a Pulitzer Prize contender that lost out to the book, "To Kill a Mockingbird," Lord said.

Lord and husband Jerry raised three children: daughters Kerry, a teacher in Fayetteville, N.C., and Tracy, a communications worker with Sarasota County Sheriff's Office; and son Kelly, a computer programmer in Sarasota.

During her retirement, Lord plans to travel more and spend a lot more time with her grandchildren: Kerry's children Caleb, 14 and Spencer, 10.

ablackwell@venicegondolier.com



DROP from Page 1A

North Port is currently saddled with about 50,000 vacant lots, Todora said, adding that the city also saw a decline in the sales of single-family houses this year. Between those two factors, a dramatic fall in property values was inevitable.

The following are Todora's estimated taxable values compared to those certified last October, along with the percentage difference:

- Sarasota County: \$52 billion this year, down from \$62.7 billion last year (a 17-percent decrease).
- School board: \$54.7 billion, down from \$62.7 billion (minus 12.7 percent).
- North Port: \$3.8 billion, down from \$5.6 billion (minus 33.2 percent).
- Venice: \$3.6 billion, down from \$4.4 billion (minus 18.3 percent).
- Sarasota City: \$9 billion, down from \$10.3 bil-

"I don't think we'll be out of this by next year."

— Commission Chair Shannon Staub

lion (minus 13 percent).

- Longboat Key: \$4.3 billion, down from \$4.7 billion (minus 9.8 percent).

Two to three years

Jeff Seward, the county's chief financial planning officer, set about Monday dealing with the sobering numbers.

"This means an overall reduction (in county revenues) of \$39 million," Seward told the county commissioners, who happened to have a meeting scheduled Monday. "We planned for between \$14 million and \$26 million in reductions overall. We're well over our worst-case scenario."

As that number has now ballooned to \$39 million, reductions in levels of service — supported by the county general fund — will promptly come under consideration.

"That's primarily libraries, parks, our planning department and certain public works projects," Seward said, adding that cuts in those areas could total as much as \$29.4 million. "Also, emergency management services may need to push out construction and staffing of fire stations over time."

EMS cuts could total a little over \$5 million, he said, although the county commission has historically dealt gingerly with that department.

Other reductions could come in the areas of health and human services, environmentally sensitive lands and mosquito control, which could total about another \$4.3 million — which would still leave the

county \$6 million short.

As its ace in the hole, the county has an economic uncertainty reserve of about \$24 million — its rainy day fund — from which it could pull needed revenue, if necessary.

"That will be one of the options we'll present to the board during our upcoming budget workshops," Seward said.

Commission Chair Shannon Staub said that although the economic uncertainty reserve provides a temporary stopgap, the county's budget problems would not go away anytime soon.

"I don't think we'll be out of this by next year," Staub said. "I think we're looking at between two and three years. Besides, our board's pretty conservative with that money, as we look into the future."

Those workshops will take place the week of June 17. ssmith@sun-herald.com

Lost ring



PHOTO COURTESY OF SUN WEDDING

While throwing a shell into the Gulf of Mexico for good luck following her May 31 wedding, Jude Hyde Schroeder, shown here with members of the wedding party, also seems to have tossed her wedding ring into the water. It happened south of the lifeguard stand closest to the Venice Beach Pavilion, near the sidewalk, which has no walkover to the beach. Should anyone find the ring, call Tina Gebel of the Sunwedding Team at 497-7561, office, or (941) 320-3364, cell.

CITY from Page 1A

zer from having to take the stand Tuesday. Both were subpoenaed to appear before Judge Phyllis Galen.

While hopeful the city and plaintiff can work out an agreement, Mogensen isn't counting on it. She intends to reset the emergency motion for early next week and has already relayed the request to the circuit court.

On Tuesday the judge could have gone as far as to order council members' personal computers held as evidence.

Mogensen filed the emergency motion for temporary injunction on May 23, and amended the original lawsuit the morn-

ing of June 3, after learning that e-mails regarding city business were being deleted by some council members in violation of the Public Records Law.

The deleted e-mails could also be a violation of the open meetings Sunshine Law, if a judge agrees with Sarasota resident Anthony Lorenzo's claim that some of the e-mails constitute illegally held public meetings that were not properly advertised.

Lorenzo filed his lawsuit May 21.

The amended lawsuit casts a wider net, adding Council Members Moore and John Simmonds as defendants.

Apologies

Numerous public records requests by the media and on behalf of Lorenzo have caused some soul searching for council members.

In a letter to the city clerk's office Moore apologized for some of the e-mail responses he made from his home computer, admitting they might be construed as violations of the Florida Sunshine Law.

Moore turned over five e-mails from his home account. He responded to three of the e-mails, he said, "in a manner which, at the time, seemed very innocuous, because it was not my intent to engage in a discussion of any issue

which would come before city council or upon which I would be required to vote."

"... as I look back at my responses now, in hindsight, I can see how some of them could be interpreted as a violation of the Florida Sunshine Law," Moore wrote. "At the very least they could give the appearance of a violation ... I should have known better. For that I am very sorry and accept full responsibility for my actions."

Council Member John Simmonds admitted his practice of deleting public records from his home e-mail accounts and apologized for his actions.

"I have deleted almost

all of my e-mails from my personal computer. I had forgotten that I have to keep e-mails generated at home if they cited city business," Simmonds wrote to the city clerk on May 20.

"I am painfully aware now and sincerely apologize to my colleagues, the city of Venice and anyone who is offended by my actions."

Two council members — Rick Tacy and Vicki Noren — said they had no personal e-mails to bring forth.

Noren said the rare e-mail sent to her personal account was forwarded to the backed-up city e-mail account.

Tacy said he didn't have any e-mails on his home account because he regularly cleans out his personal e-mail account and his city e-mail account.

All council members have responded to the public information requests made three weeks ago except for Lang. She's expected to provide a portion of the information today (Wednesday).

Meanwhile, the city's insurance carrier has agreed the lawsuit is covered under its policy. The insurer hired the Orlando firm of Bell, Roper and Kohlmyer to represent the city.

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To RSVP, visit www.sarasota.usf.edu/InfoSession or call (941)359-4334.

APPLY NOW!

July 1 – Undergraduate application deadline, Fall semester
Nov. 15 – Undergraduate application deadline, Spring semester
Graduate application deadline – Check with program dept.



POLICE BEAT

Traffic advisory

Construction of the medallion at U.S. 41 and Colonia Lane in Nokomis will result in lane shifts on the highway and detours along side streets in the area beginning Sunday, June 8, at 9 a.m.

The medallion, a decorative paver installation at the intersection designating the center of Nokomis, is part of Sarasota County's revitalization project in Nokomis.

A temporary traffic signal will help control the traffic while the detour is in effect, which is until the completion of the medallion. During the medallion construction, Colonia Lane will be closed, leaving Nippino Trail as the main access to the area off the highway.

\$5,000 worth of diesel fuel stolen

North Port police are investigating the theft of diesel fuel from the Gran Paradiso construction site on U.S. 41.

According to police reports, construction manager William J. Houge reported at 8:30 a.m. on May 27 that 1,600 gallons of diesel fuel had been stolen from storage tanks at the site.

The theft included 1,400 gallons of off-road diesel, valued at \$3.70 per gallon, and 200 gallons of on-road diesel worth \$4.50 a gallon. In all, the stolen fuel was valued about \$5,190.

North Port Detective Chris Cowan was told the site had been secure the morning of May 26, Memorial Day. Houge told police the locks on the fuel tanks did not appear to have been tampered with. The tanks belong to C&M Road Builders of Sarasota.

Cowan said a similar theft of around 500 gallons of diesel fuel

occurred a few weeks ago at Gran Paradiso. Based on police investigation of evidence at the site, police were able to identify a suspect, Fidel Gonzalo Camejo-Chile, 43, of Cape Coral. A warrant was issued for his arrest on charges of grand theft from a posted construction site.

Camejo-Chile was apprehended by Lee County sheriff's deputies on May 14. He was released on bond later that same day.

Camejo-Chile had been charged in December 2006 with felony trespass and petty theft at a construction site in Lee County. He entered a plea and was adjudged guilty in that case. Camejo-Chile was assessed costs and placed on one year of probation.

Cowan said the Gran Paradiso property may be "vulnerable because it is in an isolated location," with few houses or businesses nearby.

Venice Police Department arrests

• Thomas Eugene Eaton, 37, 1000 block Columbine Road, Venice. Charges: dealing in stolen property, willfully falsifying a motor vehicle surrender affidavit. Bond: \$2,000.

• Lisa Anada Vandort, 26, 600 block Home Park Road, Venice. Charge: domestic battery. Bond: none.

• Richard Francis Lucibello, 47, 300 Base Ave., Venice. Charge: DUI. Bond: \$500.

• Julio Cesar Marqueztorres, 30, 300 block Pameto Road, Nokomis. Bond: no valid driver license. Bond: \$500.

• Palma Mary Lee, 47, 1100 block Ketch Lane, Venice. Charge: possession of cannabis less than

20 grams. Bond: \$120.

• David Dennis Oswald, 43, 8500 Dorothy Ave., North Port. Charge: driving while license revoked-habitual traffic offender. Bond: \$2,000.

• Michael Thomas Taber, 51, 40 block Oak St., Osprey. Charges: Driving while license permanently revoked, unlawful alteration of tag. Bond: \$1,120.

• Derek McConnell, 24, 1100 block Timber Trail, Englewood. Charge: DUI. Bond: \$500.

Sarasota County Sheriff's Office arrests

• Derek Leigh Grasso, 27, 4000 block Shamrock Drive, Venice. Charge: contempt. Bond: \$10,000.

• Richard Joseph Marek, 48, 1900 block South Tamiami Trail, Venice. Charge: contempt. Bond: \$5,000.

• Raymond Lucey, 60, 400 block East Shade Drive, Venice. Charge: DUI. Bond: \$500.

• Brock Daniel Boyer, 28, 200 block Marlin Road, Venice. Charge: domestic battery. Bond: \$10,000.

• Walter James Cooper, 57, 40 block West Oak, Venice. Charge: violation of probation (two counts). Bond: \$6,000.

• Douglas Keith Thomas, 53, 200 block Millet Place, Nokomis. Charge: violation of probation. Bond: none.

• Brian Allen Roudebush, 57, 100 block Avenida de la Isla, Nokomis. Charges: DUI third or subsequent violation, DUI .20 or higher or with a passenger under 18. Bond: \$6,000.

• Karl Richard Matthews, 38, 100 block N. Ravenna St., Nokomis. Charge: violation of probation. Bond: none.

• Jamie Spangler, 19, 40 block W. Oak St., Osprey. Charge: bur-

glary of a dwelling with assault or battery. Bond: none.

• Joseph Michael Radzilowski, 52, no street address, Venice. Charges: grand theft, possession of cocaine, possession of drug paraphernalia. Bond: none.

• Matthew Erin Craft, 39, 3600 block Sunset Beach Drive, Venice. Charges: possession of crack cocaine, possession of drug paraphernalia. Bond: \$1,120.

Sarasota Police Department arrests

• Gerald Lynn McCloud, 45, 500 block Cypress Ave., Venice. Charge: open container. Bond: \$120.

• Sherry Jean McIntyre, 40, 200 block Green Cove Road, Venice. Charges: possession of cocaine, possession of drug paraphernalia. Bond: \$1,120.

North Port Police Department arrest

• Michael Ray Mosser, 28, 1000 block Myrtle Ave., Venice. Charges: giving a false name after being arrested or lawfully detained, driving while license revoked-habitual traffic offender. Bond: \$2,120.

Florida Highway Patrol arrests

• Jesse James Shoupe, 26, 200 block Jessica St., Nokomis. Charge: driving while license revoked-habitual traffic offender. Bond: \$2,000.

• Guenther Beer, 60, 200 block Sugar Loaf Drive, Nokomis. Charge: DUI. Bond: \$500.

Department of Corrections arrest

• Ryan Gary Alt, 30, 1700 Mackintosh Blvd., Nokomis. Charge: Charlotte County warrant. Bond: \$2,500.

OBITUARIES

Stella C. Alden

Stella C. Alden, 87, of Venice, formerly of Export, Pa., died Wednesday, May 28, 2008. Farley Funeral Home, Venice, is in charge of arrangements.

John McCormack

John McCormack, age 81, of Venice, Fla., died on Sunday, June 1, 2008.

He was born in New York, N.Y., on Aug. 8, 1926, and came to Venice from Yucaipa, Calif.

John served in the U.S. Navy (nine years), the Merchant Marine (two years) and the U.S. Air Force (13 years). He retired from the Loma Linda VA Hospital in California, where he was the food service manager. He was a member of the VFW, the DAV and the American Legion. John was also associated with the Boy Scouts of America for 62 years. He was a member of Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church.

Surviving family members include his wife, Trudy; sons John of Yucaipa, Calif., Barry of Arizona, Ray of Texas, Patrick of North Port, Fla., Francis of Venice and Arman of North Port, Fla.; daughters Rose of California, Tina Angle of California, Chona of Venice, Christine of North Port, Fla., and Raquel DiGuzman of the Philippines; 29 grandchildren; and many great-grandchildren. He was predeceased by his daughter Sharon.

Services: Visitation will be on Friday, June 6, from 2 to 4 p.m. and 6 to 8 p.m. and on Saturday, June 7, from 10 to 11 a.m., at Farley Funeral Home, Venice. A scripture service will be held at 11 a.m. Saturday, June 7, at Farley Funeral Home, Venice. Burial will follow at Venice Memorial Gardens. To send condolences, visit www.farleyfuneralhome.com.

Contributions: Memorial donations can be made to the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society, Donor Services, P.O. Box 4072, Pittsfield, MA 01202.

Recycle this newspaper.

Commissioners balk at Red Sox study

BY STEVEN J. SMITH
STAFF WRITER

The Sarasota City Commission endorsed a \$30,000 study Monday to determine the feasibility of moving the Boston Red Sox's spring training site to Sarasota, an idea that three county commissioners consider something of a wild pitch.

The study comes in the wake of the Cincinnati Reds' impending departure. The team is committed to only one more year in Sarasota before moving its spring training operations to Goodyear, Ariz., in 2010. The Red Sox currently train at City of Palms Park in Fort Myers.

The study will explore:

- What the Reds' economic impact has been.

• What the Red Sox's economic impact will be.

• What economic impact there would be with no baseball team.

The study will be done by consulting firm Conventions, Sports & Leisure International, which has offices in Minneapolis and Dallas. Sarasota County Administrator Jim Ley pledged the county would split the cost with the city.

Commissioners Jon Thaxton, Nora Patterson and Paul Mercier looked askance at the study and its hoped-for results.

"You can get independent studies to say different things," Thaxton said.

Patterson was annoyed she was not given an opportunity to vote against

funding half the study's cost.

"I have limited faith in any of these studies," Patterson said. "I don't think we're getting it done to help in our decision-making. I think we're getting it done more as a topic of community discussion. It's all about assumptions and whether they're valid in the first place."

Sold out

Mercier agreed. "If this study is just studying baseball, I'll be surprised if it shows the

numbers work," Mercier said.

County Commissioner Joe Barbetta welcomed the study and accompanying input promised by CSL President Craig Skiem.

"With the Red Sox brand and depending on where the stadium is located, the surrounding area of businesses — whether they're hotels, motels, restaurants or retail — will also provide a great benefit to the community," Barbetta said.

Sarasota Mayor Lou Ann Palmer was hopeful of a positive outcome from

the study.

"We could open up a corridor with the Boston area that we haven't had before," Palmer said. "We need to have it."

Palmer said she would love to see the Red Sox migrate to Sarasota.

"Fort Myers was totally sold out, every single game they had," she said. "They didn't have enough space for everybody who wanted to attend. The Reds only sold out here a couple of times."

ssmith@sun-herald.com

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Let the skeeters have it

The buzz. Hallelujah. I just read that Sarasota County is going to spray for mosquitoes. It doesn't take a rocket scientist to know that there has been a long lapse in spraying. Just try sitting outside without being eaten alive. I really don't appreciate the excuses for not spraying, i.e., dry weather and sitting water. The real truth is that the county is trying to cut back at our expense.

Grow up. It's about time for the Venice City Council to don their adult pants and make responsible decisions. Their 5-1 vote eliminating the MEA Group from completing the airport plan is childish behavior: "If you don't play the way I want, I'll take my ball and go home." These elected officials, with one exception, feel it is better to spend more money, waste more time and just forget about federal regulations. It seems the plan is to close the airport, which would be a very stupid thing to do. Adults would go back to the MEA Group, tell them what they want and have them do it right. I am told that some on city council just didn't like one of the people who talked to them. So what. You're adults. Make adult decisions. I do not like the idea of spending more money to reinvent the wheel. Work with the MEA group. Say I'm sorry, I made a mistake and correct it. It is no wonder meetings take so long; few seem able to make adult, responsible decisions. Grow up and act as adults.

Move it. I would like to comment on a couple of things. The school for troubled teens is located next to Venice Elementary. That is a problem. These teens get out at the same time and pass the elementary students. They walk between the cars. They harass mothers by making rude gestures in front of them. This school needs to be relocated. The kids could possibly harm the students. The other thing is the parking lot at Sharky's. Who OK'd the parking lot and who is paying for the trees that are being planted there? I'd like to know that. Also, getting rid of 24 homes in the Gulf Shores community is just unheard of. People live in those homes and because the FAA wants to give money to the airport, you cannot get rid 24 homes on the island to enlarge that airport. I believe it would cut into Harbor Drive as well. That needs to be looked at by the whole community because if it does intrude on that property, the other properties on the island, Golden Beach, etc., will have huge planes flying over them. These are three things that need to be looked at.

Not right. I'm calling in regard to the article on

May 9 by the Rev. Suzanne Nazian. I just can't believe we have a pastor in the neighborhood who has the same thinking as Jeremiah Wright. I think it's terrible, and I think we don't need that in our newspaper.

In pocket. I retired from the U.S. Department of Defense a good number of years ago. If we got caught with our hands in a vendor's pocket, we didn't get a reprimand, we didn't get a demotion, we didn't get a fine, we got jail time. It is still against the law. The pockets are bigger now and the violations are ignored. Our representatives in Tallahassee are allowed to pick a pocket for \$100, but no more. Our sheriff can award multi-million dollar contracts. He never should have gotten the opportunity. His job should be the sheriff, not awarding lucrative contracts.

Condescension. I'm responding to "Co-acts" from Let'em Have It. I resent the editor's note that neither person writing the real estate column has used the space to promote his own business. Posing as an expert in the real estate field while writing this column and giving his name, people will think they should go to this man. They think he must know what he's doing so I'll use him as a Realtor. He may not say in his articles, "Come to my office and I'll do this or that for you"; but not everyone is stupid who reads papers. I believe the Editor's note was very condescending to the person who called in and also defensive because obviously the *Gondolier Sun* must be wanting to do a favor for the Realtors. The editor is too smart to know that these people are getting to promote their businesses. Some gullible people will think they're experts and will want to go to them.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Both men are licensed real estate professionals, and we do think that an upturn in real estate activity would be good for the local economy.

Cut fat. There's a lot of fat that can be cut from the top, but you seem to be cutting our services. Our taxes keep going up and our services keep getting cut. Where does it stop?

Call collect. I just turned on Laurel Road off U.S. 41 at the stoplight, and my car was swarmed with fire-

fighters collecting, soliciting money. This is the wrong place to do this at a busy intersection. We've got enough distractions, like the elderly, cell phones and now firefighters dancing across the street. It's ridiculous and just wrong.

Put up. I'm calling to ask, "What the heck is going on at city hall?" Our city manager is accusing three council members of violations of the Sunshine Laws? The paper is requesting council members' personal and council e-mails. This is a heck of a way to run a railroad. I can't understand what kind of Pandora's box our manager has opened. He's made very, very serious allegations to John Patten and then he can't find any of the corroborating evidence, save for one letter dated Dec. 27. We have a great many serious issues to address in Venice, and we are being completely distracted from work by

these political smears. I think our city manager, if he is really in possession of Sunshine Law violation e-mails, should lodge a complaint with the state attorney. He should either put up or shut up.

Heal. I'm calling to say I was deeply offended by your article entitled "Physicians, heal your profession." I come from a family of physicians, and I am proud to say that I am married to a man who worked like a dog through many years of schooling, studying, internship, residency and medical exams to become a doctor and to dedicate himself in a profession that not only involves long days, long nights, night calls, weekend calls but dealing with life and death situations on a daily basis. My father dedicated his entire life to cancer patients. I hardly saw my father while I was growing up. My husband's first home has always been, and still is, the hospital. Times have certainly changed; no thank-yous for saving people's lives or

extending them, only criticism, armchair philosophy and threats of lawsuits. In contrast, we need to say a big thank-you to all our doctors, health care workers and hospice workers who sacrifice their lives on a daily basis for others' well-being. My final comment for Mr. Karr is, heal your own heart because one day, you may need it. You're right, because in the future there will be a shortage of physicians.

EDITOR'S NOTE: The "article" in question was an opinion column.

Wrong place. This is regarding Anita's Sandcastle at the South Jetty. I remember when it was built, and at the time I couldn't understand why anyone would permit this large structure. When you enter the area, the first thing blocking your view of the jetty and the Gulf is this building. Also, equally upsetting is a number of parking spaces near the water are gone, where everybody could enjoy the view, the boats, the dolphins and so forth. Many

people are unable to walk very far or even get out of their car. This structure was allowed to be put in the wrong place. It should have been smaller; remember, it should only be for limited menu, cold drinks, water and two restrooms. Why in the world didn't they put it in the back of the property, away from the water near the trees? This would allow more parking and an unlimited view on entering the park. It would also eliminate any problem with the easement along the jetty waterline for possible future repair.

Great policy. I'm calling in regard to the no-smokers hiring policy for county employees. I think it is a good policy. I did smoke for 30 years, and I do know that smoking does affect our health. People who are still smoking have no concept as to the cost of medical care for that person. Why should the city or county have to pay for people's stupidity when they continue to smoke? No. I think it's a great policy.



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OUR VIEW

Voters' voices seem louder in election years

There's nothing quite like an unpopular idea that touches an emotional cord in an election year. Elected officials tend to listen more carefully to the public and respond a little quicker than they might otherwise.

Not that that's a bad thing. Two weeks ago, Sarasota County commissioners approved a plan to study the feasibility of paid parking at county beaches, which have always been open and free to all who can find a space. The free-beach policy is a true bonus for the many thousands of visitors attracted to the area and for Sarasota County residents, who support it through taxes.

It even benefits residents of other counties, like Charlotte, where fishing ramp and beach parking run 75 cents an hour and fines for violations are

more than \$65. It doesn't take much extra gas money for Charlotte County residents headed to the beach for the day to travel a few more miles up Manasota Key from Englewood Beach, which charges a fee, to Blind Pass Beach, which is free.

When county commissioners first brought up the idea months ago, their main stated concern was overcrowding. But that's rarely a problem outside of the beaches closest to the city of Sarasota, notably Siesta Public Beach. It's an unusual weekend day in March that you can't find a parking space at most other beaches in the county. Siesta, on the other hand, often fills up before noon.

The idea picked up steam as the budget concerns grew, though. Obviously, beach fees presented an opportunity for new revenue. County staffers estimated

net proceeds of \$3.5 million annually in five years if a fee schedule were implemented with \$2-per-hour parking, \$30 annual resident permits and \$75 annual permits for nonproperty owners.

By a 3-2 vote, commissioners decided to ask for private management contract proposals with an eye toward starting a pilot project in Nokomis and the two Manasota Key beaches.

Then came the public reaction. In an election year.

Commissioners were inundated with e-mails and phone calls. Commissioner Shannon Staub told *Sun* reporter Steve Smith she was besieged by complaints.

"A whole neighborhood came up to me (at an event) and said they had a meeting ... and none of them thought this was the way to go," she said.

A few days later, Staub, who is facing

a re-election fight, announced she was switching her vote to oppose beach fees. She denied it was a political move, but Staub is politically astute. When the news was announced at a meeting of the Venice City Council, a crowd of two dozen people broke out in applause. Whether they'll hold a grudge over Staub's original vote remains to be seen.

Chronic flip-flopping can be a problem for any elected body, but that isn't the case here. There's always a fine line between being responsive and responsible and holding a finger to the wind of public opinion. It's almost impossible to lead people where they really don't want to go.

In this case, the board got it right with what proved to be a surprisingly emotional issue. Now, they'll just have look elsewhere to help balance the budget.

Commissioner for a day



BOB VEDDER
PUBLISHER

Last week the county put on a costly exercise to simulate for citizens what it is like to be a county commissioner. One session was held at the Venice Community Center, where about 90 people went through this fun and educational experience.

We were separated into groups of about seven people to make decisions about what was most important for our county. There were seven major categories and then about eight items in each of those.

For instance, in the public safety area we could choose from police, fire, animal control, paramedics and a couple of others. The audience voted and instantly decided they thought police was slightly more important than fire services.

Under recreation, it was library services with park maintenance a close second. No surprise at all that roads were No. 1 in the infrastructure category, with bus service the second most important (the impact of gas prices, I assume). The people also ranked funding for non-profits and waterfront preservation very high.

The second part of the exercise took us through many examples of decisions a commissioner might have to make; instead, we had to make them.

For instance, should we build a fire station or a police station, or do a study to see which, if any, was needed? We played this out on a board game with money so that each decision our commissioner came up with had consequences, including how much it cost. At the end of the exercise each group got graded. Our grade was good enough to get re-elected.

The last part — which is where I thought most of the three-hour session was going to be spent — was on how we felt about the seven areas we judged up front.

One common thought was to use volunteers more to keep things that otherwise might be eliminated. In a similar vein, one team suggested forming more partnerships be-

tween entities such as city and county or county and school system. One group wanted to make neighborhoods more active — more neighborhood watches, but also social events to get people to know each other better.

Our group proposed a countywide private/public transportation system utilizing all the different transportation systems from the YMCA to the ALFs to SCAT to the schools and churches. It would be coordinated (likely by SCAT or a separate, private agency) to give seniors who cannot drive and kids who have no way to get to Little League or other sports a way to get around.

The exercise was a good one, but I was somewhat disappointed that we did not go to work on the challenge of the day: reducing costs and raising money for the county. I felt that citizens needed to be giving their thoughts on where the county might be finding some of the tens of millions it is going to have to cut.

Assistant County Administrator **Susan Scott** liked the idea and thought they might put focus groups together to accomplish this. Of course, they will be having budgeting sessions, but that is not actually the best forum for suggestions. I think Susan had the right idea.

It is nice seeing the county seeking help in such a time of need by including everyone.

By's Crack: (Byron, my dad, has been in the hospital. By the time he gets this, I hope he is out.)

Fred Lugar is forming a new group to fight prejudice against accountants. He calls it the N.A.A.C.P.A.

The city lost a great volunteer in **Tom Bixler**, who has been a planning commissioner for about six years.

When Tom came to town he went to planning commission meetings as he was very interested and felt it was important. Then he was appointed and did a great job. He will be missed.

The Boys & Girls Club opened its first summer camps this week with 550 kids. It has been unbelievably successful. The club had to hire 29 extra people for the summer.

If you have things that can be used for crafts (yarn, thread, plastic bot-

Please see **VEDDER, 9A**



LETTERS FROM OUR READERS

Hiring policy sends a message

Editor:

Thankfully, the county commissioners are in the majority on the anti-smoking policy.

Commissioner Thaxton's reservations on the policy are sadly misplaced. His reasoning that they may be eliminating from their work force qualified personnel solely on the fact that they are smokers misses the real point. Let's call a spade a spade.

One, it encourages any and all applicants in the work force that it is easier to get a good job if you don't smoke. Two, smokers are more prone to diseases. We all know what they include. Health-care costs for the taxpayer could far outweigh any benefits. You can always fire a bad worker; not so easy to fire a sick one.

I, as a taxpayer, have enough problems paying my own health-care costs. I am also a former smoker.

Commissioner Patterson can rest assured that there is nothing Gestapo-like in the message. It just sends a message to all who smoke: Now's the time to quit.

Gil Armstrong
Englewood

Left gets the blame for social ills

Editor:

It has been my observation for some time that Mr. Giorgianni has been sailing under false colors.

He is billed as a humor columnist when in fact he is obviously a card-carrying member of the permissive, elitist left who takes every opportunity to engage in that most revered of all liberal pastimes: Bush bashing. His column should in fact appear where all other opinion belongs, on the editorial page.

He laments the actions and behavior of our youth as he states, "Whom do we blame for today's misbehaved and under-educated youth?"

He further wonders where our standards have gone. Why do we have more incarcerated youth today than ever in our history? Whose fault is it? Parents, more especially single parents, he asks? Or is it, he wonders, the fault of a society to which we have become accustomed? To that I would say a

resounding yes. Since the permissive, anything-goes '60s, with the corrosive, relentless support of the ultra-left media our standards have been under attack. Faith has been and is belittled. Morals have been reduced to a definition of "is." Perjury is practiced without penalty. It's OK to lie repeatedly as long as the word "mis-spoke" is substituted for the real word.

Mr. Giorgianni undoubtedly knows the answers to his questions. He also has a bully pulpit from which to speak out.

I encourage you to put him on the editorial page, and I encourage him to pick up the cudgels and strike a blow for our youth.

Gibb Brownlie
Venice

Thanks for keeping beaches free

Editor:

Thank you, thank you, thank you to the people who are responsible for letting our beaches continue to be free.

It's one of the greatest

things that make Sarasota County special. For some families it may be their only entertainment, and a charge would be a real hardship for a day of fun.

We were so angry that there was even a thought of a fee, but now we and most of the Sarasota County residents are happy and thankful.

Mr. and Mrs. William Bullock
Venice

Make Esperanto the language of choice

Editor:

Esperanto, the international language, seems to be getting more attention as we struggle to communicate using world languages. Your editorial on foreign languages addresses this well. But, instead of Spanish, why not go all the way and teach Esperanto in our high schools?

I understand Esperanto has been around for more than 100 years and gets updated as needed. The advantages seem numerous: easier to learn, it avoids idiotic things like gender prefixes and duplicate letters. It has Latin roots but many fewer grammatical rules than English. It's sounds are melodic and singable. Esperanto apparently is easy to write and spell with its phonetic emphasis.

Some colleges offer two-week crash courses that allow you to speak, write and read Esperanto, and there supposedly is an online course.

Some people have said that attempts to promote Esperanto in this country will stumble like converting to the metric system, but it is not the same thing. As adults, we need to lead the way and start learning Esperanto. I am

ready. Care to join me?

Clark Moore
Venice

Pictures didn't tell the story

Editor:

We are shaking our heads in wonder at your photos by Kim Cool for "VAMS students complete oral history of circus."

At first glance, it could be a meeting of anyone anywhere. Dull! Never have we seen an unanimated Tito Gaona till now. He could have been pictured at his trapeze school or at "the wall" by the parade wagon with him and his performing family in full costume.

What about Jackie LeClaire holding a picture of himself as a clown? We don't recognize him as an average citizen. How about the ever-elegant Sigrid Gebel by the circus wagon with Gunther Gebel-Williams — how colorful that would have been!

What a shame all that's colorful and unique about these people was ignored. Oral or not, the *Gondolier Sun* and VMS could have done better announcing this wonderful project to the public.

Lucy and Alice Smith
Venice

Editor's Note: The photos were provided by the people helping the students with the project to focus on the work they did in preparing the circus history video.

Read Bob Vedder in Wednesday and Sunday's *Venice Gondolier Sun*

Mayor reports on first six months



ED MARTIN
GUEST COLUMNIST

within moderate boundaries.

Similarly, the Tra Ponti hotel approved earlier this year, originally planned to include four 80-foot towers, was proposed by the developer to be built at 45 feet.

Public input is standard

The city planning staff is finishing work on new land-use provisions that will require developers of certain projects to notify nearby residents and have public meetings as part of the approval process. The county employs a similar practice.

In the Laurel Road approval such meetings, held on a voluntary basis, helped in eliminating opposition from neighbors.

Preliminary changes in comp plan

The draft plan includes diverse land uses: low-density residential, multi-family residential, business and new commercial/industrial areas.

Densities in many areas of the city, where 18 units per acre are currently allowed, are unchanged, providing the possibility of "urban" development of moderate height. Other areas have been identified for lower densities.

The areas of the city that the previous plan had identified for six- and seven-story buildings, something out of keeping with citizen comments in the "Envision Venice" process, have been changed to permit lower heights, generally a maximum of three stories/42 feet. Exceptions for greater heights are allowed in some areas, e.g., five stories along the Esplanade.

The proposed plan is a document that preserves the nature of the city as we currently enjoy it, and also allows for reasonable growth and economic development.

Increased input opportunities

We have adopted a pol-

icy of considering important decisions, not just development-related decisions, in two meetings, rather than having them voted on shortly after having been introduced.

Important items considered by council during the six months included fees for use of parks, fire department fees, proposals for new airport facilities and structures.

In each of these cases we discussed the issue first, then after a period of consideration, generally two weeks, had the final vote. This allowed the public and council to become familiar with the issue and reflect on it over that period.

New task forces

I recommended and council approved two new task forces, one on economic development and one on the environment. The task forces will assure public input into these important issues.

New fees rejected

After reflection, council did not approve recommendations for user fees for festivals, music performances in Centennial Park, and the like, with the exception of events held on the festival grounds at the airport, where the FAA requirements require user fees.

Council also did not adopt new fire fees in place of the current provision of these services through general tax revenues.

With the Legislature limiting the funds available to cities and counties, there has been considerable belt-tightening, and the city has reduced its staff and expenditures. It is reasonable to expect the city will be faced with choices in the future involving cutting necessary and desirable services, or perhaps allowing some fees.

Airport planning moves forward

In November, council was faced with a consul-

tant-drawn airport master plan update, including what is known as an airport layout plan, that was not approved by the previous council.

Many members of the public found the plan's impact on city neighborhoods and the golf course and the scope of possible commercial development to be unacceptable. No alternatives or proposed plans of action were presented to the new council.

In what is probably reasonably well known to the public, several citizens knowledgeable in aviation and airport development, designed a "conceptual plan" not for adoption by the city, but to stimulate discussion with the FAA for problem solving.

The council voted recently to let a new contract to revise the airport layout plan and update the master plan. That new consultant plan will be reviewed by appropriate committees and council.

Summary

As mayor, I had three major goals in November: 1. Increase citizen participation, 2. Revise the comprehensive plan, moderating its negative potential for the city, and 3. Develop strategies for the airport that would avoid the most negative impacts on the city.

All are well under way.

Ed Martin is the mayor of Venice.

VEDDER from Page 8A

tles, beads, paper) or board games, DVDs or art supplies (crayons, markers or scrapbook supplies), please take them to the club on Gulf Coast Boulevard. **Paul Keim** is the executive in charge.

Robert A. Vedder writes a twice-weekly column in this paper.

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Miss Venice All Stars impress in May tournaments

FROM MISS VENICE FASTPITCH

All-star teams representing Miss Venice Fastpitch won three championships during the month of May with one of the best showings in Miss Venice history.

At the NSA Recreational Softball All-Stars Tournament held in Sarasota, Miss Venice all-star teams competed against all-star teams from Miss Sarasota, Miss North Port, Miss Charlotte, Miss Englewood, Miss Manatee and Manatee Girls Softball.

In the 8 and Under division, Miss Venice all-stars defeated Miss Sarasota to capture the 8U championship.

In the 12 and Under division, Miss Venice all-stars captured the 12U championship by defeating the Manatee Girls Softball all-stars 18-2. Jenna Bailas was the winning pitcher, recording two strikeouts in three innings of work. Lexie Flerlage, Carly Rosa, Elizabeth Walters, Emily Friel and Nikkie Kovalsky all had multiple hits in the championship effort.

Miss Venice later sent all-star teams to the Miss Florida USSSA All-Stars Tournament where they faced teams from Sarasota, Pinellas, Hillsborough and Polk counties.

In the 8 and Under Coach Pitch division, Miss Venice all-stars captured the championship in their division. Their only loss in the tournament was to the Miss Sarasota all-stars, who they had to beat in back-to-back games to win the championship. This was the best finish ever for a Miss Venice all-star team in the Miss Florida Coach Pitch division.

In the 10 and Under Mini-minors division, Miss Venice all-stars finished in second place with a nar-



Miss Venice 12U All-Stars, left to right. Back row: Alex Martin, Jenna Bailas, Megan Quinn, Morgan Wier, Nikkie Kovalsky, Elizabeth Walters. Front row: Lisa Starkey, Taylor Constantino, Carly Rosa, Emily Deming, Lexie Flerlage, Emily Friel. (Not pictured: Manager Tony Rosa, coaches Steve Constantino, Mike Deming, Angela Quinn)



COURTESY PHOTOS

Miss Venice 8U All-Stars, left to right. Back row: Manager Kim Simes, coaches Rich Landers, Katie Smith, Kevin Martineau. Middle row: Lindsey Matthews, Caitlin Cristello, Tiffany Dodson, Corryne Martin, Tess Rosa. Front row: Cassidy Simes, Skylar Kidwell, Carly Keating, Kassi Sands, Haley Hendricks, Lacy Landers, Marissa Smith, Erika Martineau.



Miss Venice 10U All-Stars, left to right. Back row: Coach Mike Smith, Manager Jerry Simes, Coach Chris Davis. Middle row: Savannah Morgan, Carly Smith, Rachel Lightner, Breanna Matthews, Katelin Davis, Kahlie Bickerstaff. Front row: Kayla Huddleston, Alexis Weaver, Taylor Davis, Sydney Lakins, Logen Lincoln, Elaina Garris. (Not pictured: Coach Chris Matthews)



Miss Venice 16U All-Stars, left to right: Back row: Manager Jim Laurie, Christina Sanchez, Sierra Tommas, Julie Dukarski, Sam Miller, Courtney Chapman, Coach April Kidwell. Front row: Breanna Barrett, Alexis Butler, Kora Miller-Behr, Holly Mattmuller, Rebecca Thomas, Jessie Laurie. (Not pictured: Nina Arthur, Coach Michael Taylor)

row loss to Haines City. This ties the best finish ever for a Miss Venice All-Star team in the Miss Florida Mini-minors division.

In the 12 and Under Minors division, Miss Venice all-stars brought home a second place finish in the Miss Florida Minors Division. Their only losses were to the eventual champions from Christina Park in Lakeland.

Miss Venice Fastpitch will be back in action with its fall softball season beginning in August.

LIONS from Page 10A

advantage: 11-0.

The fourth inning brought on seven more insurance runs for the Lions. Dan Dinka led off with a walk and later scored on a first baseman's error on Tritschler's batted ball. Rhett Dinka doubled, moving Tritschler to third, and Billings hit his second double of the night for his final two RBIs.

McKenzie cracked his two-run home run on the next at bat, clearing the bases for Jim Heise. He doubled, and scored on PaoLillo's single up the middle. PaoLillo later scored on an RBI single by Dan Dinka, putting the Lions up 18-0.

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Driver's ed program restructured

BY AUDREY BLACKWELL
STAFF WRITER

More than twice the number of students will take driver's education this summer as in the past.

That's because there will no longer be a driver's education class during regular school hours next year. It was one of the programs cut from the school day due to budget cuts. It is not a required course in a student's core curriculum.

A restructured driver's education program will be offered this summer and after school next year.

Jim Clark, supervisor of driver's education for Sarasota County School District, said the restructured program will accommodate more students this summer than was originally planned. He opened up the program to more students because many parents were concerned their children might not get driver's education next school year.

"Instead of the standard \$75,000 for the summer school program, we have \$150,000 this year and can serve about 330 students," Clark said.

In the past, the summer school

program served about 150 students for driver's education. Classes will begin June 16.

Grant funds

In November 2007, the district was making plans to offer a standard driver's education program to about 150 students during the school day and add a collision avoidance component in the summer that would have been paid for with Slosberg Foundation grant funds.

"Instead of the standard \$75,000 for the summer school program, we have \$150,000 this year ..."

— Jim Clark, Sarasota County School District

The Slosberg Foundation was started in 2005 by Dori Slosberg's father, a state representative, after the teen was killed in an automobile accident. The funds allow for educational enhancements to teen driving

programs.

The standard driver's education program during school hours was offered in 2008, but plans changed for the collision avoidance program.

With recent budget cuts, the district cut driver's education from the regular school day and will make it an after-school course. In order to serve students who may not be able to take the course after school, the district canceled the collision avoidance component and is opening up the summer school program to twice as many students.

Options

Clark said he is looking at options from the school district and Sarasota County, including a model used in Broward County for an after-school program that offers credit. The after-school program for credit would provide six hours of classroom instruction and six hours of behind-the-wheel training, which would meet the state's requirements, according to Clark.

"Nothing is hard and fast right now," he said.

ablackwell@venicegondolier.com

Laptop giveaway



SUN PHOTO BY AUDREY BLACKWELL

Mike Jennings, standing, assistant principal at Venice High School, helps Riley Manyak, 17, get acquainted with the laptop she will take home as part of the TeXellence program. Riley's mother, Rhonda, looks on. TeXellence gave out 28 laptops at VHS Monday, which brings the program's total to 1,100, well more than its goal of 1,000. The Sarasota County District Schools program puts computers in the hands of students who are otherwise without access to the technology.

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Growth battle ends with dismissal

BY GERALD ROGOVIN
CORRESPONDENT

The once-anticipated battle royale between developers and slow-growth proponents petered out a few days ago when seven developers and business owners dropped their lawsuit against Sarasota County.

The suit arose as an appeal of the group's petition for a writ of mandamus, denied by Second District Court of Appeal in Lakeland. It closed the case on May 28, notifying both parties that it had issued a notice of voluntary dismissal.

Seven developers and business people, including Ed Taylor of Venice, had agreed to drop the case if the urban service boundary amendment to the county charter passed on May 6. It did. Eighty percent of those voting approved the ballot question.

dismissed the group's complaint for declaratory and injunctive relief in their opposition to the proposed amendments. Voters' consent for the county commission to shift the USB to open more land for urban development was required by one question.

A second required a 4-1 super-majority vote of approval by the board on development issues.

More than 13,000 signatures collected by the Citizens for Sensible Growth of Sarasota Inc., by November 2006, put the questions on the ballot.

That prompted a vigorous campaign to solicit funds from developers and businesses to fight CSG. It is a committee of neighborhood associations, civic leaders and business owners seeking tougher standards for approval of land-use policy decisions by local governments.

But the trend of citizen resistance to growth,

which some observers have suggested led to the defeat of three sitting pro-development Venice City Council members last November, was recognized by developers.

Henry Rodriguez headed a group seeking a cease fire. Extensive negotiations between the two sides ensued. It led to an agreement to support the Consensus Smart Growth Charter Amendment, voted in last month.

It requires unanimous approval by the board of any increases in the urban service area; payment of all costs for roads, utilities and other infrastructure for new development by developers, not taxpayers; and voter approval of changes in the urban service boundary.

Taylor was joined in the suit by Miraya Eavey, Jon Kleiber, Gretchen Miscik, Dr. Kenneth Pfahler, Mark Serbin and James Toller-ton.



PHOTO COURTESY OF SUNCOAST REEF ROVERS

BENCH MARKS. Frank Albrecht, left, Bill Willson, Jim Johnson, Andy Richardson and Scott Matthews, members of the SunCoast Reef Rovers Scuba Club, recovered two benches with commemorative plaques that had been tossed off the Venice Fishing Pier about six weeks ago by vandals. A previous attempt was unsuccessful as the benches were covered with sand and could not be found, but recent heavy waves partially uncovered one bench. Team members dug them out by hand and then used inflatable lift bags to pull the benches free and float them back to shore.

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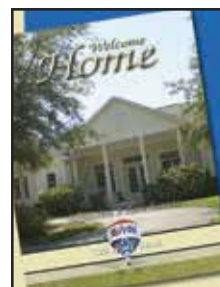


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TAKE THE SUDOKU CHALLENGE 4B

COLLEGE CLUB AWARDS SCHOLARSHIP 8B

Saturday is National Trails Day — celebrate at Shamrock Park



SUN PHOTOS BY KIM COOL

The park building at Shamrock Park houses offices and a large meeting room plus displays and a porch where visitors can enjoy cool breezes and be out of the sun.

BY KIM COOL
FEATURES EDITOR

Sleep a little later Saturday — but not too late. You should be at Shamrock Park in South Venice by 9 a.m. to celebrate National Trails Day.

The free Venice-area event is being hosted by the Friends of Shamrock Park as a celebration of that park's place in the Sara-

sota County trail system, which includes the recently opened Legacy Trail from Venice to Sarasota.

"Shamrock Park is the southern-most trailhead to connect with the Legacy Trail once the bridges are completed," Park Ranger Ed Woofenbarger said. "It also is a trailhead for the Venetian Waterway Park. It is 15 miles from the Shamrock Nature

Center to Palmer Ranch where the trail ends now."

The county trails are part of the national system of hiking and walking trails that was created following the signature of President Lyndon B. Johnson on a bill passed by Congress in 1968. National Trails Day, which occurs on the first Saturday of June each year, celebrates that system.

The Shamrock Park event will include a bird and nature walk, stroller walk or biking from 9 to 10 a.m., continental breakfast at 10 a.m., a story about a gopher tortoise and book signing by local author Kay Bannon at 10:30 a.m. and at noon. From 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., there will be arts and crafts events for children and a special event on the children's ABC Trail. There also will

be face painting and a bubble station. The focus is on family activities.

Bannon's book is "How Gimble Gopher Tortoise Finds a New Home." The title befits all the gopher tortoises that have found new homes at Shamrock Park. Woofenbarger took me through the park one day last

Please see **PARK, 2B**



A gopher tortoise heads toward its nearest hole at Shamrock Park.



A gopher tortoise scrambles into its hole at Shamrock Park.



Gopher tortoise holes are similar in size to the tortoise that inhabits them.

Senior Pets for Senior Folks reaching out to community for help



KIM COOL
FEATURES EDITOR

Rabbi Anne White of the Jewish Center of Venice is one of those people who continues to make a difference in the lives of so many people and now — pets.

In a recent e-mail she told me about her latest cause — Senior Pets for Senior Folks, a nonprofit group that helps seniors with existing pets and also with matching seniors and pets based on age and the disabilities of one or the other. My first thought was "What a great idea!" My second thought was of Margaret, a former neighbor who lost her beloved pet. Margaret didn't feel up to taking on a puppy but wanted another dog. Her veterinarian found an older dog that needed a home and it turned out to be a perfect match.

That is just one of the ideas behind Senior Pets for Senior Folks, which already has its non-

profit status. Because it is a 501 (C)3, you can make tax-deductible donations, something that will help to get this project off the ground. The list of needs includes money but also pet food and all the myriad other items needed by pet owners — leashes, carriers, toys and the like.

And for foster and permanent homes for pets, foster caregivers like dog walkers and pet sitters, which are even more important while this organization is still in the start-up stages.

When I called for more information, Rabbi White said she already has three older dogs in need of new homes and she has

several "angels" who can assist with care-giving for the animals but she needs seniors in search of pets.

White said that this new group also plans to work with hospice and with other people faced with end-of-life decisions. Wondering what will happen to a beloved pet when its owner dies is a major concern of senior pet owners. Senior Pets for Senior Folks hopes to do away with such worries by caring for such pets when the need arises, for however long it takes to place the pet with another caring senior.

Senior Pets for Senior Folks plans to develop associations

with existing shelters and with the various rescue groups, which primarily serve specific breeds.

As both older pets and older people may have health concerns, the organization plans to deal with those also. To that end the organization might provide funding for medical treatments for older pets or provide dog walking or other services for seniors unable to perform certain duties in looking out for their beloved animal(s).

The organization's angels will perform such tasks, provide foster care and stay in touch with

Please see **COOL, 2B**

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PARK from Page 1B

week, pointing out at least 100 gopher tortoise homes, which actually are holes in the ground. The hole entrances match the size of the creatures, which move pretty fast, especially when scooting into the safety of their holes. The park manager said there are about 80 to 100 gopher tortoises in the park and about two holes per tortoise.

Saturday's planned walk is 3 miles in length and the bike route is 8 miles. There are 6 miles of paved trails within the park, Woofenbarger said. There also are tennis courts, picnic shelters, a play area for children, an area for grilling and new covers over the playground area.

There also will be trail exhibits and workshops at Saturday's event. Inside the main building there are several gopher tortoise shells, additional wildlife exhibits and a wealth of pamphlets covering everything from Florida-friendly landscaping to a map and guide to the county parks.

Bobcats and eagles also

call the park home, Woofenbarger said. Iguanas also live in the park, although they are not native in the area.

The park also has a butterfly garden, ample parking and an abundance of wildlife, especially gopher tortoises. The butterfly garden was funded by a grant secured by the Friends of Shamrock Park, operating under the umbrella of The Friends of Sarasota County Parks. Another grant purchased needed tools and a storage building and fence, which were built with volunteer labor. Parks and Recreation paid for the slab and Friends put up the building.

"We are self-contained," Woofenbarger said. "We have our own sewer system and water. There are fire sprinklers in the building."

Trailblazers, a park biking group, is represented by its members every day in the park. Some come back at night, after the park is closed, to make sure everyone is safely out of the park. The first year the park was open, there



PHOTO COURTESY OF ED WOOFENBARGER

Children enjoyed making papier mache tortoises during an event similar to the National Trails Day celebration.

were 87,000 visitors, the director said. The park has had as many as 17,000 visitors in one month. The solar-powered automatic gates contain automatic counters. Those numbers are multiplied by 2.64 people per car, a number used by the national park system to estimate park visitors. To make sure they are not artificially inflating the figures, the tally is then adjusted downward by 10 percent. The total does not include people who walk into the park or who enter from the waterway trail.

Most mornings there

are 15-20 cars at the tennis courts and all the courts are filled.

"There is always a breeze here," Woofenbarger said.

The Intracoastal Waterway rims the west edge of the park. On the opposite shore is Manasota Key and Caspersen Beach. A section of Sunset Drive runs through the park, dead-ending at the waterway, the rest of it can be seen across the waterway, heading toward the Caspersen Beach area. The road was cut off by the opening of the waterway in 1967.

To keep the park's vegetation healthy, rangers use periodic controlled burns, something that used to happen naturally in the years before the area was populated. The land area is covered with spoil from the digging of the waterway 40 years ago but today it is mostly covered with native plants. There is muey grass, coontie, coco plum, gopher apple, wax myrtle, cabbage palms and even a wetland area with mangroves. The park also is a scrub jay habitat.

The next Friends grant will be for a dripline irrigation system for the butterfly garden, which is hand watered now, Woofenbarger said.

"In a drought, we have to water," he said.

On the day of my visit, there was plenty of free compost available for the taking.

Rangers are vigilant about invasive plants like Brazilian peppers, which Woofenbarger said are 90 percent contained.

One of the park volunteers, Terry Redmond, is a Master Gardener and now is pursuing the Master naturalist series, which requires the study of five ecosystems, Woofenbarger said.

The park is supported by county tax money, grants and money raised by the Friends. Park T-shirts featuring a gopher tortoise design sell for \$10.

Park staff and Friends also cooperate with other parks such as neighboring Challenge Park, 2.5 miles to the south. It has no building yet but the Shamrock folks are working with the other parks to get their

DIRECTIONS

Take U.S. 41 to Shamrock Boulevard. Travel west 1.5 to Shamrock Park. Turn right and follow driveway to main building.

neighbors involved and training them to get a neighborhood grant. They also are working with members of Venice Area Beautification Inc. and other organizations along the trail system on safety and public health issues plus other matters, Woofenbarger said.

"This park was supposed to be all soccer fields and such," he said. "Then they found all the gopher tortoises."

The tortoises won but so did country residents and visitors and Woofenbarger who moved to Sarasota from Illinois some years ago.

"I am one of the lucky ones," he said. "I got a degree and got to stay in a field doing what I want to do."

kcool@venicegondolier.com

COOL from Page 1B

seniors who adopt older pets, befriending the people and protecting the pets as they determine what if any follow-up services might be needed. Already signed on as angels are: **Joan Cannariato, Lucy Hirsh, Ruth Lehman and Louise Brown.**

Foster caregivers could include seniors or anyone who would like a pet but not a long-term commitment or the costs involved with owning a pet. Foster pet caregivers will be provided with food and the rescue will pay for any added expenses such as medical costs. Should the foster pet person want to go away for a while, another foster caregiver will offer the needed relief. Such homes offer safe havens for the pets and can save the animals from kennels or euthanasia.

White said the group is seeking a manager to coordinate the foster homes, caregivers and placement.

Also needed are people to go out and speak to groups about this organization, fundraisers, a committee to organize donations, grant writers, a cat committee because of the Rabbi's allergies to cats, drivers to take animals for medical treatments, dog walkers, groomer and veterinarian coordinators who also will work at finding discounted services when possible, a publicity person, someone to maintain the Web site (www.seniorpets4seniorfolks) and someone to manage

the finances.

The rabbi said this could be a model organization but it needs a lot of people to share all the various jobs involved with matching pets and people and all the additional needs that match the multiple goals of this specialized organization.

The first goal is to help those seniors who already have pets but need help to keep them. The second goal is to match pets with people who want them but may need help or a special pet. The third goal

is to provide end-of-life care so that seniors know their pets will be cared for and will eventually be matched with the right new owner.

Other than a few volunteers, three dogs, the non-profit status and many ideas, the organization has many needs. If you can help fill any one or more of the needs mentioned above, or if you have other suggestions, call the rabbi at 941-544-6687.

The rabbi said that **Keith Backhouse**, formerly with the Senior Friend-

ship Centers, said that another benefit of this program is that it provides socialization for the seniors and that the pet care angels will also know when the pet owner might need some extra help or assistance.

Sounds like there are a whole bunch of good reasons to get this program going and if ever there was a place filled with caring folks who can help, it is Venice.

I told the rabbi this is even a great program for people like me because

my busy schedule makes it impossible to have my own dog but perhaps I could become a dog walker and thus have a pet for a little while each week. Or I could be a foster pet owner for a weekend, to relieve a regular foster pet caregiver. The ways in which one can help are endless and the benefits to pets and people are incalculable.

Give Rabbi White a call — and, some help.

kcool@venicegondolier.com

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WEDNESDAY, JUNE 4

Food distribution

All Faiths Food Bank will distribute free USDA food from 10 a.m.-1 p.m. at the Venice Community Center, 326 S. Nokomis Ave., to all eligible Sarasota County residents. Residents will receive nine to 12 commodities.

Library volunteers

Volunteer orientation meeting at 11 a.m., Venice Public Library, 300 S. Nokomis Ave. Tour the library and meet the staff and other volunteers. Call 861-1332.

Amphibious Forces

Amphibious Forces luncheon, 11 a.m., first Wednesday of each month (June 4) at the American Legion of Venice, No-Vel Post 159, 1770 E. Venice Ave. Call Leroy at 497-0345.

Writing class

Creative nonfiction writing will be taught from 12:30-3:30 p.m. for four Wednesdays in June beginning today at the Manatee Community College Venice Campus, 8000 South Tamiami Trail. To register call (941) 408-1412. Cost \$75. Instructor, Diane Robertson, pswriter1@netzero.net.

Art classes

Fun with Watercolor classes for adults, 1-4 p.m., Wednesdays, through June 25 at the South Venice Civic Association, 720 Alligator Drive. Cost: \$65 plus supplies. All skill levels welcome. Supply list available at the center; register at first class. Call Carolyn Merenda at 366-2866.

Venice Public Library,

300 S. Nokomis Ave., 861-1348
•10-10:30: Story
Wednesdays: Animal Fun.

Jacaranda Public Library,

4143 Woodmere Park Blvd. 861-1260
•9:30-11:30 a.m.: Buckle Up Baby free mobile car seat safety inspections. Call 365-7716 for an appointment.

Senior Friendship

Centers, 2350 Scenic Drive, 584-0075, seniorfriendship.com
•8:15 a.m.: Wednesday Walkers
•9:30 a.m.: Watercolor Art
•10 a.m.: Euchre
•11 a.m.: Senior Fitness Plus; Line Dancing

Venice Art Center,

390 S. Nokomis Ave., 485-7136, veniceartcenter.com
•10:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.: Game Day at Venice Art Center

Club fun

•11 a.m. - 2 p.m.: Lunch served at the Venice-Nokomis Elks Lodge, 1021 Discovery Way, Nokomis.
•4 - 7 p.m.: Hamburgers served at the Venice-Nokomis Elks Lodge, 1021 Discovery Way, Nokomis.

THURSDAY, JUNE 5


Casino cruise

Today is the last day to get a ticket for the Venice Nokomis Elks Club Casino Cruise Day Trip on June 7. Cost: \$50 for members, \$55 for nonmembers and includes a \$10 port fee. The bus leaves the club, 1021 Discovery Way, Nokomis, at 7:45 a.m. and returns at 7 p.m.

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Forks & Corks University \$125 Saturday, June 7
The Grand Tasting \$35 Sunday, June 8
VIP Pass \$235 (does not include dinners)

Tickets on sale at
FreshOriginals.com/forksandcorks

COURTESY PHOTO

Forks & Corks

Forks & Corks, a fundraiser to benefit the John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art, will be held at the museum and The University of South Florida Sarasota-Manatee. Forks & Corks runs June 5-8. For tickets, information and a detailed calendar of events, visit freshoriginals.com.

Medical professionals

Summerville and Tidewell Hospice invite local medical office managers, nurses and clinical directors who support seniors to an evening of celebration, entertainment, hors d'oeuvres and refreshments from 5-8 p.m. The event will be held at Summerville's courtyard, 200 N. Nassau St. Admission is free. Reservations, 485-2404.

MOPS

Mothers of Preschoolers meets at 9:30 a.m. at the Venice Presbyterian Church, 111 E. Firenze Ave. Information: 726-3804 or 488-2258.

Club fun

•11 a.m.-2 p.m.: Lunch, Venice-Nokomis Elks Lodge, 1021 Discovery Way, Nokomis.
•5 - 7:30 p.m.: All you can eat Italian dinner, Venice-Nokomis Elks Lodge, 1021 Discovery Way, Nokomis.
•6 - 8 p.m.: Trivia Games with \$50 prize, Venice-Nokomis Elks Lodge, 1021 Discovery Way, Nokomis.

Venice Public Library,

300 S. Nokomis Ave., 861-1348
•9:30 a.m.-noon: Sarasota County Extension Service experts answer your gardening questions.

Senior Friendship

Centers, 2350 Scenic Drive, 584-0075, seniorfriendship.com
•9 a.m.: Easy yoga
•3:15 p.m.: Learn ballroom dancing

• Noon: Arts and crafts

FRIDAY, JUNE 6

Hurricane Madness

Florida's Blood Centers, Venice Regional Medical Center and the city of Venice are on a mission to strengthen the local blood supply with Hurricane Madness 2008. The blood drive will be held at VRMC, 540 The Rialto from 7 a.m.-7 p.m. Donors will receive a goody bag with a T-shirt and other give-a-ways. A barbecue lunch also will be provided. Local community leaders will be hoisted in a bucket truck begging donors to rescue them. One of the hostages will be Edward McCrane Jr., Emergency Management chief for Sarasota County. The event goal is 240 blood donors.

Republican club

Candidates for Sarasota County Sheriff, Lawrence R. Dunklee, David Gutstafson and Tom Knight are on the program for the 11:30 a.m. luncheon meeting of the Republican Women's Club at Michael's On East in Sarasota. Cost: \$22. Reservations: 966-6978.

Employment help

• The Women's Resource Center offers an Employment and Business Success class from 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m.,

701 Center Road (South County Family YMCA campus), 485-9724. Career advisor offers career counseling, resume assistance and job resources to help develop an employment plan. RSVP to register. Donation: nonmembers, \$8; members, \$5.

Senior Friendship

Centers, 2350 Scenic Drive, 584-0075, seniorfriendship.com
•9 a.m.: Crochet class
•9:30 a.m.: Balance movement
•10:30 a.m.: Hula class

Club fun

•11 a.m.-2 p.m.: Lunch, Venice-Nokomis Elks Lodge, 1021 Discovery Way, Nokomis.
•6:30-9:30 p.m.: Fried fish buffet and music, Venice-Nokomis Elks Lodge, 1021 Discovery Way, Nokomis.

Venice Public Library,

300 S. Nokomis Ave., 861-1348
•9:30 a.m.: French Club. Basic knowledge of French required. Practices French conversation and reading from French literature.
•2-3:30 p.m.: Teaching Company lecture series on the middle ages taught by Professor Philip Daileader through Aug. 29.

Music

•7:30-10:30 p.m.: Music Jam Circle open to anyone who plays acoustic music or likes to listen to it live at Books-A-Million, 6591 South Tamiami Trail,

Sarasota.

•8-10 p.m.: The Destined band will play at the Gazebo in Centennial Park on Venice Avenue.

COMING UP

Grand opening

The grand opening of the new Caregiver Resource Center at the Senior Friendship Centers, 2350 Scenic Drive, takes place from 9 - 11 a.m. on June 12. RSVP: 584-0050. The new center's mission is supporting, educating and connecting caregivers through community partnerships.

Nature events

•Sunset/moonlight kayak trips on Little Sarasota Bay with the American Littoral Society, 7-9:30 p.m., Friday, June 13, and Saturday, June 14. Equipment and training provided. Bring sunscreen, bug spray and water. Fee: \$25. RSVP to John Sarkozy at 966-7308.
•American Littoral Society ecosystem restoration workday, 8:30 a.m.-noon, Monday, June 16, in Osprey on Little Sarasota Bay. RSVP to John Sarkozy at 966-7308.
•Kayak and snorkel trip from Turtle Beach to Point of Rocks with the American Littoral Society, 8:30-11:30 a.m., Tuesday, June 17. Kayak equipment provided. Bring snorkel equipment and sunscreen. Fee: \$25. RSVP to John Sarkozy at 966-7308.

Adoptathon

Puffy Paws Kitty Haven holds its first cat adoptathon, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., Saturday, June 7, at Mike's Pet Store, 447 S. Indiana Ave., Englewood. Music, fun and cats and kittens to adopt. Normal adoption fee of \$72 will be cut in half. Senior cats available for \$25 instead of \$50. Snyder Law Group will donate the difference. Call 473-5406 or visit puffy.pawskittyhaven.com.

Loveland Follies

Venice Little Theatre and Loveland Center present the 13th annual Follies: Sound of Music at 7 p.m., Saturday, June 7, and 2 p.m., Sunday, June 8, at the theater, 140 W. Tampa Ave. Tickets: \$15. All proceeds benefit the Loveland Center and the Venice Little Theatre. Call VLT at 488-1115 or Loveland at 493-0016, ext. 310.

Dance camp

Tap, jazz, ballet, lyrical gymnastics, acting and more, June 9-July 25, 10 a.m.-3 p.m., for kids in elementary school through middle school. Tuition: \$90. Starz Choice Dance Academy, 348 S. Seaboard Ave. Call 485-7450.

Art camps

Englewood Art Center holds art camps for children at 350 South McCall Road. Clay camp: 1-3 p.m.: June 9, 16 and 23, and July 7, 14 and 21. Art explosions begin 10 a.m.-noon, June 9, 16 and 23, and July 7 and 21. Fee: \$40. Registration required. Call 474-5548.

'The Tempest'

The Players Theatre, 838 N. Tamiami Trail, Sarasota presents "The Tempest" by William Shakespeare June 12 through 15. This production boasts a strong cast of local actors in some non-traditional roles. Those not familiar with Shakespeare will love this updated, hip and shortened version set in the late 1960s. Shakespeare lovers will appreciate the scope and the universality of the bard's words and how they relate to contemporary issues. Come hang out as The Players serves up a groovy Shakespearean clambake. Tickets are \$20 for adults, \$12 for students. Purchase tickets by calling 941-365-2494 or going online to www.theplayers.org

Class reunion

The Venice High School Class of 1988 holds its 20-year reunion June 13-15. Call Chris Freeman at 400-3312.

Flag Day

Venice-Nokomis Elks Lodge 1854 holds a public Flag Day ceremony at 4 p.m., Saturday, June 14, at 1021 Discovery Way, Nokomis. Refreshments served after the service. Call 486-1854.

Normandy tour

The Fraternal Military Association of the U.S.A. will tour the Normandy Invasion beaches, departing from New York, June 17, 2008. Current, past military personnel, dependents, friends and the public are invited to participate in this journey commemorating the 64th anniversary of D-Day June 6, 1944. Call Sy Canton at (561) 865-8495 or write to him at 14130-C, Nesting Way, Delray Beach, FL 33484.

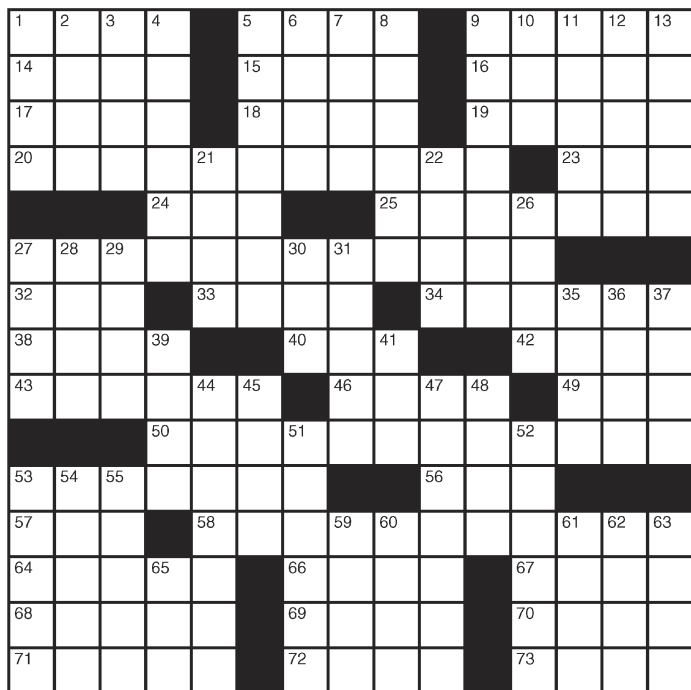
Check the latest events in Venue

THE Daily Crossword

Edited by Wayne Robert Williams

ACROSS

- 1 B-o-r-ing!
- 5 Shoestring
- 9 Lowest point
- 14 Genesis twin
- 15 The King's middle name
- 16 Avoid capture
- 17 Pleasant pitch variation
- 18 All even
- 19 Tapers off
- 20 Steal books?
- 23 Jazz enthusiast
- 24 Sympathetic attention
- 25 Undirected
- 27 Steal produce?
- 32 Former Bruin Bobby
- 33 One-named New Ager
- 34 Noshes
- 38 Woo-hoo!
- 40 ER figures
- 42 War vehicle
- 43 Delhi appetizer
- 46 Pyramid, e.g.
- 49 Wahine wear
- 50 Steal coins?
- 53 Pack
- 56 Greek cross
- 57 EPA pollution measure
- 58 Steal gym equipment?
- 64 Is the ability ours?
- 66 Casino game
- 67 Barnyard butter
- 68 Woodwind section members
- 69 Continuously
- 70 Songstress Fitzgerald
- 71 Verbal digs
- 72 Half of zwei
- 73 New driver, often



By Barry Silk
McLean, VA

Please see CROSS, 6B

DOWN

- 1 Canine complaint
- 2 Atlas section
- 3 Mural site
- 4 Eggnog topper
- 5 Some time afterward
- 6 Song for a diva
- 7 Dorm occupant
- 8 Make beloved
- 9 Male anchors
- 10 Gardener on screen
- 11 Twist or tango
- 12 Mind business?
- 13 Takes five
- 21 Very unusual
- 22 Turn-of-the-century muckraker
- 26 Exam for college srs.
- 27 Men of the future?
- 28 Bailiwick
- 29 Light weight
- 30 Charisse of "Singin' in the Rain"
- 31 Mars neighbor
- 35 Colombian city
- 36 Patella location
- 37 Hits the slopes
- 39 Kachina doll makers
- 41 Bribe
- 44 Without transgressions
- 45 Prefix with trust or matter
- 47 Shooting stars
- 48 ___ B'rith
- 51 Colombian export
- 52 Denver pro
- 53 First name of 22D
- 54 Red Sea gulf
- 55 Petty
- 59 Rikki-Tikki---
- 60 Small songbird
- 61 Putting target
- 62 Story
- 63 Comic Laurel
- 65 Arachnid structure

GOREN BRIDGE

Q 1 - As South, vulnerable, you hold:

♠ A 7 4 ♥ K 9 6 5 2 ♦ 8 ♣ 10 8 7 2

Partner opens the bidding with one heart. What do you respond?

A - This is a textbook hand. With good five-card support for opener, an ace and a singleton, don't pussy-foot around. Jump to four hearts. The hand might not even belong to you, so make it as difficult as possible for the opponents to enter the auction.

Q 2 - As South, vulnerable, you hold:

♠ A 7 3 ♥ K 9 6 5 2 ♦ 8 2 ♣ 10 7 2

Partner opens the bidding with one heart. What do you respond?

A - Here the five-card support for partner's presents an illusion of strength. Your balanced distribution means that, by the time partner gets to ruff some losers, the contract might already be down. You have a maximum simple raise of partner's suit. Bid two hearts.

Q 3 - Both vulnerable as South you hold:

♠ Q 9 5 ♥ A 10 8 7 3 ♦ Q 9 2 ♣ 7 3

The bidding has proceeded:
NORTH EAST SOUTH WEST
INT Pass 2♣ Pass
2♠ Pass ?
What do you bid now?

A - You cannot bid three hearts — that would be game-forcing. Instead, invite game by bidding two no trump. If you play transfer bids, transfer into hearts and then invite game by bidding two no trump.

Q 4 - Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:

♠ Q J 7 2 ♥ 6 ♦ A K 5 2 ♣ 9 8 4 3

The bidding has proceeded:
NORTH EAST SOUTH WEST
INT 2♥ ?

A - No, a bid of three clubs by you would not be an inquiry for majors. When an opponent has deprived you of the possibility of using Stayman by overcalling, a cue-bid of the enemy suit replaces two clubs. Bid three hearts.

Q 5 - As South, vulnerable, you hold:

♠ 9 4 ♥ Q 10 6 3 ♦ A J 10 6 2 ♣ 10 3

Partner opens the bidding with one diamond. What do you respond?

A - When partner opens in a minor suit and you hold a four-card or longer major, bid the major even if you have five-card support for partner's minor. Bid one heart. If the bidding permits, you can support partner's suit later.

Q 6 - Both vulnerable, as South you hold:

♠ J 7 4 ♥ A Q 9 ♦ K 8 7 4 2 ♣ 10 5

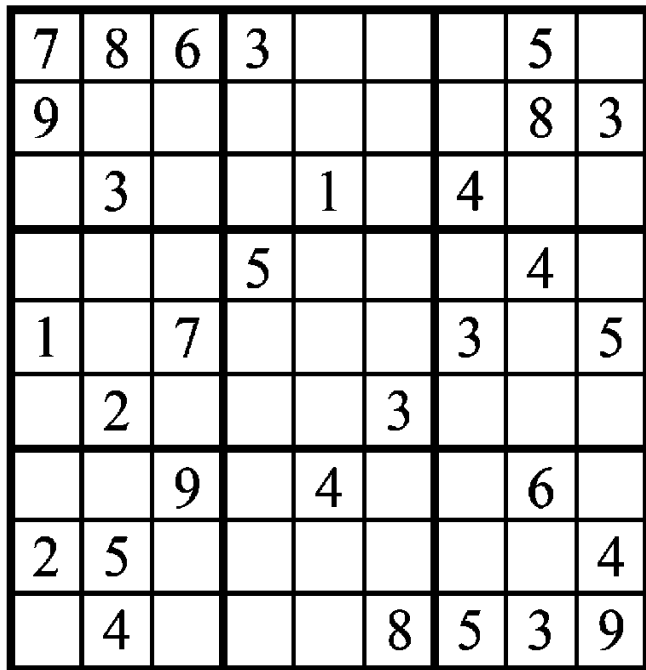
Partner opens the bidding with one diamond. What do you respond?

A - An awkward hand. Two diamonds is too weak and three diamonds too strong, so the technically correct bid is one no trump. But that could easily miss a game since the diamond suit rates to produce five tricks. So pretend one of your diamonds is a heart and respond one heart. No rebid by partner can embarrass you since you can always return to diamonds or no trump.

(Tannah Hirsch welcomes readers' responses sent in care of this newspaper or to Tribune Media Services Inc., 2225 Kenmore Ave., Suite 114, Buffalo, NY, 14207. E-mail responses may be sent to gorenbridge@aol.com.)

The Los Angeles Time

SUDOKU



Complete the grid so each row, column and 3-by-3 box (in bold borders) contains every digit, 1 to 9. For strategies on how to solve Sudoku, visit sudoku.org.uk.

Please see SUDOKU, 6B

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Singing will do in a pinch — if you're a bird



JOE GIORGIANNI
HUMOR COLUMNIST

Bird singing reminds me of a great joke about a guy who had a bird — a crow, in fact — that sang a duet with a canary; but I can't tell it here. Maybe one day when you stop by for a cold one or a cup of coffee I can share this funny but naughty story. After all, this is a family newspaper.

In the meantime, I will confine this column to the singing finches and other birds of the world.

I mean those that sing their hearts out, and all for the benefit of those who relish the 400-year-old Flemish challenge of how many chirps a bird can chirp in an hour.

Now, I'm not talking about just any bird. I'm talking about those that are raised to bring home the bacon — or chicken feed, if you prefer.

In Belgium, for example, where raising finches is more than just for the birds, in the past year there were more than 10,000 finches hatched with the intention of singing for all the marbles, err, warbles.

After learning what delectation a bird's whistle can bring, I decided to see

for myself. After all, I do know something about birds.

For example, I have a close relative who was a jailbird because a jealous neighbor sang like a canary to the authorities. Also, one of the more delectable cocktails I have enjoyed over the years requires copious amounts of a libation called Old Crow. After all, I'm no spring chicken.

So you can see, I do know something about birds. A century ago, during my high school days, I was a Redbird, and in college I was a Cardinal. And the bird flu seems to be a medical nemesis.

My wife and I became empty "nesters" after the kids got their wings clipped and were told about the birds and the bees. And although they weren't hatched, they did originate from an egg, and as they grew they spread their wings and eventually took flight. So, we killed two birds with one stone, you might say.

Metaphorically, birds have significant input in our everyday use of the English language. When we do something wrong, someone causes a flap. Some politicians are called nest-featherers, while others are considered vultures.

Those who think they are great communicators parrot some of the great communicators.

Often they, those who would like to be great, crow about the good things they have accomplished or plan to accomplish, if only we would

vote for them so they can have a feather in their cap.

However, most of what they say is for the birds, mainly because birds of a feather flock together. That, of course is a bird's-eye view of the pecking order in the political arena. Unfortunately, many of these wannabes count their chickens before they hatch, simply because the chickens came home to roost.

So, if you find yourself eating like a bird, primarily because we pretty much have to work for chicken feed, and if you don't chicken out while remembering that the early bird gets the worm, then whatever plumage they wave at us will be like water off a duck's back.

And speaking of a duck's back, we pretty much have a lame duck session in Congress these days. But with a lame duck president, what else would you expect?

And by the way, the snowbirds are gone. No lines for early bird specials and we are free to gander about as the crow flies, assuming that the yard birds in Washington don't chicken-liver out leaving us with our wings clipped. That would make pigeons out of all of us and we'll all be singing for chicken feed.

And remember, a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush, even if he is a lame duck.

Joe Giorgianni is a humor columnist who lives in Nokomis. He can be reached at: photo joe101@comcast.net.

Young mother feels the urge to take break from parenting



DEAR ABBY
COLUMNIST

DEAR ABBY: I'm a 20-year-old single mom of a 17-month-old son. I love my baby dearly, but lately I feel I'm missing out on life. I feel like I need to go out on my own and find myself.

Before I got pregnant I had plans to go to college, work abroad and experience life. My mom says if I do it, I would be running away, that I can't take a break from being a mom, even for a little while, and come back and be a mom again. I know being a parent means all or nothing, but I'm still just a kid myself.

If I did leave, I'd go somewhere and use that time effectively. I have thought about going to school in Colorado where I could experience something different and give myself a shot at a better career. Would it be running away and leaving my baby if I did that? — **YOUNG AND RESTLESS IN IDAHO**

DEAR YOUNG AND RESTLESS: Your mother is right. You are responsible for the welfare and emotional development of your baby. While this does not mean you can't have some social life, please recognize that your son needs consistency. He should not be left for an extended period of time. Take the college courses, but take them locally. Foreign travel to "find yourself" will have to wait because leaving your son now could cause

lifelong repercussions.

DEAR ABBY: I have lived on a golf course for the last five years, but golf — or any sport, for that matter — has never interested me. My parents and the rest of my family can't get enough of golf. I have given it many tries, including being forced into going to two golf camps and playing the game. My parents know I don't like golf — I have told them — but they keep on insisting I "give it a try." (I have for five years. I just don't enjoy it.) And to top it off they want me to go golfing once a week.

I try to please them. I go to church, get straight A's, respect them and do my chores. But they constantly nag me about the rest of the family enjoying it, and it makes me feel guilty for being a black sheep. Are my parents asking too much, or am I being selfish? — **TEE'D OFF IN MIDDLETOWN, DEL.**

DEAR TEE'D OFF: You are intelligent and obviously a high achiever. But nowhere in your letter did you mention that you are in any way physically active, which may be what concerns your parents. I cannot stress enough how

important it is for young people to get at least an hour a day of cardiovascular exercise. Please consider what I'm saying. If you are adamant about disliking golf, perhaps you can make a deal with your family to engage in some other physical activity that interests you.

DEAR ABBY: I just turned 15, and everyone in my family gave me great presents. I'd like to write them thank-you notes instead of just telling them that I am grateful. But, I'm not sure if writing thank-you notes to my parents and siblings is too formal. Are these notes written to close family? — **EMILY IN DALLAS**

DEAR EMILY: They absolutely are. Not only should you write those thank-you notes, you may be surprised to find later on that family members treasured and kept every single one you wrote.

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Help Puffy Paws help the kitties

FROM PUFFY PAWS
KITTY HAVEN

Puffy Paws Kitty Haven needs your help. The non-profit, no-kill cat rescue and haven is located in Englewood and serves the tri-county area.

It's kitten season and Puffy Paws Kitty Haven needs items from their wish list.

Call 473-5406 to arrange for pick-up or drop off donations at 270 Lakeview Lane, Englewood. The kitties will really appreciate it.

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Cat food

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- Whiskas, Choice cuts, Multi-pack
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Exchange student host families needed

FROM STS FOUNDATION

Student Travel Schools Foundation invites families to host international exchange students coming to the area this fall.

The students are ages 15-18 and will have their own spending money and health insurance. They will attend the local high school for the 2008-2009 school year. The students are proficient in English and must maintain satisfactory academic progress while in school.

Host families are responsible for providing meals, a place to sleep and a nurturing and safe environment. STS is supportive of host families and a local representative will maintain monthly contact with each family.

All types of families are welcome to apply to host, including empty nesters, older couples, young couples, families with/without children and even single parents.

More than 400 students from the following countries have registered for the exchange program: Austria, Australia, Sweden, Norway, Finland, Denmark, France, Germany, Switzerland, Netherlands, Italy, Poland, Hungary, Turkey, China, Thailand, Korea, New Zealand, Brazil and Colombia.

For more information on hosting, call (321) 939-2277, (866) 425-4678 or e-mail david@stsfoundation.org.

Rotary names local Teacher of the Year



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE VENICE-NOKOMIS ROTARY CLUB

The Venice-Nokomis Rotary Club awarded the Teacher of the Year Award to Thomas K. Marshall of Venice High School, center with tie, May 22 at their regular meeting. The committee members, also pictured, are from left to right, Mollie Hernandez, Ann Roggero, Beth Harrison, Dick Dodderidge, Marshall, Jim Woods, Jim Renz and Fred Hammett.

The Players Studio offers summer fun

FROM THE PLAYERS

The Stage Door Workshop summer camp is for students ages 8-17 and explores the magic of musical theater.

Two four-week sessions are offered; June 9 through July 3 and July 7 through Aug. 1. Youth camp is for ages 8-12 and is held at The Players Studios at 500 Tallevast Road.

The teen camp, for ages 13-17, meets at The Play-

ers Theatre.

Camp meets Monday-Friday from 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Pre- and post-care is available. Each session culminates in an exciting original musical revue performance on stage. Session I will be presenting String II and session II is Fractured Fairy Tales.

The Players Studio's summer classes will run for an eight-week session June 9-Aug. 2 and will include jazz, tap, hip-hop,

lyrical, ballet, acting, singing, and on-camera acting for ages 7-12. More advanced classes are offered for ages 10-18 and include the above as well as pre-pointe and pointe.

For the young child, pre-ballet, combo dance, creative combo and musical theater for munchkins are available.

For information, call 360-0120 or visit theplayers.org. Scholarship applications are available.

Class Acts on summer break

With the end of the school year, the Class Acts page goes on hiatus for the summer. Look for local school news again one week after classes for public schools resume.

You may continue to send any school related stories or information to Class Acts Editor Audrey Blackwell at ablackwell@venicegondolier.com for when the Class Acts page resumes.

CROSS from Page 4B



SUDOKU from Page 4B

7	8	6	3	9	4	2	5	1
9	1	4	6	5	2	7	8	3
5	3	2	8	1	7	4	9	6
8	9	3	5	2	1	6	4	7
1	6	7	4	8	9	3	2	5
4	2	5	7	6	3	9	1	8
3	7	9	1	4	5	8	6	2
2	5	8	9	3	6	1	7	4
6	4	1	2	7	8	5	3	9

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Pain Registers In The Brain

Brain scans have recently revealed that people in chronic pain show a constant state of activity in areas of the brain that should be at rest. This finding could help to explain why chronic pain sufferers have higher rates of depression and anxiety. It seems that chronic pain alters the way that sufferers process information that is not pain-related. As a result, the endurance of pain over a prolonged period of time affects brain response to tasks that are completely unrelated to pain and require only minimal attention. With this new focus on chronic pain's life-disrupting effect, sufferers have all the more reason to seek chiropractic care that will isolate causes of pain and treat them effectively.

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SUN PHOTOS BY FRAN VALENCIC

Heidi Ingerick, a graduating senior at Venice High School, received a renewable \$1,000 scholarship from the College Club and a Gator visor.



Karen Olm-Stoelting, left, and Dottie Murlock, the new president of the College Club, discuss plans for the coming year.



Betty Boese, left, and Lois Peeler visit at the College Club luncheon.

College Club of Venice rewards high achievement



FRAN VALENCIC
SOCIAL COLUMNIST

Community Outreach Chair **Joan Schum** awarded checks at the College Club luncheon at Boca Royale Golf & Country Club.

Heidi Ingerick received a \$1,000 renewable scholarship. The Venice High School graduate enters the University of Florida as a fourth-generation Gator.

Friends of the Venice and Jacaranda libraries, In Stride Therapy and Laurel

Civic Center also received checks. **John Jefferies** described the Laurel Civic Center's Teen Intervention Program, which benefits from the \$500.

Dorothy Marlock, Karen Olm-Stoelting, Lois Reeler, Sally Downey, Dorothy Nehls and **Elaine Carlson** were installed as officers for the new year. Outgoing president **Alice Wentworth** applauded her team and presented an honorary membership to **Helen Hatch**, celebrating her 101st birthday.

The College Club of Venice does small things in great ways and meets October through May.

Extreme Make-Over in Venice

Nancy Zinn gets the good sport award for starring in the Extreme Make-Over Fashion Show at the Venice Yacht Club. She arrived dressed in a muu-

muu, silly hat and no make-up.

Ruth Rogers, the new owner of Delia's Skin Care, transformed Ruth's face and provided makeup for all the models. **Patti Paul** and **Kelley Plough** of Avenue Hair gave each model a new 'do. **Jennifer Fourney** made sure models **Ann Dodderidge, Liz Hill, Lisa Liming, Carol Senn, Alice Hayden** and **Jeanne McDonagh** dazzled the audience with clothes and bling from Champagne Threads.

Bravo to **Shirley Ambrose** for chairing the event and the staff at the yacht club for making sure the luncheon was extremely terrific.

Happy anniversary

Mike and Melody Trimble celebrate their 25th wedding anniversary June 4. This dynamic duo knows the secret to a loving rela-

tionship comes from sparkle moments shared with someone you love.

On this happy day, Mike and Melody are enjoying a warm apple dumpling at Cracker Barrel made just for two.

One of our best

The special person of this week is **Ann Dodderidge**. This terrific lady tells everyone to keep on clicking, which is what she does.

She teaches computer and digital camera classes at the Senior Friendship Centers and the Venice Yacht Club and co-chairs the Computer User's Group at the Venice Public Library.

She doesn't hesitate to help anyone interested in sharpening their computer skills. She also finds time to work as a Health Care Volunteer of Venice.

Ann Dodderidge clicks and makes Venice a great place to live.



Dorothy Nehls, left, Elaine Carlson, Sally Downey, Lois Reeler, Karen Olm-Stoelting and Dorothy Marlock take over as officers of the College Club for the new year. Dorothy Marlock is their president.



Patti Paul, left, and Kelley Plough created hair styles for the models at the Yacht Club luncheon.



Helen Hatch, left, celebrated her 101st birthday at the College Club luncheon and also received an honorary membership from outgoing president Alice Wentworth.



John Jefferson talked about the Teen Intervention Program that benefits from the \$500 check he received from Community Outreach Chair Joan Schumm.



Ruth Rogers, left, and Julie Lalande from Delia's Skin Care in the Venice Centre Mall showed the models how to apply makeup for the Extreme Make-Over fashion show and luncheon at the Venice Yacht Club.



Chair Shirley Ambrose, at left, made sure everyone enjoyed themselves at the Extreme Make-Over fashion show and luncheon at the Venice Yacht Club.



Nancy Zinn arrives at the fashion show at the Venice Yacht Club ready for her extreme make-over.



Yacht Club models are Nancy Zinn, left, Carol Senn, Ann Dodderidge, Alice Hayden, Lisa Liming, Liz Hill and Jeanne McDonagh.



Ann Dodderidge received a merit award at the Floral Exhibition at the Venice Art Center. She photographs flowers, and the juror said her orchid reminded her of a Georgia O'Keeffe.



Tonya Corbett and Joanna Sauppe enjoy the Floral Exhibition at the Venice Art Center. Corbett and Joanna visited Venice from Seattle.



Marge Canfield, at left, received a merit award for her mixed-media piece "The Pink Cloth" at the Floral Exhibition at the Venice Art Center.



Nancy Casey stands in front of her first-place painting "Imaginary Garden" at the Floral Exhibition at the Venice Art Center.

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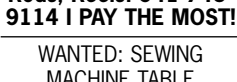
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GENE GORMAN'S 2000 LEXUS GS300, 46K MI, 1 FLA. OWNER! PERFECT \$12,990. 625-2141, Pt. Char. www.genegormans.com

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7100 MERCURY

1997 Grand Marquis, 186K miles, ac, p/w/i, new tires, \$1000 obo. 941-623-7618

2002 Grand Marquis LS, excel.. 53K, dlr serviced, \$6,950. obo (941)-743-7930

2007 Grand Marquis LS Leather 12K mi \$14700 (941)-926-1443

7130 PONTIAC

1984 Pontiac Firebird 4cyl, AC, Auto,PS/PB Runs gd \$975 941-828-0246 OR 815-3490

2000 PONTIAC Firebird red, t-tops, V-6, cold a/c, clean car 117K. \$4800 obo. 941-716-1574.

7135 SATURN

PRO-POWER AUTO SALES (941) 627-8822 USED SATURN SALES PARTS & SERVICE "THE SATURN GUYS" *****

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7136 SCION

GENE GORMAN "PREMIER" 2005 SCION TC SUNROOF AUTO. GAS SAVER \$11,990. 941-639-7300 www.genegormans.com

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1982 300 Diesel, good mi. 177k, gold, \$2500 (941)-391-0581

2002 MB SLK 32 AMG, 27K mi, 2-seat hardtop convert, black/charcoal leather, 349 hp, 5-speed auto, Bose, loaded, \$26,200 OBO 941-473-0203.

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7177 KIA

1999 Sephia 5spd 94K 35mpg Clean \$2750 (941)-697-0722

7180 MAZDA

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7

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2006 RMZ 450 Racing Bike, \$3000 2003 Yamaha PW80 \$700 obo or trade (863)-558-0198

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16' Mitchcraft w/15hp Johnson, elec/pull start, bimini top, runs great, boat, motor & trailer, \$2200/obo. (941)-575-6861

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