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# Is regional transit coming to Tampa Bay?

**By B.C. Manion**
*bcmanion@lakerlutznews.com*

It's no secret that getting around Tampa Bay is challenging.

Unlike other cities that have light rail, regional bus service and even subway systems — there's no cohesive regional transit option that links counties within the Tampa Bay region.

The Tampa Bay Area Regional Transit Authority (TBARTA) — which includes Hernando, Pasco, Hillsborough, Pinellas and Manatee counties — is working to change that.

The TBARTA board —made up of elected county and city leaders, representatives of local transit authorities and gubernatorial appointees — is pursuing a Bus Rapid Transit system, which would create a 41-mile route, between Wesley Chapel and St. Petersburg.

Riders would be able to take advantage of rapid bus routes, with stops at State Road 54, State Road 56, the University of South Florida, downtown Tampa, Westshore, Tampa International Airport, the Gateway area of St. Petersburg, downtown St. Petersburg and the Tropicana Field area.

The idea is to make the buses convenient enough that riders will choose mass transit for regional trips, rather than driving their own cars.

Finding a way to reduce congestion and increase mobility options are topics of obvious interest to board members of the Pasco County Metropolitan Planning Organization, the lead transportation planning agency in Pasco County, and to members of the North Tampa Bay Chamber

See TRANSIT, page 11A



FRED BELLET

# A star-spangled show

**Four-year old Hudson Kirby, of Lutz, plants an American Flag into the ground near the Land O' Lakes Heritage Park stage. Hudson was at the benefit event for the Tunnel to Towers Foundation and Let Us Do Good Village with his grandmother, Jewel Brown, of Lutz. *See more coverage of this event on page 1B.***



**U.S. Army veteran Staff Sgt. Steven Daily, right, served in Afghanistan and Iraq and sustained injuries. He discussed his experiences during the event and expressed his gratitude to Corsos for Heroes. The 28-year-old St. Petersburg man received a Corsos for Heroes dog. The veteran was at the event with his wife, Rachael, an active member of the U.S. Air Force. Harry Toro, at left, a breeder from Lutz, was there to hand over the leash to Daily.**



**The Zephyrhills U.S. Army JROTC present the colors at the Memorial Day weekend event.**



COURTESY OF NICOLE SANCHEZ

# Hats off grads!

**Nicole Sanchez is a graduate of the Class of 2022 from Saint Leo University, in St. Leo. She's the digital content assistant for The Laker/Lutz News. *Check out more graduation pics on page 9A.***



MIKE CAMUNAS

# Disc golf for life

**Zephyrhills resident and professional disc golf champion JohnE McCray suffered a massive heart attack in February that required three stents and an in-chest defibrillator. Now, months later, McCray is gradually gaining his endurance and strength back, to get back on the Professional Disc Golf Association (PDGA) Tour. Here he practices his signature move, the Turbo Putt, a type of throw for which he is widely known and one which he once sank from 100 feet. *Check out the story in SPORTS, on page 12A.***

# Pasco School Board identifies how it would spend 'Penny' proceeds

**By B.C. Manion**
*bcmanion@lakerlutznews.com*

The Pasco County School Board has identified how it would spend its share of proceeds from a proposed extension of the Penny for Pasco surtax.

Voters will decide in November if they favor extending the tax.

The special 1-cent sales tax initially was adopted in March 2004, and was in effect from Jan. 1, 2005 through Dec. 31, 2014. Voters extended it for 10 years, with that renewal going from Jan. 1, 2015 through Dec. 31, 2024.

Now, voters are being asked for another renewal — this time for 15 years, from Jan. 1, 2025 and Dec. 31, 2039.



FILE

**Woodland Elementary School's cafeteria is now more spacious, allowing more children to eat at the same time. It also has a new stage, enabling the school to hold larger events. Those improvements were done using proceeds from the Penny for Pasco surtax.**

The school district, Pasco County and the county's municipalities share the proceeds, with the school district and county each receiving 45% and the municipalities splitting 10%.

See PENNY, page 11A

# Pasco County clerk continues her push for a bigger budget

This is the second year in a row the clerk is seeking a significantly larger budget than has been approved in the past

**By B.C. Manion**
*bcmanion@lakerlutznews.com*

Pasco County Clerk & Comptroller Nikki Alvarez-Sowles is seeking a budget increase of 6.1% over her budget request of last year.

But that percentage increase relates to her request from last year, not the actual amount she received.

Her request in this year's budget is about $14 million. That's roughly double of her current budget.

See BUDGET, page 11A

# Planning board delays request, so neighbors can iron out issues

**By B.C. Manion**
*bcmanion@lakerlutznews.com*

The Pasco County Planning Commission has delayed a request in the Central Pasco Employment Village, to give neighbors a chance to discuss proposed conditions of approval.

The main sticking points involve the alignment of a proposed road and entitlements regarding commercial uses.

The requested zoning would allow development up to 2 million square feet of corporate business park and light industrial uses, as well as 300,000 square feet of support commercial/office on 321.13 acres. The site is on the south side of State Road 52, about a half mile west of Bellamy Brothers Boulevard.

The application, known as Eagle II, was filed by 3KS Family LLLP.

George Southworth, of 3KS Family LLLP, and Cynthia Spidell, a professional land planner, spoke on behalf of the application during the planning board's May 19 meeting.

"We have a light industrial project. It's an employment center. We have people that are looking for large, light industrial tracts, and we want to help the county fulfill that vision and bring some jobs to Pasco County," said Spidell, who works for Stearns Weaver Miller, a law firm in Tampa.

She said her client is willing to reduce the commercial entitlement by 200,000 square feet, if the county is willing to exchange that for additional industrial development.

Chief Assistant County Attorney David Goldstein said the county board has made it clear that it wants to lift restrictions on industrial development in the Central Pasco Employment Village (CPEV).

The CPEV is an area designated by the Pasco County Commission years ago to create a coordinated vision among a group of landowners.

As adopted, the plan envisions a mixed-use employment village on more than 2,400 acres, located along the south side of State Road 52, roughly between the Collier Parkway Extension and Bellamy Brothers Boulevard. The employment village is expected to contain commercial, residential and industrial uses.

> *"Most of this information was not submitted with the application. That's why it's such a mess."*
>
> *— Andy Joe Scaglione, adjacent landowner*

A system had been developed to allow landowners to swap entitlements among themselves, under the county's supervision. But during the Pasco County Commission's May 2 meeting, it became clear that at least some board members don't think that landowners within the CPEV should have to jump through hoops, if they want their sites to be used for industrial development.

Disagreements already have arisen between CPEV landowners over entitlements, and a dispute of a similar nature arose at the May 19 planning board meeting.

Daniel Bergin, representing D&D Ranch of Pasco LLC, an adjacent landowner, asked the planning board to delay the request.

"Eagle II is seeking 300,000 square feet of commercial space," Bergin said, which he said is inequitable, based on the overall total of commercial allotted within the CPEV.

Bergin asked Andy Joe Scaglione, the adjacent landowner, if he wanted to make some remarks.

"Most of this information was not submitted with the application. That's why it's such a mess," Scaglione said.

"I'd like to ask for a continuance because all of this information was not in the application."

One issue in dispute involves the alignment of a proposed road that would be built on the Eagle II property.

Scaglione and Bergin said they were not aware of the proposed shift.

Goldstein, representing the county's legal staff, told Scaglione it appears the new alignment would actually benefit Scaglione.

"The eastern side of your property seems somewhat landlocked," Goldstein said. "What the applicant is saying, is by that moving it, they're going to build you a road going out to the east."

If the proposed road is left where it currently is, on the southern boundary, there's a good chance it would never get built, Goldstein said.

That's because the county typically doesn't require landowners to build roads that aren't needed by their developments, and in this case, the property already has access to State Road 52, Goldstein said.

Still, Scaglione asked for a continuance, saying the information came in at the last minute.

Spidell disputed that claim, pointing to a summary of a Nov. 8 landowner meeting.

She presented a map to the planning board from that meeting, noting: "This is the map we showed."

Goldstein asked the applicant if there's a way to change the alignment of the road on its property, to avoid making a portion of Scaglione's property unusable.

Southworth said they can provide connectivity, and "they can swing the road and hug their line."

Goldstein observed: "I think there's a way that you two could work out a connection point."

But Southworth wasn't so sure: "We aren't going to work out a connection point with Andy Scaglione. It won't ever happen."

Planning board Chairman Charles Grey responded: "I don't think that's necessary."

Ultimately, planning board members voted 3-2 to delay the request until their June 16 meeting. Planning board members Jaime Girardi and Roberto Saez dissented.

That allows the parties time to have a meeting, to see if they can resolve their issues.

After the planning board makes its recommendation, the request moves on to the Pasco County Commission, which has final jurisdiction on zoning and land use issues.

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# Pasco observes Juneteenth through events, celebrations

**By Kathy Steele**
*Special to The Laker/Lutz News*

After being declared a federal legal holiday in 2021, Juneteenth is gaining greater recognition as communities across the nation celebrate, and commemorate, the historic end of slavery in the United States.

The holiday marks the day in history, when on June 19, 1865, Union soldiers reached Galveston, Texas, with the news that slaves were free.

President Abraham Lincoln had issued the Emancipation Proclamation to free slaves in Confederate states in rebellion against the Union in 1863. Texas was the last Confederate state to fall to Union soldiers.

For generations Black communities celebrated Juneteenth, or Freedom Day, with picnics, church services, remembrances of ancestors, poetry readings and programs about African American heritage. Over the years, a handful of states, including Texas, recognized Juneteenth as a state holiday.

For many years, Pasco County has issued proclamations honoring Juneteenth.

Now, with a national holiday marking the day, Juneteenth is garnering more attention.

"I am very pleased and very happy with interest being shown not only in Pasco (County) but across the country. People are celebrating even before the day of Juneteenth. There's great history here," said Cassie Coleman, a member of the East Pasco Juneteenth Committee and an organizer of the Rosewood Traveling Exhibit. "I think it's going to get bigger and bigger," she said. She also thinks it will "teach our children a little bit more about our history."

In Pasco County, the Parks, Recreation, and Natural Resources Department is partnering with businesses and community groups to organize a week of Juneteenth activities. Partners include East Pasco Juneteenth Committee, AdventHealth, Pasco-Hernando State College, the Pioneer Florida Museum & Village and the Rosewood Family Reunion Inc.

In Wesley Chapel, residents of Union Park and Union Park East will host the third annual Juneteenth Family Day to "celebrate freedom," on June 18 from 1 p.m. to 7 p.m., at The Landing. Festivities will include free drawings, games, spoken word performances, music, dancing, and food trucks.

In prior years of local Juneteenth events, Pasco County's parks department and AdventHealth embraced the festivities with a goal to expand outreach for health screenings within Black and Hispanic communities.

In 2020, a Saturday event drew about 300 people, said Kimberly Miller, East Pasco recreational coordinator for the county's parks department.

Last year as a national holiday, the Juneteenth crowd grew to more than 700 people, she said.

"It's become huge. We're looking to make it bigger and better."

Festivities from June 15 through June 18 will include traditional picnics with health screenings, and family activities, music, a bowling night, a community paint party and a special presentation on the history and legacy of the Rosewood Massacre.

A special Rosewood Traveling Exhibit will be on display at the Pioneer Florida Museum & Village from June 13 through June 20. On June 17, Rosewood descendants from the Lacoochee community will host a special presentation: A Night to Remember.

Lacoochee resident Ebony Pickett is a descendant of several survivors of the Rosewood Massacre.

The trauma of Rosewood is still felt, Pickett said. Some survivors changed their names soon after because they thought they would be tracked down. "It was a real fear," she added.

Rosewood was settled in the 1840s by white and Black residents, but by the 1890s, the town was predominately Black. The one exception was a white family that ran a general store.

In the first week of January 1923, white mobs including Ku Klux Klansmen from surrounding counties descended on Rosewood fueled by an untrue report that a white woman had been assaulted and raped. They burned and destroyed the town. Some residents received shelter from the white store owner. Others fled into the nearby swamp and hid for days in bitter cold. Those who survived never returned but resettled in other communities, including Lacoochee.

The number of deaths is disputed.

The official record acknowledges eight deaths — six Black people and two white people. But Pickett said survivors remember many more Blacks died.

Rumors of a mass grave have persisted, despite official reports to the contrary.

Survivors were reluctant for many years to talk about the massacre until prodded by younger family members. Pickett said she didn't hear the story of Rosewood until she was in third grade. It was a secret too dark to be spoken of publicly by those who lived through the assault, she said.

Pickett's uncle, Willie Evans, who died in 2020, was among survivors who fought to secure reparations through the Florida legislature. A Rosewood claims bill was approved in 1994 that included direct payments to a small number of survivors and educational scholarships to descendants.

The Rosewood Family Reunion Inc. created the Rosewood Traveling Exhibit to tell their story. The special presentation will include members of the Rosewood families, a youth art show and a performance by the Rosewood Family Choir.

Pickett is glad to see Juneteenth becoming nationally recognized as a day to celebrate but also an opportunity to reflect and learn about the past. "We're happy to do more," she said.

Coleman agrees. "It's something that will put us in mind of facts and history, so we won't repeat it in future."

## Upcoming Juneteenth celebrations

These special events are planned during Juneteenth Week, June 15 to June 18

### Beats N' Brushes, a canvas painting party set to music

**WHEN:** June 15, 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.
**WHERE:** The James Irvin Center, at 38122 Martin Luther King Blvd., in Dade City
**COST:** $10 Tickets are required.
**INFO:** 352-521-4166

### Family Bowling Night

**WHEN:** June 16, 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.
**WHERE:** East Pasco Pin Chasers, 6816 Gall Blvd., Zephyrhills
**COST:** $5 Tickets are required.
**INFO:** 352-521-4166

### A Night to Remember

**WHAT:** A special presentation on the legacy of Rosewood and a youth art show.
**WHEN:** June 17, 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.
**WHERE:** Pioneer Florida Museum & Village, 15602 Pioneer Museum Road, Dade City
**COST:** Free but pre-registration is required. Space is limited.
**INFO:** 352-521-4166




### The Rosewood Traveling Exhibit

**WHAT:** A special exhibit on the legacy of Rosewood including photographs and artifacts from Rosewood family survivors
**WHEN:** June 13 through June 20, during museum hours
**WHERE:** Pioneer Florida Museum & Village, 15602 Pioneer Museum Road, Dade City
**COST:** Contact the museum for hours and admission.
**INFO:** 352-567-0262

### Third Annual Family Celebration Day

**WHAT:** Juneteenth celebration organized by residents of Union Park and Union Park East
**WHEN:** June 18, 1 p.m. to 7 p.m.
**WHERE:** The Landing, 32885 Natural Bridge, Wesley Chapel
**COST:** Free
**INFO:** Email forthecultureup.e@gmail.com.

### Second Annual East Pasco Juneteenth Community Celebration

**WHAT:** Free health screenings; food trucks; family fun zone; games; drawings for prizes; local vendors; Juneteenth Toddler Pageant; and special performances
**WHEN:** June 18 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
**WHERE:** The James Irvin Center, at 38122 Martin Luther King Blvd., in Dade City
**COST:** Free
**INFO:** Contact Kimberly Miller at 352-521-4166 or kmiller@pascountyfl.net.

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PUBLISHER & OWNER
BRIAN CALLE
bcalle@lakerlutznews.com

EDITORIAL
B.C. MANION
*Editor*
bcmanion@lakerlutznews.com

MIKE CAMUNAS
*Staff Writer*
mcamunas@lakerlutznews.com

MARY RATHMAN
*Editorial Assistant*
mrathman@lakerlutznews.com

ACCOUNTING
MARY EBERHARD
meberhard@lakerlutznews.com

SALES
TERRI WILLIAMSON
*Senior Account Manager*
twilliamson@lakerlutznews.com

MARY JANE WEEKS
*Account Manager*
mweeks@lakerlutznews.com

LAUREL CUMMINGS
*Advertising & Sales Assistant*
lcummings@lakerlutznews.com

TREVOR LLOYD
*Marketing/Advertising Coordinator*
tlloyd@lakerlutznews.com

CAROLYN BENNETT
*Customer Service*
cbennett@lakerlutznews.com

DESIGN
MATTHEW MISTRETTA
*Art Director*
mmistretta@lakerlutznews.com

STEFANIE BURLINGAME
*Graphic Designer*
sburlingame@lakerlutznews.com

MARKETING
KELLI CARMACK
*Digital Content Manager*
kcarmack@lakerlutznews.com

NICOLE SANCHEZ
*Digital Content Assistant*
nsanchez@lakerlutznews.com

**LOCATION/MAIL:** 3632 Land O' Lakes Blvd., Suite 102, Land O' Lakes, FL 34639
**PHONE/FAX:** ph: 813.909.2800 • fax: 813.909.2802
**IT SUPPORT:** STEVE MISTRETTA
**WEBSITE:** www.lakerlutznews.com
**FACEBOOK:** www.facebook.com/lakerlutznews
**TWITTER:** www.twitter.com/lakerlutznews
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# What's Happening

Your Community Calendar • Submit 2 weeks in advance to: news@lakerlutznews.com • All listings free of charge

## HOME DÉCOR
The Starkey Ranch Theatre Library Cultural Center, 12118 Lake Blanche Drive in Odessa, will host a craft class on June 9 at 2 p.m. Participants can make a shell windchime or picture frame. Register online at PascoLibraries.org.

## COOKING SHELLFISH
The Starkey Ranch Theatre Library Cultural Center, 12118 Lake Blanche Drive in Odessa, will present Seafood 101: Cooking FinFish and Shellfish for Two at Home, on June 9 at 6 p.m. Participants can learn kitchen tips and hints, and anecdotes about the joys and challenges of cooking seafood for two. There will be a cooking demonstration. Register online at PascoLibraries.org.

## STREET BASH
The Dade City Street Bash will take place on June 10 from 4 p.m. to 9 p.m., starting at the Dade City Brew House, 14323 Seventh St., and continuing down and past Meridian Avenue. Every second Friday of the month, the Brew House takes over Seventh Street for local vendors, car showings, live music, food, and an open-container wet zone for residents and visitors. For information, call 352-218-3122, or visit DadeCityBrewHouse.com.

## JELLYFISH STORYTIME
The Land O' Lakes Library will host Oceans of Possibilities Storytime: Jellyfish on June 11 at 9:30 a.m. and again at 10:30 a.m., for children and their caregivers. The event will take place at the Land O' Lakes Recreation Complex, 3032 Collier Parkway, Activity Rooms 1 and 2. Registration is online at PascoLibraries.org.

## MASTER GARDENING
The Zephyrhills Public Library, 5347 Eighth St., will host Master Gardener sessions on June 11. At 9 a.m., a Master Gardener will be on hand to answer questions. At 10 a.m., the topic will be Butterfly Gardening for Children that will include activities, a storytime, educational displays and demonstrative boards, for ages 4 to 12. Registration is online at GardeningSolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/mastergardener/

## HOW MONEY WORKS
The American Financial Education Alliance (AFEA) will present a "How Money Works" course at the Starkey Ranch Theatre Library Cultural Center, 12118 Lake Blanche Drive in Odessa, on June 12 from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. The nonprofit AFEA teaches people of all income levels how to do a money analysis, understand how money works, and how to design a strategy to fit their needs. Registration is online at PascoLibraries.org.

## MANATEE PROGRAM
The Hillsborough County Public Library Cooperative will present a live, online program entitled "ZT Saves: Florida Manatees" on June 13 at 6:30 p.m., for all ages. Participants can 'meet' a Florida manatee, ask questions to animal care professionals and learn how to support the species in the wild. The program is presented in partnership with ZooTampa and the Lowry Park Zoological Society of Tampa. Register through the calendar feature at HCPLC.org.

## VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL
The Church at Myrtle Lake, 2017 Riegler Road in Land O' Lakes, will host the Spark Studios Vacation Bible School from June 13 to June 17 from 9 a.m. to noon. The event is free for children in kindergarten through sixth grade. Registration is open online at MyrtleLake.org. For information, call 813-949-5516.

## FAVORITE FILMS
The Tampa Theatre, 711 N. Franklin St., in downtown Tampa, will host its popular Summer Classics Movie Series. All shows are at 3 p.m. Classic films are $10 at the box office and $12 online ($7 for theater members); sing-alongs and silent films are $13 at the box office and $15 online ($10 for theater members). Upcoming films include:
- June 13: "Star Wars: Episode IV - A New Hope" (1977, PG, Sci-Fi)
- June 19: "In the Heat of the Night" (1967, PG-13, Crime Drama)
- June 26: "Fail Safe" (1964, Not Rated, War Thriller)
- Aug. 7: "Blazing Saddles" (1974, R, Western Comedy)
- Aug. 14: "All That Jazz" (1979, R, Musical Drama)
- Aug. 21: "Casablanca" (1942, PG, Drama). This film also will be shown on Aug. 20 at 7:30 p.m.
- Aug. 28: "One Week" (1920, Not Rated, Comedy) and "The Camerman" (1928, PG, Comedy Romance). Both are silent films.

For a complete summer list and tickets, visit TampaTheatre.org.




## Thrift shops need volunteers

Gulfside Hospice thrift shops are in need of a few extra helping hands for the summer.

All five Gulfside shops need volunteers to assist with accepting donations, sorting and pricing items, organizing merchandise on the shelves, assisting customers and more.

Volunteers can work flexible schedules in the location of their choice, including Dade City, Hudson, Lutz, New Port Richey or Zephyrhills.

Volunteers also receive discounts when shopping at any of the stores.

Those interested must be at least 15 years of age. Teens and students can earn community service hours toward scholarships and other programs.

For information and store locations, visit GulfsideThriftShop.org, talk to any store manager, or call 727-845-5707.

## GREEN SCREEN FUN
The Starkey Ranch Theatre Library Cultural Center, 12118 Lake Blanche Drive in Odessa, will present "Find Your Treasure: Green Screen Fun" on June 14 at 1 p.m., for tweens. Participants can create an ocean adventure story while learning about the Green Screen. A parent-signed photo release (available at the program) is required to be in the video. Kids can participate without a photo release, but will not appear in the video. Register at PascoLibraries.org.

## NETWORKING GROUP
The East Pasco Networking Group will meet on June 14 at 7:30 a.m., at the Sarah Vande Berg Tennis & Wellness Center, 6585 Simons Road in Zephyrhills. The guest speakers will be Pasco County Tax Collector Mike Fasano; Charles Tousell, candidate for Pasco County Board, District 5; and Steve Meisman, candidate for Pasco School Board, District 1. For information, call Nils Lenz at 813-782-9491 or Vicky Jones at 813-431-1149.

## HILLSBOROUGH RIVER
The Hillsborough County Public Library Cooperative in partnership with the Tampa Bay History Center will present "Secrets of the Hillsborough River" on June 14 at 2 p.m., online, for teens and adults. Register through the calendar feature at HCPLC.org.

## PUPPET SHOW
The Zephyrhills Public Library will host a live Rumpelstiltskin Puppet Show on June 15 at 10:30 a.m., next-door at Zephyrhills City Hall, presented by the Bit 'N Pieces Puppet Theatre. The program is free for children in kindergarten through fifth grade, and their caregivers. No registration is required.

## NATIVE PLANTS
The Starkey Ranch Theatre Library Cultural Center, 12118 Lake Blanche Drive in Odessa, will host a gardening seminar about Florida native plants on June 15 at 11 a.m. The guest speaker will be Mary Ellen Gotto from the Florida Native Plant Society. Participants can learn about the plants and their pollinators, and which ones are suitable for the landscape and how to maintain them. Registration is required online at PascoLibraries.org.

## SPACE EXPLORATION
The Starkey Ranch Theatre Library Cultural Center, 12119 Lake Blanche Drive in Odessa, will host a space exploration party with fun experiments and crafts on June 15 at 11 a.m. Register at PascoLibraries.org.

## CANVAS PAINT PARTY
Beats N' Brushes will take place on June 15 from 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m., at the James Irvin Civic Center, 38122 Martin Luther King Blvd., in Dade City. Participants can 'let the music move them' as they tap into their creative side for this canvas paint party. The cost is $10 per person. Online registration is at Secure.rec1.com/FL/pasco-county-fl/catalog, under the East Side Recreation tab.

## SUGAR SCRUB
The Starkey Ranch Theatre Library Cultural Center, 12118 Lake Blanche Drive in Odessa, will offer a craft class on June 16 at 2 p.m., for teens in grades eight to 12. Participants can learn to make a mermaid sugar scrub. Masks are recommended, but not required. Registration is required online at PascoLibraries.org.

## FISH FRY
J.F. Swartsel Lodge, 3109 W. Lutz Lake Fern Road, will host its monthly Third Friday Fish Fry on June 17. Service begins at 5 p.m., and ends at 8 p.m. (or until the food runs out). The cost is $15 for eat-in, and $13 for carry-out.

## FLOWER CROWNS
The Starkey Ranch Theatre Library Cultural Center, 12118 Lake Blanche Drive in Odessa, will host a flower crown craft class on June 18 from 2 p.m. to 3:30 p.m., for ages 10 and older. Participants can create a summer solstice flower crown – a fun circlet of flowers to wear. Learn to put together a cascade of flowers or something simpler, whether it's earthy, fairy or princess style. Register online at PascoLibraries.org.

## SPRING CONCERT
Atonement Lutheran Church, 29617 State Road 54 in Wesley Chapel, will host a spring concert titled, "Show Me the Way," on June 18 from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. Music will be provided by the Godify Bank and the Celebration Choir, along with a few surprises. Admission is free and complimentary child care will be provided. For information, call 813-973-2211, or email office@discoveralc.com.

## OPEN AUDITIONS
Live Oak Theatre will host auditions on June 18 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., for "Murder on the Orient Express." The Agatha Christie murder mystery will be performed from Sept. 23 through Oct. 9. This open audition is for members and non-members of the repertory company. Auditions will require prepared readings from the script, and those who audition must be prepared to show their ability to become the character. To get a description of the characters and the accents they require, email liveoakstagemanager@gmail.com, to familiarize yourself with the scenes pertaining to the characters you are interested in.

## CIVIL WAR REENACTMENT
The Pioneer Florida Museum and Village, 15602 Pioneer Museum Road in Dade City, will present "Home Front: The Civil War" on June 25 from noon to 3 p.m. The event will feature a converted convalescent hospital, a camp of Home Guards conducting drills, living history stations and presentations in the Lockey Room in the Main Building. Admission is $12 for adults, $10 for seniors/veterans, $6 for students, and ages 5 and younger are free. For information, visit PioneerFloridaMuseum.org.

## HAM RADIO FIELD DAY
Members of the East Pasco Amateur Radio Society will participate in the national Amateur Radio Field Day exercise on June 25 and June 26, at the San Antonio Train Depot, 32700 Railroad Ave., in San Antonio. Ham operators provide a free public service to their communities during a disaster or emergency, all without needing a cellphone or the internet. The field day will demonstrate ham radio's ability to work reliably under any conditions from almost any location and create an independent communications network. The event is open to the public. For information on the field day or amateur radio, visit EPARSonline.org.

## SUMMERTIME FESTIVAL
Starkey Ranch District Park will host a SummerTime Fun Festival on June 26 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. The event will feature food trucks, a kid zone, summer games, music, and more than 60 vendors. Admission is free for all ages. Visit Facebook for more information.

## ZEPHYRHILLS SUMMERFEST
The seventh annual Zephyrhills Summerfest, an Independence Day Celebration, will take place on July 2 from noon to 9:30 p.m., at Zephyr Park, 38116 Fifth Ave. Fireworks are scheduled at dark. Vendors can register online at tinyurl.com/2zzaebb4 (food vendors sold out). For information, call 727-674-1464.

## CAKE CONTEST
Entries for the Lutz 4th of July Cake Contest can be dropped off at the Lutz Community Center, 98 First Ave., N.W., between 4 p.m. and 6 p.m., on July 3; or between 6 a.m. and 9 a.m., on July 4. Cakes must be no larger than 9 inches by 13 inches. Cakes or pies that require refrigeration will not be accepted. Categories include: Adult Best Decorated; Adult Best Tasting; Youth Best Decorated (ages 11 to 18); Youth Best Decorated (10 and younger); Youth Best Tasting (11 to 18); Most Patriotic (all ages); Guv'na Favorite; Cupcakes Best Decorated; Best Pie (all ages); and Youth Best Tasting (10 and younger). All entries will be auctioned off after the parade. For information, email lutz4thofjuly@gmail.com.

## BIRTHDAY BASH
To celebrate Tampa's 135th birthday, the Tampa Bay Moms Group will host a Birthday Bash on July 16 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., at 1710 N. Highland Ave., in Tampa, next door to Armature Works. There will be food trucks, interactive exhibits, entertainment, goody bags for the first 100 families, party favors, giveaways, gifts and more. Admission is free. For information, visit TampaBayMomsGroup.com. To join as an exhibitor or sponsor, email steffany@tampabaymomsgroup.com.

## CONCERT EVENTS
The Carrollwood Cultural Center, 4537 Lowell Road, will celebrate the music of 1969 and host these concert events:
- Aug. 6 at 8 p.m.: Peace of Woodstock. Tickets are $23 for center members and $28 for non-members. Streaming also is available for $12.
- Aug. 20 at 8 p.m.: Bad Moon Rising – A Tribute to Creedence Clearwater Revival (CCR). Tickets are $29 for center members and $33 for non-members. Streaming also is available for $15.

Tickets can be purchased at the center's box office, online at CarrollwoodCenter.org, or by calling 813-922-8167.
For information about shows, classes, camps, memberships and the center's COVID guidelines, visit CarrollwoodCenter.org.

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## POLITICAL AGENDA

# New precinct boundary lines

The Pasco County Commission has approved the 120 precinct boundaries recommended by Supervisor of Elections Brian Corley.

Corley informed Commission Chairwoman Kathryn Starkey in a May 2 letter, of the need to change the precinct boundaries as a result of redistricting, which occurred because of the 2020 U.S. Census.

As a result of that redistricting, Corley wrote, Pasco now will be represented by two congressional districts: District 12 and District 15.

It also will be represented by three members of the Florida Senate, from Districts 11, 21 and 23, and four members of the Florida House of Representatives, in Districts 53, 54, 55 and 56.

In his letter to Starkey, Corley also noted that the new precinct lines conform to municipal boundaries.

### CENTRAL PASCO DEMOCRATIC CLUB

The Central Pasco Democratic Club will meet in person on June 15 at the Meadow Pointe 1 Community Center, 28245 County Line Road in Wesley Chapel. Socializing starts at 6:30 p.m., followed by the meeting at 6:45 p.m. For information, email centralpascodemocraticclub@gmail.com.

### EAST PASCO DEMOCRATIC CLUB

The East Pasco Democratic Club will meet June 20, remotely on ZOOM. All friends of the Democratic Party are invited to attend. Congresswoman Val Deming will be the speaker. Socializing starts at 6 p.m. The meeting starts at 6:30 p.m. Email eastpascodems@gmail.com, or call 813-383-8315 for details.

### WESLEY CHAPEL REPUBLICAN CLUB

The Wesley Chapel Republican Club is having a Candidate Forum, involving candidates for District 4 of the Pasco County Commission. Candidates Christina Fitzpatrick, Gary Bradford and Shannon Wittwer are expected to participate at the forum, which is set for June 9 at 6:30 p.m., at Myrtle Lake Baptist Church, 2017 Reigler Road, in Land O' Lakes.

### BOOK CLOSING DATES

The book closing date for the primary election is July 25; the primary election is Aug. 23. The book closing date for the general election is Oct. 11; the general election is on Nov. 8.

The book closing date is the statewide deadline to register to vote, or change your political party for any election, if you are already registered. For first-time voters in Florida, a completed voter registration form must be in the Supervisor of Elections' office, or postmarked, by the book closing date. If you have relocated to a new address within Florida, register that address with the Supervisor of Elections' office as soon as possible.

An online sample ballot usually will be available 30 days to 35 days prior to an election. Immediately following the election, the sample ballot will be replaced by the election results.

### ENDORSEMENTS

- **Seth Weightman,** candidate for District 2 on the Pasco County Commission, has received the endorsement of State Sen. Danny Burgess, according to a release from Weightman.
- **U.S. Rep. Gus Bilirakis,** in Florida's 12th congressional district, has received endorsements from Citrus County Sheriff Mike Prendergast and from U.S. Congressman Jim Jordan, according to a news release from Bilarakis' campaign. The 12th congressional district includes all of Citrus and Hernando counties, and parts of Pasco County.
- **Stacy Hahn,** who is running for reelection for the District 2 seat on the Hillsborough County School Board, has been endorsed by Associated Builders and Contractors (ABC) Florida Gulf Coast Chapter, according to her campaign.

*Political Agenda is a column that runs only during election years.*

*It gives candidates a place to announce they are seeking political office. It lets voters know of upcoming Meet the Candidate nights or political forums.*

*It is a place where political clubs can announce upcoming meetings, and it will include news that is pertinent to voters for upcoming elections. It also will announce endorsements.*

*It is limited to candidates who are running for office in The Laker/Lutz News coverage area.*

*This column does not include political fundraising events.*

*There is never a guarantee of publication, but we do consider each item we receive. Please submit items for consideration at least two weeks prior to the desired publication date. Send submissions to news@lakerlutznews.com.*


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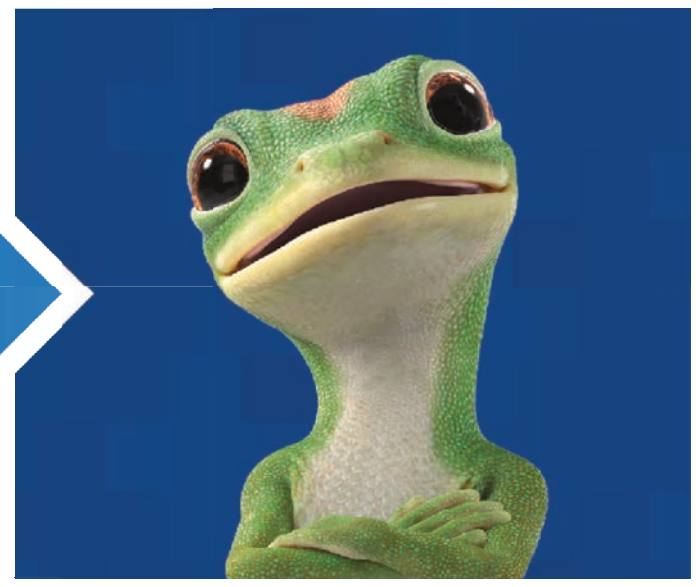
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COURTESY OF THE GREATER TAMPA BAY AREA COUNCIL OF THE BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA

**Among those attending the Eagle Scout Reception on May 22, from left: Mark Rhodes, Scoutmaster of Troop 212 in Lutz, 17-year-old Michael Jeffries, of Lutz, and Jeffries' parents, Karen and Paul. The Eagle Scout attends Freedom High School.**



**Thirteen-year-old Carly Winscott and 15-year-old Taylor Winscott are Eagle Scouts and members of Troop 834 in Pasco County. They were among those attending an Eagle Scout reception on May 22.**

# Eagle Scouts honored for community service and leadership at reception

*The Laker/Lutz News Staff Report*

Eagle Scouts, and community service, leadership and accomplishment, were honored at the May 22 Eagle Scout Reception, hosted by the Greater Tampa Bay Area Council of Boy Scouts of America, according to a news release.

The rank of Eagle Scout is the highest in Scouting and requires earning at least 21 badges, completing an Eagle Scout community service project and holding leadership positions in the Scouting unit. Girls and boys both are eligible to attain the rank.

The council had 206 Scouts earn the rank between May 1, 2021 and April 30, 2022, said council board member Nick Digirolamo, who served as master of ceremonies for the event, recognizing those Eagle Scouts. Many of the 206 being honored live in the Lutz and Land O' Lakes area.

The Eagle Scouts, dressed in their uniforms, paraded into the banquet hall at the USF (University of South Florida) Embassy Suites, receiving a standing ovation from family members, Scout leaders and friends.

According to the news release, Digirolamo told the Eagles, "You are the best and brightest Scouting has to offer."

He said the 206 Eagles had 24,328 of combined hours in volunteer labor for their Eagle Scout projects. He added that using the U.S. Department of Labor figures for employment, that was about $628,000 worth of service to the community.

The event also included the announcement of the council's Eagle Scout Project of the Year.

Jacob Young, 17, of Lithia, received the award for his bat house that can shelter up to 3,000 bats. The Troop 61 member and Newsome High student built it for the nonprofit Future of Hunting in Florida using $3,500 he raised for the project.

His project will be entered into the competition for the National Eagle Scout Service Project of the Year, sponsored by the National Eagle Scout Association.




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Now $48,798

2021 22ft Springdale Toy Hauler


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Now $19,987

2022 34ft Salem Cruise Lite Travel Trailer

1-slide, private bunk room, sleeps-9, ducted A/C & heat, electric jacks and awning LOADED!! MSRP $45,963
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2018 Winnebago Era 70M

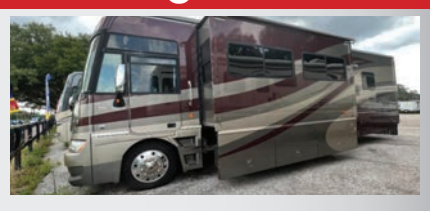
21k miles, slide, murphy bed, generator, full dry bathroom, full kitchen, Mercedes diesel chassis. MSRP $198,995
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2016 39ft Winnebago Suncruiser A

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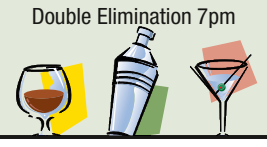
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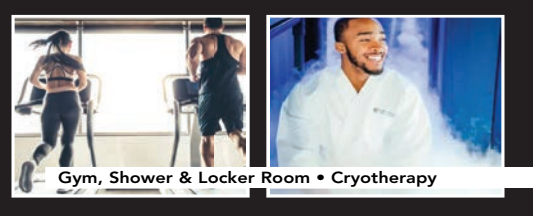
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*Rescue Pets of Florida*

If you know a student or nonprofit deserving of recognition, please email your nominee suggestion to kcarmack@lakerlutznews.com.




**CONGRATULATIONS** to **Rescue Pets of Florida** for being applauded by Avalon Park Wesley Chapel.

Rescue Pets of Florida's mission is to rescue, vaccinate, spay/neuter, and find loving adoptive homes for stray, abandoned and neglected cats and dogs. The nonprofit also wants to increase public awareness of the companion animal overpopulation issue, and provide solutions to end the killing of adoptable animals in the Tampa Bay area.

The nonprofit did an outstanding 3,500+ adoptions last year. It routinely works with local shelters and the Humane Society, who are usually always at capacity (or over).

"It's the fulfillment one feels when doing it, that makes it all worthwhile," says Jeanine Cohen, founder of Rescue Pets of Florida.

Adoption is so important to the nonprofit that last year they spent over $150,000 just on vet care, which ensures each furry friend is healthy and ready to be adopted.

"I am super proud of how this rescue is able to fundraise to pay for life-saving operations that most people wouldn't be able to afford," says Cohen.

One of the nonprofits' cats, DoSiDo, is a perfect example of this. DoSiDo had to have a Pectus Excavatum, which ran close to $4,000. Another cat, Sidney, recently had to have a liver shunt repair that cost $3,750.

"When you donate to us, every penny counts. We are committed to saving animals that may have otherwise been euthanized due to their high cost of care," says Cohen.

According to Cohen, the two main ways you can help support Rescue Pets of Florida is by becoming a volunteer, or fostering a pet in need.

Cohen and her team will make sure to provide a foster parent with all the support and materials they will need, which includes a supportive group chat that will answer any questions and provide emotional support to help with the process.

The community can also help support Rescue Pets of Florida by sending monetary donations through its Paypal, Venmo, Facebook Page or by purchasing items on its Amazon wishlist, which you can also drop off at any of the nonprofit's adoption center locations. Some of the nonprofit's most needed items are wet cat food and pee pads.

Rescue Pets of Florida's adoption centers, which are open seven days a week, are located at five PetSmarts in the Tampa Bay area. One of them is right here at the PetSmart at The Grove in Wesley Chapel.

"We would not be successful with our adoptions without PetSmart Charities," says Cohen, "We show cats and kittens seven days a week at each of our locations. PetSmart donates a free bag of food, and coupons galore to each adopter."

For more information, please go to www.rescuecatsofflorida.org. To check out the nonprofit's Amazon Wishlist, go to tinyurl.com/2s3u2fcs.

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## Lutz man was former MLB player, coach

John Cumberland, a former left-handed pitcher who appeared in 110 Major League Baseball games from 1968 to 1974, passed away in his Lutz home, on April 5.

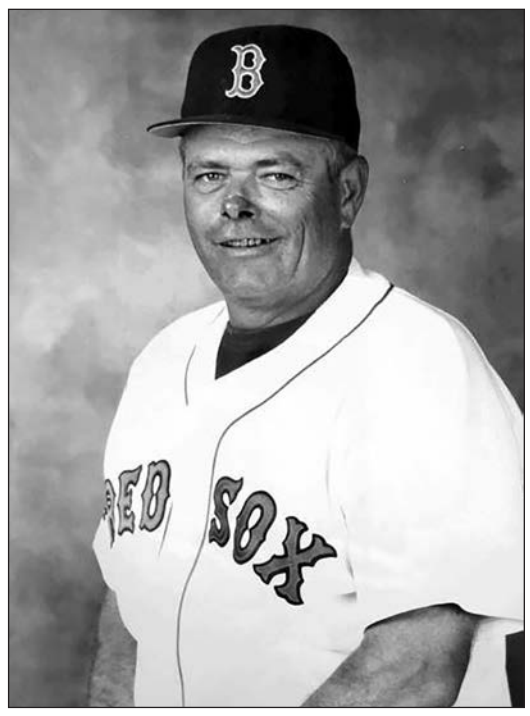
He was 74.

Cumberland was a member of the New York Yankees, San Francisco Giants, St. Louis Cardinals and California Angels, and then went on to manage in the majors for 23 years.

Originally from Maine, Cumberland made his major-league debut with the Yankees in late 1968 and then was traded to the Giants in the offseason. He spent most of his pitching career with the Giants, but ended his nine-year playing career after a brief stint with the Cardinals. He finished his career with a 15-16 record, six complete games, two shutouts and two saves. Over 334 1/3 innings pitched, he gave up 312 hits, 142 earned runs and 46 home runs, walked 103 batters and struck out 137. His career ERA was 3.82.

Cumberland began coaching in 1982 as pitching coach of Class A Lynchburg of the Carolina League. He was there three seasons, including in 1983 when he coached 18-year-old phenom and Tampa native Doc Gooden. Cumberland worked as a minor league coach for the New York Mets, Milwaukee Brewers and the San Diego Padres.

He was briefly the Boston Red Sox pitching coach, in 1995, before becoming a scout for the team. From 1999 to 2001, he was the Red Sox bullpen coach. In 2002, he became the Kansas City Royals pitching coach, until he finally retired from baseball on June 29, 2004.



COURTESY OF BLOUNT & CURRY FUNERAL HOME-CARROLLWOOD
**John Cumberland, a former Major League Baseball player and coach, was living in Lutz at the time of his death in April.**

Cumberland, who also was in the Army Reserve and inducted into the Maine Sports Hall of Fame, is survived by his wife of 52 years, three sons, a brother, a sister and three grandchildren.



### MONTHLY FISHING TOURNAMENT

South Pasco Bassmasters (SPB) had its monthly tournament in May, this time fishing at Lake Panasoffkee in Sumter County.

Tim Troutt teamed up with Derek Boswell, as the two brought in fish with a winning weight of 21.29 pounds. Troutt and Boswell caught their fish casting chatter baits, Rattle Traps and flipping soft plastics around scattered grass in 2 feet to 5 feet of water.

SPB's next tournament will be on Lake Kissimmee, on June 18.

For more information, visit SouthPascoBassmasters.com.

### MARATHON HOCKEY TOURNAMENT

On June 10 and June 11, the Tampa Warriors Hockey Club (TWHC) will host a Hockey Heals 22 event at AdventHealth Center Ice, 3173 Cypress Ridge Blvd., in Wesley Chapel.

The event entails 22 hours of continuous hockey play to raise awareness and provide support to veteran suicide prevention.

The 22 hours of play was chosen because, since 2009, 22 has been the daily average of veteran suicides.

TWHC is a 501(c)(3) team organized to operate exclusively for charitable and educational purposes, for disabled veterans and first responders.

The event, open to the public, kicks off at 6:30 p.m. on June 10 and concludes at 5 p.m. on June 11. It will include the games, raffles, food and more.

For more information, please email TWHC executive director Chris Scangarello at chris.scangarello@tampawarriors.com.

*To submit notable sports news, event information, and individual or team accomplishments, email mcamunas@lakerlutznews.com.*

*Check out more SPORTS coverage on page 12A.*


What does YOUR Before & After FEEL Like?

Your Before
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-Not that happy
-Body feels flabby
-Feeling much older

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-Muscles are tone
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# The Laker/Lutz News salutes grads of all ages

**By B.C. Manion**
*bcmanion@lakerlutznews.com*

There were lots of big moments being celebrated around The Laker/Lutz News' coverage area in recent weeks, and there will be more before Graduation Season 2022 concludes.

Whether your favorite graduate was making the transition from pre-kindergarten, finishing up a doctoral degree, or progressing at any stage in between — it was a time to pause and celebrate.

We invited you to share photos of your favorite graduates, and you responded.

Here's a look at the gallery of photos we compiled.



COURTESY OF JESSIE GUGLIETTA

**Ellie Guglietta graduated from voluntary pre-kindergarten at Kids' Stuff Preschool, in Lutz. Jessie Guglietta writes: 'When asked, Ellie wants to be a dog sitter, and singer and songwriter when she grows up. But for now she enjoys school, swimming and Disney!'**



COURTESY OF TARA STRIGLER

**Kelsey Strigler, a graduate from Wiregrass Ranch High School, is heading to Florida State University.**



COURTESY OF TARA STRIGLER

**Kylie Strigler, left, and Delaney Strigler are both graduates of eighth grade at John Long Middle School, in Wesley Chapel. They'll be attending Wiregrass Ranch High School.**



COURTESY OF TERRY AND CARROLL CARPENTER

**Katilyn Tawzer poses on her big day. Terry and Carroll Carpenter, longtime residents of Lutz, submitted this photo of their grand-daughter, Kaitlyn Tawzer, who graduated with a bachelor's degree from Florida State University. Her grandparents were there to see their first grandchild to graduate from college. Kaitlyn is a graduate of Blake High School. Her family lives in Wesley Chapel.**



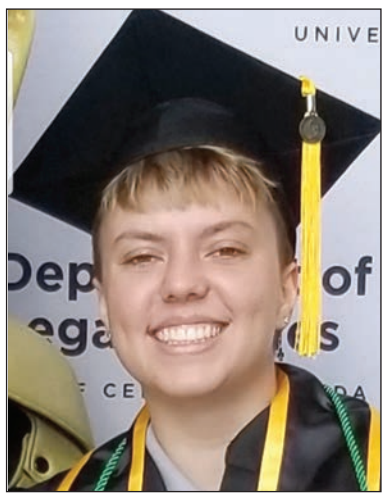
COURTESY OF VICTORIA CHRIST

**Nathan Christ is a graduate of Discovery Point Terra Bella in Land O' Lakes. Victoria Christ writes: 'He is very excited to graduate VPK (voluntary pre-kindergarten).'**



COURTESY OF KAREM DE LA HOZ

**Sebastian Gutierrez is a graduate of the Class of 2022 from Wesley Chapel High School. Karem De La Hoz writes: 'Sending warm congratulations today and wishing you all the best at Wittenberg University. We are so proud of you!'**



COURTESY OF TRACY GASCHLER

**Tracy Gaschler, who describes herself as a super-proud momma, writes: 'Rebecca Gaschler, of Lutz, graduated with honors from the University of Central Florida Burnett Honors College with degrees in political science, pre-law and psychology. The National Merit scholar is the 2022 Austyn White Memorial Award recipient for her contributions to the UCF Moot Court team, She placed in nationals this year.'**



COURTESY OF LARA HENDRIX BRENNAN

**Alexandra Paige Hendrix is a member of the Land O' Lakes High School Class of 2022. Her mother, Lara Hendrix Brennan writes: 'She loves God, family, friends, playing golf and animals. Alexandra will be attending Pasco-Hernando State College in the fall.'**



COURTESY OF KATY SWETS

**Trinity Swets is a member of the Class of 2022 at Land O' Lakes High School. Katy Swets writes: 'In this photo, she is at her annual dance banquet, for Contempo School of Dance. She currently is a dance student at Contempo, as well as a teacher.' Trinity plans to continue to teach dance at Contempo and to attend Pasco-Hernando State College, in the fall.**



COURTESY OF CAROLANN NEWSOME

**Lutz resident Mariah Tirado is a member of the Gaither High School Class of 2022. Her mom, Carolann Newsome, writes: 'We are so proud of Mariah, she is truly one of a kind. She loves cowboy boots and racing. Mariah races go-karts at Dirt Devils Speedway in Land O' Lakes. She plans to become a Realtor.'**



COURTESY OF NICOLE SANCHEZ

**Nicole Sanchez is a graduate of the Class of 2022 from Saint Leo University, in St. Leo. She's the digital content assistant for The Laker/Lutz News. The Laker/Lutz News staff says to Nicole: 'We're proud to salute our very own graduate! Congratulations, Nicole. We're happy you're part of our team.'**



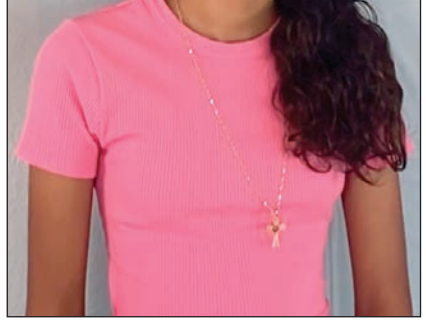
COURTESY OF TAMMY FRISCO

**Cannon Frisco is a member of the Sunlake High School Class of 2022. Tammy Frisco writes: 'Cannon will graduate with cum laude honors. He also won the Senior Superlative for Best Smile.' Cannon plans to pursue the path to become an emergency medical technician/paramedic and firefighter.**



COURTESY OF SHANA CARNAHAN

**Ethan Carnahan, of Lutz, graduated with honors from Hillsborough Virtual K-12. He will be attending Florida Polytechnic University in the fall.**



COURTESY OF KAREM DE LA HOZ

**Daniella Gutiérrez graduated from Wesley Chapel Elementary School and will attend Thomas Weightman Middle School. Karem De La Hoz writes: 'Good luck in middle school and remember, a positive mindset brings positive things.'**



COURTESY OF ASHLEY MISTRETTA

**Luna Mistretta, 5, graduated from VPK at Temple Terrace Presbyterian Weekday School in Temple Terrace on May 26. She said she wants to be "a copy editor like Mama" when she grows up. She is the daughter of Ashley and Matthew Mistretta, art director of The Laker/Lutz News.**



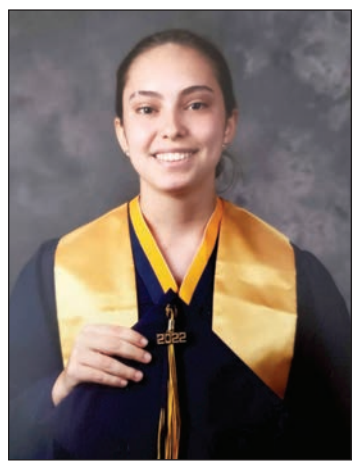
COURTESY OF HIEDI PEREZ

**Rielly Perez, who played varsity baseball, and Brooke Lea, who played varsity softball, are both graduates of the Zephyrhills High School Class of 2022. Hiedi Perez writes that Rielly and Brooke have been friends since elementary school and both are big believers in giving back to the community. Rielly will attend Nova Southeastern University. Brook will attend the University of Central Florida.**



COURTESY OF PAM AND ALLAN URBONAS

**Daniel Urbonas is the IB Valedictorian of the Class of 2022 at Land O' Lakes High School. He is a National Merit Scholar and will attend the University of Florida, studying in the College of Engineering, Honors Program.**



COURTESY OF MARY JANE WEEKS

**Andrea Burgess is a graduate from Steinbrenner High School. She is the great-niece of Mary Jane Weeks, an account manager for The Laker/Lutz news. Mary Jane writes: 'She graduated with a 6.04 GPA and will attend the University of South Florida this fall, working toward a double major in computer science and music. I am so proud of her.'**



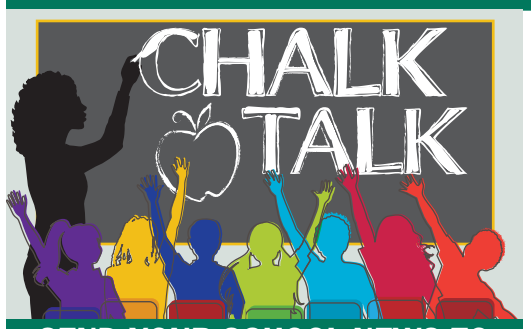
COURTESY OF SHANNON BILLEK

**Kaylee Grace Billek is a volunteer prekindergarten graduate from The Cherry Tree. Shannon Billek writes, 'I can't believe your VPK year is over! Kaylee girl, you are the answer to my dreams. I am so proud of you and beyond excited you are now a Wildcat! Kindergarten here she comes!!!'**




COURTESY OF MARY JANE WEEKS

**Everett Walker graduated from kindergarten in Alpine, Wyoming. He lives with his mom, dad and little brother, Evan. He attends Thayne Elementary School. He is the great-nephew of Mary Jane Weeks, account manager for The Laker/Lutz News.**




**SEND YOUR SCHOOL NEWS TO NEWS@LAKERLUTZNEWS.COM**

## SUMMER HAUL PASS

Students can ride Paco County Public Transportation buses on regular routes all summer, for just $20.The special rate is effective June, July and August 2022.

Summer Haul Passes are available at these locations:

- GoPasco Administrative Office, 8620 Galen Wilson Blvd., New Port Richey
- Pasco County Clerk & Comptroller Office, East/West Pasco Government Centers
- Pasco-Hernando State College bookstores, in Dade City, New Port Richey and Wesley Chapel
- County libraries

For more information, please visit bit.ly/SummerBusPass.

## STUDENT ACHIEVEMENTS

- William Brockman, of Lutz, Dean's List at Tallahassee Community College
- Austin Brown, of Lutz, Dean's List at Tallahassee Community College
- Mya Cobb, of Lutz, Diversity Scholarship at Appalachian University (Boone, North Carolina)
- Hannah Coleman, of Lutz, Dean's List at Tallahassee Community College
- Jaelyn Evans, of Odessa, Dean's List at Mississippi College (Clinton, Mississippi)
- Kassidy Gordon, of Lutz, Dean's List at Tallahassee Community College
- Jenny Han, of Odessa, President's List at Georgia State University
- John Martinez, of Dade City, Dean's List and Bachelor of Science in Business Administration Management, from Union University (Jackson, Tennessee)
- Ryleigh McElroy, of Lutz, Dean's List at Talllahassee Community College
- JoAna Mucklow, of Odessa, Chancellor's Honor Roll at the University of Mississippi. Mucklow is majoring in general business.
- Mykayla Christine Parise-King, of Lutz, Honor Roll of the Academic Dean at Mars Hill University (North Carolina)
- Brynnan Popper, of Odessa, Dean's List at Tallahassee Community College

## SUMMER MEALS PROGRAM

Pasco County Schools Summer Food Service program began June 6 and will continue through July 29.

Breakfasts and lunches will be provided Monday through Thursday to anyone age 18 and younger, at various West Pasco, Central Pasco and East Pasco schools.

Students attending PLACE or Extended School Year programs will receive meals on campus while attending the program.

For school locations, visit Connectplus.pasco.k12.fl.us/summerfoodpasco/site-locations/.

Additionally, buses will be available at these locations, also Monday through Thursday:

- Hilltop Landings Apartments, 37611 Colina Drive, Dade City
- Resurrection House Park, 37124 Lock Street, Dade City
- Trilby United Methodist Church, 37504 Trilby Road, Dade City
- Zephyrhills YMCA, 37301 Chapel Hill Loop, Zephyrhills
- Crystal Springs Community Center, 1655 Partridge Blvd., Zephyrhills

For questions and information, email FNS@pasco.k12.fl.us.

## FEE ADJUSTMENT MEETING

Pasco-Hernando State College's (PHSC) District Board of Trustees (DBOT) will consider approving proposed adjusted course-related fees at its board meeting on June 21 at 6 p.m., at the North Campus.

Fee adjustment proposals are reviewed and approved for DBOT consideration by PHSC's Council of Academic Affairs, a committee that includes representation by administrators, deans, academic department chairs, program directors, faculty and staff.

Many fee adjustments relate to vendor increases for workforce courses, laboratories and program testing. Some fees may be covered by financial aid, scholarships and grants.

For details regarding proposed fee adjustments, justification for the fees and fee implementation details, visit Policies.phsc.edu, and click on Policies and Procedures, Public Disclosures.



COURTESY OF HERITAGE ARTS CENTER ASSOCIATION

**Erin Caffarelli, 2022 Nereim Fine Arts Award winner**

## TALENT ABOUNDS IN THIS COMPETITION

The Heritage Arts Center Association (HACA) produces "Spotlight on Talent," a regional performing arts competition for young students up to high school seniors. There are $4,000 in prizes and trophies, in addition to a $1,000 Pasco Heritage Scholarship.

This year, the scholarship was awarded to Faith Phaller, a Blackwood Studios dancer.

Heritage Arts also gives the Nereim Visual Arts Award to aspiring artists, in honor of the late founding board members Mr. and Mrs. Gordon Nereim.

Erin Caffarelli, a graduating senior at Zephyrhills High, was selected for this recognition. She shared her sculpture of a dramatic fox-like creature — realistic but completey imaginary — with the HACA Board. Her work can be viewed on Hertiage Art's Facebook page, as well as its website at HeritageArts.org.

Caffarelli will attend Pasco-Hernando State College and plans to study mechanical engineering and robotics at Florida Polytechnic.



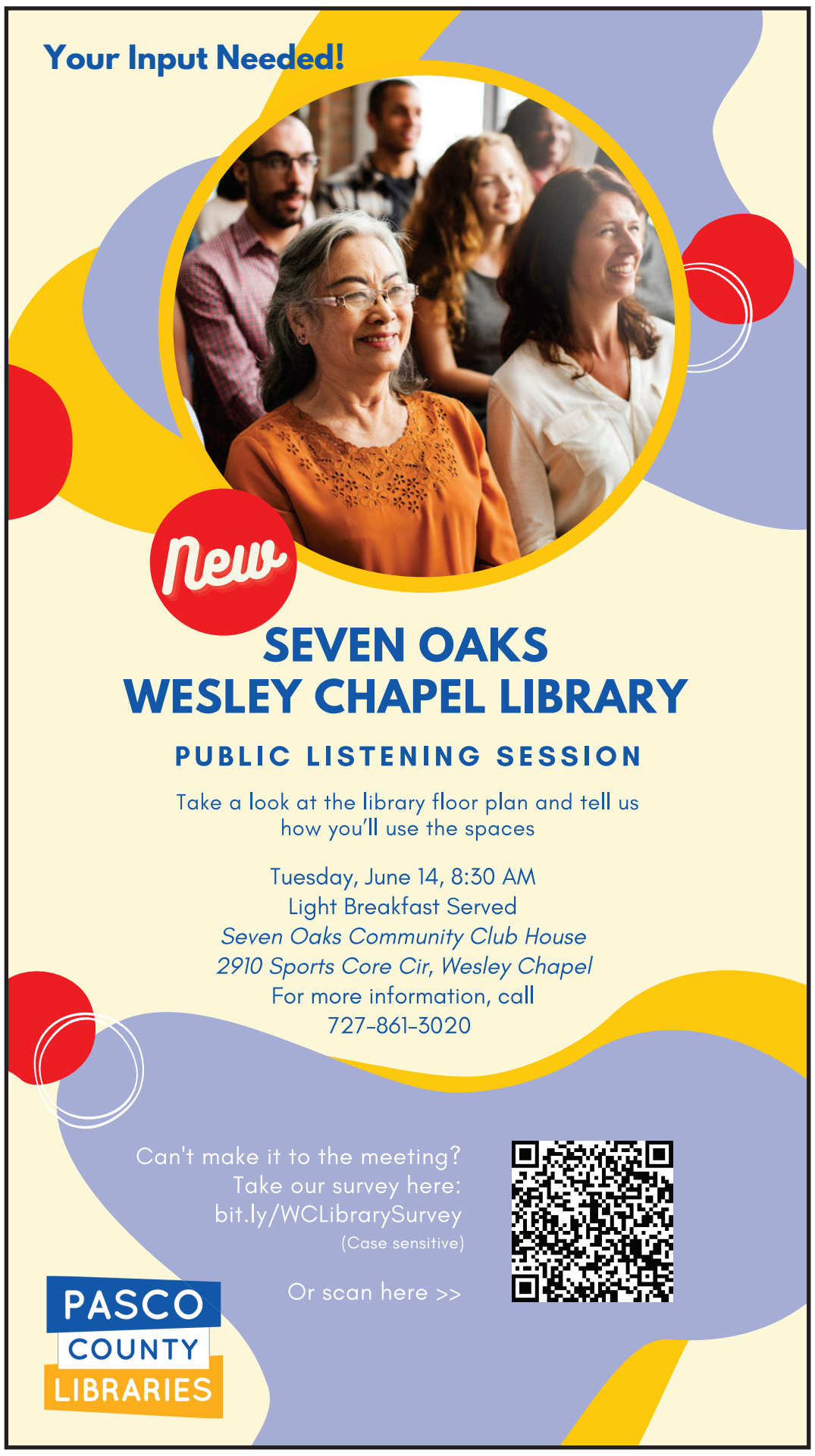


## Air Force graduate earns her 'wings'

**Abbey Duncan, a 2017 graduate of Wesley Chapel High, graduated from the Air Force Academy on May 25. She was nominated and recommended to the academy by U.S. Rep. Gus Bilirakis. Nominees to the academy undergo rigorous medical and physical testing, have their academic credentials reviewed and have to score a minimum of 26 on the ACT, as well as go through a series of interviews. Athletics, extracurricular activities and community service also are considered. Abbey's favorite training at the academy was jump school, of which she did all her jumps solo and earned her jump wings. Abbey is the daughter of Denise Duncan, retired Shriners Hospital nurse, and Ken Duncan, retired teacher and coach.**

COURTESY OF KEN DUNCAN

The Laker/Lutz News likes to keep our readers informed about news from our local schools, including upcoming events, photos of events, recognitions and so on. Submissions need to include who, what, where, when, contact information, identifications for individuals in a photo (unless it is a large group), and a photo credit. Please send your information two weeks prior to desired publication date, and email it to news@lakerlutznews.com. If you would like The Laker/Lutz News to consider coverage of an event, send a request to the same email.







## TRANSIT, from page 1A

of Commerce, which advocates for business development and workforce opportunities.

Both groups recently heard presentations on TBARTA's efforts to make something happen on the regional transportation front.

Chris Jadick, director of communications for TBARTA, briefed North Tampa Bay Chamber members on the history of TBARTA and gave them an update on its current efforts.

"As you probably know, we don't have good public transportation in this area," Jadick told chamber members, during a luncheon meeting.

"There was a 2019 survey, before the pandemic hit, about the best and worst public transportation. The top three cities there were actually Seattle, Boston and San Francisco.

"We're at the list at the very bottom. Out of the 100 cities that were ranked in this survey, Tampa was 98; St. Petersburg was 99. And, by the way, since this survey came out, the No. 100 city, Indianapolis, Indiana, has added Bus Rapid Transit."

The Florida Legislature designated TBARTA as the sole authority in Tampa Bay regarding the implementation and operation of regional transit, Jadick said.

To that end, TBARTA has developed Envision 2030, which is a 10-year strategic plan.

"Envision 2030's goal is a region-wide transit network that efficiently connects people and places, making the Tampa Bay area more competitive with regions across the country," Jadick said.

TBARTA's board has approved a Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) that calls for a regional bus rapid transit that would operate along Interstate 275, with stops in Pasco, Hillsborough and Pinellas counties. Funding for the system has not yet been identified or secured.

Efforts are ongoing to build cooperation among TBARTA's board and core partners, to enable the region to be competitive for federal funding, when it becomes available, Jadick said.

He noted: "It is contentious in Hillsborough County right now, as to whether that stretch between USF (University of South Florida) and downtown Tampa would be dedicated lanes, or would it operate in mixed traffic.

"If you've been following that discussion, you'll know there are lot of folks, especially on the Hillsborough side that do not want any more expansion of I-275. And, while our project would not expand beyond anything that FDOT (the Florida Department of Transportation) already owns, there is some issue and pushback with politicians saying, we don't want you to do anything," he said.

While efforts continue to resolve those issues, a project development and environmental study is underway and operational planning has begun.

Scott Pringle, of the consulting firm WSP, filled in the Pasco MPO board on some of the work that's being done now.

Since the adoption of the Locally Preferred Alternative last August, the focus has been on pursuing necessary approvals and also on how the system will actually operate, he said.

The TBARTA board has indicated it would like to see electric vehicles used on the route, Pringle said.

"There's a number of different travel markets within the I-275 corridor and our service for the RRT (regional rapid transit) project mirrors that. We're actually looking at four different routes that serve each one of those individual travel markets.

"We're really looking at a service that runs all day long, from 6 a.m. to the late evening, 10 p.m., allowing not only the folks working that traditional 9 to 5 job, but service workers — and really providing that equity to serve residents along the corridor," Pringle said.

He expects work to continue until the end of 2022, on efforts to obtain environmental compliance from the federal government.

"We're anticipating that this project could be up and running by 2030," Pringle said. "We want to be in lock-step with what FDOT is doing on the interstate.

"There's a lot of opportunities for partnership between the department and this project, and to be honest, this partnership really helps to reduce the cost for the transit project because we could leverage some of those federal highway dollars to the benefit of transit," Pringle said.




B.C. MANION

**Chris Jadick, director of communications for the Tampa Bay Area Regional Transit Authority, talked about regional transit efforts during a North Tampa Bay Chamber of Commerce luncheon.**




COURTESY OF TAMPA BAY REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY

**This is a rendering of what one of the Bus Rapid Transit stations could look like, if the proposed regional route from Pasco to Pinellas counties, along Interstate 275, becomes a reality.**

### A proposed 41-mile Bus Rapid Transit System would connect Pasco, Hillsborough and Pinellas counties

**PROPOSED STOPS:**

**Pasco County**
- State Road 54 and State Road 56, in Wesley Chapel

**Hillsborough County**
- University of South Florida
- Downtown Tampa
- Tampa International Airport
- Westshore

**Pinellas County**
- Gateway Center
- Downtown St. Petersburg
- Tropicana Field area

### ELECTED LEADERS EAGER FOR REGIONAL TRANSIT

Pasco County Commission Chairwoman Kathryn Starkey, who also sits on the TBARTA board, said a regional transit solution can't come too soon.

"As most of you, I think, we are the largest MSA (Metropolitan Statistical Area) in the country without any transit that's multi-county. This is our first hope that we can get something going," she said.

Bus rapid transit, Starkey said, is "like dipping your toe in a regional system."

Starkey added: "We're all onboard except for Hillsborough. But at our meeting last week , it seemed like (Hillsborough County) Commissioner (Kimberly) Overman was signaling that maybe they're starting to think regionally.

"And, every commissioner that was there at the summit on affordable housing and transit — every county was saying how we had to get something like this going," Starkey said.

Pasco Commissioner Jack Mariano said if it's going to take until 2030 to get bus rapid transit, perhaps a stop should be considered at State Road 52, too, since the area is being planned for a significant amount of industrial development.

But Starkey said Pasco County will need to help cover the costs for the stops in the county, and it needs to pace itself.

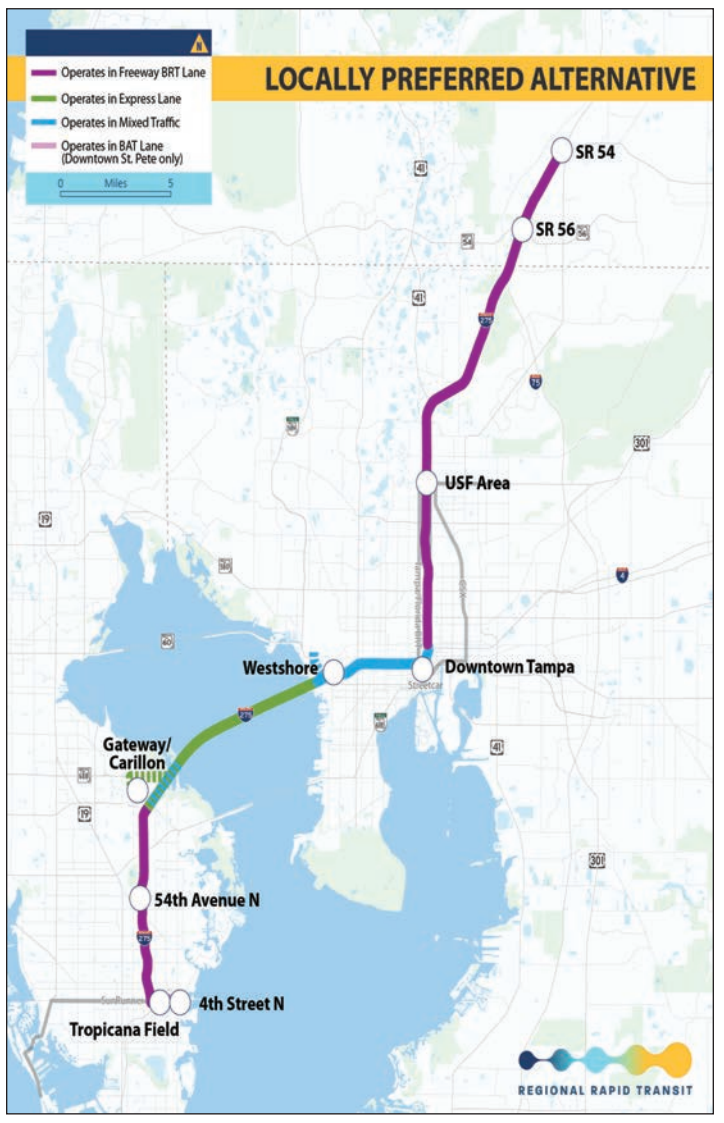
Zephyrhills City Councilman Lance Smith also weighed in: "I do think it's pretty exciting that someone could go to Wesley Chapel and catch a bus to the airport.

"Almost anywhere else you go, you can catch the bus at the airport (and get) close to where you're going."

Smith continued: "For us to be the largest metropolitan area that doesn't have it (regional transit), it's a little embarrassing.

"We've got to start getting people out of their cars and into transit. It's a more efficient way to move people. We've got to think about these long-term solutions and we've got to be serious about it, too.

"I hope this pushes through. I hope it's before 2030," Smith said.




COURTESY OF TAMPA BAY REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY

**This is the route for the Locally Preferred Alternative that was approved by the Tampa Bay Area Regional Transit Authority's board. Officials with the agency said the project could be completed by 2030, but so far, no funding source has been identified.**

## Proposed Penny for Pasco projects*

**SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION**
- Gulf Middle School new construction: $67.3 million
- New Elementary School, Bexley area: $43.1 million
- New K-8 School, Central Pasco Employment Village: $97.3 million
- New K-8 School, southwest Land O' Lakes: $71 million
- West Zephyrhills Elementary new school: $38.4 million
- School Complex, Villages of Pasadena Hills: $97.3 million

**SCHOOL RENOVATIONS**
- Calusa Elementary: $8.6 million
- Chester W. Taylor Elementary: $20.8 million
- Cypress Elementary: $25.3 million
- Dr. Mary Giella Elementary School: $20.4 million
- Fox Hollow Elementary School: $26 million
- J.W. Mitchell High: $35.8 million
- Pasco High: $28.6 million
- San Antonio Elementary: $33.1 million
- Wesley Chapel High School: $35.8 million
- River Ridge High: $40.5 million
- River Ridge Middle: $43.3 million
- Pine View Middle: $38.2 million

**ATHLETIC FACILITY RENOVATIONS**
- Hudson High: $4.8 million
- J.W. Mitchell High: $1.8 million
- Land O' Lakes High: $9.4 million
- Pasco High: $10.5 million
- River Ridge High: $9.2 million
- Wesley Chapel High: $1.7 million
- Wiregrass Ranch High: $1.8 million
- Zephyrhills High: $5.2 million

**CAFETERIA RENOVATIONS**
- River Ridge High: $5.3 million
- Wesley Chapel High: $2.7 million

**DISTRICT-WIDE PROJECTS**
- Furniture replacement: $40.2 million
- Replacement of physical education equipment: $4.4 million
- Early Childhood Literacy Center: $2 million
- Energy Marine Center: $17.8 million
- Increase in student computers/devices: $45 million
- Network infrastructure: $29 million
- School Safety & Security Equipment: $33 million
- School Safety & Security Hardening: $16.5 million
- School Traffic Improvements: $11 million
- Transportation Depot - Alternative Energy: $14 million

** Figures are rounded*

*Source: Pasco County Schools*

## PENNY, from page 1A

The school board adopted a resolution listing specific projects, as well as spending categories, for the estimated $1 billion that it would receive in additional revenues.

The proposed list includes numerous new schools.

Those new schools on the list include a new elementary in the Bexley development and a K-8 in the Ballantrae area. Both of those developments are off State Road 54, in Central Pasco.

The district is proposing a K-8 in the emerging Central Pasco Employment Village, off State Road 52, west of Interstate 75. Another K-8 is expected in the Village of Pasadena Hills, which is between Wesley Chapel and Dade City.

The district also would use Penny for Pasco funds to add computers in schools, upgrade the district's computer network, fortify the safety on its campuses, upgrade athletic facilities and improve safety at driver pickup locations at schools, among other things.

The county proposes to spend its portion of the tax revenues this way: 40% for transportation, 20% for economic development, 20% for public safety; and, 20% for environmental lands, as well as park infrastructure.

In the above info graphic is a look at the Pasco School Board's proposed list of projects, based on a resolution the board approved on May 17.

## BUDGET, from page 1A

While the new request is being reviewed, the clerk and county remain locked in a legal dispute over how much funding the county is required to provide for the clerk's operations.

Alvarez-Sowles outlined her current request during a recent budget workshop with the Pasco County Commission and county administration.

She said her request is essentially made up of three parts: the continuation of her current services; the balance of funding she did not receive last year for the Criminal Justice Information System (CJIS) funding; and funding for court-related local requirement — which refers to the Annex Courthouse in New Port Richey.

The clerk said the continuation of services requested in the budget refers to the services provided, along with increases for employee compensation, increased for the Florida Retirement System costs and increases in health insurance costs.

She said her budget includes a 5.3% average pay increase for employee compensation, but she told the board if the county's average increase exceeds that, she would expect that her budget would be increased to reflect that. She said that County Administrator Dan Biles has agreed to that request.

The second part of her budget request refers to expenses related to the CJIS, which the clerk contends the county is required to pay, under state law.

Last year, the county agreed to pay $117,000 of those costs — far short of the costs for administering CJIS.

"My office has been paying the county's responsibility since January of 2017. The county agrees that it is responsible for the IT (information technology) expenses and has agreed to fund this expense in the next fiscal year. My office can no longer fund the county's responsibility."

Her $14 million request also includes approximately $7.3 million for the operation of the annex courthouse in New Port Richey.

The clerk contends the cost for the annex courthouse also is the county's responsibility, under state law.

But County Attorney Jeffrey Steinsnyder said the court case involves both the courthouse annex and the CJIS costs.

Steinsnyder said that before last year, the courthouse annex had never been classified as a local requirement.

"The big scary number is the $7 million number," Pasco County Commissioner Jack Mariano said. "How can that be justified to go from $6 million, you go to $14 million?"

Steinsnyder said he doesn't believe the courthouse expense is a local requirement.

"The clerk disagrees with me. And that's going to be the big ticket in the declaratory judgment action, between the county commission and the clerk," he said.

The court also will decide whether the clerk is entitled the CJIS expenses, Steinsnyder said.

"We are litigating both of those items and it may be that the clerk isn't entitled to the CJIS funding, either," Steinsnyder said.

Alvarez-Sowles responded: "I doubt that."

Alvarez-Sowles told the board: "I don't have revenues to cover the expenses."

Because she doesn't have sufficient revenue, she said her office's expenses are supported through a trust fund.

"Other clerks' offices are funding the deficits in my office for court-related operations. I don't put money into that trust fund. I receive money from that trust fund and it is only the clerk's money that goes into that trust fund," she said.

Beyond what she has requested in the $14 million budget, Alvarez-Sowles reiterated her request the county provide for her employees whatever the average increase it gives to county employees.

Plus, the clerk said, her current budget doesn't include the impact her office will experience as a result of the county's decision to shift jail operations from the sheriff's office to the county's control.

A specific request regarding those impacts needs to be delayed until more information is available, she said.

She also mentioned the current request does not include back pay for the CJIS component or the courthouse annex — from last year's request.

County Administrator Dan Biles said he will not be making recommendations on this year's budget requests until he has more information from the property appraiser's office.



MIKE CAMUNAS

**Zephyrhills resident JohnE McCray has won on the Professional Disc Golf Association (PDGA) Tour 13 times, including the 2016 Masters and 2018 U.S. Masters, both major wins, similar to professional golf.**

# A hearty comeback

## Zephyrhills resident and professional disc golf champion suffered a massive heart attack, but now is a disc's throw away from returning to competition

**By Mike Camunas**
*mcamunas@lakerlutznews.com*

JohnE McCray was dead for 4 minutes.

This Zephyrhills resident and professional disc golf champion was out on the course on Feb. 5, even doing well at the Barnett Park Championships, in Orlando, but was in pain.

"I was warming up and just got this intense pain in my left arm," the 50-year-old said. "Which I thought was weird because I throw with my right arm. … Through 10 holes, a local player came up to me and said, 'You're already winning,' and I was like, 'Well, I feel like I'm dying!'"

McCray wasn't too far off. The pain kept getting worse and after 11 holes, he sought out a doctor player in the group ahead of him. The doctor took one look at him and called an ambulance. Less than an hour later, he was at hospital and those attending him were getting a crash cart. He needed surgery right away and the medical staff told his wife, Jennifer McCray, this is your last chance to speak with him before surgery to put in three stents.

"The last thing I told him was, 'You better fight. It's time to fight,' said his wife, who is also his disc golf caddie. "There I am, by myself, waiting for him at the hospital, not knowing if he could die. It was very traumatic.

"The whole (incident) was definitely on God's timing. The doctor on the course, as well as a registered nurse, to get an ambulance there, with me running red lights following it — it all could've all gone differently."



**JohnE McCray has several baskets, or disc golf holes, in his backyard, including a few from his main sponsor, Latitude 64, a massive disc golf store based in Sweden.**

JohnE also had an automated internal cardiac defibrillator (ACID) inserted into his upper left chest. The state-of-the-art device is essentially a pacemaker with the ability to recognize abnormally fast cardiac rhythm and provide an immediate shock treatment. Once installed, JohnE was restricted in what he could do, as the device needed to set for 90 days.

He has been medically cleared to resume disc golf activities, which include throwing and building up his endurance through evening walks.

"I definitely feel better than I did months ago," JohnE said recently. "Getting stronger and stronger every day, and working on getting back on the course."

It definitely won't be much longer before JohnE's back out there. He's already set to play in early July, as he trains on equipment from his sponsors in his backyard.

"(This is) absolutely a comeback. My husband is a fighter," Jennifer said. "We're a disc golf family, and his fans are always asking for updates and very supportive. I want him back (on the course). It's his passion, it's our passion, and I'm not sure what we'd do without disc golf."

This wasn't even the first time JohnE almost died.

He used to lay ceramic tile for a living, playing disc golf on the side.

But about eight years ago, he contracted Lyme Disease, which burst into his bloodstream and nearly killed him.

"I was in the hospital for two weeks," he recalled. "I was in there longer for Lyme than I was for a heart attack!"

Not much later, JohnE went on the Professional Disc Golf Association Tour (PDGA) full time. In fact, he, Jennifer, their daughter and four cats decided to travel on tour, jumping in a RV and going from event to event. That's when his play caught the eye of his major sponsor, Latitude 64, a disc golf manufacturer and store based out of Sweden.

"That was an amazing time," Jennifer said. "We met on the disc golf course, so I've always played, too, but just traveling around from course to course was amazing."

JohnE picked up disc golf when he was a soccer player attending Saint Leo University, during the mid-1990s.

He's had incredible success on the PDGA, where he's won 13 times, including two majors, his first in 2016 and another, a Masters title, in 2018.

In fact, he kicked off this season in January by winning the 2021 Florida Disc Golf Championship, which was held at the course on Picnic Island Park in South Tampa. JohnE shot a course record 15 under, with a prize of $345.

So after months of being basically immobile and feeling weak, JohnE is ready for his prizefighter-style comeback.

"Definitely got some big plans (to get back on tour)," he added. "When (the heart attack happened), it was Saturday afternoon, and I woke up on Monday, but thought it was still Saturday. I'm like, 'Am I still going to be able to play tomorrow?' and Jen was like, 'Um, I don't think so!'

"So, yeah, I'm really ready to get back out there on the course."

**Professional Disc Golf Association**

The Professional Disc Golf Association (PDGA) is the governing body of professional disc golfers. Disc golf is played much like golf, though players use a flying disc instead of clubs or a ball. The sport was formalized in the 1970s and, like golf, players complete each hole in the fewest strokes or, in this case, throws. A golf disc is thrown from a tee area to a target, which is the "hole," i.e., an elevated metal basket. Players must make consecutive throws from the spot where the previous throw landed. Once the "putt" lands in the basket, the hole is completed.

**INFO:** Visit PDGA.com, and to learn more about JohnE McCray, visit JohnEMcCrayTour.com/johne or his Facebook page at Facebook.com/johnemccraytour.
To join the group to follow along on JohnE's heart health and professional comeback, visit Facebook.com/groups/5001282929963039.



The LAKER / Lutz NEWS B

INSIDE: Directories, Classifieds, Games & More

JUNE 8, 2022

# Land O' Lakes benefit featured patriotism and pups

*The Laker/Lutz News Staff Report*

A benefit was held over Memorial Day weekend to honor those who have served in the U.S. armed forces and to help the Tunnel to Towers Foundation.

The May 28 event featured a presentation of the colors by the Color Guard from Zephyrhills High School's U.S.Army JROTC.

There were musical acts, vendors, special guests and activities.

Kevin Wright and Chandler Entertainment LLC organized the event, which served as a fundraiser for the Stephen Siller Tunnel to Towers Foundation.

During the benefit, U.S.Army veteran Staff Sgt. Steven Daily thanked Corsos for Heroes, as he received a dog named Six from the organization that provides service dogs for disabled veterans and first responders in need. Daily served in Afghanistan and Iraq and sustained injuries during his military service.

Tunnel to Towers is building the Let Us Do Good Village, off Parkway Boulevard, about one-half-mile east of Ehren Cutoff, in Land O' Lakes.

The subdivision of more than 100 homes is planned on 75 acres donated by the Esther and Harold Mertz Foundation to the Stephen Siller Tunnel to Towers Foundation.

The Tunnel to Towers Let Us Do Good Village will be the first of its kind community of mortgage-free homes for the nation's fallen first responder families, Gold Star families and catastrophically injured veterans and first responders.

Ground for the village broke back in December, with the first of 110 houses estimated to be completed and given to a veteran by December.

The neighborhood also will feature amenities, including an indoor basketball court, pool, tennis court, an ADA-accessible gym, a theater, an outdoor playground, a game room and more.

The foundation is named after Stephen Siller, a New York City firefighter who had finished his shift and was on his way home when the Sept. 11 attacks occurred at the Twin Towers.

With 60 pounds of gear strapped to his back, he raced by foot through the Brooklyn Battery Tunnel to the Twin Towers, where he was one of 343 firefighters who perished that day.

He left behind five young children.

In another local story related to the Tunnel to Towers Foundation, the Wesley Chapel home of fallen U.S.Army Sgt. First Class Benjamin Bitner, who was killed in Afghanistan in 2011, was paid off by the foundation, according to a news release from the organization.

In observance of Memorial Day, the foundation paid off the mortgage on the homes of 21 Gold Star families in 16 states across the country.

Bitner left behind his wife, April, and two children, Rogue and Gunnar.

The Tunnel to Towers Foundation has set a goal to reach 1,000 mortgage-free homes delivered across the country to our nation's military and first responders, by the end of the year, the releases says.



FRED BELLET

**Flags flap in the wind, as members of the Color Guard from Zephyrhills High School's U.S. Army JROTC present the colors during the Star-Spangled Banner and the Pledge of Allegiance. The guard was part of a Memorial Day weekend event at Land O' Lakes Heritage Park, to benefit the Tunnel to Towers Foundation and Let Us Do Good Village.**



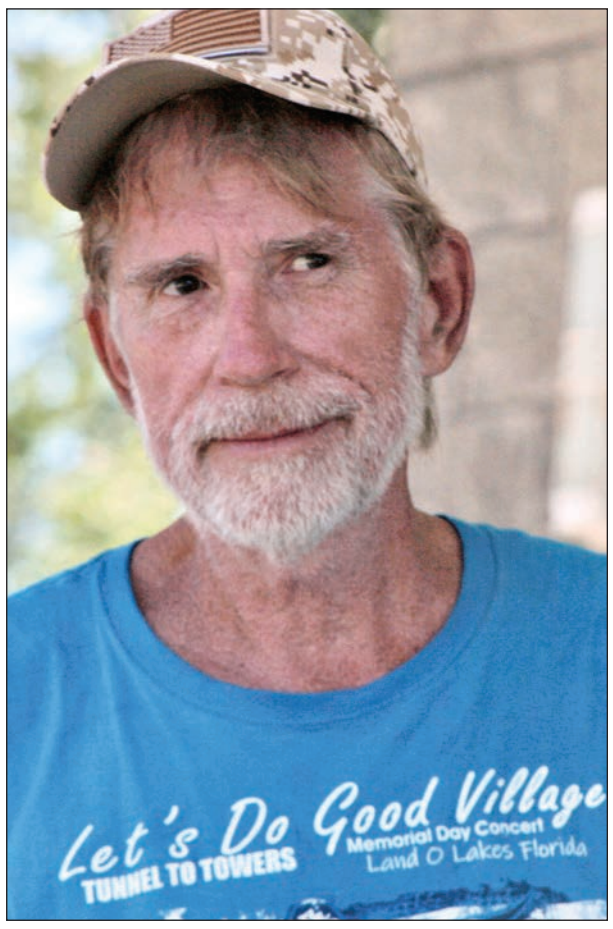
**Six is the name of the 11-month-old Corsos for Heroes dog presented to disabled veteran Steven Daily, of St. Petersburg. Harry Toro, a breeder from Lutz, awarded the pup to Daily.**



**Fred Chandler, of Lutz, was among the musicians who performed during the event. Chandler, a versatile performer, sang and played guitar and violin.**



**Anthony Kenworthy, 40, right, of Land O' Lakes, sustained injuries in Afghanistan, as a Sgt. First Class, with Special Forces. His wife, Jamie, left, and 10-year-old Mia, were with him at the benefit for the Tunnel to Towers Foundation. Kenworthy was a recipient of a foundation home in 2019.**




**Known as 'Ranger,' Kevin Wright sang and also served as master of ceremonies at the benefit for the Tunnel to Towers Foundation.**

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# LOCAL WILDLIFE



## A 'call' for freedom

**Barry Herscovitch captured this incredible photo of a bald eagle at Circle-B-Bar Reserve in Polk County. The bald eagle, of course, is our national symbol, chosen in June, 1782, to represent the United States.**

## PET PAWS

### HELP CONSERVE WILDLIFE

The Florida Wildlife and Conservation Commission (FWC) is reminding residents and visitors how to help conserve native species and reduce conflicts with them.

As the weather warms, many species begin to migrate, mate, feed and nest, which means people are more likely to encounter wildlife and should take precautions to avoid disrupting these natural behaviors and prevent conflicts, according to a news release.

The FWC offers these tips on how to enjoy and help conserve Florida wildlife:

• **Sea Turtles:** These reptiles start to nest in the spring. Keep beaches dark at night and free of obstacles during nesting season (through October). Artificial light can disturb nesting sea turtles and disorient hatchlings. Avoid using flashlights and cellphones on the beach, too. Turn out lights or close curtains and shades in buildings along the beach after dark. Clear away boats and beach furniture; fill in holes in the sand that could entrap turtles.

• **Manatees:** For boaters, spring is a critical time to be on the lookout for manatees, to avoid collisions with these mammals, at a time when manatees travel the coastal waterways along the Atlantic and Gulf coasts, and other inland waters. Boaters should follow posted speed limits; many areas have seasonal zones that reflect manatee migration patterns.

• **Gopher Tortoises:** This native tortoise becomes more active in the spring, foraging for food and searching for a mate. If you see gopher tortoises or their half-moon shaped burrow entrances, leave them alone. If you find a tortoise crossing a road, pick it up and place it in a safe location along the roadside in the direction it was heading. Never attempt to put the tortoise into water.

• **Nesting birds:** Keep your distance from shorebirds and seabirds on the beach, and wading birds nesting on mangrove and tree islands. Disturbance can cause birds to flush from their breeding sites, which exposes their eggs and chicks to predators and extreme heat. Shorebirds and seabirds nest in shallow scrapes in the sand, and their eggs and chicks are well-camouflaged. People should look out to avoid stepping on them and avoid walking through flocks of birds.

• **Bears:** During the spring, females teach their cubs what to eat and the skills necessary to survive. Make sure bears cannot find food in the garbage, or pet food or bird seed in your yard.

• **Bats:** Bat maternity season runs from April through Aug. 15. During this time, it is illegal to block bats from their roosts, as flightless young can be trapped inside a structure and die. Exclusion devices that allow bats to exit a structure but block them from returning are the only legal and appropriate method to remove bats from your home or building.

• **Snakes:** If you come across a snake in your yard or on a hike, stand back and observe it. Snakes do not purposefully position themselves to frighten people, but would rather avoid encounters and usually will flee.

• **Injured and orphaned wildlife:** If you find a baby animal, it is best to leave it alone. Baby animals rarely are orphaned; a parent may be nearby searching for food or observing its young. Instead, report wildlife that you think may be injured or orphaned to the nearest FWC office.

It is illegal to disturb or harm wildlife; if you encounter someone who is not following the rules, call the FWC Wildlife Alert Hotline at 888-404-3922, or #FWC or *FWC on a cellphone.

For more information, visit MyFWC.com/news and click on Spring Wildlife News.

# PETcetera

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**If you would like to adopt Opie or Wilbur, be sure to make an appointment at Pasco County Animal Services at 19640 Dogpatch Lane in Land O' Lakes, by calling 813-929-1212. The adoption center is open Tuesday through Saturday, noon to 6:30 p.m. All adoption fees include spay/neuter, microchip and vaccines. For more information, email adoptionpartners@pascocountyfl.net.**


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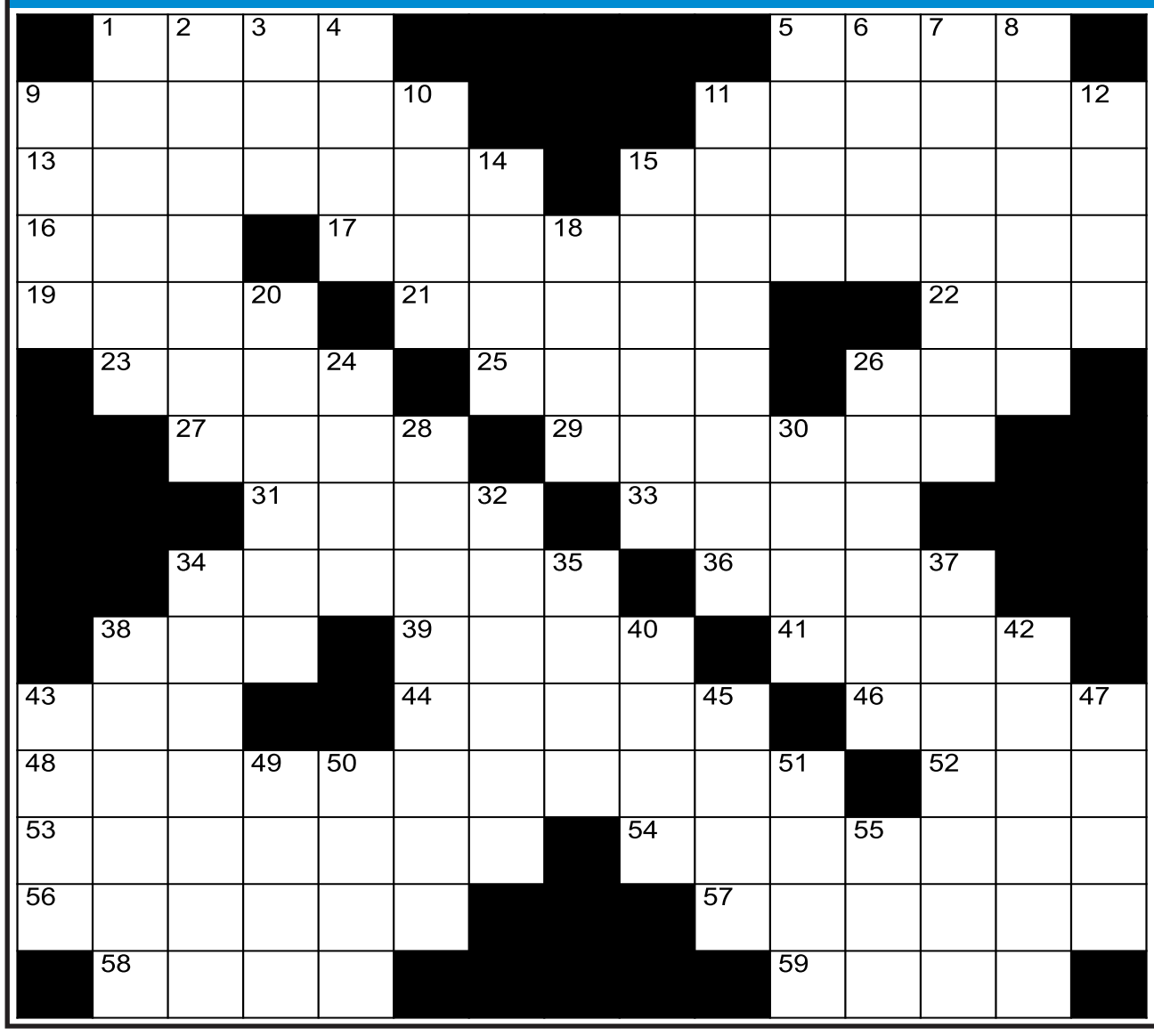
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# The LAKER / Lutz NEWS CROSSWORD PUZZLE



**ACROSS**

1. Slovenian mountain
5. Growl
9. Where things stand
11. Made a sharp sound
13. Female spirit in Irish folklore
15. Deteriorate with age
16. A way to save for retirement
17. The Big Apple
19. Intestinal pouches
21. City in New Hampshire
22. Giving a bad impression
23. Samsung laptops
25. Without (French)
26. Scientist's tool (abbr.)
27. System of one more computers
29. Captures
31. Authentic
33. Female mammal's nipple
34. Pandemonium
36. Satisfy
38. Arrived extinct
39. Shipborne radar (abbr.)
41. Network of nerves
43. Monetary unit
44. Showed old TV show
46. They help you hear
48. One who eliminates
52. Congress' investigative arm
53. Parties
54. Most supernatural
56. Takes illegally
57. Breathes while asleep
58. Sea eagles
59. German surname

**DOWN**

1. Looks at for a long time
2. Solution for diseases
3. Belonging to a thing
4. Former Packers fullback
5. Contemptible person
6. One billionth of a second (abbr.)
7. Helps
8. Final section of the large intestine
9. Invests in little enterprises
10. Look for
11. Unbeliefs
12. Susan and Tom are two
14. Female sheep
15. A poet writes it
18. Affirmatives
20. "Full House" actress Barber
24. Traveled rapidly
26. Long upholstered seat
28. Set wages
30. Peter Gabriel song
32. Sides of a jacket
34. More beautiful
35. Actress Kate
37. Furniture with open shelves
38. Indicate
40. The cost of a room
42. Gets rid of something
43. Impudence
45. No No No
47. Drunkards
49. Middle eastern country
50. High energy lasers (abbr.)
51. Primary component of ribosomes
55. An informal debt instrument

SEE SOLUTIONS, PAGE 9B

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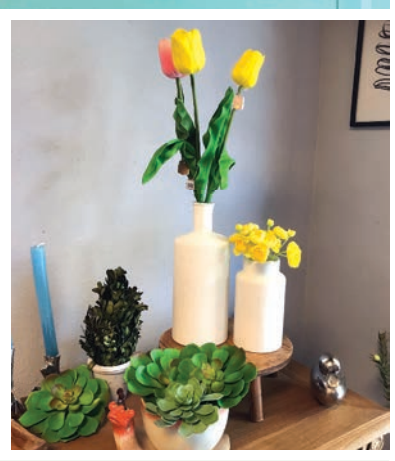



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# Development plans keep pouring in, in Pasco

**By B.C. Manion**
*bcmanion@lakerlutznews.com*

The Pasco County Planning Commission has recommended approval on a number of requests for zoning changes that will enable sizable projects.

Some of the projects call for adding industrial land, but others feature a mixture of residential and commercial growth.

One request, titled I-75 Logistics Center, MPUD (master-planned unit development) was formerly known as the Pasco Commerce Center MPUD.

The planning commission has recommended approval for a request for a substantial modification of this project to 56.17 additional acres of land to the site, and to increase the maximum entitlements for development to 1.9 million square feet of industrial on approximately 224.57 acres.

The item was recommended for approval, with conditions, by county planners and had been part of the planning board's consent agenda. Items on the consent agenda are approved in a single motion, unless someone pulls the item for discussion.

In this case, planning board member Chris Poole pulled the item.

"I'm super-excited about this project," Poole said. However, he voiced concerns about the distance for the stacking of trucks that are headed northbound on Interstate 75 and are trying to come off to go to the commerce center.

Poole asked how the trucks will make the movement across three lanes of traffic to get to the site.

Brad Tippin, the county's development review manager, noted that the Flying J Travel Center is already located in this area.

Attorney Clarke Hobby, representing the applicant, asked his transportation expert, Steve Henry, of Lincks & Associates, to address Poole's question.

Henry told Poole: "We have met with DOT (Department of Transportation) on numerous occasions on this, on working out the geometry of how that is all going to work.

"We're also working with Flying J because they do have a median opening in the left-hand turning lane.

"We believe that with all of the improvements we're doing out there, that it will function actually better than it is today."

Poole asked directly: "So will trucks coming off northbound (I) 75 onto (State Road) 52, will they still be able to get across there, into that lane, coming across three lanes of traffic?"

Henry responded: "Sure. They may have to stop, so on red, they'll be able to turn or once they have a green light, they'll be able to get across there without any conflict in traffic."

Poole added: "I'm concerned about any backing onto 75, so I wanted to raise the issue."

Henry added: "We're making sure that geometry works."

In another application, relating to a proposed development in Land O' Lakes, concerns were raised by an area resident about maintaining access to an existing property.

The request, under the name of Zona Law MPUD, is for up to 130 single-family units and associated infrastructure on 75.65 acres.

Attorney Clarke Hobby, representing the applicant, said this is the third MPUD from an original tract of land.

"The net residential density is under 3 (units per acre)," Hobby said.

He said he was aware that some neighbors are concerned about getting out onto U.S. 41.

He also noted that "for many years, DOT was against having a signal at Lake Patience and (U.S.) 41, but we understand that that has changed, and as part of this MPUD, my client is paying a proportionate, or fair share, towards the signalization, even though it's probably a quarter or a half-mile away from the site."

Hobby added: "I think the project fits in very well with the neighborhood."

Betsy Law Lamoy, who lives in the area, told the planning board: "Several of my family members and I live on property directly south of this parcel being reviewed. I can't say that I'm really for it being developed, but I understand, these things happen.

"My concern — our concern — is about a driveway, a road that provides access to our family property, that has been in our family for greater than 75 years," she said.

The small driveway comes off a road that may be part of a future vision road, she said.

"It provides access to our property," she said, adding the family wants to be sure it remains that way.

Hobby told the planning board: "We're not going to landlock them. We can assure that there is no loss of access."

The planning board recommended approval.

In other action, the planning board also recommended approval of these requests:

• A rezoning of a 740-acre site on the northeast quadrant of State Road 52 and Bellamy Brothers Boulevard for a request in the name of Hillcrest MPUD. The request is to allow a maximum of 1,800 detached single-family residences, 600 townhomes; 450,000 square feet of retail and, 200,000 square feet of light industrial/office on 740.2 acres. No one spoke against the request.

• A county-initiated rezoning for One Lacoochee Center WREC Property/EDC project. The request is from a residential designation to light industrial.

These requests now go to the Pasco County Commission, which has final jurisdiction over land use and zoning requests.






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FILE

**The Chassahowitzka River, or The Chaz, is a spring-fed river in southwestern Citrus County, and is a popular spot for boaters, kayakers and water enthusiasts.**

# Help to protect the Chassahowitzka River

**The Laker/Lutz News Staff Report**

When The Laker/Lutz News initially published "Cruising on the Chassahowitzka," the intention was to encourage readers to visit the river and enjoy its beauty.

It turns out that some of the activities described in the story are the same kinds of activities that the Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFMD), along with its state and local partners, have set out to discourage through a public education campaign.

The water management district circulated a news release in March urging the public to help protect the river, by avoiding any activities that pose a threat.

The Laker/Lutz News did not publish information from that March news release because "The "Chaz," as its commonly known, is outside the newspaper's coverage area.

However, after this Worth The Trip story published, the water management district reached out to us to alert us to potential threats to the river from some activities.

In the spirit of trying to ensure that visitors now, and in the future, can enjoy this slice of Florida's natural beauty, we are sharing the tips that were shared with us.

**When visiting the Chassahowitzka River:**

- Stay in the vessel when possible.
- If you have to leave the vessel, tie off in shallow waters.
- Avoid docking on riverbanks.
- Don't trample vegetation or kick up silt.
- Avoid climbing on banks.
- Don't climb trees or use rope swings.
- Don't throw out litter or leave anything behind.
- Trim boat motors to prevent propeller scarring.

To learn more about protecting the Chassahowitzka River, visit WaterMatters.org/ProtectChass.


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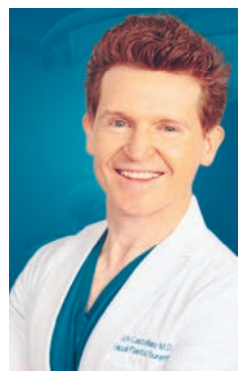


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# READER of the Month




## MILA GARDERIS!

**CONGRATULATIONS** to our Reader of the Month, Mila Garderis! Garderis, who resides in Wesley Chapel, enjoys reading about the growth and updates of the local community. "I find the quality of writing very good, and the content positive," says Garderis.

### Want to be our next Reader of the Month?

**Email a photo of yourself holding our newspaper to kcarmack@lakerlutznews.com, along with a short blurb about why you love The Laker/Lutz News.**

**Each winner receives a $15 gift card to a local business.**



STEFANIE BURLINGAME

# Protect the environment, help to save manatees

**By Mary Rathman**
*mrathman@lakerlutznews.com*

Fertilizer can promote a healthy, vibrant lawn, but applying too much or applying it incorrectly can cause chemical runoff that pollutes the ground and surface water.

This causes harmful algae blooms that choke out seagrass, which is the main food source for manatees, according to a Pasco County news release.

More than 1,100 manatees died in Florida last year, many due to starvation from the lack of seagrass, the release says.

Harmful chemical runoff is most likely during the rainy season — June through September — and the resulting algae blooms also can cause flooding.

Pasco County offers these fertilizer application tips that can help to protect the environment:

- Follow package directions to avoid over-fertilizing.
- Avoid spreading fertilizer on sidewalks, streets and gutters.
- Don't apply fertilizer within 10 feet of any body of water.
- Don't apply fertilizer ahead of expected flooding or tropical storms.

For more information, please visit KeepPascoBeautiful.org, and click on Programs, Fertilizer Awareness.


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COURTESY OF PATRICIA SERIO

## Making a house, a home

**Members of the GFWC Lutz-Land O' Lakes Woman's Club attended a recent dedication of the newest home built by Habitat for Humanity, in Dade City. The club presented housewarming gifts — a wreath, a fire extinguisher, a first aid kit, a water filtration system, a set of Tervis tumblers and other useful goods — to the proud homeowners. From left: Linda Mitchell, Debbie Cardona, Pam Blumenthal, Jan King, Barbara Booth and Nancy Branham. For information about the woman's club, visit GFWCLutzLandOLakesWomansClub.org or its Facebook page.**

# Part of Chancey Road is closed for repairs

**The Laker/Lutz News Staff Report**

Chancey Road — between Sixth Avenue and Copeland Drive — is closed for repairs.

The project was scheduled to begin on May 1 and is expected to take about 30 days to complete depending on weather conditions, according to a news release.

The Pasco County public works project is addressing an area of the roadway where a hole formed. Crews will fill in the area and resurface the road.

Signs along Chancey Road will direct drivers to detour routes.

The construction crews will be working from 7:30 a.m. to 6 p.m., on weekdays, with some weekend work possible.

Southern Road & Bridge LLC is the contractor on the job.

### CORRECTION

A story published in The Laker/Lutz News on June 1 had an incorrect number of containers that are planned at The Krate.


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# Health & Wellness

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## CHILDBIRTH EDUCATION

AdventHealth Zephyrhills will host a free childbirth and newborn care class on June 11 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., at AdventHealth Wellness Center.

The guest speaker will be Natalie Farrell, registered nurse and childbirth educator.

For information and to register, call 877-534-3108, or visit AHZephyrhills.com.

## MEDICARE FRAUD

Fraud costs Medicare an estimated $60 billion per year, and costs its beneficiaries in time, stress, their medical identities, and even their health. It costs families, friends and caregivers in worry and lost work when helping their loved ones recover from falling victim to Medicare fraud, according to an AAAPP (Area Agency on Aging of Pasco-Pinellas) news release.

Learn how to protect yourself and your loved ones by joining the Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) and its partners for the first-ever Medicare Fraud Prevention Week, June 5 to June 11, in conjunction with the SMP program's 25th anniversary.

The week kicked off on June 5, or "6-5," because most people become eligible for Medicare when they turn 65 years old.

Senior Medicare Patrol helps to educate and empower Medicare beneficiaries, their families and caregivers to prevent, detect and report health care fraud, errors and abuse, through outreach, counseling and education.

An SMP can answer questions, concerns or complaints about potential fraud and abuse issues.

To volunteer for the program, contact Geralyn Fortney at 727-570-9696, ext. 234, or geralyn.fortney@aaapp.org.

## MEDICARE SESSIONS

SHINE (Serving Health Insurance Needs of Elders) is a program offered by the Florida Department of Elder Affairs and the Area Agency on Aging of Pasco-Pinellas.

Volunteers can assist with Medicare, Medicaid and health insurance questions, through one-on-one counseling and information. Services are free, unbiased and confidential.

Upcoming Zoom sessions are scheduled for:

- **June 15 at 10 a.m.:** Medical Financial Assistance
- **June 15 at noon:** Lunch & Learn, Medicare Part C Advantage Plans
- **June 21 at noon:** Lunch & Learn, Medicare Long Term Care
- **June 22 at 10 a.m.:** Medicare Part C Advantage Plans
- **June 22 at noon:** Lunch & Learn, Medicare Part D Drug Plan
- **June 29 at 10 a.m.:** Medicare Basics
- **June 29 at noon:** Lunch & Learn, Medicare Financial Assistance

For more information and access to meetings, please contact Geralyn Fortney at Geralyn.Fortney@aaapp.org, or call 727-570-9696, ext. 234.

## BREAST-FEEDING BASICS

AdventHealth Zephyrhills will offer a class on breast-feeding basics on June 30 from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m., at AdventHealth Wellness Center Zephyrhills.

The guest speaker will be registered nurse Janna Hardiman.

For information or to register, call 877-534-3108, or visit AHZephyrhills.com.

## CARDIAC SURGERY RANKING

HCA Florida Bayonet Point Hospital has ranked No. 3 in Florida for Cardiac Surgery, according to a new analysis released by Healthgrades, a resource that connects consumers, physicians and health systems.

For state ranking, Healthgrades evaluated clinical performance for nearly 4,500 hospitals nationwide focusing on eight key specialties across a mix of chronic, urgent, and planned clinical areas, a news release said.

"Being recognized as a top Cardiac Surgery hospital in Florida is a huge honor for our team at Bayonet Point Hospital," said CEO, Gina Temple, in the release.

"I'm extremely proud of our Cardiac Surgical Team, and all of our caregivers who support our multiple Cardiac Programs," said Temple.

Hospitals recognized as among the top ranked in their state by Healthgrades are providing patients with measurably superior clinical outcomes.

Access to quality information can inform and empower consumers in their decision-making process, and direct them to the best care.

Consumers can visit Healthgrades.com, to learn more on how Healthgrades measures hospital quality.




COURTESY OF ADVENTHEALTH WEST FLORIDA DIVISION

**Alyssa Smith, AdventHealth community health liaison, trained Rotary Club members on how to perform hands-only CPR.**

## CPR CAN HELP SAVE LIVES

AdventHealth is getting "hands on" to help Pasco County save lives.

Alyssa Smith, AdventHealth community health liaison, spent a day training members of the Rotary Club of Wesley Chapel on how to perform hands-only CPR.

According to the American Heart Association, about 90 percent of people suffer out-of-hospital cardiac arrests.

Hands-only CPR can be as effective in the first few minutes as conventional CPR for cardiac arrest at home, at work, or in public, and if performed immediately, can double or triple a victim's chance of survival.

AdventHealth's ongoing hands-only CPR training is part of the hospital's commitment to not only care for the community when they are sick, but also to keep them well.

## MEN'S HEALTH SEMINAR

A free talk on men's health will be presented on June 16 at 2 p.m., at the Sarah Vande Berg Tennis and Wellness Center, 6585 Simons Road in Zephyrhills.

The guest speakers will be Dr. Matthew Moralle, Dr. Patrick Guthrie, Dr. Jason Abdallah and Dr. Farhan Rehman.

Register online at AHZephyrhills.com, or call 877-534-3108.

## KNEE REPLACEMENTS

A free health talk on knee replacements will be presented on June 29 at noon, at the Sarah Vande Berg Tennis and Wellness Center, 6585 Simons Road in Zephyrhills.

The guest speaker will be Dr. Gerald "Trey" Alexander.

Register online at AHZephyrhills.com, or call 877-534-3108.

The Laker/Lutz News likes to keep our readers informed about available classes, seminars, lectures and events regarding health and wellness issues. Hospitals, doctors, individual practitioners and anyone related to the health care industry can submit information, at least two weeks in advance, to be considered for publication. Photos of events, recognitions and so on, also are welcome. Submissions should include who, what, where, when, cost, contact information, identifications for individuals in a photo (unless it is a large group), and a photo credit. This information should be emailed to news@lakerlutznews.com.


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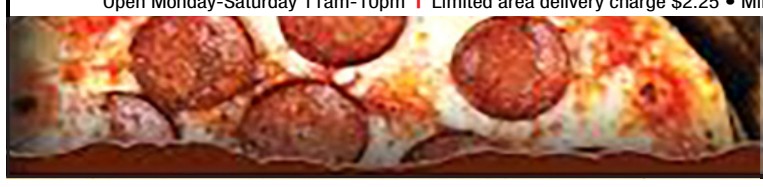
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Additional responsibilities vary and will include providing general administrative support with correspondence, communications, updating the church database and assisting members.

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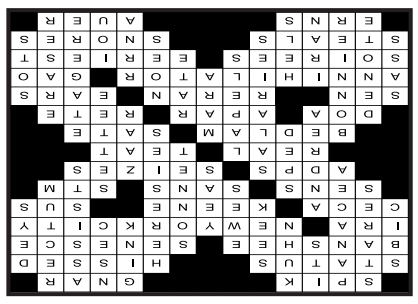
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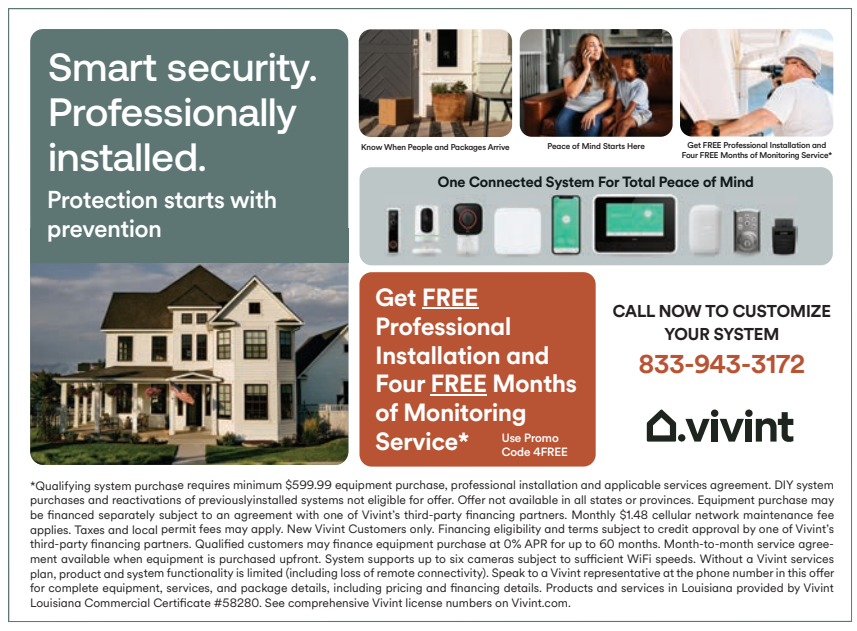
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# Habitat for Humanity to benefit from gifts

**The Laker/Lutz New Staff Report**

Pasco County Tax Collector Mike Fasano's five offices will feature Habitat for Humanity as the charitable organization for the month of June, which happens to be National Homeownership Month.

All proceeds from the promotional effort will benefit Habitat's homebuilding and homeownership programs, to help those without a home own one of their own, according to a news release from Fasano's office.

There currently are 70 approved families waiting for an opportunity to build a home through Habitat for Humanity, the release says.

"Homeownership has the power to transform lives," Fasano says, in the release. "It is an honor for our office to support Habitat as they build affordable, safe and stable homes for hard-working families in our community."

Donations can be made at any of the five tax collector locations in Pasco County.

For more information about Habitat for Humanity and how you can receive services or help with Habitat's mission, contact Devin West of the West Pasco Affiliate 727-536-4755, ext. 222, or Melissa Parks of the Central & East Pasco Affiliate at 352-567-1444.

# American Rescue Funds remain available

**The Laker/Lutz New Staff Report**

Hillsborough County has $1 million remaining to be distributed to Hillsborough County nonprofit organizations that served the community throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Hillsborough County Commission in January dedicated $5 million in American Rescue Plan money to help nonprofits in the county recover from the pandemic's financial impact, according to a county news release.

Hillsborough County partnered with Community Foundation Tampa Bay to launch and administer the American Rescue Plan Nonprofit Safety Net program. Since then, over 200 local nonprofits have been approved for funding.

There's still $1 million available in this fund.

To apply, nonprofit leaders can visit the Community Foundation Tampa Bay Safety Net Program for the online application portal, complete program guidelines, and full eligibility criteria.

Approved nonprofit agencies may use awarded financial assistance to offset revenue losses or cover incurred, unplanned costs resulting from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The application deadline is June 10.



COURTESY OF PATRICIA SERIO

# In remembrance and honor

**Members of the GFWC Lutz-Land O' Lakes Woman's Club visited two local cemeteries in Land O' Lakes and Lutz, to place flags on the grave of veterans in remembrance of their service, and to commemorate all veterans over the Memorial Day weekend. The women prayed for the brave servicemen and servicewomen, and gave thanks for their sacrifices. Pat Serio places flags at one of the cemeteries to honor those lost.**

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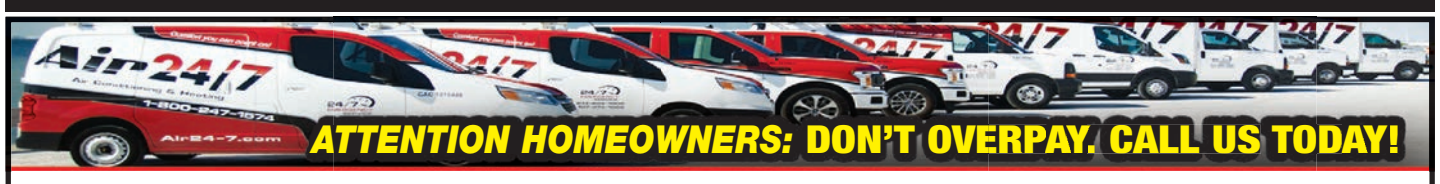
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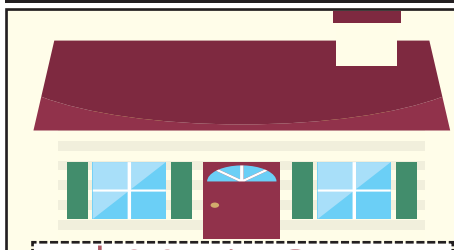
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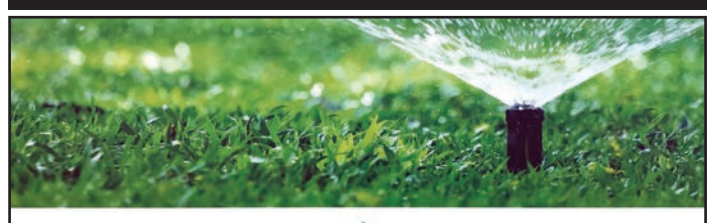
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# This party goes on in the street

## The monthly Dade City Street Bash is growing increasingly popular, with vendors, residents looking for a way to connect to their small town

**By Mike Camunas**
*mcamunas@lakerlutznews.com*

Every second Friday evening of the month in Dade City, there's a party in the street. A street bash, actually.

Dade City Brew House, the craft beer dispensary located in The Block on Seventh Avenue, began hosting the Dade City Street Bash back in February. And with each passing month, the street-wide, open-container, live music and vendor event gets bigger and bigger.

"It was definitely a way to get local merchants involved," said Meghan Bertovich, manager and one of the owners of the Brew House. "And it's a way to give the people of Dade City something to do, some place to hang out on a Friday evening. We found there is a fair share of people who work here, but don't live here. … This gives them a reason to stay and meet more of the vendors, but also gives a reason for people to come out, bring their families, shop some and enjoy some live music.

### If you go

**Dade City Street Bash**
**WHEN:** June 10, 4 p.m. to 9 p.m.
**WHERE:** Starting at the Dade City Brew House, at 14323 Seventh St., Dade City, and continuing down and past Meridian Avenue.
**DETAILS:** Every second Friday of the month, Dade City Brew House takes over Seventh Street for local vendors, car showings, live music, food, and open-container wet zone for residents and visitors to enjoy part of Historic Downtown Dade City. The event is presented by the Brew House and Premium Title Inc.
**INFO:** DadeCityBrewhouse.com or 352-218-3122.

"There's a little bit of something for everyone."

When Bertovich and fellow owner Geoff Layne started the Street Bash, they were "blown away with the response from the city." Now, each Street Bash has grown not only in the turnout, but the amount of vendors looking to set up shop during the event.

Vendors are required to pay a fee to have a table or booth, with all proceeds of the Street Bash going to the Dade City Police Foundation.

"It gets bigger and better every month," said Larry Guilford, founder of The Block, the renovated city block in which the Brew House is the main tenant.



COURTESY OF LARRY GUILFORD

**Dade City Street Bash shuts down Seventh Street every second Friday of the month to host live music and vendors just in front of The Block, at 14307 Seventh St., in Dade City.**

"It really does give everyone a reason to come into downtown Dade City," Bertovich added. "Because while it's all on Seventh Avenue down to Meridian (Avenue), it has branched out to the side streets and even further into the rest of downtown. It's always been about promoting local merchants and most of our vendors are from Pasco County, too, as well as the food trucks that will come out."

Bertovich and Layne were more than happy to not only get the event going, but also to give the proceeds to the Dade City Police Foundation, as they are big supporters of the charitable organization. Bertovich is excited for the next Street Bash, which is set for June 10 and will feature live music from Lisa Kay and The Goldtop Band.

Bertovich said one great selling point of the Street Bash is that it's a wet zone area. That means Brew House beers and drinks can be enjoyed anywhere on the street.

"It is nice, people trying our beer, and then they can take it to go and enjoy the music and the vendors," Bertovich said. "It's a way for us to get people to see the brewery, but we're glad they can go and enjoy the whole event, even look at the car show when we have those parked along the street.

"It really is a great evening in Dade City," she said.


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