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## Great Snakes Alive!

Thomas Promise Won't Let San Antonio Event Curl Up And Die

by Joe Potter



The San Antonio Rattlesnake Festival has been saved from extinction by the Thomas Promise Foundation, which will keep the event at San Antonio Park. Photo by Dave Walters

The Thomas Promise Foundation has agreed to take over the San Antonio Rattlesnake Festival, saving the event from an uncertain future.

The announcement was made Tuesday during the regular meeting of the San Antonio City Commission where it was learned that the Zephyrhills-based foundation will keep the festival in the San Antonio City Park.

A dwindling volunteer base has been one of the things that has resulted in leadership of the festival being handed off during the past few years, and the local Rotary club said that they just couldn't manage the event anymore.

"You asked me to come and talk to you about the festival's demise, but I am here instead to tell you about its resurrection," said Betty Burke, president of the San Antonio Rotary Club.

Burke's club held the festival from 2014-2016, and a group of east Pasco Rotary Clubs staged the event in 2013.

Rattlesnake • Continued on Page 6A

## County Fair In Full Swing

Celebrity Milk Off Is 'Udderly' Entertaining

Story and photos by Keri McAlpine

The Pasco County Fair is back in all its glory, celebrating 70 years of homespun fun. The fairground gates officially opened Monday afternoon and guests were immediately greeted with the bright colors of spinning, twirling rides, the smell of sugar covering cotton candy and funnel cake booths, and mysterious animal sounds drifting from one of several agriculture buildings.

Fair festivities kicked into gear Monday with the annual Celebrity Milk Off in the Albert A. Barthle Livestock Pavilion. Local politicians, business owners and



Dozens of different spinning and thrilling rides are scattered across the fair grounds this year. The fair opened its gates on Monday, and will run through Sunday evening.

Fair • Continued on Page 7A

## County Wants Your Help To Improve Recycling

Don't Just Throw This Away, Pitch In

by Max Zimmerman

Pasco County is rethinking its approach to recyclable materials and with good reason, since too much of it is ending up in the garbage.

Flip Mellinger of utilities services believes the recycling situation is so dire that the Spring Hill waste-to-energy facility will need a nearly \$200 million upgrade in just five years unless more trash is recycled.

That's where you come in.

Should residential customers boost a paltry 27 percent curbside participation rate it could go a long way in reducing

the 1,050 tons of garbage the facility burns every day. The county wants more people to separate cans, bottles and paper from their trash so it can be baled at the Material Recovery Facility in St. Petersburg, and eventually sold at market rates.

To that end, the county is pushing a survey to Pasco residents in attempt to map out a plan to hike the curbside participation rate to around 35 percent by 2030.

Residents who are paying for twice-a-week trash pickup are also paying for recyclables to be picked up, but the numbers show that those county customers, by and large, just aren't pitching in.

The survey released on Feb. 6 focuses primarily on

Recycling • Continued on Page 4A

**INSIDE:** Pg. 3A - Habitat Women Build A Home Pg. 8A - Peace Week Celebrated At PHSC Pg. 1B - Fee Waived For Florida Crush  
Pg. 6A - City Tweaks Comprehensive Plan Pg. 1B - Lady Pirates Lose First Game Pg. 2B - FHZ Says 'Pardon Our Dust'

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# Dade City Arrests

## Uncooperative Man Goes To Jail Anyway

**Devin Eric Bello**, 27, transient, was arrested by Dade City police on Feb. 4 on charges of driving under the influence and possession of paraphernalia. Officers stopped Bello at Hillside Lane at 11:46 p.m. while he was driving a red Saturn. Bello reportedly attempted to exit the vehicle and lit a cigarette. An open container of alcohol was observed in a cup holder inside the vehicle. Bello allegedly had slurred speech, watery/bloodshot eyes and the smell of an alcoholic beverage emanating from his person. He reportedly performed poorly on the field sobriety exercises he attempted. He refused to provide a breath sample. A small bag that was found inside the vehicle contained a green leafy substance, a scale and a grinder. Bello said the items did not belong to him. Bello was reportedly extremely uncooperative while being transported to the



jail. He banged his head against the divider in the patrol vehicle repeatedly until small lacerations appeared on his face. He was transported to a hospital for medical clearance and became belligerent while being taken to the jail.

**Travis Scott Reffuse**, 29, of Ridge Manor, was arrested by Dade City police on Jan. 28 on a charge of driving under the influence. An officer observed a Chevrolet pickup truck stopped in the turn lane of Seventh Street and Meridian Avenue at 12:28 a.m. A person who had driven past the stopped truck told police, "Hey, that guy's asleep." The truck began rolling into the intersection as the officer approached it, causing the officer to yell "Stop" several times while banging on the rear of the vehicle. Reffuse stuck his



head out the window of the truck after it had stopped and reportedly asked what was going on. He was ordered to pull his vehicle over to the side of the road, which he did. The officer immediately noticed that Reffuse's eyes were bloodshot and glassy. When asked where he was going, Reffuse said The Abbey, a local establishment. He reportedly performed poorly on field sobriety exercises and was booked into the Pasco County Jail.

**Matthew Scott Selbert**, 29, of 18407 Lawrence Road, was arrested by Dade City police on Jan. 29 on a charge of driving under the influence. Selbert was stopped at U.S. 98 Bypass and Meridian Avenue at 1:45 a.m. for an equipment violation – no tag light. He provided police with an expired vehicle registration and an expired insurance card along with his



driver's license. Selbert's eyes were observed to be bloodshot and watery. An odor of an alcoholic beverage could be detected coming from his person. Selbert said he had drunk two beers during the evening. Selbert performed poorly on field sobriety exercises and was arrested. He reportedly refused to provide a breath sample.

**Lorenzo Galihoo**, 21, of 15118 Marion Ave., was arrested by Dade City police on Feb. 6 on a charge of resisting law enforcement officer without violence. Galihoo began walking away from an officer who was trying to determine who had been driving a vehicle that had driven into a ditch. He refused to walk back to the officer when ordered to do so. He tensed up and attempted to pull away when the officer approached him and grabbed his wrist to escort him back to the patrol car. The officer was able to place handcuffs on Galihoo after taking him to the ground. He was later determined to be the driver of the vehicle. He was released with a notice to appear in court.

*The information provided in the Dade City Police report is taken from public record. All parties are considered innocent until proven guilty.*

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# Women Build Starts Another Habitat Home

## They Come From Near And Far For Humanity's Sake

by Joe Potter

The sound of laughter and clanging hammers accented the Women Build 2017 that was held last Friday in Dade City.

More than 30 women gathered at 37812 Beth St. to begin construction of a three-bedroom, two-bath, home for Habitat for Humanity of East & Central Pasco.

Friday's event was the 10th annual Women Build held by Habitat For Humanity International, a Georgia-based nonprofit organization.

The mission of Habitat is to provide safe and affordable housing for qualifying

families.

Wells Fargo Bank donated the Beth Street property, said Crystal Lazar, chief operating officer of the local Habitat affiliate.

"It's a great event," Lazar said, regarding Women Build 2017. "There are a lot of newcomers and a lot of returnees participating."

One of the women, Tera Townsend, drove 50 miles from her Lake City home to participate. This is Townsend's second Women Build event, both of which have been with the local Habitat community.

"I love it. It is rewarding," Townsend said about the time she spent Friday. "I'm impressed with myself, actually," she said when asked about her construction skills. Townsend noted that she had learned to use a miter saw during the first Women Build event.



Members of the Dade City Jazzercise Club who participated in last week's Women's Build included, from left, Sarah Rudolph, Diana Greif, Susan Forholt, Kris Dail and Karen Stalaker.

Photos by Richard K. Riley



Tera Townsend of Lady Lake, uses a power saw to cut headers for the windows and doors in the home. Earl Cunningham, Habitat Volunteer Supervisor, assists.

Lowe's home improvement was on hand at 9 a.m. to kick off Friday's event. Lowe's sponsors Women Build events across the United States and donates millions of dollars to Habitat for Humanity International annually, said Jere Ferguson, Habitat's director of volunteer services.

The 1,200-square-foot house has not yet been assigned to a family, Ferguson said. Work is anticipated to be completed by April 30.

Applicants for a Habitat home must complete 400 hours of sweat equity before they can move into a home. The owner of the new home will be chosen from among the applicants who have fulfilled that requirement by the time the house has been built, Ferguson said.

Habitat homes are financed with interest-free mortgages to keep payments affordable and mortgage payments are used to help pay for future projects.

Instructors and students of the Dade City Jazzercise Club gave the workers an

opportunity to relieve some stress before they enjoyed a dinner prepared by Del Carmen Restaurant.

Steph's Restaurant, also of Dade City, provided lunch on Saturday for women and others who worked at the Beth Street site.

Twenty-one students from Guelth University in Ontario, Canada, arrived in Dade City on Sunday. They were scheduled to work on the home from Feb. 20-24 as part of Habitat's annual Collegiate Challenge. The program gives college students an opportunity to do something constructive while they are on spring break. Ferguson hopes that local churches can provide meals for the college students while they are working through Friday.

Some of the groups that were represented at Friday's event included Florida Hospital Zephyrhills, Wells Fargo Bank, Traveler's Rest RV Resort, Century 21 and Lassiter Insurance.

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## East Pasco Events

**Feb. 25 – Wine Festival** – Florida Estates Winery, located at 25241 S.R. 52 near Land O'Lakes, will host a wine festival from 11 a.m.-4 p.m. The event will include vendors offering unique gifts, live entertainment and an opportunity to sample the winery's offerings and meet our winemaker for an educational tasting. We are pet friendly. Call (813) 996-2113 for information.

**Feb. 25 – The Blessing of Green** – Dance, auction, entertainment and a bit of Irish fun! Cocktails will be served at 5:30 p.m. with dinner and entertainment at 6:30 p.m. Cost is \$50 per person. A costume contest with an awesome prize for the winner. Held at Tampa Bay Country Club, 10641 Old Tampa Bay Drive in San Antonio. Contact the Benedictine Sisters of Florida at (352) 588-8443 or [hnmdevelopment@saintleo.edu](mailto:hnmdevelopment@saintleo.edu) for tickets and information.

**Feb. 25 – Resist Trump Rally** – Held from 2-5 p.m. in Dade City's downtown square, in conjunction with Indivisible East Pasco County AMP (America Minus Putin). Come and bring signs to communicate your resistance. Call Cheryl at (352) 446-2010 for information.

**Feb. 25 – Multi-family Yard Sale** – Held at Centennial Estates on Dusty Hill Loop off of Centennial Road from 8-2 p.m.

**Feb. 25 – Southfork Carport Sale** – Southfork Mobile Home Park, located at 10808 U.S. 98, will be hosting a park-wide carport sale from 8 a.m. to noon. Call (352) 206-2754 for information.

**Feb. 25 – Two-Park Yard and Bake Sale** – Majestic Oaks and Emerald Pointe will hold a two-park yard and bake sale in the clubhouses of the respective parks from 8 a.m.-4 p.m. Refreshments will be available. The parks are located across from one another on Chancey Road, east of State Road 39. Past attendees as well as first time visitors are encouraged to attend both sales.

**Feb. 27 – Mobile Vet Center** – Pasco Vet Center will be hosting a Community Outreach Day at the Winn Dixie located at 1230 S Broad St. in Brooksville. A Readjustment Counseling Tech will be on site and Benefits referral services will be onsite. The MVC will be available from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Multiple counseling opportunities available. Veterans and family members interested in learning more about services provided by the Vet Center are encouraged to attend the event or contact AJ Jones at (727) 372-1854. Visit [www.vetcenter.va.gov](http://www.vetcenter.va.gov) for information.

**Feb. 28 – Pizza and A Major** – A discussion on business, hosted by Pasco Hernando State College. Meet and hear from PHSC faculty and staff with free pizza following. Held from 11 a.m.-1:30 p.m. at the PHSC East Campus Dade City, 36727 Blanton Road. Call (352) 567-6701 for information.

**March 2 – Cherokee Leaf Printing** – Join our crafters as we take leaves, flowers and other plant parts and imprint them on cloth to make natural designs. All materials will be provided. Cost is \$3/vehicle or annual park pass plus \$5/person; 12 and under free. Held from 10 a.m.-12 p.m. at Dade Battlefield, 7200 C.R. 603 in Bushnell. Call (352) 793-4781 for information.

**March 4 – Chicken Dinner Fundraiser** – The Dade City Kiwanis Club presents an eat-in or take-out chicken dinner fundraiser at the American Legion Hall in Dade City, 37745 Church Ave., from 11 a.m.-3 p.m. Tickets are \$9 per ticket. Tickets are available for purchase at the Greater Dade City Chamber of Commerce, 14112 Eighth St. Call (352) 518-002 for information.

**March 4 – Market Place** – Fresh produce, garden accessories, home decor, soaps, honey, jewelry and so much more. Pet friendly event held in Hibiscus Park from 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Contact Lucy Avila at (352) 521-5858 or [lucyavila707@gmail.com](mailto:lucyavila707@gmail.com) for information.

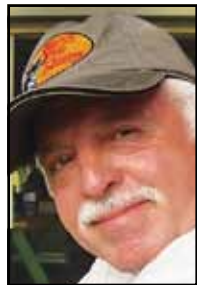
**March 4 – Cruise In** – Free event featuring DJ Starvin' Darwin and a hula hoop contest for kids. Come on down with your prized car/truck, or just with the family to check out all the wonderful antique and specialty cars. Enjoy lunch at one of our many exceptional restaurants, and shop in out antique and specialty shops. Held in downtown Dade City from 1:30-5:30 p.m. Contact the Greater Dade City Chamber of Commerce at (352) 567-3769 for information.

**March 4 – Little League Opening Day** – Dade City Little League is celebrating 66 Years. Come by Burks Park, 13220 Gene Nelson Blvd., for a pancake breakfast at 8 a.m.. opening day ceremonies at 9 a.m. and moving into challengers game, t-ball, softball and legacy games throughout day. Kids activities wrist band \$5 and includes bounce house and other games. Pilled pork dinner is \$10 with drive through option.

For more events visit [www.pasconewspublications.com](http://www.pasconewspublications.com)

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### Commentary



#### First Things First

Greg First

## Fake News Is Nothing New

It just keeps getting worse every day. I have gotten to the point that I watch very little network news and I quit reading and subscribing to daily newspapers. The only reason a few people are still buying them is for the coupons. I shop at Publix and I use digital coupons. It is super convenient and I save a bunch.

One daily, the Tampa Tribune was at one time the big man on campus but it, like many others, has gone by the wayside. Fortunately we still have three awesome local newspapers that serve east Pasco County and it is all real news. We don't have to come up with fake news or fake numbers to make us look good. The *Zephyrhills Free Press*, *Dade City News* and the *East Pasco Senior News* do a great job at covering real news, real sports and real information that is important to where we live

I'm pretty sure you have been hearing quite a bit about fake news lately. I am here to tell you that this type of news has been going on since biblical times. After my morning quiet time with the Lord I read a verse that Franklin Graham, the son of Evangelist Billy Graham, shared on his Twitter account. "You shall not circulate a false report" (Exodus 23:1). When I read it I had to check it out for myself to see if

it was there and it was. I don't know how bad it was back then but that was way before daily newspapers, TV and social media.

Some people are very gullible and believe everything they read or hear. Seventy-five years ago Columbia Broadcasting System's regular programming was interrupted with an alert that our planet was being invaded. In reality it was Orson Welles and some radio actors performing a show. According to Radiolab about 12 million listeners were tuned into the broadcast, which reportedly scared the dickens out of many Americans; about one out of 12 really believed what they were hearing. There was panic in the streets. Imagine the number of people today that believe everything that they hear, read or see on TV.

This is a free country and not controlled by major media. I totally believe in the First Amendment which protects the freedom of the press. I also believe that there must be accountability of the press. The intention of the amendment was to make sure the government is acting in the interest of the people. I think each member of the major media needs to read this amendment one more time and think before they act.

When I was a kid my mom and dad used to love to watch the CBS Evening News with Walter Cronkite. He was with that network for nearly 20 years in a career that spanned about 45 years reporting on everything. Cronkite was often referred to as, "The Most Trusted Man in America". He always ended each broadcast with, "And That's The Way It Is".

Maybe it's time for the media giants to take a good look back. Many things come and go – just like the once powerful Blockbuster Video and others along with many daily newspapers in our country. Major media, as we know it, just might become a thing of the past.

For the new generation of millennials and a growing number of others I think this has already begun.

#### Recycling • Continued from Page 1A

homeowners' habits and preferences since residents of multi-family housing units – apartments or condominiums – do not have curbside service. Unless their community engages in recycling on a private basis, multi-family residents are stuck with toting their recyclables to drop-off sites.

"If you have paper, cardboard, plastic bottles, cans; all of those things are recyclable," Mellinger, an assistant county administrator, recently said.

The county warns that, if the trend persists, a fourth boiler will be needed at

the solid waste facility by 2022, which would cost 190 million in today's dollars. Another part of the problem is there are currently no dollars earmarked to pay for such an expansion. Better participation rates could push off the need for another boiler by another eight years, according to the county, and stagnant rates would negatively affect homeowners' trash fees.

The survey, which runs until April, can either be completed online, or requested by calling (813) 235.6186, or emailing to [RecycleSurvey2017@PascoCountyFL.net](mailto:RecycleSurvey2017@PascoCountyFL.net).

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# Black History Month Celebrated

## Presentations Made During Commission Meeting

Story and photo by Joe Potter

Students from two local schools were joined by numerous other members of the community to focus on black history during a presentation made to the Dade City Commission.

One of the Feb. 14 presenters was Ladinian Johnson, a fifth-grader from Lacochee Elementary School. He talked about the accomplishments of President Barack Obama during his eight years in office. He was followed by DaVante Gray, an eighth-grader from Pasco Middle School, who gave a presentation on American history.

Although we consider George Washington (1789-1797) as the first

president, Gray said, eight men were president before Washington was elected.

They were John Hanson (1781-82), Elias Boudinot (1782-83), Thomas Mifflin (1783-84), Richard Henry Lee (1784-85), John Hancock (1785-86), Nathan Gorman (1786-87), Arthur St. Clair (1787-88) and Cyrus Griffin (1788-89). They were technically presidents of Congress since the United States did not have an executive branch until the Constitution was ratified on June 21, 1788.

The presentation also included singing, dancing, poetry reading and storytelling.

Mayor Pro-Tem Eunice Penix helped organize the event.



Ladinian Johnson listed some of President Barack Obama's accomplishments during last week's Dade City Commission meeting. Johnson is a fifth grader at Lacochee Elementary School.

## Letter To The Editor...

Dear American Patriots

We need the truth, the whole ugly truth concerning the Russian interference with our 2016 presidential election. We need that truth as soon as possible. Our current leadership is not legitimate without the truth of this election interference. Its legitimacy will constantly be in question until we know the truth.

We, as citizens and all, all of our elected officials, not just Democrats and a handful of Republicans, should be calling for and expediting a thorough investigation by an independent, non-partisan body with subpoena powers. Only then will we know the full extent of this heinous interference with one of the most precious, basic and integral foundations of our democratic republic – full and fair elections.

Who would not want the truth of this matter? Why would any patriotic American not want to know the full extent of the Russian interference? Only one reason is conceivable – because he, she or they would be damaged by the truth. That is the only possible reason one would not want to know the truth. Whether the

goal of this interference is incipient fascism or anarchy, as suggested by David Brooks of the New York Times, movement toward either meets the needs of Russia and Vladimir Putin.

Is it possible? Is it conceivable that Donald Trump either colluded with or enlisted Russian agents to interfere with our election? Could Donald Trump's insatiable need to win have driven him this far beyond the pale? Why does he make up the sighting of thousands of celebrating Muslims and the existence of millions who traveled from one state to another to vote illegally. The man demonstrably lives in an alternate reality. This is the most serious threat to our country in my life of 68 years. It plays directly into Putin's desire to destabilize us and thus destroy our leadership in the world.

So, yes, it is both possible and conceivable, given what Trump has shown us through his pathological lying and his acts of cheating his contractors and students of his university as proven by abundant legal records (just two examples). Not to mention his failure to provide his income tax returns or divest himself from his business interests. It appears the man has no moral bottom. We cannot accept or normalize this complete

and total lack of transparency. We cannot go backward in our morals and values, if we want our USA to continue to fulfill its role as a leading world democracy.

If neither Donald Trump nor any of his agents colluded with or enlisted the Russian interference then his presidency will be shown, once and for all, to be a legitimate presidency. Therefore, he and all Republicans, should be eager to get this investigation completed as soon as possible. Only then will the cloud over his presidency be fully removed. Then those of us who did not vote for him will have to get through it with as little damage as possible. But until then, his daring, insulting lack of honesty and transparency require all people of conscience and integrity to question the legitimacy of his presidency.

So, I call on all patriotic Americans to urgently call for and immediately insist upon a full, fair and non-partisan investigation of the well-established Russian interference with our 2016 presidential election, so we can all move all to other and better things.

Sincerely,

Cheryl J. Pence, JD, MCP  
 Founder, Indivisible East Pasco County AMP  
 ("America Minus Putin")



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# City Tweaks Comprehensive Plan

## Door Opens For More Intense Residential Development

by Joe Potter

Dade City Commissioners approved an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan on the second reading at their recent regular commission meeting. The adopted amendment revises text of the Future Land Use Element and the Recreation and Open Space Element.

City Planner, Michael Sherman, AICP, explained that the adopted Future Land Use Element amendment proposes to delete the Planned Development zoning districts currently listed in the Policy 1.1.6 of Future Land Use Element and replace them with the new planned development zone districts that were adopted in the unified land development code in August 2014.

Policy 1.1.6 establishes the Future Land Use Map categories, primary and secondary uses, density and intensity criteria and zoning districts that are compatible with Future Land Use Map categories.

A second component of the Feb. 14 adopted amendment is a change in the allowable uses in the General Commercial Future Land Use Map category. The GC category currently does not allow multi-family dwelling units and apartments as a permitted use,

Sherman said.

This amendment will include multi-family housing as a permitted use in the category and sets a maximum density not to exceed 20 dwelling units per acre. The amendment also “fixes” an inconsistency between the adopted Land Development Code and the Comprehensive Plan.

A third component of the adopted amendment, which was not previously reviewed by the Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) or other agencies during the proposed amendment stage, increases the maximum dwelling units per acre in the Downtown Future Land Use Map category from 20 dwelling units per acre to 30 dwelling units per acre, Sherman said.

“The city hopes that an increase in the maximum allowable residential densities in the downtown will foster increased demand for existing goods and services and encourage more residential and commercial growth in the future,” Sherman said. “The City is also rewriting the Community Redevelopment Plan for the downtown and one important component of downtown redevelopment is creating residential land uses and development within a walkable distance to our pedestrian friendly downtown

and shopping opportunities.”

Sherman said the amendment will also support the EQ-NX project, a soon-to-be proposed development in downtown Dade City. The city considers the EQ-NX project would be a “game-changer” for the downtown and will include a mix of residential, retail, commercial, restaurants, offices and hotel units.

Plans call for EQ-NX to be developed on the site of the former Pasco Motors dealership on Seventh Street that has been designated as a brownfield.

“This EQ-NX project and the residential and hotel units proposed will also put more people on the streets and increase our downtown from a 10-hour place that generally closes up at 6 p.m. to a downtown that will support activity late into the evening hours,” Sherman said.

The text amendment change commissioners approved will not change the city’s zoning maps, Sherman said.

The City also amended the Recreation and Open Space Element to recognize park and recreation improvements and extension of the Hardy Trail.

No one spoke against the proposed change during the public hearing and commissioners unanimously approved the proposed changes.

# Essay Contest For Middle Schoolers

The Tax Collector’s office is accepting entries to the Constitutional Officers Essay Contest, held from March 1-31. The contest is for Pasco County students in grades 6-8 attending public, charter, private, non-public and home schools.

In 500 words or less students will answer the question: “How do you, as a middle school student, benefit from taxes your family, friends and neighbors pay?” Entries will be judged by a panel of directors from the Pasco County Tax Collector’s Office and reviewed on how well the student communicates their response to the question as well as overall essay structure, appearance and readability.

The winning entry is worth a \$300 gift card to Best Buy as the prize.

Public or charter school students can submit their essays to their principal, who will forward them to the tax collector’s office. Private, non-public or home school students may send their essays directly to Greg Giordano, Assistant Tax Collector, Pasco County Tax Collector’s Office, 8731 Citizens Drive, Room 120, New Port Richey, FL 34654 or via e-mail at [ggiordano@pascotaxes.com](mailto:ggiordano@pascotaxes.com). Call (727) 847-8179 with any questions.

Entries will be accepted until 5 p.m. on March 31. Each entry should include the student’s name, school, grade and contact information.

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## San Antonio Will Have April Election

**Staff Report**

Three candidates have qualified for the two available seats on the San Antonio City Commission so an election will be held on April 11.

Incumbents Mayor Tim Newlon and Commissioner Mark Anderson qualified for the ballot, as did challenger James Markley. All three of their names were submitted before the filing deadline, which expired at noon on Tuesday.

Commissioners are elected at-large and serve two-year terms.

The commission will hold a reorganizational meeting following the election. Candidates who have been elected will be administered the oaths of office at that time for their new terms.

**Rattlesnake • Continued from Page 1A**

The festival was the brainchild of the Rattlesnake and Gopher Enthusiasts Inc. (RAGE), which operated the event from 1967 to 2013.

Details need to be worked out with the city before the Thomas Promise holds the 51st annual Rattlesnake Festival in October.

Mayor Tim Newlon said he was excited that the Rotary club had partnered with the Thomas Promise Foundation to keep the festival going and to keep it in San Antonio.

Five different organizations approached the local Rotary Club about taking over the festival, and some of them wanted to hold the event outside of San Antonio, Burke said.

The club agreed that Thomas Promise was the organization most qualified to take control of the festival.

The Thomas Promise Foundation is a nonprofit organization that feeds more than 1,500 Pasco County students during the weekends. The students are given backpacks containing food items to take home with them on Friday and they return the backpacks to their schools on Monday.



The top milkers from Monday's celebrity milking competition included, from left, Kayla Howard, Amanda Martin, Stacey Nance, Hope Allen, Makenzie Manganelli and Dr. Michael Caselnova.

**Fair • Continued from Page 1A**

public figures sported their blue jeans and boots to get down and dirty in the friendly competition. Four cows were assembled for the milking process, but by the final rounds one of the cows was sent off as she was not in the mood for milking and was trying to kick the milkers. Even still, the barn was full of laughter as each contestant did their best to multitask and hold a jug while milking the cows.

With one less cow, only six finalists competed in the championship round. First place went to Stacey Nance, general manager of Tampa Premium Outlets, who produced a total of 17 ounces of milk. Runner-ups, in order, were 2016 defending champion Kayla Howard of Bayfront Health Dade City with 13 ounces; Dr. Michael Caselnova of Bayfront with eight ounces; Amanda Martin of Bayfront with seven ounces; Makenzie Manganelli with five ounces; and Hope Allen of the Wesley Chapel Chamber of Commerce with four and a half ounces.

Set up just down the hill from the livestock pavilion, the Axe Women Loggers of Maine are set up to perform daily shows of axe throwing, chainsaw performances

and log rolling. In between their scheduled shows, the women can be seen sporadically performing their feats of strength and skill.

The Poultry and Rabbit Barn was a hit for children earlier this week, as they lined up at the two picnic tables flanking the entrance. They were all smiles as they held rabbits and chickens close to their bodies, ensuring they couldn't make an escape.

In the Schrader Building, exhibits from incorporated Pasco County cities are set up to go along with this year's fair theme. Dade City won first place for their exhibit, which features antique quilts, furniture, dolls, signs and toys. Several wagon wheels and other circular objects are placed around the exhibit to accentuate the theme of 'homespun fun'.

This year's fair would not be complete without the typical carnival-style rides that are rigged up across the property. The potato-sack slide, a fun house, bumper cars, Ferris wheel and more are just a couple of tickets away from enjoyment, and possibly nausea for the older fairgoers who have to brave the rides.

The Pasco County Fair runs through Sunday and features pig races, a rodeo, special agricultural events, hypnosis shows and a whole lot more.

# Highlights For The Pasco County Fair

Today	Saturday
Unlimited Midway Ride Special (\$20 wristband, gate admission is additional)	Unlimited Ride Special (\$25 wristband, gate admission is additional)
4 pm: Gates & Exhibits Open	10 am: Gates & Exhibits Open
4:20, 6:20, 8 & 9:30 pm: Robinson's Racing Pigs & Paddling Porkers – Clayton Way	12, 3, 6:30 & 9 pm: Robinson's Racing Pigs & Paddling Porkers – Clayton Way
5:30, 7:30 & 9:30 pm: Axe Women Loggers of Maine – Ag Stage	12:30 pm: Miss Pasco Princess & Mister Pasco Prince (Baby Pageant) – Dan Cannon Auditorium
7:15 pm: Lizzy The Dream Girl Hypnosis Show – Collura Family Theater	3, 5:30 & 8:30 pm: Axe Women Loggers Of Maine – Ag Stage
6 & 8:30 pm: Matt's Family Jam – Collura Family Theater	2, 5 & 7 pm: Matt's Family Jam – Collura Family Theatre
6 pm: The Triumphant Quartet and The Sound (Rob Mills Family) Gospel Music - Dan Cannon Auditorium	2, 4 & 7 pm: Barnyard Review – Ag Stage Area
7 pm: Youth Steer Sale – Albert A. Barthle Livestock Pavilion	2:30 pm: Pasco County Fair Championship Rodeo, PRCA sanctioned Military Tribute, Rodeo Arena (free with gate admission)
9:20 pm: Lizzy The Dream Girl Hypnosis Show – Collura Family Theatre	5:45 pm: Lizzy The Dream Girl Hypnosis Show – Collura Family Theater
11 pm: Midway Closes	6 pm: Karaoke - Dan Cannon Auditorium
	5 pm: Youth Hog Sale – Albert A. Barthle Livestock Pavilion
	9:20 pm: Lizzy The Dream Girl Hypnosis Show – Collura Family Theater
	Midnight: Midway Closes
Friday	Sunday
Unlimited Midway Ride Special (\$25 wristband, gate admission is additional)	One child admitted free with one paid adult
4 pm: Gates & Exhibits Open	Unlimited Ride Special (\$25 wristband, gate admission is additional)
4:20, 6:20, 8 & 9:30 pm: Robinson's Racing Pigs & Paddling Porkers – Clayton Way	Noon: Main Gates & Exhibits Open
2, 4 & 7 pm: Barnyard Review – Ag Stage Area	12:30 pm: Youth Dairy Show – Albert A. Barthle Livestock Pavilion
5:30, 7:30 & 9:30 pm: Axe Women Loggers Of Maine – Ag Stage	1, 3 & 5 pm: Axe Women Loggers Of Maine – Ag Stage
7:15 pm: Lizzy The Dream Girl Hypnosis Show - Collura Family Theatre	1, 2:45, 4:15 &, 6:15 pm: Robinson's Racing Pigs & Paddling Porkers – Clayton Way
6 Youth Swine Showmanship - Albert A. Barthle Livestock Pavilion	1 pm: Bay Area Bandits Mounted Shooters - Rodeo Arena
6 & 8:30 pm: Matt's Family Jam – Collura Family Theatre	1:30, 3:30 & 5 pm: Matt's Family Jam - Collura Family Theater
7 pm: Pasco Showcase of Talent - Dan Cannon Auditorium	2 pm: Youth Plant Sale – Joe Herrmann Greenhouse
7 pm: Pasco County Fair Championship Rodeo "Tough Enough to Wear Pink Night" for Breast Cancer Awareness, PRCA sanctioned - Rodeo Arena (free with gate admission)	2, 4 & 6 pm: Barnyard Review – Ag Stage Area
9:20 pm: Lizzy The Dream Girl Hypnosis Show – Collura Family Theatre	2 pm: Boxing Club Matches - Dan Cannon Auditorium (Free with Gate Admission)
Midnight: Midway Closes	2:15, 5:30 pm: Lizzy The Dream Girl Hypnosis Show – Collura Family Theater
	6 pm: Gates Close
	7 pm: Fair & Buildings Close
	8 pm: Midway Closes

## Florida Hospital Zephyrhills March Events

MAR 1

**Getting Down to the Bare Bones**

If you have questions about aching joints, arthritis, hip and knee pain, then you'll want to attend our informal Q&A with Board Certified Orthopedic Surgeon, Dr. Trey Alexander. Reservations required. Call (877) 534-3108.

**Wednesday, March 1 | 12:15 pm – 12:45 pm**

Florida Hospital Zephyrhills Cypress Conference Room  
7050 Gall Boulevard, Zephyrhills

MAR 1

**Diabetes & You Support Group**

Dr. Tobin John, a Board Certified Family Medicine Physician and provider at Florida Hospital Prompt Care in Dade City, will bring to light the basic and not-so-basic things you should know about diabetes. Reservations required. Call (813) 715-6683.

**Wednesday, March 1 | 3:00 pm - 4:00 pm**

Florida Hospital Zephyrhills CREATION® Health Wellness Center Education Room  
38233 Daughtery Road, Zephyrhills

MAR 6

**AHA Family & Friends® Infant CPR & Choking**

A one-night American Heart Association class for expectant parents to learn Hands-On CPR and Choking Rescue. This class is an orientation to CPR and is not a certifying or credentialing course. There is no charge and the class is open to the public with limited availability. Reservations required. Call (813) 783-6124.

**Monday, March 6 | 6:30 pm - 8:00 pm**

Florida Hospital Zephyrhills American Room/Maple Room (Hospital Ground Floor)  
7050 Gall Boulevard, Zephyrhills

MAR 9

**Bingo in the CREATION® Café**

Join us for Bingo, pudding and a brief presentation by Duane Mitchell, RN, Florida Hospital Zephyrhills ER Clinical Nurse Manager, about our new look in the emergency room. There will be prizes, too! Reservations required. Call (877) 534-3108.

**Thursday, March 9 | 2:00 pm – 3:00 pm**

Florida Hospital Zephyrhills CREATION® Café (First Floor)  
7050 Gall Boulevard, Zephyrhills

MAR 16

**Ladies Who Lunch**

Featuring special guest Courtney Robinson, Anchor/Reporter for 10News WTSP. This half-day event is educational, fun and inspiring! You'll have a chance to meet and talk to clinicians while you enjoy some sweet surprises! There will be complimentary health screenings; women's health presentations; a lovely luncheon; prize drawings and more. Reservations required. Call (877) 534-3108.

**Thursday, March 16 | 9:00 am - 1:30 pm**

East Pasco Seventh-day Adventist Church  
7333 Dairy Road, Zephyrhills

MAR 22

**Total Mako™ Robotic Knee Replacement**

Be one of the first to hear about Mako™ Robotic-Arm Assisted Surgery for Total Knee Replacement. This innovative alternative to conventional surgery is designed to help those with degenerative knee diseases like osteoarthritis. Presented by Dr. Trey Alexander, Board Certified Orthopedic Surgeon. Reservations required. Call (877) 534-3108.

**Wednesday, March 22 | Noon - 1:00 pm**

Florida Hospital Zephyrhills Cypress Conference Room  
7050 Gall Boulevard, Zephyrhills

MAR 22

**Heartbeat Support Group**

If you or someone you care about is affected by heart disease and/or atrial fibrillation (A-FIB), attend this support group for a brief educational presentation and discussion. Light refreshments provided. No reservations necessary.

**Wednesday, March 22 | 3:00 pm - 4:00 pm**

Florida Hospital Zephyrhills CREATION® Health Wellness Center Education Room  
38233 Daughtery Road, Zephyrhills

MAR 23

**Hernia Repair Using Robotic Technology**

Facing a hernia repair? Join us as Dr. Vijay Ferris, a Board Certified Surgeon, discusses da Vinci® robotic surgery as a minimally invasive option for hernia repair. Reservations required. Call (877) 534-3108.

**Thursday, March 23 | Noon - 1:00 pm**

Florida Hospital Zephyrhills Cypress Conference Room  
7050 Gall Boulevard, Zephyrhills

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# Peace Week Celebrated

by Keri McAlpine

In celebration of Peace Week, two Tibetan Buddhist monks set up shop for four days at Pasco-Hernando State College's Dade City campus to create an intricate sand mandala.

Tibetan Monks Drupon Thinley Ningpo Rinpoche and his younger brother Konchok Gyaltzen of the Drong Ngur Jangchubling Buddhist Center in Wesley Chapel, created the mandala last week from Monday morning to Thursday afternoon. Virginia Blum assisted in the creation of the sand sculpture while also interpreting for Thinley Ningo during a series of seminars and question and answer periods at the college.

Dozens of Tupperware containers full of bright colored sand could be seen scattered across the carpeted floor of the college's Building A lobby. Chairs and pillows surrounded the wooden canvas, which was slowly filled in with millions of grains of sand.

Before the process began on the morning of Feb. 13, the site was consecrated with sacred chants and music before the design and outline of this specific mandala was drawn from memory onto a piece of wood.

There are different types of mandalas, each created to honor a certain Buddha, and the one the monks chose for the college's Peace Week was one connected with the cultivation of compassion and loving-kindness. The mandala serves as a visual support for meditation, this one in particular for intensive visualization practices based on Avalokiteshvara, a 'bodhisattva' representing the compassion of all Buddhas.

On Feb. 16 around 5 p.m., the practice came to a close and the mandala was destroyed, or dissolved, in a special ceremony. The school's lobby was full of

interested parties and Buddhist students, who respectfully took their shoes off and sat forming a circle around the completed mandala, which had taken form into a rainbow of intricate designs and Buddhist messages.

The mandala is meant to represent a celestial palace, complete with doors, windows and decor in which, in this case, the Buddha of compassion dwells. Although flat, the mandala represents a three-dimensional space, the center of the image as a dome of a building. Five letters surround the dome, representing the five Buddha families in each direction: north, south, east, west and center.

Buddhism focuses on purifying one's afflicted mind states, or purifying one's mind of the five afflictive emotions, which include desire, anger, jealousy, pride and ignorance (unawareness).

"As Buddhist practitioners, one is generally practicing to pacify or overcome these afflicted mind states. Gradually these five afflicted mind states diminish – they become less and less," Blum said.

Before the dissolution ceremony, Drupon Thinley Ningpo Rinpoche thanked PHSC for hosting them and for upholding the tradition of Peace Week. Mandalas are known in Buddhism for spreading peace by the mere practice of their creation or from people simply looking at them and their magnificence. This could be seen during Peace Week as well, he said.

"In order to create an outside environment that is one of peace, or in order to have world peace, it comes from first developing that peace within oneself," Blum said, translating on his behalf. "For that reason he says it's so wonderful and extraordinary that here at PHSC, you have this tradition of peace week where you're focusing on the virtue



During the dissolution ceremony, everyone was welcomed to participate and circle the mandala three times before it was dismantled. Photo by Richard K. Riley

and benefit of peace... having this period in which you're practicing cultivating and kind of honoring the intention for peace ... it sends positive energy out into the world, and he says it has great power."

Attendees joined in on a meditation to the Exalted Lord Avalokiteshvara from packets handed out upon entry. The meditation was accompanied by chanting, moments of silence and music. A mantra was recited while the monks stood and welcomed everyone to join them in circling the mandala, a practice required before the mandala's permanent dissolution.

One by one, visitors were welcomed to bring one of their knuckles to a corner or edge of the mandala, and scrape along its surface until reaching its center – disrupting the pattern in their path.

By the end of the ceremony, the mandala's elaborate pattern was collected into a pile in the center of the piece of wood, the colors mixing together to make one pile of gray-blue powder.

Small plastic bags were handed out so people could spoon a portion of the sand into them to save for themselves.

Konchok Gyaltzen then brushed the remaining sand into a crystal bowl held by Drupon Thinley Ningpo Rinpoche. An additional four mandalas created by students, faculty and staff were also dissolved and their remnants added into the bowl.

Still chanting the mantra from the beginning of the dissolution, the monks led the group to a pond down the hill from the building and poured the sand into the body of water. The dissolution of the mandala is meant to symbolize the impermanence of all that appears and exists in this world.

Thinley Ningpo explained that love and compassion are the foundation of peace.

Peace "is the embodiment of the mind of love and compassion and the wish for other's benefit – the wish for the benefit of all beings," he said.

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