**LET’S BE CAREFUL OUT THERE**
*By Keith Crank
Vice President and Controlled Access Chairman*

The holidays have come and gone. I hope everyone had a safe and joyous holiday season. With respect to the sheriff’s patrol, the month of November was very quiet. During the month the sheriff deputies only wrote one citation and it was for speeding. There were several written and oral warnings issued.

There was one accident during the month involving a bicycle and a car. The bicyclist ran a stop sign and hit the car. The accident was investigated by FHP and the bicyclist was issued tickets for running the stop sign and hitting the car. Oddly enough, the bicyclist was not a resident of our community. This brings to light the fact that as cyclists we must adhere to the rules of the road the same as drivers. At a recent board meeting it was brought up that many cyclists riding in a group are three abreast. I have mentioned in previous articles cyclist cannot ride more that two abreast and if they are impeding the normal traffic flow they must ride single file. I understand that it is inconvenient for us to stop at the stop signs or ride single file but when we don’t stop or ride single file we are putting ourselves at the mercy of drivers and we are breaking the law. Let’s be careful and not take the chance of getting a citation or even worse being involved in an accident.

The gates at the SunTrust entrance and exit are back and in working order. In hopes of preventing further accidents at these gates we have placed reflective tape on both gates and placed flashing lights at each of the gates.

When the gate at Quail Forest was reinstated earlier this year it was hit twice by residents and once by a truck doing work at the Cove. Since these incidents we have not had any further accidents at Quail Forest.

continued on pg 5

**PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE**
*By Judy Fosbrook, President*

Happy New Year! Can you believe it has been 15 years since we were all worrying if there would be any effect from Y2K? Can you imagine what worries we would have had if the internet 15 years ago was as sophisticated as it is today?

January brings many changes to our community. As you read in last month’s Heron, our long-time manager, Bernadette Massaro, retired. We are very pleased that her tasks will be ably filled by Jaime Soderland, who also has a long affiliation with Management & Associates.

Another change you will see coming this month is the re-design of the island on Woodlands Parkway in front of the Club. The plan is to re-design all the islands on the parkway mainly because of the problems with the aged laurel oak trees, many of which are diseased.

Construction will start soon on the next phase of sidewalks along Woodlands Blvd. in the area of Aberdeen and Cross Pointe.

Additional warning lights, rumble strips, and paint are being added to the gates at the Sun Bank entrance. Hopefully, it will eliminate any further “meetings” of cars and gate!

Again, the Board wishes all residents and happy, healthy and safe New Year.

*Judy Fosbrook, President*

**MANAGER’S MEMO**
*By Jaime L. Soderland*

_Honored to be Your Association Manager_

As 2015 rolls in, I must say that I am very excited about my position as your association manager. I look forward to working with everyone. With new positions come new challenges and I am honored and blessed.

The ELWCA has scheduled a meeting of the Presidents of Member Associations for Wednesday, January 7th at 7:00 P.M. The purpose of the meeting is to appoint a Nominating Committee for the 2015 Annual Meeting and Election of Directors. Residents will receive notification of the Nominating Committee members and the process for being considered as a candidate in their mailboxes around the middle of January.

Members who need to obtain new barcodes can come into the management office at 720 Brooker Creek Blvd. #206, Oldsmar, FL 34677 M-F from 8 a.m. to noon or from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. If you have any questions regarding this please call Mary Hunt at 813-433-2000.

“A pessimist sees the difficulty in every opportunity; an optimist sees the opportunity in every difficulty.”

– Winston Churchill
IT’S ANOTHER NEW YEAR...

“Happy New Year!” That greeting will be said and heard for at least the first couple of weeks as a new year gets under way. But the day celebrated as New Year’s Day in modern America was not always January 1.

ANCIENT NEW YEARS

The celebration of the new year is the oldest of all holidays. It was first observed in ancient Babylon about 4000 years ago. In the years around 2000 BC, the Babylonian New Year began with the first New Moon (actually the first visible crescent) after the Vernal Equinox (first day of spring).

The beginning of spring is a logical time to start a new year. After all, it is the season of rebirth, of planting new crops, and of blossoming. January 1, on the other hand, has no astronomical nor agricultural significance. It is purely arbitrary.

The Babylonian new year celebration lasted for eleven days. Each day had its own particular mode of celebration, but it is safe to say that modern New Year’s Eve festivities pale in comparison.

The Romans continued to observe the new year in late March, but their calendar was continually tampered with by various emperors so that the calendar soon became out of synchronization with the sun. In order to set the calendar right, the Roman senate, in 153 BC, declared January 1 to be the beginning of the new year. But tampering continued until Julius Caesar, in 46 BC, established what has come to be known as the Julian Calendar. It again established January 1 as the new year. But in order to synchronize the calendar with the sun, Caesar had to let the previous year drag on for 445 days.

THE CHURCH’S VIEW OF NEW YEAR CELEBRATIONS

Although in the first centuries AD the Romans continued celebrating the new year, the early Catholic Church condemned the festivities as paganism. But as Christianity became more widespread, the early church began having its own religious observances concurrently with many of the pagan celebrations, and New Year’s Day was no different. New Years is still observed as the Feast of Christ’s Circumcision by some denominations.

During the Middle Ages, the Church remained opposed to celebrating New Years. January 1 has been celebrated as a holiday by Western nations for only about the past 400 years.

NEW YEAR TRADITIONS

Other traditions of the season include the making of New Year’s resolutions. That tradition also dates back to the early Babylonians. Popular modern resolutions might include the promise to lose weight or quit smoking. The early Babylonian’s most popular resolution was to return borrowed farm equipment.

The tradition of using a baby to signify the new year was begun in Greece around 600 BC. It was their tradition at that time to celebrate their god of wine, Dionysus, by parading a baby in a basket, representing the annual rebirth of that god as the spirit of fertility. Early Egyptians also used a baby as a symbol of rebirth.

AULD LANG SYNE

The song, “Auld Lang Syne,” is sung at the stroke of midnight in almost every English-speaking country in the world to bring in the new year. At least partially written by Robert Burns in the 1700’s, it was first published in 1796 after Burns’ death. Early variations of the song were sung prior to 1700 and inspired Burns to produce the modern rendition. An old Scotch tune, “Auld Lang Syne” literally means “old long ago,” or simply, “the good old days.”
FROM THE EDITOR
By Jeff Hunt.

A POINT IN TIME

My fellow ELWCA member John Fernsler might call it “most fortunate”. I’ll just call it “plum lucky”. Take your pick, we’d both be correct. The arrival of our New ELWCA Manager Jaime Soderland has been many years and several twists of fate in the making. She begins her new job at a point in time that is very important to the future of our Community. We are going to have many opportunities over the next several years that will determine how our 40 year old community looks and functions for the next 40 years. I think Jaime’s experience, energy and optimism will prove to be key to helping us chart a positive course for our future.

Jaime comes to us after being born in New York and moving to Florida at an early age. She tells me that she knew early on that she wanted to be successful. As a 16 year old, she started working part-time on weekends in Miami as a paralegal and quickly became a Senior paralegal after her graduation from Plantation High School. She spent 17 working in the corporate offices of United Property Management (UPM) and had a goal of becoming a lawyer. While at UPM she graduated from Barry University with a degree in Criminal Justice in 1992 and earned her her license for Community Association Management (LCAM) in 1998.

In 2003 she left Florida for Cookville, TN to be closer to her recently retired mother. She took a Senior Paralegal job with the law firm of Jared and Associates doing defense work for Farm Bureau Insurance and still thought about becoming a lawyer. But a conversation in 2005 with one of her co-workers about Cuban cigars caused her to call her father who lived in Tampa. She thought he could ship her a few cigars up to Tennessee, but he wanted to talk about her moving back to Florida and working for him at Management and Associates. Convinced by her father that it was the right time for her to come help him, she moved back to Florida.

Jaime has spent the last 9 years managing Community Associations in the Tampa Bay area for Management and Associates and learning all aspects of the business from her father. In 2012 she received her Masters degree in Business Administration from St. Leo College in Dade City and she intends to sit for her PCAM license in 2015.

In addition to her new duties as our Community Manager she was also recently named Vice-President of Management and Associates and looks forward to serving our Community for many years to come and thus most likely putting that lawyer dream to bed.

Finally, Jaime tells me she is very excited to have this opportunity to manage East Lake Woodlands (ELW) and strongly believes that ELW is a “Golf Course Community” that benefits greatly from a strong ELW Country Club. She also firmly believes that landscaping is a top priority in our Community and will work to ensure that all the little things are looked at with a keen eye to detail. The self-described optimist wants all residents to know that we have her commitment to improving our Community and she is always on the lookout for residents that want to help.

Happy New Year,

– Jeff

“It’s good to keep in mind that prominence is always a mix of hard work, eloquence in your practice, good timing and fortuitous social relations. Everything can’t be personalized.”

– Barbara Kruger

BOARD MEMBER STANDARDS OF CONDUCT
By John Fernsler, East Lake Woodlands Community Association (ELWCA) Board Member – Legal and Insurance

Each community in East Lake Woodlands is subject to Chapter 617 of Florida Statutes. This is true whether the not-for-profit membership corporation is ELWCA, a homeowner association or a condominium. That statute sets forth the powers and duties of the board members. Generally speaking, each board member owes a fiduciary duty (looking out for the common good) to the community as a whole.

One specific provision defines conflicts of interest and how they should be handled. At a recent meeting of the ELWCA Board, an official policy was adopted as to conflicts of interest. It can be found at the end of the Policies and Procedures section of the Documents section of the Community Association heading on the ELWCA web site. The text of that provision is set forth below:

“CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

ELWCA is a Florida not for profit corporation governed by Chapter 617 of Florida statutes. It is obligated to comply with all of the statutory provisions of Chapter 617. In subchapter 617.0832 there is a definition of conflicts of interest and how a not for profit corporation is required to respond to them.

A contract or transaction in which one or more of its directors is “financially interested” is void or voidable owing to that relationship. If, however, the contract or transaction is approved by a majority of the board who are not “financially interested” then the contract or transaction is valid. The financially interested director is obligated to disclose that interest and not vote on the measure.

“It is prudent, even if a board member’s interest in a transaction gives the appearance of a conflict, but does not directly benefit that board member, to treat that board member’s interest as though it is governed by subchapter 617.0832, disclose that interest, and not vote on those arrangements. Even if a conflict of interest may sometimes be created, a board member’s depth and breadth of knowledge may benefit ELWCA through reducing cost and improving quality as to matters within that expertise.

Internal policy and practiced safeguards can prevent a financially interested board member from having knowledge of other bids and other bidders; not seeing other bids until they are received and compared; having no opportunity to revise a bid; and not voting on the award. These and other safeguards allow true competition in the bidding, or rational decision-making in the transactional, process.”
DRIVE FOR A CURE 2015...

We’re very excited to announce the 2015 East Lake Woodlands “Drive for a Cure” Golf Tournament. It will take place on Friday, February 27, 2015, at the East Lake Woodlands Country Club. Arrival and registration begins at 11:30 AM with a 1:00 PM shotgun start. There will be flights for women, men and mixed foursomes. Dinner, along with the Chinese, silent and live auctions will follow play. The cost is $75.00 (if paid before February 13, 2015; $85.00 if paid after February 13, 2015) and it covers golf, cart, range, snacks, dinner and a contribution to our charities.

By supporting the Morton Plant Mease Mammography Program and the Florida Suncoast Affiliate of Susan G. Komen, a dedicated effort is made to keep the funds raised to benefit those in the Tampa Bay area. The focus is on screening, diagnostic and treatment services for the uninsured and underinsured, and to support research with the goal of eradicating breast cancer once and for all. Both recipients are designated as 501(c) 3 organizations.

Since 2007 the Drive has sent $113,458 to the organizations we support. Our goal is to reach $150,000 to support those dealing with breast cancer. Participation and sponsorship is very important to this effort, and there are many opportunities available to help us meet this goal. Come play with us on our beautiful, top-quality golf courses; you’ll have a wonderful time and you will be instrumental in supporting this very worthwhile goal.

For more complete information about the event, registration, sponsorship and donations, please visit our web site at:

http://www.elwdriveforacure.com

We’ll see you on February 27th!

From left to right: Carol Piggott (DFAC), Kaytlyn Burke, Mission & Special Events Manager (SGK), Charlene Mixa (DFAC), Gina Kravitz, Executive Director, Susan G. Komen Florida Suncoast and Marianne Rechtoris (DFAC).

Sarah Murry, Director of Community Impact & Corporate Giving, Morton Plant Mease Foundation, awarding a plaque of appreciation to Nina Rose Hatfield and Charlene Mixa, co-chairs of the event.
“Let’s be Careful …”, continued from pg 1

My feeling is that because the gates at these two entrances have not been in place for such a long time it took awhile for everyone to get used to them being back in place. I am hoping with Quail Forest the learning curve has peaked for the SunTrust entrance and we can avoid any further incidents.

Something very unpleasant was relayed to me recently. It seems that one of our residents felt that an officer working at the Tampa Road entrance was not doing the job properly and was very disrespectful to the officer. I would hope that if a resident feels that strongly concerning the job an officer is doing he or she would call Management and Associates and relay that information to Jamie Soderland. There is not a need for anyone to curse at the officers and please let those responsible for their conduct handle any complaint you might have.

Should you need assistance please feel free to call the community patrol officers at 785-7384 or 789-1465. For all emergencies call 911 and for non-emergencies please contact the Sheriff’s department at 582-6200.

Channel 10 recently did a report on emergency response times throughout the Tampa Bay region. While response times can vary due to population density, traffic, prioritization of calls and the time of day, several agencies in the Tampa Bay region are able to respond in six minutes or less. When you are in danger minutes and seconds can be the difference between life and death.

That’s why the Pinellas County Sheriff’s Office is proud to have the fastest response time to 9-1-1 emergency calls of all agencies in the area at 3 minutes and 43 seconds. Pinellas County residents know that no matter what the time of day is, our roads are often congested with locals, tourists and construction. All these things can lead to lengthy delays, making it that much more important that law enforcement can get to you when you need help.

The new consolidated 9-1-1 center located in the Sheriff’s Administration Building aims to cut down on the amount of time it takes to tell your story to a call taker and get a deputy dispatched to you.

Centralized and prioritized emergency calls allows the Pinellas County Sheriff’s Office to quickly attend to those in danger. It is also important to not only know your location but also to be prepared to provide details to the call taker so that assistance can be provided with a minimum amount of time.

To form a Neighborhood Watch in your association, contact Deputy Charles Skipper at cskipper@pcsonet.com or call 582-5661

When You Call 911
Response Times Matter
Pinellas County Sheriff’s Hot Topic
Judy Gauron, Controlled Access Committee

When you call 911 response times matter
Pinellas County Sheriff’s Hot Topic
Judy Gauron, Controlled Access Committee

Angel Hair Pasta with Black Truffles

4 quarts water
3/4 teaspoon salt
3/4 pound angel hair pasta
1/2 cup plus
2 tablespoons truffle oil
1/4 pound Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese, grated
1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
1/4 cup snipped fresh chives or finely chopped green onions or scallions (green part only)
1 black truffle, shaved

In a large pot, bring the water and 1/4 teaspoon of the salt to a boil. Add the pasta and cook until al dente, about 4 minutes. Drain and place in a mixing bowl, add 1/2 cup of the truffle oil, 3/4 cup of the cheese, the remaining 1/2 teaspoon salt, the black pepper, and chives and toss to mix.

To serve, garnish with the shaved truffle, drizzle with the remaining 2 tablespoons truffle oil, and sprinkle with the remaining cheese. Serve immediately.

Yield: about 12 small servings

Angel Hair Pasta with Black Truffles

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Happy New Year to all of our East Lake Woodland friends and neighbors! As we begin 2015 we have plenty to celebrate at the club that we want to share with our community.

First, Happy 40th Anniversary to East Lake Woodlands Country Club! Since 1975 the club has served as a ‘home away from home’ for Members throughout the years and it is important we continue to drive the member experience in all areas of the club for the next 40 years. In 2014 we spent over 2 million in capital investments/improvements at the club that resulted in the opening of our new restaurant The Compass Grill, improved golf course and tennis court conditions, a year around heated pool and membership/retention growth for the first time in 10 years! With that said, we are looking to continue the growth in 2015 and we would like all ELW residents to consider becoming part of our ELW family. Please stop by the club today and ask about our anniversary specials for joining and become part of the best inclusive club around!

As I mentioned above, The Compass Grill is now open and our new Executive Chef Tim Kiellich is here to take care of all of your dining needs. We are open 7 days per week and lunch/dinner options throughout the week along with breakfast on the weekends, all at a great value. Combined with all of our golf, tennis, kids and social events ELWCC has become a very active and vibrant club again, all in your own backyard! Upcoming events include men’s/ladies/couples golf, tennis mixers, monthly junior tennis tournaments, cooking classes, wine dinners and around the corner will be our spring open house, summer camps and swim team!

On behalf of all of us at the club we want to thank you for your continued support and feedback. We are very thankful for being part of this great community. As we say “As the club grows, the community grows, and as the community grows, the club grows”, so stop by the club today and join the FUN!
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Cypress 1
ELW Community Assn.
Enclave
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Greenhaven 2
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Hunter’s Crossing
Pinevinds
Pinnacle
Preserve
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Pinellas Folk Festival
Heritage Village, Largo
Saturday, January 31

Boston Pops Orchestra
Amalie Arena, Tampa
Tuesday, February 3

Bob Seger & The Silver Bullet Band
Amalie Arena, Tampa
Thursday, February 5

Lady Antebellum
Amalie Arena, Tampa
Friday, February 6

Downtown Dunedin Craft Festival
Downtown Dunedin
Saturday & Sunday, February 21 & 22

Maroon 5
Amalie Arena, Tampa
Wednesday, February 25

Dana Carvey
Tampa Theatre, Tampa
Friday, March 7th

Journey & Steve Miller Band
MidFlorida Credit Union Amphitheatre At The Florida State Fair Grounds, Tampa
Saturday, March 14

Miley Cyrus
Amalie Arena, Tampa
Thursday, March 20
PINELLAS FOLK FESTIVAL

Dozens of Tampa Bay area’s premier folk musicians will be playing traditional folk, gospel and country music on stages throughout Heritage Village. Sponsored by the Pinellas County Historical Society. There will be historical demonstrations and activities. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Free to children under 12; requested minimum donation of $5 per adult. Heritage Village, 11909 125th St. N. Largo. Shuttle to event entrance located from free parking on 119th St. between Ulmerton and Walsingham Roads; handicapped parking and drop-off located at 12211 Walsingham Road

The Festival is on Saturday, January 31st. For additional information, visit http://www.pinellascounty.org/heritage/

HOW TO KEEP YOUR NEW YEAR’S RESOLUTIONS

The new year has arrived, and you have already drawn up your resolutions. Now, how to stick to your plan?

Steps:
1. Put it all on paper. Write your resolutions down, and keep them in an accessible place as reminders - tape them to your mirror, write them in a journal or put them on your refrigerator door.
2. Mark your calendar. Set deadlines for yourself to tackle each step toward reaching your goal, one at a time.
3. Start as soon as possible. Go out and purchase the necessary equipment or literature; call now and set up an appointment with your dentist, your doctor, your trainer, your accountant....
4. Find a role model. Is there anyone who has succeeded in fulfilling an ambition like yours? Look to this person as a reminder that it is possible to achieve your goal.
5. Check your progress regularly, and give yourself an occasional reward for your efforts. Make sure the reward isn’t contrary to your resolution; celebrate a cigarette-free month with a weekend trip or a new outfit, not with a cigarette!
6. Inform friends and family of your goals, and recruit them to regularly remind and support you in your endeavors.

Tips:
• Don’t sweat the setbacks; persistence is the key.
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COLLECTIBLE BITS AND PIECES

By Paul J.H. Leaser

UNEARTHED!

The archeological record surrenders its secrets slowly and sometimes grudgingly. Persistence and a deep interest will force the earth to reveal its treasures.

Pictured here is an old western “shooting iron”; actually a 44 cal. Colt recovered in Texas recently. Further down the creek, this 1851 Navy colt was found.

The lure of collecting relics, perhaps, is the stimulation of our imaginations as to their history.

Civil War artifacts are high on the list of desire by “digger”, and even today important relics are unearthed from battlefields and campsites.

In our own Florida Territories, arrow heads and musket flints, buttons from Federal army personnels are recovered in Seminole areas. The pictured powder flask was found in the depths of Totopotamy Creek just last winter.

Truly, if I were 20 years younger, I believe I would embrace this form of collecting!

Well-preserved powder flask unearthed near Totopotamoy Creek. The stamped brass flask measures 2” x 4 1/8” and can sill keep powder dry.

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TARPON SPRINGS
GARDON CLUB NOTES

January Meeting

The Garden Club of Tarpon Springs meets 11am, Monday, January 6th at St. Timothy’s Fellowship Hall, 720 E. Tarpon Ave, Tarpon Springs.

PROGRAM : Gardening with Florida Native Plants
By : Master Gardener Peggy Gretchen
Light refreshments
All are welcome

February Meeting

The Palm Harbor Garden Club meets 10:00am, Monday, Feb. 9, 2015 at the East Lake Community Library, 4125 East Lake Rd. Palm Harbor, Fl 34685.

“Meet and Greet”, continental breakfast and business meeting followed by our guest speaker, master gardener Sandra Huff.

She will speak on the early spring bloom habitat of the birds of Alligator Lake during the Great Blue Heron nesting season.

Free. All are welcome.

For information call Anastasia Seelig (727) 781-9049
INVASIVE PLANTS (PART 2)
By Pam Brown, Gardening Coach (ELW resident)

Just as a review, last month I provided the definition of an invasive-exotic plant as an introduced plant that can displace native vegetation by out-competing it. Without the diseases and pest insects that normally keep the invasive plants under control in their native habitat, they form dense stands that dominate and alter the original natural community by overwhelming and displacing existing native vegetation. This loss of native plant diversity also destroys or alters the habitat for our native wildlife causing them to also decline. There are several more plants that I have encountered in the Woodlands that I want to add to the two mentioned in last month’s article.

Carrotwood

Carrotwood (Cupaniopsis anacardioides) is an evergreen tree that is usually single-trunked and grows to 35 feet tall. The outer bark is dark grey. The tree is called carrotwood because it often has an orange colored inner bark. The compound leaves look a bit like Brazilian pepper leaves on steroids. There are 4-12 shiny yellowish-green un-toothed leaflets on each eight inch long and three inch wide compound leaf. Numerous white to greenish yellow flowers occur in branched clusters about 14 inches long in January and February. The fruit are the most striking identifying characteristic; a woody capsule with 3 distinctly ridged segments, yellow orange when ripe (April/May), drying to brown and characteristic; a woody capsule with 3 distinctly ridged segments, yellowish brown having 2 black seeds. The outer bark is dark grey. The tree is called carrotwood because it often has an orange colored inner bark. The compound leaves look a bit like Brazilian pepper leaves on steroids. There are 4-12 shiny yellowish-green un-toothed leaflets on each eight inch long and three inch wide compound leaf. Numerous white to greenish yellow flowers occur in branched clusters about 14 inches long in January and February. The fruit are the most striking identifying characteristic; a woody capsule with 3 distinctly ridged segments, yellow orange when ripe (April/May), drying to brown and splitting open to expose 3 shiny oval black seeds covered by a yellow-red crust. Birds consume these seeds and spread them far from each tree. Access the University of Florida publication on this invasive at http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/ag111 for more information on identification and control.

Climbing Fern on Cypress

The next two ferns; Japanese Climbing Fern (Lygodium japonicum) and Old World Climbing Fern (Lygodium microphyllum) have similar characteristics. Japanese climbing fern is a perennial vine-type fern, reaching up to 90 feet in length. Its leaves are lacy and finely divided, arranged opposite on the vine. The vine stems are green to orange to black and wiry, often infesting trees and shrubs forming dense mats of vegetation. Fertile fronds are usually smaller segments with fingerlike projections around the margins. These projections bear the spore producing structures in double rows under the margins. The very tiny spores are easily dispersed by wind. Access the University of Florida publication on this invasive at http://plants.ifas.ufl.edu/node/639 for more information on identification and control.

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Climbing Fern Comparison

Old world climbing fern is a fern with climbing fronds. What looks like a stem is actually a climbing, freely branching, leaf which may grow as long as 100 feet. There are two types of leaflets on its climbing leaf. The leaflet with the simple (unlobed) outline is a normal vegetative leaflet. The more convoluted leaflet has reproductive parts which produce spores which lead to the production of separate small plants that lead ultimately to a new climbing fern. This alternating of vegetative and reproductive plants as separate generations is typical of most ferns. Access the University of Florida publication on this invasive at http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/ag122 for more information on identification and control.

Skunk Vine

The next vine, Skunk vine (Paederia foetida) is aptly named for the smell emitted by the crushed leaves. Skunk vine is a woody vine that is able to grow 50 feet in length, climbing up into tree canopies or crawling along the ground which is the way I have found it growing in the Woodlands. Curiously, the vines constantly twine to the right. Skunk vine leaves vary in size and shape generally with either rounded or heart shaped bases with pointed tips and smooth margins. Leaves are usually opposite on the stem but have also been found in whorls of three. The flowers are small, light grayish pink or lilac, with red centers. The fruit are small, spherical, shiny brown having 2 black seeds. Skunk vine stems are able to root readily in soil. It is thought that birds eat the seeds, but this has not been verified.

Please learn to identify these invasives so that they can be removed while they are young. This is especially true of the last three vines. All of these vines have the potential to cover existing vegetation up into the canopy of trees. This can be disastrous in case of fire which can rapidly spread up the vines into the canopy of trees.

If you find any of these invasives on your own property or on conservation land near your home, pull it up by the roots or spray it with herbicide. Monitor and retreat if re-growth occurs. Double bag in plastic any invasives you pull up and place them in the trash to prevent spread. Every little bit helps control the spread of these pest plants.

All of the plants I profiled in these two articles are on the Florida Noxious Weed List. They may not be introduced, possessed, moved, or released without a permit. For additional information, the University of Florida publication “Help Protect Florida’s Natural Areas form Non-Native Invasive Plants” (http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/ag108) can provide practical ways to deal with these pests.

Pictures from University of South Florida or University of Florida
REAL ESTATE TODAY!
Hugh A. Lichter, M.A. REALTOR®,
Century 21 East Lake Realty and Leasing

What do today’s home buyers want in a home? If you’re thinking of selling, please take note!

Today’s trends show that home buyers are younger than previous generations and “younger at heart”, and as the home buyer evolves, so do the things they look for in a home. Here are five major shifts in homes you can expect to see today and in the coming years.

1. The media room or “man cave” emerged in real estate marketing a few years back, and it’s no longer the purview of males! Many buyers now prefer high-tech rooms with surround sound, large-screen TV’s, and the most up-to-date A/V equipment to the coveted formal living room of a generation’s past.

2. “Carrie Bradshaw” Closets. In the first Sex and the City movie, Carrie Bradshaw excitedly tours her future Manhattan apartment with Mr. Big - and is woefully disappointed at the tiny closet space. He surprises her by dramatically remodeling the cramped space into a dream closet, with glowing, glass-enclosed sub-closets. We don’t need to go to that extreme, but closets and storage are important.

3. Home Offices. Even if you don’t work from home, it’s true that most of us do take work home and even retirees have computers, printers, scanners, and other technology. For this purpose it’s become a need, rather than a want for most home buyers.

4. Hardwood Floors and Large Tile Flooring. If you walk into a home that hasn’t been on the market for decades, you’ll probably see a lot of wall-to-wall carpeting and older small-sized tile. This was common in the mid and late 20th century. Not only did carpeting help reduce heating bills, it was seen as physically comforting and less sterile. These days, it’s a thumbs down for potential buyers and a costly replacement.

5. Urban Homes with Amenities. Home buyers used to covet a three-quarter acre lot. Today’s buyers - both the Gen X and Gen Y generations as well as empty-nest retirees-see that same lot and think “maintenance.” They want smaller properties with less to keep up, but still enough interior space for living and fun!

I am often asked, “What’s the first thing I should do if I want to sell my home?” If you’re looking to sell your home and the outside of your house looks weather-beaten or if there’s any sign of “green” or discoloration on the exterior, then you should consider pressure washing. If it’s really bad, I recommend paint at least the front, if not the whole exterior, along with a large “dose” of fresh mulch.

Think about it: “Curb appeal” sells. The first thing a potential buyer sees is the front of the house and first impressions are everything.

In picking a paint color, keep in mind the character of a neighborhood and any HOA restrictions. If all the houses on the street are beige and tan, don’t paint your house pink! The color should also reflect the landscape. Consider the shrubs and trees when shopping for a color as the color will enhance your greenery!

If torn, you can’t go wrong with white. White is one of the safest, and most popular colors to paint the exterior. According to one survey, nearly 40 percent of those questioned liked white. For one thing, white can make your house look larger. White also soak up the light in a shady yard, and is also clean-looking. One of the nice things about white is that you can paint the trim with a color that makes the entire house pop!

If you are even thinking of selling, you owe it to yourself to have a conversation with a real estate professional. We can give you sound advice and good, solid local market info that will greatly assist you. And, if you or someone you know is even thinking of buying, a real estate professional is best able to go over price, payment, location, and value information for this very large decision.

If you or someone you know has an interest in either buying or selling a home/condo/villa/estate, please contact me, Hugh A. Lichter, MA, Century 21 East Lake Realty, at 727-421-5010.


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AIR DOCTOR AIR CONDITIONING AND HEATING INC RECEIVES 2014 BEST OF OLDSMAR AWARD

Air Doctor Air Conditioning and Heating Inc has been selected for the 2014 Best of Oldsmar Award in the Indoor Air Quality Equipment & Supplies category by the Oldsmar Award Program.

Each year, the Oldsmar Award Program identifies companies that we believe have achieved exceptional marketing success in their local community and business category. These are local companies that enhance the positive image of small business through service to their customers and our community. These exceptional companies help make the Oldsmar area a great place to live, work and play.

Various sources of information were gathered and analyzed to choose the winners in each category. The 2014 Oldsmar Award Program focuses on quality, not quantity. Winners are determined based on the information gathered both internally by the Oldsmar Award Program and data provided by third parties.

About Oldsmar Award Program

The Oldsmar Award Program is an annual awards program honoring the achievements and accomplishments of local businesses throughout the Oldsmar area. Recognition is given to those companies that have shown the ability to use their best practices and implemented programs to generate competitive advantages and long-term value.

The Oldsmar Award Program was established to recognize the best of local businesses in our community. Our organization works exclusively with local business owners, trade groups, professional associations and other business advertising and marketing groups. Our mission is to recognize the small business community’s contributions to the U.S. economy.
THE “PERFECT” SPOT  
By Sally Giar

It’s a common challenge in almost every home. What you ask? Why, where to put the TV – and how to arrange a room full of furniture around this all-important home entertainment unit! And, as with many electronic products today – bigger is definitely better!

So where to begin? How do you accommodate the 40” plus TV unit? Is it possible to hide or at least disguise these units and the components?

The answer to these questions is a resounding YES! It can be done! All it takes is a little pre-planning and some imagination! Today’s beautiful and functional entertainment centers and armoires are specifically designed to “close in” televisions and their component equipment.

When creating any furniture arrangement plan, it’s important that you first make a list of the activities and functions that the room will encompass. It’s important to think about how this room will ultimately be used. What is your desired seating capacity? Is traffic flow around your furniture important? Are pets a consideration? What specific types of activities will be enjoyed in this room? Taking stock of exactly how you desire to use your room will ultimately help you work with a professional decorator, or design and implement your own plan.

Once you’ve analyzed your space, the next step is to divide your space into primary and secondary plans. It’s also critical that you take into consideration the positions of windows and doors; direction of room exposure, and placement of heat vents, before determining locations for various pieces. Naturally, placing your television directly opposite a wall of windows facing east would be less than ideal. Exposure to strong sunlight, humidity, extremes of heat and cold, and even less extreme but frequent changes of temperature may affect various pieces of furniture – limiting their possible placement.

Furniture arranging is a fun and often challenging experience – just like putting the pieces of a jigsaw puzzle together. Successful furniture arrangement is not a hit and miss matter. It’s a skillful process and can be done easily, and beautifully, when you take advantage of a knowledgeable professional.

Along Dunedin’s Main Street, you will meet some of the country’s finest artists and crafters with products all handmade in America. Ceramic planters, functional pottery, hair accessories, handmade one-of-a-kind jewelry pieces and an expansive Green Market offers something for every taste & budget.

The festival will be on February 14 and 15, from 10:00 to 5:00 pm and is free to the public.

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Along Dunedin’s Main Street, you will meet some of the country’s finest artists and crafters with products all handmade in America. Ceramic planters, functional pottery, hair accessories, handmade one-of-a-kind jewelry pieces and an expansive Green Market offers something for every taste & budget.

The festival will be on February 14 and 15, from 10:00 to 5:00 pm and is free to the public.
LIBRARY CLOSINGS:
1/19/15 - STAFF DEVELOPMENT DAY

COMPUTER CHAT WITH PAUL
Wednesdays, January 7, 14 & 21, 2015
12:30pm-2:30pm
Bring your problems, questions, and laptops! Classes are 1 hour each and are scheduled from 12:30pm-1:30pm or 1:30pm-2:30pm. Please call the library to register.

ELCL BOOK CLUB
Wednesday, January 7, 2015
6:30pm-7:45pm
This month’s selection is “Learning to Die in Miami: Confessions of a Refuge Boy” by Carlos Eire. We always welcome new members.

BABY SIGN!
Fridays, January 9, 16, 23 & 30, 2015
11:30am-12:30pm
Miss Kathryn from the Deaf Literacy Center of the Pinellas Public Library Consortium will teach babies up to age 3 and their caregivers sign language. No older children please. Space is limited registration is required.

LEGO CLUB
Friday, January 9 & 23, 2015
3:00pm-4:00pm
As part of our fabulous fun Fridays, join us for LEGO CLUB. School age kids only, please. You can free play or we will provide a project for you. No need to register, come on by.

THRILLING TALES
Friday, January 9, 2015
1:30pm-2:15pm
A story time for adults - sit back and enjoy short stories of suspense from well-known authors such as Poe, Bradbury, and Asimov as well as lesser known writers! No registration is required.

SEWING CLASS
Saturday, January 10, 2015
12:00pm-2:00pm
Join us for this fun new, basic sewing class. You will learn how to thread a sewing machine, wind a bobbin and make a potholder in your very first class. Please call for the supplies list and to register.

CONCERT AT THE LIBRARY - BAYSIDE STRING QUARTET
Sunday, January 11, 2015
2:00pm-3:00pm
Advance tickets are available at the library circulation desk for a donation of $10 for one concert ticket or $40 for a season ticket. Tickets will also be available at the door. Proceeds benefit the library. Join us after each concert for a complementary wine and cheese reception.

PALM HARBOR GARDEN CLUB
Monday, January 12, 2015
10:00am-12:00pm
Would you like to learn what plants thrive in Florida? How to propagate plants? What plants grow well in sun or shade? What diseases or pests are attacking your plants? How to prune properly? Then, join us for our exciting program! There will also be presenters for your enrichment, enjoyment, and gardening knowledge.

WRITERS’ CRITIQUE GROUP
Mondays, January 12 & 26, 2015
6:00pm-7:45pm
A workshop for writers of all levels. Read excerpts of your works in progress and receive helpful feedback.

SHINE MEDICARE HELP
Tuesday, January 13 & 27, 2015
12:30pm-3:00pm
Do you need help navigating Medicare? Free, confidential, unbiased help with all Medicare questions, long-term care planning, and prescription assistance resources. Registration required.

FIBER ARTS FOR KIDS
Wednesday, January 14, 2015
4:00pm-5:00pm
Ages: 7-14. Love working with fabrics or want to learn a new skill? Fabric art projects for kids include needlework, knitting, embroidery, crocheting, and quilting! Bring your project or start with our materials. Preregistration required. Parents are encouraged to stay in the program and assist the participants. Space is limited to 15 families.

NIGHT LIFE AT THE LIBRARY: CHOCOLATE MAKING!
Wednesday, January 14, 2015
6:30pm-7:45pm
Fun, entertaining and sometimes offbeat workshops for grownups! In anticipation of Valentine’s Day, this month’s program is chocolate-making, presented by chocolatier Michelle Palisi. Enjoy demonstrations and samplings of some delicious treats! This program will require a $5.00 non-refundable materials fee to defray the costs at the time of registration. Please make your payment by cash at the reference desk. In-person registration only for this workshop. Register between December 10-January 7.

FAB FRIDAY FUN ART STUDIO
Friday, January 16, 2015
3:00pm-4:00pm
All school age kids can join Miss Susan for art, crafts and fun.

LITTLE ARTISTS
Saturday, January 17, 2015
11:00am-12:00pm
Ages: 3-7. Special programs for families on the third Saturday of each month. This month, little artists can create a masterpiece! Please register, so we have enough for everyone. Dress accordingly, art can be messy.

PRACTICE SAT TEST
Saturday, January 24, 2015
9:00 am-1:30 pm
The Huntington Learning Center and the East Lake Community Library are teaming up to offer a practice SAT test. The practice test is available for $25.00 and all proceeds will benefit teen library materials and services. Registration is in-person only, and the non-refundable test fee is due at the sign-up. Due to limited space, only students in grades 9 through 12 are eligible to enroll to take the practice test.

ART CLASS-YOU CAN DO IT!
Saturday, January 24, 2015
2:00pm-4:00pm
Are you looking for a new hobby for the new year? In this popular art class, you will explore painting with acrylics and watercolors. Registration required. Try your hand at a landscape or florals. Preregistration required.

FIBER ARTS GROUP
Wednesday, January 28, 2015
6:00pm-7:30pm
Come and explore fabric arts with us! Sewing machines are welcome.

DON’T FALL FOR IT - “FALL PREVENTION”
Friday, January 30, 2015
9:30am-11:00am
Fall Prevention Coalition of Better Living for Seniors presents “Don’t Fall for It”. Did you know that 1 out of 3 older adults (65+) fall every year? Come learn how to avoid being in that statistic! Open to the public!

FABULOUS FRIDAY FUN!
Friday, January 30, 2015
3:00pm-4:00pm
School age children can join us for fun stories, crafts or something special. The fourth Friday of the month is always the Librarian’s surprise. Miss Susan always has something up her sleeve!

AARP SMART DRIVER COURSE
Saturday, January 31, 2015
10:00am-4:00pm
AARP’s Smart Drive course is a six-hour workshop that will provide drivers 55 and over with defensive driving techniques and proven safety strategies. Register online, by phone or in person with payment made the day of the course - $15 for AARP members and $20 for non-members (CHECK ONLY). Participants will receive a certificate at the end of the workshop that may earn you a multi-year discount on your car insurance!
OVERCOMING RETIREMENT FEARS
By Kathy Burke, Financial Planner

Retirement is supposed to be the “Golden Years”, but lately it seems many pre-retirees are overwhelmed with “Retirement Fears”. The top fears I hear include: terrified I will outlive my money, no idea what I own, another Great Depression, losing my financial independence, and, no idea when to take social security, just to name a few.

Fear is one of the most powerful emotions that impacts investment results. When markets are rising, there is a fear of missing out on gains that are making others rich. When markets are falling, the fear is losing everything you’ve saved. Without a financial plan in place, emotions can play a big role in investment decisions. This is evidenced during the years of 1990 – 2009 when the average stock mutual fund returned 8.8% per year, but the average stock fund investor earned only 3.2%. This means that investor mistakes caused a penalty of more than 5% of returns per year!

If you have any of the fears above, know that you are not alone! And more importantly, know there are a number of ways to mitigate, if not take away, those fears. A good financial planning program dedicates a full meeting to each financial planning topic, providing thorough coverage of each topic. In the process you are provided with the education needed to empower you to work collaboratively with your planner, to choose from multiple planning options. You are then able to determine the most beneficial option for you financially, as well as the option that aligns with your beliefs and values.

When empowered by your financial planner and given multiple planning options to choose from, you are much more likely to stick to your plan when times get tough. It is much easier to stick to a plan that you decided is right for you, knowing the reasons you chose the path you are on, and realizing that the path anticipates unexpected or disruptive changes.

A financial planner can be thought of as your financial coach. Bill McCartney, University of Colorado Football Coach said, “All coaching is, is taking a player where he can’t take himself.” Coaching is what separates great athletes from good ones. A coach takes athletes who can compete on their own and helps them achieve greater success faster. Likewise, a good financial planner will help you accomplish your financial goals more quickly, with less anxiety, and with fewer mistakes.

One way financial planners coach clients is by integrating all areas of their finances, including current and future cash flow, debt management, investments, estate planning, insurance, social security and taxes, so they are working together both efficiently and harmoniously. This holistic approach allows you to consider the effect of each planning option on other areas of your finances, before making a final decision. A good financial plan will consider the four stages of your financial life with each decision: wealth accumulation, preservation, distribution, and wealth transfer.

An independent fee-based financial planner has no allegiance to any particular company, product or service. By charging a fee for services rather than receiving commissions, she is able to provide the best products and services, in the best interest of her clients. A fee-based financial planner can make a positive difference on your financial life, as well as provide financial peace of mind. You owe it to yourself and to your family to do all you can to provide a stable, secure future. Call today for a free consultation and resolve to have financial peace of mind in this New Year!

1Report pulled from Dalbar, Inc., from a purchased QAIB report

Kathy Burke, Financial Planner
813-352-4060
Kathy@WorryFreeMoney.com
www.WorryFreeMoney.com
EAGLE GALA FUNDRAISER TO BENEFIT CYPRUS WOODS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Cypress Woods Elementary School’s Parent Teacher Association (PTA) invites you to save the date for its Annual Eagle Gala “Be Center Stage” school fundraiser event to be held at 7 p.m. on January 24, 2015 at Cypress Run Country Club in Tarpon Springs, Fla.

Parents, businesses, teachers, friends and neighbors of the school are invited to attend and/or contribute. Proceeds help bridge gaps in the funding of educational and enrichment programs, reading recovery programs, teacher partnerships and materials/equipment for students at Cypress Woods Elementary (CWE).

Designed as an upscale evening of entertainment for a great cause, the Eagle Gala “Be Center Stage” event will include gourmet-style food, bar service, a live band, dancing, silent auctions, talent show/karaoke, photography and more. For tickets, sponsorship and donation information, visit www.eaglegala.com or contact the PTA at info@eaglegala.com.

“Donations and sponsorships are critical in meeting the Eagle Gala’s fundraising goals for Cypress Woods,” explains Leona Wells, CWE PTA vice president. “There are many ways for our neighbors and businesses to get involved. They can email us at info@eaglegala.com to purchase tickets or become a Named Sponsor, gift items for the auction or contribute a tax-deductible donation,” she continues.

Tax-deductible sponsorship packages include: Bronze ($200), Gold ($500) and Platinum ($800) and provide name/brand recognition in multiple formats, including print and digital exposure throughout the community this school year.

“Supporting the Eagle Gala through sponsorship allows our business partners an opportunity to make a positive impact in the lives of students while fostering goodwill and expanding marketing reach in the community,” adds Wells. “We appreciate the ongoing generosity of our sponsors. They help make great things possible for the kids … and that’s what it’s all about!”

Located off of East Lake Road in Palm Harbor, Cypress Woods Elementary is an A-rated school that provides a first-rate education to a diverse population of more than 800 students.

PTA is the largest volunteer-based child advocacy group in America with a mission to be a powerful voice for all children. Collectively, it has worked for more than 100 years toward bettering the lives of every child in the areas of education, health and safety. For more about Cypress Woods Elementary PTA and other upcoming events, visit www.cypresswoodspta.com.
Our smallest and most common small falcon is the American Kestrel, sometimes also called the “sparrow hawk”. It packs a predator’s fierce intensity into its small body. It is usually found in close proximity to open fields, either perched on a snag or telephone wire or hovering in search of prey. The typical falcon-shaped wings are slim and pointed and the tail is long and square-tipped. All American Kestrels have two bold, dark moustache marks framing white cheeks on the face and have the dark eyes typical of falcons. It is believed that the dark patches under the eyes serve to absorb bright sunlight so it does not reflect back up into the eyes. The American Kestrel hunts grasshoppers, lizards, mice, insects, small mammals, small birds, and reptiles from a perch or on the wing. It will hover above a field on rapidly beating wings, or soar in place in strong winds above a hillside. The flight style is quick and buoyant, almost erratic, with wings usually swept back.

While our American Kestrel in Florida does not normally migrate, others do and become a frequent winter visitor to Florida arriving in October and leaving in April. The migrating American Kestrel usually returns to the northern U.S. and Canada where they spend the summer months. Sports fans in some cities have been known to get an extra show during night games; American Kestrels perching on light standards or foul poles, tracking moths and other insects in the powerful stadium light beams and catching these snacks on the wing.

It can be tough being one of the smallest birds of prey. Despite their fierce lifestyle, American Kestrels end up as prey for larger birds such as Red-shouldered Hawks, Barn Owls, American Crows, and Cooper Hawks, as well as a variety of snakes and even Fire Ants here in Florida.

American Kestrels nest in cavities, although they lack the ability to excavate their own. They rely on old woodpecker holes, natural tree hollows, rock crevices, and nooks in buildings and other human-built structures. They do not use nesting materials. If the cavity floor is composed of loose material, the female hollows out a shallow depression. The male does the searching for possible nest cavities. When he’s found suitable candidates, he shows them to the female, who makes the final choice – sound familiar?

American Kestrels normally hunt by day. You may see them scanning for prey from the same perch all day long – or changing perches every few minutes. An American Kestrel pounces on its prey, seizing it with one or both feet; the kestrel may finish off the meal right there or carry it back to the perch.

During breeding season, males advertise their territory by repeatedly climbing and diving, uttering a short series of klee! calls at the top of each ascent. Courting pairs may exchange gifts of food; usually the male feeds the female.

Three to seven eggs are typically laid approximately 24-72 hours apart. The eggs are white to cream colored with brown or grey splothing. Incubation usually lasts 30 days and is mainly the responsibility of the female. Hatching takes place over three to four days and the chicks are altricial at birth (helpless). The chicks are finally able to sit up after five days but grow quickly thereafter, reaching adult weight after 16 days. After a month, their wings develop and they are able to leave the nest. The young birds may breed when they are a year old, and American Kestrels generally have a 10-year life expectancy.

I took all of these photographs in 2014 at Fort DeSoto Park at the southern end of Pinellas County and on the Honeymoon Osprey Trail in Dunedin.

Jake
“We have a great team and that shows in the way we care for you!”
Hollie, RN

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