

What Does The Civic Association Board Do For Me? —

Being on a volunteer HOA Board is interesting. We hear this question mostly when someone is upset, wants change or some other issue comes up. As an HOA – the Town & River Civic Association does an incredible job given a 100 percent volunteer Board and a mere \$10/month from homeowners. Some owners even complain loudly that it's too expensive – others have told us, "Well, the Board allowed this owner to do such and such so I'm not paying the dues," from an incident well over 10 years ago. 52 percent of owners carry the cost of the association's activities.

What do we do? A lot. And for those that criticize, there is always room on the Board for them to volunteer – and there is always room every month. We have a meeting homeowners can come to and they can comment and make their voice or opinion heard. Our greatest effort is in increasing everyone's property values. This is something we should all care about.

Twice a month, our Architectural Review Committee receives a permit report from Lee County. Docks, seawalls, demolition, additions, new homes – all of it comes to the committee, it is sorted through and determinations are made on many things. Town & River Deeds of Restrictions do differ from the county in some significant ways, so a county permit does not mean a new build or modification or whatever meets Town & River standards. And we should all note – adhering to all the DOR is a matter of your property's deed. It is a legal and binding obligation. So we also review violations from hedge

heights and fencing to trash barrels and lawns in bad need of weeding, fertilizer, mowing and edging.

Today, you can go online and read the DOR for your area. There are three in force today. They were written years ago and badly need a rewrite, not to change the rules – but to make them clear, legible and easily understood so they can be easily followed.

This Board attempted to consolidate the two remaining outlying DORs into the main DOR that governs some 70-plus percent of the community. Unit 6 fell four votes short in the effort – mostly because so many folks didn't respond with a proxy or simply didn't answer their door. Unit 11 had a split vote.

So the Board will move forward with a planned rewrite of the main DOR and will attempt to clean up the language and structure of all three. Our goal is to finish this work by the annual meeting and present it to the community for their approval. As I stated above – the effort is not – again, not to make changes. It is simply to clarify and, in the process, eliminate vague, contradictory ambiguous and illogical language.

The Board works with the community's attorneys most often to guide us when we do have a conflict and DOR language leaves us without a clear course.

The Board has over the past couple of years had many of our streets paved. We totally redid our website. We have

created a community logo, worked on the newsletter – and many other issues to include insurance and more.

Our schedule and proceedings are in the monthly newsletter. All the DORs are on the website as are past editions and more. If you haven't been to www.townandriverfl.com, take a few moments and head over. If nothing else – the videos show off our community in the most favorable light.

And maybe join us when you have time. We really seek community involvement. Your constructive input helps us immeasurably.

Board Of Directors Meeting Minutes [Unapproved]

Thursday, February 10, 2022

Call To Order – President Mark Generales called the meeting to order at 6:30 P.M.

Board Of Directors

A quorum was established. Directors Present: Ann Marie Aeschliman, Roy Benton, Kay Gloris, John Kristobak, Myriam Lentz, Capt. Craig O'Donnell & Martha Smith (via telephone). Officers Present: Vice President Rick Chubb, Secretary Renee Notes & Treasurer Gary Hudson via telephone. Executive Secretary Sally Stigler was also present. Absent: Director Marge Byrne. At the request of President Mark Generales, the Association Attorney, Richard DeBoest was also in attendance.

Guest Speaker: Richard DeBoest, Esquire

Board members introduced themselves to Richard with a brief report of their T&R board involvement. Mr. DeBoest began his address with a brief history of T&R & the DOR, stating the current DOR is extremely broad with no details; lending to various interpretations. The community began in the early 1960's, & the DOR reflects the mindset of residents at that particular time. He suggested the DOR be modernized in keeping with the thinking & lifestyle of today.

He also cautioned on the granting of variances. The definition of a variance is "an exception to the rule"; & should be granted for unique & justified circumstances only, to avoid selective enforcement of the DOR. Areas with an expired DOR need 50% of owners to vote favorably to re-establish the DOR.

The formation of a committee to review & re-write the DOR would be in order prior to submitting for legal counsel & filing. Rick questioned if it were possible to have purchasers indicate on the estoppel letter they had read the

DOR. Mr. DeBoest suggested he refer to Florida Statutes 720.30851 for direction & a sample letter. Having answered all questions Mr. DeBoest left at 7:15pm.

Approval Of Minutes –January 13, 2022 minutes were approved by motion.

Treasurer's Report – Gary Hudson (via telephone)

- Gary emailed January financial reports to the board earlier in the week.

- With no questions presented, the treasurer's report was approved by motion.

Committee Reports

Lake Status –Renee Notes

Renee reported the aerators are not working properly & has made arrangements for repairs. Mark will contact South Florida Water Management to have debris removed to create a pathway from the river to the lake for increased water flow. If this area were cleared aerators in the lake would not be needed.

Deeds Of Restriction/Architectural Review Committee – Rick Chubb

Permit reports have been received from the county, & Rick will speak with owners.

Special Meetings of Units 6 & 11 Owners

If additional meetings are necessary, they will be held at South Pointe South Clubhouse on March 10, 2022, to assure all owners who wish to vote have another opportunity to do so. Board members will be contacting Unit 6 and 11 owners in person to urge them to vote.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:55 P.M. The next regularly scheduled Board Meeting will convene 6:30pm Thursday, March 10, 2022, at South Pointe South Clubhouse, 9734 Foxglove Circle, Ft. Myers.

Respectfully submitted,
Sally Stigler, Executive Secretary

Valentine's Day Cruise

The Town & River Cruise Club met for the annual Valentine's Day celebration. The weather was beautiful! The Captains and First Mates gathered at the Lighthouse Restaurant on Tuesday, Feb. 8 to share in good times and to celebrate Valentine's Day. The food was good, candy sweet and no one left hungry. The bingo games were fun with treats from Norman Love. The Bebees won big!



Pam Simon hosted this fun event.



Old friends enjoyed being together again.



Decisions. Decisions.

Valentine's Day Cruise on page 2

**All are encouraged to attend
our next Board meeting on April 14!**

The Board meets on the second Thursday of each month at 6:30 p.m.
South Pointe South Clubhouse
9734 Foxglove Circle, Fort Myers.

Check out our new website
www.townandriverfl.com.

Valentine's Day Cruise from page 1



Fred announces the winner of the 50/50.



The "Special of the Day" sounded great.



Pam and Rick Simon went all out decorating.



The view from the dining area is simply amazing.



An enthusiastic group arrived at the Lighthouse.



The T&R Cruise Club celebrated Valentine's Day on a gorgeous day.



Norman Love chocolates were given to Ed, Ken and Adrienne for winning the bingo games.



Playing bingo is serious business every year.



Carol Pease wins again, LUCKY!



Town & River Cruise Club Membership Application

Name: _____
 Spouse: _____
 Address: _____
 Phone: _____
 Email: _____

BOAT INFORMATION

Boat Name: _____
 Boat Type and Size: _____
 Boat example – Name: Only in America
 Boat Type and Size: Power 30', Beam 10' 6"

MEMBERSHIP DUES

Dues	\$40 / household
Initiation Fee	\$40 / household (included burgee and name tags)
New Members Prorated Dues	
Joining between	
April 1 to September 30	\$40
October to December 31	\$30
January 1 to March 30	\$20

Send Application, Dues and Initiation Fee to: Cecilia Bourdon
 1026 Clarendon Drive
 Fort Myers, FL 33919

Make checks payable to: Cecilia Bourdon

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 9am Traditional ♦ 11am Contemporary

Maundy Thursday at 6:30pm
 Good Friday at 6:30pm

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 9am Traditional
 11am Contemporary



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Social Security Earnings Limit

Presented by Jacqueline Lambros, Registered Principal



Once you reach full retirement age (FRA), any income you earn will not affect your Social Security benefits. If, however, you took benefits early, you may be affected by the earnings limitation, which caps how much income you may earn and still receive Social Security benefits. Moreover, if other family members, such as your spouse or children, are receiving dependent benefits based on your work history, your earnings could reduce their benefits, too.

What's The Earnings Limit?

In 2022, the Social Security Administration (SSA) will

allow individuals to earn up to \$19,560 in calendar years prior to their FRA without being affected by the earnings limit. Once you reach this limit, \$1 of Social Security benefits will be withheld for every \$2 earned above the threshold. The threshold is higher in the year you reach your FRA: \$1 will be withheld for every \$3 earned above \$51,960. This offset would end in the month in which you reach your FRA.

Example: Let's assume Sally decides to begin collecting Social Security at age 64, two years before her FRA. She contacts the SSA and finds out that her monthly benefit amount will be \$1,800. She has been doing part-time consulting work to keep busy and estimates she has earned \$35,000. This amount puts her \$15,440 over the earnings limit for 2022 and consequently reduces her Social Security benefit by \$7,720 for the year.

Which Income Applies To The Earnings Limit?

When applying the earnings limit, the SSA looks only at earned income, which is an individual's gross wages or net

earnings if self-employed. A worker's investment income, government benefits, retirement plan distributions, and pensions do *not* count as income for the earnings limit. In addition, if you receive income after retirement that Social Security considers to be a "special payment," it is not counted as income for the earnings limit. Postretirement bonuses, vacation pay, commissions, sick pay, severance pay, and deferred compensation fall into the special payment category and therefore do not count toward the earnings limit.

Offset Benefits Are Not Lost Forever

If you find your Social Security benefits are offset by the earnings limit, you will recoup these payments once you reach your FRA. At that time, your benefits will be increased to account for the amounts withheld because of the earnings limit. Benefits paid to spouses and survivors with minors or children with disabilities in their care will not receive this increase at FRA.

This material has been provided for general informational purposes only and does not constitute either tax or legal advice. Although we go to great lengths to make sure our information is accurate and useful, we recommend you consult a tax preparer, professional tax advisor, or lawyer.

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Town & River Civic Association Inc. Profit And Loss February 2022

	Feb 22	Jan - Feb 22
Ordinary Income/Expense		
Income		
Income		
Income - Mandatory	240.00	10,920.00
Income - Voluntary	15,240.00	21,960.00
Total Income	15,480.00	32,880.00
Interest Income	0.55	1.15
PayPal Cash Bank Bonus	0.00	8.13
Total Income	15,480.55	32,889.28
Expense		
Accounting Fees	95.00	410.00
Bank Fees	35.00	70.00
Corp Insurance	420.09	840.18
Email Service	243.00	243.00
Legal Expense	1,381.53	3,960.28
Meeting Rooms	25.00	125.00
Newspaper Postage	143.02	286.04
Office Expense	0.00	74.97
PayPal Fees	170.28	221.76
Postage & Delivery	287.98	574.80
Printing & Reproduction	0.00	737.72
State Fee	0.00	61.25
Secretary Expense	262.50	262.50
Storage Expense	119.79	239.58
Utilities	49.51	95.09
Total Expense	3,232.70	8,202.17
Net Ordinary Income	12,247.85	24,687.11
Net Income	12,247.85	24,687.11

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Talent And Volunteers Are Being Sought By The Players Circle Theatre

The Players Circle Theatre, located in The Shell Factory, North Fort Myers, is seeking both talent and volunteers. Do you have a special talent or are you an experienced entertainer? The theatre is looking for local people to perform at the theater. Entertainers might be magicians, comedians, musicians (piano, voice, instrument), ventriloquists, dancers (cloggers, tap, flamenco, jazz or other types), or other special talents.



There's a volunteer job for everyone interested in the theatre business. And everyone needs to find his/her niche. Many individuals have the desire to become part

of a theatre. The Players Circle Theatre and Arts Center is looking for those individuals to become part of their theatre family of volunteers.

Volunteers would serve the whole gamut in putting art on the stages. You can choose how you want to participate from a long list of ways to interact with the theatre. The theatre is looking for dedicated people to assist patrons as ushers and customer service; these volunteers get to see the shows free!

Other volunteers are needed to assist with behind-the-scenes activities, helping with VIP events, assisting with mailings, office duties, and fundraising activities. Days and hours can be flexible. Email clcacioppo@playerscircle.org to sign up to become a volunteer.

Those interested in acting at the theatre should email Rcacioppo@playerscircle.org for information about acting positions.

The Players Circle Performing Arts Center was developed by veterans of the Southwest Florida theatre movement, Carrie Lund Cacioppo and Robert Cacioppo. They are prominent faces of theatre in Lee County for over 35 years, having started Lee County's first professional theatre on Sanibel Island and the Florida Repertory Theatre, which has been named "one of America's best regional theatres" by *The Wall Street Journal*. Players Circle Performing Arts Center is a professional black box theatre providing Broadway-level entertainment. Follow it online at PlayersCircle.org.

Eighth Annual Golf Tournament Supports The Heights Center Early Learning

April 22 At The Club At Shell Point

The eighth annual benefit golf tournament, "Tee It Up FORE The Kids," will take place on Friday, April 22, at The Shell Point Golf Club, 17500 On Par Blvd., Fort Myers. This year's event has been renamed The Craig Scott Memorial Tournament in honor of Scott, a long-time board member and supporter of Heights Early Learning (formerly GLAD Kids). The event's proceeds benefit Heights Early Learning, an organization that supports 85 children from birth through age 4. A part of The Heights Foundation/The Heights Center family, Heights Early Learning's mission is to ensure low-income families have quality, affordable childcare. Children read, learn and play in a safe environment while their parents provide for their families.



The event is sponsored by Entech.

Registration is from 7:30 until 8:30 a.m. The shotgun start is at 8:30 a.m., with a box lunch and awards following the tournament.

"The poverty rate for children in Harlem Heights is more than twice the county average," said Pat Ostrom, tournament director. "Heights Early Learning provides a stable, nurturing environment and means the parents can further their education and participate in the workforce."

Tournament registration is now available. The registration deadline is Friday, April 15.

Registration is \$125 per golfer or \$500 for a foursome. In addition, sponsorships that include golf packages and recognition are available. For more information, visit www.heightsfoundation.org/forthekids or call Jim Sanger at (239) 482-7706 or email jim@heightsfoundation.org.

About The Heights Foundation, The Heights Center, And The Heights Early Learning

The Heights Foundation works to build self-sufficient families in the Harlem Heights neighborhood. Our mission is to support education and wellness, promote

family and community development, and provide the benefits of enrichment and the arts. The Heights Center, supported by The Heights Foundation, is a place for education, opportunity, and enrichment. Heights Early Learning serves 85 babies through 4 years old. The Heights Center serves 134 children in after school and summer camp. The Harlem Heights Community Charter School serves 150 children from kindergarten through fifth grade.

Harlem Heights was originally settled as a rural agricultural community. Approximately 780 children live in a mixture of single-family homes and multi-family apartments. The population is approximately 70 percent Hispanic, 20 percent African-American, and 8 percent Caucasian. The poverty rate for children in Harlem Heights is more than twice the county average, with family income 40 percent below the county average. Families cannot easily access family support services in downtown Fort Myers and benefit greatly from programs located within the neighborhood.

Town & River Civic Association Inc.	
Balance Sheet	
As of February 28, 2022	
	Feb 28, 22
Assets	
Current Assets	
Checking/Savings	
First Citizens Bank 2580	27,635.34
First Citizens Bank - MMS	70,892.91
PayPal Account	5,804.45
Total Checking/Savings	104,332.70
Accounts Receivable	
Accounts Receivable	3,438.65
Total Accounts Receivable	3,438.65
Other Current Assets	
Prepaid, Lake Expense	909.03
Prepaid, Other Expense	270.76
Total Other Current Assets	1,179.79
Total Current Assets	108,951.14
Total Assets	108,951.14
Liabilities & Equity	
Equity	
Prior Year Fund Balance	56,180.89
Retained Earnings	28,083.14
Net Income	24,687.11
Total Equity	108,951.14
Total Liabilities & Equity	108,951.14

New LPGA Amateurs Lee-Charlotte Counties, FL Chapter Launched

The LPGA Amateurs Lee-Charlotte Counties, FL Chapter has officially launched, and everyone is invited to check them out. Whether you enjoy social or competitive golf, or would like the opportunity to improve your skills, or make new friends, you are invited to join.



The chapter is planning to offer regularly scheduled weekday and monthly weekend golf outings at courses throughout Lee and Charlotte Counties. They will also be hosting social events to give the members the opportunity to meet each other and widen their circle of friends and golf buddies! Membership and preregistration will be required for many of the events. Fees for the golf and social outings will be based on the respective facilities.

In addition to the classic membership, LPGA Amateurs offers special membership rates for military, seniors (ages 65-plus), and young professionals (ages 18 to 35).

For more information about LPGA Amateurs, visit www.lpgaamateurs.com or the Lee-Charlotte Chapter's website at www.lpgaamateursleechar.com.

About LPGA Amateur Golf Association

LPGA Amateurs is the recreational amateur arm of the LPGA family with headquarters in Daytona Beach, Fla. With more than 130 chapters globally, LPGA Amateurs is one of the largest women's amateur golf communities in the world. The organization provides playing and learning opportunities for adults of all ages and abilities through a variety of local and national events. As a member, you are connected to thousands of other members and can get it all through LPGA Amateurs.

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TOWN & RIVER CIVIC ASSOCIATION, INC.
 OFFICERS & BOARD OF DIRECTORS - as of February 9, 2022
 www.townandriverfl.com

President	Mark Generales	239-676-5676	pres@townandriverfl.com
Vice President	Rick Chubb	609-707-0825	vp@townandriverfl.com
Secretary	Renee Notes	239-209-2072	secy@townandriverfl.com
Treasurer	Gary Hudson	239-481-7748	treas@townandriverfl.com

STREET ASSIGNMENTS	DIRECTOR	EMAIL PHONE NUMBER
Bal Isle Dr E Town & River Rd	Roy Benton	dir1@townandriverfl.com 239-462-6515
Brevity Ln N Waterway Dr	Rick Chubb	dir2@townandriverfl.com 609-707-0825
Cal Cove Dr Cape View Dr Hatchee Vista Ln Jennifer Ln	John Kristobak	dir3@townandriverfl.com 724-272-6818
Clarellen Dr Cypress Lake Dr	Marge Byrne	dir4@townandriverfl.com 239-482-8923
Cypress Lake Cr Joanna Cr Sand Spur Ln	Myriam Lentz	dir5@townandriverfl.com 239-225-8533
Deep Lagoon Ln Julie Ann Ct	Ann Marie Aeschliman	dir6@townandriverfl.com 239-270-0000
Erin Marie Ct S. Town & River Dr	Martha Smith	dir7@townandriverfl.com 239-671-6347
McGregor Blvd Wittman Dr	Capt. Craig O'Donnell	dir8@townandriverfl.com 239-872-3313
N. Town & River Dr	Kay Gloris	dir9@townandriverfl.com 239-470-6400
Lake Committee	Renee Notes	secy@townandriverfl.com 239-209-2072
Deeds of Restriction Committee	Gary Hudson	archreview@townandriverfl.com 239-481-7748
Architectural Review Committee	Gary Hudson	archreview@townandriverfl.com 239-481-7748

Please contact the Director responsible for your street regarding any issues related to Town & River.

Owner Contact Information Request

Town & River Civic Association Inc.
 P.O. Box 07073
 Fort Myers, FL 33919

For improved communications,
 Please update your contact information.

Name(s): _____

Town & River Address: _____

Full Time Resident: ___ Seasonal Resident: ___ My Property is Leased ___

If not full-time, other address, including zip: _____

Telephone Number(s): _____

Email Address: _____

Attention: Members in good standing (paid dues and have no outstanding unresolved violations), who have submitted their contact information, and have agreed to have their contact information published in the online directory, will be issued a password to access the online directory. **An email address is required to access the online directory. EMAIL ADDRESSES WILL NOT BE PUBLISHED IN THE ONLINE DIRECTORY UNLESS YOU GIVE YOUR PERMISSION BELOW.**

Otherwise, the information submitted is for board use only.

If you agree to have your contact information included in a Town & River Directory, accessible by a password, please initial either: ___YES or ___NO

If "YES", please check the information you agree to be included in the Directory:

___ Names ___ Town & River Address ___ Other Address ___ Telephone # ___ Email Address

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Save The Date: Letter Carrier's Food Drive To Return On May 14

Seasonal Residents Urged To Leave Food For Drive At Post Offices

After a two-year hiatus, the Letter Carrier Food Drive will be held on Saturday, May 14. Letter carriers in Lee County are gearing up for the 30th annual food drive, the largest single-day food drive in the nation. The "Stamp Out Hunger" food drive is the one day when letter carriers collect nonperishable food that has been left by mailboxes.



Summer is coming, school will be out, and the need for food assistance will be greater than ever. Northerners and seasonal residents who are returning home prior to May 14 are encouraged to check their pantries for unopened food items; they may drop off their contributions at any post office.

Food collected will be distributed by local food banks such as Harry Chapin Food Bank and Midwest Food Bank in addition to food pantries managed by local community agencies. All food collected is distributed to participating agencies



at no cost. Virtually any kind of food may be donated in unopened, nonbreakable containers. Items especially in need are peanut butter, tuna, rice, beans, and canned meats, fruits, vegetables, and soups.

Volunteers are needed to both help letter carriers collect the food and to help sort the food once it has been collected. Information about volunteering will be provided in the near future.

For additional information about the Letter Carrier Food Drive, contact Steve Camacho, (239) 770-8463, machomantwo@gmail.com.

Catch The Action

April On The Water

By Capt. Bill Russell

If I had to choose one month of the year to fish in Southwest Florida, it would be hard to pass on the month of April. As we transition into spring, our coastal waters are warming, and fish are on the move and hungry. Weather is in our favor with light winds and mild sunny days, plus not much threat of daily thunderstorms. Also, until the summer rains begin, inshore waters are the clearest we will see all year.

Anglers will hook into the largest sea trout of the year with fish measuring well over 20 inches and a few near 30. Spanish mackerel are running large and schooling across our inshore waters, in the gulf passes, and a short distance offshore. Bluefish, ladyfish, jack crevalle, and sharks are often mixed with the mackerel. In gulf waters, king mackerel, often large, also follow the Spanish mackerel. If you want to tug on something larger, toss a big bait out for a big cobia or shark when you get mackerel or other fish biting. Both are curious and always looking for an easy meal.



Large sharks are common in our waters, it's possible to hook up with big bulls and lemons inshore with some pushing 10 feet. Also, blacktip and spinner sharks are roaming inshore and off the beaches. They may range from 3 to 6 feet and are some of the hardest fighting fish in the water, plus they often give an impressive aerial show when hooked.

Tarpon fishing kicks off this month throughout Southwest Florida. You may hook into a big silver king if you are fishing for them or not. They are just as likely to gulp down a live shrimp or small lure as anything. With calm days, look for schools of fish a short distance off the beach, early morning is the best time to toss a small live crab or Atlantic thread herring ahead of the school. Tarpon numbers will increase inshore, in the passes, and off the beaches as the month progresses.

After months of winter lows, we get high (spring) tides during the day. This is the time to hunt redfish under the bushes or mangroves shorelines as they use the higher water to get under the tree overhangs to root out their next meal. Fishing a stretch of shoreline over the last couple of hours of the rising and first of the falling on the big tide days will result in redfish action. On the opposite end of the spectrum, the month will hold mornings with ultra-low tides, just the ticket for sight fishing reds over the shallow flats. Hit the flats at first light for the best results.

This may be our best month of the year for chasing snook. If there is one fish in Southwest Florida that is easy to get obsessed with, it would be snook. To me, they are without a doubt our premier game fish. After you hook a few, you might get the snook bug. When releasing snook, or all fish to be released, it's important to quickly get them unhooked and back in the water. If you do not remove them from the water while unhooking, even better. If fishing live or natural baits, circle hooks are the way to go as they prevent deep damaging hook sets.

Make sure and keep up to date with fishing rules and seasons in the area you fish, as they change often. You can visit www.myfwc.com for all current state and federal regulations.

You can go a different fishing direction each day from inshore to offshore and not cover all the possibilities. If there is one month that just doesn't have enough days to take advantage of all the great fishing and boating available in our waters, April is it.

For charter information, please contact us at Gulf Coast Guide Service and "Catch the Action" with Capt.

Bill Russell, call or text (239) 410-8576, website: www.fishpineisland.com, email: gcl2fish@live.com.

Capt. Bill Russell is a native and lifelong resident of Pine Island who has spent his entire life fishing the waters surrounding Pine Island and Southwest Florida. For the past 26 years Bill has been a professional fishing guide who takes pride in customizing each trip to ensure everyone on board has a great time and will return again. Come join us and "Catch the Action."



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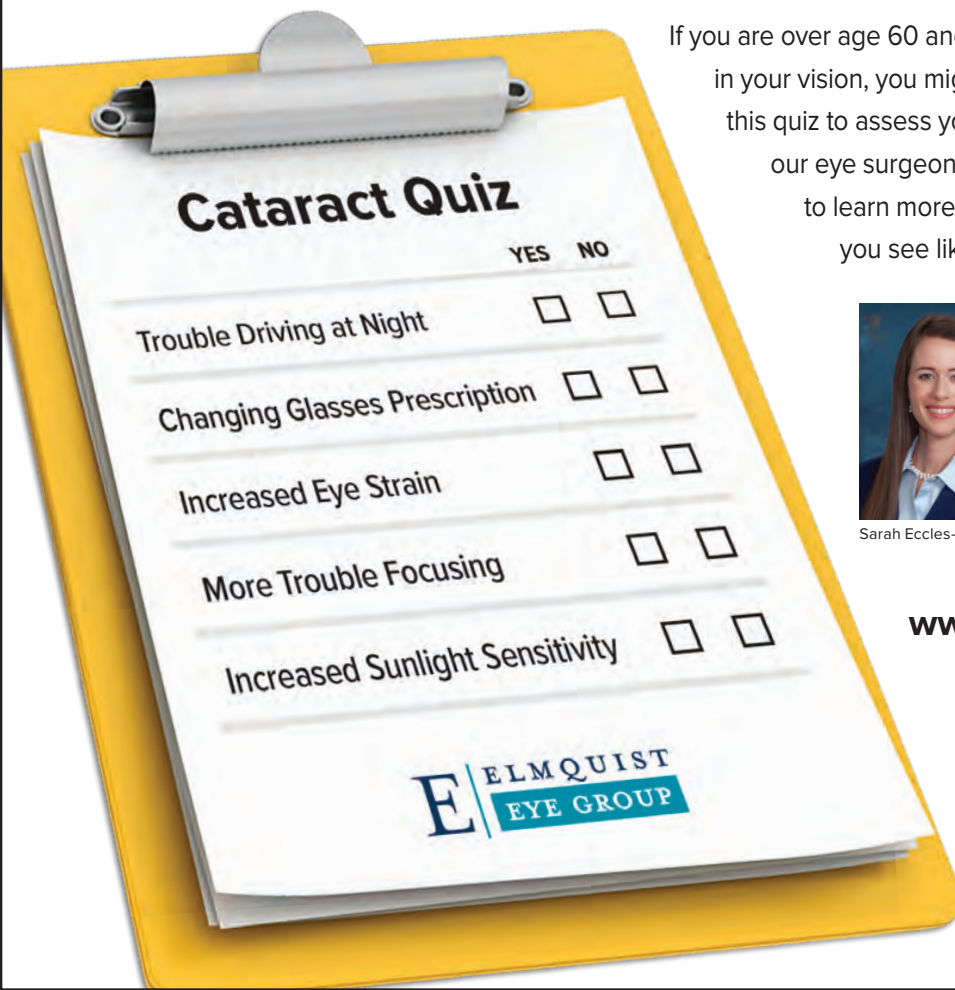
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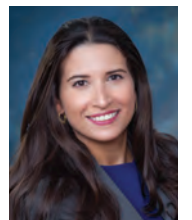


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From The Desk Of Sheriff Carmine Marceno

Construction Site Theft

Construction sites are appearing all over the Lee County Sheriff's Office East District. Undeveloped properties have increased in value and the demand for new homes has grown beyond expectation.



New homesites are particularly vulnerable to theft as the properties are vacant during the evening hours. Home builds, in their latter stages, include new appliances and, unfortunately, are frequently targeted.

While this activity is not unique to this region, the volume of theft has grown. Nationwide, an estimated \$1

billion of materials are stolen annually from construction sites ... Florida ranks third in the nation behind California and Texas.

A recent and dramatic increase in the cost of building supplies ... especially lumber ... has resulted in an escalation of criminal activity at these locations.

As a result of these thefts, I have created a Construction Site Investigations Unit, staffed with Lee County Sheriff's Office detectives, to investigate these construction-related felonies.

While this unit has proven to be effective and has made a significant number of arrests, the unit's success is dramatically improved when community members reach out with concerns and information.

Your assistance is invaluable! Should you see something, say something, make the call!

The majority of theft occurs between Friday at 6 p.m. and the Monday early morning hours. Contact the Lee County Sheriff's Office immediately at (239) 477-1000 nonemergency or 9-1-1 emergency, should you suspect construction-site theft, or observe:

- Vehicles or individuals at the construction site during the evening and overnight hours.
- Loud noises during these darkened periods. This should raise red flags!
- Juveniles, as they have no reason for being at or near construction locations at any time.
- Flashlights and cellphone lights after dark.

Let's work together to keep Lee County a safe and wonderful place to live!

Free Shred Day Event To Benefit United Way

Markham Norton Mosteller Wright & Co., P.A. (MNMW) will partner with Secure Shredding Inc. to host its fifth annual **free** Community Shred Day event on Friday, April 29, from 9 a.m. until noon. The Secure Shredding Inc. truck will be on site at the Fort Myers MNMW location, 8961 Conference Drive. There will be a two-box maximum per person for shredding.

This is a **free** event; however, MNMW encourages participants to consider a donation to the United Way of Lee, Hendry, Glades and Okeechobee Counties when dropping off

shred items. Donations for United Way can be in monetary form, canned or nonperishable goods, or new/gently used clothing. A representative from United Way will be on site to receive the donations and answer questions.

"Our annual Shred Day is one of our most popular events held at MNMW. We have clients and people eager to find out when they can securely dispose of their sensitive documents and personal information safely," said Jessica Walker, MA, APR, CPRC, marketing and public relations manager/



consultant for MNMW. "Our hope is by offering this free service we can provide awareness and support to the United Way and its partner agencies."

Items that can be shredded are bank statements, tax records, contracts, blank checks, etc. A good rule to determine if an item is "shreddable" is "if it tears, it can be destroyed." Items **not** suitable for shredding include hard drives, cell phones, batteries, etc. All shredded material will be recycled to support an eco-friendly environment.

Markham Norton Mosteller Wright & Co., P.A. is a public accounting and consulting firm with offices in both Fort Myers and Naples.

Secure Shredding Inc. is a locally owned and industry certified document destruction company that has serviced the Southwest Florida area since 2002. For more information about shredding services, visit www.floridashredding.com.

United Way Campaign funds remain in our community to help support the local human service network of 96 agencies and over 260 programs. United Way partner agencies and initiatives serve a diverse range of needs such as nurturing children and youth, strengthening families, meeting critical needs, and empowering communities. Last year one in every two people were touched by a program funded by United Way and over 94 percent of every dollar given to our United Way goes back into the community. For more information, please call (239) 433-2000 or visit www.UnitedWayLee.org.



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