

Tropical Times



NEW EMERGENCY ROOMS OFFER PATIENT CONVENIENCE

In March, NCH unveiled a state-of-the-art, 24-hour pediatric emergency room at NCH North Naples Hospital. The major expansion provides a child-focused, comforting environment designed to relieve the anxiety that often accompanies an emergency-room visit.

The pediatric emergency room has been handling 15,000 annual patient visits, which is expected to increase to 18,000 a year. The new facility features customizable ambient lighting in each of the 14 exam rooms that the young patient can control. The waiting room is equipped with an interactive video display projected onto the floor, where young visitors can use their feet to make various scenarios come alive, ranging from chasing a starfish around the sea to



kicking marshmallows into warm cocoa. Adding to the welcoming ambience are a fanciful tree to play under with soft "critters" to crawl through.

Dr. Allen Weiss, president and chief executive officer of NCH, noted that Collier County is home to 80,000 children 18 and under.

"We want them to get the same care the rest of the family gets," he said.

The Robert, Mariann and Megan MacDonald Pediatric Emergency Room is located at 11190 Health Park Blvd. Its expansion means it can serve 20 percent more patients each year, and the facility is the first in the country to integrate smart room technology to improve patient care.

Last fall, NCH also opened a \$24 million freestanding emergency room at 15420 Collier Blvd. that houses diagnostics, imaging and physician offices near the northeast intersection of Immokalee Road. Collier County's first freestanding emergency room was built to relieve patient load and wait times at NCH's other ER locations. **gB**

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Artis-Naples SCHEDULE

5833 Pelican Bay Blvd.
239.597.1900

- Beethoven's Fifth [5/5, 5/7]
- The King and I [5/6-8]
- All That Jazz [5/11]
- EarShot [5/25-26]
- Summer Spectacular [5/29]

The Baker Museum

Hours
Tuesday-Saturday: 10 a.m.-4 p.m.
Sunday: noon-4 p.m.
Monday: Closed

Entertainment LINE-UP

The Naples Players

[239.263.7990]

The Dixie Swim Club [through 5/15]

Barbara B. Mann

[239.481.4849]

Dirty Dancing [4/26-5/1]

STYX [5/10]

Gulf Coast Symphony La Boheme [5/14]

The Monkees [5/18]

Gulfshore Playhouse at The Norris Center

[239.261.7529]

The Who and the What [4/30-5/15]

Misc. Events

Cinco de Mayo Concert & Fiesta

[5/5 6-9 p.m. @ Mercato]

Evenings on 5th & Sidewalk Sale

[5/5, 6:30-9:30 p.m. @ 5th Avenue South]

Blues, Brews & BBQ

[5/6-7, 11 a.m.-9 p.m. @ Tin City]

Mothers Day Brunch - Young Life New Collier

[5/8, 9 a.m.-2 p.m. @ Sugden Plaza]

Great Dock Canoe Race

[5/14, 11 a.m.-3 p.m. @ Crayton Cove]

Third Thursday on Third

[5/19, 6-9 p.m. @ 3rd Street South]

SEA TURTLE NESTING SEASON BEGINS



Kathy Worley, Conservancy of Southwest Florida's director of environmental science, recently attended a sea turtle conference, where the statewide highlights of 2015 were shared. Here are some key findings:

- Statewide, green sea turtles had a phenomenal season. Preliminary numbers show about 37,339 nests, an exponential increase of 70 percent over the past 27 years. Collier County even had more green sea turtle nests than it's ever had before (17).

- The leatherback's 2015 season was small, but mighty, with preliminary numbers coming in at 1,493 nests. There were only 27 nests 25 years ago statewide; Collier recorded one nest on a beach.

- Approximately 80 percent of the global loggerhead population nests either on Florida beaches or in Oman on the Arabian Peninsula. Florida alone accounts for 90 percent of U.S. loggerhead nesting. Loggerheads have had good seasons and bad seasons. There were about 89,287 nests, indicating a general increase.

- There were 14 Kemp's ridley and three hawksbill nests, though their primary nesting territories are outside of Florida. **gB**

Sea turtles landing on Southwest Florida's shores were a winner last year as their nesting numbers trended upward. And local environmental researchers, monitors and volunteers will be out in force during nesting season again this year, which runs May 15 to August 15.

The main players that take to our beaches every year are the loggerhead (*Caretta caretta*), the green turtle (*Chelonia mydas*), and the leatherback (*Dermochelys coriacea*), while the hawksbill (*Eretmochelys imbricata*) and Kemp's ridley (*Lepidochelys kempii*) turtles are less frequent visitors. All five species are listed as either threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act.

NAPLES WINTER WINE FESTIVAL NO. 1

The Naples Winter Wine Festival has once again been rated the No. 1 charity wine auction in the U.S. by Wine Spectator magazine. This year, it brought in \$11.1 million to benefit local children's charities through its Naples Children & Education Foundation. The extravagant Naples event has topped the wine auction list for 10 out of the last 15 years.

The 2016 wine festival auction was held Jan. 30 at The Ritz-Carlton Golf Resort; it was the 16th year for the signature event. Since its inception in 2001, the wine festival has raised more than \$146 million to address the needs of

underprivileged children in Collier County. This year, the top bid of \$750,000 landed the winning bidder the world's first Rolls-Royce Dawn.

To meet growing demands, the festival has announced that, for the first time, there will be four couples serving as co-chairs to oversee the 2017 festival, which will feature "Bright Sunshine Day" as the theme as "shining a light on the needs of underprivileged, at-risk children."

The 2017 festival is set for Jan. 27-29, again at The Ritz-Carlton Golf Resort in Naples. Ticket packages to the event start at \$10,000 per couple. Information: (239) 514-2239. **gB**



Inside Florida's Gulf Coast {Notes, News & Views}

COLLIER COUNTY 2ND HEALTHIEST

For the second year, Collier County ranks as the second healthiest county in Florida, according to rankings performed annually by the University of Wisconsin and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation in Princeton, New Jersey, which works to promote better health and health care in the United States. Thirty health-based indicators ranging from premature deaths, obesity and smoking rates, access to health care and social and economic indicators like education and poverty are considered.

SPENDING POWER

Compared with some other parts of Florida and the nation, Collier County residents have a lot of purchasing power, a new report says. The New York financial technology company SmartAsset.com compared the median income and cost of living data in counties nationwide to find where people have the most purchasing punch. Collier County ranked seventh in the state and 556th in the nation. Collier was the only South Florida county to land in the top 10 rankings.

LOW JOBLESS RATES



Collier and Lee counties both had unemployment rates in January that were among the lowest in the state, and were lower than the national average, according to a monthly report by the Florida Department of Economic

Opportunity. Collier County's unemployment rate sank 0.5 percent to 4.8 percent from 5.3 percent over the year, while Lee County's fell to 4.7 percent from 5.5 percent. Statewide, the unemployment rate fell to 5.1 percent from 5.9 percent. Nationally, the unemployment rate is 5.3 percent, down from 6.1 percent a year earlier.

NAPLES AREA REAL ESTATE

After months of tight supply, overall resale inventory rose 27 percent in February, to 5,577 homes from 4,406 homes a year earlier, according to the Naples Area Board of Realtors (NABOR). The monthly report covers all of Collier County except Marco Island. "More inventory means more opportunity for buyers," said NABOR president Rick Fioretti. Months of supply, which is determined by dividing the number of active listings by the number of closed sales in the prior 12 months, was 6.8 in February.

NEW HYATT HOUSE OPENS

The new \$31 million Hyatt House Naples/5th Avenue opened its doors for business in March. It was built on the former Joe's Crab Shack and marina site on the Gordon River. Set on a little more than 4 acres, the 135,000-square-foot hotel and attached 80,000-square-foot is at 1345 Fifth Avenue. With British West Indies-inspired décor, a fitness center, bar, pool and spa, grilling area and fire pit, the pet-friendly hotel was designed by Naples architect Matthew Kragh, who also designed the nearby Naples Square mixed-use project.

LAST GREAT DOCK CANOE RACE

Mark your calendar for one of Naples' biggest traditions: the Great Dock Canoe Race, scheduled for Saturday, May 14, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Wildly decorated canoes compete in multiple

rares to celebrate the end of the winter season and the start of summer. Each year the race has a theme, which serves as the inspiration for the decorated canoes that compete for the best-dressed \$1,000 prize. This year's theme is "The Last Dance," evoking the disco era in which the race was first launched—1977. Theme boats will parade around Crayton Cove starting at 11 a.m., with the first race at 11:45 a.m. Money raised will benefit the National Alliance on Mental Illness. The fun unfolds at Naples City Dock, 880 12th Ave. S. in Naples.

FREE MARINE SCIENCE CRUISE



Join Pure Florida and Mr. Glen from Super Science & Amazing Art for a kids science cruise aboard the M/V Double Sunshine for a science and sightseeing cruise. Guests enjoy a 45-minute science show on the lower deck with added sightseeing narration by the boat captain. Kids cruise free with purchase of full adult ticket(s). Call (239) 263-4949 to reserve your spot for Saturday, May 14, at 10 a.m. Tin City, 1200 Fifth Ave. S., Naples. **gB**

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