

EditorialOpinion

Naples Daily News

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Kudos&Kicks

Reviewing the good, the bad and the questionable

Kudos: The doors opened to 88 participants in January 2014 and, in less than two years, membership grew to more than 800.

That remarkable success story necessitated a fast expansion of the Naples Senior Center, a vision of JFCS of Southwest Florida. The center has doubled its size from 3,000 to 6,000 square feet at its site at 5025 Castello Drive, just south of Pine Ridge Road and to the east of U.S. 41.

An open house to see the expanded senior center is from 1 to 3 p.m. Sunday.

The center provides a variety of resources and services to seniors. There’s a weekly hot lunch on Wednesdays, art classes, tai chi, movies and discussion groups.

It’s never too late to learn, so there are classes in conversational Italian, beginning Spanish and French, and assistance in the use of computers and cellphones.

In a recent interview on “Naples Daily News-Makers,” Jaclynn Faffer, president and CEO of Jewish Family and Community Services of Southwest Florida, described the center as a nonsectarian human service provider with geriatric case management, mental health services, financial assistance, a food pantry and more.

Faffer said membership is 74 percent women; 48 percent are older than 80 and several are over age 100; and 51 percent live at or below the poverty line.

Kudos to the center’s volunteer crew of about 130, which Faffer said closely aligns in demographics with the membership, furthering their bond.

Major donors for the expansion, completed in several months, included the Richard M. Schulze Family Foundation and Patty and Jay Baker.

Kick: It’s not that we’re in favor of people texting while driving.

We just question why some state lawmakers are pushing legislation in the 2016 session to make texting while driving a primary offense. Doing so would allow officers to stop drivers and issue citations even if the driver hasn’t done anything else wrong. Now, it’s a secondary offense to the officer writing some other kind of ticket.

Florida lawmakers aren’t keeping up with technology. Washington was the first state to pass a texting ban — in 2007. By the time a Florida law would go into effect next year, it’s almost a decade later. There have been many advances, including technology in vehicles, and smartphones with GPS, traffic and weather alerts, apps and more.

That’s even evident in the legislation, which allows some of that phone activity for drivers. It would be OK to text while the car is stopped.

For the passing officer, who can’t see the phone in the other car, how is it determined what the driver is doing? What if someone getting pulled over just opens the GPS? Deletes the text? Was on Snapchat? Are we confiscating phones as evidence for traffic court? Why are reckless driving laws not sufficient?

A dozen states have banned use of hand-held devices. Now that’s worth talking, tweeting, Snapchatting or texting about. But not if you’re driving, please.

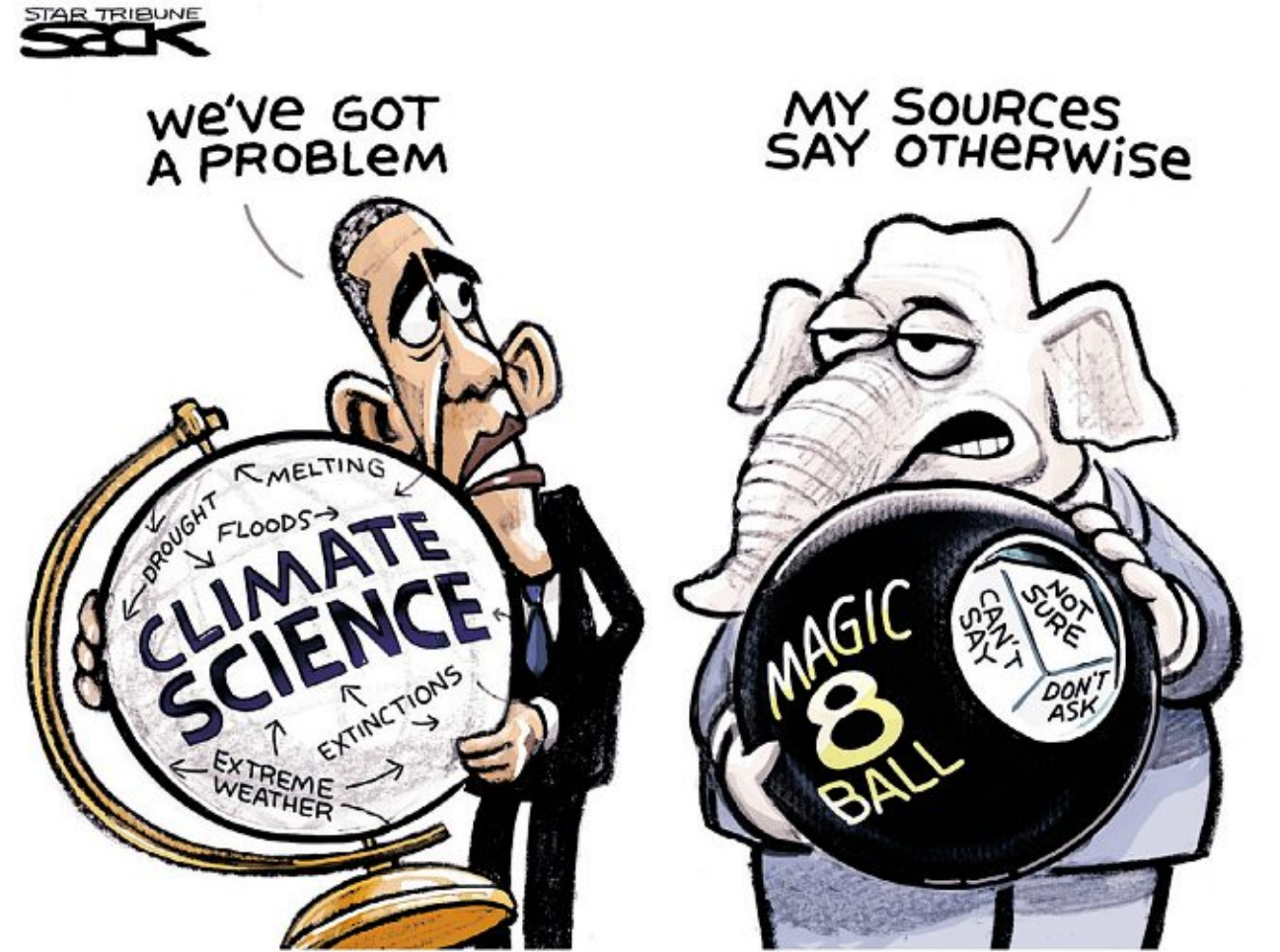
Kudos: It was impressive to see the school family and Collier County community rally behind the Gulf Coast High Shark marching band to make its performance possible in the Macy’s Thanksgiving Day Parade.

On behalf of the band, lead drum major Lindsey Haerle offers some heartfelt appreciation on Sunday’s “Naples Daily NewsMakers.”

Kudos to the dedicated 350-plus students, trip coordinators, school staff and dozens of chaperone volunteers who logged little sleep over four days. For example, they all had to be in place in New York City at 3:30 a.m. on Thanksgiving Day for a short rehearsal, then hours later briskly navigated the 2.5-mile parade route.

Justin Goff, director of bands at Gulf Coast, says on “NewsMakers” the trip that cost \$1,500 per student has been paid for but donations will continue to help the band in other ways, such as buying instruments. To help, go to www.gchsharkband.com.

The selection to perform in the Macy’s parade was a notable feat, but the band’s not stopping there. Next up is Prism Concert on Thursday and Friday. Information is available on the band’s website.



LETTERS

Bill Halling, *Bonita Springs*

Smart and lucky

No presidential candidate would survive the negative issues that surround Hillary Clinton unless that person is smart and lucky.

She put the improper and potentially illegal use of her email system out for all to see early on and the issue seems to have faded at this point. Smart.

She testified at the Benghazi congressional hearings and, while she was not able to deny that she blamed the attacks on an obscure video rather than an Islamic terrorist organization, this issue seems to get little attention now. Smart.

She argued that the enormous contributions to the Clinton Foundation by people who could benefit from her favor and the millions of dollars received by her and Bill for speeches, including amounts received while she was secretary of state, were all above board, and this issue seems to have passed. Smart.

She is critical of President Barack Obama’s foreign policy although much of such policy was developed and put into action while she was secretary of state, but Obama is taking the heat for the failed policies. Smart.

She has dodged all these bullets and more. She will likely sail through to the nomination supported by two-thirds or more of the Democratic Party voters. Lucky.

Samira K. Beckwith, *Fort Myers*

President/CEO, Hope HealthCare Services

About Hope Hospice

November was National Hospice and Palliative Care Month. Hope Hospice is committed to providing community education about hospice care so that you and your loved ones have all the information you need — before you need us.

■ Hospice is a program of comprehensive care and services that brings the patient and family the medical, emotional and spiritual support they need during life’s final journey.

■ Hospice care is about adding quality to each individual’s life for as long as possible.

■ Hope’s palliative care programs ensure comfort and dignity and prevent needless suffering.

■ Hope Hospice is committed to providing quality care and support to patients in private residences, nursing homes, assisted-living facilities or in one of our four Hope Hospice houses.

■ Eligibility for hospice benefits often begins sooner than you think and is typically available much longer than you might expect.

■ Hope Hospice cares for every individual facing a life-limiting illness, regardless of age, illness or ability to pay — nobody is denied our care.

Letter of the Day

Kenneth Wetcher, *Naples*

Fifth Avenue

My wife and I took a lovely walk on Fifth Avenue South on a recent night.

It was a beautiful evening marred only by the ridiculous amount of traffic on the street.

Most towns with a lovely downtown have created a pedestrian mall down the main street. Perhaps one could be made on Fifth Avenue South, and people would feel much more comfortable sitting outside and eating their dinner without worrying about pollution and traffic noises.

Perhaps we could merely have electric shuttle buses taking people along Fifth Avenue South and then down to Third Street South. This way we won’t have to get into cars to get from one major area to the other.

■ Hope Hospice offers grief and bereavement services to family members, including programs specifically for children.

■ Hope Hospice serves people of all backgrounds, traditions and religions and allows them to be with family while receiving care. Emotional and spiritual support are tailored for each individual’s personal needs.

Hospice can enhance patients’ quality of life and ease the transition for their loved ones. Remember to speak with your doctor about the options for hospice as soon as a life-limiting diagnosis is made.

Go to www.HopeHealthCare-Services.org or call 239-482-4673 for more information about Hope HealthCare Services programs that serve thousands of individuals each day.

Roger Bleck, *Bonita Springs*

Chicago politics

Chicago has been in financial dire straits for many years due to the Democratic machine, which has been running the city for decades.

The citizens of Cook County, or Crook County, should realize they deserve better.

The tragedy of the young African-American boy being shot (murdered) over a year ago, and Mayor Rahm Emanuel and the aldermen covering up the situation due to the forthcoming election last spring, was typical of Chicago politics.

They paid the victim’s family \$5 million to settle and keep quiet. That’s the Chicago way.

Being a senior citizen who was born and raised in Chicago, in my opinion our current federal administration learned the Chicago way of politics and tried running the coun-

try that way. Think about it. President Barack Obama dragged a good number from the Chicago machine with him to Washington. Even Hillary Clinton was born in Chicago.

Hopefully, our 2016 national election will clean house in Washington and provide America with an administration we can be proud of. Right, Sen. Marco Rubio?

Nina Mold, *Naples*

Notorious statement

This is in reference to an article in the Naples Daily News regarding Gulf Coast High School’s marching band’s participation in the Macy’s Thanksgiving Day Parade.

Collier County Public Schools Superintendent Kamela Patton is quoted as saying: “Some 53 million people got to hear about Naples because of them. It’s a great thing for our community to have that kind of notoriety.”

The Oxford dictionary’s definition of the word notoriety is: The state of being famous or well-known for some bad quality or deed. Synonyms: scandalous, undesirable, infamous, outrageous, flagrant and disreputable.

The band was awesome. The superintendent’s comment, not so much.

David Rush, *Marco Island*

Channeling support

I was one watching, with great pride, the Gulf Coast High School marching band and dancers in the Macy’s Thanksgiving Day Parade.

Since historically CBS has done the superior job of coverage, I watched WINK. Boy was my judgment bad.

When the GCHS band came into view, the announcer said briefly, “And here is the Gulf Coast High School band of Naples, Florida.” That was it? Knowing the CBS camera was at 54th Street and NBC-TV was at 34th, in front of Macy’s, I switched channels. What a difference.

When the band came into view, the announcer identified it, pointing out that it was the largest high school marching band in the state. He then went on with words of praise for the marchers and especially the dancers whose performance was awesome.

Upshot of all this is the Rush household is now boycotting CBS and has raised NBC to top watching priority.

By the way, NBC is my alma mater, but that did not influence me. My granddaughter was one of the dancers, but that had little to do with this letter. She and her teammates worked their buns off to do a spectacular job and they deserved more than a passing identification from an announcer who seemed more interested in Captain Marvel floating by.