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THE COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER OF LAKEWOOD RANCH

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 20, 2021



WELCOME THE NEW YEAR WITH A RESOLUTION TO SHOP LOCAL! Enjoy the Farmers' Market at Lakewood Ranch from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. every Sunday in the parking lot of Lakewood Ranch Medical Center. Among the many offerings are seafood, dairy, bread, juices, fresh pasta, and ready-to-eat foods. Photo by Eric Nalpas.

INSIDE:

**BOURBON AND BONES
OPENS**

Page 8#

**COMMUNITY
ACTIVITIES**

Page 10 #

**THE UNASSUMING
WINE BROS.**

Page 20#

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Resolve to Live a Brain Healthy Life in 2021

By Dr. Stephanie Peabody, PSYC, HSSP, Neuropsychologist, Executive Director



Happy New Year! You survived 2020! If you are like just about everyone else in the world, you believe that this new year just has to be better than the last one.

You have probably also made some resolutions for 2021. Exercising more and losing weight top the list of the most common New Year's resolutions and diet and exercise are two of the pillars of a brain healthy lifestyle. Congratulations — you have resolved to live a brain healthy life in 2021.

If you want to lose weight, changing your diet is the starting place for long-term success. Luckily, the same nutrients that support your physical well-being also promote optimal brain health and performance. Aim for a diet rich in fruits and vegetables, whole grains, beans, nuts and healthy fats — often referred to as a Mediterranean diet.

In fact, why not encourage everyone in your household to improve their brain healthy lifestyle through eating habits that enhance brain health and fight brain illness? Here are some guidelines for a brain healthy diet that promotes weight loss:

EAT HEALTHY SNACKS. Reduce your intake of unhealthy foods that are high in saturated fat, sugar, refined carbohydrates and processed food products.

DRINK LOTS OF WATER. Keep hydrated, drinking six to eight glasses of water daily and avoid beverages with a high sugar content.

ADD NUTRIENT-RICH FOODS TO YOUR MEALS. Shop the outer aisles of the grocery store for vegetables, leafy greens, fruits, fish, whole grains and nuts.

GET HEALTHY TAKE OUT. It's OK to take a break from cooking and get food-to-go, but avoid fast food. Eat healthier and support local restaurants using locally sourced meat and produce. It's a win-win-win!

LIMIT ALCOHOL.

But diet is only half of your brain healthy resolution. You also need to exercise. Physical activity is one of the Brain Health Initiative's protective factors. Exercise improves blood

flow to and within the brain, providing the oxygen and nutrients it needs for optimal health and performance.

Exercise also improves your quality of sleep, your mood, enhances your cognitive performance, and builds powerful brain and cognitive reserves across your lifespan. These benefits can also help decrease your risk for cognitive decline later in life.

Regular, moderate exercise can also kick-start your weight loss. If you are worried that you don't have time to exercise, new research from Massachusetts General Hospital shows even short bursts of exercise have health benefits.

The ideal brain health physical activity program includes aerobics, resistance, strength training and mind-body activities, like yoga and tai chi. Even if you haven't been exercising, start out by just moving — some exercise is better than none.

WALK. Get outside and take a brisk walk. Walking is great exercise and no special equipment is required. Just make sure to practice physical distancing.

BIKE. Florida provides an ideal environment for riding a bike — no hills! Set a leisurely pace and enjoy the scenery.

SWIM. Swimming is great low-impact exercise and if your pool is heated you can swim year-round.



PHOTOS BY ERIC NALPAS

STAND UP AND MOVE Instead of sitting at your desk all day, stand up! If you are working remotely get up and dance, skip, hula hoop, gallop, walk backwards and sideways. If you're at work, grab a friend and get out of the office for a few minutes.

Start slowly but keep at it and make physical activity part of your brain healthy daily routine.

Each month the BHI shares the science behind a different brain health pillar and information about how to practically apply this

science to the daily life of you and your family. If you are looking for more information about how to live a brain healthy lifestyle, check out our Brain Health Boosts archive at brainhealthinitiative.org/outreach/brain-boosts/. To learn more about the Brain Health Initiative and to become a Brain Health Champion, visit brainhealthinitiative.org.

The Brain Health Initiative needs your participation! There's still time to participate in the Brain Health Initiative Pilot Study. If you received one of the invitations sent to randomly selected adult residents from Lakewood Ranch, we encourage you to complete the online survey. The pilot study examines the ways you function mentally, socially, cognitively, and overall, as well as the factors in your life that present risk or promote resilience in brain health and performance. Community participation is critical to the study's success.

The Brain Health Initiative (BHI) is a cutting-edge approach to protecting brain health, optimizing brain performance, and fighting brain illness across the lifespan. The BHI is creating a culture that promotes brain health protective factors and decreases risk factors, thereby improving brain health and optimizing brain performance outcomes for the Florida Suncoast region and beyond. Join the brain health movement, because brain health matters, and lifestyle makes a difference.





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Bourbon and Bones opens in San Marco Plaza

By Ernie Soller
Community Correspondent

So ... What's a burgoo?

For the uninitiated, a burgoo is a meat stew flavored with vegetables and a specific other ingredient served as a meal or appetizer in Kentucky's Bourbon Country. You may by this time have figured out that the "other ingredient" in burgoo is, of course, bourbon whiskey!

I was introduced to burgoo by a friend who took me on a little trip into the heart of Bourbon Country, in and around Bardstown, Ky., earlier this year. We visited a number of distilleries, dined on burgoo, sampled some darn good bourbon, and had a great time of it all.

Now Lakewood Ranchers have an opportunity to do a little "Bourbon Trail" traveling of their own, without ever having to leave The Ranch. There's a (relatively) new restaurant in town called Bourbon and Bones, and it's located in the San Marco shopping center. You know you're in a bourbon-friendly place when a sign above the bar reads: "Our House Wine is Bourbon." And, then you remember the sign just outside the entrance that says: "The Soup of the Day is Bourbon."

And there area a lot of bourbons to choose from. I counted 40 bourbon and rye brands listed on the menu and yes, if you're a wine fan, or just want a cold beer, they have those choices, too (and lots of them), as well as scotch, tequila, Irish whiskey, etc.

Taking a trip to Bourbon and Bones might be a very good idea in this "time of the virus," since recently at least, many of the distilleries along Kentucky's Bourbon Trail have been closed to the public. And that means that you might not be able to get a tasting, or take a distillery tour, or even buy some of your favorite spirit at its source.

On the other hand, Bourbon and Bones has bourbon AND burgoo, and a good one at that. I had to sample the Bourbon and Bones burgoo, which they advertise as being made with Maker's Mark whiskey -- and there's nothing wrong with that! I found the Bourbon and Bones burgoo to be flavorful, full-bodied, and a delightful paring with the Bulleit bourbon that I ordered to accompany the burgoo. In general, burgoo can be made using various meats, but the burgoo at Bourbon and Bones is made with cuts of steak, and served with oyster crackers,



and is offered as either a cup or a bowl portion.

Now with a name like "Bourbon and Bones" you would be correct in assuming that this restaurant has a panoply of steak offerings, and you would be correct.

The steak offerings on the menu start with prime rib, followed by sirloin, filet mignon (in both 7- and 10-ounce cuts – my bride ordered the 7-ounce), a Manhattan strip steak (which I ordered), ribeye steak, Kansas City strip steak, and, for those of you who might have just come in hungry from the "range" in Lakewood Ranch, and have a hankering for a huge steak ... a giant 40-ounce porterhouse! Note that this huge steak is listed on the Bourbon and Bones menu as being suitable for sharing – unless maybe you're the ghost of John Candy!

Our steaks arrived cooked just as we had requested and were served with the addition of butter on top of the meat. At Bourbon and Bones, the diner can have the "standard" butter on his or her steak, or they could choose from a selection of other toppings, such as a dry rub, cabernet shallot butter, bourbon-glazed shrimp, or a number of other choices.

Each steak comes with a side of the diner's choice. My bride ordered the au gratin potatoes, while I chose the creamed spinach. Both were tasty, as we sampled each other's side choices, and the only criticism I might have about my spinach was that, rather than being chopped, the spinach leaves were left "stem-on," resulting in a little bit of stringiness, attested to by the sauce drips which subsequently made their appearance on my shirt.

The fact that Bourbon and Bones was relatively crowded only three weeks after opening attests to the "word of mouth" network among Lakewood Ranch diners.

The place was almost at capacity, and that included both seating inside as well as outside. And, speaking of seating, the chairs and booths at Bourbon and Bones are upholstered in a shiny "gator" pattern.

The décor at Bourbon and Branch is warm and welcoming and features a number of clues that you're in a steak and bourbon place. There's a large set of moose antlers on one wall, some of the chandeliers are made of antlers, and the wall décor in the lobby is made of barrel staves.

There are also a number of sayings featured on the lobby wall, such as Frank Sinatra's comment that "Alcohol may be man's worst enemy, but the Bible says love your enemy." Indeed.

Not only is Bourbon and Bones a great eat-in steak place, but you can go there and pick out a terrific steak to take home and grill at your place.

Bourbon and Bones also offers specials, such as the Wednesday prime rib night during which, after 4 p.m., you can get a full prime rib dinner for \$17.95. There's also a daily happy hour from 3 to 6 p.m., and children eat free all day on Sundays.

There's a new, fun dining experience waiting for you at Bourbon and Bones, so get yourself down to the San Marco Plaza and try it – you'll like it!

For more information visit bourbonandboneslw.com or call (941) 893-5403.



PHOTOS BY ERNIE SOLLER



HOLIDAY SEASON 2020: It's About Giving, Not Getting

Residents of Lakewood Ranch, and employees of Ranch developer Schroeder-Manatee Ranch (SMR) opened their hearts to two local non-profits for the 2020 holiday season.

From Nov. 20 through Dec. 14, employees at SMR headquarters (over)filled two barrels with food for both people and pets – clients of Meals on Wheels PLUS/Food Bank of Manatee. The end result was more than 1,800 lbs. of food.

“Our deepest gratitude to SMR and all the employees who donated food for families and for pets,” said Maribeth Phillips, president & CEO of Meals on Wheels PLUS of Manatee. “With the significant increase in food insecurity as a result of COVID, these donations will help to feed babies, children, families, and their furry friends.”

And as they do annually, both members and non-members of Lakewood Ranch Golf and Country Club donated hundreds of new bikes and new toys for all ages for the local Marines’ Toys for Tots organization. Donations were accepted at the Main Clubhouse, The Lodge, and the Tennis and Fitness centers from November through mid-December. The gifts filled up two moving trucks, with two trips required.

“We were overjoyed to be able to put smiles on the faces of many, many deserving children,” said Wayne Piazza, general manager of The Lakewood Ranch Golf and Country Club. “We appreciate the overwhelming response from our membership and residents of The Ranch.”



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What a great first month of January lined up for our residents! The official launch of our Parks and Rec program took place on January 2 at Bob Gardner Park. Residents were able to participate in demos of many of our new programs, including yoga, barre, intro to horses, Fit4Kids, and many more. If you missed demo day, not to worry! Many of our programs are continuing and can be found on our website at myLWR.com.

Calling all child yogis! Join us for a mindful morning filled with movement! Yoga instructor Jessie will lead this dynamic yoga series designed just for kids. Yoga flows will be infused with music, storytelling, arts, and more! This is held at 10 a.m. the first Saturday of the month at Bob Gardner Community Park. We even offer a special class at 11 a.m. for teens! They will be guided through a variety of postures and breathing exercises to keep them actively interested, engaged, and challenged. They'll have fun getting fit, improving strength, balance, flexibility and endurance. In addition to this, they will learn strategies to build self-esteem, regulate emotions, strengthen concentration, and cope with stress.

Did someone say barre? Join us for free barre class in the beautiful setting of Bob Gardner Community Park just off of



White Eagle Boulevard, continuing on January 31 and every other Sunday following.

We're so excited that our newest program, The LWR Couch to 5k has started! This is not a cookie-cutter fitness program. It is an organic, individualized, and collaborative way to find your fit-family! The Couch to 5k group is designed to get you off the couch, establish a manageable running routine, and build a sustainable fitness model that you can carry on long after the program ends. Crush your 5k goals and find your tribe along the way! More info can be found at myLWR.com.

Our Stretch and Flex program is great for all ages! Whether you're struggling with back pain, looking to improve your joint health, or just want to get outdoors and get moving — this four-week stretching course is for you. Enjoy 45 minutes of self-care at Summerfield Community Park as you work to in-

crease flexibility, heighten your energy levels, and have fun with friends and neighbors. Find out when the next session begins at myLWR.com!

Free yoga continues January 24, and every other Sunday following, in the beautiful setting of Bob Gardner Community Park.

Calling all moms! This is your time to focus on bettering your physical and mental health — all while having fun with your little ones. Grab a friend and meet us for weekly "stroller strides," a fitness class that incorporates strength, cardio, and special connections with your baby. More info at myLWR.com.

We are excited to see the return of our hit program, Fit4Kids! This progressive fitness program for the youth of Lakewood Ranch is a fan favorite and back for its second session. This all-inclusive workout includes warm-up, cool-down, running, fundamental calisthenics, and fitness challenges!

Our Senior Fitness class is all new this month: A 60-minute class to help seniors with strength, mobility, and balance. Join us at 8 a.m. on Wednesdays through February 17 at Summerfield Community Park.

"Fishing Saturdays" returns on the third Saturday of the month! Attendees will learn the art of casting, being a good angler, and knot tying. There will be time for practice immediately after in beautiful Lake Patton.

Sir Winston Churchill once said: "There is something about the outside of a horse that is good for the inside of a man." Come see for yourself, in our four-week introduction to horses, as it relates to the high-octane sport of polo. Sponsored by and hosted at Sarasota Polo Club. More info at myLWR.com.

Looking to play some cornhole out in the park? Meet new

SEE COMMUNITY, PAGE 12

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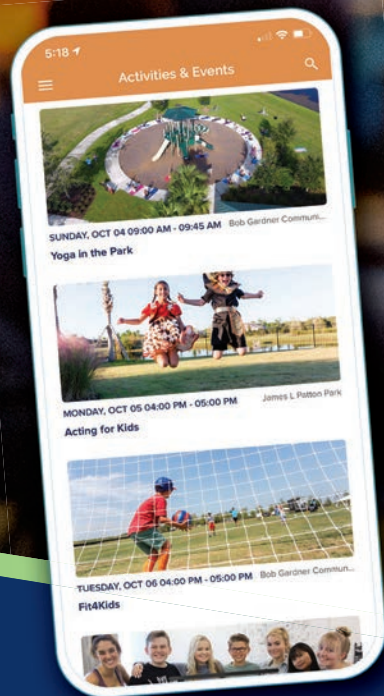
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HEALTH OF WEALTH

Money Is _____ ?

By Huldah Mathis
Northwestern Mutual



Happy New Year, everyone! January usually brings a time of reflection for what was and a time of hopeful anticipation for what lies ahead. It often brings a renewed focus and commitment around improvement too.

From a financial perspective, that might mean resolving to save more or pay off debt or rein in spending. It might even mean giving charitably, whether for the first time or at new levels. In every case, the “why” behind it is probably unique. As appropriate as those efforts may be for your particular situation, I want to challenge you to first step back for a moment and give your honest answer to the statement, “Money is _____ to me.”

Most people have a complicated relationship with money. Sometimes the reasons are obvious to us. Many times they are layered and not as easy to identify or articulate.

You may answer this statement with words like “freedom” or “control.” Money likely means security

to you in this case. Losing money may feel like losing control. Spending may feel like a threat.

You may answer this statement with words like “opportunity” or “impact.” You may happily let go of money in the name of your vision for what it can create. This may take the form of memories from family vacations or a business dream come to life. Saving may actually feel like a threat to you.

You may answer this statement with words like “stress” or “fear.” This might be from feeling like you have never had enough. It might be from growing up in a home that had an abundance but at the cost of all kinds of relationships. You may have watched money be used to mistreat or manipulate. In this case, both having and lacking could feel like a threat.

The goal of this exercise isn’t necessarily to bring about a change of perspective. However, getting honest about our current relationship with money does start us down the path of knowing how to either begin or maintain a healthy one.

Huldah C. Mathis is an agent of NM and registered representative of the NMIS based in Sarasota. To contact her, please call (941) 957-4518, email huldah.mathis@nm.com, or visit huldahmathis.nm.com.

FROM PAGE 10

friends over a casual game of cornhole at Bob Gardner Park on Thursdays, starting January 21.

Our new program, Field Bocce, is a modified version of bocce that is played at beautiful Greenbrook Adventure Park. The class will be held on Fridays starting on January 22.

Mommy and Me Music class returns to Patton Park on January 22! It consists of fun with music and movement, interactive experiences for children and parents to enjoy together. Designed for children and an accompanying parent to experience music through movement and play.

Have you ever wanted to learn how to play guitar? Bring your own guitar and learn how to collaborate with fellow music lovers to create our own guitar ensemble. Meet your neighbors, make friends as you experience the camaraderie of music under the guidance of an expert guitarist/teacher. All levels welcome! No experience necessary, beginning at 4 p.m. on January 23.

Don't forget about our furry friends; bring them out to our doggy bootcamp and agility class at Bob Gardner's beautiful dog park! Help build dogs' confidence, and exercise and have fun! Instructors will assist owners in teaching their dogs how to utilize agility equipment in a safe way and allow the dogs to work at their own pace. This program begins at 10 a.m. January 23.

All programs require pre-registration at myLWR.com, and attendance is limited to comply with social distancing and keeping our community safe.

If you have an idea for a new parks program, we want to hear from you! Send us a note at info@lwrca.org and we'll be glad to help.



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AROUND THE RANCH



PHOTOS BY ERIC NALPAS



New Year, New You?

If you haven't been yet, you need to check out the Farmers' Market at Lakewood Ranch.

Held from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. every Sunday in the parking lot at Lakewood Ranch Medical Center, the market features seafood, milk, cheese, bread, butter, cold-pressed juices, jams and pickled products, fresh pasta, ready-to-eat foods, honey, soap, truffle oils, mushrooms, popcorn,

gulf sea salt, and knife sharpening, among many offerings.

Held in a unique outdoor environment in the heart of The Ranch, you can safely socially distance and enjoy fresh, local products while supporting community vendors.

For more information visit themarketlwr.com or call (941)556-8300.



Fire Station No. 7 Helps Expand Service to East Manatee

By Ernie Soller
Community Correspondent

Way back when – in the 1970s – the Braden River Volunteer Fire Department was formed to offer fire protection to eastern Manatee County. The volunteers back then referred to themselves as the “tin house orphans,” since their “fire house” was a somewhat dilapidated pole barn with a tin roof. Their equipment consisted of bits and pieces of “hand-me-downs” from other agencies.

The Braden River Fire Control and Rescue District was created by an act of the state legislature in 1980. It was to be a 100-square-mile district with taxing authority.

A purpose-built fire station was constructed in 1982 – currently Station #2 – at 803 60th St. Court E., and in 2008 a headquarters office building was built, followed by a central station in 2010. A training tower was built in 2017.

In 1983, the commissioners decided to appoint the District’s first full-time chief, Henry Sheffield. Chief Sheffield began his fire service while a student at Polk Community College, serving as a volunteer firefighter. He continued his service and became fire chief of the Highland City Volunteer Fire Department until he was hired as chief by Braden River Fire Control District, which became the East Manatee Fire Rescue District in 2005.

Chief Sheffield continued his service after his retirement from East Manatee in 2007, as a staff member of the Florida Fire College in Ocala. In 2014 he returned to Manatee

County as the coordinator of the fire academy at Manatee Technical College’s East Campus, a position he held until his death in December of 2019. His obituary noted that Chief Sheffield “taught customer service by doing the right thing and showing firefighters what customer service looked like.”

Station No. 7 – the newest fire station of the East Manatee Fire Rescue District – opened in June of 2020 and was dedicated to the memory of Chief Sheffield.

Byron Teates succeeded Sheffield as chief, and ran the district for nearly 14 years, during a time of exponential growth in the Lakewood Ranch area. He was credited with bringing the department out of debt and raising the department’s Insurance Service Office rating from a six to a four, translating to insurance premium savings for residents. He successfully oversaw the addition of several new stations during his tenure.

The current chief is Lee Whitehurst.

The new station was authorized as part of the District’s five-year plan. Construction began in 2019 and was completed at a cost of \$3,570,000.

Station 7 will help serve the neighborhoods of the Lakewood Ranch Country Club, Country Club East, The Lake Club, and The Concession, as well as the rest of the area.

Current equipment at Station 7 includes a ladder truck with an operating height of 107 feet. This truck, with its high reach, would be needed to fight fires in the taller buildings now appearing in Lakewood Ranch. There is also an older “high water rescue truck”

which sits high off the ground on BIG tires, and would be used in flood situations, such as massive hurricane-related flooding which might preclude travel by “normal height” vehicles.

The law requires that each special district prepare a five-year plan – a relatively new requirement for fire districts all across Florida.

This plan must include a description of existing facilities owned or operated by the districts. It must include the current capacity of each facility, the demands placed on each facility, and the location of each facility. In addition, the five-year plan must be updated at least every seven years, and the plan, as updated, must be submitted to the overall government entity in whose area the special district operates.

In accordance with the East Manatee Fire Rescue District’s plan, two more fire stations are on the horizon.

Station 8 will be built at 6975 Bourneside Blvd., near the area of the Polo Run and Del Webb communities, on the south side of State Road 70 and east of Lorraine Road, and is expected to be operational in 2021. Station 9 is planned for the northern edge of Lakewood Ranch at 17900 S.R. 64 E

In addition to plans for new buildings, the five-year plan also designates a schedule for the updating and expansion of existing structures, and a schedule for replacement of equipment, such as fire trucks. These expenditures become part of a coordinated master plan that will enable East Manatee Fire Rescue to move into the future as Lakewood Ranch and the surrounding area continue to grow.



PHOTOS BY ERNIE SOLLER



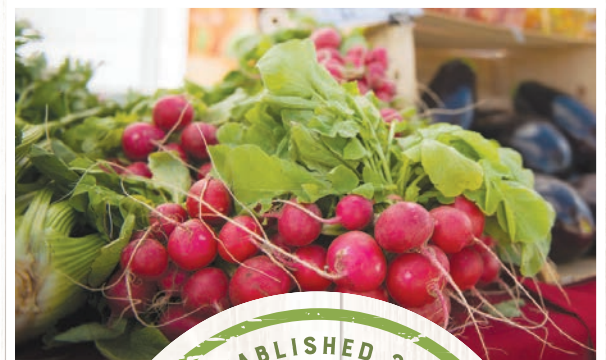
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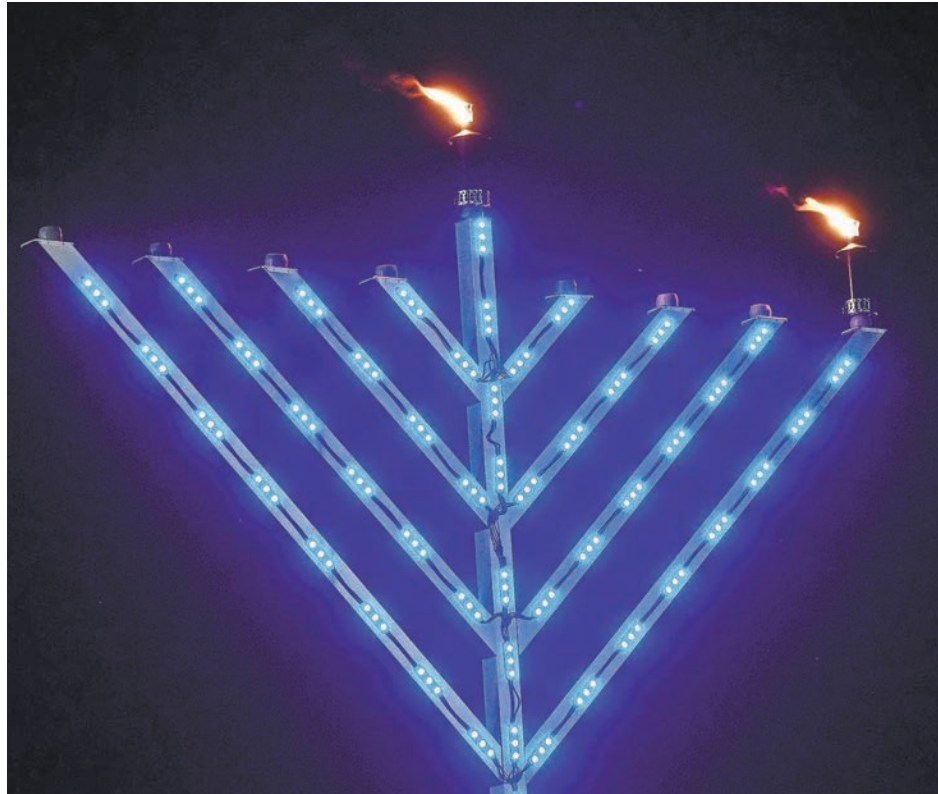
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Undeterred by Weather, Pandemic: Chabad of Bradenton-LWR Celebrates the First Night of Chanukah



PHOTOS BY ERNIE SOLLER



By Ernie Soller
Community Correspondent

Social distancing didn't ruin the lighting of the Chanukah menorah.

Give credit to Rabbi Mendy Bukiet of Chabad of Bradenton-Lakewood Ranch. This rabbi – or someone in his congregation – cranks out new ideas for celebrating the first night of Chanukah in new, creative ways every year.

Last year, due to an extreme downpour, the Chabad Chanukah celebration was held in the Chabad House on Lorraine Road, north of State Road 70.

It was very crowded, and outside the Chabad House it was very muddy, but a lot of people showed up, and the spirit of the feast showed in the faces of young and old alike.

The unique menorah for that celebration was made of LEGO – various colored large LEGO blocks built into a large eight-branched candlestick!

Previous menorahs were made of various items. One year, the menorah was created by sculpting a giant block of ice, lit from below with a blue light, and placed on a stage that had been constructed in the middle of Lakewood Ranch Main Street. Florida in December is still a lot warmer than most places, and a lot of water dripped from the bottom of that menorah, but it was really amazing.

Then there was the year that the “candles” of the menorah were represented by donation boxes for various charities.

Another year, the menorah was built of donated cans of food to be given to the needy; then there was the sock menorah – attendees were encouraged to bring new pairs of socks to be given to the homeless.

But crowding into the Chabad House on a rainy night, or a large gathering of happy people usually found on the first night of Chanukah on Main Street, would not do in 2020, thanks to COVID-19. Rabbi Mendy had to come up with something totally different ... and, totally different it was!

SEE CHANUKAH, PAGE 19



FROM PAGE 18

To avoid big gatherings with people getting too close, he decided to find a large field, and have people come in their cars! They marked out spots in the field with sufficient distance between the cars and had people park in those designated areas. And they held it at the Premier Sports Campus!

But what about all the good food, like the latkes and doughnuts, enjoyed in previous Chanukah first nights? Again, things were different this year.

When a carload of folks drove into the Premier Sports Campus, they were handed a box. Then, as the car moved further into the area, food was given out, such as latkes and doughnuts, gelt (candy wrapped in the shape of coins), and candles, so that people could go home and light their own menorahs. And of course, there were those favorites of everyone at Chanukah – dreidels – small tops inscribed with Hebrew letters. Take home the dreidels, get out the gelt, and see who can win the most.

There's a message in the dreidels. Each of the dreidels has four sides, which are inscribed with the Hebrew letters shin, hay, gimmel, and nun. The letters represent the words "A great miracle happened here." And the great miracle is the essential story of Chanukah: the story of Jews who first drove out the Greco-Syrian invaders, and then went about re-consecrating the temple, using oil to light a menorah – oil that should have lasted for only one day, but lasted for eight – hence the eight days of Chanukah.

As in previous years, after intoning three blessings, Rabbi Mendy lit a central lamp in the center of the menorah, and then lit one other: the second lamp representing the first night of Chanukah. As always, the Rabbi's theme was that of light – the light of the menorah, and the added light of Jews brightening the world with their good works. He wore a



PHOTOS BY ERNIE SOLLER



mask, and a shirt emblazoned with the words: "Just Add Light."

After the ceremony of lighting the menorah, there was more singing, and more entertainment, including a juggler, acrobats, and a stilt walker (all masked). There was live music in the klezmer tradition, along with a jazzed-up version of "Let My People Go."

A history lesson, music, fun and food – and social distancing. Kids had a great time ... especially the kids who, in order to get a better view, climbed on top of their parents' cars.

Another great first night of Chanukah in Lakewood Ranch.

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In-person attendees at the meeting included, from left, Don Avolio, Tom Green, Pete Bokach, finance director Steve Zielinski, and Jerry Twiggs. Not shown: Executive Director Anne Ross. All others participated via Zoom. PHOTO BY ERNIE ZOLLER

Social Distancing Rules at Public-Again Board Meetings

By Ernie Soller
Community Correspondent

Like most government agencies, city and county offices, etc., the Community Development District boards of Lakewood Ranch elected to maintain meetings – but not in-public meetings – when the COVID-19 thing got serious late last winter. Meetings became “Zoom events.”

In November, the meetings were again open to the public at the Lakewood Ranch Town Hall.

On Dec. 17, I attended my first open-to-the-public set of board meetings at the Town Hall.

What a change from previous years! As you enter the Town Hall, you are required to have your temperature taken by a thermometer mounted on the inside wall of the entrance, after which you are expected to use hand sanitizer before going further into the building.

As usual, two of the salons at the Town Hall were used for the meetings, but the room set-up was quite different. Instead of the regular seating arrangement for the board members, who had been sitting right next to each other in the past, there was now a very large horse-shoe-shaped seating arrangement, with supervisors’ chairs set about 10’ apart. After each district meeting, a staffer went around to all the previously occupied tables, spraying them down with disinfectant spray, and wiping everything on those tables down, including microphones, as well as the metal portions of the supervisors’ chairs.

In the case of each district, not all the supervisors were in actual attendance. Some used the Zoom option and joined their respective meetings from other locations. The attorneys

who advise the boards, the engineer, director of operations, and financial director likewise used the Zoom option, as well as a number of other Town Hall staffers.

There were only a very few chairs for the public to use while attending the meetings, and everybody wore a mask. So, what transpired at the December CDD board meetings?

GENERAL ITEMS

The boards were notified that there will be a special workshop for board members on aspects of the Florida Sunshine law at 3 p.m. Feb. 1. This meeting will also be available on Zoom, and will be conducted by Attorney Andrew Cohen.

There will be a special COVID scam prevention meeting on Jan. 25. This meeting will involve the Manatee County Sheriff’s Department and is being presented by Lakewood Ranch Community Emergency Response Team.

Gary Glass, who has been the director of community associations for the past eight years, has resigned to accept a new position elsewhere. Several supervisors joined in thanking Glass for his service to our community.

Auditors are working on the financial audit of district finances for fiscal year 2019-‘20. Results of the audits will be available in early 2021.

The boards of districts 2 and 5 expressed concerns over the proposed sale of a portion of the land belonging to the Legacy Golf Club, and the proposed construction of a number of condominiums. Attorney Cohen informed the boards that his firm is doing research as to what options the districts might have if the

SEE BOARD, PAGE 26

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History Day Judges Needed

Manatee Village Historical Park and the Manatee County Historical Commission are seeking volunteer judges for Manatee History Day 2021. This year's contest will be virtual: all student projects will be both submitted and judged virtually.

The virtual academic competition for middle and high school students will take place from Feb. 3 to Feb. 10 of 2021. There are multiple judging dates and opportunities within this date range.

Manatee History Day is an affiliate of National History Day, a research-based program that spans the school year, providing students a unique opportunity to practice intensive historical research and interpretation. Each History Day project must address an annual theme. This year's theme is "Communication in History: The Key to Understanding." Students with outstanding projects from Manatee History Day will be selected to move on to Florida History Day in Tallahassee, with a chance to go on to National History Day (typically held in Washington, DC but will also be virtual this year).

Volunteer judges must register by contacting



Some of last year's Manatee History Day winners posed for a photo in February of 2020. In 2021, judging will be virtual instead.

Allyson O'Leary at (941)749-7165 and attend judge training on:

Feb. 2, 6 to 7:30 p.m. at Manatee Village Historical Park, 1404 Manatee Ave. E. (State Road 64), Bradenton, 34208

OR

If you can't make it in person to the judge training, there are digital training materials you can complete at home. Contact Allyson O'Leary

for more details.

Students will present their findings through categories established by National History Day. These categories include historical papers, websites, documentaries, performances, and exhibit boards. Judges will analyze these projects and the way they are presented. Since this year's contest is virtual, all projects will be judged online. To participate, a judge needs access to a comput-

er and the internet.

To register as a volunteer judge, contact Allyson O'Leary via email at history.day@manateeclerk.com or by phone (941)749-7165.

Manatee Village Historical Park is a part of the Manatee County Clerk of Circuit Court and Comptroller Historical Resources Department. This program is offered in conjunction with the Manatee County Historical Commission, Inc. Manatee Village Historical Park staff members serve as county coordinators for National History Day.

Like and follow Manatee History Day's Facebook page. This is where Manatee Village Historical Park staff members will share resources for students, teachers, and judges:

www.facebook.com/manateehistoryday

Students can follow Manatee History Day's Instagram page. This is where interesting facts and history tips will be shared: www.instagram.com/manateehistoryday/

Learn more about Manatee History Day at www.manateevillage.org/manateehistoryday

Learn more about National History Day at www.nhd.org



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January Programs at Chabad of Bradenton & Lakewood Ranch

Please note that all events will take place at the Chabad tent (outside Chabad at 5712 Lorraine Road) or at the virtual Chabad House at chabadofbradenton.com/zoom, unless otherwise written.

Torah Classes

Mondays, 7:30 - 8:30 p.m.

At the virtual Chabad House

Explore the Talmud and its laws in its original text. No prior knowledge of the Talmud or Hebrew is necessary. Book fee: \$45.

Torah Studies

Saturday mornings, 9 - 9:30 a.m.

At the Chabad tent

Participate in a fascinating class on the Torah portion of the week. Discover the mystical meanings and lessons behind ancient stories. Admission is free.

Weekly Shabbat Services

At the Chabad tent

Friday nights, one half-hour after candle lighting time;

Saturday mornings at 9:30 a.m., Shabbat Kiddush at 11 a.m.

Enjoy warm, family friendly services at The Chabad House. Saturday morning services are followed by a delicious buffet Kiddush.

Torah & Tea

At the virtual Chabad or at the Chabad tent

January 26 - 11 a.m.

Join Chanie Bukiet through for a weekly dose of delicious tea and refreshments spiced with lessons on the weekly Torah portion and round the table discussions. Admission is free. Sponsor a class in someone's memory or honor for \$25.

Chabad Hebrew School of the Arts

At the virtual Chabad House or at the Chabad tent

January 24 and 31 - from 9:15 a.m. - 12:45 p.m.

Give your child the experience of a lifetime at CHS featuring an outstanding curriculum, professional and warm teachers, hands-on lessons, CKids motivational system and an innovative Hebrew reading Aleph Champ program. Virtual and in-person tracks available.

CTeen Tu B'Shvat Fruit Fest

At the Chabad tent

January 27, from 7:30-9 p.m.

Join an exciting CTeen Tu B'Shvat (Jewish Arbor Day) Fest featuring dinner, succulents and smoothies, games and more! Outdoors; masks required until seated. Suggested donation: \$10.

Knead to Rise Mega Challah Bake

Online event

January 21 at 7 p.m.

Five Chabads unite for "A Knead To Rise" - a virtual mega challah bake uniting women and girls of all affiliations across the SRQ area to explore the beauty of this unique tradition. Registration includes a beautiful challah box and Shabbat kit with all ingredients and features a multi-generational presentation by local women. The Challah Bake is sponsored by the Jewish Federation of Sarasota-Manatee. Cost: \$25 per person /sponsor \$180.

For more information on any of the ongoing events or to reserve, call Rabbi Mendy Bukiet at (941)752-3030, email rabbib@chabadofbradenton.com, or visit the Chabad website at chabadofbradenton.com.

Lakewood Ranch Town Hall Is Open

Town Hall is currently open for governance meetings and scheduled appointments; however, it is still requested and encouraged that everyone use phone and email as the primary way to conduct business with Town Hall. Transponders, dog park memberships, and reservations will continue to be conducted through the website and scheduled appointments. Anyone wanting to access Town Hall will need to wear a face covering and have their temperature checked. Those unable to wear face coverings will need to conduct business over the phone or email. The lobby area will be limited to four people in line. Additional people will need to wait on the front porch.

All facilities and parks are open at this time. We ask that visitors use caution and abide by CDC and Florida Health Department guidelines.

Board meetings, committee meetings, and club meetings will need to comply with the following:

- Setups are limited to predefined socially distanced layouts (generally 11-person max per salon).
- Meeting organizer will need to regulate their own reservations for the limited seats/participants that will be available.
- Access to a projector and screen will be provided if possible. Any additional equipment needed for virtual (Zoom-type) meetings are the responsibility of the meeting organizer. Town Hall will not supply additional equipment or technology assistance.
- No food events are allowed at this time.
- No exercise classes are allowed at this time.
- No card or mahjong events are allowed at this time.
- Saturday and Sunday events are not allowed at this time.
- Groups that do not comply with the conditions above may lose use privilege of Town Hall facilities.

Town Hall North: Town Hall North is also open to the general public. However, given the size of the Town Hall North building, the meeting rooms will not be available to the general public or clubs.

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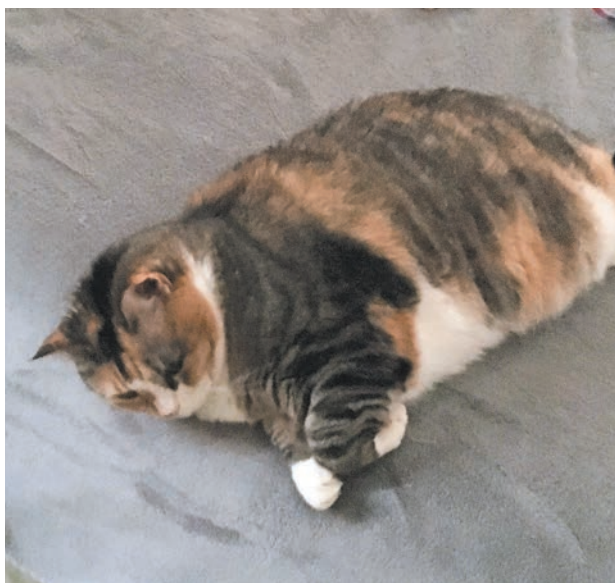
THE PET DOC

The (Pet) Doctor is In!

By Erin Siems, DVM

The new year is here already! Many of us have already made (and possibly broken) our New Year's resolutions. A very commonly made (and broken) resolution is to eat healthier, exercise more and lose weight. Most of our pets could stand to make (and keep) the same resolution, but they need our help to do so. Almost 60% of American pets are overweight or obese from a mixture of too many calories and too little exercise. Just like us, many dogs and cats that are simply put on a diet don't lose weight or regain the weight that they do lose. That's why they need a lifestyle change that includes diet and exercise.

There are so many foods out there it can be confusing to decide which one is the right one for your pet. For pets who have already packed on the extra pounds, it is a good idea to switch to a light or diet food that is going to have more fiber and less calories per cup. These foods are not going to taste as good and you may notice a decrease in appetite, which is OK as long as they are still eating it. Any food change should be done gradually, over 1-2 weeks, to avoid upsetting the GI system. Of course, if your pet is on a special diet for medical reasons, consult



your veterinarian prior to switching foods. Also, consider how many snacks and treats your pet gets. There can be a surprising amount of calories in all those little extras. Try healthy treats like baby carrots or green beans so that they can keep snacking with

you but in a healthy way.

The key to a truly healthy lifestyle is exercise. Just like us, it is a good idea for pets to get a physical exam before starting any strenuous exercise program to make sure their bodies are able to handle it. For our couch potato pets, we need to start slow and build up stamina over time. While taking a walk or playing fetch are good dog activities, cats are a bit harder to convince to get moving. Many cats can be enticed with a laser pointer or interactive feather toys. Even if you have to hide treats around the house to entice them to "hunt," at least they are working for their calories.

The most important part is to recognize small gains as successes and do not solely focus on setbacks. This is a journey that will take time, but you can do it together!

Dr. Erin Siems graduated from Ross University School of Veterinary Medicine in 2010, and has enjoyed working in both general practice and emergency care. She has been practicing in the Lakewood Ranch/Bradenton area for the past seven years. She enjoys general practice because it gives her the ability to build relationships with her patients and their families. Dr. Siems opened her own practice, Big Paws Animal Hospital in Lakewood Ranch, in May 2020. Email pet questions to reception@BigPawsAnimalHospital.com.

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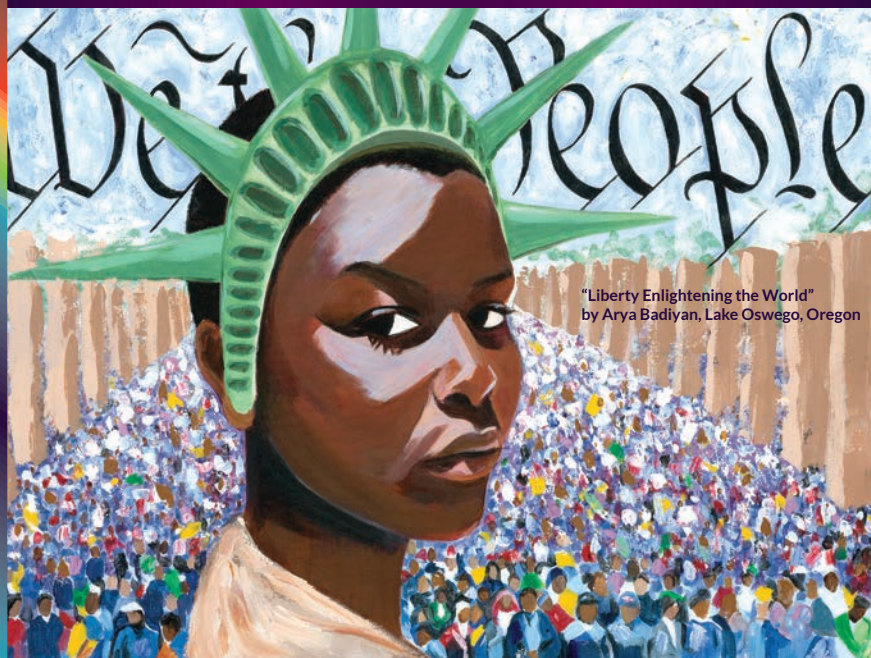
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Forestar Reveals New Community Coming Soon - Star Farms at Lakewood Ranch

Forestar Group Inc., a national residential lot developer, recently announced a community that will be coming soon – Star Farms at Lakewood Ranch. Star Farms will be a multi-generational lifestyle community that offers “a unique experience tailored to meet the needs of today’s diverse homebuyers.”

The 700-acre, gated neighborhood is planned to be a resort ranch hometown, featuring 1,500 single-family homes, paired villa retreats and townhomes with a variety of amenities, clubs and hospitality services. Positioned within Lakewood Ranch, Star Farms is minutes from dining, shopping and cultural activities as well as top-rated beaches.

“We look forward to introducing a new hometown concept with our resort ranch community,” said Tony Squiteri, president of Forestar’s West Florida Division. “As one of the newest villages in Lakewood Ranch, Star Farms plans to offer a wide range of amenities and diverse housing options for parents, children, retirees and singles to enjoy. The Forestar team has significant experience designing, developing and executing the vision for lifestyle communities in the Lakewood Ranch area, and we are passionate about creating an inspiring experience for our homeowners within our master-planned communities.”

The Forestar Group Inc. has operations in 49 markets and 21 states and is a majority-owned subsidiary of D.R. Horton, the largest homebuilder by volume in the United States since 2002.

“We are excited that Forestar chose Lakewood Ranch to introduce its first-in-kind concept around multi-generational living,” said Laura Cole, senior vice president of Lakewood Ranch Communities, LLC. “Star Farms will be a vibrant new village with opportunities for diverse housing and a lifestyle that will bridge the gap between generations and shape community.”

To join the VIP Club or for more information, visit www.starfarmslwr.com.

FROM PAGE 21

land is indeed sold for development.

The Country Club district boards discussed the progress toward unmanned automated gate access into the Country Club.

A pilot program is currently being tested out in the Edgewater neighborhood and, when the “bugs” have been worked out, it is expected that this type of gate management equipment will be installed at other Country Club gates.

Executive Director Anne Ross was given a very high rating by the IDA board during her annual performance review and was given a 2-1/2% pay increase.

DISTRICT-SPECIFIC ITEMS

In District 1, reports on the condition of the banks of the Braden River, which have been a concern to residents of the Bluffs neighborhood for some time, will be covered as a special item during the January, 2021 District 1 board meeting.

Operations Director Paul Chetlain proposed two repair items – one involving drainage, and the other involving control of vehicular access to the Heron’s Nest area. The District 1 board approved the expenditures for both items.

The District 5 board was informed by operations director Chetlain that during the process of revamping the Players Gate, there will be times when one side or the other of the gate may be closed to traffic. This is due to the need for multiple paving passes over several days’

time to accomplish the base repair to the roadway. Signs directing residents to not use the gate during the repaving will be posted so that residents don’t attempt to pull into the gate area while this paving work is being done.

The District 5 board also gave authorization to the operations department to repair damaged pipe joints, using a “pig” in order to grout the damaged joints without having to excavate the entire area.

During the District 6 board meeting, supervisor Wayne Turnblom requested that a notice be posted on the Lakewood Ranch website to inform residents about the placement of a food donation barrel on the front porch of the Town Hall.

Turnover of the potable water system to Manatee County will require that a manhole cover be raised, and that access to county sewer trucks be maintained.

A new filtration system has been installed at the Silverwood irrigation pump station.

The District 6 board approved the expenditure of approximately \$4,600 to trim 61 specimen palm trees. This is a budgeted item and will require a bucket truck to accomplish. The Board also approved payment to cut down an oak tree which is interfering with the sidewalk at 11421 Hawick Place, as the tree will cause additional problems both to a sanitary clean-out as well as to irrigation infrastructure, and since part of the tree structure is in the right-of-way.



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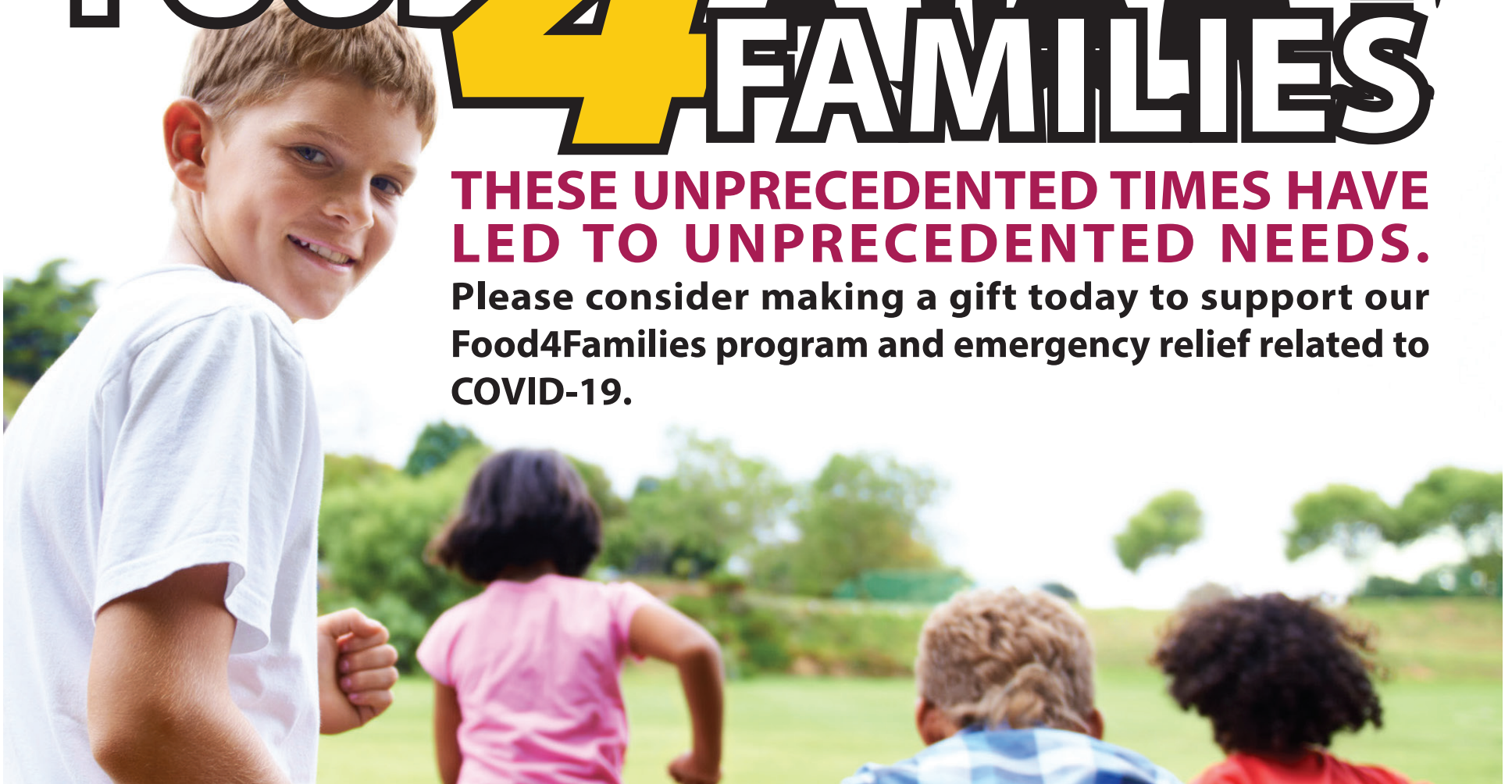
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