



Around the Ranch

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THE COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER OF LAKEWOOD RANCH

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 17, 2021



LIFE IS BETTER AROUND A CAMPFIRE - The third annual Lakewood Ranch Community Campout was held in February at Greenbrook Adventure Park, with more than 30 families enjoying food, fun, and the camaraderie of their neighbors. Photo by Pedro Castellano.

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The Brain Health Initiative (BHI) Be Brain Healthy Movement

WHAT IS BRAIN HEALTH? WHY IS IT SO IMPORTANT?

By Dr. Stephanie Peabody,
PSYC, HSSP, Neuropsychologist, Executive Director
Founder and Executive Director, Brain Health Initiative

A healthy brain is crucial to our overall well-being. Brain health includes not only the physiological and metabolic health of the brain as an organ but the dynamic interaction between the brain, mind, body, and environment. This includes our ability to concentrate, remember, communicate, learn, and maintain a clear, active mind, as well as to engage with the outer world.



Brain health impacts virtually every aspect of our lives, from our physical health and functioning to our emotional health and our relationships with others, as well as how we can perform in our professional and/or our academic careers.

Achieving optimal brain health is about reducing risk factors, keeping our minds active, and getting the very best out of our brains when we are young and developing, as we mature in adulthood, and as we age. An optimally performing brain experiences increased focus and attention, is resilient to stress and anxiety, improves the quality of our sleep, experiences a heightened sense of satisfaction and joy, and increased cognitive and physical performance. The performance of our brain impacts many things in our life including: our level of happiness, relationships, physical performance, executive performance, motivation, ability to focus and learn, metabolism, confidence, and management of stress.

The BHI Be Brain Healthy movement will educate and engage residents of the Suncoast region about the importance of brain health.

Taking preventative steps to keep our brains healthy, resilient, and performing optimally across the lifespan (beginning as early in life as possible), can have significant impacts on our health, life achievement and fighting brain illness, such as depression, anxiety, and dementia. The Lancet International Commission on Dementia Prevention, Intervention, and Care estimates that over 40 percent of dementia cases globally could be prevented by addressing modifiable risk factors. The World Health Organization also has published guidelines on risk reduction for brain illness. Although many of us believe that maintaining a healthy and high-performing brain sounds important, we don't really know what that means.

That is why the BHI BE BRAIN HEALTHY movement was created.

BE BRAIN HEALTHY MOVEMENT AIMS

The BHI Be Brain Healthy Movement calls for families and communities to change how they care for their brains and transform how we promote optimal performance and approach brain illness.

Educate

We will arm families and communities with the information they need to protect not only their brains, but those of their families and friends.

Empower

Families and communities must realize that they can be a driving force for change – by starting courageous conversation with healthcare providers, other family members, friends, and others in their communities.

Engage

We will engage and partner with world-renowned scientists, innovators, and funders to change the paradigm of brain health research.

Elevate

We will galvanize influential people in leadership roles to join our efforts, inspire a conversation on brain health, and demand research, action, innovation, and change.



The Be Brain Healthy Movement translates these findings to actions people can implement in their daily lives. The movement encompasses activities designed to engage and empower the Suncoast residents about the importance of brain health, along with easy, concrete actions that anyone can take to stay brain healthy and brain powerful every day.

The movement is the BHI's multi-pronged approach to leveraging the power of community voices and actions to make a fundamental change in the way we care for our brains. With research as the foundation of the Be Brain Healthy movement, the BHI aims to:

- **Promote** and protect lifelong brain health and optimal performance at the individual and community level.
- **Elevate** the subject of brain health to encourage action-oriented/meaningful conversations.
- **Encourage** behavior change that science shows us can help improve brain health and optimize brain performance across the lifespan.

Activities that are part of the Be Brain Healthy movement will educate, empower, engage, and elevate members of the commu-

nity to take control of their brain health and to increase brain health outcomes for all ages.

Initial elements of the Be Brain Healthy movement include:

- Enrichment (education, training, and resources) for individuals and the general public who are interested in personal development and self-care.
- Opportunities for those who are interested in taking a more active role through training regarding their brain health that they can share with the community, as a community brain health educator.
- Professional development programming for fitness and wellness professionals.
- Continuing education courses, as well as access to state-of-the-art, innovative brain health screening, programming, and intervention tools for licensed medical and health care professionals and paraprofessionals interested in expanding their competency and portfolio of services to support their clients/patients and the greater community's brain health and performance across the lifespan.



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FROM PAGE 6

- Public awareness campaign with WEDU/PBS through a monthly primetime series focused on educating and informing the community about how to protect their brain health through the sharing of intelligent, informative, and entertaining science (translated to action) as well as telling compelling regional brain health stories of organizations and everyday people.

As part of the Be Brain Healthy movement, the BHI “Be Brain Healthy: Be Brain Powerful” campaign is about to be launched in the Suncoast region. It is a collaborative effort with UsAgainstAlzheimer’s and WomenAgainstAlzheimer’s and will be an ongoing effort.

The driver of this campaign is an initial pilot 30-day brain health challenge. It addresses the overall lack of awareness about brain health and encourages preventative lifestyle behaviors that support brain health protective factors and optimal performance—eating well, staying active, sleeping well, controlling risk, exercising your brain, and connecting with friends and family. The Brain Health Challenge will also spark conversation around brain health – through social media, real-world events, and your actions and commitment; the Be Brain Healthy Movement and BE Brain Powerful campaign will help families in Lakewood Ranch build a brain healthy community and talk openly about protecting brain health while paying attention to their brain wellness and overall well-being.

This campaign is crucial for everybody, but particularly women, minorities, and youth. Women are the CEOs of family health, change agents in the communities, and twice as likely as men to develop many brain illnesses, including depression, anxiety and Alzheimer’s. Women also make up two thirds of brain illness caregivers.

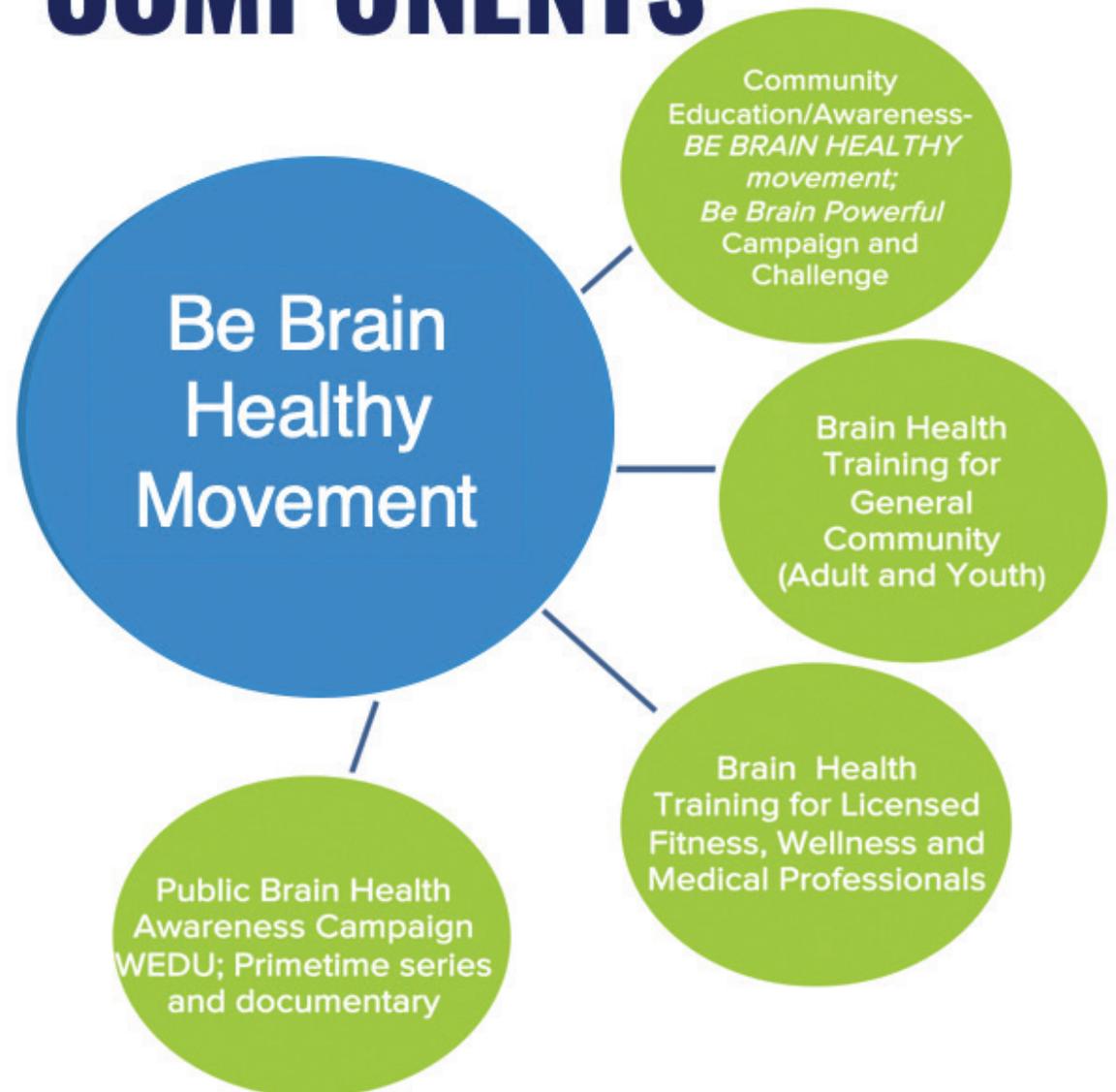
The campaign also focuses on racial/ethnic, gender, and sexual minorities who often experience poor brain health outcomes due to multiple factors including inaccessibility to high quality brain health care services, cultural stigma surrounding mental health care, discrimination, and reduced access to information about brain health.

Youth in the community are also targeted by the campaign to prepare them for leading their own brain healthy lifestyles as well as those of their future families and the greater community. The BHI will pilot the 30-day challenge in the coming months with a group of women, men, and youth throughout the region. The pilot participants will assist in the design of the future challenges to be launched regionwide.

Individuals and communities need to be empowered when it comes to making lifestyle changes that will impact their brain health and performance.

Understanding the latest science behind protecting brain health, promoting brain performance, and preventive measures to decrease the risk for brain illness across the lifespan is critical to empowering individuals when it comes to their brain health, and the health and well-being of their family and their greater community.

BE BRAIN HEALTHY COMPONENTS



Creating a Brain Healthy Community requires collaboration across all sectors and the BHI will begin the pilot with women and youth, including the men and dads they love. Women in particular, as their family’s chief health officer and go-to caregivers, can drive change regarding how we care for our brains. Their efforts can transform how we promote optimal performance and approach brain illness across the lifespan.

Part of the BHI’s long-term vision is to guide policymakers, payers, and providers to champion initiatives and efforts that support brain health as a standard of care from before birth to the end of life, making brain health coverage standard and accessible to all. Through the Be Brain Healthy movement, the BHI aims to partner with individuals and communities throughout

the region to bring awareness and action that protects brain health, promotes optimal brain performance, and fights brain illness that drives real, sustainable change.

We make healthy choices for our bodies every day but we rarely think about our brain health. Together, LET’S CHANGE THAT!

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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LAKEWOOD RANCH COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

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Even in the midst of a challenging environment, the LWR Parks and Rec team is working hard to connect our residents via safe, affordable outdoor programming. In the first quarter of 2021 alone, we completed over 100 sessions of 23 programs, with more being added every quarter! The newest edition of our Parks and Rec guide is out now – many of our first session programs are continuing and can be found on our website at myLWR.com.



Keith Pandeloglou
Director of LWRCAC



Chris McComas
Parks & Rec Director of LWRCAC

Fishing Saturdays takes on a new twist in its return on the third Saturday of the month, March 20! During this session, being held this month at Summerfield Park, attendees will learn the art of casting, being a good angler, and knot tying. This session is sponsored by Fish Florida, and all youth in attendance that complete all the sessions will receive a free rod and reel!

The following Saturday, on March 27, our annual youth fishing tournament returns to Lake Uihlein, im-



mediately behind Lakewood Ranch Town Hall. Youth ages 5-17 are invited to join in the fun, starting at 9 a.m. Pre-registration is required and available at myLWR.com

In an effort to continue to build and grow our Parks programs, we've brought in the best partners in sports, fitness, music, and more to help. One of those is Chris McComas, Parks & Rec director for Lakewood Ranch Community Activities. We've given the rest of our column over to Chris to share some thoughts about his new role!

"As the Parks Director for Lakewood Ranch Community Activities, I am excited to contribute my energy to this community," McComas said. "Lakewood Ranch is a fantastic place to live and work and I feel very fortunate to be a part of this beautiful place. My goal, through our parks and recreation programs, is to provide active, social events all ages can enjoy. Sports and recreation are vital components of a well-balanced and healthy community, and all of us at Lakewood Ranch Community Activities are excited to create these special events for everyone.

"I am a graduate of The University of Tennessee and moved to Lakewood Ranch in 2015. My wife, Jessi, and I are so happy to be raising our daughter, Josie, in a fun filled, active community like Lakewood Ranch.

"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. We love working with our LWR-based businesses! We are open to applications for the upcoming session of our Parks and Recreation program. If interested, submit a Park Partner Application. For a link to the application, send us a note at info@lwrca.org.

"After applying, you are welcome to join us for 'Monthly Office Hours,' the fourth Monday of the month, from 2-3 p.m. Contact us at info@lwrca.org to schedule an in-person, socially-distanced pitch, or meet the LWRCA Parks team via Zoom."

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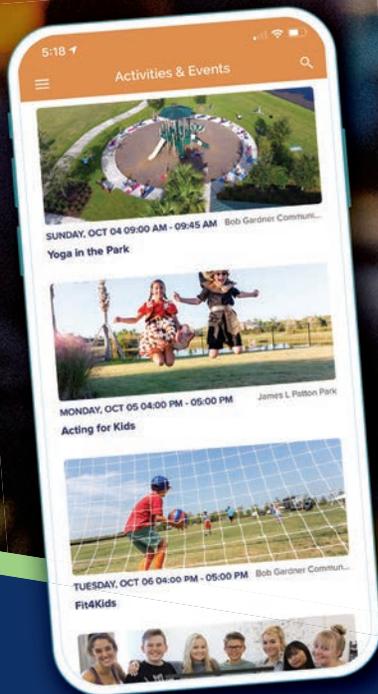


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Wicked Awesome Ice Cream Emporium at the Ranch!

By Ernie Soller, Community Correspondent

Something remembered from my childhood: “I SCREAM, YOU SCREAM, WE ALL SCREAM FOR ICE CREAM!” I can remember my aunt coming up with that little bit of literary trivia every time my sister and I went with her to get ice cream and, in a way, that little saying exemplifies what folks think of that favorite treat – ice cream.

Matt Eastman owns Lickity Splits Ice Cream, a company which makes ice cream – right here in the environs of Lakewood Ranch.

Eastman decided to go for it, but thought that rather than opening a retail ice cream shop himself, he'd rather make the ice cream, and distribute it to the individual shops. And Lickity Splits Ice Cream was born. Eastman's ice cream distribution customers now include more than 50 ice cream stores, restaurants, and resorts.

Enter Michelle Noel.

After 30 years in the corporate world of deadlines and trips to China to source products, Noel's career got whacked by COVID-19, and she lost her job.

The store itself is a bit of a wonder, with murals done by Jeff Riggan of Gulf Coast Art and Mural Company, and interior design is by Debra Wren of Wrenhouse Design in Sarasota.

Wicked Awesome Ice Cream Emporium is definitely not a “corporate clone” -type store.

Believe me, just walking into the place will be an experience. The penguins alone will make you smile. But, this IS an ice cream shop, so let's talk ice cream flavors.

Lickity Splits, mindful of our community, has already sponsored an FFA dairy cow at Lakewood Ranch High, and has created several special local flavors.



PHOTOS BY ERNIE SOLLER

After a long time working in the telecom industry, and fast moving toward “burn-out,” Eastman decided to start his own business and, like some rather famous entrepreneurs (Steve Jobs, Henry Ford), Matt Started Lickity Splits in his garage!

The idea of getting into the ice cream business came to him when on a trip to an ice cream store in a major resort area of Sarasota, he noticed a man standing in a very long line, rather impatiently waiting to buy an ice cream cone.

By the time this man got to the head of the line, the store had run out of the flavor the guy wanted. No problem – the man simply chose another flavor, got his ice cream cone and smiling, happily began downing his favorite frozen treat. No complaints were filed about the store having run out. No nasty words were uttered. Peace and happiness seemed to be the prevailing feelings.

This got Eastman thinking ... why not get into the ice cream business? After all, who hates ice cream? No one, that's who. Ice cream is a pretty much a fun, recession-proof business. Even in bad times, people take time for ice cream. Kids love it. Grandparents love it. Show me a person who doesn't like ice cream. You probably can't!

A New England girl and self-confessed “foodie,” Noel remembered the summertime trips to get ice cream, and started thinking about opening an ice cream shop in Florida – where it's summertime most of the year. A real estate agent knew about Lickity Splits Ice Cream, and suggested that Noel call Eastman.

Having taken a good look at the Lakewood Ranch area, Noel realized that the northern area of Lakewood Ranch was underserved, ice cream-wise.

Pizza joints? Check ... Grocery stores? Check ... Sports bars? Check. Ice Cream? ... Good luck unless you want to drive a ways.

So Noel rented a space on the northern area of Lakewood Ranch Boulevard, in the Shoppes at Business Park, right next to Skyline Chili, and set up shop as Wicked Awesome Ice Cream Emporium, and opened at the beginning of January.

The shop offers 36 flavors of “hard” ice cream – the kind you scoop, and plans to offer soft serve in vanilla, chocolate and two-flavor twist, as well as concretes, brownies, cookies, whoopie pies and frappes.

The Wicked Awesome customer can expect to see a number of “New England” flavors, too. You can feast on flavors such as “Rocky Rhode Island,” “Boston Tea Party,” and Vermont Maple Walnut, to name a few. There are two vegan offerings, as well as one sugar-free and one dairy-free option. Don't feel like a cone at the moment? Pick up a pint, to go!

There are also cups for your puppy pals.

When it comes to ice cream, I'm like the proverbial kid in the candy store. I will also predict that long lines will be found at this location.

The store is located at 412 Lakewood Ranch Blvd. Hours are 2-9 p.m. Tuesday-Thursday; 11 a.m.-10 p.m. Friday and Saturday, and 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. Sunday.

For more information visit wickedawesomeicecream.com or call (941)345-4755.

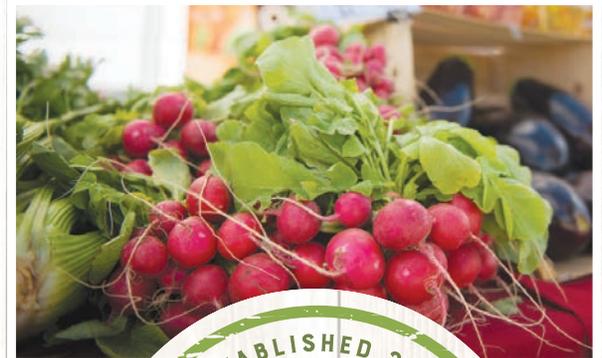
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PHOTOS BY PEDRO CASTELLANO



Happy Campers

The third annual Lakewood Ranch Community Campout was held February 20-21 at Greenbrook Adventure Park. Campers brought their own tents and supplies to the family-friendly, socially distanced event; and activities included tent-pitching demos, an astronomer with telescope, outdoor games, a family movie – “Aladdin,” live music, a campfire, a nature hike, and food and s’mores for purchase from Buonissimo Pizza. More than 30 families participated, with approximately 150 campers in attendance.



THE (PET) DOCTOR IS IN!

By Erin Siems, DVM

Spring is here.

Although Florida is not particularly known for its seasons, spring tends to bring about our longest, most annoying season – ALLERGY SEASON.

Just like us, many pets have seasonal or environmental allergies. While people tend to get itchy eyes and runny noses, common signs of allergies in pets include itching, licking paws, ear infections, watery eyes and sneezing. Just like people allergies, pet allergies are not curable but can usually be managed. The severity of the allergies will determine how much maintenance is needed.

If your fur friend has allergies, the best way to decide on a treatment plan is to consult your veterinarian. Together, you can come up with a targeted plan for success for treating your pet and managing their environment.

A few common environmental solutions are to vacuum often, use HEPA filters and wash bedding in hot water weekly. Often allergy pets will need more frequent bathing with a hypoallergenic or medicated shampoo and nutritional supplements like omega fatty acids. Some pets need prescription medications to help with the allergies and any resulting infections. Some need allergy testing and special medication



formulated for their specific allergies.

This allergy season know that help is out there. Know the signs of allergies in pet and know that you can help make your buddy more comfortable. Afterall, pets make our lives better in so many ways so why wouldn't we do the same for them?.

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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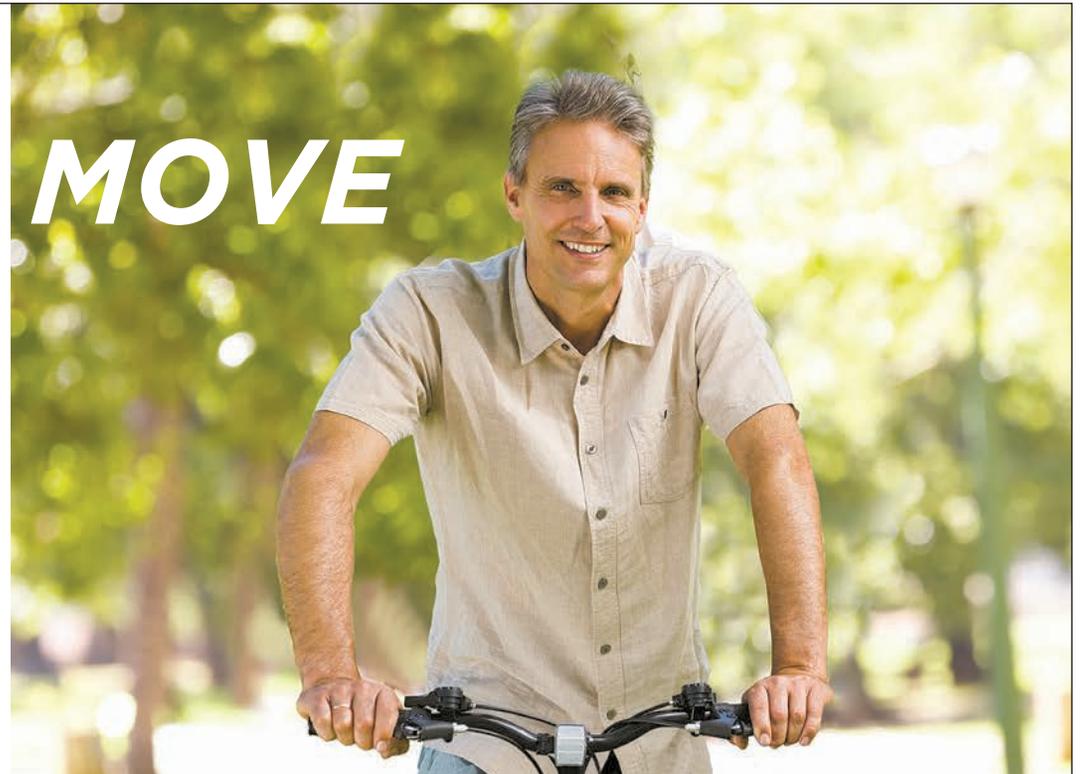
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USA Dry Rieslings

If you are like most wine drinkers, when you hear the word “riesling” you think of sipping overly sweet wine while doing one of two things: yodeling through a central European valley in lederhosen, humming melodies from “The Sound of Music,” or watching a cardboard cutout going over the cliff in an episode of the “Price is Right.” And while European-style rieslings are generally more well-known, crisper, less sweet dry rieslings from the United States have recently exploded onto the scene with a cult-like following and growing popularity to give their more traditional and sweeter European counterparts a serious run for their money.

We are The Unassuming Wine Bros (UWB) – Patrick and Vigo – two regular guys who love everything about wine, including writing about it. Our goal is to explore the nuances of wine, share our adventures with you, and have a little fun along the way.

This month’s article’s original concept was a “Battle of the (European vs. the US) Rieslings” in full disclosure. In furtherance, we sampled five different rieslings – two traditional European (one from Alsace, France; one from Bernkastel, Germany) and three US dry (from New York’s Finger Lakes region (2), and Columbia Valley, Washington, (1), respectively). And after doing so, because we were shocked at how much more we enjoyed each of the US dry rieslings, we decided to ditch what we each believed were inferior European selections and write about just the US dry rieslings. With surprise, enthusiasm, and while patriotically draped in the Stars and Stripes, here are our thoughts:

Rating System: – ratings are given on a 1-5 scale, with five being the highest

2018 CHATEAU STE. MICHELLE DRY RIESLING, COLUMBIA VALLEY, WASHINGTON STATE,

\$9 U.S.; 12.5 % Alc. by Vol.

Vigo: This wine should have been in our “under \$15” article, but as we all know, “wine hindsight is 20-20.” After my first taste of this wine, I discovered something: I like (not love) dry rieslings. The wine’s bouquet is of roses, oranges, and green apples. The flavor is dry and acidic, with lemons, green apples, oranges, and pears lingering on your palate. Altogether, delightful, and the price point makes it even better.

Vigo’s Rating:

Patrick: I found the 2018 Chateau Ste. Michelle Dry Riesling to be refreshing, easy to drink, and enjoyable. This bottle was tangy, dry, and crisp with notes of peach and apple. It exhibited a present, but not overpowering sweetness combined with this wine’s minerality to make a flavorful taste. At \$9 per



Chateau Ste. Michelle



Forge Cellars Classique



Wagner Vineyards

bottle, you could have two and still feel you were getting your money’s worth.

Patrick’s Rating:

2018 FORGE CELLARS CLASSIQUE DRY RIESLING, SENECA LAKE, NEW YORK STATE

\$14 U.S.; 12% Alc. by Vol.

Vigo: Of the US dry rieslings we tasted, this is the one Patrick and I disagreed on the most. If you research this wine, you’ll find it is the highest-rated and most acclaimed of the three bottles. My first observation after tasting this wine was that this is a dry riesling for those who want a different type of riesling. The bouquet is different from most dry rieslings with wildflowers and a hint of apple. The flavor is dry but not acidic, with the profile of apples and wax on the palate. The smoothness may be from being fermented in oak initially, before being transferred to stainless steel to finish the fermentation process. The 2018 Forge Cellars Classique Dry Riesling is a well-balanced wine, but it confused me because of its lack of acidity. If you’re looking for a less sweet, not acidic, dry riesling, then the 2018 Forge Cellars Classique is for you.

Vigo’s Rating:

Patrick: As usual, Vigo is wrong, and I am right. This is the second time I have sampled this bottle, and I enjoyed it thoroughly each time. The 2018 Forge Cellars Classique is a perfect blend of fruit, minerality, and a long, interesting finish. Apple is the predominant fruit in this delicious wine and was far and away the best of the three wines sampled. I can’t wait to pick up another bottle.

Patrick’s Rating:

2018 WAGNER VINEYARDS DRY RIESLING, FINGER LAKES, NEW YORK STATE

\$13 U.S.; 11.9 % Alc. by Vol

Vigo: The bottom line on the 2018 Wagner Vineyard Dry

Riesling is it’s a reliable representation of a dry riesling. A beautiful bouquet – citrus, green apples, and flowers – fill your glass after a few swirls. The flavor profile is dry and acidic, with citrus, green apples, and orange peel on the palate. The Wagner is an excellent representation of a Finger Lakes riesling and should be a go-to for those who love traditional dry rieslings.

Vigo’s Rating:

Patrick: I enjoyed the 2018 Wagner Vineyard Dry Riesling. This wine was the least sweet of the three dry rieslings we sampled, and its minerality was its dominant feature. It exhibited more pronounced citrus and less but still present apple notes. I thought this wine was a solid dry option. This will pair perfectly with shellfish.

Patrick’s Rating:

Patrick’s overall impressions: I went into this month’s tasting with a low expectation and ended up being blown away by the quality of these three samples of this often-overlooked grape varietal. My favorite was the 2018 Forge Cellars Classique Dry Riesling, although I liked each for different reasons. If you have not tried these dry rieslings, check them out and let us know what you think. Each can be purchased at the UTC Total Wine.

Vigo’s overall impressions: US dry rieslings should be given serious consideration when thinking about choosing a white wine for your next meal or wine get-together. If you’re not a lover of a sweet riesling, then one of these US dry rieslings is the way to go. I was very impressed with this month’s selections, with the 2018 Chateau St. Michelle Dry Riesling being my favorite.

Although this month we focused on US dry rieslings, an honorable mention shout-out goes to the 2018 Alberechi Traditional Alsace Riesling. This French riesling was sweeter than each of the three US dry rieslings, which should be expected given its traditional European roots, but was clean and flavorful. It is worth a try if you are looking for a sweeter wine.

ATTENTION FANS AND READERS:

We have thoroughly enjoyed the overwhelming response to our recently launched social media presence. It gives us other ways to communicate with our readers about our passion for all things wine. Amazingly, we have already interacted with followers in Asia, South America, and Europe about some of the wines we have sampled in the short time period since we launched. Like our Facebook page “The Unassuming Wine Bros”; follow us on Instagram @theinassumingwinebros, or email us at vigoandpatrick@gmail.com. Let us know what you think about this article, these bottles, or suggestions for upcoming articles.

LWR Medical Center Named a Best Maternity Hospital 2021 By Newsweek in Partnership with The Leapfrog Group

Newsweek, in partnership with The Leapfrog Group, named Lakewood Ranch Medical Center (LWRMC) a 2021 Best Maternity Hospital in the U.S. The ranking includes 217 hospitals across 36 states.

To be considered for the list, hospitals must meet Leapfrog's tough standards for excellence in maternity care: hospitals that have low rates of C-section, episiotomy, and early elective deliveries, and follow important protocols to protect moms and babies. Though these are standards aligned with medical research and best practices, not all hospitals achieve them. Newsweek's Best Maternity Care Hospitals are "an elite group of hospitals demonstrating the highest performance in the United States," according to a Feb. 24 Newsweek publication.

"Lakewood Ranch Medical Center is



honored to be named one of the Best Maternity Hospitals 2021 by Newsweek and The Leapfrog Group for the second year in a row," said Andy Guz, CEO of Lakewood Ranch Medical Center. "It is very important to maintain the highest standards of care, especially for expecting mothers in our Women's Center."

Johanna Pumphrey, LWRMC's director of the Women's Center, added that "It is with great honor and pride that Lakewood Ranch Medical Center has achieved the 2021 Best Maternity Hospital Award. Patient safety and quality of care are the key elements to this recognition. Evidence-based practice, working together as a strong team toward exceeding the national benchmarks in quality and patient safety is our commitment to our patients and families each and every day."



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Lakewood Ranch District Finances Are in Good Shape

By Ernie Soller, Community Correspondent

At the monthly Community Development District (CDD) board meetings held in February, the accounting firm of Purvis Gray presented their findings from the audits of the finances of all the Lakewood Ranch CDDs, as well as the Inter-District Authority (IDA).

Due to all the COVID-related issues, the reports were delivered via Zoom, rather than in person.

The audits are required under Florida laws regulating special districts, and the results were very encouraging.

Helen Painter, audit partner at Purvis Gray; and Tiffany Mangold, the auditor in charge of the Lakewood Ranch audits, presented reports that were, in the accounting parlance, “unqualified,” meaning that there were no irregularities in the community’s governmental finances.

Painter noted that one very good aspect of some district finances was the re-financing of several bond issues which, because of much lower interest rates, created a very positive result, with the bond re-funding in Dis-

trict 5 alone to save residents approximately \$200,000.

The auditors commented that Lakewood Ranch Finance Director Steve Zielinski and his staff were keeping very good records.

FISCAL 2022 BUDGET MEETINGS

Finance Director Zielinski reported that the budget preparation meetings for all districts will begin in mid-March.

EROSION CONTROL

In District 1, there was a discussion among board members and the District’s attorney, Chris Van Hise, relating to the issue of whether erosion mitigation aimed at stemming continued erosion of the bank of the Braden River as it impacts the Bluffs neighborhood would benefit the District as a whole, or be of benefit to only those residents who are directly impacted by the erosion. Van Hise noted that the District’s engineer would need to make a determination on this. Operations Director Paul Chetlain and Executive Director Anne Ross noted that there is no longer a possibility of getting grant money to pay for the mitigation. Chetlain commented that the grant program was “DOA.”

If a special assessment is needed to pay for erosion mitigation, it would have to be based on the cost and a determination as to which homeowners would receive the greatest benefit. Engineer Richard Ellis will be working with Lakewood Ranch staff to make this determination.

Supervisor Laura Fox told her fellow Board members that she had recently had some gutter work done on her home, and that she was quite impressed as to how much water was coming off her roof. She also noted that household gutters were supposed to drain toward the street drains in the front of homes, and that if they are not draining in this manner, this might be a factor in the erosion problem toward the rear of the lots.

CELL TOWERS

Executive Director Ross reported that Verizon’s new small cell towers along Lakewood Ranch Boulevard and Lorraine Road were now up and functional, which should improve cell service to area residents.

PIG DAMAGE

It was reported during the District 2 board meeting that a new pig trapper has been hired to attempt to rid the District of the feral pigs that have been damaging lawns, especially in

the Edgewater and Muirfield neighborhoods. He has set out 20 traps.

LAKE UIHLEIN BANK EROSION

During the District 2 board meeting, supervisor Jerry Twiggs asked about the erosion on the western bank of Lake Uihlein. Operations director Chetlain stated that a possible reason might be small wave action resulting from easterly winds. Twiggs asked if Schroeder-Manatee Ranch (SMR), the owner of the water in the lake, would be responsible for reducing the erosion. Executive Director Ross responded by stating that the Town Hall staff would contact SMR to determine what mitigation might be possible.

CEVA

During the District 2 board meeting, the subject was raised about an apparent perception among some Country Club/Edgewater Village HOA members regarding the services that they are getting from their CDD.

Per supervisor Tom Green, issues such as this often result from a misconception on the part of residents who might not have a good understanding of the “shared services” concept under which the CDDs, the Homeowners Associations (HOA) and the IDA operates.

Attending one of the “new resident orientation” sessions, which are held several times a year (currently virtually), he noted, might provide for a greater understanding on the part of residents as to how government functions in Lakewood Ranch.

PLAYERS GATE RENOVATION PROJECT

The board of District 5 approved a bid by the Gator company to perform the renovation of the Players Gate. The entire gate area will be re-done and will include the installation of new gates and landscaping. The work is expected to be completed within budget, and will take approximately 13 weeks. Residents should be aware that during the construction, entrance and egress at that gate may be compromised at times, due to the need for underground work on items such as drains and electrical systems, and new pavement installation.

PRESIDIO BERM PROJECT

Work on the Presidio berm improvement project is expected to have begun early in March.

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FROM PAGE 20

SEWER CLEANING

During the District 5 board meeting, a resident called in with a request that the District delay a planned sewer cleaning activity for another eight months, due to concerns about COVID-19.

The caller told the Board that the World Health Organization had issued recommendations to plumbers relating to their work during the pandemic, and that she was very concerned about this project, noting that her elderly father was at risk and that she was concerned that the cleaning might push virus cells out into the air through open manholes.

Marty Cohn, District 5 board chairman, noted that this was an ongoing maintenance project, and that work had already been completed in other districts, with no adverse results reported.

Operations Director Chetlain noted that manhole covers are open during the process to allow back pressure from the cleaning to be released into the street rather than have back pressure impact residential plumbing systems.

It was the consensus of the Board that the company doing the cleaning would be notified about the concern, and residents would be informed as to when the work was going to be done, so that they could take any precautions they might see fit to employ if they were concerned about possible virus exposure.

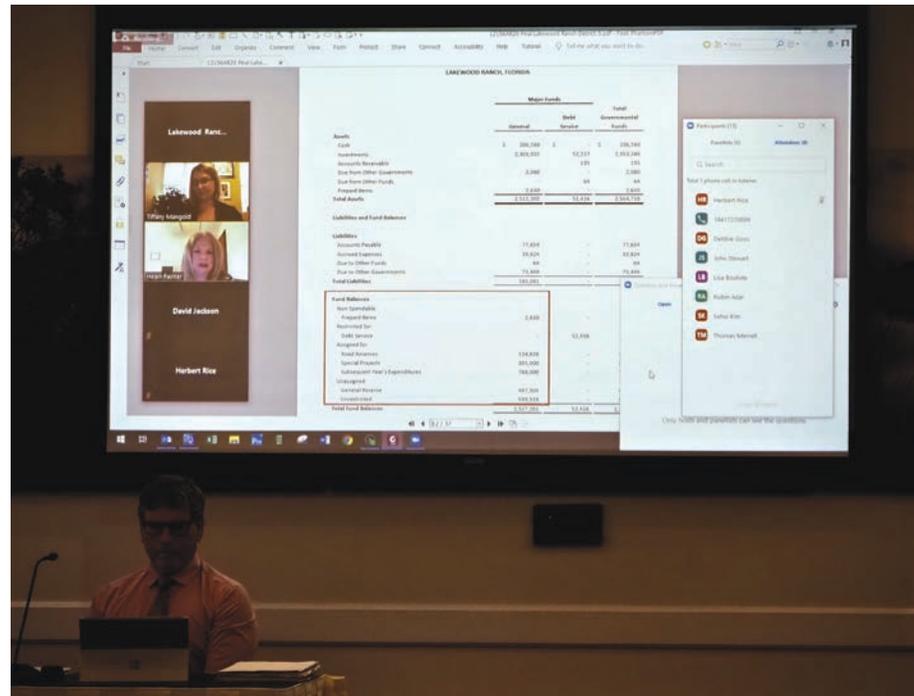


PHOTO BY ERNIE SOLLER

BALMORAL WOODS/LAKEWOOD RANCH BOULEVARD TRAFFIC SIGNAL

Engineer Ellis reported to the District 6 board that preparatory work for the traffic signal at the corner of Balmoral Woods and Lakewood Ranch boulevards is moving along, noting that the right turn lane from northbound Lakewood Ranch to Balmoral Woods boulevards will be extended to about double the current length, in order to prevent a backup of vehicles into the traffic lanes on Lakewood Ranch Boulevard. There are no plans to do similar work on southbound Lakewood Ranch Boulevard.

The project is expected to commence late in 2021.

Also in District 6, the inspection of some sewer areas on Shenandoah Court will be re-done, as the contractor failed to abide by county regulations in inspecting these areas during the first inspection.

New speed limit signs showing a limit of 20 mph are being installed in the Silverwood neighborhood. In addition, the Operations Department will be surveying street name signs in

District 6 to determine which may have deteriorated and may need replacement.

TAX PAYMENTS

Finance Director Zielinski reported that district tax receipts are, for the most part, coming in at the same rate as last year for most districts, with the exception of District 4, which is lagging behind by several percentage points, compared to last year.

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The Lakewood Ranch Golf & Country Club 18 Hole Women's Golf Association (WGA) held its President's Cup on Feb. 16. This event is held annually, honoring the 19-year history of the WGA and the women who have led this organization. Lizane Nadon and Debbie Stokes battled it out after tying with scores of 77, in a 3-hole play-off to determine a gross winner. Lizane Nadon came out the winner and will have her name added to the trophy that remains in the clubhouse. Barb Chalson won low net with a net 69. Thank you to all the ladies that have served.

Top left: Lizane Nadon

Top right: Barb Chalson

Bottom left: Debbie Stokes and Lizane Nadon

Bottom right: Past presidents

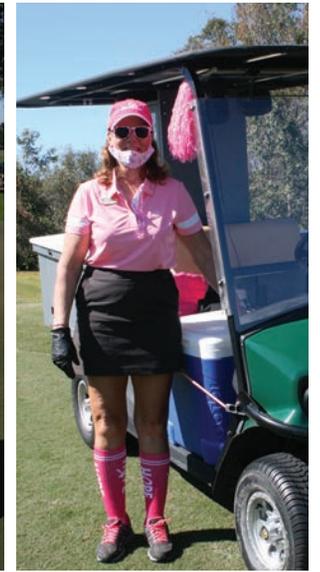
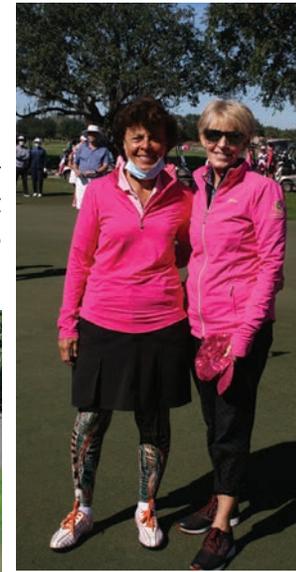


WGA Holds Annual President's Cup



Think Pink Event Benefits Breast Health Sarasota

In January, the 18-hole Women's Golf Association of the Lakewood Ranch Golf and Country Club held its annual Think Pink charity event benefiting Breast Health Sarasota, Inc. a non-profit agency that provides breast cancer prevention and support services to the local community. More than 190 golfers participated in the event, which raised more than \$31,000.



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Does Wonder Woman Live in Lakewood Ranch?

By Ernie Soller, Community Correspondent

If you've seen the movie "Wonder Woman", you've experienced the tale of a young woman who uses all her powers to help defeat an enemy, during which she gets kicked around quite a bit but, in the end triumphs, saving the world.

Perhaps we have a Wonder Woman of our own here in Lakewood Ranch.

Her name is McKenzie Hanlon, and her story of fighting the good fight begins with a 14-year-old teenage girl's experiencing migraine headaches in her hometown of Syracuse, New York.

After a move to Pittsburgh, the headaches appeared to go away, but, then they returned. The doctors who tried to treat her migraines gave her meds to combat the headaches, but they kept coming back. The medication wasn't coming close to defeating the symptoms.

After another move, this time to Birmingham, Ala., again the headaches came back and again, their family doctor prescribed more migraine medications.

But then McKenzie's mom, Misty, remembered that a relative (her aunt) had died of brain cancer at 16 years old, and asked the doctor to check for the possibility that the same sort of problem might be the real cause of McKenzie's headaches.

The doctor ordered an MRI on then 17-year-old McKenzie, which showed no evidence of brain cancer. However, it did show that McKenzie had developed a giant aneurism in her brain. The aneurism turned out to be the size of a "halo" orange! It was the largest aneurism that the professionals had ever seen.

The doctors had to find a way to deal with the aneurism, but how? They decided to take a blood vessel from McKenzie's forearm, and splice it into the area in her brain where the aneurism had formed, and subsequently, cut out the aneurism. Unfortunately, the replacement artery wouldn't take, and more surgery was needed.

Clipping off the end of the artery caused a stroke, followed by another.

While McKenzie was in the Intensive Care Unit, a nurse noticed that she wasn't doing all that well and notified her doctor, who ordered a CAT scan. On the way to the

scan, McKenzie flatlined, and her head had to be again opened up.

This young woman came away from these procedures with a large piece of her skull removed, in order for the doctors to access her brain. And this, too became an issue since, even though the doctors had taken caution in preserving the portion of her skull which had to be opened up, after they replaced it in McKenzie's head, for some reason, her body began to reject it, and that portion had to be removed once again and replaced with an artificial part.

Even after another move – this time to Florida – McKenzie was still experiencing pain, and she was checked out by the pain management team at Sarasota Memorial Hospital. She wanted to avoid opioids, because of their addictive nature.

The pain management team suggested that McKenzie go on a CBD oil treatment plan. This marijuana derivative lessened her pain considerably, enabling McKenzie to function more normally, and eliminated the nausea that the headaches precipitated – nausea which at times had caused vomiting for hours on end.

Because of the strokes, the surgeries, and the havoc they played with McKenzie's brain, she was left with paralysis on her right side. She has no use of her right hand.

In addition to the paralysis, McKenzie is largely blind – totally in one eye and with only a very limited ability to see with the other. She has no peripheral vision. Getting around and performing normal tasks became difficult.

She had to give up her pet Papillon after tripping on the small dog one day – a fall that landed McKenzie back in the hospital.

A friend who became familiar with McKenzie's challenges told her about Southeastern Guide Dogs, located in Palmetto.

Southeastern Guide Dogs has for years been a trusted dog training organization that provides guide dogs to vision-impaired people and service dogs to military veterans who have experienced issues with PTSD, through their Paws for Patriots program. Their services are given at no cost to their clients.

McKenzie applied to Southeastern and after a two-and-a-half-year wait, in late September of 2020, McKenzie was invited



PHOTOS BY ERNIE SOLLER

to go to the Southeastern campus for training with a dog.

Southeastern doesn't just train a dog and then give that dog to an individual.

They train the dog to interact with the client, and they train the person getting the dog to interact properly with the dog.

Selection of the dog that will be assisting a client doesn't just happen by chance. Southeastern matches the dog to the person. A number of dogs were selected to work with McKenzie and finally, she was paired with CJ, a long-legged golden Lab with giant paws – and a potentially table-sweeping tail!

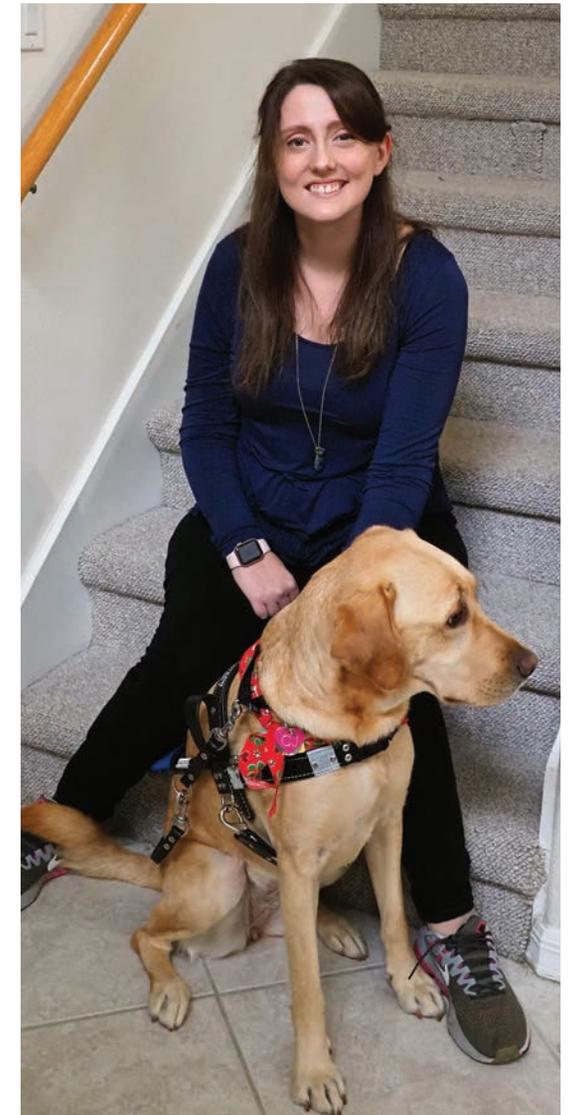
At Southeastern, both the clients and their dogs are trained in how to properly interact in various environments, such as getting into a car and riding in the car without incidents.

After McKenzie came home with CJ, their trainer, Jonathan, came out to their home for further training. CJ had, at first, a little tendency to want to chase and/or interact with other dogs. After additional training, CJ doesn't do that anymore.

McKenzie comments that she's amazed at how calm CJ can be – and how easily CJ can fall asleep.

McKenzie wants to sponsor a Southeastern Guide Dogs puppy ... and she now says that her dream job would be to work at Southeastern!

Is McKenzie our new Lakewood Ranch Wonder Woman?



HEALTH OF WEALTH

World Opening Up

By Huldah Mathis,
Northwestern Mutual

As the vaccine rollout continues, it has been fun to hear about plans being made again.

Although not directly tied to finances, I thought it might be encouraging to share some of the highlights that I have heard from clients as we have caught up to look ahead to this new year.

- First in-person trip to the Super Bowl as a “thank you” for being a frontline health care worker
- An official wedding date set
- First time to hold a new grandbaby in person
- First time on a plane for a “belated 40-year reunion” with high school friends
- Honeymoon travel booked
- Professional golf tournaments being hosted right here in our LWR backyard
- Volunteer work resuming in our local hospitals
- Enjoying the simple pleasures of favorite restaurants and movie theaters again
- A long anticipated move to Florida to live closer to grandkids
- I’m sure many of you could add to this list in meaningful way – would love to hear from you if so!

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.



March 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, 6:30 p.m.;
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

March 23, 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

March 21, 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.

RCS – The Code to Joy

At the Virtual Chabad House or at The Chabad Tent

March 18, noon to 1:15 p.m.
JCode to Joy is a monthly course which explores some of the underlying ideas and beliefs that sustain a truly happy life. Fusing classic Jewish concepts with the panoramic perspective of Chassidic thought, along with a sprinkling of insights and research from modern psychology, you’ll learn how to find self-acceptance without complacency, to confront the past without being burdened by it, to be comforted

by faith without being confined by it, to give to others and gain even more, and so much more. Course fee: \$70 JWC members, \$75 non-JWC members, or \$18 per class.

CKids – Passover Pyramid Dig

At the Chabad tent

March 21, 10 a.m.
Roll up your sleeves, pick up a shovel, and get ready to start digging! Help uncover the missing items that will solve the Pesach mystery. When you complete your mission, design your own hammered copper seder plate to use at home. Masks required until seated. Admission: \$10, Hebrew School families: free.

CTeen Brilliant Colors of Freedom

At the Chabad tent

March 17, 7 p.m.
Join CTeen LWR for dinner and tie-dye pillowcases to be used at the Seder. Make one for yourself and one to donate to children in need. Masks required until seated. Suggested donation of \$10/sponsor event for \$180.

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

LAKWOOD RANCH CHARGERS



2021 SOCCER PROGRAMS

THE BEST FACILITIES & LOWEST COMPETITIVE PROGRAM RATES!

SPRING 2021 RECREATION PROGRAM

2021 SPRING SCHEDULE

Practices Begin: End of January
Games Begin: Middle of February
Saturday Morning Games

10 WEEK SEASON DETAILS

OPEN TO BOYS & GIRLS - AGES 4 - 14
10 WEEK SEASON
Program Cost: \$135 (Includes Uniform Kit)

FALL 2020 Season Returning Players \$125 (does not include uniform)

CAMP PROGRAMS

ADVANCED DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

6 Sessions - \$60
Begins Monday March 22, 2021
Every Monday: 6:30pm - 7:30pm
Open to Players Born in 2010 - 2013

SPRING BREAK CAMP

MARCH 12 - 19, 2021
Half-Day Camp: 9am - 1pm
Cost: \$120
Includes: T-Shirt

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at **\$349** per month
36 month red carpet
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\$3500 due at signing.

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Photos are for illustration purposes only. Offer expires 03/31/2021.

Please submit for coop approval and include srsmith@localiq.com on compliance emails.