

EAST LEE COUNTY NEWS | DANIELS CORRIDOR

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We're Purposely Being Divided But Have the Power to Stop It

Butch Swank | butch@goodladandswank.com | President, SWFL Business Alliance + Owner, Goodlad & Swank Insurance, LLC



I can't help but see and feel our society has lost sight of some very important things. As a result, a great number of people are walking around feeling confused, rudderless, and anxious. It's the loss of pride. Pride in your family. Pride in your work. Pride in your community. Pride in your ac-

complishments. Pride in your struggles. Joy. Fellowship. Laughter. Not taking yourself too seriously. Lending a hand. Checking in on neighbors. Reconnecting with old friends. Going to church. Taking a long walk. Working out. Smiling.
Around 2016, somehow, somehow, our media realized that they were in a fight for survival. Their money supply, which is us, had unprecedented access to information, and

the TV and newspaper business models were failing. Then someone had a remarkable insight: We're losing ALL of our customers, and something must be done. The clever people in management decided that keeping 50% of customers is far better than losing all of them. So, they decided to pick teams. Some went to the Left, and some went to the Right.

Continued on the Next Page

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Continued From Cover Page

It was a new business model of feeding the customer a steady diet of how awful the other side is and how 100% virtuous their side is. After all, it is basic human nature to want to be right and feel validated. By no longer just reporting the news, these media institutions, if I am being charitable, unknowingly began to split apart America.

Let's think about it for a second. How can you feel good about things if you know darn well that half of your fellow Americans are despicable people? One side calls the other communists, and the other thinks having an American flag in your yard is flat-out evil. Well, I've got news for everyone, and it's particularly pointed at the most devout haters of the other side. We have far, far, far more in common with each other than your preferred media outlets encourage you to believe. If you have read any of my other articles you know I am a numbers guy. This number has zero basis in scientific research and is purely a gut number, but here it is: 90%. That is how much we have in common. We've all been very capably convinced it's the other way around. I use Lehigh Acres as an example, but this is true all throughout America. Lehigh makes it easy as an example because we already have such a diverse population. Our friends and neighbors come from all over the place. Again, somehow, somehow, we all get along, look after each other, and make this a truly great place to live. However, when you get home and turn on the TV or check the news on your phone, all you see is how bad the "other side" is. It's very tough to reconcile your day-to-day positive experiences with the steady drumbeat from the media on how bad things are out there.

So, my unsolicited advice is to really begin to study your news. Are they giving you information, or are they telling you how to think? Are they always on one "side" and never report other perspectives? Do they see failures on the other side and unabashedly celebrate? (That's the one that gets me the most) When Ruth Bader Ginsburg

or Rush Limbaugh died, we all saw how some people genuinely celebrated this news. How have we gotten to the point where we celebrate the death of a fellow American? I will tell you when you've been convinced the "other side" is evil, then one less of them is cause to rejoice. This is not a sustainable path we're on, and I implore all sides to begin looking for all the things we do have in common and hold dear. You will be surprised how easily you connect with others you recently thought were basically alien to you. An added benefit is that this confused and rudderless feeling will dissolve. Having pride in yourself and your community does wonders for your heart and soul. It's also remarkable how much more you can get done by focusing on yourself and what's around you. Is it really a good use of your time to continuously obsess over politics? It again will be remarkable how much more time you can invest in your day when you minimize the deliberately dividing nature of our current media. After all, we live in the greatest country and society that has ever graced this beautiful planet. The founders rightly used the words "a more perfect union." That means America is not perfect. Nothing at all, except perhaps my meatballs and sauce recipe, is perfect. So, if we all accept that our amazing society is a work in progress and we all agree to help pitch in to make it better from our day-to-day actions, I see a bright shiny future that will make us ALL proud.

Of course, I am a businessman, and my personality cannot let this article purely be about social commentary. I'm only adding this because I have some exciting news to share. A few years ago, we formed the Southwest Florida Business Alliance, SWFL-BA.com, which has had many successes. Our membership has grown to include several successful and influential business leaders. The organization has made over 1,400 contacts and coalesces an Executive Advisory Board of 47 subject matter experts who make themselves available to advise on all sorts of regional and State topics and who help write many of the articles that appear in this paper. The Alliance members believe that we are on the precipice of better things in Lee County, and we look forward to accomplishing something we can ALL be proud of. 🐾

Your Lee County Legislative Delegation is Meeting Soon to Discuss Possible Referendums



Matt Caldwell | Lee County Property Appraiser

The issue of single-member districts (SMD) has a long history in Florida. New voters moving to Lee County are shocked to learn that currently, everyone votes for their district County Commissioner, even if they do not live in that district. Litigated repeatedly, the courts have proven that SMD were eliminated in cities, counties, and school boards following Reconstruction with the express purpose of disenfranchising voters. Considering that of all Lee County Commission races since 1980, the local districts have been denied their choice about 40% of the time, it is easy to see how this system does just that. Lee County is radically out of the mainstream, as the seven counties larger than ours in Florida all have embraced reforms to their county structure, including SMD. In fact, from Marco Island to Clearwater, we are one of only two counties not to have SMD county commissions, and over 2/3 of all Florida voters live in a SMD county.

As Lee County approaches 1M full-time residents, should the 6th part of the county executive branch also be made directly accountable to the voters? To put that in perspective, Lee County is already larger than Wyoming, Vermont, and Alaska, as well as the counties that are home to Nashville, Tulsa, Oklahoma City, and Kansas City! Representatives being chosen only by the voters from the district where they live is how we elect the State House, State Senate, and US Congress. It works for them, and it will work for our County Commission. In fact, Congress is an excellent example. Today, our local congressional seat represents around 700k people, while an at-large countywide BoCC member represents about 800k people. Should it be harder to run for the county legislature than the federal?!

Some opponents to these reforms will point to the fact that the Lee County Charter Review has repeatedly not presented these questions to the voters. Bluntly, the Lee County Charter Review process has failed. It is the weakest structure of all Florida charters with all members being appointed only by the BoCC. It has met five times in 28 years, and after debating these questions every time, nothing has been sent to the voters. In fact, I served on the 2006-08 cycle, and despite having 12 of 15 members reject the status quo of a 5 at-large BoCC, they failed to propose an alternative.

ABOUT MATT CALDWELL

Matt Caldwell was elected Lee County Property Appraiser in 2020. He was the Republican nominee for Florida Senate District 27 in 2008, was elected as State Representative for portions of Lee County from 2010-2018, and was the Republican nominee for Florida Commissioner of Agriculture in 2018.

partly due to BoCC interference. Today, Commissioners opposed to change have made it clear by their actions that a nominee's stance on these issues is a prerequisite; don't bother applying if you actually want to consider the task of reviewing the Charter for improvement.

Ultimately, you may decide that you differ from me in seeing the wisdom in these reforms. But does that mean that you and your neighbors should never even have the chance to voice your opinion? That is what the opposition to these ideas is demanding of your legislators, claiming that these ideas are too "dangerous" for simple citizens to decide for themselves. They will cry "Home Rule!", but what is the Lee County Legislative Delegation if not "home rule"? They live in Lee County, are elected by Lee County voters, and empowered by them to consider just such questions as these! It's really just a kind of political NIMBYism that opposes allowing voters to even hear these questions.

The irony is that voters have already had their say on these two questions when it came to the Lee County School Board. Voters approved moving to a 5 single-member/2 at-large board in 2014, by a vote of 55%-45%. Then, they voted in 2022 to bring back an elected superintendent (executive) by a vote of 62%-38%! This is exactly why the opposition is so frightened that it has even led some of them to threaten to "punish" these upstart legislators politically; they know that if voters get a chance to weigh in, these changes will become a reality. When your opposition starts freaking out, it's a strong sign that you are on the right course.

This debate is not new to the Legislative Delegation either; then Rep. Bruce Kyle brought forward bills to create SMD in 2003, but the bill was killed by opposition in the State Senate. Thankfully, this time a majority of the delegation have already publicly stated that the voters should have their say, but they are still under enormous pressure from the opposition. That is why you need to act! The Legislative Delegation is meeting on the morning of January 9 at the FSW Fort Myers Campus to take public testimony on these issues. But if you cannot make it, then contact your local Representative and Senator regarding your support of these issues.

Visit www.leeelection.com for meeting details and contact information today! 🐾



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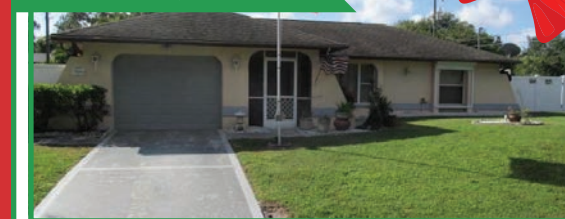


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From One-Word Answers to Heartfelt Conversations: Connecting With Your Grandchild

Cecilia Soto

You just pick up your grandchild from school. They buckle themselves in the car, and you ask them how their day was. They only respond with “Good.” Or you asked them, “Did you learn anything new today?” and responded with “No.” Are you tired of feeling you’re the only one talking in the conversation? You love them so much and want to hear about their day, but you only get one-word answers. Here is a quick lesson to get your grandbabies to have real conversations with you.

Start with open-ended questions that lead to detailed answers and often begin with how, what, where, or who.

Here are a few example questions: What did you eat for lunch today? What was the most exciting thing of your day? What do you love to do on the playground? How do you think animals communicate?

After asking your question, give them time to respond. Listen and acknowledge their answer. By asking open-ended questions, your grandchild must think and react with a colorful answer. The goal is not to ask a question with a yes or no answer.

When communicating with your grandchild, they are

building social-emotional skills. A key skill in their development. Social-emotional skills involve managing emotions, setting and achieving goals, establishing and maintaining positive relationships, making responsible decisions, and showing empathy for others.

Using open-ended questions will get your grandchild talking with you, turning those one-way conversations into two-way conversations. Once you get into a rhythm of talking with your grandchild, they will open up and give you meaningful details of their day. 🐾

Luxury Custom Home Builders vs. Mass Production Builders: Why AR Homes® Fort Myers is Your Best Choice in SW Florida

Suzie Spiro

When building your dream home, choosing the right builder is one of the most important decisions you’ll make. In Florida, homebuyers often weigh the benefits of a luxury custom home builder like AR Homes® Fort Myers against mass-production national builders. While mass-production builders may offer affordability and speed, luxury custom builders deliver unparalleled quality, individuality, and a tailored home-building experience. Here’s why selecting a luxury custom home builder is the superior choice for crafting your dream home.

1. Control Over Land Selection

Mass-production builders typically purchase large tracts of land and develop planned communities, offering buyers limited lot choices. These lots are often small, restricting your ability to personalize your outdoor space.

In contrast, AR Homes® Fort Myers allows you the freedom to select your own land. Whether you desire a waterfront property, a secluded estate lot, or a site in a prestigious neighborhood, AR Homes® Fort Myers works with you to ensure your home’s location aligns with your vision and lifestyle. This flexibility ensures your home’s setting is as unique as its design.

2. Say Goodbye to Cookie-Cutter Designs

Mass-production builders are known for cookie-cutter homes that lack originality. Their floor plans are designed for efficiency rather than individuality, often limiting your ability to customize beyond basic finishes and fixtures.

With AR Homes® Fort Myers, you can forget about cookie-cutter limitations. Their custom design process offers unparalleled flexibility. Whether you dream of an open-concept layout with a gourmet kitchen, a spa-like master suite, or a custom outdoor living area complete with a pool and lanai, AR Homes® Fort Myers brings your vision to life with meticulous attention to detail.

3. Tailored Craftsmanship and Premium Materials

Mass-production builders focus on economies of scale, often using standardized materials and processes to keep

costs low. While this approach may save time and money, it often compromises quality.

AR Homes® Fort Myers, on the other hand, takes pride in using premium materials and delivering superior craftsmanship. From high-end finishes to energy-efficient technologies, every aspect of an AR Home reflects luxury and durability. Their skilled artisans ensure your home not only looks stunning but is built to last.

4. Personalized Service and a Seamless Experience

Building a home with a mass-production builder can feel impersonal. With so many projects on their plate, communication can become fragmented, leaving you feeling like just another number.

AR Homes® Fort Myers provides a boutique, concierge-style service. From the initial consultation to the final walkthrough, their team of professionals guides you every step of the way. They take the time to understand your needs and preferences, ensuring the entire process is stress-free and enjoyable.

5. Maximized Use of Space

Mass-production builders often work within the constraints of pre-planned developments with small lot sizes, leaving little room for creative design. This approach can result in homes that feel cramped or poorly optimized.

AR Homes® Fort Myers specializes in maximizing the potential of your land. Whether your lot is expansive or challenging, their team of architects and designers works to create a home that seamlessly integrates with its surroundings, optimizing space and enhancing livability.

Why Choose AR Homes® Fort Myers?

AR Homes® Fort Myers stands out as the luxury custom builder of choice in SW Florida, offering decades of experience and a reputation for excellence. Here’s why homeowners in Fort Myers trust AR Homes:

- **Local Expertise:** Deep knowledge of the Florida market ensures homes are designed to withstand the local climate while embracing the state’s unique beauty.

- **Award-Winning Designs:** AR Homes® Fort Myers has a portfolio of award-winning floor plans that serve as a starting point for your customizations.

- **Customer-Centric Approach:** Every detail is tailored to your preferences, ensuring your home reflects your personality and lifestyle.

- **Transparency:** Open communication and clear pricing ensure there are no surprises along the way.

When building your dream home, you deserve more than a cookie-cutter experience. Luxury custom home builders like AR Homes® Fort Myers offer the freedom, quality, and personalization to create a home that is truly yours.

Skip the compromises of mass production. Embrace the artistry, individuality, and superior craftsmanship of a luxury custom builder. Let AR Homes® Fort Myers transform your vision into reality, delivering a home that is as unique and exceptional as you are.

AR Homes® Fort Myers has earned a reputation as one of Lee County’s most revered and sought-after builders of upscale custom homes. Since 1988, they have built over 1,000 homes in the most prestigious gated communities and on customer-owned sites throughout Southwest Florida. Their unparalleled expertise in new home construction guarantees exceptional quality in every completed project, while also streamlining the building process to ensure timely delivery of your dream home.

AR Homes® Fort Myers is the premier custom home builder of choice in Babcock Ranch and Lee County, including Miramar Lakes, Cape Coral, Bonita Springs, Estero, Fort Myers and surrounding areas. Homes starting from \$1M+ excluding homesite.

For more information on building your dream home with AR Homes® Fort Myers, please visit www.arhomes.com/lyonshousing, tour our Tesoro model home at 10411 Via Parma Way, Miramar Lakes or call a member of our team: Bill Lutz, BLutz@arhomes.com, 239-398-6407 or Scott Carter, SCarter@arhomes.com, 239-699-3968. 🐾

Streets to Screens: Crime Changes in Lee County

Arthur Ingram

Crime used to have a sound: the crash of a broken window, the wail of a car alarm, or a neighbor’s urgent shout. But in Lee County, the menace has grown quieter. Today’s threats arrive in subtle forms—an innocent-looking email, a casual text, or even the unexpected chime of your phone. While declining rates of violent crime signal progress, a new wave of deception thrives in the digital shadows, reshaping how we think about safety and security.

A SURGE IN SCAMS AND SCHEMES

Lee County residents have found themselves increasingly vulnerable to a non-violent threat: scams. Scam calls, emails, and messages, and even fraudulent mail have taken center stage in this crime evolution.

Consider so-called “phishing” emails. Phishing, a tactic involving fraudulent messages impersonating others that trick recipients into revealing sensitive information, was virtually unheard of in Florida twenty years ago. Now, the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) reported more than 34,000 fraud complaints from Florida residents in the first three quarters of 2024 (www.public.tableau.com/app/profile/federal.trade.commission/viz/FraudReports/FraudFacts). The most common bait? Impersonating trusted institutions like banks, online retailers, and government entities.

Telemarketing scams are another concern. Scam callers have evolved from simple, clumsy cons to sophisticated operations targeting seniors and younger residents alike. A recurring favorite involves impersonators claiming to represent Medicare. In Lee County, where around 29% of the population is over 65 (www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/leecountyflorida/PST045223), scammers find an especially receptive audience. These calls often promise fake “upgrades” to Medicare coverage—requiring only a quick confirmation of your social security number.

One of the most pervasive scams affecting residents is the IRS Impersonation Scam. It starts with a stern cold call from someone claiming to be an IRS agent, demanding immediate payment of back taxes. The caller often threatens legal action, attempting to scare the victim into compliance. This scam has cost thousands of Americans millions over the years (www.idwatchdog.com/irs-phishing-and-impersonation-scams).

The Grandparent Scam is another cruel trick, preying on the elderly by posing as a grandchild or other family member in urgent trouble—perhaps arrested or stranded—and in desperate need of money. The scammers rely on emotional manipulation, hoping that the targeted grandparent will act before verifying the details. This scam has unfortunately succeeded in many cases, draining both finances and emotional reserves.

The Sweepstakes Scam has also seen a worrying uptick in recent years. Victims receive letters, phone calls, or emails claiming they have won a large sum of money—but to claim their prize, they must first pay a “processing fee” or provide personal information. Despite its age, this scam still catches people off guard, especially those who might be struggling financially or are simply caught up in the excitement of an unexpected windfall.

Instant messaging apps are another avenue scammers exploit. A common tactic involves sending messages that appear to be misdirected—perhaps a friendly “Hey, are we still meeting later?” or “I think this is the beach photo you asked for.” When the unsuspecting recipient responds, the scammer starts friendly conversation. They often attempt to build rapport before soliciting personal information or money, or directing the victim to malicious online links. These schemes capitalize on our natural inclination to be helpful and polite.

And, finally, let’s not overlook regular mail scams. Residents have increasingly reported receiving fraudulent letters—official-looking ones that might claim a prize won, or an urgent bill unpaid. An example might involve letters imitating utility companies, threatening to cut off services unless a supposed overdue balance is paid immediately. These scams prey on people’s reliance on essential services, creating a sense of urgency that compels swift action. Such campaigns can find many victims and persist for months before authorities catch wind.

LOCAL COLOR, GLOBAL REACH

What’s important to recognize is that these scams do not emerge in a vacuum. Florida is a state marked by its large population of retirees, its thriving tourism, and its rapid growth. These dynamics make it fertile ground for scammers looking for vulnerable groups or transient individuals who might be easier to deceive.

Lee County has also been shaped by these factors. The post-Hurricane Ian recovery brought renewed attention to fraudulent contractors. “Storm chasers,” as these fraudulent contractors are often called, move in swiftly after a disaster, offering repair services they never intend to complete.

HOW CAN RESIDENTS STAY SAFE?

The new criminal landscape asks us all to adapt—not with fear, but with knowledge. Here are some key precautions:



1. **Verify Before You Trust:** Whether it’s an email from your bank, a call from Medicare, or a letter from the IRS—verify the source. Look up official contact numbers, and never use the contact information provided by the suspicious communication itself.
2. **Stay Skeptical of Unsolicited Offers:** If you didn’t sign up for a lottery, you probably didn’t win it. Common scams often involve “free prizes,” “exclusive deals,” or demands for immediate action under the guise of a crisis.
3. **Use Technology Wisely:** Many phones now have features that can detect and block potential scam calls. Take advantage of these, and also add your number to the National Do Not Call Registry.
4. **Talk About It:** Especially among older residents, there can be a reluctance to admit to being scammed—which prevents others from learning about the danger. Discuss suspicious incidents openly with family, friends, and neighbors. What you share could help protect someone else.

A CHANGING YET MANAGEABLE LANDSCAPE

While the nature of crime in Lee County is changing, so too is our community’s capacity to adapt. With many residents enjoying their retirement years, there’s a wealth of time and experience available to observe events and assist neighbors. Retirees can play a pivotal role in staying alert to suspicious activities and sharing information about potential scams.

Simple actions—like discussing recent scam attempts over a morning coffee, sharing a newspaper article advising precautions, or checking in on a neighbor’s changing behavior—can make a big difference. Our collective vigilance, strengthened by the strong connections within our community, empowers us to face these new challenges together.

As we move forward, let’s remember that while crime may evolve, the spirit of Lee County remains steadfast. By looking out for one another and adapting to the times, we can make sure our community continues to be a safe and welcoming place for all who call it home. 🐾

Arthur Ingram is a pseudonym representing artificial intelligence algorithms and human writers working together in Southwest Florida. Trey English provided prompting, editing, and fact-checking for this algorithm-written article.

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A Bird for the Holidays: The Northern Cardinal

Kara Tyler-Julian | Biologist

Ah, the holidays. A time for holly and jolly, mistletoe and Christmas trees, wreaths, and... cardinals? For some peculiar reason, many winter holiday decorations, cards, and wrapping paper feature the Northern Cardinal. There isn't anything particularly Christmasy about the northern cardinal other than the fact that the mature male is a brilliant red color that stands out starkly in a white wintery landscape. In our area, you can see cardinals (the bird, not the clergy members) throughout the year, including winter, snow not included. Cardinals range throughout the Eastern and Central United States and south into Mexico.



Those beautiful males, with their striking red coloration and their black mask, are territorial and will fight other males to defend their territory. This trait, combined with our modern world full of vehicles, leads to males often being seen attacking their own reflection in a side-view mirror. If you do see this happening to your own vehicle, which is quite common, the only way to stop it is to cover the mirror.

The adult females and the juvenile cardinals are distinguished from the brilliant red males by featuring more drab brownish or copper coloration. The female is distinguished from the juveniles by her bright orange beak, whereas the juvenile is grayish in color.

These songbirds are granivorous, meaning they feed on seeds and, as such, are easily attracted to bird feeders. The young cardinals, however, are fed a diet that is almost entirely insects, which underscores the importance of a healthy food web to support a healthy population of these and other species of birds. Cardinals will produce anywhere from one to five eggs per brood, but three to four is the average number. Once the babies hatch, they grow relatively quickly and are ready to fledge around 11 days after hatching, which is remarkable!

Many people enjoy attracting these and other songbirds to their yards by providing birdfeeders full of seeds for the birds to enjoy. Interestingly, research suggests that this human activity of providing seed for wild birds has expanded the Northern cardinal range. Additionally, feeding birds with birdfeeders can increase the likelihood of diseases spreading among local bird populations and attract outdoor cats that kill and injure the birds. The dropped seed also attracts unwanted creatures to your yard, such as rats, squirrels, and raccoons. Furthermore, the seed provided by humans does not accurately reflect the natural diet that the birds would obtain from their instinctual foraging activities and may not be nutritionally balanced. For these and other reasons, it is better to provide food for wild birds by planting diverse native plants for them to feed on. Planting a diverse range of native grasses, wildflowers, shrubs, vines, and trees will do a much better job of attracting diverse bird species while supporting their nutritional needs at all life stages. Don't forget that insects are crucial for their young, so be sure to let the insect populations flourish as well!

We at the East Lee Wildlife Stewardship Group would like to wish everyone a happy holiday season, and we look forward to sharing more creatures with you in the new year! 🐾

A Letter to the Community From the Salvation Army

Major Brenda Lane | Salvation Army Lehigh, LaBelle, Clewiston

Dear Friends and Community Family, I hope this note finds each of you well and enjoying the beautiful weather we are having, can you believe we are already halfway through November!! Christmas is upon us!!

We here at the Lehigh Salvation Army stand ready to assist in any way we can. We can't do it alone, it takes us all working together!! We need your help. There are so many ways in which you can help us help those coming to us for assistance every day. We need canned goods and non-perishable food items to replenish our Emergency Food. Canned meats are a great need. We are getting requests for help paying for Medication, help with bus passes, gas, and so many other necessities. We have some wonderful people in our Community of Lehigh Acres, who support us, and make it possible to continue to have the resources to serve those who come to us with various needs. Our resources are running low and we don't want to turn anyone away if they have a legitimate need. We need your help... We could use Gift Cards to help with various needs. We have signed up over 300 families for our Toy and Food Distribution. We are in need of toys. That is why a lot of children will wake up to gifts under the tree—because we are making it possible.

If you are in a position to help with any of the things I have mentioned, or perhaps, you are able to make a monetary donation (tax-deductible), be assured your support will go a long way in allowing us to fill the needs and requests of those who are not able to provide for their families at this time. If you would like more information on ways to help us continue serving and providing for the needs of those who are struggling to make it day to day, please feel free to give us a call or stop by our office Monday through Friday, 8:30am to 4pm (closed 12 to 1pm).

We are located at 25 Homestead Road N. #42 (facing Alabama Rd, behind Joe's Café) and in the Lehigh Town Center Mall. Our phone number is 239-491-6071.

We look forward to meeting you and sharing with you the services offered through our office. Have a wonderful day! 🐾



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 - FRI, DEC 27TH** **MEMPHIS LIGHTNING**
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 - FRI, JAN 3RD** **SANDY ATKINSON & THE TRUE LOVES**
8pm - 11pm • \$20 Admission
 - SAT, JAN 4TH** **JP SOARS & THE RED HOTS**
8pm - 11pm • \$20 Admission
 - SAT, JAN 11TH** **BACKYARD BLUESFEST***
With Selwyn Birchwood, Carolyn Wonderland, Tommy Lee Cook & BBB
2pm - 7pm • \$20 Admission
 - FRI, JAN 17TH** **ERIC DEMMER**
8pm - 11pm • \$20 Admission
 - SAT, JAN 18TH** **BACKYARD BLUESFEST***
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Mind Cap Mushrooms: A New Frontier in Sustainable Food & Wellness in Fort Myers

Stephanie Cole



Mind Cap Mushrooms Photographs Provided by James Kennedy

Have you ever heard of Mind Cap Mushrooms? If not, let me introduce Daniel Waddell, a passionate entrepreneur and Fort Myers native, and his team, who have embarked on this new Mushroom "Wave" sweeping the country. They are here to answer all your questions and invite you to be part of this Groovy Wave, too!

Launching his new, sustainable mushroom farm in Buckingham, within walking distance of where he grew up, he and his family focus on growing gourmet and medicinal mushrooms. His passion for growing mushrooms started after the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020. With his 9-5 job at a standstill and his inquisitive mind needing a new challenge, he discovered the world of Mycology. An instant love developed, which opened the door to his new endeavor, Mind Cap Mushrooms.

From step one to the last, Daniel ensures meticulous care is taken in all aspects of cultivating these mushrooms. The process begins in the lab with the spores or liquid cultures, from which he starts to produce an array of eye-catching and mouthwatering mushrooms that are as beautiful as they are tasty! Desirable strands include Lions Mane, Black Pearl, Blue Oyster, Pink, Chestnut, and several more! They all come to fruition in their private "Growing Room." This sustainable way of farming uses all organic materials, and the substrate byproduct creates no waste as it safely decomposes and fertilizes their land.

In addition to nutritious food varieties, Mind Cap Mushrooms also offers a range of medicinal mushroom strains. The decision to provide access to these was born from the frustration with the current healthcare system and the prevalence of low-quality supplements on the market. Mr. Waddell's passion lies in the medicinal path, where he actively advocates for the healing benefits of these fungi. Driven by his commitment, he is dedicated to expanding both the use and availability of high-quality medicinal mushrooms.

For example, the genus Cordyceps is one of these medicinal fungi. With an extensive history of medicinal use reaching back to the continent of Asia, specifically China, Tibet, and Nepal, for supporting vitality, as well as energy, this interesting fungus piqued scientific interest due to its use by athletes and the correlation with stamina during competitions in the early 90's. It has been extensively studied and continues to be researched due to its health benefits, including anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties, making it popular with athletes and people interested in natural remedies. This slow grower is freeze-dried after fruiting and packaged for use in teas and other culinary applications. It is also made into tinctures, which are dual extracted for their active properties and then bottled as one of their bestselling products.

Another crowd-favorite is the Lions Mane tincture. New research shows that apart from being a flavorful delicacy in the kitchen, Lions Mane has OUTSTANDING neurogenesis properties when ingested properly. What is neurogenesis, you ask? Defined by Britannica, neurogenesis "is the process by which new neurons, or nerve cells, are formed in the brain." Leading researchers have begun studies to investigate potential uses for diseases such as Alzheimer's, as it has shown potential to re-grow neuro pathways of the brain. It is also proven to aid our immune systems blood sugar levels, and other benefits! These tinctures are fantastic for mental focus and clarity and it flies off the shelves!

Daniel and his family have focused on innovation. They offer freeze-dried products, such as fruits and vegetables, unique spices, local produce, and MUSHROOMS! Freeze-dried or Fresh.

This charming farm is full of imagination and at the center of a pivotal movement in the genesis of mass mushroom studies. Filled with fascinating and tasty fungi, Mind Cap Mushrooms will offer you a unique weekend experience. The owners are friendly and would love to give you a tour!

For more information, contact Daniel Waddell, Mind Cap Mushroom Farm and Market, 4751 Justinwood Road, Fort Myers, 239-989-2838, www.mindcapmushrooms.com. 🐾

Six Mile Cypress Slough Photo Contest Now Accepting Entries

Friends of Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve

Entries are now being accepted for the Friends of Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve 2025 Photo Contest honoring Carolyn Babb. The deadline is January 31, 2025.

The contest is limited to amateur photographers and only digital entries can be submitted. Photos must be of native species and must have been taken at the Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve, which includes Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve North.

This past spring, the Friends of Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve Board named the photo contest in honor of the late Carolyn Babb, a longtime volunteer and Friends member who founded the contest in 2009. Registration and entry submissions should be made on the Friends website, www.sloughpreserve.org.

First, second and third place winners will be awarded in three categories: Plants and Landscapes, Birds, and Animals. A Grand Prize winner will be awarded to the photo the judges deem best overall.

In addition to the regular adult contest, there will be separate contests for youths and staff members. Youth entries are eligible for the Grand Prize.

Hoping to foster a greater love and appreciation of nature and conservation among young people, the Friends group is allowing youths ages 17 and under to participate for free. The entry cost for adults is \$15 for Friends members and \$25 for non-members.

The 2024 Grand Prize photo was taken by Grace Waller, who said she had taken up photography as a hobby just months earlier. Her photo showed a mother raccoon clutching her youngster in a tree.

Winning photos from past years can be viewed on the Friends website, www.sloughpreserve.org, and in the Interpretive Center at the Slough. The Center is open from 10am to

4pm every day except Mondays. Admission to the Center and the Boardwalk is free with paid parking, which is \$1 an hour or \$5 for an entire day.

Last year, a total of 244 photos were entered by 103 different photographers.

The photo contest honors Carolyn Babb, who died in December 2023. She served seven years as president of the Friends Board, the longest tenure of any president.

"She wore many hats at the Slough through the years," said Theresa Roake, Friends Board secretary, "and had a hand in pretty much everything the Friends organization has accomplished over the past 20-plus years.

"As the Board looked for a way to honor her lasting legacy at the Slough, we looked to one of her other passions. The Slough truly inspired her love of nature photography. She was seldom seen without her camera and shared this love with other photographers at the Slough." And that, Roake said, inspired her to create the photo contest in 2009, with the first winners announced in January 2010.

The Friends organization is a nonprofit citizens group that provides support for the Slough's staff and volunteers. Membership levels in the Friends organization start at \$10 for students and \$25 for individuals. More information about the photo contest and membership is available on the Slough Friends website at www.sloughpreserve.org

Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve is over 3,500 acres of wetland ecosystem with a boardwalk trail and Interpretive Center. Animals like otters, alligators, turtles, wading birds, and more live at the Slough year-round. Others, like migrating birds and butterflies, use the Slough as a feeding area or a winter home. The Slough is managed by the Lee County Department of Parks and Recreation and is open daily from sunrise to sunset. 🐾

Proposed Changes to Lee County Comprehensive Plan Threaten Northeast Lee County's Rural Character

Special to East Lee County News

Lee County staff has proposed significant amendments to the Lee County Comprehensive Plan, which could profoundly impact Northeast Lee County communities, including Alva, North Olga, and Buckingham. These amendments involve removing critical language from policies, goals, and objectives within the rural future land use category.

(The Lee County Comprehensive Plan is a legally binding document adopted by the Lee County Government. It establishes long-term goals and objectives for the county's future, serving as the foundation for all land-use regulations in Lee County. Any amendments to the plan must undergo the Comprehensive Plan Amendment Process, which includes a series of steps, such as review by the Lee County Planning Agency.)

The proposed amendments claim to address potential future requirements for transitioning areas from septic systems to centralized sewer systems (CPA2024-00007). However, many residents see this as a pretext for increasing development density and intensity in rural areas. For example, the proposed changes could permit forty-foot-wide homesites with just ten feet between structures and allow attached single-family homes—housing types currently prohibited in rural areas.

Community members in Alva and Buckingham are particularly concerned that these changes could lead to mandatory assessments for surrounding property owners to cover the costs of forced utility connections.

On Monday, December 9, Lee County staff presented the proposed amendments to the Lee County Local Planning Agency (LPA), a seven-member advisory board of local residents appointed by the Lee County Commissioners. The LPA is tasked with reviewing such amendments to the Comprehensive Plan and land-use regulations. After conduct-

ing public hearings and considering community input, the LPA votes to recommend approval or denial of the amendments to the Board of County Commissioners. The LPA's recommendations hold significant influence in shaping the county's future development.

The proposed changes also appear to misuse House Bill 1379, which became effective on July 1, 2023. This bill, an amendment to Florida Statutes, focuses on environmental protection measures such as wastewater management, septic system regulation, and planning within Basin Management Action Plans (BMAPs). Lee County staff seems to be leveraging HB 1379 to justify the proposed amendments despite misrepresenting the law's intent.

If approved, these changes would undermine the Comprehensive Plan's goals and objectives for Alva, North Olga, and Buckingham. By facilitating development inconsistent with the rural character of these communities, the proposed amendments could erode the very identity these areas strive to preserve.

After hearing from several members of the public, all of whom opposed the proposed changes, the LPA Board after a confusing discussion of what options were available to the panel, chose to forward an admittedly inadequate work product to the board. Although several members voiced concern, a unanimous vote resulted in the LPA choosing to provide this set of changes to the Board of County Commissioners. Where is the advice, value and stewardship the residents of Lee County are entitled to?

Community members are urged to engage with the decision-making process to protect the unique rural heritage of Northeast Lee County and ensure that development remains consistent with the Comprehensive Plan's original vision. To help develop a better understanding, visit this article online at EastLeeNews.com and follow the support links there. 🐾

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The DECEMBER EVENTS CALENDAR

Two Alva Events Remember the Fallen, POW & MIA

Katrina Salokar & James Kennedy

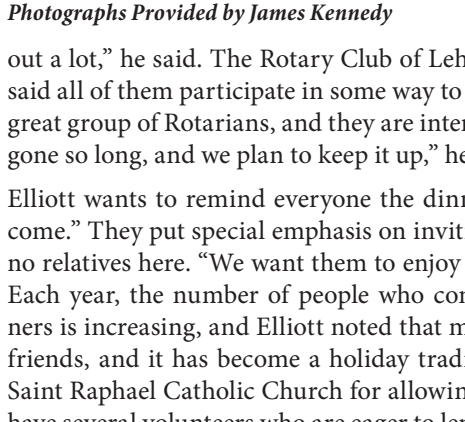
On Saturday, December 14th, residents and neighbors gathered in two locations in Alva. First, to dedicate the Never Forget Garden Marker presented by the Alva Garden Club and hosted by the Alva Library and Museum, and then to lay Wreaths Across America at the Alva Cemetery at Noon.

The day began as the photos below depict the Alva Library and Museum, where a dedication ceremony with refreshments occurred. The events started with a Flag-Raising Ceremony, the playing of the Star-Spangled Banner and God Bless America by Saxophonist Dennis Gwizdala, words from Cathy Lowe, Director of Never Forget Registration for the Society Honor Guard, the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, Grant Fichter of the Alva Library and Museum, and Lorraine Gregg, an Alva Garden Club Representative.

Then, many of the crowd headed to the Alva Cemetery directly afterward to join others and Georgette Lundquist of the USS Hannah Chapter, National Society Daughters of the American Revolution, for the Annual Wreaths Across America ceremony. Georgette introduced the wreath ceremonies, and the ladies requested a moment of silence. There was a pledge of allegiance with Abby Golden, the Billy Bowlegs Society chaplain, Children of the American Revolution. Second, the Lee County Sheriff's Office presented colors, Taps, Amazing Grace on bagpipes, the Riderless Horse salute, and a rifle salute. One retired member of the service branches each laid remembrance wreaths at the Alva Cemetery head marker while NSDAR members stood by and helped guide the ceremony.

The Wreaths Across America Ceremony was held this day in over 4,500 locations across America, at sea, and around the globe. Nearly 3 million Americans gathered as one nation to remember our past veterans, honor those serving now, and teach the next generations that freedom comes at a cost. The live balsam fir wreaths symbolize our honor to those who have served and their families who endure sacrifices.

From Saturday the 14th through January 17th, Wreaths Across America has a buy-one-get-one sale. Purchase one wreath for \$17. The USS Hannah Chapter, National Society Daughters of the American Revolution, will get a second one to put on the graves in the Alva Cemetery. There are 145 veterans buried there, and you can benefit the cemetery and our organization by using the code FL0533P. If you want a wreath delivered to another cemetery, please indicate that on the form. Visit www.wreathscrossamerica.org/FL0533P to order. 🐾



Photographs Provided by James Kennedy

Montage Women's Club

The Montage Women's Club is a social and philanthropic club open to all women residing in Lee County. We normally meet on the fourth Thursday of each month. Our January meeting will take place at the Hilton Garden Inn (Captiva Ballroom), 12600 University Drive, Fort Myers, corner of College Parkway and the Summerlin Road overpass. Meetings begin at 11:30am with a short social period followed by lunch at Noon followed by an informative speaker program and a short business meeting. Within the organization are various interest groups for members' participation. Membership is open to both year-round and seasonal residents. We welcome you to visit Montage for a luncheon.

Our next meeting will be held on Thursday, January 23, 2025. Our planned speaker for January will be Cecilia St. Arnold, Executive Director, Blessings in a Backpack, SWFL. This is a program that steps up by feeding children on the weekend; insuring students return to school every Monday morning with an empty backpack, a full stomach, and an eager mind. Luncheon fee will be \$30 per person, and you always have a choice of either a regular menu entree and/or a vegan/plant-based entree.

If you would like to attend a Montage meeting, need further information, or would like to make a reservation, please call Rita Artwohl at 239-703-7787. Reservation cut-off to attend this meeting is Noon, Thursday, January 16th. 🐾

FREE Christmas Day Meals



Christmas Day, December 25th, the Rotary Club of Lehigh Acres will be hosting a free Christmas dinner in Lehigh Acres. Fred Elliott, coordinator of the project, says, "This is the 18th year in a row that the Rotary Club has hosted this event." The annual Christmas dinner will begin at 11:00 am and continue until 1:00 pm at Saint Raphael Catholic Church, located at 2514 Lee Blvd in Lehigh Acres across from Walmart.

Every year, hundreds of people come out to enjoy Christmas Dinner, Elliott said. The dinner on Christmas Day is again FREE like all other dinners the Rotary Club and its volunteers have prepared over the years. Elliott said that at Christmas they plan to provide a traditional ham dinner, including all the sides and dessert. "We are going to have enough food; we always do," Elliott said. Volunteers are an important part of making all of this possible, Elliott said. "For that reason, we would ask volunteers to come to the parish hall at around 10 am if they can. Getting there a little earlier will really help us all

out a lot," he said. The Rotary Club of Lehigh Acres has 25 active members, and Elliott said all of them participate in some way to make the holiday dinners special. "We have a great group of Rotarians, and they are interested in our community. That is why we have gone so long, and we plan to keep it up," he said.

Elliott wants to remind everyone the dinner is "absolutely FREE and everyone is welcome." They put special emphasis on inviting people who live alone or people who have no relatives here. "We want them to enjoy their Christmas dinner with us," Elliott said. Each year, the number of people who come to the Thanksgiving and Christmas dinners is increasing, and Elliott noted that many families come with family members and friends, and it has become a holiday tradition to be together. "We also want to thank Saint Raphael Catholic Church for allowing us to use the kitchen and hall. They always have several volunteers who are eager to lend a helping hand. "It's a great day to celebrate Christmas," Elliott said.

The Rotary Club of Lehigh Acres mission is to provide service to others, promote integrity, and advance world understanding, goodwill, and peace through its fellowship of business, professional, and community leaders. 🐾

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Holiday Reminder From Alva Fire & Rescue



Jean P. Etcheverry | Fire Chief, Alva Fire Protection & Rescue Service District

Happy Holidays, everyone! Christmas is just around the corner, and we would like to share some safety tips for decorating your home. According to the National Fire Protection Association, 835 residential structure fires are caused by holiday decorations, and another 210 are caused by Christmas trees every year. Following these tips can help ensure your home is safely decorated during the holidays.

Fifth, avoid plugging too many decorations or electrical devices into one outlet. Another holiday hazard is too many electrical devices or decorations plugged into one electrical outlet, which can cause the outlet to overheat and cause a fire. It is a best practice to turn off holiday lights when leaving home or before bed. Finally, make sure to check the water level of your Christmas tree daily. A dry Christmas tree can ignite more easily and burn extremely hot because as it dries out, it becomes more flammable.

First, when choosing extension cords and electric decorations, make sure they are used in the proper setting. For example, extension cords are marked for outdoor use or indoor use, as are electric decorations.

Second, plug outdoor decorations and extension cords into GFCIs (Ground-Fault Circuit Interrupters) protected circuits. All outdoor receptacles should have a form of GFCI breaker protection.

Third, inspect extension cords, decorations, and lights for damage (e.g., worn, frayed, pinched wires, etc.) before use. If electric decorations or light strands are damaged, please discard them properly.

Fourth, be sure to keep your distance from power lines when decorating; a minimum distance for all equipment should be at least 10 feet from the power lines.



Alva Fire and Rescue Photographs Provided by James Kennedy



Sheriff's Budget—More Questions Than Answers

Special to East Lee News

With all the recent press regarding the Lee County Sheriff's Office budget, audit, and related topics. There are more questions than answers.

Recent events have rekindled questions regarding Sheriff Carmine Marceno's ethics, decisions, budget expenses, and budget requests. Recent meetings and communication from Kevin Karnes have discussed the complexities of a related audit. Some Lee County Commissioners have recently begun making suggestions to change the way the Lee County Sheriff's Office is funded by suggesting an alternative approach, the MSTU (Municipal Services Taxing Unit) as opposed to the current mechanism (Lee County General Fund).

What normally happens? Consistent with Florida State Statutes, the Lee County BOC-Creviews and approves the Sheriff's Office budget request. When conflicts arise, there is a process governed by law to allow differences to be remedied. This process is contained within Florida Statutes 30.49.

What is being proposed? Moving to an MSTU Taxing Unit to fund the Lee County Sheriff's Office. There are multiple counties in Florida utilizing this approach. Citrus County is currently considering this approach. Their pursuit of this change stems from issues related to spending, transparency, and communication breakdowns.

What are the real questions? Funding the Sheriff's Office through an MSTU approach may be a better solution for our growing county. But that isn't necessarily the issue at hand. The politician's sleight of hand is at play here, and the taxpayers should not consider this entertainment.

The issue is governmental oversight, representing the interests of the taxpayers, and performing the duties of an elected official.

In August 2023, members of the local legislative delegation called for an audit of disaster



funds spent for Hurricane Ian. This would have included auditing funds dispersed to the Lee County Sheriff's Office. Our local elected commissioners did not take up the rallying cry for transparency or accountability. In fact, there was a lot of push back on the approach.

Our commissioners are elected to serve the public.

When the only consistent voices for accountability, transparency, and oversight come from local state representatives we have deeper problems.

Make sure we are asking and focusing on the right questions. 🐾

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VOICES of LEHIGH

East Lee County Welcomes the New Year! Blessings For 2025



Mike Welch | voicesoflehigh.com
We Want to Hear From You!

At the writing, I hope most of us are enjoying the Holiday cold snap—Florida style. In this issue of Voices of Lehigh, I hope to glance at the articles that Sheriff Marceno and Major Brenda Lane have prepared as we enter into the high season of the Holiday Season. Unfortunately, crime doesn't take a holiday vacation, and during celebrations on a community scale, we need to be all the more vigilant with theft and other predatory activities that can ruin our holidays.

As always, each year, the community reflects on the blessings of the past year and the hope for the New Year. Major Lane, from the Salvation Army Lehigh unit, informs us that the need is great. This past year highlighted the housing and rental crisis that haunts us as well as the difficult market that property insurance faces—leading to even more homelessness due to out-of-range mortgages. Please take a look at Major Lane's article and see if you can help out this season.

YOU ARE INVITED!

Each year, one of our state senators, Senator Kathleen Passidomo, hosts her annual Pre-Session Luncheon. She represents a good portion of eastern Lee County, including Lehigh Acres. The other portion of our area is represented by Senator Ben Albritton, who has taken the gavel over from Senator Passidomo as the Florida Senate's President. District residents are always welcome and information is included in this section. However, you may call the Chamber of Commerce at 239-369-3322 to reserve a seat or send an email to me at mike@eastleechamber.com

Wishing everyone a Merry Christmas! Happy Hanukkah! Happy Holidays! 🍀

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Safety During the Holiday Shopping Season



Lee County Sheriff Carmine Marceno

Halloween has passed and, if you haven't already done so, your focus will soon turn toward holiday shopping.

"Season" here in Southwest Florida has begun and roadways, malls, and restaurants will swell with the influx of snowbirds and tourists.

Each year, I reach out to our residents and guests reminding them that while enjoying this special time of the year, they need to be additionally cautious and careful.

As we near "Black Friday" and the heart of the shopping season, I remind everyone to remain aware and alert. While we see this time of year as festive, criminals see this season as an opportunity.

Parking lots fill, forcing shoppers to park unusually far from store and mall entrances. Many of these areas are not well-lit and, as a result, items left inside of parked cars create an opportunity for thieves. It is important to remember exactly where you park your car or truck. Additionally, walking to and from your vehicle, especially during evening hours, should be done cautiously. Ensure that all vehicle doors are locked and there are no items of value in sight. Upon your return, have your keys/fob in hand when approaching your vehicle.

Shopping with friends and family is always a good idea. Groups are far less vulnerable. If shopping with young children, discuss the importance of remaining together and discuss plans should they get separated from you. Remind them how to ask mall/store staff for assistance should they need to find you. Consider selecting a meeting location if separation occurs.

Keep purses, wallets, and purchases close to your body. When dining, purses should never be placed on the back of chairs. Purses should be carried and not left in shopping carts.

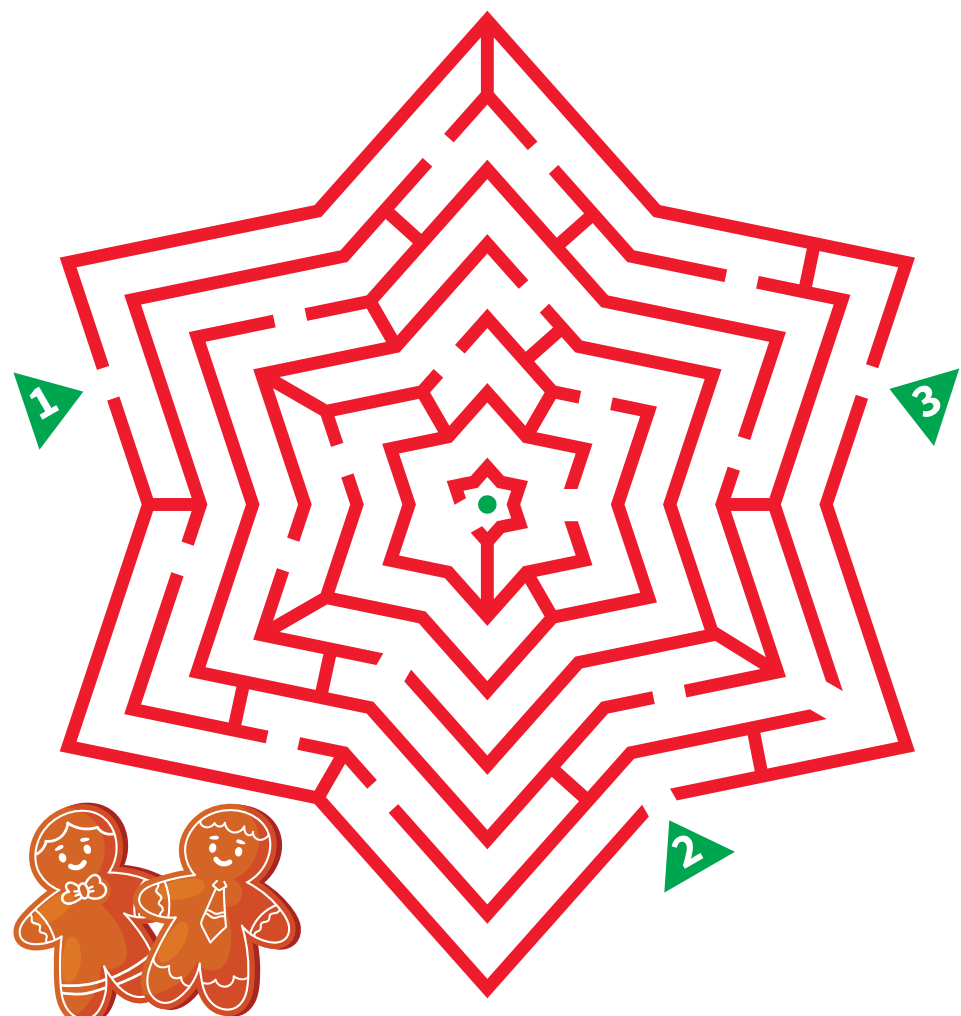
Avoid carrying large amounts of cash. Avoid using ATMs located in isolated areas. Report any and all suspicious activity.

The Lee County Sheriff's Office will be present, in full force, in an effort to ensure that everyone has a safe and wonderful holiday season. 🍀

Pre Session Regional Luncheon

You are Cordially Invited to Attend our Annual Pre Session Regional Luncheon. Hosted by Florida Senator Kathleen Passidomo on Monday, January 6, 2025 at 11:30am at The Plantation Golf and Country Club, 10500 Dartington Drive, Fort Myers (1/4 mile North—Daniels Parkway and Treeline). \$50 per person, business attire.

Please make your reservations via Mike Welch by December 27, 2024. Fax: ATTN Mike Welch at 239-425-2816, buildingissues@aol.com, 239-565-8450. 🍀



Happy Holidays

ANSWER KEY
DECEMBER 2024

2	3	7	9	4	6	1	5	8
4	5	6	7	8	1	2	9	3
8	9	1	5	2	3	4	6	7
9	1	8	2	5	4	7	3	6
3	2	4	6	7	9	5	8	1
6	7	5	1	3	8	9	2	4
7	8	2	3	1	5	6	4	9
5	6	3	4	9	7	8	1	2
1	4	9	8	6	2	3	7	5

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CONTRIBUTORS
Butch Swank | Matt Caldwell | Cecilia Soto | Suzie Spiro
Arthur Ingram | Kara Tyler-Julia | Stephanie Cole
Major Brenda Lane | Friends of Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve
Katrina Salokar | James Kennedy | Jean P. Etcheverry
Mike Welch | Sheriff Carmine Marceno

PRODUCTION • DESIGN
Paradise Creative Group | Jennifer Scott

DIGITAL PRODUCER
Jordan Batty

CUSTOMER RELATIONS
David Foetisch | Katrina Salokar

ADVERTISING INFORMATION
East Lee County News, LLC | 239-908-4581
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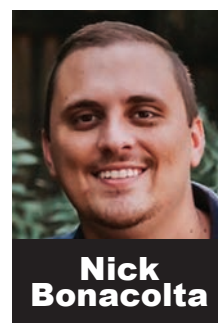


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Offered At\$259,900

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3 BEDROOM 2 BATH POOL HOME IN MARBLEBROOK

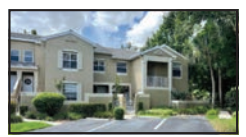


THREE BEDROOM TWO BATH POOL HOME BUILT IN 2019, located in an excellent neighborhood atmosphere of Marble Brook, Very low HOA fees \$110 per month, CENTRAL WATER AND SEWER, sidewalks, secure gated entry, walking distance to common clubhouse with resort style pool, fitness center and playground, Private Pool on the home was built in 2020 with spacious open deck with light grey pavers, electric heat pump, salt water system and Baja deck in pool for sunning, BUILT IN FIREPIT overlooks the FENCED BACKYARD with excellent views of the lake in the backyard as well as plenty of privacy by not having another home in the yard, HEDGES ARE ALLOWED ALONG THE FENCE LINE FOR PRIVACY, pavers in double driveway and walkways, NEWLY REMODELED KITCHEN WITH GRANITE TOPS, breakfast bar, BARNYARD DOOR over pantry with custom built in shelving and drawers, SAMSUNG STAINLESS STEEL KITCHEN APPLIANCES, decorative stone tile wall accents on the kitchen wall, backsplash, under breakfast bar and around entry way, spacious living room with decorative wood accent wall overlooks the pool area, ceramic tile floors throughout with newer LUXURY VINYL FLOORS IN THE BEDROOMS with 5 inch baseboards, CROWN MOLDING, master bedroom located in the rear of the home with pool and lake views, private ensuite master bath with walk in closet, separate water closet, dual sinks and walk in shower, guest bedrooms located in the front of the home with upgraded vanity and fixtures in the guest bath, indoor laundry room with accent wall, built in cabinets and shelving with full size washer/dryer, double garage with auto opener, storm panels for openings, quiet low traffic street. The home is located near schools, Veteran's park and minutes to Downtown Lehigh for shopping etc. yet minutes to I-75, SR 82, Ft Myers and the airport. NO FLOOD INSURANCE REQUIRED HERE. HIGHEST ELEVATION IN LEE COUNTY.

Offered At\$380,000

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GROUND FLOOR 2 BR 2 BA IN GATEWAY



Convenient ground floor 2 bedroom 2 bath Condo located on the 5th hole of Gateway Greens Championship golf course. Located right next to the community pool and mailboxes, Just Minutes to JetBlue Park and SWFL International airport! Breakfast bar in the kitchen as well as a nook for a table, split bedroom layout for privacy. The master bedroom has a beautiful golf course view with access to the lanai, large walk in closet, dual sinks in master bathroom, indoor laundry room with washer and dryer included, newer water heater in 2021, Summerwind has the luxury of being close to Daniels Pkwy by utilizing the Westlinks Dr Entrance. Gateway is a beautiful serene gated community and offers a soccer park, dog park, bike and jog path, and more. Included in HOA fee: Comcast cable, High-Speed WIFI, Water, Sewer, Garbage, Landscaping, Exterior Pest Control, Roof & Paint Reserves, Building Insurance, access to pool, Etc. Owner's just pay FPL electric!

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AFFORDABLE POOL HOME IN MEADOWS AT MIRROR LAKES



AFFORDABLE POOL HOME LOCATED IN THE MEADOWS AT MIRROR LAKES, excellent neighborhood atmosphere with CENTRAL WATER AND SEWER, quiet low traffic streets, located just minutes to SR 82, I-75 and Ft Myers, screen enclosed solar heated in ground pool with separate spa, plenty of deck space for entertaining with 18 X 10 under truss and 38 X 26 screened pool/spa area, accordion storm shutters, cathedral ceilings, plant shelves, eat in kitchen with breakfast bar and panty, nook area overlooking the pool, master bedroom has a separate music room off of it that can be used as a den/office or nursery, large walk in closet and private bathroom with walk in shower, indoor laundry room with full size washer/dryer and laundry tub, NEW WATER HEATER IN 2017 in double garage with opener, home is in need of some cosmetics and updating but is priced accordingly.

Offered At\$297,000

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BRAND NEW 3/2 + DEN IN SE LEHIGH



Brand New Home located in SE Lehigh, MOVE-IN READY 3 BEDROOM 2 BATH WITH A DEN with a closet that may be used as 4th BEDROOM, C.O. HAS BEEN ISSUED, double door entry to the den for privacy, 32 X 32 POLISHED PORCELAIN TILE FLOORS THROUGHOUT THE ENTIRE HOME with 5" baseboards, impact resistant windows, covered front porch leads to large great room, high ceilings throughout with tray ceilings in the living room and master bedroom, shaker cabinets with soft close doors and drawers, pendant lighting over breakfast bar, QUARTZ TOPS in kitchen and baths, stainless steel appliance package will be provided including a range, refrigerator, dishwasher and built-in microwave, glass tile backsplash, large dining area off of the kitchen, upgraded LED lighting throughout, spacious master bedroom with walk in closet, private bath with dual sinks and tiled walk-in shower, indoor laundry room, covered porch in rear overlooking the backyard, double garage with seal coated floors, extra long driveway with plenty of extra parking, excellent location just minutes to SR 82, I-75 and Ft Myers. NO FLOOD INSURANCE REQUIRED HERE. LEHIGH IS THE HIGHEST ELEVATION IN LEE COUNTY.

Offered At\$370,000

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Offered At\$195,000

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3 BEDROOM 2 BATH HOME - NEW ROOF IN 2024



NEW DIMENSIONAL SHINGLE ROOF IN 2024, NEW CENTRAL HEAT/AIR IN 2023, newer water heater, Square D electrical panel box, newer dual tank water treatment system, beautifully landscaped yard with plenty of privacy on a quiet low traffic street, CERAMIC TILE FLOORS THROUGHOUT, cathedral ceilings, plant shelves, newer solid surface countertops in kitchen with island top, tile backsplash, all appliances, master bedroom with dual walk in closets, newer vanities, sinks and fixtures in both bathrooms with dual sinks and tile backsplash in master bath with newer tile in multi head walk in shower, newly tile guest bathtub area with new fixtures etc., indoor laundry room with built in shelving and full size washer and dryer, screened front entryway plus a large 18 X 10 screened lanai under truss with tile floors overlooking the backyard, excellent location just minutes to SR 82, I-75 and Ft Myers, NO FLOOD INSURANCE REQUIRED HERE. LEHIGH IS THE HIGHEST ELEVATION IN LEE COUNTY.

Offered At\$295,000

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BRAND NEW 3/2 IN NE LEHIGH



Brand New Home located in Northeast Lehigh bordering ALVA, MOVE IN READY, AFFORDABLE 3 BEDROOM 2 BATH NEW CBS HOME. C.O. HAS BEEN ISSUED, 32 X 32 POLISHED PORCELAIN TILE FLOORS THROUGHOUT THE ENTIRE HOME with 5 inch baseboards, impact resistant windows, covered front and rear porches with large open concrete patio 12.6 X 18 overlooking the backyard, excellent for grilling and parties, high ceilings throughout, upgrades galore in the kitchen with shaker cabinets, soft close doors and drawers, LED pendant lighting over breakfast bar, QUARTZ TOPS in kitchen and baths, stainless steel appliance package, glass tile backsplash, large dining area off of the kitchen, master bedroom with private bath, tiled walk in shower with frameless glass doors, indoor laundry area, garage with grey seal coated floors, extra long driveway with plenty of parking, excellent location just minutes to SR 80 bordering ALVA I-75, Ft Myers and the International airport.

Offered At\$295,000

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BRAND NEW HOME IN NE LEHIGH ON 1/2 ACRE LOT



Brand New Home located in Northeast Lehigh on a HALF ACRE LOT, MOVE-IN READY 3 BEDROOM 2 BATH WITH A DEN with a closet that may be used as 4th BEDROOM, C.O. HAS BEEN ISSUED, double door entry to the den for privacy, TILE FLOORS THROUGHOUT THE ENTIRE HOME with 5" baseboards, impact resistant windows, covered front porch leads to large great room, high ceilings throughout with tray ceilings in the living room and master bedroom, shaker cabinets with soft close doors and drawers, pendant lighting over breakfast bar, QUARTZ TOPS in kitchen and baths, stainless steel appliance package, glass tile backsplash, large dining area off of the kitchen, upgraded LED lighting throughout, spacious master bedroom with walk in closet, private bath with dual sinks and tiled walk in shower with glass tile accents, indoor laundry room, covered porch in the front as well as the rear overlooking the backyard, double garage with seal coated floors, extra long driveway with plenty of extra parking, excellent location on a quiet low traffic street just minutes to SR 80, I-75 and Ft Myers.

Offered At\$365,000

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4 BR 3 BATH BRAND NEW HOME - 1/2 ACRE LOT



Brand New Home located on a HALF ACRE LOT located in Northeast Lehigh, MOVE-IN READY 4 BEDROOM 3 FULL BATHROOMS with 2 MASTER SUITES, EXCELLENT FOR IN-LAW QUARTERS, C.O. HAS BEEN ISSUED, 32X32 POLISHED PORCELAIN TILE FLOORS THROUGHOUT THE ENTIRE HOME with 5" baseboards, impact resistant windows, covered front porch leads to large great room, high entry foyer with lighted decorative shelf, high ceilings throughout with tray ceilings in the living room and master bedroom, shaker cabinets with soft close doors and drawers, pendant lighting over breakfast bar, QUARTZ TOPS in kitchen and baths, stainless steel appliance package, glass tile backsplash, large dining area off of the kitchen, spacious master bedroom with 2 walk-in closets, private bath with dual sinks and tiled walk-in shower with frameless glass doors, 4th bedroom guest quarters off of the kitchen area with it's own private bathroom, indoor laundry room, covered porch in rear overlooking the backyard, covered front porch as well, double garage with grey seal coated floors, extra long driveway with plenty of parking, excellent location bordering ALVA just minutes to SR 80, I-75, Ft Myers and the International airport. NO FLOOD INSURANCE REQUIRED HERE. LEHIGH IS THE HIGHEST ELEVATION IN LEE COUNTY.

Offered At\$375,000

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