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BONITA

LEE COUNTY
COLLIER COUNTY
FLORIDA

B

BONITA SPRINGS EDITOR: KEITH GIBSON, 335-0299; BUREAU: 992-1345

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 12, 1997

Be careful of masked creatures

RACCOONS CAN BE cuddly or cantankerous. It depends on your dangerous encounter.

Lisa Nelson, a Cornell University student, was walking on a wet Cascadilla Gorge trail in Ithaca, N.Y., when she slipped and fell 75 feet.

The 20-year-old student survived, suffering a broken wrist and minor injuries, because she landed on a soft, plump raccoon.

"She was on the bottom and there was an injured raccoon beside her," Capt. David Barnes told United Press International in 1990.

Despite rallying from injuries, the raccoon died of complications six months later at an animal shelter.

Seven years hence, John Antoniowicz's head-to-head with a raccoon was life-threatening, not life-saving.

Antoniowicz was driving his pickup in Daytona Beach when a raccoon jumped through his windshield from an adjacent garbage truck.

The 39-year-old landscaper was knocked unconscious, but his son steered the truck to safety. The truck-hopping raccoon convulsed on the floorboard and died.

Asked if he felt differently about raccoons, Antoniowicz replied, "Yeah, they hurt."

Playful or pestiferous? Is the garbage can half empty or half full? Raccoons are not politically correct pets. In the wrong locale — your back yard — they can be eyesores.

It could be the mask. They just look sneaky. Accordingly, their fingers are adept at picking pockets.

Besides Batman and Zorro, how many other do-gooders cover up? Survival depends on cunning for these nocturnal carnivores whose ancestry reaches 30 million years.

Their hands accelerate quicker than the Batmobile. Their tails move swifter than when Zorro carried a "Z" into Sgt. Garcia's lapel.

They may hunger-driven.

So what's the proper procedure for disposing of these critters?

That's the catch. You can trap and humanely kill raccoons. But you cannot legally release them, according to an official of the Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission.

"The reason we don't permit people to trap and relocate is because it would spread rabies," Lt. Rip Stalvey said.

A raccoon abuse complaint surfaced last week against Rosa Eilers of Fort Myers Beach, said Lee County Animal Control spokesman Eileen Sobock.

Someone said Eilers, who runs the Oyster Bay Park on Main Street, was trapping raccoons in the mobile home park and drowning them in Hurricane Bay. She was not charged.

Eilers, 64, denied drowning raccoons but said she knows where the story may have started.

"I was talking to some environmental guy," Eilers said. "I told him if I ever catch one, I'm going to release it off Summerlin. He told me that was illegal. I couldn't do that. I told him I'd just drown it."

"That last remark perked the ears of raccoon huggers countywide."

"As God as my witness, I did not drown a raccoon," Eilers said. "If I had caught one, I might have drowned it because I didn't know any better. I didn't catch one."

"All I did was make them fat."

Animal Control isn't so sure.

After the lecture, Eilers promised to keep her raccoons. And you can bet she will watch her tongue and tactics when trying to rid her complex of the adventurous critters.

Better yet. Leave 'em be.

— Sam Cook's column appears Sundays, Wednesdays and Fridays. You can reach him at the News-Press, P.O. Box 10, Fort Myers, FL 33902, call him at 335-0384, (800) 468-0350 or fax him at 334-7008. By computer: e-mail NPLJE@aol.com.



SAM COOK
"She was on the bottom and there was an injured raccoon beside her," Capt. David Barnes told United Press International in 1990.

months later, and the roles are reversed: A dozen men are arrested after propositioning plainclothes policemen walking the same stretch of Cleveland.

Fort Myers police are trying old and new tricks against the oldest profession. Undercover stings, which alternately target streetwalkers and their johns, or customers, are their main weapon.

Officers want to add a technique called "mapping" that is being used

Prostitution put on the run

Police try new, old tactics to stop oldest profession

By MIKE BRASSFIELD
News-Press staff writer

FORT MYERS — Wearing a loud Hawaiian shirt, Richard Bizzard is cruising Cleveland Avenue when a blonde woman flags down his beat-up Chevy.

Speaking in graphic terms, she offers him a good time for \$20. Bizzard is an undercover cop, so she's arrested.

Another sting operation five

elsewhere. It forbids prostitutes from returning to places where they have been arrested. A return to their strolling grounds is considered a probation violation, which could lead to more jail time.

Police hope that would help stiff the city's sex trade.

Right now, Police Chief Larry Hart said crack-downs just move the "ladies of the evening and morn-



HART: Crackdowns only lead to prostitutes moving from area to area

ing and lunch hour" from neighborhood to neighborhood.

"They're more spread out now than they were years ago," said Hart, who used to run prostitution stings as a police captain. He said most are crack addicts.

Arrests this year are lagging behind the usual pace, but Hart said that could change quickly as arrest totals vary from month to month.

The customers

Nobody knows how many prostitutes work Fort Myers. The number fluctuates.

"They're very sporadic and very

ARREST COUNT			
Fort Myers prostitution arrests:			
Year	Women	Men	Total
1995	53	25	78
1996	33	47	80
1997*	17	22	39

*Through Oct. 2

Note: Police say most of the women are prostitutes and most of the men are customers.

SOURCE: Fort Myers Police Department

Estero plays war the Civil way



READY, AIM: Members of the Confederate U.S. Artillery Company D prepare to set off the cannon during a skirmish against the Union Army during festivities at the Estero River Blockade in Estero on Saturday.

Koreshan Unity Foundation creates Blue-Gray environment

By LISA KNIGHT-PATTON
News-Press staff writer

ESTERO — During the week they are ordinary citizens, working to make a living.

But on weekends some local residents are warped into the Civil War era.

Imitation Union and Confederate soldiers camped on the grounds of the Koreshan Unity Foundation on Saturday during the Estero River Blockade, a re-enactment of the Civil War period.

More than 100 re-enactors from various areas of Florida gave onlookers a peek into the early to mid-1800s.

The re-enactment is among several events the foundation scheduled this year to honor the Koreshan heritage and continues today.

"What we're trying to do is present the Koreshans as the open-minded people that they were,"

said Jo Bigelow, president of The Koreshan Unity Foundation.

A time of artillerymen, Union settlement camps and nursing tents became real as re-enactors dressed the part of Civil War soldiers and their families.

"I have a lot of fun doing this stuff," said Lt. Cdr. Stephen Sheets of the U.S.S. Ottawa, a Civil War re-enactment organization based in the Tampa Bay area. "I like to portray history and tell people what happened back then."

Infantry drills, a ladies' tea and fashion show, a Civil War roundtable and a skirmish were among the activities at the blockade. Artifacts included an authentic cutlery used by American Navy men and a pepper box revolver crafted by Ethan Allen.

The re-enactors consider their recreation of the Civil War period a hobby.

Fort Myers' 1st Lt. Michael Simpson of the Third New York Artillery, Battery B, said his troop

IF YOU GO

- **WHAT:** The Estero River Blockade
- **WHERE:** The Koreshan Unity Foundation
- **WHEN:** 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. today
- **COST:** \$3 for adults, free for children 10 and younger
- **INFORMATION:** Call 992-2184

performs re-enactments at area schools and in other Florida cities.

Simpson and his wife, Georgia Woodard, have been re-enacting for about five years. Simpson said his interest in the period evolved when he read a book about the Civil War during his junior year of high school.

"It sparked an interest, and I started reading more and more about history," he said.

Woodard sews ladies' and children's costumes from the Civil War period. By referring to guidelines in authentic 1860 pattern books, Woodard crafts day and morning dresses, bonnets, and Garibaldi shirts, named after an Italian artillery commander.

Ankle-length skirts, long-sleeved shirts and bonnets were typical dress for women in the 1800s, said Jolene Wiltsie of Davie.

"The object was to have very pale complexion," Wiltsie said. "So you didn't want expose your skin to sun. They were very strict etiquette lines."

Wildie owns Confederate Rose, a mail-order catalog of Civil War women's wear. She sells pattern books and handmade jewelry and dresses.

"You have an initial interest in history," she said. "And then you get sucked in."

Devotion renewed after rally, men say

By BETTY PARKER
News-Press staff writer

After hundreds of Lee County men attended the "Stand In The Gap" Promise Keepers' rally in Washington, D.C., Lee County organizers plan a "Back From The Gap" rally, scheduled for Oct. 23.

"A lot of people watched what we did in Washington, and they've heard and read a lot about what we're doing since then," said Ray Enrico, chairman of the Southwest Florida Promise Keepers Task Force.

"We'd like to invite all men to come out that night and learn more firsthand."

Enrico estimates that about 600 Lee County men attended the Oct. 4 Washington event. That included about 150 who rode to Washington on three buses and another 170 from Gateway Baptist and McGregor Baptist churches who took a charter plane.

"The crowd on the buses included men from Fort Charlotte to Naples, said John "Zack" Zaccagnini, 50, of Cape Coral.

"The Lord humbled a lot of men on that trip," Zaccagnini said. "We were all re-energized and renewed in the spirit. I just hope everybody comes back and keeps the fire in their hearts and keeps praising the Lord."

Like many men who attended the rally, Zaccagnini said he was already active in a church — in his case, First Assembly of God, Promise Keepers, however, helps him take an extra step with his faith.

"I get a lot of the same things out of Promise Keepers that I get at church, but I get more of it from Promise Keepers," he said.

"When men get around women, they've got to be macho. But when we're with other men, we can humble ourselves."

That theme was repeated constantly by others who attended the rally. They returned re-energized for a Christian lifestyle — a revitalization more easily reached in the company of like-minded men.

"Promise Keepers is an ignition for greater involvement with your

See RALLY / 2B

■ Local rally / 2B

NICE JOB: Citizen of the year Dennis Gilkey, center, accepts the award Saturday from outgoing chamber president Vickie Helbing and Dennis Carwell, a former citizen of the year.

MARC BEAUDIN/News-Press

Citizen of year shocked by award

By ANDI ATWATER
News-Press staff writer

BONITA SPRINGS — One of the most anticipated and prestigious awards of the year came as a surprise Saturday night to Dennis Gilkey, executive vice president and chief operating officer of Bonita Bay Properties.

And the Citizen of the Year couldn't have been more proud.

"I'm overwhelmed. Bonita Springs is made up of a lot of good people," Gilkey said after the awards ceremony at the Bonita Springs Area

Chamber of Commerce's annual banquet.

"I think it's a can-do community. It always has been."

The award is given to a person whose involvement in Bonita Springs leaves a significant mark in the growth of the community.

"The Citizen of the Year is involved not only in business issues but in issues that affect the entire community," said 1993 recipient Dennis Cantwell, who presented the award to Gilkey.

The National Bank of Florida was given the Business of the Year

award, and bank President Richard Garner echoed the sentiments of many at the banquet.

"What is it about Bonita Springs? Look around, you can feel it in the air," Garner said. "Bonita Springs has the closeness of a small community."

"There's a lot of unselfishness here."

The chamber also recognized board member Andrew DeSalvo of DeSalvo and Wyatt Realtors as Director of the Year.

The banquet was held Saturday night at the Quail West Country Club in Bonita Springs.



THINGS TO DO

■ **NAPLES FREE NET:** Naples Free Net will hold its fourth exposition on Oct. 18 at the Times Warner Building, 1610 40th Terrace Southwest, in Golden Gate.

The exhibit will include demonstrations on the web site, digital photo opportunities, registration information and classes on the Internet and World Wide Web.

Naples Free Net is a volunteer-based, nonprofit organization dedicated to creating an electronically connected community in Southwest Florida. The public is invited to stop by the Expo from 8 a.m. to noon.

For more information, call 774-4007.

NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

■ **LOCAL SCANDINAVIANS MEET:** Sons of Norway Scandia Lodge 3417 had a social Friday night at Worthington Country Club in Bonita Springs.

Socializing begins at 6 p.m. Dinner, featuring fresh catch from the sea, will follow. Oddvar Pedersen will give the program, which includes the Led Erikson Millennium Anniversary Tribute.

The club is based in Bonita and open to all people of Scandinavian descent. Cost for the evening is \$19 a person or \$17 for members. Reservations are due by Monday. Call Meta Brylle at 597-4535. To inquire about membership, call Bob Holbrook at 793-1066.

HEALTH

■ **FLU SHOTS:** Flu shots are being offered at several sites this week in Lee County:

- Oct. 13: 8:30 to 11:30 a.m., Elks Lodge of Cape Coral, 4631 S.E. 10th Place, Cape Coral; 1 to 4 p.m., Masonic Lodge of Fort Myers Beach, 17625 Pine Ridge Road, Fort Myers.
- Oct. 14: 8:30 to 11:30 a.m., Sambel Community Center, 2173 Periwinkle Way, Sanibel.
- Oct. 15: 8:30 to 11:30 a.m., Jamaica Bay, 15235 S. Tamiami Trail, Fort Myers.
- Oct. 16: 2 to 4 p.m., Bonaire Towers, 1915 Haightm Ave., Fort Myers.

ETC.

■ **REFORM PARTY:** The Reform Party of Lee County will meet Thursday at 7 p.m. in the Sambel Meeting Room on the second floor of the Old Courthouse at 2120 Main St., Fort Myers. Call 267-9440 or 997-3964.

The immunizations are recommended for those 65 and older; those with chronic cardiovascular, pulmonary or metabolic disorders including diabetes, asthma; health-care workers with extensive patient contact; and children 6 months and older with respiratory problems or children at risk of developing Reye's syndrome after a flu infection. Women in the second or third trimester of pregnancy should also consider a vaccination.

People who are allergic to eggs should not take the vaccine.

The vaccinations are given by the Lee County Flu Coalition, cost \$10 and is covered by Medicare Part B. Questions? Call 275-7577.

LOCAL

RALLY: Goals call for return to values

From Page 1B

church," said Enrico, who attends Vineyards Christian Fellowship. "But a lot of churches are geared for women because they're the ones who go more often. Promise Keepers is geared to men and helping men change for the better in the context of other men. It used to be that things like football and baseball were the only ways men identified with each other. But now we can identify and share through Promise Keepers rallies and groups."

The nondenominational Promise Keepers organization, a seven-year-old group founded by former University of Colorado football coach Bill McCartney and based in Denver, has annual revenues of \$87 million.

The group's goals call for a return to Christian values. All its male following and support from the religious right, however, lead critics to wonder if its real goal is conservative Christian male domination.

They've also noted the group's predominantly white composition. Organizers of the Washington rally, however, made an effort to reach out to different ethnic groups, and several Lee County men who attended specifically mentioned how they enjoyed seeing men from all cultures come together for Christ.

Among other principles, including honoring Jesus and practicing ethical and sexual purity, Promise Keepers tells men to have spiritual leadership into their homes.

Some Promise Keepers' wives say that only means changes for the better.

Linda Ruffini's husband, John, has been involved with Promise Keepers for about two years.

"It's been fantastic," she said.

"Women can express themselves freely with their friends, but men don't do that very well."

LINDA RUFFINI
wife of John Ruffini,
a Promise Keeper

"He's always been a great husband and father."

But since Promise Keepers, he's been even better. They come back from these rallies so on fire it's unbelievable.

Many women, she added, have mistaken ideas about Promise Keepers.

"Women can express themselves freely with their friends, but men don't do that very well," she said.

"These rallies are a great outlet."

John Ruffini, 34, also praised that aspect of Promise Keepers.

"We talk about things you wouldn't talk to your wife about," he said. "It's an avenue to vent, to share. You find out you're not alone with your problems."

The Washington rally gave him renewed energy in his efforts to be a better husband and father.

Since his initial involvement with Promise Keepers, however, Ruffini said, he tries harder to listen to his wife and ask for her opinion on his performance as a husband and father.

"If your family is taken care of, everything else falls into place," he said.

The Ruffins, from Cape Coral, also attend Vineyards Christian Fellowship Church.

"Church is wonderful, but

IF YOU GO

- **WHAT:** Southwest Florida Promise Keepers rally
- **WHEN:** 7 to 9 p.m., Oct. 23
- **WHERE:** First Alliance Church on Colonial Boulevard
- **WHO:** All men are invited.

Promise Keepers is another avenue for God to use to get through to your heart and mind," John Ruffini said.

Mart Gonzales, pastor at Gateway Baptist Church, said many of his members went to the rally because they are already deeply involved in their religion.

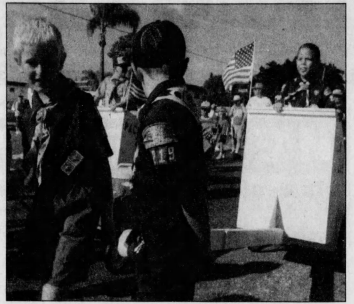
The national group tells followers to get or stay involved with local churches, he said.

"But it's up to the individual churches and pastors to take advantage of the momentum and energy generated at the rally," Gonzales said.

His church already emphasizes family-to-family relationship improvement, but Promise Keepers does the same thing with men only. If that works best for some men, it's all for good, Gonzales said.

"If there's one thing Christian wives want, it's a husband who'll be the spiritual leader of the home," he said. "Women always gather together and share their feelings."

"But that doesn't come naturally to men, so they benefit from the encouragement they get from Promise Keepers."



JOSE R. MENDEZ/News-Press
FASTER: Sean Kelly, 8, left, and Corey Callahan, 8, keep an eye on Christopher Knapp, 8, as they pull him in the official Boy Scout Pack 219 chariot during the Columbus Day Parade in Cape Coral on Saturday.



SOUTHWEST FLORIDA Collier County
MANSLAUGHTER: Deputies say a man killed his neighbor with a baseball bat in North Naples. Frank Bochet, 48, of 401 Mimosa Court was charged with manslaughter Saturday, according to a Collier County sheriff's report. Frank Melvin McGuckin, 47, of 402 Mimosa died in a hospital after being hit Thursday night. Deputies said the two men were fighting.

BODY FOUND: The body of an unidentified man was found Friday in some woods at the southwest corner of Gulf Gate Plaza, deputies said. The body of the white male couldn't be identified because of decomposition, deputies said. An investigation is ongoing.

Two die in car wreck on Sanibel

SANIBEL — Two men were killed late Friday night when the Chevrolet Corvette they were in crashed into some Brazilian pepper trees along Sanibel-Captiva Road, authorities said.

The Sanibel Police Department would not release the men's names nor any information about the accident.

The Corvette crashed at about midnight. There were no other passengers, and the car was destroyed. Both men died at the scene from severe head injuries, the District Medical Examiner's Office said after autopsies were conducted Saturday.

Police are investigating. Blood tests will determine whether alcohol was a factor in the crash.

The men were the 65th and 66th traffic fatalities in Lee County this year. Through the same date last year, 65 had been killed.

—News-Press staff

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POLICE: 'Mapping' used in St. Petersburg

From Page 1B

mobile," said Sgt. Glenn Johnson, head of the city's vice and narcotics squad. "They'll walk one area and get picked up then get dropped off somewhere and walk that area."

Police officers have focused on a half-mile stretch of Cleveland Avenue between Lee Memorial Hospital and the Fort Myers County Club.

An Oct. 2 sting nabbed 12 alleged johns, a cross-section of Lee County. Aged 21 to 61, half were from Fort Myers. The others came from Bonita Springs, Cape Coral, Estero, Lehigh Acres and Naples.

Streetwalkers stick to the main drag so they can attract more customers. Earlier this year, sheriff's deputies increased the pressure on prostitutes along Old U.S. 41 in North Fort Myers, driving some back into the city.

Complaints about overt prostitution on Palm Beach Boulevard led deputies to arrest 13 men in a trio of stings in August.

"They come from all walks of life," said sheriff's Sgt. Jim Nygaard.

Businesses along Cleveland complain, too.

'Really a pain'
Karl Vucich, proprietor of the Mobil station at Cleveland and Hanson Street, said streetwalkers are "really a pain."

"They all want to use the bathroom, and they're always looking to bum something from you," Vucich said. "If I see them soliciting a customer, I run them off."

"Vucich said prostitutes used to secretly wedge open the outside bathroom door so they could turn tricks in there. When he eventually remodels the station, the bathroom entrances will be moved inside.

Across the street, Eckerd Drugs removed its pay telephone.

"It attracted the wrong people — ones we didn't want in front of our store," said manager Greg Lingle.

Undercover

Situations like that are why Fort Myers' community police officers put together their first undercover sting last May. They're planning more.

The eight community officers act as old-fashioned beat cops, each staking out a district. Their job is to make the city less attractive to criminals.

"You've got to make the conditions nonconducive to what they want to do," said Sgt. Michael Carr, head of the community police.

Besides a Hawaiian shirt, community officer Blizard also wore a recording wire. Fellow officers listened in on his conversations and swooped in for an arrest when they heard a streetwalker offer sex.

"I wasn't doing anything. Please don't arrest me. Tomorrow's my birthday," one prostitute said after warning a frisking officer that she was not wearing underwear.

She was frantic.

Carr had talked to her before and seen her scratching at her arms nonstop. He suspected she was a heroin addict.

It was her seventh Fort Myers arrest.

Punishment

Prostitution and solicitation of prostitution are second-degree misdemeanors, punishable by up to 60 days in jail and a \$500 fine. Whether people actually see jail

"They all want to use the bathroom, and they're always looking to bum something from you. If I see them soliciting a customer, I run them off."

KARL VUCICH
proprietor of Mobil Station

time depends on if they are repeat offenders, said Kerri Carmin of the State Attorney's Office.

Jail time for customers is rare. The embarrassment of seeing their names run in the newspaper is usually the worst part, said Sgt. Johnson, head of the city's vice squad.

A new idea

Fort Myers modeled its community police after St. Petersburg's. Now, police here are studying the technique of "mapping," which is being used in cities such as St. Petersburg, San Francisco and Trenton, N.J.

Often, when St. Petersburg prostitutes are convicted, their probation includes being mapped from the area where they were caught — usually one of that city's three major prostitution areas. If they're seen back there, they are in violation of probation and can be arrested.

"Of course, they just move to the next area. Then we keep moving them, and hopefully, we move them out of the city," said Harry Herbst, administrative officer for a prostitution enforcement team.

He said St. Petersburg is seeing positive results after three years of mapping, although it still has plenty of prostitutes.

Police can't ask the courts to map a person from an area where they live, but Herbst said that is rarely an issue.

Herbst said police first had to work out the details with prosecutors and judges.

In Fort Myers, Hart said Wednesday that police plan to discuss the idea with judges here.

Risky business

In Lee County, prostitution is among the deadliest trades. At least 16 prostitutes have been murdered in the county since 1975, their bodies dumped in isolated areas.

Disease adds more danger. Officials say streetwalkers spread HIV, and the Lee County Health Department thinks prostitution was behind a syphilis outbreak last spring.

A new Florida law took effect Oct. 1 making it a felony to intentionally expose someone to HIV without their consent. Before, it was a misdemeanor.

There's no way to know how many streetwalkers have HIV, but "we assume it's a very high percentage," said Dr. Peter Bright, an epidemiologist with the Lee County AIDS Task Force.

Sgt. Johnson of the vice squad said drugs remain the root cause because most prostitutes sell their bodies to buy crack.

Johnson also said the customers are easier to arrest than streetwalkers.

"It doesn't take that long," he said. "There's tons of johns out there looking for girls."

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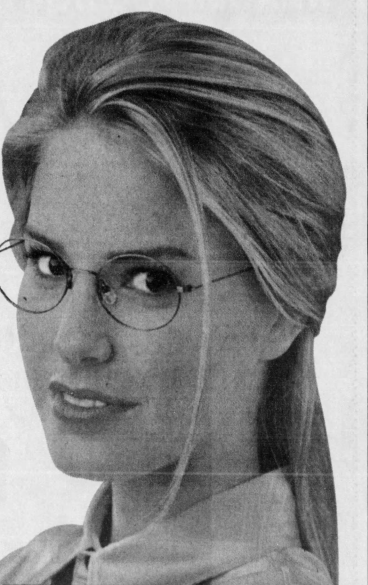
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