

Editorial Opinion

Naples Daily News

WILLIAM R. BARKER
PRESIDENT AND PUBLISHER

MANNY GARCIA
EXECUTIVE EDITOR

ALLEN BARTLETT
EDITORIAL PAGE EDITOR

1100 Immokalee Road, Naples, Florida 34110 239-262-3161

Kudos & Kicks

Reviewing the good, the bad and the questionable

Kudos: Well-deserved accolades were traded around the room when Collier County commissioners, Collier Sheriff Kevin Rambosk and various advocates for battling the scourge of modern-day slavery gathered Tuesday for the presentation of a proclamation recognizing January as Human Trafficking Awareness Month.

Commissioner Georgia Hiller led the way as a new logo and campaign “Stop Modern Slavery” was unveiled, featuring T-shirts and information sharing via social media, including Twitter and a Facebook page at www.facebook.com/empowermententerprises.

Among those recognized were staffers in Rambosk’s human trafficking unit; Linda Oberhaus, executive director of The Shelter for Abused Women & Children in Collier County, which provides a secure place to stay for trafficking victims; and Angelina Spencer, president of Empowerment Enterprises Ltd., a Washington, D.C., political management firm.

Rambosk shared the news of the weekend arrests of two suspects charged locally with trafficking and the rescuing of four victims, and he said as many as a dozen other victims may have been protected by the arrests. Community help is needed to continue battling the crime, Rambosk said.

Hiller said the victims in question weren’t brought here from another country; they were locals. She noted that traffickers target both genders and all ages.

Spencer said a human trafficker can earn \$100,000 or more yearly off each victim.

It’s often in sex rings, but also can be in domestic or farm labor, for example.

“Collier County is committed to taking a firm stand against human trafficking and will remain focused on ensuring that all Collier County residents are safe and abusers are held accountable for their crimes,” the proclamation states.

If you suspect someone is a trafficking victim, call local law enforcement, the shelter’s 24-hour crisis hotline at 239-775-1101 or the National Human Trafficking Resource Center 24/7 hotline at 1-888-373-7888 or text 233733 (BE FREE).

Kick: During a presentation this week about whether fluoride should be taken out of the water distributed by Collier County government’s utility, newly chosen Chairwoman Donna Fiala reached over and grabbed a plastic bottle of water.

“Did you notice everybody up here has their own bottle of water,” she said, referring to the commission dais. “Nobody drinks their regular water it seems.”

Ouch.

Lest we forget, Collier government’s utility won honors in 2015 for producing the best-tasting drinking water in Southwest Florida. The award, a regional and statewide competition yearly among public water utilities, is held by the Florida Section of the American Water Works Association. The state’s top award last year ultimately went to the city of Tallahassee.

Collier County’s utility won the statewide award in 2012. Ave Maria’s utility won top state honors in 2014 and 2010 for the best drinking water in the state. Bonita Springs Utilities Inc. has regularly fared well in the competition.

It’s also a reminder that it never hurts to look at the fine print on your water bottle label. For example, the label on a plastic bottle sold recently by a Southwest Florida International Airport vendor showed it came from the water system in Zephyrhills, “the city of pure water” northeast of Tampa.

Kudos: Collier County School Board members made the right call this week in adjusting a proposed 2016-17 school year calendar after hearing concerns from the Jewish community.

As had been proposed, Yom Kippur would have been a regular school day and the second day, Oct. 3, of Rosh Hashana was a regular school day, and Oct. 4 a half school day although there are morning services before the Jewish holy holiday ends that evening.

Board members sought a middle ground by keeping Aug. 10 as the start of the school year, reducing the days out of school in the week before Christmas but keeping Oct. 4 a full school day.



LETTERS

Bob Moates, Naples

Welcome visitors

I’m so mad I could eat fried chicken. I refer to JJ Carlene’s recent letter griping about how snowbirds fly down here and steal every last parking spot at the beach, crowd our restaurants and crowd our perfect, palm-lined streets.

The letter goes on to gripe about 15 percent tipplers, rising rents and billionaires who “come with a boat load of money to spend.” (I say thank God for that.)

The writer tells us the letter is “on behalf of Naples locals — the ones who were here before all the constant construction and changes were made, the ones who were here, yes, even born here.”

Well, let me tell you something: I’ve been here for 48 years and that letter wasn’t written on my behalf.

Furthermore, all snowbirds aren’t billionaires. Our winter visitors are folks who come to Naples because of the amenities which we share with them — fine restaurants, well-maintained sandy beaches, ample shopping centers, nice homes, upscale hotels and more. Real Neapolitans appreciate their coming.

In closing, the letter states: “To all newbies out there, I say, through clenched teeth and a forced smile, ‘Welcome and enjoy.’ To all my fellow locals, peace and patience be with you.”

That’s ridiculous.

To all you snowbirds, real Neapolitans say thanks for coming. We’ll do all we can to make your visit pleasant. And we’ll keep striving to improve what we have to make your visit better next year.

We have a few folks who disagree. They are a minority and cross-threaded. Ignore them.

Henry S. Kolesinski, Naples

Lies

To lie or not to lie, that is the question.

The world is nothing more than one big lie ever since we crawled out of the sea. It doesn’t matter which definition of lies one prefers to use, but it all narrows down to presenting something that is not true.

We witness lies spoken every day, whether by politicians, corporations, advertisements, different religious beliefs, businesses or even as simple as letters to the editor.

Lying is intrinsic to human nature, and we depend on it for our mental and physical survival. We lie every day if it serves our purpose. The problem becomes when people start to believe lies over fact. Obviously, some of us have already fallen into that hole.

One would guess the psychiatrists would classify this condition as being delusional, which eventually could lead to deranged behavior. The issue is how to stop the propensity of humans to lie. Fact-checking only goes so far, but if one has already reached a delusional condition, facts be damned.

Letter of the Day

Blanche Hawkins, Naples

Treat the water

I second Joan Millon’s letter about untreated stormwater going from the city into the Gulf.

I had no idea this was even being allowed these days, after all the knowledge gleaned over the past decade on the harmful effects of these pollutants on humans and wildlife.

The citizens of Naples should be outraged and demand that the water be fully treated before it’s dumped close to our shores.

God knows there’s enough wealth in Naples for us to comply with the minimum clean water regulations observed by most communities in the U.S.

Simple conversation usually ends up in an argument. The answer is: We’ll never stop it. Lies are part of the human brain DNA so we’ll have to live with them as we have in the past, no matter how frustrating they may be to honest people.

Gary Lefebvre, Naples

PC dangers

Recently in Philadelphia, police officer Jesse Hartnett was shot multiple times in his patrol car.

A man identified as Edward Archer approached, pulled out a gun and opened fire, pumping about a dozen rounds into the driver’s side window.

The suspect confessed to the shooting and said he did it in the name of Islam and that he pledged allegiance to ISIS. The suspect said he shot the officer because police enforce laws that do not comply with Sharia law or the Quran.

There was no doubt that he was inspired by his Islamic beliefs in his attempt to kill a police officer.

Philadelphia Mayor Jim Kenney is quoted as saying: “In no way, shape or form does anyone in this room believe that Islam or the teaching of Islam has anything to do with what you’ve seen on the screen.”

Who would ever agree with this statement? This politician is so clueless that it boggles the mind. The politically correct believers will get us killed.

Francesco Morsilli, Naples

Be patient, Dr. Carson

OK, Donald Trump supporters, you’ve had your fun following this populist (fill in the blank; “entertainer” would be a good word).

He’s said a few things all of us like; lots of things that are not feasible and absurd; and some things that could face legal challenge.

He signed a pledge not to run as a

third-party candidate if he failed to receive the nomination. He’s walked this back twice by saying “so long as they treat me nice.”

So Trump supporters, get real. Why don’t all of you pledge not to vote for Trump should he run as Ross Perot did against George H.W. Bush in 1992. Anyone who votes for a third-party Trump assures the presidency to Hillary Clinton.

Dr. Ben Carson isn’t the smartest guy running, but has an enormous content of character and a compelling life story. He has done the greatest good for humanity.

He shouldn’t bolt the GOP. He should be content to run as a vice president and wait his turn. He will one day be president.

Pat Lyons, Naples

Krauthammer commentary

Charles Krauthammer’s commentary on President Barack Obama’s reaction to international provocations continues to resonate on the level of a broken record.

Even the headline of his commentary, “Defy America, pay no price,” illustrates his refusal to leave the thinking of the ‘50s and early ‘60s and look at the world through the prism of the realities of 2016.

America’s wishes are no longer the world’s commands; that ship sailed years ago. Obama understood at the onset of his presidency that America’s interests were best served by working with the nations of the world, not issuing dictates on what America wanted the global landscape to be.

Krauthammer asserts the United States faces three great challenges to the American view of the new world order, and paints Obama as being “oblivious” and “inert” in the face of these threats.

He cites Iran’s moves in the Persian Gulf as a prelude to managing the Middle East and becoming an emerging global power. While Iran may well someday become the major player in the Middle East, it will not rise to the level of a global powerhouse any more than North Korea will, their thermonuclear claims aside. The Middle East is unmanageable for any global power, what with geopolitical designs colliding with intense religious hatreds.

China is certainly pushing its designs in the South China Sea, but it is confronted by the competing interests of its neighbors, Japan and Vietnam, backed by the American 7th Fleet. Russia may well continue its high jinks in Eastern Europe, but a ground war in Russia’s backyard is unthinkable.

Krauthammer continues to shrill about Obama’s reserve in these matters, but he has never offered a thought on how a “strong” president (think Republican) should respond. Obama’s greatest legacy will be his restraint in how he avoided reckless response in the face of repeated bait thrown his way by Moscow and Tehran.