

SWFLATODAY

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Big Corkscrew

Fire department trying for medical services after merger

By Greg Stanley
greg.stanley@naplesnews.com
239-263-4738

Big Corkscrew firefighters will try again for approval to deliver lifesaving drugs and advanced treatment to patients before an ambulance arrives.

Denied by Collier County commissioners a little over a year ago, the rural fire district immediately took up efforts to merge with North Naples Fire and Protection District, the only

fire district in the county with its own medical director and whose firefighters can start advanced life support without a county medic.

Voters approved the merger in November. It took effect in January. Now the new combined district is asking commissioners to allow all of its certified paramedics to administer advanced treatment, not just those in the old North Naples boundary.

“With this we could double and triple our coverage in Cork-

screw without hiring anybody,” said Jorge Aguilera, the district’s deputy chief of emergency medical services. “We have 10 paramedics out there who are already trained and credentialed by the district medical director.”

Early last year, Corkscrew sought and was denied the same county license that has allowed North Naples fire to operate under its own medical director for the last four years.

Firefighters in the sprawling rural northeastern side of the

county were regularly beating ambulances to medical emergencies by several minutes.

Even though the district had trained paramedics on staff, they couldn’t begin advanced work — such as regulating airflow, starting an IV or administering drugs — until an ambulance arrived.

But at the time, there were nine separate fire districts in the county, each with their own administrators and standards. Ambulance response, on the other hand, always has been run under

just one county department — Emergency Medical Services.

County commissioners and EMS officials long have been wary of fragmenting advanced medic care among the fire districts, so training or treatment standards in one neighborhood would be tossed out in another.

Rather than allow Corkscrew firefighters to use advanced care, commissioners beefed up EMS presence in the area, adding an-

See MEDICAL, 6A

‘2015 Makers: Women Who Make Southwest Florida’ awards



COREY PERRINE/STAFF (2)

Jan Manarite, center, is congratulated by friend Tom Mullins after being honored Monday as one of the “2015 Makers: Women Who Make Southwest Florida” at The Naples Beach Hotel & Golf Club. See more photos at naplesnews.com.

5 who left their mark

WGCU honors special SW Florida women

By John Osborne
Daily News Correspondent; 239-435-3435

They made a difference by focusing their time and talents on others. So on Monday, WGCU Public Media returned the favor for the third straight year by turning the spotlight on five Southwest Florida women during the “2015 Makers: Women Who Make Southwest Florida” awards and television screening at the Naples Beach Hotel & Golf Club.

Former state Rep. Mary Ellen Hawkins, R-Naples; Jan Manarite, a patient advocate with Prostate Cancer Research Institute; Maria “Lucy” Ortiz, retired outreach manager for the Shelter for Abused Women & Children in Naples; Robbie Roepstorff, president of Edison National Bank in Fort Myers; and Nola Thiess, founder of the Human Trafficking Awareness Partnerships, were this year’s honorees.

In a snippet of her television segment, which will air 8:45 a.m. each Wednesday along with portraits of the other Makers on WGCU media platforms through

See WOMEN, 8A



Lois Bowling becomes choked up after talking about why she nominated Mary Ellen Hawkins — and accepted the award for Hawkins, who did not attend.

Man threatens to ‘call NRA’ on Collier deputies

By Jessica Lipscomb
jessica.lipscomb@naplesnews.com
239-263-4829

A Golden Gate Estates man threatened to call the National Rifle Association on Sunday after Collier County sheriff’s deputies arrived to investigate a report he had threatened his neighbor with a gun in an argument about an unleashed dog.

A family who live two doors down from Alan Lee Huerth on Birdie Drive said they were in the backyard playing with their dog

when Huerth began yelling obscenities at them and threatening to have them fined for not having the dog on a leash.

The father of the family apologized and tried to defuse the situation, according to an arrest report, but Huerth pointed a black handgun at the father. The father quickly moved his children inside and called for help.



Alan Lee Huerth

When Collier County sheriff’s deputies came to Huerth’s home to investigate, Huerth was sitting in a chair on his lanai with a handgun about a foot away on a table.

Deputies said Huerth cursed at them, telling them they were violating his rights and yelling at them to get off his property.

“I’m calling the NRA,” he said at one point, according to an arrest report.

Deputies, who said they were worried Huerth would turn the gun on them, eventually cut a hole

through the lanai’s screen and grabbed Huerth’s weapon, which was loaded. Reports say deputies found a glass of scotch on the table next to the gun and said Huerth smelled strongly of alcohol and was slurring his words.

Huerth, 60, faces a felony charge of aggravated assault with a deadly weapon and misdemeanor charges of resisting an officer without violence and using a firearm under the influence of alcohol. As of Monday night, he remained jailed on bonds totaling \$70,000.



BRENT BATTEN

OPINION

Controversial Central element to Naples’ street plan

Plans to redevelop Central Avenue as a more pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly thoroughfare are generating a lot of interest inside the city of Naples.

And outside of it. At the request of Collier County Commissioner Penny Taylor, the county’s transportation staff weighed in on the plan, mildly questioning its wisdom.

That prompted a polite “mind your own business,” reply from City Manager Bill Moss to County Manager Leo Ochs.

Residents and business owners concerned about the plans for Central Avenue have looked to the Florida Department of Transportation for an ally but have gotten only a generic response suggesting the state favors plans such as the one moving forward in Naples.

For weeks, Taylor has been hearing from property owners along Central Avenue worried the proposed changes — fewer east-west travel lanes, on-street parking and roundabouts among them — will hurt their businesses.

New residential developments coming on and near Central likely will add cars, bolstering the case against the “road diet,” as it is called when lanes are taken away, she believes.

As the city’s representative on the county commission, a resident of nearby Lake Park and a former Naples City Council member, Taylor has a keen interest in Central Avenue. She’s been trying to slow the process down.

“I question the wisdom of city leaders that narrow streets with all this growth

See BATTEN, 12A

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WOMEN
from 3A



COREY PERRINE/STAFF

April, Hawkins said her gender often proved an obstacle when she began her political career in 1974. "It was difficult," Hawkins said. "I couldn't sit at the head table sometimes, because they didn't allow women to sit at the head table. It was a good ol' boys club."

But Hawkins, who served in the state Legislature until 1994, said she didn't let the perceived gender roles of the time stop her from accomplishing what she set out to do. "I always tried to do my best for Collier County," she said in the conclusion to her television segment as about 200 people filled a hotel ballroom against the picturesque backdrop of the Gulf of Mexico.

Adversity didn't get in Manarite's way, either. As a matter of fact, she said, the worst kind of adversity is precisely what led to her career in patient advocacy.

When Manarite's husband, Dominic, was diagnosed with prostate cancer in 2000 (he since has passed away), she said it got her thinking about those who didn't have a support system while going through a debilitating illness.

"One thing that occurred very quickly to me was: What do people do when they don't have an advocate?" she said. "What do people do when they're very sick and alone?"

For the more fortunate among the ill, Manarite

About 200 people came out Monday to support the "2015 Makers: Women Who Make Southwest Florida" awards. Four of the recipients at The Naples Beach Hotel & Golf Club were Robbie Roepstorff, center left, Maria "Lucy" Ortiz, Nola Theiss and Jan Manarite. The fifth recipient, Mary Ellen Hawkins, did not attend.

still answers that question today by taking matters into her own hands through her advocacy.

"I believe that for some reason I stepped into a calling for helping other people," she said. "The best, most powerful advocacy is to fight for someone, not against someone. It takes some perspective, but once you get it, that perspective becomes inspiring and powerful on its own."

Ortiz, who worked 16 years at the Shelter for Abused Women & Children in Naples, said Monday's recognition provided her with a sense of satisfaction while reflecting on a career well spent.

"I'm overwhelmed," said

Ortiz, who once traveled to the nation's capital to participate in a presentation for President Barack Obama. "It just feels very, very good."

Roepstorff, president of Edison National Bank, said much the same.

"As my pastor said to me: 'It's not about you, it's about others,'" she said. "You can't talk the talk if you don't walk the walk. I'm a strong believer in that."

For her part, Theiss, former mayor of Sanibel Island, has also spent the better part of her life trying to fight the good fight for others.

"I don't believe in the permanence of barriers," she said in a snippet of her

television segment. "I've lived long enough to know that barriers won't stand forever if people fight to knock them down."

Barbara Linstrom, executive producer for WGCU, said each of Monday's honorees shared a common trait.

"They've helped build the community, and they've built legacies for themselves," Linstrom said, adding that WGCU accepts nominations for future Makers each August through October.

Since its inception, 40 women have been honored through the awards program.

For more information, see www.wgcmakers.org.

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Jan Manarite, a patient advocate with Prostate Cancer Research Institute

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