



WEATHER FIRST
WEEKEND
FAMILY PLANNER

FRIDAY
PARTLY
CLOUDY
Storm Chance: 40%
89HIGH **74**LOW
High Tide: 12:10 AM
Low Tide: 6:18 AM

SATURDAY
PARTLY
CLOUDY
Storm Chance: 40%
88HIGH **76**LOW
High Tide: 12:48 AM
Low Tide: 7:42 AM

SUNDAY
PARTLY
CLOUDY
Storm Chance: 40%
89HIGH **73**LOW
High Tide: 1:27 AM
Low Tide: 7:47 AM



This Week



GRADES ARE IN

The grades for Indian River County schools are in and many schools received an **A8**

Vacation cruise to Vancouver



The Alaska cruising season is here. Make your first stop the Vancouver Lookout **B13**

American favorites for July 4th



Try some truly American dishes on this Independence Day **B1**

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Club raises money by auctioning townhouse

By Jay Meisel
Staff writer

VERO BEACH — For a chance to win a townhouse valued at almost \$400,000, people can help the Boys & Girls Clubs of Indian River Club expand.

The organization began the fundraising effort June 24 at the Indian River Mall with events for children that included arts and crafts, computer graphics and fingerprinting.

Ronnie Hewett, president and chief executive officer of Boys and Girls Clubs of Indian River County, said the organization hopes to net \$100,000 from the raffle. The organization is suggesting a donation of \$20 per ticket.

With that \$100,000, he said, the organization will be able to serve more children by moving to a larger facility in south Vero Beach and opening up a new club in Fellsmere inside a former high school building.

The raffle drawing will be held Dec. 15. Tickets can be purchased at

www.holidayhousetickets.com or by calling (800) 345-7694.

Regatta Construction, LLC, of Vero Beach, is donating the townhouse with more than 2,400 square feet.

Dennis J. Witherow, the president of Regatta, said he wanted to help the Boys and Girls Clubs and discussed the matter with Joe Telese, the president of the commercial division for Regatta and Mr. Hewett.

That led to the idea of donating the townhouse, which will be part of the Bridgepointe development at the northwest corner of Indian River Boulevard and 45th Street in Vero Beach, he said.

Construction of the townhouse is expected to be completed in November. It will include impact glass on windows that can resist penetration by debris from winds of up to 140 mph.

Other features include solid core doors, a side-by-side refrigerator with water and ice, a range with a glass cook

▶ See **CLUB, A3**



Cliff Partlow/staff photographer Rikki Kluas, Miss Florida Teen United States 2006, right, paints the face of Christina Pachao during the Boys and Girls Club of Indian River County kick-off of the Win a Luxury Townhome campaign at the Indian River Mall Saturday.

County plans facelifts for local roadways

By Jay Meisel
Staff writer

VERO BEACH — Burger King will probably not have its way regarding Indian River County's plans to take some of its parking for an \$11 million road improvement project, county officials said last week.

The project involves improvements to Highway 60 and 58th Avenue.

Burger King would lose 28 percent of its parking, Mark Holm, assistant managing partner for Fast Food Enterprises, of Vero Beach, said after a public meeting about the project.

The reduction to below 43 spaces "goes to the vibrancy of our business," he said. "You can't afford to lose that many parking spaces."

Terry Rauth, who is in charge of capital projects for the county's public works department, said Indian River County needs the right-of-way and any change in the amount of it is unlikely.

The project will affect 17 properties, mainly businesses. Indian River County held the meeting last week to educate property owners about the process the county will use to obtain the right-of-way.

Ms. Rauth said the county hopes to begin moving utilities in 2007 and that should take a year.

After that construction will last another year, she said.

Improving the road, she said, is important because of the growth in the area and the need to better accommodate the resulting traffic.

When the project is completed, 58th Avenue will be six-laned from 26th Street to College Lane. The plans also call for adding turning lanes at the intersection of Highway 60 and 58th Street.

▶ See **HIGHWAY, A3**



Cliff Partlow/staff photographer Indian River County commissioners recently discussed the congestion at S.R. 60 and 58th Avenue.

Thrift store helps youths

By Jay Meisel
Staff writer

VERO BEACH — When Alexandria Taylor, 15, began working at the Teen Academy Thrift Store three years ago, she was a rebellious teenager.

"I didn't care about what anybody told me," she said. When someone gave her direction, she said, typically she would roll her eyes.

Three years later, she said, she's learned to take constructive criticism.

Marylyn Rogers, the director of the academy, said Ms. Taylor has matured considerably over the years and is a fine employee.

Ms. Taylor is typical of many of the teenagers who come to work at the store.

More than 70 percent of those teenagers succeed in the program and end up completing high school and going to college or getting a job, Ms. Rogers said.

Charles Fairchild, a local businessman, came up with the idea of starting the thrift shop in 1992 to curb what he saw as an alarming dropout rate.

Ms. Rogers, who has

▶ See **YOUTHS, <None>**

Florist's roots go back to Waldorf

By Jay Meisel
Staff writer

VERO BEACH — When Bill House, owner of Artistic First Florist, visited the Waldorf Astoria Hotel in New York City about five years ago, he was amazed and impressed with the floral arrangements decorating the building's interior, he said last week.

Months after buying Artistic First Florist in September 2005, Mr. House said, he was surprised to learn that one of his floral designers, Luz

Elena Davila, had worked at the Waldorf.

"She had never talked about it," Mr. House said.

Ms. Davila has been doing floral creations for more than 22 years, including 11 at the Waldorf. There her creations often appeared at parties and weddings for celebrities, such as Donald Trump and Madonna.

Although she loved flowers since she was a child in Colombia, she said, she never planned to become a professional designer.

In Colombia, she took a

university course on floral designing, but the intent was to pursue it as a hobby.

That changed, Ms. Davila said, when she moved to New York City and got a job at a floral shop. Everyone at the business spoke either Greek or English, she said, adding that she spoke mostly Spanish at the time.

"I got bored there," she said.

Eventually, she said, she got the job at the Waldorf and was one of 15 floral

▶ See **FLORAL, <None>**



Artistic First Florist designer Luz Elena Davila poses with her tropical creation.

Cliff Partlow staff photographer

Club

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top, a microwave, a dishwasher, a garbage disposer, a washer and dryer and granite countertops.

The townhouse also features two bedrooms, 2 1/2 bathrooms, a dining room, a grand room and a two-car garage.

The raffle will help the organization's continuing efforts to serve children, Mr. Hewett said.

"We help educate children and help kids succeed in school, which is our top priority," he said.

The Boys & Girls Clubs of Indian River County serves more than 2,000 children a year and has a club in Sebastian and two facilities in the Vero Beach area.

The organization wants to move its South County Club in the Vero Beach area, currently located in a building with about 2,500 square feet to a facility double that size, Mr. Hewett said.

Currently, the organization serves 80 to 90 children at that club during the school year and about 100 during the summer. He said the move would allow the club to serve an additional 50 to 75 children.

There's a waiting list of children wanting to join the club.

During the summer break, he said, the organization provides activities from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. When school is in session, the clubs open from



Cliff Partlow/staff photographer

The Boys and Girls Clubs of Indian River County held their kick off for a chance for someone to win a luxury town home at the Indian River Mall Saturday. Front row from left, Heidi Lemberg, Joe Telese and Dennis Witherow, co-owners of Regatta Construction, Center row, Philip MacMonagle, Hometown News, Doris Blair, advertising, Alan Polackwich, Riverside National Bank, back row, Pete Grasso, WGNX, Ronnie Hewett, pres, CEO Boys and Girls Club, Bob Boyle, Comcast, and Jay McNamara, Chairman Boys and Girls Club.

after school to 8 p.m.

The organization, which started in 2000, has also organized youth volunteer corps, which involves youth volunteering to do community service work.

Additional information about Boys & Girls Clubs of Indian River County can be obtained by calling (772) 299-7449 or at www.BGCIRC.org. meisel@hometownnewsol.com

Highway

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There will be triple-turning lanes for traffic heading northbound on 58th Avenue from Highway 60 and double-turning lanes for traffic heading south on 58th Avenue from Highway 60.

For traffic heading in either direction on Highway 60 from 58th Avenue there will be double turn lanes.

To obtain the land needed for those improvements, Indian River County contracted with American Acquisition Group, a Tampa-based company that specializes in right-of-way acquisition.

Bob Miller, executive vice president with AAG, said that the company will conduct appraisals, including one by an appraiser who specializes in doing evaluations for property owners.

The company will make an offer based on those appraisals, he said. If an agreement can't be reached, the county will seek the land through eminent domain, he said.

Besides Burger King, Bank of America, Walgreen Drug Store and The Home Depot are expected to lose parking spaces to right-of-way acquisition.

sition.

Mr. Holm said that he will try to negotiate with the county.

"We will talk with them and see where it goes," he said.

Employees of Nicholas Enterprises, which owns several Subway shops in Vero Beach, said they were happy to learn the project won't reduce parking for the Subway in the area.

"The only impact will be during the construction," said Ken Schifelbein, a spokesman for company.

Work on U.S. 1 has resulted in a

double-digit percentage loss in sales for the Subway at 6th Street, Mr. Schifelbein said.

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WEEK IN REVIEW

New decal program identifies land for police

INDIAN RIVER COUNTY — A new local program called Agriculture Emergency Contact System was recently launched throughout the county.

A small, yellow reflective decal with an identification number is placed on the property's gate, fence, or post of groves and pastures of at least five acres.

According to Deputy Jeff Luther, of Indian River County Sheriff's Office, the need for such an identification system developed from the police being unable to identify rural properties away from street signs and/or addresses, which delayed police response times.

At this time, the program is voluntary. However, IRCISO is asking the County Commission to possibly make the program mandatory.

Residents can register via the Internet

INDIAN RIVER COUNTY — Indian River County and other Florida counties are seeking to make residents more aware of the opportunity to register to vote via the Internet.

Supervisor of Elections Kay Clem said residents can go to www.voteindianriver.com and print out a form that would then be signed and mailed to her office at 1750 25th Street, Vero Beach, 32960.

She said very few people register that way, possibly because they don't know the option is available. The applications require identifying information that is checked with a state database.

Indian River County currently has about 85,000 registered voters, but Ms. Clem said the number may be lower because her office doesn't always know if someone has moved to or died in another state.

— Compiled by Jay Meisel and Nancy Whelan


There is Extra Help Available for Low Income Medicare Recipients

"How will I ever be able to afford the rising cost of health care?"

America's Health Choice has a program available for Low Income Medicare Recipients that will answer that question.

For more information and to see if you qualify for extra help, please call:

1-866-556-1125 TTY 1-877-660-6651, Monday to Friday, 8 am - 8 p.m.

 America's Health Choice Medical Plans, Inc. "Health Care From The Heart"

An HMO with a Medicare Advantage contract available to all eligible for Medicare. Members must use Plan providers except in emergencies, urgently needed care, or out-of-area renal dialysis services. Must continue to be entitled to Part A and pay Part B Premium.

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