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Affordable housing plan called for by fall 2017

“The plan will offer clarification of the issue, recommended solutions and funding streams.”

Kim Grant, director of Collier County's community services department

By Greg Stanley
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Collier County's first comprehensive plan for dealing with affordable housing problems should be completed by September 2017, according to a timeline approved Tuesday by commissioners.

Commissioners created a large committee of residents to help steer the study and identify housing and rental needs of middle-class and low-income families.

The 27-member charter committee will draw from a wide pool of residents, including bankers,

Collier County commissioners created a panel of residents to help steer the study and identify housing and rental needs of middle-class and low-income families.

for-profit and nonprofit developers and representatives of the Sheriff's Office, school district, hospitals and some of the area's largest private-sector employers.

“There's been a desire for wide community involvement,” said Kim Grant, director of the community services department. “This is a very sophisticated is-

sue,” Grant said. “This charter will have one simple deliverable — the development of a housing plan by September 2017.”

“The plan will offer clarification of the issue, recommended solutions and funding streams. ... It will reflect the collected view of the citizens of the county.”

Commissioners need to select a

firm or university to complete the study. A key part of that plan will be to find a funding source, perhaps a county tax, to help lower down payments, mortgages and building costs.

There is a need for affordable housing among the middle class as well as the working poor.

Almost half of the families living in Collier County are paying more for housing than what generally is considered financially healthy, according to the county's housing analysis.

See HOUSING, 6A

Bonita Springs | American Legion Post 303



NICOLE RAUCHEISEN/STAFF (2)

Bernie Lurye, 83, of Bonita Springs, salutes toward American flags that were burned Tuesday in a flag retirement ceremony at American Legion Post 303 in Bonita Springs. When flags become too worn, torn, faded or badly soiled, they traditionally are retired through incineration.

Veterans retire U.S. flags with respect

By Shelby Reynolds
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Adam Prentki Jr. can't bear to see an American flag on the ground.

“I have too much respect for it,” said the 83-year-old Korean War veteran, who circled around flames Tuesday after a ceremony to celebrate National Flag Day and to retire unserviceable flags.

Prentki is a member of Bonita Spring's American Legion Post 303, which hosted its annual ceremony Tuesday evening with the city's Veterans Advisory Committee and Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 4254.

About 50 people gathered to pay tribute to the nation's flag, including Mayor Peter Simmons, several City Council members, Boy Scout Troop 109 and the local chapter of the Knights of Columbus.

The Bonita Springs Fire Department was on hand in case



Flags lie on the table ready to be burned in the flag retirement ceremony Tuesday at American Legion Post 303 in Bonita Springs. About 1,500 flags were gathered to be retired at the ceremony.

the fire got out of control.

The service included prayers, the national anthem and other patriotic songs, and words from speakers while a small fire crack-

led in barrels 30 yards away.

“Our flag has been a symbol of freedom wherever it flies,” Simmons said to the audience. “It inspires hope in people suf-

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See more photos and a video of the Flag Day ceremony.

fering under tyranny or terror; it welcomes immigrants from every land searching for a better life; and it rallies our nation in time of conflict, crisis and war.”

A pile of faded and torn American flags — their stars and stripes weathered from use — were stacked on a table and packed into bins, waiting for proper retirement.

To be discreetly burned in a ceremony is a “dignified and solemn occasion” for unserviceable flags, according to flag etiquette protocol on the American Legion's website.

On command, Boy Scout members — carrying in their arms the first of about 1,500 unserviceable flags — approached the barrels and draped the flags

See FLAG DAY, 6A

Collier district Board's 3-2 vote extends contract for schools chief

By Melhor Marie Leonor
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Collier County Public Schools Superintendent Kamela Patton could remain at the helm of the district until 2020, after a 3-2 vote by School Board members to extend her contract by two years.

“This is about the stability of the district,” said board member Kathleen Curatolo, who voted in favor of the extension.



Kamela Patton

Patton's contract was to expire June 30, 2018.

It was the third time Patton's contract has been extended.

AHEAD OF ELECTIONS

It was the second time it was done months before elections that promise to bring new members to the dais.

That's the issue board members Erika Donalds and Kelly Lichter took with the extension.

“This is trying to preempt voters, and it's being done out of fear of change by the board,” Donalds said. “If you're doing this out of fear due to an election, are you really standing for the majority? I don't understand that. I do feel it's disenfranchising.”

Lichter said if Tuesday's vote was about renewing a contract about to expire, her vote might have been different.

Lichter said that the last time board members extended Patton's contract before elections, many voters expressed displeasure.

DIFFERENT THIS TIME?

Board member Roy Terry, who sat on the board at the time and supported the extension, said that vote wasn't advertised properly.

This time, district residents had a chance to reach board members with their thoughts, Terry said, and many did so during Tuesday's meeting. Some opposed the extension, but most expressed support for Patton.

“We as a board have to look at the accomplishments of the district,” Terry said. “In my opinion, the district has been very successful in the last five years.”

Before extending her contract, board officials approved Patton's goals for

See SCHOOLS, 5A

Naples Wine Festival chooses Lurton as honored vintner

Daily News staff

Naples Winter Wine Festival organizers said Pierre Lurton has been selected to be the honored vintner of the 2017 event.

Lurton oversees two acclaimed wineries — Château Cheval Blanc and Château d'Yquem — in France's Bordeaux region.

Those wineries have been

in operation since the 1800s.

“It is truly a pleasure to be honored at this festival among some of the most respected vintners in the wine world,” Lurton said in a news release.

“I look forward to being able to share my experience with esteemed colleagues and connoisseurs, all while contributing to improving the well-being of children in need.”

Lurton will pour some of his most lauded wines at the wine festival, which is scheduled for Jan. 27-29 at The Ritz-Carlton Golf Resort in North Naples.

He has helped the festival in prior years with two auction lots that have included a private tour and tasting at Cheval Blanc and a special lunch with him.

The wine festival raises

millions of dollars each year for children's charities in Collier County and has helped more than 200,000 children, organizers said.

The three-day festival has gained an international reputation and brings together esteemed vintners and chefs.

Ticket packages, to be limited to 580 guests for 2017's festival, start at \$10,000 per couple.



Pierre Lurton oversees two wineries in France.

FLAG DAY
from 3A

into the flames. Audience members were invited to do the same.

A bugle player sounded out the notes to taps. "It's good to see (the flags) going that way," Prentki said, motioning toward the swelling smoke, "instead of going somewhere else."

He surveyed the flames, gathering with a stick singed bits of flag that had fallen to the grass; he couldn't let them burn on the ground.

Prentki's son, Adam Prentki III, is commander of American Legion Post 303. He served in the Marines like his father.

"As veterans, we have fought and are willing to die for the flag," the commander said.

"That's what our men and women are fighting for. ... It's paying respects to the flag."

A red, white and blue mailbox sits outside the building, where residents can drop off their weathered flags.



A member of Boy Scouts Troop 109 helps gather used flags to be retired Tuesday at American Legion Post 303 in Bonita Springs.

Local Ace Hardware stores also take donations and deliver them to the American Legion. Prentki III estimated

5,000 flags have been retired this year; there are too many to burn, he said, to wait until June 14. Bill Pace, a World War II

prisoner of war and Purple Heart recipient, said he attends the Flag Day ceremony in Bonita Springs each year.

"People don't salute to the flag anymore the way that they used to," said Pace, 91. "It's a great ceremony that they have."

NICOLE RAUCHEISEN/STAFF

Collier County | I-75
Two held after chase, car fire

By **Alexi C. Cardona**
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Collier County deputies arrested two men late Tuesday afternoon after an Interstate 75 chase that ended with a car fire.

Deputies tried to stop a gray car they said had an expired license tag and dark window tints.

But the car, headed east on the cross-state Alligator Alley stretch of I-75, sped up just after 4 p.m. near mile marker 91, and deputies chased it, said Sheriff's Office spokeswoman Michelle Batten.

The driver lost control and the car veered into the median, where the vehicle got stuck.

"Eventually, the car worked itself out and turned to head westbound on I-75, at which point deputies deployed stop sticks to try to stop the car," Batten said.

The driver avoided the stop sticks and again lost control, Batten said. The car got stuck in the median again and the driver tried to drive east again on the interstate.

Deputies crashed into the car to steer it off course near mile marker 99.

The car started smoking after the driver and passenger exited, and it eventually caught fire.

No one was hurt, but the lanes for southbound traffic on I-75 were blocked. They reopened before 5 p.m.

The men were not identified, but the driver faces charges of fleeing from law enforcement officers. Other charges were pending.

HOUSING
from 3A

Many — almost a quarter of county residents — are spending more than half of their income on rent or mortgages.

HOSTING PICKLEBALL

Commissioners also unanimously decided to work to make East Naples the long-term home of the U.S. Open Pickleball Championships.

The first U.S. Open for the sport was held in April at a transformed East Naples Community Park.

With more than 1,000 players coming from all over the county and overseas to compete and over 10,000 spectators checking out the growing sport, the

championships beat even the most optimistic projections, said Jack Wert, tourism director. "We knew the crowd would get to 8,000, but to get over 10,000, we are very pleased," Wert said. "The number of overnight stays was what we were hoping for."

The county has a contract with organizers of the tournament to host the event two more years. Both sides said they want to make that a long-term deal.

"Our goal in the beginning was not three years," said Terri Graham, president of the tournament. "Our goal was forever, to make Naples the pickleball capital of the world."

To improve the event for next year, organizers want to add more bleachers for the championship court and have more

shade, parking and restrooms.

A misting station would go a long way, Graham said. And most importantly, more courts.

"We stopped registration this year based on the amount of courts," she said.

"If we have more courts, we can get you more participants and visitors."

If the county is going to invest in more courts and bleachers for the event, it would need a guarantee the tournament will be in Collier longer than 2018, Commissioner Tom Henning said.

"If we put in that kind of investment, we need it to stay here," Henning said.

"This is something new. I never knew about pickleball. So if we can house it here and call it home, what a great addition we would have to our county."

FGCU
from 5A

"You feel like this heaviness that's been on your shoulders has been lifted off."

On Sunday night, Diane Smith made it a point to be at Bambusa Bar & Grill in Naples, a gay-friendly establishment, she said.

The 53-year-old Collier County paramedic, who is gay, said she went to support the LGBT community and in honor of the first responders.

There was a moment of silence, she said. "You could hear a pin drop," Smith said. "It was a somber moment."

Jeremy Burke, 22, an FGCU junior from Orlando, said he has hometown friends that lost loved ones.

"It's sad to see your hometown go through troubled times," Burke said.

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"Male Enhancement Pills ... Do They Really Work?"

Unfortunately, most **Natural Male Enhancement** products DON'T live up to their hype, but one reader recently wrote me about a new **RED** pill that blew his mind (and his partner's). After a little research, I felt compelled to share his letter. **Read on ...**

Dear Steffanie,

I recently received a sample for the male enhancement product, **RED FORTERA**, in the mail. I'm a relatively healthy male, but I have tried a few of these natural alternatives - what guy WOULDNT want an extra boost with that special someone? Well, results from these products are typically underwhelming, but the moment I received this sample, I knew something was definitely different - this pill is **RED**, actually a sort of luscious red that you don't ordinarily see. More importantly, the sample came with an interesting letter from the manufacturer. The letter didn't make any ridiculous claims of how many inches I was going to gain, but it did make a rather bold statement that I could not get out of my head, one that intrigued me to the point I had no choice but to try this new red pill. Here's what it said, verbatim:

Take our **"Partner Reaction"** Challenge, just use this **FREE** sample 30 minutes prior to sexual activity and **TAKE NOTE OF YOUR PARTNER'S REACTION!** That's right, don't believe us, let your partner's reaction tell the real story - we **CHALLENGE** your partner **NOT** to show a reaction to the drastic difference in your performance. We're so sure you're going to agree, we're **GIVING AWAY A FREE 3 MONTH SUPPLY** to the best testimonials we receive. Simply send us a paragraph or two describing your partner's reaction to your newfound **PROWESS**. We'll post the best descriptions we receive to our website (so keep them "clean") - if yours is one of them, we'll send you a full **3 MONTH SUPPLY** absolutely **FREE!** (All personal info will be kept confidential.)

I couldn't believe it, they were so confident in their product, they literally said **MY PARTNER WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO CONTAIN HER REACTION** to the difference in my performance. **THAT'S BOLD!** Most other pills say take this pill every day for this next 60 days and feel a difference. **THIS** one boldly says - take this pill today, **ONE TIME**, on your **FIRST TIME** - **watch how your partner reacts?** I HAD to try it, just on pure principle.

Steffanie, all I can say is, they weren't kidding. I didn't tell my wife I took it. Literally, in the middle of our "experience," she stopped me and said, "OK, what's going on, what did you take ..." - I couldn't believe it! **They were right!** She couldn't help but to react! Steffanie, you have to find out more about this New **RED HOT PILL!** Now, every time my wife and I are intimate, she asks me, "Did you take the pill?" It's crazy but I had to order a 3 month supply! She won't let me go without it!

Here's the phone number for your readers: **1-800-318-8385** or they can also go to **www.ITakeRed.com**. They may still be able to get a **FREE SUPPLY** with their order like I did! I only needed to try it once, now I tell everyone ... **I Take Red!**

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