



Around the Ranch

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THE COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER OF LAKEWOOD RANCH

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 19, 2023



A LITTLE SPRINGTIME AND IRISH LUCK IN LAKEWOOD RANCH – There was a sea of green everywhere you looked at the annual Irish Celtic Fest and Lucky Dog Parade at Greenbrook Adventure Park. For more information and photos see pages 12-13. Photo by Ernie Soller

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Advertising Sales/Circulation: Around the Ranch is published by Lakewood Ranch Media which is solely responsible for its content. The Herald-Tribune is responsible for the printing, distribution and sales production of this newspaper. The articles and editorial viewpoints contained in this publication are written solely by Lakewood Ranch Media with the assistance of the Community Services Office and other offices in Lakewood Ranch, none of which are associated with the Herald-Tribune.

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- Brian Higgins, Owner, with son Kyle

Brain Health Benefits of Having a Pet

Research suggests pets are good for our brain health.
So, in honor of National Pet Month in April, we honor our pets.

By Stephanie Peabody, PsyD, HSPP, Neuropsychologist

Our pets are family, at least they are for the more than over 90 million households who count at least one pet as a resident. But our pets bring us more than unconditional love, joy, and companionship. Research shows that having a pet can protect our brain and physical health and even extend our life.

According to Harvard Health, research shows bonding with an animal can have an immediate and long-lasting impact on our brain health and sense of well-being. Studies show regular interaction with animals may increase brain health protective factors by boosting levels of oxytocin and production of serotonin, the feel-good brain chemicals, which may explain why petting animals is so calming.

DOGS HELP CHILDREN DEVELOP SOCIALLY AND TO REDUCE CHILDHOOD ANXIETY

The incredible effects of dogs on the brain development and health of children are well-researched and science backed. A pediatric study done by researchers found that children aged 3-5 years old with dogs at home were more sociable and well-behaved than their peers without dogs at home. Naturally, being more socially adjusted can play a role in a child's overall well-being and sense of self.

One of the most surprising benefits dogs have for school-age children is reducing childhood anxiety. Studies show that interacting with dogs on a regular basis boosts mood and eases the stress of children like few other things can replicate. Your furry friend is a relaxing influence to all who know them.

DOGS HELP ADULTS STAY ACTIVE AND SOCIAL

Getting a pet helps keep our minds and bodies active. The ongoing nurturing, feeding, caring, and grooming of our pets keep our brains engaged. If our pet is a dog, the daily walks and playtime get us outside and physically active. In addition to being good companions, pets can also help reduce brain health risk factors by decreasing stress and preventing feelings of depression, anxiety,



and loneliness — especially for people who live alone. Having a friendly face to come home to can help prevent isolation.

As a necessity, dog owners walk on average 22 minutes more daily than the average person, according to a recent study. That extra activity leads to a less sedentary life, which is linked to increased brain health, improved sleep, increased stress resilience, higher self-esteem, better mood, and decreased risk of brain illness, including dementia.

On top of the enhanced cognitive, emotional, and physical benefits of walking your dog, the dog park is doing wonders for the social lives of adults. Many worldwide have reported an increase in loneliness and a shortage of friends.

Studies have shown that people can make new friends just by owning and walking their dogs. It's great to make connections with people you see regularly and share a love of your pets!

DOGS HELP THE ELDERLY FIGHT OFF LONELINESS AND SOOTHE SYMPTOMS OF ALZHEIMER'S

Pets also provide therapy for the sick and elderly. Animal-assisted therapy is used in hospitals to support treatment and recovery. In one study, daily visits with therapy dogs helped cancer patients lower their stress levels and the fear associated with radiation therapy and chemotherapy. Retirement centers often use animal-assisted therapy to help residents with depression and stress, as well as support the challenges of aging and grief.

Dogs are shown to be fantastic companions to the elderly, providing comfort as we enter the later stages of life.

Research has shown that dogs help those with dementia as well as provide companionship to caregivers. Dog ownership can help a person with Alzheimer's feel more independent, which boosts their quality of life. Dogs

are wonderful at providing comfort and companionship to caregivers.

Having a pet isn't for everyone, but there are other ways to get a healthy dose of animal therapy. The Suncoast is home to many rescue, shelter, and adoption organizations that are always in need of donations and volunteers. Helping animals can help provide us with a sense of purpose and we may even feel motivated to take one of those fuzzy, little faces home.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TODAY TO PROTECT YOUR BRAIN HEALTH

Whether you are looking for volunteer opportunities or a new family member, these are just a few organizations in our area that can provide you with some animal therapy:

- Manatee County Animal Services
- Cat Depot
- Forget-Me-Not Inc.
- Gulf Shore Animal League
- Humane Society at Lakewood Ranch
- Humane Society of Manatee County
- Humane Society of Sarasota County
- Nate's Honor Animal Rescue
- Satchel's Last Resort

And for you and your pet, remember to BE BRAIN HEALTHY and adopt a lifestyle that includes thoughts, behaviors, emotions, responses, and language that promote:

- Stress resilience
- Nutrition
- Physical activity
- Sleep
- Social connection
- Emotional wellbeing
- Meaning and purpose
- Cognitive stimulation and creativity
- Engaging with nature
- General health
- Positive impacts

For more information about the Brain Health Initiative or to learn more about how you can become involved in *Schools for Brain Health*, brain health programming, participate in the Brain Health Legacy Study, nominate a Brain Health Scholar, or live a brain-healthy lifestyle, please visit brainhealthinitiative.org.

LWR's Waterside Place Adds Nationally Acclaimed Retailer; Announces New Openings

Lakewood Ranch recently announced a new tenant for its newest town center, the 36-acre Waterside Place – a retail, services, dining, and entertainment destination. The Black Dog store, when open, will sell resort wear, including T-shirts, polos, sweatshirts, hoodies, and shorts, among other things. Black Dog started in Martha's Vineyard with stores mostly in the northeast, with the only other Florida location on St. Armand's Circle.

The most recently opened businesses at Waterside Place include Man Cave for Men, a luxury modern barber shop; Monkee's, an upscale women's boutique; Florida Provisions Co., a retail and bar concept; Forked, a breakfast, lunch, brunch and cocktails establishment; the John Cannon Model Experience Center, M/I Homes Design, M/I Homes Financial, and M/I Homes Title Agency.

Between now and May, additional planned openings include SHACK (a yoga studio), Capstan Financial, Marmalade, featuring home decor and furnishings along with women's apparel and unique gifts; Modish Salon, Good Liquid Distilling Co., Osteria 500, an Italian restaurant; and Shore Rejuvenation, offering spa services and treatments.

Tenants expected to open in the third and fourth quarter

of 2023 include Agave Bandido, a Mexican-American restaurant and tequileria; Deep Lagoon, a seafood & oyster house; Duck Donuts, Platinum Palm Properties, Cileone Jewelers, and Williams Parker Law.

The new businesses will join the currently operating Koré Steakhouse and cocktail lounge, Good Liquid Brewing company, O&A Coffee Supply, CROP Juice, Bay Area Aesthetics, Body Bar Pilates, 3Form Fitness, Kilwins, Paint Nail Bar, Lakewood Ranch Medical Group, and Smith Law.

"Waterside Place has truly become a hub of activity for Lakewood Ranch," said Kirk Boylston, president of Lakewood Ranch Commercial. "The design, layout and most of all, the tenants who are occupying the project, are providing a place that can be enjoyed by everyone who goes there. It is a great place to simply hang out and enjoy the water view, find an outdoor space to work, enjoy some great shopping or dining or participate in one of the many activities that are happening there.

"The turnout for the Farmers' Market, Ranch Nights and music on the weekend evenings has surpassed all our expectations," Boylston continued. "The majority of the project is leased with a large number of business openings planned for

2023, which will provide many new dining and shopping options for our guests. It has been extremely gratifying for everyone who has made this project come to life see so many people there meeting new and old friends, shopping, dining, listening to music, or participating in events at Waterside Place. It has turned out to be the place that we hoped it would."

Recently named the "Best Lifestyle Program in the U.S." by the National Association of Homebuilders, Waterside Place is already active with festivals, music, and sporting activities. It is home to the Farmers' Market at Lakewood Ranch, with more than 100 vendors offering organic produce, baked goods, pet products, and prepared food, etc. Ranch Nite Wednesdays, "your favorite weeknight hangout," runs every Wednesday through May 31, from 6-9 p.m., and features food trucks, live music from local artists, a weekly night market, and a vintage mobile bar hosted by Cornerstone and Co., and the largest recreational cornhole league in the nation, hosted by MVP Sports & Social. There is also live music on the plaza Friday and Saturday nights, and is home to the new "Sights and Sounds at Waterside Place" music and arts series.

For more information about Waterside Place, visit www.WatersidePlace.com.



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Adolfo's: A New Place to Enjoy in San Marco Plaza

By Ernie Soller
Community Correspondent

Many years ago, when I still lived “up north,” there was an Italian restaurant nearby that I frequented. The place had been there for a while before I moved into the neighborhood and had a good reputation. The food was good, but not pretentious, the prices reasonable, the staff friendly, and it was close. It truly was a good combination. After I'd lived in the area for several years, the owner retired, and the place closed, leaving a gap in my available dining options.

Recently, I paid a visit to Adolfo's, which advertises itself as an Italian market and pizza restaurant.

Now I LIKE pizza. Maybe that's because when I was a kid we never had pizza, unless it was my birthday or some other special occasion. My dad just did not like pizza.

Later, when I graduated high school and went off to college, my pizza cravings were unleashed. I can claim that I dined at a little pizza place on a side street in Ann Arbor, Michigan called Dominick's – before it eventually morphed into what became Domino's Pizza. Over the years, pizza became one of my personal major food groups.

So when I heard about Adolfo's having opened in San Marco Plaza, of course I had to try out their pizza.

We picked a day, and my wife and I got to Adolfo's just before 5 o'clock, figuring that we'd beat the after-work rush hour by a few minutes. Even though there are a handful of tables outside, it was windy enough that evening that we agreed to dine inside.

Adolfo's was already fairly busy, with people sitting at the small bar area, and several tables were already occupied by couples and families. The bar area boasts a big-screen TV, which was showing a recording of a Frank Sinatra concert. The walls were decorated with posters of Italian celebrities, like Sophia Loren and Andrea Bocelli, along with a poster advertising the mob flick “Goodfellas,” as well as a “portrait” of movie and TV gangsters, among them Vito Corleone and Tony Soprano. The overall look and feel of Adolfo's was warm and friendly.

Now, the menu at Adolfo's isn't huge, but it doesn't need to be.

Remember, pizza is one of the major food groups, right? At Adolfo's, pizza is king. The pizzas here are BIG. You won't have to feel that you need to order an extra one just to make



PHOTOS BY ERNIE SOLLER



sure that you get enough to eat. These are 18-inch thin crust pizzas, baked perfectly, and delivered to your table on a baking sheet!

There are several varieties of pizza available, starting with the plain cheese pizza, and the white pizza, made from Italian cheeses, fresh basil, garlic, olive oil – you know the drill. There's a meat pizza featuring pepperoni, sausage, meatballs and ham, and what is noted on the menu as the “Neapolitan Classic” – the margherita pizza, with tomato sauce, fresh mozzarella, basil, and olive oil ... basic but great.

Many additional toppings are available and yes, unlike some pizza purveyors in our area, they DO have anchovies!

ny's Combo ... ham, turkey, provolone, lettuce, tomato, mustard and mayo.

Salads? Adolfo's has them, too. Take your choice: garden, caprese, Caesar, or how about an antipasto for two?

That's what my wife and I chose, along with a couple of slices of Adolfo's pizza, and something to wash it down. The Italian beer is good, and Adolfo's also has several varieties of wine by the glass.

Our meal was great, and the antipasto salad was big ... big enough that we took part of it home and I ate it for lunch the next day. No skimping here – a couple of big peppers, olives, big slices of cheese, salami and ham.

The service was great, too – attentive and friendly. Kelly and Rebecca did a great job.

As for dessert, of course they have cannoli, biscotti, etc.

But wait: Adolfo's is also an Italian market. You can find assorted salamis, prosciutto, pepperoni, and many different cheeses; even an entire wheel. They have several types of olives, including olives stuffed with blue cheese and garlic, along with Italian breads and baked treats. And of course you can also buy Italian beer and wines at Adolfo's.

If you're looking for a friendly, low-key place with good food, family tradition, and a comfortable atmosphere, you have to try Adolfo's.

Adolfo's is open Monday-Saturday from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Adolfo's is located in San Marco Plaza at 8225 Nature's Way. For more information visit adolfoflwr.com or call (941)388-8701.

I'll be back!

Supervisors Discuss Pros and Cons of Changing Auditors

By Ernie Soller
Community Correspondent

During the Inter-District Authority board meeting in March, Supervisor Alan Silverglat, District 5's representative on the IDA board, initiated a discussion regarding the merits of putting the IDA's annual audit business out for bids, citing the fact that Purvis, Gray and Co. has been handling these audits for several years, and that he felt that a change of auditing firms was perhaps a good idea, to get a "fresh set of eyes" every three to five years on the IDA's finances.

The IDA supervisors voted to have Town Hall staff put out a request for proposal (RFP) for fiscal year 2024.

At the same time, they voted to sign the engagement letter with Purvis, Gray for the current fiscal year, 2023, as it is too late in the year to make changes without causing problems.

During the subsequent district board meetings, the question of issuing an RFP for audit services for the districts came up for discussion, since the auditors need to view both the IDA's finances as well as district financial records to get a sense of the entire financial picture.

Executive Director Steve Zielinski noted that engaging a new auditing firm could cost Lakewood Ranch in terms of additional staff time spent on networking with new auditors who may not be familiar with how things are done in Lakewood Ranch, as well as additional time on the part of any potential new auditing team that would be spent in learning the nuances and various allocations. (Think: "billable hours!")

Not only that, but the statute that sets the rules for bids on audits requires that each entity have a committee of three people to handle the bids, and that committee cannot include the chief executive officer or the chief financial officer. This would also greatly increase costs.

Zielinski also noted that Purvis, Gray has been billing Lakewood Ranch on a fixed price fee schedule, and that their cost increases over the years that they have been auditing LWR finances have been quite minimal, averaging only a little over 2% per year.

During the District 1 board meeting, Supervisor Bob Swiatek, District 1's IDA representative, after hearing some of these caveats, stated that he was sorry he had voted for issuing the RFP for auditing services for the IDA and would, if he had known about the pitfalls of such a move,

have voted "no" on the proposal.

The district IDA representatives for districts 4 and 6 voiced similar comments.

The District 1 board voted to not issue an RFP for auditing services. They also signed an engagement letter with Purvis, Gray for auditing services for fiscal year 2023. District 1's board chairman, Alan Roth, noted that dealing with a new RFP for audit work could result in tens of thousands of dollars in additional cost.

District 5's board went along with Silverglat's wishes and voted to issue an RFP for auditing service for fiscal year 2024, although they did sign an engagement letter with Purvis, Gray for fiscal year 2023's audit.

District 2, 4, and 6 boards also voted to not issue an RFP for auditing services for fiscal year 2024, and also authorized the signing of an engagement letter with Purvis, Gray for fiscal year 2023 audits.

DATA DUMP DAY

Do you have an old computer that you don't use anymore, but are afraid of just tossing it into the waste bin? How about other electronics – not working, perhaps?

The Lakewood Ranch Business Alliance is sponsoring a "Data Dump Day" to be held on April 21 in the east parking lot of Lakewood Ranch Main Street, between the Fish Hole and the Michael Saunders real estate office.

A company will be on hand to properly destroy these items, including the hard drives, at no charge to our residents and businesses, right in front of your eyes, so you won't have to worry that your data might be hijacked.

SHRED DAY

Once again, in cooperation with Grow Financial, the annual Lakewood Ranch Shred Day will take place April 22 from 9 a.m. to noon in the Town Hall parking lot, and also the Grow Financial branch on Lakewood Ranch Boulevard, south of State Road 64.

The Town Hall site will feature a large shredding truck that will take up to two banker's boxes worth of records per resident and shred them on-site. The Grow Financial site will accept your records and put them into a secure truck.

In addition, donations of non-perishable food products (as well as cash donations) to the Food Bank of Manatee County are welcomed and will be accepted at the Shred Day event.

SEE AUDITORS, PAGE 15

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LAKEWOOD RANCH COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

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The Lakewood Ranch Tribute to Heroes Block Party and Parade is coming up on May 28th, from 6-8 p.m. on Lakewood Main Street. That's just over five weeks and there are still so many ways that you can get involved!



Aliye Presley
Events & Marketing
Manager

We invite businesses, groups, nonprofits and veterans to register for this year's procession. Registration is free for all groups and \$50 per for-profit business. Participate by foot, bike, vehicle, float, golf cart, or something else! Creativity is highly encouraged.

There are so many ways to get involved in this year's parade! Children (accompanied by adults) can showcase their patriotic creativity and enter the bicycle/wheelchair decorating contest. Prizes will be given out for first, second and third place winners by age group: under 5, 5 to 10, and 10 and older. Adults and families will also get a shot at winning a prize when entering in the golf cart decorating contest.

Proceeds from the parade will go to two local veteran groups: The Del Webb Lakewood Ranch Association of Veterans and Military Supporters as well as VFW Post 12055. If you would like to make a monetary donation to the veter-



ans' groups without parade participation, you may do so by sponsoring the event, sponsoring a veteran in the procession, or donating funds directly to the groups.

Please visit lwtributetoheroes.org to register for the pa-

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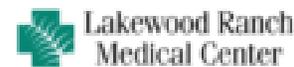
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AROUND THE RANCH



Photos by Ernie Soller

THE IRISH CELTIC FESTIVAL RETURNS TO THE RANCH

By Ernie Soller
Community Correspondent

It seems fitting that being Irish combines a love of life, love of freedom, and a love of that great Irish world out there. And along with that come memories of the times when being Irish and being in Ireland wasn't always happy.

Fittingly, two of the entertaining segments of this year's Irish Celtic Festival in Lakewood Ranch brought to mind what some Irish went through during the famine that swept Ireland in the mid-nineteenth century. This was a time when a huge portion of the population of Ireland either starved to death – a result of the Potato Famine – or made their way by one means or another to find a better life elsewhere.

Cahal Dunne, whose wide reputation comes primarily from his great wit and showmanship, chose to sing a song called "The Fields of Athenry." The song tells of a young man who, because he stole food to feed his starving family during the Famine, was jailed and sentenced to "transportation" on a prison ship to Australia, as many were in that period. His wife prays that she'll see him again and hopes that she can raise their child without him. The performers of the Celtic Conundrum also sang the song during their performance time at the Festival.

Dunne sang several songs that got the crowd singing along, including one that involved a rescue at sea, singing "Carry us home, home from the sea, angels of mercy, answer my plea!" The song ends happily with all hands rescued.

Dunne sang "Danny Boy" as a tribute to the late Frank Shea, who founded the Irish Celtic Festival several years ago. There is a tree in Greenbrook Adventure Park with Frank's name on a stone next to it, to remind us of his legacy.

Next up was the band Celtic Conundrum, with a 12-string guitar, drums, and a lady who both sang and played the banjo

and guitar. Their music was a little bit of old Irish tunes, and a bit of rock, with a constant drum beat.

One of their songs involved the line "Two shots of whiskey and a prayer..." And yes, there was whiskey available at the Festival. The New World Celts were selling tastes of Irish whiskey at their booth, along with other goodies, to raise money for their charitable work.

And there were other booths for more fun! At one booth, kids could get shamrock stickers, and little "pots of gold" for their favorite leprechaun to fill. The Lakewood Ranch Medical Center Fruitville ER had a booth, as did the Animal Rescue Coalition, which offers low-cost medical services for pets. There was a booth full of Irish-themed jewelry, and one for the Ancient Order of Hibernians (Hibernia is the Latin name for Ireland). And if you weren't already attired in lots of green, there were T-shirts, hats and all of that available.

Since people need to eat and drink, there were several food trucks on site at the Festival, along with BEER – green or otherwise.

The pipe and drum band Lion Rampant took over center stage next, and after several rounds of rousing pipe music, led the Lucky Dog Parade, an annual favorite at the Festival. There were big dogs, such as a Great Dane, and little dogs, such as "Tiny," a Chihuahua with a set of wheels taking the place of his non-functional back legs. One dog owner, dressed in a kilt, held a remote that controlled the movement of a cart hauling a West Highland terrier around. And there were a couple of kids which combined their "lucky charms" theme with shirts and signs on both themselves and their golden retriever.

After the Lucky Dog Parade, the music began again with the Blue Skye Pipe and drum band, offering a rousing finale to the event.



Feeling Bad? Tired? Over-Partied?

Elite IV Hydration's Wellness Center May Be Able To Help

By Ernie Soller
Community Correspondent

You went out with your friends last night after work. It was a Friday night, and your business week ended up on a high note so you figured that it wouldn't hurt to have a couple extra drinks.

Your friends managed to get you back to your home in one piece, but it is now Saturday morning, and you feel like you've been run over by the proverbial Mack truck. Your head hurts. Your stomach feels as though it is going to explode. After cradling the porcelain throne before you dropped into bed last night, you really need to combat the dehydration that is part and parcel of your hangover.

To complicate matters, you committed to attending a tailgate party and a sporting event later on in the afternoon. And in the shape you're in, you either aren't going to make the party, or you're going to be sitting in a corner, feeling miserable.

Friend, you need help – and NOW. You need Elite IV Hydration ... and hangover therapy is just one of the services they offer.

Elite IV Hydration was established by two registered nurses, both single parents, who met each other after their kids started dating. They found that they each had issues with the way that wellness services were delivered and felt that, with their combined knowledge and experience, they could do better. Jana Marra and Matt Malin have years of nursing experience behind them, with Marra having a lot of oncology experience, and Malin serving as an EMT, and they've put that experience into their new business here in Lakewood Ranch.

How does this therapy work? First, you need to understand that the fastest way of getting the needed medication into your system is by running an IV line directly into your bloodstream. By hooking you up to an IV, they can provide Zofran for your nausea, Toradol to reduce the inflammation of your insides, and Pepcid to put a stop to that nasty heartburn you're experiencing, all in one infusion. The IV infusion therapy puts these medicines into your system much faster than pills and not only are you getting the meds faster, you're actually getting the benefits of the medications at a much higher rate than pills can provide.

Before and during the therapy, the patient is monitored by elite's staff for vital signs, lung function and heart performance, ensuring a quality outcome. So if you made the choice to get your IV hangover therapy at Elite, by the time your IV has run its course, you're on your way to returning to the "land of the living." And while you're getting your treatment, instead of being plopped on a gurney, you'll be sitting comfortably in a recliner at Elite. You might actually make that tailgate party.

In case you may be starting to think that hangover therapy is the only service provided by Elite IV Hydration, think again.

Among other services, they also provide oxygen therapy.

Why oxygen? Well for starters, oxygen is one of the main elements that our bodies need. Oxygen in our bodies is carried by our blood. With all the pollutants in our modern-life air, we need oxygen more than ever, and our air today, in general, con-



PHOTOS BY ERNIE SOLLER

tains less elemental oxygen than it did a long time ago.

If you're interested in an oxygen "booster," Elite IV Hydration offers an oxygen bar. You can choose from several different scents, and you'll be hooked up to a machine that gives you oxygen complete with the "flavor" you selected. I tried this for just a short period of time, and enjoyed it. Oxygen therapy is said to increase memory capacity, stimulate brain activity, and enable heightened concentration. Fifteen minutes on oxygen can make for a noticeable difference in your feeling of well-being.

Elite IV Hydration provides a service known as Cryoskin, which involves treatment to improve the contours of your body, such as wrinkle removal, and skin smoothing.

They also make use of ozone therapy, including an ozone steam sauna. Marra and Malin found that ozone can be used to mitigate the effects of Lyme disease. This disease, carried by ticks, can result in long-term body issues.

Elite IV Hydration has also treated patients who have "long-



haul" COVID symptoms – issues that linger in people's bodies long after they are "over" what might be called "normal COVID."

It should be noted that Elite IV Hydration can come to you if you can't come to them, via their mobile IV treatment service. Elite IV Hydration also offers memberships for packages of treatments, and their staff is knowledgeable and friendly. Check out their many products and services. You'll be pleasantly surprised. I enjoyed meeting both Jana and Matt, along with their staff. You will, too.

Elite IV hydration is located at 9130 Town Center Parkway, Ste. #103, in Lakewood Ranch, right across the street from the fire station.

Their hours are 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday; 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Wednesday; 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday, and they're closed Sunday.

For more information visit eliteivhydration.com, or call (941)388-8723.

AUDITORS FROM PAGE 9

DISTRICT BOARD VACANCIES FILLED

The District 4 board elected to replace retired Supervisor Peter DeAngelis with resident James Murphy. Murphy is a retired architect.

The District 6 board accepted the resignation of long-time Supervisor Henry Hofeler, and thanked him for his long years of service. The board selected Martin Fugardi, professional engineer, to replace Hofeler.

TRAFFIC AND PAVING

The District 6 board was informed that although Manatee County had scheduled the traffic signal at Lakewood Ranch Boulevard and Balmoral Woods to be operational by mid-March, it would be pushed back a week or two.

Paving project in districts 2, 4, and 5 have been authorized. Both project engineering and geotechnical engineering services have been solicited.

Geotechnical work done beforehand will determine if there are any hidden issues with the projects, such as unstable areas under drains. That way, the issues can be addressed before the final paving work is done, making it more likely that the work will have a much longer service life. This method is intended to save the districts money in the long run by making sure that the work is "done right the first time."

COUNTRY CLUB GATES

There have been a number of issues raised by residents and supervisors regarding guard service at the Country Club gates. One problem appears to be that of no-show guards, who aren't getting to their assigned gates when they are expected to be on the job, resulting in incoming cars getting stacked up at gatehouses. Executive Director Zielinski will be meeting with the guard service company to try to straighten out this situation.

UTILITY TURNSOVERS TO MANATEE COUNTY

The District 2 board of supervisors was provided Manatee County's new set of rules and procedures for utility system takeover by the County. These systems, so far, have been maintained by the district. Under the new guidelines from Manatee County, it could cost District 2 as much as \$4 million in the form of a "transfer fee" to accomplish the turnover.

District 6's sewer system has already been taken over by Manatee County, with the Manatee County Board of Commissioners approving the conveyance. The County has indicated that a transfer fee of approximately \$1.3 million is due for the conveyance. None of the paperwork attributable to the sewer system turnover reflected a transfer fee. The district is interested in the conveyance of its potable water system. In order to proceed, Executive Director Zielinski will be requesting a breakdown of the proposed transfer fee attributable to the potable water system turnover.

Both districts have spent extensive amounts of money to maintain and upgrade their systems, and there are concerns that the County has lately been "moving the goalposts," making it much more difficult to accomplish such turnovers.

"MICRO FORESTS"

A presentation was made at the District 4 board of supervisors meeting by Professor Charles Reith about the prospect of creating a "micro forest" on a parcel of land in Greenbrook Adventure Park. The idea, apparently was originated by a Japanese scientist, involves creating an environment in which plants and trees could grow in size at a very high rate and in the process, create a forested area in 10 years' time, which normally would take 100 years to accomplish.

It was determined that the area is actually within the boundaries of District 1, so that approval would need to come from that district's board. Funding for the project is expected to be provided by the Rotary Club of Lakewood Ranch.

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Mega Challah Bake Turns Out to Be a Mega Party!

By Ernie Soller
Community Correspondent

I must admit, a good portion of my culinary tastes were molded in the neighborhood I grew up in on the northwest side of Detroit, during the 1950s and 1960s.

We weren't Jewish, but we lived in a largely Jewish neighborhood. We had a couple of very good bakeries in the area, and these bakeries made great breads ... challah and rye were our favorites. My dad, an immigrant from central Europe, didn't like the soft, spongy commercial breads that were popular at the time at the neighborhood supermarkets. There was no "Wonder Bread" at our house. I remember my mom telling me to go down to Zeman's Bakery – two blocks down the street – to pick up a loaf and sometimes, the bread would still be warm from the oven when I brought it home.

But here we are in Lakewood Ranch, in 2023. Earlier this year I received an e-mail inviting me to cover an event sponsored by the Jewish Women's Circle of the Chabad – the Mega Challah Baking Event. This piqued my interest and accordingly, I went down to Grove on Lakewood Main Street for this event.

I'd been advised that the event was a sell-out, but I was still surprised at the large crowd of women who attended the event.

There were 25 tables of 10; yes, 250 women had signed up for the Mega Challah Bake. Everyone was in a festive mood. There were moms, grandmothers, and girls as young as nine.

Just to make sure that everyone felt welcome, as the attendees entered Grove's banquet hall, there were several tables loaded with sweets – cakes, pastries, cookies, etc., – and coffee, tea, water and soda were on hand, so the participants could make sure that they'd had dessert beforehand.

Chanie Bukiet pointed out that for Jewish women, baking challah is a mitzvah – a good deed – and to begin the festivities, Chanie asked the women present to make use of the donation boxes that had



PHOTOS BY ERNIE SOLLER



been placed on each table, as charity is a main focus of the faith. She pointed out that here were 250 women from different backgrounds coming together "to make our blessings a reality by making challah."

The Mega Challah Bake began with each participant pouring out yeast into a stainless steel bowl. At their table, each attendee had her own set of what was needed to make challah – a bowl, yeast, eggs, flour, oil, water, and so on. Each woman would take her dough home with her and bake it in her own oven. A woman demonstrated to the crowd just how to roll it out, form it into long pieces, and braid it into a loaf prior to baking.

"Feel the power of challah as it brings us together in unity," Chanie Bukiet said. She added that when the Jewish people moved to the land of Israel, they would take a small amount of the challah dough, remove it from the rest of the dough, and burn it as a blessing. This tradition is still held to today.

On each of the 25 tables there was a sign. Each represented things to be thankful for, such as prosperity, fertility, resilience, guidance, forgiveness, and so on. In addition, a woman from each table was asked to bring up a "blessing card" that had been placed under one of the challah bowls, and read the blessing, after which they poured different colored paint on to a "cup of blessings" sculpture, which would be donated to Hope Family Services in Manatee County. Past Hope President Laurel Lynch was on hand to thank the women. Hope Family Services is a local charity which provides shelter for women and families whose home is not a safe place.

Once all this was done, the dancing started. Women formed conga lines, going in and out of the hall, and some formed circles, dancing and holding hands as they celebrated.

It was an absolutely joyous end to a unique event in Lakewood Ranch.

April Programs at Chabad of Bradenton & Lakewood Ranch

Please note that all events will take place at the Chabad House at 5712 Lorraine Road, or at the virtual Chabad House at chabadofbradenton.com/zoom, unless otherwise noted.

Talmud Classes

Mondays, 7:30 - 8:30 p.m.

At the Chabad House and via Zoom

Explore the Talmud and its laws in its original text. No prior knowledge of the Talmud or Hebrew is necessary. Book fee: \$45.

Torah Studies

Saturday mornings, 9 - 9:30 a.m.

At the Chabad House

Participate in a fascinating class on the Torah portion of the week. Discover the mystical meanings and lessons behind ancient stories. Admission is free.

Weekly Shabbat Services

Friday nights, 7 p.m.; Saturday mornings at 9:30 a.m., Shabbat Kiddush at noon

At the Chabad House

Enjoy warm, family friendly services at The Chabad House. Saturday morning services are followed by a delicious buffet Kiddush.

Tanya Class

Thursdays, 9-9:30 a.m.

At the Chabad House and on Zoom

Delve into the secrets of the soul with Rabbi Mendy at this weekly Tanya class. Admission is free.

Ladies Torah & Tea

Tuesday, April 25, 11 a.m.-noon

At the home of Chanie Bukiet and via Zoom

Join Chanie Bukiet for a dose of delicious tea and refreshments and discussion on the 12 principles of energized living, which has empowered thousands of women to activate transformational goodness in their lives. Admission is free. Sponsor a class in someone's memory or honor for \$36.

Chabad Hebrew School of the Arts

Sundays, April 23 and 30, 9:30 a.m. to noon

At the Chabad House

Give your child the experience of a lifetime at CHS, featuring an outstanding curriculum, professional and warm teachers, hands-on lessons, CKIDS motivational system and an innovative Hebrew reading Aleph Champ program.

Babyccino

Friday, April 21, 10-10:45 a.m.

At the Chabad House

Our wonderful Babyccino program offers a great opportunity for you to spend quality time with your child while meeting other moms in a warm and friendly atmosphere. Three months to 2+ years. Bagels and coffee, plus snacks for the babies! Suggested donation: \$10 per child.

CTeen Lag Ba'Omer Under the Stars

Tuesday, April 25, 7 p.m.

At the Chabad House

Join Chabad of Bradenton & Lakewood Ranch for a fun-filled evening featuring campfire cones, s'more bars, fruit arrows and custom notebooks for children in foster homes. Cost: \$20, and free for CTeen members.

RCS – To Believe or Not to Believe in Yourself

Thursday, April 27, noon

At the Chabad House and on Zoom

The Rosh Chodesh Society Course introduces the students to Tanya, a 225-year-old text whose portrayal of human psychology in general and our inner spiritual composition in particular, remains as revolutionary – and as refreshing – as ever. This is the sixth class of a seven-class course and is entitled "Wheeling and Dealing to Feeling the Healing." Lunch will be served. Course fee: 85, JWC members \$80, textbooks included, or \$25 per class.

For more information on any of the ongoing events or to reserve, call Rabbi Mendy Bukiet at (941)752-3030, email rabbi@chabadofbradenton.com, or visit the Chabad website at chabadofbradenton.com.

Your LWR Story

By Maggie Milne

Meet Emily Hovermale, Lakewood Ranch resident and business owner.

She was born and grew up in Lexington, Ky. She met her husband, Adam, in the summer of 2004 while working at their community golf and country club; they married in the summer of 2005. Emily says “destiny” is responsible for their meeting, marriage, and life together. They lived within the same community their entire childhoods and met when they were recent graduates from two different high schools – young adults adventuring into the unknown.

Emily’s life was in step with her husband’s first career as a horse trainer. Living in Lexington, horses, horse training, and horse farm life are a common lifestyle. When Emily became pregnant with their first child in 2006, she and her husband chose to embark on a new adventure, switching from horses to entrepreneurship and family business. The career change required a move to Richmond, Va., where their family continued to grow with a second child in 2009. Richmond was their home and community for a few years; Emily remained busy raising two toddlers and managing their home. Her husband’s success with his career prompted another move, this time either to Florida or back to Kentucky.

Emily said “NO” to the idea of Florida. Her fear of alligators superseded her interest in sun every day, and easy access to the beach. Despite that, Emily and Adam made trips to various locations within Florida that would be within an easy driving distance from home to the office before making their final decision. Lakewood Ranch was one of their stops, having seen a promotion for Lakewood Ranch in a magazine. Despite the intrigue of Lakewood Ranch and other Florida possibilities at that time, the family returned to Kentucky. When settled, they welcomed their third child in 2013. Emily continued with her busy life caring for three children under seven. Life was steady and their routine consistent, with their kids growing up and thriving. But it was Christmas 2017 when Adam’s job did require one more move – this time to Florida. Based on their earlier trips exploring Southwest Florida, Emily made the decision on behalf of the family to move to The Ranch. By the time they arrived in Lakewood Ranch in 2018, Emily could not believe how much the community they visited only five years before had changed.

Emily chose Lakewood Ranch for the family because she wanted a small town feel without living in a small town. One huge asset for Emily was the ease with which she could drive to one of her favorite “big box” stores found just west of Lakewood Ranch. Emily has a firm belief that the specific “big box” store is a key indicator that other moms live in the area. And where there are moms, there are parks, schools, friends for her children, and friends for her. Emily had an intuitive hunch that Lakewood Ranch offered the essentials she needs as a mom, resident, and wife – specifically convenient living. The family bought a new construction home in Country Club East, close to parks, schools, town centers, beaches, and neighborhood plazas.

One big reward of their new home and new community was their ability to access golf courses. Their eldest, AJ, is a competitive golfer and received help from golf classes and regular tee times on the three courses of Lakewood Ranch Golf and Country Club. Emily was busy with the three kids, each at different ages and stages. But their home was within walking distance to the golf course, which was great for AJ and Emily. They live on a short street, next to terrific neighbors and other children. Emily loves that her kids have the choice to safely run around and play within the neighborhood. She is grateful for her friendly community, the shared camaraderie, block parties, and sports parties. Her children are growing up: Adam Junior (AJ) 17, a junior in high school, and a golfer. Austin is 13, in seventh grade, and a gamer. Adison is 10, in fourth grade, and is an artist. Emily also counts on Grace, their nanny, as an instrumental part of their family. Emily says Grace is “amazing” and that the family would not thrive as they do without her.

As the children acclimated and settled into their forever home and community, Emily started to imagine her next creative endeavor. More than a decade of raising three children and managing a dynamic household prepared Emily to become a business owner – the owner of her favorite clothing boutique, Monkee’s. Emily became familiar with the Monkee’s



brand when living in Virginia and Kentucky. She felt confident that Lakewood Ranch would welcome just such a choice of clothing, accessories, shoes, and bags. She worked out her business plan and with her husband’s support started the process in October of 2021 of reaching her goal to open Monkee’s of Lakewood Ranch. Emily chose Waterside Place Town Center as the location for her retail store, as she feels it is an excellent mix of shopping and dining options, and community events each week. Emily knew that the future residential development within Waterside would align with her business plan and strategy – community growth. Monkee’s of Lakewood Ranch enjoyed a grand opening in December of 2022. Emily is thrilled with success she and the store are experiencing so far.

With the opening of her new business, her husband’s latest business endeavor, and the children’s school and extracurricular activities, Emily is discovering her new normal in her Lakewood Ranch life. She gives credit to her staff and team at Monkee’s of Lakewood Ranch, each doing their part to support the daily operations of the store. She also praises the children’s teachers, friends, neighbors, and Grace for their support through the transitions into business life.

Emily is clear that she will never move away

We would like to share Your LWR Story! Include who you are, why you chose Lakewood Ranch, your Lakewood Ranch life now, and what excites you about your Lakewood Ranch future. Send Your LWR Story and photos to yourlwrstory@lakewoodranch.com.

from Lakewood Ranch. The community roots she and her family have created run deep. If they do move, it will be within the Lakewood Ranch community. With Monkee’s of Lakewood Ranch doing so well this first year, Emily anticipates opening future Monkee’s retail stores throughout Southwest Florida. Emily believes the ongoing growth throughout The Ranch will provide opportunities and choices unlike anywhere else, and she is grateful to be a part of what makes Lakewood Ranch so special. Through the opening of Monkee’s, Emily has found one secret to a satisfying life – helping people feel happy, beautiful, and welcome.

You can learn more about Monkee’s of Lakewood Ranch and contact Emily at: 1561 Lakefront Drive Suite 104, call her at 804-248-9036, or email emily@monkeesoflakewoodranch.com.

LWR RANCH CERT PRESENTS: Stop The Bleed – Save A Life!

By Ernie Soller
Community Correspondent

In March, a crowd of Lakewood Ranch residents gathered at the Town Hall to attend a presentation sponsored by Lakewood Ranch's Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) on stopping the bleeding from an injury in order to save a life.

The session was presented by Rick and Ruth Landes, founders and owners of Landes Emergency Training Services. CERT's Dave Cashbaugh introduced Rick Landes, who immediately discussed what constitutes a bleeding emergency.

Landes noted that bleeding is the number one cause of death – outside of severe bodily injury – and the type of bleeding that can kill a person can result from many causes, and outlined what he referred to as the “ABCs of bleeding”:

1. Alert 911 (or, if in a CERT emergency situation, your CERT supervisor.

Give the 911 operator a location and follow instructions from 911.

2. Bleeding ... Find the source of the bleeding. Look for continuous bleeding, a large volume of bleeding, and any pooling of blood. Note that there may be more than one location of the bleeding, and clothing may hide the source. Don't be afraid to remove the person's clothing to get to the bleed.

3. Compression ... Put direct pressure on the wound, and hold for 10 minutes to stop the bleeding. If the pressure stops the bleeding, keep the pressure on the wound until help arrives.

If putting superficial pressure on the wound isn't doing the job of stopping the bleeding, you may have to resort to a different method. If the wound is deep, pack the wound with gauze, shoving the gauze into the wound until the bleeding stops. Yes, it will cause pain, but if you stop the bleeding, you may have saved the person's life.

If there is a lot of bleeding, a tourniquet may be the solution. The idea of a tourniquet is to compress blood vessels to cut off the flow of blood. The compression should be placed 2-3 inches above the wound, and not on an elbow or knee. The idea is to compress the blood vessel, which won't work if the tourniquet is placed on a joint. Tighten the tourniquet until the bleeding stops. If the bleeding still continues, a second tourniquet may be needed.



PHOTOS BY ERNIE SOLLER

The tourniquet should be approximately one inch wide, or slightly wider, and wire should never be used as a tourniquet, as it may cut into the victim's limb. A tourniquet may be applied over clothing.

Landes noted that a tourniquet can be made from a piece of cloth, a belt, or the responder may use a commercial tourniquet. He demonstrated how he could use such a piece of equipment to place a tourniquet on himself.

The subject of bleeding from the nose came up in the talk. A nosebleed should be able to be stopped by pinching the nose and holding the pressure for around 10 minutes.

One person in the audience asked about stopping bleeding on someone who is on blood thinners, such as Plavix or Eliquis. Landes commented that one thing you should NOT do with such a victim is to use an “instant clotting” compound on the wound, as this material can make it a lot more difficult for a surgeon to repair the damaged area. Landes said that using this instant clotting material is a bit like pouring concrete into the wound, as the doctor doing the repair has to go in and remove this mass of hardened material before the actual problem can be dealt with.

If a person has been impaled by an object, do not try to remove it, but use a tourniquet to stop the bleeding, if it is severe. If a person has lost a limb, try to preserve the body part in ice, and cover the wound on the person's body, as it may be possible to reattach it.

One other major item Landes stressed was



that the person responding to the needs of the victim should make sure they are not putting themselves at risk in the process. This includes, for example, getting out of a building that may be in danger of collapsing, and especially in the case of attempting to stop serious bleeding, to wash their hands and wear gloves to protect themselves from blood-borne diseases. Even a small cut on your hand, or a torn cuticle, can provide a place for bad things to get into your own body.

The Landeses stayed after the meeting to answer questions and to help demonstrate tourniquet techniques to both CERT members and non-affiliated residents.

Non members were encouraged to join Lakewood Ranch CERT, and certain items, such as gauze packs and commercial-grade tourniquet items, were also available for sale.

Art Sale at LWR Townhall Raises over \$1800 for Nonprofits

The Lakewood Ranch Women's Club and Lakewood Ranch Art League cosponsored a charity art sale in March, held at LWR Townhall, to benefit Sarasota Association of Riding Therapy (SMART) and Save The Children – Ukraine Crisis Relief Fund. The fundraiser featured artwork donated by award-winning Art League artists and offered for sale at unbelievably low prices. In just more than two hours, the art sale raised over \$1,800 to donate to both charities. Purchasers were delighted with their wonderful new art treasures and were happy that they were helping those in need, officials said.

The event was a collaborative effort and 100% of the proceeds will benefit the two 501(c)(3) charities, SMART and Save The Children – Ukraine Crisis Relief Fund. SMART is dedicated to enhancing the physical, emotional, and cognitive growth of children and adults with special needs, including children with autism, PTSD veterans, and human trafficking victims, through quality educational and therapeutic horseback riding and carriage driving programs. SMART suffered over \$100,000 in damage from Hurricane Ian, but fortunately all the SMART therapy horses survived! Save The Children – Ukraine Crisis Relief Fund provides life-saving services to Ukrainian children, in response to the plight of 7.5 million kids who are in danger of physical harm, emotional distress, and displacement due to the invasion in Ukraine. The fund is used to help Ukrainian families meet their basic needs such as food, medicine and shelter and help Ukrainian children get access to education and psychosocial support.

The Lakewood Ranch Women's Club is a not-for-profit service club with about 350 members, founded to improve the quality of life in the community and foster friendship among its members. Throughout 2023, LWRWC will continue philanthropic fundraising through numerous events. For more information, please visit www.lwrwc.org. The LWR Art League is a club of local artists who gather together on Monday and Friday each week for studio time to work on their art. For more information, contact Mary Ellen Slenker, Art League President, at meslenker72@gmail.com.

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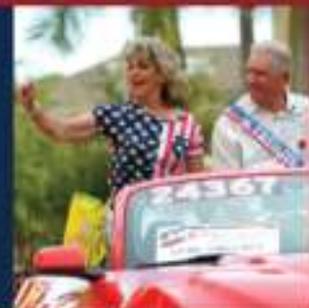
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THE UNASSUMING WINE BROS.



Cooper's Hawk Winery and Restaurant: Wines for the Masses?

Before Cooper's Hawk Winery and Restaurant opened near the periphery of Lakewood Ranch on Fruitville Road, I had yet to learn of the company or its types of wines. Much like in King Solomon's Dilemma, I needed to figure out what was more important, the wine or the dining. My more advanced wine aficionados friends bemoaned the opening of Cooper's Hawk as though it was a McDonald's that served below-par wine (FYI, totally fine with the McDonald's that opened on Lakewood Ranch). My other friends, who were less snobbish, were excited to have another restaurant in the Lakewood Ranch community that provided a wine-tasting experience along with comfortable and solid dining choices.

I'm Vigo, your Unassuming Wine Bro (UWB). I'm a regular guy who loves everything about wine, including writing about it. I aim to explore the nuances of wine, share our adventures with you, and have a little fun along the way.

As a cleansing statement to this article, I'm a Cooper's Hawk Wine Club member. Yes, a board-certified WSET (Wine and Spirits Education Trust) member has a Cooper's Hawk Wine Club membership. If Papa Johns had a pizza club membership, I'd also have that card in my wallet. I've tasted almost every type of wine in Cooper's Hawk wine catalog, and though many I wouldn't select based on quality and taste, others make a good showing at a reasonable price. Those wines, I'm going to review in this article.

Rating system:  Ratings are given on a 1-5 scale, with five being the highest.

2021, COOPER'S HAWK HOUSE BLEND RED WINE

Woodbridge Winery, Illinois, \$19 U.S., 13.5% ABV

I'm sure you're thinking; I didn't know Woodbridge, Ill., was known for delicious red blend wines. FYI, it's not. Much like The Wine Group in California, Cooper's Hawk sources grape varieties from all over the U.S. and internationally. So, with this red blend, the grapes came from California, and the fermentation



2021 Cooper's Hawk House Blend Red Wine



2021 Cooper's Hawk Unoaked Chardonnay



2021 Cooper's Hawk Bubbly Rosé

and bottling from Illinois. This red blend is a solid representation of most California blended red wines. With cabernet sauvignon, Syrah, and merlot grapes being married together, it's almost certain this wine will be full-bodied with a smooth finish. You will get the aroma of black cherries, ripe raspberries, tobacco, and pepper on the nose. On the palate, medium tannins, and dark fruit with a smoky finish. Though not the best red blend I've had, it's not the worst.

Vigo's rating: 

2021, COOPER'S HAWK UNOAKED CHARDONNAY

Mattawa & Quincy, Washington, \$19 U.S., 12% ABV

If you have read this article once or twice in the last three years, you will know I "do not like oaky chardonnays." I like butter on my popcorn but not in my wine, so I was excited to taste this chardonnay selection from Cooper's Hawk. This chardonnay is not a blend; it's 100% chardonnay grapes that have not touched the inside of an oak barrel. On the nose, the Unoaked chardonnay has the aroma of citrus fruits, ripe apples, and melons. On the palate the "in your face" acidity will give you a bit of a palate jolt, but the medium balance and taste of apples, lemons, and melons will put your palate on an even

landing. This is a solid choice for your first course.

Vigo's rating: 

2021 COOPER'S HAWK BUBBLY ROSÉ

Woodbridge Winery, Illinois, \$21 U.S., 12% ABV

It's time to start the party, and the Cooper's Hawk Bubbly Rosé is a perfect selection for taste and fun. Much like the Cooper's Hawk House Blend Red Wine, the Bubbly Rosé grapes come from Washington State, and the fermentation and bottling process comes from Illinois (O' Illinois, always the bridesmaid, never the bride). The Bubbly Rosé is a good mood wine that pairs well with date night dinner or "let's celebrate, success" dinner. On the nose, the aroma of strawberries, peaches, tart green apples, and freshly baked bread wafts up from the sparkling tight bubbles. On the palate, strawberries, peaches, and tart apples coat your tongue, surrounded by tight bubbles that feel like you are drinking pop rocks (do they make pop rocks anymore?). This is fun in a bottle and my first choice when my wife and I have a date night.

Vigo's rating: 

Vigo's overall impression: Cooper's Hawk Winery and Restaurant is no McDonald's. It's not stuffy, but it's not a T-shirt and peanut shells on the floor joint either. Every time I have been to Cooper's Hawk, I've enjoyed my experience both with the food served and the wine selections. Cooper's Hawk has drawn a middle ground area when it comes to food and wine. Are Cooper's Hawk wines going to win wine-making awards? I am doubtful. The wines are good quality for their price, and you won't suffer sticker shock when the waiter gives you your bill.

FANS AND READERS:

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THE (PET) DOCTOR IS IN!

By Erin Siems, DVM



Oh the things dogs will eat! The weird, the wacky, the just plain gross. We are always amazed by the things our four-legged friends are willing to put in their mouth and swallow – until you try to hide a pill in it! Most of the things we hear about are amusing and typically harmless and we shake our heads and comment on how weird they are.

However, there are some major pitfalls we need to try to avoid. Sometimes we are the culprit by giving in to those big sweet eyes begging for foods that are toxic to dogs. No matter what your dog says, never give him raisins, chocolate, onions, garlic, anything labeled "sugar free" (as it may contain xylitol),

uncooked dough, and macadamia nuts. There are other no-no foods but these are the most common.

Sometimes dogs are the culprit by being opportunistic scavengers. Dogs have a natural curiosity and tend to explore the world with their mouths. Some of the common household items that have gotten them in trouble are jewelry, hearing aids, remotes, human clothing, pieces (or sometimes whole) toys and bones. We have even seen whole spoons swallowed when an overzealous licker was offered a dab of peanut butter on the end. If they are lucky, they may pass with just an upset tummy. Often these objects have to be removed surgically.

We can't protect our furry babies from all the dangers of the world, but you can try to make it easier for them to make better decisions by making sure any tempting household items are kept out of reach or behind closed doors. Be cognizant in

the kitchen of what drops on the floor and who may be there to get it. And certainly avoid the temptation of offering them anything you are not 100% sure is safe for dogs. Finally, if they do tend to make bad decisions, consider a crate when you are not able to supervise them. The crate is not a punishment; it is a tool to protect them.

Dr. Erin Siems graduated from Ross University School of Veterinary Medicine in 2010, and has enjoyed working in both general practice and emergency care. She has been practicing in the Lakewood Ranch/Bradenton area for the past seven years. She enjoys general practice because it gives her the ability to build relationships with her patients and their families. Dr. Siems opened her own practice, Big Paws Animal Hospital in Lakewood Ranch, in May 2020. Email pet questions to reception@BigPawsAnimalHospital.com.

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HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Surgeon Values Robotic Tools and Human Touch

Even as a child, Samuel Yelverton, M.D., liked solving problems with his hands. He grew up building radio-control airplanes that sometimes would take months to complete. Later, he got into woodworking and fly fishing.

Today, Dr. Yelverton is a general surgeon. He recently joined Lakewood Ranch Medical Group and performs robotic general surgery procedures at Lakewood Ranch Medical Center.

"I've always loved working with my hands to make something useful that I could be proud of after sweating and working so hard on it," Dr. Yelverton said. "As a surgeon, I get to use this same love for working with my hands to fix my patients' problems."

ROBOTIC SURGERY ADVANTAGES

At Lakewood Ranch Medical Center, Dr. Yelverton uses the da Vinci Xi surgical system, which helps surgeons to extend the natural capabilities of their eyes and hands. Features include a 3-D, high-definition visual tool that magnifies the surgeon's view by 10 times. Additionally, the robot's tiny wristed instruments, controlled by the surgeon, move like a human hand, but with a far greater range of motion.

For patients, a major advantage of minimally invasive robotic surgery is that procedures require only a very small incision. "Having a smaller incision often means less blood loss, less pain,



less scarring and a quicker recovery time," Dr. Yelverton said.

ADVANCED GENERAL SURGERY IN THE COMMUNITY

Both Dr. Yelverton's father and grandfather were general surgeons. He shadowed them during pre-medical school and be-

came fascinated with general surgery as a specialty, particularly how it relates to abdominal surgery.

"I enjoyed learning about abdominal pathology," Dr. Yelverton said. "Also, the robotic technology that was just starting to advance at the time was enticing. There are so many different organs involved with the abdomen that require different types of surgeries. Some days I show up to work and get to do four or five different surgeries, and it keeps my job fun and interesting."

Dr. Yelverton is excited to offer advanced surgeries for patients, close to where they live and work in Lakewood Ranch. "There is a need in communities across the country for general surgeons who can do many types of advanced surgeries so that patients don't always have to travel far from home to larger academic hospitals for their surgery," he said.

"I enjoy the personalized care I get to offer in a community setting," he continued. "From the first time I see a patient, I treat them like family. They have a phone number available to them that they can call 24 hours, in case they have questions before, during or after surgery."

In addition to general surgery procedures, surgeons at Lakewood Ranch Medical Center perform a variety of robotic procedures, including colorectal, gynecologic and urologic surgery. To learn more visit lakewoodranchmedicalcenter.com

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