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Pelican Preserve



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Jim & Leslie Anderson  
Rick & Jeanne Shirk



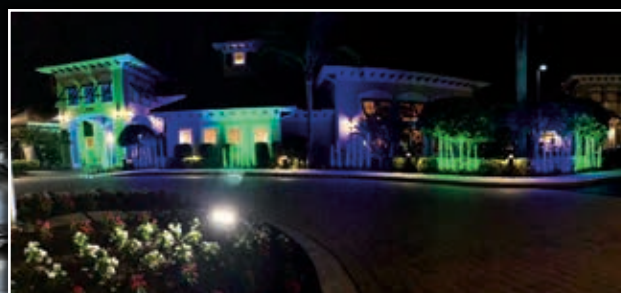
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## CONTRIBUTORS AT LARGE

The residents of Pelican Reserve  
We are always looking for residents to follow up on leads, find great stories and send us ideas. Let's celebrate the great things happening in our community! No contribution is too small. Please email Pelican@n2co.com with your pictures, suggestions, or requests.

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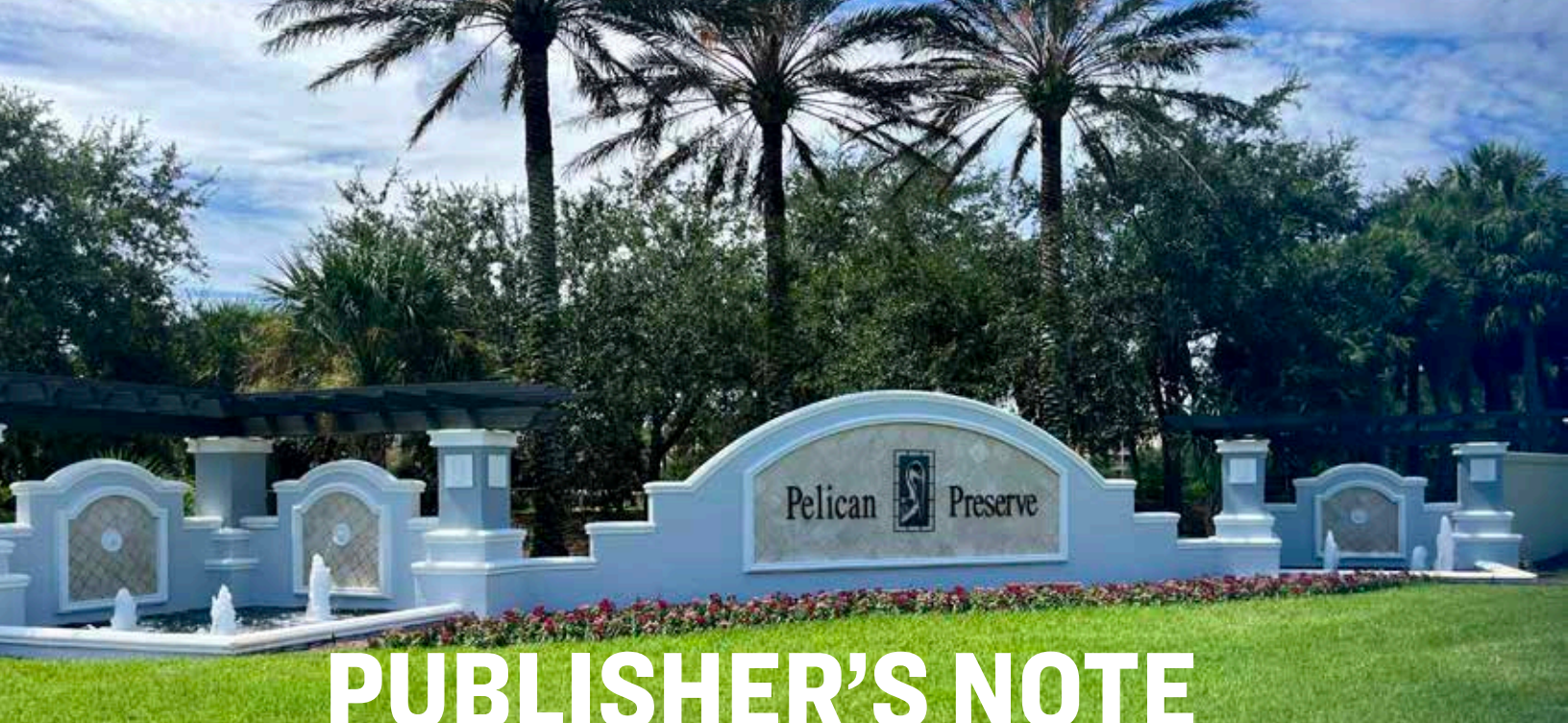
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# PUBLISHER'S NOTE

Dear Neighbor,

As the year winds down and December arrives, there's a special kind of magic in the Florida air. While much of the country bundles up against the chill, we're lucky to enjoy sunshine, palm trees, and holiday lights twinkling against a backdrop of warm evenings and ocean breezes.

It's a wonderful time to pause and reflect on the year we've shared together as a community — the events, the laughter, and the connections that make our neighborhood feel like family. Whether you're hosting visiting loved ones, decorating your home, or simply enjoying the season's slower pace, I hope you take time to soak in all the beauty this month brings.

As we look toward a bright new year, I want to thank our residents, readers, and local businesses for your continued

support. Your stories, photos, and involvement are what make this publication special.

Wishing you and yours a joyful holiday season filled with warmth, peace, and Florida sunshine.

As always, if you have ideas for articles or would like to nominate a neighbor friend for a Meet Your Neighbor spotlight, please send your nomination. Also, we are on the lookout for our next pet to make famous! Send your nominations to [shannon.aulick@n2co.com](mailto:shannon.aulick@n2co.com)



*Shannon Aulick*

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# *We found LOVE in Pelican Preserve!*

## JIM & LESLIE ANDERSON

*So, does anyone know anyone at the lifetime channel? In this issue, we recount the tales of two couples who found love at pelican preserve. Could these stories be fodder for their next “must see” movie?*

WRITTEN BY MARK AULICK, PELICAN PRESERVE RESIDENT

Who doesn’t enjoy a good love story? Literally millions of books have been sold extolling the subject, and Hollywood has capitalized on the genre since the inception of moving pictures. Seemingly everyone has their own favorite, and debating the attributes and merits of a particular beloved protagonist has long been a favorite poolside palaver.

Leslie Hutchison had always enjoyed attending the Ravenna neighborhood “Drinks on the Drive,” an opportunity to reconnect with friends and meet new residents. Her friend Bev Loo had previously told her about a nice guy who had recently bought a condo on her floor, but she hadn’t heard anything else about him, and soon forgot all about it.

So when Bev introduced her to Jim Anderson, reminding her that Jim was the neighbor that she had told her about, Leslie played along, and they chatted a bit, as Jim was helping to set up chairs. As folks arrived, they soon were seated in a circle, but Leslie was across the way from Jim, limiting any interaction. She observed that he seemed very personable and chatted easily with all those around him, but Leslie also noticed that no matter who he was talking to, he seemed to be looking at her.

The outing was cut short by rain, and Bev, Leslie, and (guess who?) Jim remained behind to pack things up. When Bev said she wasn’t yet ready to go home, Leslie invited both to come up for a drink.

In her condo, with less competition for Jim’s attention, Leslie was able to tell him about SASSEO (Single and Solo Seniors Eating Out,) a group she founded here in Pelican

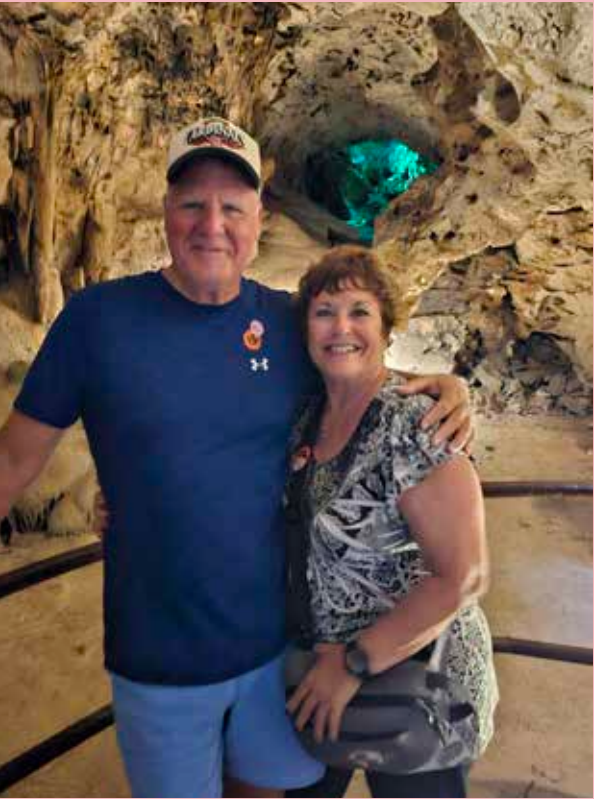
Preserve. (Long time readers of Stroll may recall the article about SASSEO in the March 2023 issue.) She asked if he would be interested in joining the group, and he accepted the invitation.

The next day, she sent an invitation to the members of the group to see the movie “White Christmas.” As luck would have it, she and Jim were the only ones who showed up. Dinner at Flip Flops followed the excursion, and the two have been inseparable ever since.

On their third date, they each shared the thought that neither harbored any desire to ever marry again. Three months later, Jim asked if they might someday reopen the topic. Four months later, they tentatively explored the notion. Jim proposed the next day, on July 4, 2025. They were married on August 29 in the Preserve.

Newlywed life seems to be good. “We go for a 2 to 3 mile walk most days - yes, we are ‘that couple’ that hold hands everywhere we go! We enjoy getting together with friends for dinner, happy hour, card games at the pool, Flip Flops, discovering new places we haven’t been to yet, and just hanging out at home and watching the wildlife on the lake outside our window. We also enjoy cruises and travel, and Jim enjoys playing softball, which is the primary reason why he bought here.”

“Even going to the grocery store and running errands are fun to do together. We laugh often and truly enjoy being together. What could be better?”







# *We found LOVE in Pelican Preserve!*

RICK AND JEANNE SHIRK HAVE FOUND HAPPINESS AND LOVE HERE IN PELICAN PRESERVE.

WRITTEN BY MARK AULICK, PELICAN PRESERVE RESIDENT

Pelican Preserve residents Jeanne Swartz and Rick Shirk had many things in common, but they had never met. They both had moved away from Pelican Preserve to houses in other neighborhoods. In 2017, their respective spouses passed away, and they both felt that their homes were too large for solo inhabitants, so they each moved back to Pelican Preserve.

They also had friends in common, and they finally met at a Pelican Christmas party, introduced to each other by Larry and Denise Adams. Subsequent interactions generally consisted of exchanging greetings and sharing small talk at the pool, but nothing beyond that. Fast forward to the “Divas” concert in March 2019.

Now, Sadie Hawkins Day is generally observed on November 15, but Jeanne was betting that Rick didn’t know that. And even if he did, so what? This was, after all, the 21st century, and many traditional norms had been weakened, if not abolished. So when Jeanne saw Rick at the concert, she boldly asked him to dance. And he accepted the invitation.

Things progressed, as things tend to do, and the two began to spend a bit more time together. Rick continued to come around, despite Jeanne’s propensity to feed him black bean pasta. As a matter of fact, things had progressed so well that Jeanne asked him if he wanted to go on a cruise with some other friends, to celebrate his birthday in July 2019.

Well, that sounds pretty serious to me, and it did to Rick, too, so he began to formulate a plan in his mind to make things more permanent. So, after dinner one evening, he knelt on



**“After dinner one evening, he knelt on bended knee to ask her to be his *BRIDE*.”**

bended knee to ask her to be his bride. And then he waited. And waited. Finally, after what seemed like an eternity, and fearing that his knee was about to fail, she accepted. They were married on December 7, 2019 in Pawtuxet Village in Rhode Island.

They moved to Johnson, Rhode Island, to be close to Jeanne’s family, but, guess what? They missed their Pelican friends and lifestyle so much that they bought still another home here, and plan to spend about half of their time here.

They get a lot of use out of a variety of amenities. Rick particularly enjoys softball and pickleball, and loves to go skeet shooting with friends Milt, Larry, and Ed. Jeanne enjoys pottery and knitting, and they are both frequent diners at Destinations. Rick sums it up thusly: “We couldn’t be happier!”



# BRIGHTLEE THE BEAGLE

WRITTEN BY MARK AULICK, PELICAN PRESERVE RESIDENT



When Jo Ann (Jody) and Frank Brown found the perfect puppy, they, of course, wanted to give it the perfect name. “Lassie” seemed appropriate only for a collie, and their new pup was a beagle. “Snoopy,” perhaps an obvious choice for a male, was rejected, as the pup was a female. The quandary, however, resolved itself as they read the sign of the kennel - “Brightly Beagles,” and Brightlee was soon on her way home.

“She looked like that would be a good, descriptive name,” says Jody. “Although sometimes we bemusedly call her ‘Dimly.’ But she doesn’t really respond to either.” The Browns have had dogs all of their married life, but they had mostly been big dogs. “As we age, we thought a smaller dog would be easier to control. What a joke that turned out to be!” says Frank.

Brightlee does, however, sit on command. Sometimes. Well, mostly if it is in her self interest, such as when the trick will end with a treat. Jody believes her main talent is in her charming and winsome ways. She’s just too darn cute to not be offered a treat.

Brightlee seems to have a fairly good handle on the household, and the word “spoiled” comes up often when

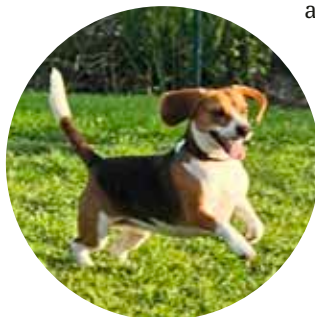
the Browns describe their canine companion. She sleeps wherever she wants, and can often be found making a fort-like nest on their bed.

All their neighbors in Casella know Brightlee, although their first introduction may have been helping to find her after one of her too-often escapes. And she can howl with the best of them! Still, she seems to have done an admirable job of ridding the streets of rabbits, a job which she obviously takes seriously.

Brightlee is not cowed by bigger dogs, that is, as long as she is in a car. She enthusiastically lets them know that they are fortunate that she is, indeed, too busy to deal with them at the moment.

Face to face, however, she is quite a bit less confrontational, and tends to avoid a would-be nemesis. And she has absolutely no use for thunderstorms, believing them to be a totally unnecessary disturbance of the peace.

With her unique and rambunctious personality, Brightlee brings a lot of joy to the Brown household. “She’s an angel,” Jody says, unabashedly, with only a slight grin. “And we love her just the way she is!”



“

With her unique and rambunctious personality, Brightlee brings a lot of joy to the Brown household.



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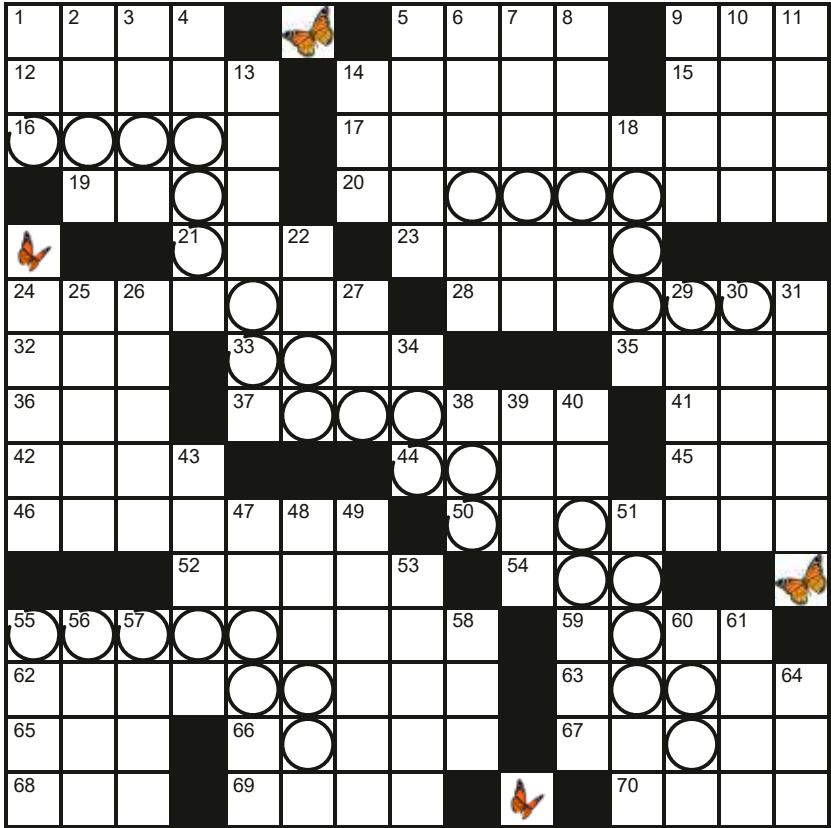
by Ed Sessa

Across

- 1 Wilted, like a flower
- 5 Amo, amas, \_\_\_\_
- 9 Apple computer
- 12 "When pigs fly," e.g.
- 14 Barn-raising sect
- 15 In the past
- 16 Half a deca-
- 17 Obeyer, as of laws
- 19 Business agreement
- 20 Bashful
- 21 Title for Elton John
- 23 Lee and Teasdale
- 24 Item mounted in a police car
- 28 Gently tap, as an MD on a chest
- 32 Hope's tour group: abbr.
- 33 Exam type
- 35 Director Preminger
- 36 Oom-\_\_\_\_ bands
- 37 Ethnic groups
- 41 Place for a piercing
- 42 Give off, as a vibe
- 44 Hindu god of destruction
- 45 Narrow inlet
- 46 Kid's 3-D project
- 50 Wild West watering holes
- 52 Miso taste
- 54 When repeated, a french dance
- 55 Rabble-rouser
- 59 Hardly any
- 62 Covered, as with barnacles
- 63 Widespread obsession
- 65 RSW screen info
- 66 Pants go-with
- 67 Leggings brand
- 68 \_\_\_\_ Alamos, NM

Down

- 1 Back talk
- 2 Carded
- 3 Selfish shout
- 4 Garden fertilizer stuff
- 5 Prayer endings
- 6 Unfortunate event
- 7 Have lofty goals
- 8 Attorneys, collectively
- 9 Actor Damon of "The Martian"
- 10 "A Death in the Family" novelist
- 11 Firewood measure
- 13 Retail security employee
- 14 "Exodus" character Ben Canaan
- 18 '50s Western "The \_\_\_\_ Kid"
- 22 Steak order
- 24 Scammed
- 25 Formal "me too"
- 26 Old Cleveland oil company
- 27 Chinese chairman
- 29 In \_\_\_\_ (unborn)
- 30 It may come out in the wash
- 31 Some rail birds
- 34 Vinyl records, for short
- 38 Fleur-de-\_\_\_\_
- 39 Emergeny op for choppers
- 40 Islamic bows
- 43 More authentic
- 47 Attack from cover
- 48 Actress Mason of "The Goodbye Girl"
- 49 Prized violins
- 51 Recorded
- 53 Like some gasses
- 55 "I \_\_\_\_ your pain"
- 56 Passionate about
- 57 Some HDTVs
- 58 Rachel Carson subj.
- 60 Santa \_\_\_\_ (dry winds)
- 61 Loud noises
- 64 Bunyon's tool



Ed Sessa is a resident of Pelican Preserve. His puzzles have appeared in the NY and LA Times, the WSJ and other publications.

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Roman Sikaczowski

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Gordon Zemke

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Kathy Peterson

## DEC. 9TH

Amy Corsi

## DEC. 13TH

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Catherine Corless  
Paul Maniscalco  
Ronald Prickel

## DEC. 14TH

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Gabrielle Zoroya

## DEC. 15TH

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Randi Rasper  
Richard Steiger  
James Wheeler

## DEC. 2ND

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Ken Eckle

## DEC. 3RD

David Winne

## DEC. 4TH

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Donna McGill  
Alan Keim

## DEC. 6TH

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Debbie Sullivan

## DEC. 7TH

Meredith Dondero

## DEC. 16TH

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Robin Nigro

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Mike Feerst  
Tami Holloway  
Jerry Lechner  
Charlene Van Eperen

## DEC. 18TH

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Bonnie Vavra

## DEC. 19TH

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Denise Mazzitti

## DEC. 20TH

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Judy O'Leary

## DEC. 21ST

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## DEC. 22ND

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JoAnn Jemmott

## DEC. 23RD

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Tami Heller  
Carole Maimoni  
Nona Stokke  
Jean Wilcoxon

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Lana Edwards

## DEC. 27TH

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Manassa-Walstein

## DEC. 28TH

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## DEC. 29TH

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Candy Gody

## DEC. 30TH

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Marsha Maple

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THEN 12-15-62



Paul & Mary Daraska NOW

# HAPPY ANNIVERSARY!

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY!  
Gary & Kathleen Brun  
12-29-68



Joe & Amy Corsi  
THEN 12-01-19



Helmuth & Cira  
Koetzle NOW



Helmuth & Cira Koetzle  
THEN 12-07-07



Charlie & Irene Arcario  
THEN 12-23-68



Gary & Beth Nitch THEN 12-06-06



Gary & Beth Nitch NOW



Carmine & Karol Iorio THEN 12-20-69



Carmine &  
Karol Iorio  
NOW



John & Meg Rabe THEN 12-19-06



Charlie & Irene  
Arcario NOW



Vince & Shane Ricciardella  
THEN 12-05-87



Vince & Shane  
Ricciardella NOW



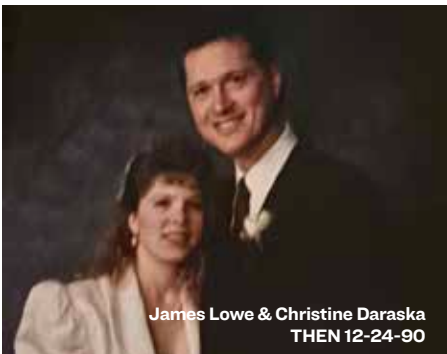
Joe & Amy Corsi NOW



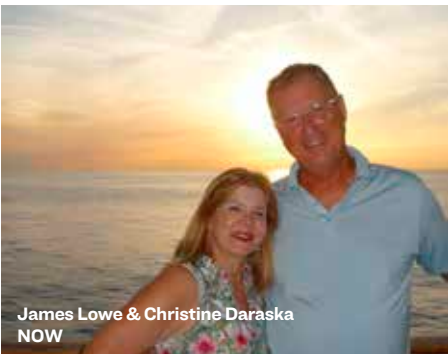
John & Meg  
Rabe NOW



Greg & Aletha Merkel  
Anniversary 12-28-  
85 HAPPY 40th !!



James Lowe & Christine Daraska  
THEN 12-24-90



James Lowe & Christine Daraska  
NOW



Dick & Karen Schmidt  
Anniversary 12-18-82



David & Karen  
Henelde THEN  
12-28-69



David & Karen  
Henelde NOW



## A Tough Nut to Crack

AUTHOR: AMY PONTIUS



There is something ridiculously daunting about writing a holiday story that makes me feel like the Nutcracker battling the mighty Mouse King. My wooden arms wield my sword, up and down in a repetitive motion, but nothing happens. My eyes stare, wide open, blinded by twinkling Christmas tree lights and the dizzying mice scurrying about. My army surrounds me. The toy soldiers march to rally their leader and shout, Just tell a story! But my painted mouth won't move. It's a tough nut to crack.

The images are there, and they are sweeter than the Sugar Plum Fairy herself. The plastic candelabra with the big orange bulbs glowing on my bedroom windowsill. The coveted dark pink raspberry creme candies hiding in the sampler box of Whitman's chocolates. The flashing lights of the 1970s disco ball, a rainbow spectacle that would become a solid bright blue every forty-nine seconds. The Hungarian kifli dough rolled out on a floured board, spoonfuls of apricot, nut, and poppyseed plopped in the center of each perfect circle. The crackling wood fire warmed my hands as snow flaked down in heaps and woolen mittens from the recent driveway shoveling dried in the bathtub.

But where is the story in that Kingdom of Sweets? Is it the time I wanted a plush Pound Puppy, but my brother unwrapped the chocolate lab with soft floppy ears and Santa hid my pale gray bulldog, ears knotted up like cabbages, behind the couch? Is it the morning the silver fox pounced through the snow? Or is it the first Christmas spent with the grandbabies - Phoebe's enchanted forest constructed with pillows on the living room floor?

My story is not told in one act or two. It is ever present in the dance of the flutes, of the mirliton, of the marzipan. It plays on in the beautiful waltz of childhood memories and in the pas de deux with my Cavalier. It is life's ballet. Just like for Clara, the Spirit of Christmas remains for me in the heart, not on the page.



Amy Pontius is a former educator residing in Pelican Preserve and summering in northern Vermont. Her work has been published by Kaleidoscope™ Reflections on Women's Journeys: In My Shoes; Voices of Cleveland: A Bicentennial Anthology

of Poems; and Bacopa Literary Review (TBA). Her writing has also been recognized and published online by Press 53, Florida Weekly, Gulf Coast Writers Association, and Kaleidoscope WoJo.

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Hello, there! My name is Jeffery Berry. I am the owner of Jeffery A Berry Inc. We are a small family-owned business specializing in residential and commercial air conditioning services in Southwest Florida. I was born and raised here in Fort Myers. I have lived here my whole life. I met my wife eight years ago. We have a beautiful 6-year-old daughter who has special needs. She is hands down the light of our lives! She loves dogs, so we have two small pups. Locally, we enjoy nature walks, the beach, and just simply exploring new things. During my downtime, I enjoy spending time with my family. I am also a part of Blackwatch Precision Rimfire Club, which is a team of competitors that shoot .22 long rifle matches. I compete nationally, and I'm ranked 5th in the nation.

For starters, from a very young age, I have always had an urge to learn new things. I am determined to be the best that I can be at whatever I am doing. When I was 13 years old, I started working with my grandpa during summertime. I started out learning how to cut duct board and the ins and outs of HVAC. I worked with him all through my high school years. Once I graduated, I was able to start working with him full time, and I've not looked back!

A few years later, I got an offer to work for Florida Power and Light. As soon as the recession hit, I turned back to AC and went to work for a big mechanical company. While there, I went to school and signed up for every class possible. Finally, after over ten years of studying and working hard, I earned many certificates. I am certified to work on almost anything in the world. So, after learning the ins and outs of working at large companies and gaining insight into how not to run a business, as well as how to run a successful one, I was able to work my way to the top. Then I met my wife, and we decided that I should start my own business with my own ethics.

Some things that make Jeffery A Berry Inc unique are: you can expect to see the same face (Me!) every visit, with the knowledge and ability to construct

the proper HVAC system specifically for you and your home, as I am certified to work on any brand in the industry. I would say that the most fulfilling part of what I do is that every job is different, unique, and in some ways challenging. One reason you would benefit from our services is that when you call my number, you get to talk to me! Your job will be done right because I will be the man on the job – there's no passing the buck!

Finally, I am so grateful for my wife and daughter, my family, and my business. I would definitely attribute my success to hard work, an honest demeanor and work ethic, great clients, positive attitudes, and the overall happiness garnered by a job well done. Please, if you have any questions, call us at 239-247-1047 or email us at jefferyaberryinc@gmail.com.

Since advertising in Stroll magazine, my business here in Pelican Preserve has grown exponentially!! I want to thank all the residents who trusted me and have become long-standing customers. Your recommendations have become the lifeblood of my business.

Jeff has been very generous with his time and money in Pelican Preserve. He has been a repeated sponsor of Tunnel 2 Towers and 4 the Fallen. When approached by a resident for help, Jeff donated his time and materials to the Ryan Healing Center, a recovery program offering transitional living environments for women and their children.

Jeff truly is a hard-working and reliable man! If you have any HVAC needs you know the one to call, Jeff Berry 239-247-1047.

**JEFF BERRY AC  
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Amazing man! My a/c went out! It's 85 degrees inside and I get a quote for \$7762 for a new a/c unit. They can install it first thing in the morning...Well, let me call this Jeff Berry in the back of my Stroll Magazine first. He came over, replaced a burned-out piece and within 5 minutes, it was fixed! So Grateful!

—MELISSA MURRAY-SCHWAB

## HELP US FINISH WHAT JEFF STARTED

Thanks to Jeff Berry HVAC's generosity,

A/C installation in the mothers units is underway.



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Thank you again to Jeff Berry HVAC!

We flew in today and came home to a hot house! Everyone in PP recommended Jeff Berry. I called him after hours and he showed up an hour after we called and fixed our HVAC unit! Great guy and gave us some fishing tips and baits! Would recommend - definitely a number to keep on hand! Thank you, Jeff!!

—NORAH STRICKMEYER





# MARK YOUR CALENDARS

- December 2nd**  
Holiday Tree Lighting

**December 5th**  
Holiday Sip & Shop

**December 9th**  
Holiday Golf Cart Parade

**December 10th**  
Deb & the Dynamics Holiday Concert

**December 12th & 13th**  
Christmas Cantada
- December 14th**  
Annual Golf Cart Caroling with the Acapelicans

**December 15th**  
Menorah Lighting Ceremony

**December 31st**  
New Year's Eve Bash

**December 31st**  
New Year's Eve After Party at FlipFlops



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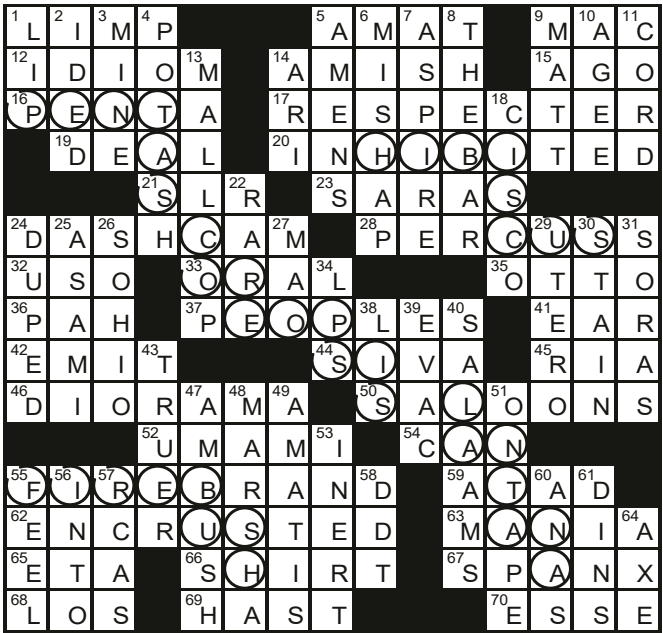
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*We used Grout Magnificent to steam clean and seal the grout in our villa . They did an awesome job. They were pleasant, knowledgeable and prompt. Wouldn't hesitate to use them again and would definitely recommend to others! -Cathy H.*



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