

Doctor to donate 'gift of hearing' through holiday essay competition

BY LISA MARIA GARZA
Orlando Sentinel

Gathering with loved ones around the holidays can be an isolating and stressful time for anyone who is experiencing hearing loss.

The muffled chatter around the dining table and inability to read lips among the crowd may put a damper on holiday celebrations, according to Lake County audiologist Dr. Kristen Weinbaum.

So through her Clermont-based practice, Precision Hearing, Weinbaum, 33, is sharing the "gift of hearing" by donating a new set of digital hearing aids to a local

community member in time for the holidays.

"A lot of people with hearing loss will just kind of shut down in those social situations and that's just not what Christmas is about," Weinbaum said. "It's about coming together and not feeling alone and isolated in the presence of your family."

To determine eligibility for the free hearing aids, Weinbaum is holding an essay contest for anyone who is experiencing hearing loss and demonstrates financial need. Contestants must be able to drive to the Clermont clinic for a fitting and evaluation if chosen and describe in the essay how the hearing

aids would impact their life.

Weinbaum said she was diagnosed at age 5 with hearing loss in her left ear during a school screening. Her degree of hearing loss doesn't qualify her for a hearing aid, but she knows the challenge of trying to distinguish faint sounds from background noise and asking people if she heard them correctly.

She said she uses other communication strategies like lip reading, suggesting loved ones rephrase their words and sitting with her right ear toward a group.

"Based on my personal experience, hearing loss is not anything to be ashamed of and something that should

be checked on annually, just like our eyes or our teeth," Weinbaum said. "I hope I pass that message on to my patients daily because they often see their hearing loss as a disability or something to try to hide."

Weinbaum said she held the first contest last year as a way to give back to the community who helped make her practice a success, but decided to keep paying it forward after seeing the impact it had on the winner and his family.

Last year, she received six essays and a panel of judges from the audiology industry chose Sumter County resident James Myles. According



Dr. Kristen Weinbaum with the 2017 contest winner, Sumter County resident James Myles.

to Weinbaum, Myles had experienced hearing loss for 20 years and received his first set of hearing aids when a loved one wrote an essay on his behalf.

Contest entries must be received by Dec. 10 and emailed to [\[ingfl.com\]\(mailto:ingfl.com\), faxed to 352-708-5199 or mailed to 4331 S. Highway 27, Clermont, Florida 34711.](mailto:drweinbaum@precisionhear-</p>
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The winner will be announced on Dec. 14.

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The garage in a Canaveral Groves home burned down on Sunday.

Brevard firefighters save 'Lucky' with push from burning residence

BY LISA MARIA GARZA
Orlando Sentinel

A cat named Lucky lived up to his name on Sunday when he was rescued by Brevard County firefighters from his burning Canaveral Groves home.

The fire erupted in the garage of the house on Canaveral Groves Boulevard and firefighters were able to douse the flames before they spread to the rest of the

structure, according to Brevard County Fire Rescue.

The four adults and one child who were living in the home weren't injured, but Lucky needed a gentle push to escape the blaze.

Firefighters administered oxygen to the black cat using a pet oxygen mask, a device fitted for snouts and beaks that allows rescuers to treat animals for smoke inhalation.

About 500,000 pets

nationwide are involved in a house fire every year and more than 40,000 pets die from smoke inhalation, according to the American Veterinary Medical Association.

Authorities had previously struggled with saving animals using protocols meant for humans. Now, many Central Florida fire department vehicles are equipped with Fido Bags — pet rescue kits that include

tools such as an oxygen mask, gloves, water dish and a leash.

"Lucky the cat had a bad day, but BCFR has his back," the department wrote on Facebook.

The Red Cross is assisting the family who was displaced from their home.

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Bicyclist killed in Mount Dora crash identified

BY LISA MARIA GARZA, KATE SANTICH
Orlando Sentinel

The Florida Highway Patrol on Monday identified a Mount Dora man who was killed when he was hit by a pickup truck while riding his bicycle.

The victim is Donald

Mosher, 48, the FHP reported.

The crash happened around 6 p.m. on South Clayton Street and Elysium Boulevard in Mount Dora, said FHP spokeswoman Lt. Kim Montes.

The cyclist was taken to Florida Hospital Waterman, where he later died, Montes

said.

The pickup's driver was identified as Melissa Kidd, 38, also of Mount Dora. Her 2009 Nissan was northbound on South Clayton Street when it struck the rear of the bicycle, Montes said.

The truck did not immediately stop but became disabled about a mile from

the crash scene, the FHP reported. The crash is still under investigation, and charges are pending against Kidd, Montes said.

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Prostitution sting results in 103 arrests

BY KATE SANTICH
Orlando Sentinel

Undercover detectives have arrested 103 people in an alleged prostitution and human trafficking operation in Polk County that may involve minors, the sheriff's office reported Monday.

The arrests took place during a six-day investigation that focused on sex trafficking, the sheriff's office said. Among those arrested was Dr. Sarat Sabharwal, 54, identified by the sheriff's office as a urologist for the Orlando VA Medical Center and an on-call trauma surgeon.

A spokeswoman for the VA could not immediately confirm that Sabharwal practices at the facility. He was charged with soliciting a prostitute.

The operation began Nov. 27 and focused on online advertisements — both by alleged prostitutes and men allegedly seeking prostitutes. Charges include human trafficking, soliciting another for prostitution, offering to commit prostitution, deriving support from proceeds of prostitution, transporting to a building for prostitution and using a communication device to commit a felony.

Three of the people arrested for prostitution are possible victims of human trafficking, and one of them is believed to be a minor, a sheriff's public information officer said.

In all, 56 people were ar-

rested on charges of advertising prostitution online, and 30 people were arrested for allegedly soliciting undercover detectives who posted ads posing as prostitutes, the sheriff's office said. Eleven others were charged with deriving proceeds from prostitution, and six were taken into custody for drug charges and other offenses.

Authorities are still searching for 49-year-old William Welch, who allegedly drove to Polk County believing he was going to have sex with a 14-year-old girl. Welch is facing several charges, including traveling to meet a minor, using a computer to solicit a child and attempted lewd battery.

"We conduct these kinds of investigations because of the link between prostitution, human trafficking, drug crimes, economic crimes — such as burglary and fraud — and violent crime," said Polk County Sheriff Grady Judd. "Prostitution is not a victimless crime. From the spread of disease, destruction of families, and to the scourge of human trafficking, prostitution is bad for our community."

Detectives worked closely with One More Child and the Florida Department of Children and Families during the operation, the sheriff's office said.

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FACES

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local health departments and address gun violence. But she also knows most of those bills aren't likely to get a hearing and will spend most of her time trying to beat back GOP measures she opposes.

Oliva only has announced the chairmanships for major committees, and the memberships of each panel won't be known until later this week.

Then there's also the worry of missing out on funding for local projects — sewer improvements, road maintenance, grants for colleges — because the delegation doesn't carry as much

pull with legislative leaders.

Eskamani said she's particularly worried about GOP budget writers cracking down on the University of Central Florida — the recipient of plenty of largesse in recent years for construction projects like the downtown Orlando campus — over a recent scandal in which funds were used improperly to pay for a building.

"There absolutely is concern about unnecessary punishment for a university that has already taken the necessary steps to correct the problem and make sure that it doesn't happen again," Eskamani said.

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LOTTERY

For more information, call 850-921-7529 or visit flalottery.com

Selected Monday

Pick 2 (midday): 6-7

Pick 2 (evening): Numbers were not available at press time

Pick 3 (midday): 4-8-1

Pick 3 (evening): Numbers were not available at press time

Pick 4 (midday): 6-5-9-9

Pick 4 (evening): Numbers were not available at press time

Pick 5 (midday): Numbers were not available at press time

Cash4Life: 29-41-48-52-57
CB: 4

Selected Sunday

Fantasy 5: 2-10-11-28-33

Florida Lottery
Capitol complex
Tallahassee, FL
32399-4016
Floridalottery.com

JUDGE

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nating commissions with members who advance judges who are "clones" of the conservative Republican governor.

"This does not bode well for Florida, especially with the divisiveness that exists in this country right now," Joyner said.

McKinley Lewis, a spokesman for Scott, said the governor must appoint judges based on the nominees advanced by the judicial nominating commissions.

"Our office does not control who applies to become a judge or what applicants are sent to the governor for consider-

ation," Lewis said.

The DeSantis transition team on Thursday referred to a statement released by the governor-elect on Tuesday when the nominations were announced. DeSantis called the nominees a group of "talented and highly qualified individuals."

"Gov. Scott leaves behind an outstanding legacy of strong judicial appointments while in office," DeSantis said. He said he would seek Scott's counsel as he evaluates the nominees and will select three justices who "will respect our Constitution and the rule of law and serve our state with distinction."

Joyner acknowledged the state Constitution will require DeSantis to make

his selections from the 11 applicants advanced by the nominating commission. A 2009 decision by the Supreme Court said governors are "bound" by the nominating commissions' lists. "There is no exception to that mandate," the court said.

Retired Supreme Court Justice James E.C. Perry, who was appointed by former Gov. Charlie Crist and served nearly eight years on the court, said a court without a black justice "is an indication of where we are" both as a state and as a country.

"I'm appalled. But not surprised," Perry said. "Obviously, we're regressing instead of progressing. ... There wasn't even an African-American

BUSH

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Library and Museum in College Station, Texas.

In the years after Bush left the presidency in 1993, the two men still kept in

touch. Bush would regularly send handwritten Christmas cards to the Zweifels, including one last year.

"There has not been one Christmas that I would not get his card," Zweifel said.

Zweifel recalled an event with Bush several years ago

when he was displaying his miniature White House.

"He said he didn't like my tie clip," Zweifel said. "So he gave me a presidential tie clip. He was such a jokester."

At another event in Texas, Zweifel was invited by Bush to play horseshoes,

a favorite past time for the former president and his family.

"George kept saying how bad he was," Zweifel said. "But he was actually very good."

Now that George H.W. Bush has died, and Barbara

Bush passed away last April at the age of 92, Zweifel said he will miss his famous friends.

"I was very, very lucky," Zweifel said.

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