



No garage at Clam Pass

Collier decides aesthetic and possible environmental issues outweigh benefits of almost 200 more parking spaces

Patrick Riley
Naples Daily News
USA TODAY NETWORK – FLORIDA

Collier County backed away Tuesday from a proposed parking garage at Clam Pass Park that drew the ire of neighbors

and concern from some environmentalists. County officials had been studying a proposal to build a garage on the park's existing lot on Seagate Drive to double the amount of spaces from 198 to 396. The garage was intended, in part, to

help take pressure off other beaches in the county and within the city of Naples. "Part of what we're looking at is how we can use our beach parks more efficiently, how we can spread people throughout the beach parks, encourage

people to use the beach parks," Barry Williams, the county's parks director, told commissioners Tuesday. But the plan spawned petitions signed by hundreds of residents from nearby neighborhoods in opposition to a garage. Environmentalists from Audubon of the Western Everglades and Audubon Florida worried that more beachgoers at Clam Pass could disturb threat-

See **GARAGE**, Page 8A



After thunderstorms cleared out from the area, Scott Schutz, of Russell Springs, Ky., and his son Zach Shutz, not pictured, took their reels to fish along Naples Beach in June 2013. Scenes like this has Parade magazine saying "what's not to love about Naples?".

SCOTT MCINTYRE

MAGAZINE: NAPLES A GREAT PLACE FOR LONGEVITY

Dave Osborn
Naples Daily News
USA TODAY NETWORK – FLORIDA

Naples has its traffic snarls, red tide, pythons, alligators and more. Even so, it ranks among the top eight U.S. cities to help live a long and healthy life. Parade magazine ranks Naples at No. 4 on the list, the only Florida city to make it. "What's not to love about Naples?" Parade says in the article. "The small town (population approximately 22,000) features high-quality health care and loads of leisure pursuits and good-for-you food—all set in a chill

backdrop of Gulf of Mexico watersports, golf and sun." The story quotes Dan Buettner, who co-founded Blue Zones Project, which has studied why people live longer in some regions compared to others. The term "Blue Zones" first appeared in a 2005 National Geographic cover story Buettner wrote, identifying five regions that included Sardinia, Italy, and Loma Linda, California. See **LONGEVITY**, Page 12A



Buettner

Hundreds take part in Python Bowl 2020

18 invasive snakes captured so far

Karl Schneider
Naples Daily News
USA TODAY NETWORK – FLORIDA

Python Bowl 2020 kicked off over the weekend as efforts to eradicate the invasive Burmese pythons heat up. The Florida Python Challenge is a 10-day event that began Friday where veteran hunters and novice snake surveyors head into the field to capture as many pythons as possible. As of Monday morning, 662 people have registered to participate and 18 snakes have been turned in to the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission's check stations. "The intent of the Florida Python Challenge 2020 Python Bowl is to bring continued awareness to

See **PYTHON BOWL**, Page 12A



These wild burmese pythons were used for a pre-Python Bowl training session in Citrus Park in Bonita Springs on how to capture pythons in the wild. ANDREW WEST/ THE NEWS-PRESS

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Longevity

Continued from Page 5A

“People in the Blue Zones don’t have better discipline or a greater sense of responsibility,” he told Parade. “They simply live in environments that make healthy lifestyle choices easier, or unavoidable.”

Buettner has visited Naples and thinks highly of the community. When he stopped by Florida Gulf Coast University in 2018, he referred to Naples as the “happiest place” in the U.S., and among the healthiest.

The other seven regions and cities to make the Parade list: 1. Southern California Beach Cities; 2. Breckenridge, Colorado; 3. Minneapolis; 5. Portland, Maine; 6. Charleston, South Carolina; 7. Pittsburgh; 8. Iowa City, Iowa.

The Parade went on to say that Naples boasts white “sugar sand” beaches so “who needs sugar?”

“An unusually high number of Paradise Coast residents say in surveys that they’re low in stress and rich in support,

ive, loving relationships,” the Parade article said.

“Having strong social ties — there are multiple retirement communities and recreation centers here — can extend lifespan as much as quitting smoking, one research review found.”

Buettner in 2010 wrote his first book on Blue Zones, identifying nine lessons about such a lifestyle. They include moderate, regular physical activity; moderate caloric intake; stress reduction; and a plant-based diet.

The Southwest Florida Blue Zones Project hosts various events throughout the year, promoting a healthier lifestyle. Visit the organization’s Facebook page for more.

“It continues to be exciting to see our Southwest Florida community recognized as a place people are living longer better,” said Deb Logan, executive director, Blue Zones Project-Southwest Florida.

“Blue Zones Project is a ‘we’ project meaning individuals and organizations are working to build infrastructure that supports well-being where we work, eat, shop, play, pray, educate and live.”

Python Bowl

Continued from Page 5A

invasive species issues in south Florida and engage the public in participating in Everglades conservation through invasive species removal,” FWC spokesperson Carli Segelson wrote in an email.

The FWC hopes the event will help “generate data from concentrated removal of Burmese pythons, such as their size and locations.”

The event organizers also want to raise awareness on not just Burmese pythons, but other invasive species. Segelson wrote that one goal is to continue educating the public and help people learn how they can help.

The Fish and Wildlife Foundation of Florida has supported these python challenges every time they’re orga-

nized, Michelle Ashton, a spokesperson for the organization said.

“Thanks to our money and the money raised from corporate and private donors, we’ve been able to support a good number of prizes,” she said. “We’re also providing logistical support for registration and the exhibit at the Superbowl.”


The foundation has made invasive pythons one of its main initiatives, Ashton said.

“We are really hopeful this not only raises awareness about how much of a problem pythons are — it’s doing a great job in educating the public. We’re helping to support projects to track pythons, but at the end of the day people going out and removing them is most effective.”

Karl Schneider is an environment reporter. Follow him on Facebook and Twitter: @karlstartswithk, email him at kschneider@gannett.com


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