

Theatre • Concerts • Art • Dining • Comedy • Music

happenings

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT
MAGAZINE

MARCH
2017

FREE



Peace River Art Festival

JON PARDI
AT THE RANCH

PAUL ANKA AT
SEMINOLE CASINO

"Louisa" by Sarah Kiser

Naples • Fort Myers • Cape Coral • Port Charlotte

Fundraiser set for March 4

Imaginarium Science Center, Museum of History take next step for merger

Ahead of unveiling a newly branded, combined experience for Southwest Florida residents and visitors of all ages to enjoy, the Imaginarium Science Center and Southwest Florida Museum of History have adopted a new, streamlined operating structure and announced an expanded board of directors.

While a dynamic rebranding effort remains under wraps, history exhibits are being added to existing science experiences to provide an immersive multidisciplinary experience under one roof at the Imaginarium, 2000 Cranford Ave. in Fort Myers. The Imaginarium has traditionally attracted families and youth groups, while more senior visitors patronized the Museum of History. The combined museum will offer exhibits and programs to appeal to visitors who fall on either end of the age spectrum and on any point in between.

In addition, a new non-profit corporate structure replaces the City of Fort Myers management, allowing the nimbleness required to act quickly in response to market trends while reducing long-term costs to taxpayers. The city continues to serve as partner for this community asset through a 10-year renewable lease of the facility. The former train depot that housed the Museum of History has been leased to the Southwest Florida Community Foundation to anchor a technology hub that will be integral to the new Midtown redevelopment project.

The groundwork for the museums' new organizational structure was established over the past several years under a dedicated and talented board of directors led by outgoing chair Jonathan Romine of Fort Myers-based planning and design firm EnSite, which has also provided conceptual planning for the future footprint of an expanded campus.

Executive director Matt Johnson said, "Jon

developed the master plan, leading this organization through a difficult process. He's done an amazing job keeping the board focused and moving forward through staffing transitions and challenges coming out of the recession. He has been an excellent leader from the very beginning, and we're thrilled to receive his continuing guidance as past chair while we see many fruits of his labor materialize."

Jon Ellsworth of Enterprise Holdings has been named the new chair of Imaginarium Group Inc., the public-private partnership managing the two museums. In addition to Romine, he joins vice chair Carlos Kelly of Henderson, Franklin, Starnes & Holt PA., Treasurer Jennifer Powers of Chico's FAS Inc. and Secretary Denise Weisinger of GMA Architects & Planners. The board also includes Jeff Bayer of Signarama Fort Myers; Greg Blurton of the Lee County School District; history professor Erik Carlson of Florida Gulf Coast University; Britt Gravley of Bernard Anthony Salon; Derrick Isaac of Goldstein, Buckley, Cechman, Rice & Purtz, P.A.; Kathryn Kelly of the Heights Foundation; Shamie Kelly, Fort Myers native; David Miller of the Chamber of Southwest Florida; and Matt Simmons of Maxwell, Hendry & Simmons LLC.

"A Night at the Museum" fundraising event has been planned for 7 – 10 p.m. on Saturday, March 4 on the grounds of the new museum, celebrating the rightful alignment of science and history with extinct animals and figures of Florida's storied past come to life, plus cocktails, hors d'oeuvres, auctions and tours from "Night Watchman" Ted Fitzgeorge. All proceeds will support the Imaginarium and the Museum of History.

For more information, visit www.i-sci.org.

Annual Reading Festival March 18

More than two dozen nationally acclaimed authors plan to meet their fans and talk about their books at the 18th annual Southwest Florida Reading Festival on Saturday, March 18 at Centennial Park in the Fort Myers River District.

The festival is a free, day-long event filled with sensational author talks, the latest library technology, contests, book-sellers, book signings, activities for teens and children, a free book for every child and teen and the Reading Rocks! Teen Battle of the Bands. The festival draws an average of 18,000 people annually. The Reading Festival is the largest one-day reading festival in Florida and runs from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., rain or shine.

"Authors come from all over the country and many genres are represented," said Margie Byers, festival coordinator. "Most are award winners, a couple are coauthors with Tom Clancy and James Patterson and all are very popular with their readers. It is a pleasure to meet these creative and interesting people who write these amazing novels and keep track of all the details."

The festival starts Friday evening,

March 17, at the Marina at Edison & Ford with the Evening with the Authors. The event provides the opportunity for fans to meet, mingle and dine with authors. Tickets to the dinner and reception can be purchased at www.Readfest.org.

A few of the award-winning authors scheduled to attend both events include adult authors: Shelley Shepard Gray, James Grippando, Gregg Hurwitz, Mark Greaney, Susan Wiggs, Lori Wilde; teen authors include: Sara Shepard, Kami Garcia and S.J. Kincaid; and children's authors: Chris Grabenstein, Salina Yoon and Candace Fleming. The complete list of authors can be found at www.readfest.org.

The Reading Festival, presented by the Lee County Library System is free and 100 percent community supported through generous donations, sponsorships and grants. To help ensure the continuation of this free community event visit www.readfest.org to make a secure online donation. Author information, dates of partner events, directions to the event and more, is available for your convenience 24 hours a day at www.readfest.org or call 239-479-4636.

ENJOY ALL THE LUXURY & *reimagine* THE FUN!
AT CAMPO FELICE RETIREMENT LIVING
OPENING THIS YEAR!
NOW ACCEPTING DEPOSITS!

Remember—55 is just a number, not a speed limit! Life can be as fast-paced and full of adventure or as relaxed and luxurious as you want. It's all up to you at Campo Felice Retirement Living! Visit the Leasing Office this month to see what "LUCKY" promo you receive.

That's Senior Living Reimagined!

SIGN UP FOR OUR NEXT

LUNCH & LEARN

CAMPO FELICE RETIREMENT LIVING

OR

Dine & Discover
CAMPO FELICE RETIREMENT LIVING

CONTACT US FOR A PRIVATE TOUR TODAY!

CAMPO FELICE RETIREMENT LIVING

RETIREMENT LIVING

(239) 271-2232 • CampoSeniorLiving.com

RESIDENCE ADDRESS: 2500 Edwards Drive, Fort Myers, Florida 33901
LEASING OFFICE: 2485 First Street, Fort Myers, Florida 33901