

 YOUR VIEW
LEGISLATIVE WISH LISTDennis Killila, *Palm City*

GOP lawmakers mute on our needs

The Feb. 10 front-page story "Legislative wish list" was a brief discussion of this year's Florida legislative session. As a proud member of the Rivers Coalition representing Cypress Lake homeowners association in Palm City, I like seeing this information in the paper.

Martin County is mentioned as wanting septic-system pollution help, finishing the C-44 Canal reservoir project and asking Gov. Scott to send excess water in Lake Okeechobee south.

Rep. Larry Lee Jr., of Port St. Lucie, wants literacy programs for young at-risk children. Sen. Thad Altman Rockledge wants a lagoon tax to restore water quality.

So what are Reps. Gayle Harrell and MaryLynn Magar pushing for?

Are they hiding under their desks? For just one example, two years ago at a public meeting hosted at The Stuart News, neither lady seemed knowledgeable about the economy-devastating pollution coming out of Lake Okeechobee.

The good news is we can vote at election time. The bad news, voters, is this county will most likely re-elect them.

And so septic system leakage, fertilizer and highway waste runoff water will continue to kill oysters, clams, blue crabs and other marine life in the river and lagoon.

I ask these lawmakers to voice support for exercising the southern flow way option.

AMENDMENT 1Richard E. Kurtz, *Orchid, Fla.*

Multiple reasons to purchase land

Add my voice to the suggestion that everyone write to the "stakeholders" in the Legislative debate over whether to use Amendment 1 money to purchase land to the west of us for water control. Most of us have the addresses of the governor, state representatives and senators, which appear regularly in this newspaper. Thank you for this public service.

The addresses for the directors of the South Florida Water Management District are a little more difficult to find. Please help us by printing them.

The land proposed for purchase is valuable now, but will be price-less 50 years from now. It is needed, not only for water control but also for the things that draw people to Florida.

A good example is Lake Garcia just to the west of Fellsmere. Since the 1920s it has been used to control the flow of the St. John's River to prevent immense flood damage.

Less important but just as visible, the lake provides great fishing, and alligator- and bird- watching opportunities for people who would not otherwise have access to these joys of Florida living.

Editor's note: Contact information for the South Florida Water Management District is included in today's editions.

IMPORTANCE OF THE ARTSShari Anker, *Port St. Lucie*

PSL should listen to Samples on arts

Bravo to Eve Samples ("Investing in the arts is key to economic development," Feb. 15) for sparking a discussion about how central the arts are to a thriving community, a fact in city planning that is either unknown or underutilized in Port St. Lucie.

This is the city on the Treasure Coast most in need of a crash course in how to cultivate the arts, because it suffers from the lack of a soul, of identity, because it was developer-, not citizen-created.

Cities that have invested in their "creative class," including and especially their homegrown artists, have discovered that not only do they help build the soul and identity of a town, but they revitalize local economies, even those stuck in tough recessions.

Most importantly for Port St. Lucie, such an active arts culture can finally provide that missing "sense of belonging," and with it a sense of pride that it is one's home.

I urge the city's talented residents, and there are many, to be the driver of this discussion. I urge the city and its elected representatives to get past their stage fright, risk pursuing Samples' suggestions, and let the show begin.

DRUG PRICESJohn Caprice, *Sebastian*

Lack of competition results in increases

As a 30-year pharmacist, I am concerned that Dr. Tim Ioannides has written a critical letter (Feb. 15) about the cost of a generic prescription at a local pharmacy. The doctor did not indicate the name and quantity of the drug, so I cannot confirm the high cost of this particular medication.

Over the past 20 years, there has been a dramatic increase in the cost of drugs. There are a few reasons for this increase. The increase in price is a result of decreased competition, as manufacturers merge their companies. Most, if not all, generic manufacturers have been acquired by larger pharmaceutical companies. I have seen a generic drug's price rise from \$2 per hundred tablets to \$25 per hundred tablets, in one week. When competition is eliminated or absorbed, the cost of a product has little or no restriction. There are hundreds of price increases that pharmacists are exposed to on a monthly basis, some are extraordinary. But before we accuse a pharmacy of profiteering, please allow us to check the facts first.

OUR INDIAN RIVER LAGOONCrystal Lucas, *Stuart*

Voters spoke; now legislators play deaf

Buying land south of Lake O is the biggest issue facing this state. The option to buy 46,000 acres from U.S. Sugar runs out in October. The decision to exercise the option needs to be made now.

What does the land purchase mean to our estuary? Life or death.

What does the land purchase mean to the Everglades, a national treasure? Life or death.

Our estuary is drowning in freshwater discharges while the Everglades dries up and burns.

We have seen and heard Treasure Coast residents rallying to save our estuary. We have yet to see the same level of concern from any of our state Legislature.

State lawmakers claim to care profusely during elections. The power of the sugar lobby seems to make them forget. In calls for the purchase of this vital sugar land, it would appear that their silence speaks volumes.

Amendment 1 passed with astounding numbers. On the night of the results, I smiled and thought, "This is it. The ticket to the purchase of the sugar land we need so desperately. Three months postelection the smile has faded.

I want a leader. I want someone who will stand up for this district and not a grower who makes big campaign contributions.

My 7-year-old daughter deserves an estuary; she deserves to enjoy the Everglades and admire their beauty and majesty. She deserves leadership in her state government from representatives who understand that this area's economy depends on clean water.

Our leaders need to understand that they can't protect residents, businesses, and the children who will inherit the consequences of our actions if they don't understand the simple message: Buy the land, clean the water and send it south.

Crystal Lucas is a candidate for the state House District 83 seat.

INDIAN RIVER DRIVERobert Paine, *Jensen Beach*

Sad only tragedy can slow traffic

It was with great sadness that I learned of the death of a motorcyclist recently on Indian River Drive. I send my sympathies to the victim's family.

As a "snowbird" who lives on the Drive six or seven months a year, I have seen firsthand how many drivers pay little heed to the speed limit or the no-passing lines. Residing on a straight section of the road, I have witnessed vehicles passing others, often at speeds well above 45-50 mph.

The early-morning and late-afternoon commuters who use the Drive to avoid U.S. 1 traffic raise havoc to the peace and tranquility one would assume we have here, but do not.

The late-night crowds leaving the bars tear up and down, seemingly racing each other to get to the next party. Some motorcyclists are the worst: groups of ten or more having late-night street races with speeds seemingly reaching 100 mph.

I understand the constraints of budget cuts, but this problem will not go away without steady enforcement of the limits. Drivers need to be aware that if they are caught speeding or passing, they will be dealt with promptly. A suggestion: Use an older, beat-up car, drive along at the posted 35 mph, and when someone passes, which invariably happens, turn on hidden blues.

It will be a pleasure to have the Drive quiet — like it was the afternoon of the motorcycle tragedy, but for a different reason.