



“STILL I RISE” ~ MAYA ANGELOU

AUTHOR, POET DIES AT 86

TRIBUTE, PAGE 1B

St. Lucie News Tribune

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Local speller fails to advance

Vocabulary, spelling test eliminates St. Ed's student

By Thomas Hargrove
Scripps News

NATIONAL HARBOR, Md. — Jonathan Buckley made a meal of “kohlrabi” and went to town with “Gothamite” to survive the early rounds of the Scripps National Spelling Bee. But like most of the 281 spellers from around the nation and from six foreign countries, Jonathan, 14, a student at Saint Edwards School in Vero Beach, was eliminated after the results of a computer-based spelling and vocabulary test were announced late Wednesday afternoon.

Only 46 spellers go on to the semifinal rounds Thursday.

“It felt really good and I was on national television,” said Jonathan after learning the results. “I even got my two words right on stage, and that’s a major accomplishment.”

Jonathan said he was certain of the spelling of kohlrabi, a variety of cabbage with edible turnip-shaped stems. And he didn’t need to know anything about Batman comics to know that Gothamite describes a resident of

See SPELLER, 3A



Jonathan Buckley, of Vero Beach, thinks before spelling a word correctly Wednesday during the Scripps National Spelling Bee in Washington, D.C.

Brush fire burns 30 acres



PHOTOS BY SAM WOLFE/TREASURE COAST NEWSPAPERS

John Wozar of the St. Lucie County Fire District sprays water along the edge of a 30-acre brush fire on Slash Pine Trail near Indrio Road.

Viking area blaze cause undetermined

By Laurie K. Blandford
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ST. LUCIE COUNTY — Sean McRae planned to attend his daughter’s eighth-grade graduation, where she was going to give her valedictorian’s speech.

Instead, McRae stayed behind Wednesday evening, protecting his home on Slash Pine Trail from a 30-acre brush fire that spread quickly throughout the Viking community, a wooded residential area between Indian Pines Golf Club and U.S. 1.

He turned on the sprinkler system in his yard, just as he did last year to battle a blaze in his neighborhood — a 360-acre

fire on March 24, 2013, officials said. “It’s a nightmare,” McRae said. “There’s no warning.”

The cause of the brush fire remained under investigation late Wednesday, said Florida Forest Service spokeswoman Melissa Yunas, as crews from the service and the St. Lucie County Fire District kept an eye on conditions overnight and into Thursday morning. They were making sure the fire stayed within lines created by bulldozers.

The fire was reported in the 5200 block of Tree Top Trail at about 1:30 p.m. Wednesday, and Yunas said crews had the

See FIRE, 5A



A truck from the St. Lucie County Fire District drives down Tree Top Trail near Indrio Road while crews fight the brush fire.

WEDNESDAY'S BRUSH FIRES

- Indian River County: 8 acres about 2 miles south of Fellsmere, cause was lightning; a half acre about 8 miles southwest of Fellsmere, cause was lightning.
- St. Lucie County: 30 acres at Tree Top Trail and Slash Pine Trail off Indrio Road, cause is under investigation.
- Martin County: 35 acres in 13800 block of Southwest Silverfox Lane in Indiantown, cause was fire burned into swamp.

BE PREPARED FOR WILDFIRES

Longer summer days, higher temperatures and a decrease in humidity leads to an increase in ignition potential for grass and dead leaf litter. In wet season or dry season, any period of little or no rainfall that allows vegetation to dry out could prompt an increase in fire activity.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Remove anything that will burn from your roof and gutters. That includes pine needles, leaves, small twigs and palm fronds.
- Be sure there is nothing flammable against the sides of your home.
- Be sure to use plants that are not highly flammable around your home.
- Keep the area within 30 feet of your home picked up, mowed and watered.

Source: Florida Forest Service

Bondi won't back down from cleanup opposition

As our state’s top lawyer, Pam Bondi believes she knows what’s best for Floridians.

So the attorney general is doing her part to kill a cleanup plan for the Chesapeake Bay.

Even though the Chesapeake is 800 miles up the Atlantic shore.

Even though six states and the federal government agreed to science-based pollution limits for the country’s largest estuary.

Even though the Chesapeake is grappling with the same types of pollution the Indian River Lagoon faces. If it doesn’t make sense



EVE SAMPLES COLUMNIST

HOW TO CONTACT ATTORNEY GENERAL PAM BONDI

Call 850-414-3990 or visit myfloridalegal.com, then click on Citizen Services and “File a Complaint.”

Letters can be mailed to:

Office of Attorney General
State of Florida
The Capitol PL-01
Tallahassee, FL 32399

to you, add your name to the growing list of People Perplexed by Pam.

Last month, the Everglades Coalition — an

See SAMPLES, 5A

Digital Domain report skimps on details

Considering the subject matter, I guess we shouldn’t have been surprised at another bump in the road in the saga of Digital Domain.

Since April, a small Port St. Lucie staff evaluation committee has been hard at work ranking real estate professionals who’d like a shot at selling the former animation facility known as Tradition Studios. Their collection of resumes, contracts and other information isn’t for the casual reader. There are 216 pages — 150 from one of the finalists alone.

Yet just before City Council was due to review the committee’s recommendations at Tuesday’s meeting, the item was pulled from the agenda without explanation.

The Office of Management & Budget wanted to further review the report,



ANTHONY WESTBURY COLUMNIST

according to city spokesman Ed Cunningham, who was unable to supply more information.

I certainly don’t claim to be a commercial real estate expert, yet I couldn’t help noting that the brokers submitting proposals didn’t seem to be blazing any particularly new trails.

The No. 1 ranked firm proposed using The Wall Street Journal and a variety of regional business and specialist publications in print and online. The broker said she also would be contacting her sizable roster of contacts.

Will that be enough to find a deep-pocketed buyer for this unique building? Perhaps.

Paul Gronroos, of Port St. Lucie, has 30 years of experience in large commercial real estate deals in New York and New Jersey. He said selling a building this unusual will require a broker with international reach — something he found lacking in the three finalists.

“If the city ends up getting \$8 million to \$10 million (for the building), they’ll have done well,” Gronroos said, “but I don’t feel they’ll do that with a local broker. This deal could be attractive enough to show very well for the right buyer or tenant, but you’ll need a ‘big name’ to do that.”

I also couldn’t find a lot

See WESTBURY, 6A

86°/69°
Rain: 40%
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