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High 78° | Low 61°
Intermittent clouds. C2



MONDAY
FEBRUARY 24,
2020

THE NEWSPAPER OF FLORIDA'S FRIENDLIEST HOMETOWN

WORLD NEWS



The Associated Press

SOUTH KOREA PUT ON HIGH ALERT, ITALY BATTLES VIRUS OUTBREAK

China reports new total of about 77,000 infections, and Iran raises death toll from the virus to eight.

South Korea's president said Sunday that he was putting his country on its highest alert, while a continent away in Italy, authorities battled to contain Europe's first major outbreak of the virus. Patient numbers worldwide are increasing, but some virus clusters have shown no link to China, and experts are struggling to trace where they started. **A7**

NATION & WORLD REPORT

Nation: The California Assembly recently apologized for discriminating against Japanese Americans and helping the U.S. government send them to internment camps during World War II. **A19**

World: Former Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott said "top levels" of the Malaysian government long suspected the disappearance of Malaysia Airlines Flight 370 was a mass murder-suicide by the pilot. **A21**



Florida News A5
Lottery A4
Local News A16
World News A2



Faces in The News Pete Buttigieg

The campaign of the Democratic presidential hopeful questioned his third-place finish in Nevada, citing "errors and inconsistencies."

Global Snapshot, A2

Top of the News

INSIDE THE ISSUES SHAPING OUR COMMUNITY

Benefit Concert to Aid Earthquake Survivors



Rachel Stuart | Daily Sun

Fernando Varela and his wife, Susan Williams, sing holiday music during "Believe: A Family Christmas Concert" at The Sharon L. Morse Performing Arts Center.

Tenor Fernando Varela to bring his show "Four Divo" to The Sharon to help Puerto Rico's recovery efforts.

By KRISTEN FIORE | Daily Sun Senior Writer



After hurricanes Irma and Maria tore through Puerto Rico in 2017, tenor Fernando Varela quickly teamed up with The Sharon L. Morse Performing Arts Center to put on a benefit concert, ultimately raising more than \$1 million through the concert, its livestream and other efforts. In the wake of recent devastating earthquakes, Varela is bringing his show "Four Divo" to The Sharon for another benefit concert for the island where he was born. Varela, along with fellow vocalists Josh Page, Devin Eatmon and Craig Irvin, as well as other featured performers including Susan Williams, Sonido Tré, David Foster's band and more, will perform the concert March 7 through March 9 at The Sharon.

Please See **BENEFIT, A9**

LOCAL NEWS

STOP SIGNS POSTED AT BUENA VISTA, CR 44A

The signs will remain as construction continues on a new Villages woodshop.

To maintain the safety of golf cart drivers and workers, new stop signs have been placed on either side of the multimodal path off Buena Vista Boulevard just north of County Road 44A. This area is by The Villages Public Safety Department Station 45 and near Eisenhower Recreation Center. The signs will be there as construction on a new Villages woodshop continues. Drivers should use caution and obey all signs and traffic patterns. For more information, go to districtgov.org.

— Maddie Cutler, Daily Sun

THAT'S AMAZING!

UTAH MOM CALLS 911 WITH BABY FORMULA EMERGENCY

A Utah mother in desperate need of baby formula for her newborn in the middle of the night called 911.

"I've never not had food for my newborn," Shannon Bird said about her 2 a.m. call to police.

Bird told the dispatcher that she had no way to feed her 6-week-old baby. Her husband was out of town, and her five other children were sleeping.

"I've been calling neighbors and no one will answer," she told the dispatcher.

So, Lone Peak Police officers Brett Wagstaff and Konner Gabbittas stopped at Walmart. And when they delivered the formula to Bird, they didn't accept any money in return.

— The Associated Press

EXPLORE & EXPERIENCE

Let the Good Times Roll During Mardi Gras at Lake Sumter Landing

There will be plenty of beads — and plenty of fun — at this year's Mardi Gras Festival. The event, sponsored by The Villages Entertainment, is free and open to the public and will take place from 4-9 p.m. Tuesday at Lake Sumter Landing Market Square. The festival will feature live entertainment by Stu Okra and the Fixins and The 2nd Line Mardi Gras band. Guests are treated to strolling entertainment from stilt walkers and magicians. The festival also includes market vendors, food trucks and performances and activities throughout the night. "And of course, plenty of opportunities for beads," said The Villages Entertainment Special Events Manager, Chalsi Cox. For more information, call 352-750-5411 or visit thevillagesentertainment.com.

— Julie Butterfield, Daily Sun

Life In Our Town

What's Happening In The Villages Get on your feet!

Villagers learn how to dance with confidence at Social Dance Steppin' Out class.

Local News, C11

Plus

Entertainment: Dixieland Band to give first Mardi Gras-themed concert at SeaBreeze. **A16**

Lifestyle: Avid cyclist has raised a quarter of a million dollars for various charities. **D5**

LOVIN' THE LIFESTYLE

Trip the light fantastic at one of three squares. **D1**



from the front page

BENEFIT

Continued from A1

Performances are at 7 p.m. March 7 and March 9 and at 3 p.m. and 7 p.m. March 8.

Tickets range from \$35 to \$95 and are available online at thevillagesentertainment.com or at any Villages Box Office location.

Varela is nationally known for his appearances on "America's Got Talent" and his history of touring with David Foster, and is a familiar name locally for his many performances on The Sharon stage.

He also is the executive director of the arts outreach organization Victory Productions, which has brought acts like The Beach Boys, Don Felder, Louie Anderson, Kansas and more to The Villages.

"I'm proud of how The Villages stepped up when we did our hurricane relief, and I'm happy to put on another show now to help the victims of these earthquakes," Varela said. "This isn't as widespread, but it's still as devastating for the people affected."

The money is being raised through PRxPR, an organization that invests 100% of donations into the most critically affected communities in Puerto Rico, according to PRxPR's website.

To learn more, visit prxpr.org. "We love doing these shows, and it's such a magical feeling to know that you did something to help people," Page said. "I'm really thankful that Fernando is doing this and that he invited me to be involved."

Page co-founded the vocal group and "America's Got Talent" finalist Forte with Varela, and a lot of the material for which Forte became known on the show will be featured in "Four Divo."

"The show is a wonderful collection of powerful tenor songs," Varela said. "Most of the show is in English."

Varela said the show will feature classics such as "Unchained Melody," "My Heart Will Go On" and more.

"We really want people to leave a show like this and feel like they saw most of their



Rachel Stuart | Daily Sun

Fernando Varela sings holiday music during "Believe: A Family Christmas Concert" at The Sharon.

favorite songs interpreted in a fresh, new powerful way," Page said. "It's about creating memories. So many of these songs have been with people throughout their entire life."

Eatmon, a Harold S. Schwartz Music Scholarship recipient and Villages Charter

School alumnus, will perform with Page and Varela, along with Irvin, another popular name in The Villages.

"He's a wonderful friend of mine and an incredible performer," Varela said of Irvin. "Devin Eatmon is of the next generation. He's a young,

incredible tenor who grew up in The Villages. He's doing big things at a very young age."

Williams, Varela's wife,

will be featured as the female soprano to help blend the palette. Sonido Tré, a Puerto Rican music group, will add a

Latin flair to some of the songs, Varela said.

"This is a tribute to Puerto Rican music, as well," he said.

Page and his brother, Zach, also have a music group together called Brothers Page, which has gained a large following on Instagram.

"Josh and his brother are just wonderful songwriters, and they're great performers," Varela said.

Varela said he hopes the concert brings people together.

"I think that's the power in music," he said. "We can all come together in that moment, in that concert and experience the beauty and power of music."

"... We want to let the people who are suffering in Puerto Rico know that they matter and we're going to come together and do our part to ease their suffering."

Elizabeth Constant, booking coordinator at The Sharon, said she loves seeing artists support their roots and use their talents for a good cause.

"(Varela) is very inspiring in the way he helps communities in need," Constant said. "Four Divo knows the weight their name carries in this community. They continue to bring in large excited crowds each year at The Sharon, and with their name recognition, they are using their popularity for good and to help others in need. I think that's very commendable."

Senior writer Kristen Fiore can be reached at 352-753-1119, ext. 5270, or kristen.fiore@thevillagesmedia.com.

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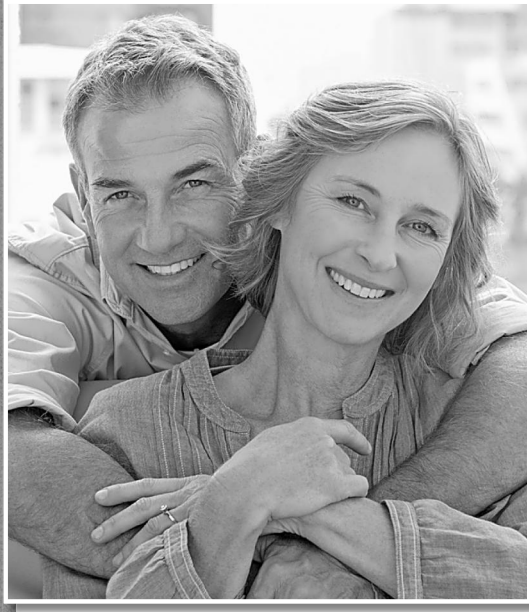
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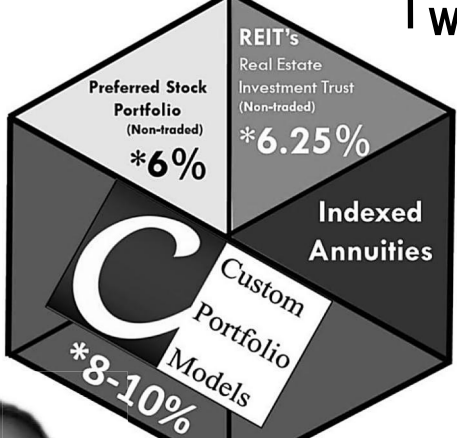
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