

NATIONAL NEWS

MOST BREAST CANCER PATIENTS CAN SKIP CHEMO, STUDY FINDS

Doctors are reporting from a landmark study that many women with the most common form of early stage breast cancer can safely skip chemotherapy without hurting their chances of beating the disease. The study is the largest ever done of breast cancer treatment. **National News, A9**

The Associated Press

Adine Usher, 78, meets with breast cancer study leader Dr. Joseph Sparano in New York. Usher was one of about 10,000 participants in the study.

CHINA SAYS U.S. TRADE DEALS ARE OFF IF TARIFFS MOVE FORWARD

China said Sunday it wouldn't step up its purchases of American products if the White House goes ahead with the threat to tax billions of dollars' worth of Chinese imports. **World News, A5**

THAT'S AMAZING

VOLUNTEERS REPLACE LOST HEADSTONES FOR VETERANS

The quest to honor veterans across the Roaring Fork Valley in Colorado started with a missing headstone. After learning a veteran's grave was missing its headstone, American Legion volunteer Lisa Passmore led a project that locates and replaces every missing veteran gravestone from Aspen to Parachute. The project the team spearheaded started with a list of 27 missing headstones. That's now down to 17, since the team of three was able to locate veterans' relatives. — *The Associated Press*

We support our men and women in uniform.

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Top of the News

INSIDE THE ISSUES SHAPING OUR COMMUNITY

Volunteers Run Clinics That Serve Uninsured

Max Gersh | Daily Sun

Nurse practitioner Angel M. Kelly-Shelby, of the Village of Caroline, examines Walter Eno, of Ocala, at the Lazarus Free Medical Clinic in Wildwood. The clinic saw 193 patients in April and 211 in May.

More help is needed to take care of the growing population.

By CIARA VARONE

Daily Sun Senior Writer

nationwide, according to the National Association of Free and Charitable Clinics. Florida houses more than 100 clinics — the most of any state. The need for such care stretches across the tri-county area: 12 percent of Sumter, 14 percent of Lake and 17 percent of Marion county residents are uninsured, County Health Rankings data shows. And local clinics are desperate for volunteers, especially those with medical backgrounds.

Please See **CLINICS, A25**

Dr. Maria Bello talks with a patient Thursday at the Lazarus Free Medical Clinic in Wildwood.

Michael Johnson | Daily Sun

CONTACT A FREE MEDICAL CLINIC

Call Lazarus Free Medical Clinic at 352-748-4567 or Community Medical Care Center at 352-787-8489 for information on volunteering. Doctors, nurses and general volunteers are needed.

COMMUNITY & CONNECTIONS

Only in The Villages

LIFE IN FLORIDA'S FRIENDLIEST HOMETOWN

2 Residents Endure 6 Grueling Days of 6 Marathons In 6 States

By DREW CHALTRY

Daily Sun Staff Writer

May is a wonderful time to visit New England. People from all over the country travel to the United States' northeast corner to take in the beautiful scenery, stroll the rocky beaches and enjoy some great seafood. Then, there are the rare few who spend their week in New England running marathons. Bob Coffey, of the Village of Pine Hills, and Tim Mahaffey, of the Village of Glenbrook, took the New England Challenge last month — six marathons in six days in six different states. Mahaffey, a longtime ultra-distance

Please See **MARATHONS, A26**

Max Gersh | Daily Sun

Tim Mahaffey, left, of the Village of Glenbrook, and Bob Coffey, of the Village of Pine Hills, recently ran six marathons in six days in six different New England states last month.

THE DIGIT

9.3

inches of rainfall

The Withlacoochee River watershed, which includes Sumter, Lake and Marion counties, experienced a rainier May than usual. The Southwest Florida Water Management District recorded 9.3 inches of measurable rainfall in the month of May, well above the month's average of 3.6 inches and May 2017's 3.3 inches. — *Michael Salerno, Daily Sun*

TONIGHT'S EVENTS ON THE SQUARES

Entertainment runs from 5 to 9 p.m.

Spanish Springs Town Square

Blue Stone Circle

Happy hour, 5-7 p.m.

Lake Sumter Landing Market Square

Band 4 Play

Happy hour, 5-6 p.m.

Brownwood Paddock Square

David Vece

Happy hour, 5-6 p.m.

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VOLUME 21 | ISSUE 155

from the front page

CLINICS

Continued from A1

Caring For the Forgotten

Volunteer doctors and nurses staff the two free clinics closest to The Villages — Lazarus Free Medical Clinic in Wildwood and Community Medical Care Center in Leesburg. Aided by office workers also donating time, the medical staffs provide free care to hundreds of residents each month, from the unemployed to the homeless.

“We take care of the forgotten,” said Tammy Halsey, ministry director of Community Medical Care Center.

With more than 2.5 million uninsured residents, only Texas and California top Florida’s uninsured population.

Some think the Affordable Care Act provided insurance coverage to all Americans, Bello said.

“That’s not true,” she said.

While the population has dropped, 31 million are expected to remain uninsured by 2024, the National Association of Free and Charitable Clinics estimates.

While clinics overall have seen a 40 percent increase in demand for services, funding has decreased 20 percent.

Myrta Aviles, office manager for Lazarus, said more people are visiting the clinic, which saw 193 patients in April and 211 in May.

“It’s picking up, and I need the help,” Aviles said.

Aviles and her assistant, who works part-time, are the only paid staff at the clinic, a program of Catholic Charities of Central Florida.

Located in San Pedro Jesus Maldonado Mission, it serves patients without insurance and with incomes of 200 percent or below the federal poverty line.

Seventeen doctors and nurses volunteer their services. Four nurses return north for the summer, creating a bigger need for help.

The clinic has not had to turn patients away, Aviles said. But with limited resources, it can only do so much for those needing specialized care.

Aviles flipped through a book of handwritten names,



Michael Johnson | Daily Sun

Dr. Maria Bello consults with a patient Thursday at Lazarus Free Medical Clinic in Wildwood. The clinic serves patients without insurance and with incomes of 200 percent or below the federal poverty line.

all patients waiting to see specialists. Aviles works to find community partners who will treat these patients.

“I’ve seen Myrta spend hours trying to get someone seen by another physician,” said Wilder, of the Village of Buttonwood. “It’s hard and it’s sometimes teary.”

A Way to Give Back

With a staff of 110 volunteer doctors, dentists and nurses, Community Medical Care Center treats 500 to 600 patients a month.

Leesburg Regional Medical Center provides funding for the clinic. Medical professionals who donate their time keep it operating.

Additional dentists and nurses would be especially helpful to fulfill the need, Halsey said.

Forty percent of the center’s volunteers are Villagers, Halsey said, like family physician Dr. John Boeren, of the Village of Glenbrook.

Medical volunteers must have a current license to practice in Florida.

Boeren and other retired members can obtain a limited license, meaning they can provide care only for underserved populations under a nonprofit agency.

Volunteer physicians and nurses at the clinics have sovereign immunity through

the state, protecting them from malpractice lawsuits.

Boeren said the process took three months, and Halsey walked him through it.

He has worked one day a week for the last four years.

Boeren said he is glad he gets to help people while still having time for leisure in his retirement.

“It’s the best of all worlds,”

he said.

After 45 years working as a dentist, Dr. Jeff Werblin said he was looking for something meaningful to do in retirement.

He found purpose at the center. Dentistry is a stressful field, he said, but not when donating his time.

“You’re not thinking about profits,” said Werblin, of the Village of St. Charles. “All the profits are in the smiles of the people you’re helping.”

He recalled one patient in her mid 20s who had lost both front teeth at 16 years old.

Werblin fashioned a removable prosthetic for her to wear. The result left her and the volunteers in tears.

“She said, ‘It’s the first time I’ve been able to look at myself in the mirror in 10 years,’” he said. “You can’t win them all. You can’t save the world. But you can do something.”

Volunteers also benefit from the patients, Werblin said.

“They’re helping me, too,” he said. “They’re helping me keep my identity.”

Helping Those in Need

Angel M. Kelly-Shelby, a nurse practitioner at Lazarus,

said patients always show gratitude and leave better prepared to care for themselves, the ultimate reward.

“It’s a gift to me that these patients are willing to be treated,” said Kelly-Shelby, of the Village of Caroline.

Bello said every visit to Lazarus reminds her why she became a doctor.

“I just wanted to help people,” she said. “This is the place to do that.”

Though Aviles said some stories break her heart, she loves coming to work.

“It’s therapy trying to help patients who have no other place to turn,” the Leesburg resident said. “You see so many problems that yours are not important.”

Carole Clarke volunteers by doing intake interviews and paperwork at Lazarus.

The Village Santo Domingo resident said she does not think many Villagers realize a need

exists so close to home.

“That’s a shame, because I think a lot of them might be willing to help if they knew about it,” she said.

She said she knows the importance of good insurance coverage. When her late husband needed treatment, she never had to worry about affording his treatments.

“I can’t imagine not being able to pay for such a basic need,” Clarke said.

She has tried to recruit some volunteers who are deterred because they are not medically trained or don’t speak Spanish.

Eighty percent of the clinic’s patients are Hispanic, Aviles said. But neither speaking Spanish nor medical training are required for clerical work.

The need is huge, but every bit helps, Clarke said.

“It’s a drop in the bucket,” she said. “But it’s worthwhile to have the drop in the bucket.”

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