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It's All About Community!

Inspiring Others!

This issue is full of inspiration. We are so happy to focus on people who are making inspiring, positive differences for everyone, especially our disabled friends and neighbors. Please read through and note the amazing folks that make our corner of Broward so fantastic.

Programs that we've seen around for awhile have taught us that being there to support and comfort others is vital. See the articles about the Edwards Family, Challenger Baseball, the Relay for Life, the F.I.S.H. ladies making a positive difference, and the Mental Wellness Networking Alliance, all focused on caring for and loving others... and sharing gifts with the world around us. Whether we are on the giving or receiving end of help in times of adversity, we are constantly modeling examples. Our kids are always watching!

We are so thrilled to celebrate our corner of Paradise with the amazing families who call it home. Enjoy March by offering love and service to friends and neighbors in our community.

Thank you for your time and support of our advertisers.

God bless you and our troops,

Shellie & Scott

Celebrating 19 Years!

By Shellie Miller-Farrugia

In all of our 19 years, this last one has been especially memorable. If I had to list all the reasons, it would take up the entire magazine. If you have a notepad nearby, I invite you to write down five positive things that impacted your life in 2020.

The Spectator started in the fall of 2001, immediately after the tragedy of 9/11. Our first magazine was printed in March 2002. Our intention was to connect neighbors who didn't know each other, and may never have the opportunity. Furthermore, our goal was to foster an openness between athletes, families, and businesses in our communities. 19 years later, we say, "mission accomplished!" and we aren't done yet!

It's been an amazing journey as we've heard so many personal stories of triumph over adversity. We've seen families devastated by unimaginable loss, that come back later with inspiring accounts of new goals and intentions. A couple who lost their only son to leukemia was featured in our very first magazine, and went on to adopt and raise several more children. Our friends Cassie & Shannon McGovern lost their precious daughter, Em, to accidental drowning, but continued on while raising awareness, funds, and being active advocates for water safety education.

We were reporting on your little one's first soccer game when she ran toward the wrong goal while sideline encouragement and cheers had her smiling the whole way! We've been there when children from opposite teams shared high-fives after the game, everyone shared orange slices, parents arranged play dates, and great fun was had by all!

The Spectator was instrumental in producing amazing events, including the Youth Sports Challenge, which saw hundreds of kids having a super-fun day while garnering a generous donation to the Make-A-Wish Foundation. Every October our magazine is dedicated to fostering awareness of and eradicating breast cancer.

We met lovely people at the parks, in the gyms, and even while we were out shopping. Some of the families we've featured have become lifelong friends of ours; sharing their insights, passions, and sage advice. Many have told us that their feature was seen by friends they hadn't seen in many years... Whom they were able to gladly reconnect with! It's because of you, dear reader, that we've been able to create happy circumstances and mail this magazine every month for 19 years.

As Coral Springs and Parkland have "grown-up," most of the changes have been positive. We've got terrific diversity when it comes to mixing our food cultures, lifestyles, and community activities. Enjoying the farmers market, various sports, and outdoor events are just small snippets of the plethora of fun each of us can enjoy while living in our quaint corner of Broward. We are so excited to call Coral Springs and Parkland our home! **Thanks for making the last 19 years so special!**



Publishers, Shellie & Scott Farrugia

Spectator™ Magazine

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On the cover: Parkland Challenger Baseball. See article on page 8.



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Meet The

Edwards Family



Skyler and Jenna are grateful to live in Coral Springs, where Jenna grew up. Skyler moved to Coral Springs in 1998. The couple attended JP Taravella High School where they began dating as teenagers in 2004. Today, this loving couple have four active children; James, 8, Anthony, 6, Skyler, 5, and Christian, 2. Two dogs, a cat, and a bearded dragon complete the family circle.

Jenna is a swim instructor with Infant Swimming Resources. She works teaching babies and children ages 6 months - 6 years survival swim. Skyler is a national brand manager for international imports.

James rides horses at Bit-by-bit and enjoys his workouts at Barwis Performance Center. Anthony plays baseball with North Springs Little League, and plays soccer with Coral Springs youth soccer. He's an avid golfer and part of the Mike Richards Golf Academy at Parkland Golf and Country Club. Skyler (daughter) has been taking dance lessons since she was 2 1/2, plus soccer with Happy Feet and she just started her new love of western horse back riding. Christian is finishing his first season of Happy Feet.

Skyler (Dad) assistant coaches with baseball. He organizes weekend wiffle ball games in the backyard, and is a lover of all sports.

Jenna is part of the PTA, while working hard to advocate and raise awareness for water safety. She tells us, "I 'blog' about James and his recovery process from a near drowning. As a family, we've been on the receiving end of the generosity this community is so amazing at, and we always try to reciprocate that kindness for other families in crisis."

Family time is fun time, and Jenna shares some of their favorite activities. "We love spending time outside. We make use of our large backyard and pool quite often. We love riding bikes and a friendly family driveway basketball game. We also enjoy visiting our parents' lake house in the panhandle."

All of the kids attend Country Hills Elementary as they have special accommodations for James' needs. James' favorite subject is "lunch" and he is in 2nd grade. Anthony's favorite subject is math and he is in 1st grade. Skyler enjoys Art and is in VPK.

"Being a lifelong Coral Springs resident, I love seeing that Coral Springs has become so diverse while maintaining its priority on families," Jenna shares. "We enjoy that there are always activities for our children to participate in around the city; from movies on the city hall lawn, to the farmers market and the endless city sports offered." Because of James' tragedy, Jenna and Skyler are thankful for Coral Springs' professional preparedness. "One thing we never anticipated we would have to consider so high on our list is our first responders. We have experienced first hand the importance of having highly-trained first responders and Coral Springs cuts no corners," Jenna says with gratitude and certainty.

Speaking of the pandemic, we wonder how the Edwards family has been dealing. It was actually a bit of a respite. "As a very active family, we enjoyed a few months of nothing-ness," Jenna says. "Not rushing to get here or there. Being able to just live in the moment and be with each other."

She goes on to say, "While our daily lives definitely have challenges, we face them head on and with a positive outlook. We will constantly push to give all of our children the best experiences to help them reach their full potential."

Siblings Skyler and Anthony both want people to know that they are very helpful when it comes to making sure James is included and has everything he needs, and James wants us to know that he is always ready for cake!

The Edwards Family attends services at St Elizabeth Ann Seton catholic church.



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Parkland Challenger Baseball Helps Special Needs Children and Adults Get Involved with Sports

By Ashley Ferraro

Challenger Baseball has been thriving in Broward County for 30 years and has recently expanded its league to Parkland. A division of Little League, Challenger is an adaptive baseball program open to all children and adults with special needs. Although last year's season was cut short due to COVID-19, the 2021 season is kicking off.

When Melissa Sackman, alongside Paul Rosenberg, and Sam Troy, saw an opportunity to bring the league to Parkland, they didn't hesitate to get it organized. "The idea behind Challenger is to provide socialization and give the players a sense of normalcy," says Melissa. The league implements buddies, who are volunteers that actively help the players on the field. This way, if parents choose to, they can relax in the stands and cheer their children on while they play.

"It's a great opportunity for the families of these children and adults to come together and be with other families who have similar circumstances," adds Mellissa. "It's a chance for the parents to have a break and to be able to sit in the stands as a normal parent and just let go for an hour."

Something unique to the Parkland league is its affiliations with the MLB. Thanks to their relationship with the Rizzo Family Foundation, Anthony Rizzo's dad, John Rizzo, acts as one of the coaches for Challenger Baseball.

Another MSD alumni and starting pitcher for the Oakland Athletics, Jesus Luzardo, has ties to the league. His father, Jesus Luzardo Sr., is also a baseball coach for the Parkland league. "That's a really cool addition that we've

been fortunate to have here in Parkland," adds Melissa.

Coral Springs resident Randy Hibshman and his wife, Debbie Hibshman, have been running the organization since it's early days. Challenger Baseball has leagues throughout Broward County, and in 2020 it finally expanded to Parkland. Challenger is privately funded, so there is never a cost to the players and their families. Every expense, including registration, uniforms, pictures, trophies, and equipment, is covered by the league.

"The people in Parkland—Melissa, Paul, Sam, and our coaches—have really done a wonderful job of getting the community involved," says Hibshman. "This year, when Parkland had their Turkey Bowl, they donated money to Challenger."

The Parkland Challenger Baseball league plays at Pine Trails Park. The games run for an hour and fifteen minutes, allowing each team to play a full inning. This way, every player gets one at-bat and one chance to play in the field. Plus, there are no outs, so players have the opportunity to run around all the bases during every game.

The vision behind Challenger Baseball is to allow children and adults with special needs to have fun, interact with one another, and be a part of Little League like their peers. Parents can register their players at no cost for Parkland Challenger Baseball online at www.challengerbaseballofbroward.com. The season will run through the end of May, and players can join at any time.



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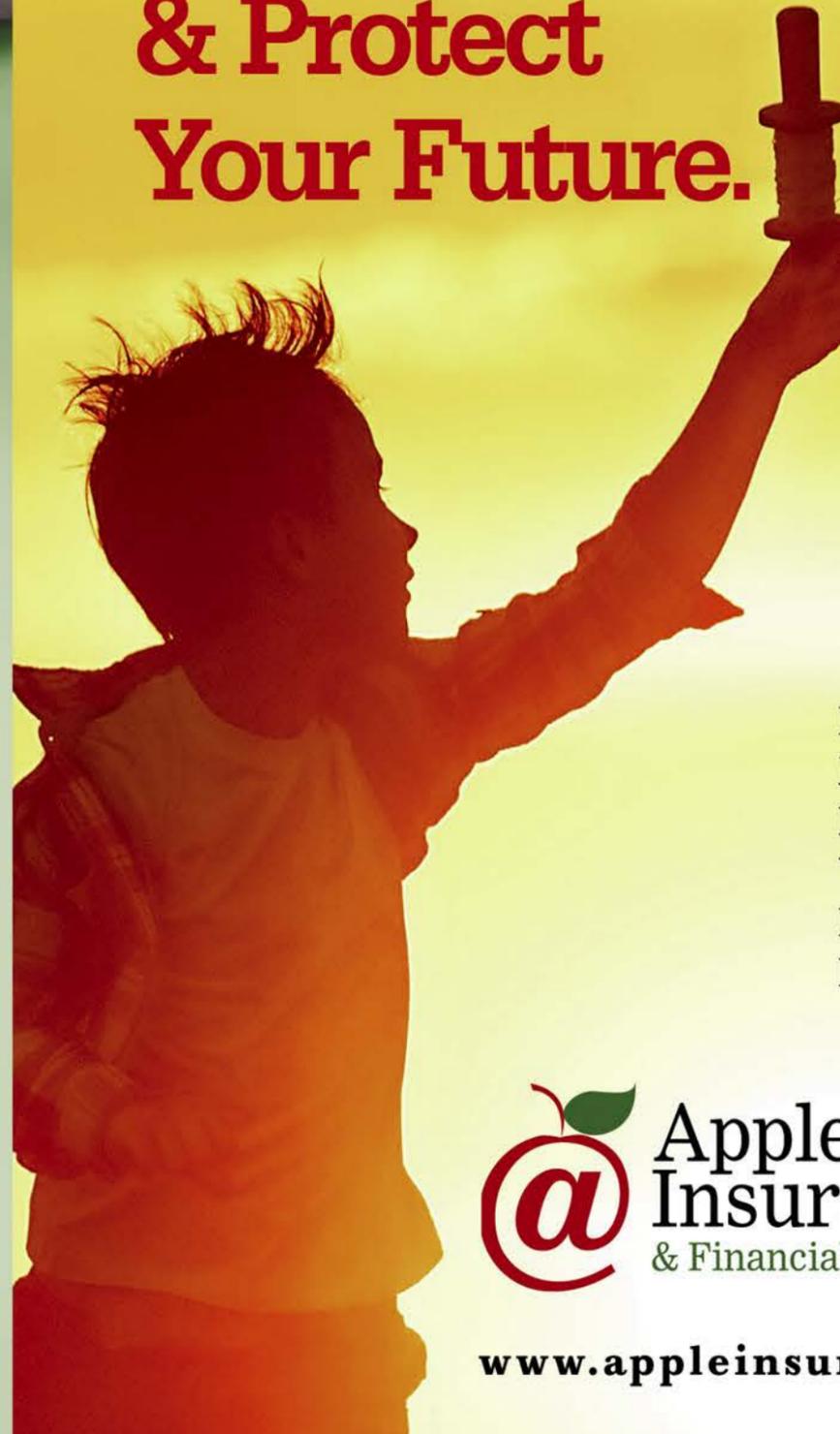
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The Athlete's Elbow Part 2

By Dr. Howard Gelb

Little league elbow is a common problem in the growing athlete and describes medial elbow pain that is attributed to a microscopic injury to the growth plate or apophysis, where the tendon attaches to the inner elbow. Pain and loss of motion are common symptoms of little league elbow. Pitchers sustain the majority of injuries but any player may develop it from overuse. X-rays are very important as part of the work up for little league elbow. Comparison x-rays can be helpful in certain cases to evaluate the extent of the injury. The UCL (ulnar collateral ligament) can be involved in severe cases. If the apophysis or UCL origin is significantly displaced, surgery may be indicated. If the ligament is completely torn, a formal UCL reconstruction (Tommy John procedure) may be needed to return to competitive throwing. Prevention of overuse injury in the throwing athlete is critical to avoid long term injury. Injury to the young athlete's elbow may be prevented by limiting the number of pitches in a game or practice, allowing the athlete adequate rest after throwing, and limiting the number of teams that he or she plays on. Recent studies demonstrate that the fast ball may be worse than breaking pitches for the immature elbow, causing the growth plate to separate or ligament to fail. Fortunately, most athletes can return to their sport after adequate rest and rehabilitation.



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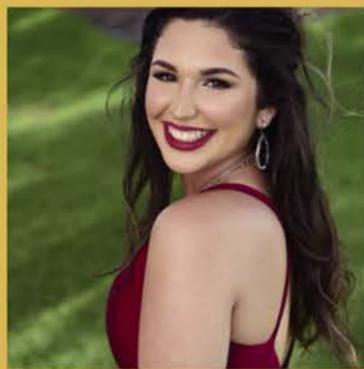


**Introducing the
Coral Springs Community
Representatives &
the newest extension to
the mental wellness
networking association**



THE ORGANIZATION: Mental Wellness Networking Alliance

Through our mental wellness networking alliance, we aim to educate the public and raise awareness for all things mental health. This includes, but is not limited to, trauma from the pandemic, post-traumatic stress disorder, as well as anxiety and depression. There is an infamous stigma that surrounds the topic and our goal is to break it. We feel that by providing an outlet for our community to connect and converse about their struggles, we are able to put forward solutions and implement long-lasting results. As a community, we are dedicated to helping our members through advocacy and facilitated conversations. By doing this, we are able to hone in on the importance of mental wellness. Our newest goal of the program is to administer guided activities to ease social anxiety in this new way of life. Along with advocating for mental wellness, MWNA aims to support local businesses and its community members in its newest networking addition.



Shauna Smith is a 20-year-old college student studying clinical psychology and criminal justice at the University of Central Florida. With her education, she plans to do judicial work within the family law department. Before working with Mayor Scott

Brook, Shauna was involved in the film industry with public works including a self-produced piece highlighting the inconsistencies within the school system. She mentored special needs students through a program called Fantastic Friends and later went on to the Ms. Dria show to market the program. Today, she coordinates community events and is dedicated to breaking the stigma surrounding mental health in the community.

Laila Subeih is a 20-year-old political science major with a business development minor. She will be attending law school after getting her master's degree and working in human rights/international law. Before working with Mayor Scott Brook, she was working with the youth in performing arts.

Laila has studied the arts in New York, London, and here in South Florida as well. Through mentoring her students and helping them reach their full potential, she was able to start her own program called Lessons with Laila. Here, she is able to coach performers, teach necessary skills, and help them gain the confidence they need. Laila looks forward to bettering this beautiful community by mentoring the youth and educating others on mental health through our outreach programs!



Scott Brook

MWNA'S NEWEST EXPANSION:

Along with advocating for mental wellness, MWNA aims to support local businesses and its community members in its newest networking addition.

This is a membership-based networking alliance that pushes members to build connections, and allows for economic regrowth. Meetings for this program will be held via Zoom the 3rd Tuesday of every month from 5:30-6:30pm.

For more information please contact the community representative email: powergirls@scottjbrookpa.com



Join the American Cancer Society Relay For Life of Parkland, Coral Springs, Margate and Coconut Creek for a Future Free of Cancer

Event celebrates those touched by cancer, remembers loved ones lost, and takes action for lifesaving change

The American Cancer Society (ACS) Relay For Life of Parkland, Coral Springs, Margate and Coconut Creek invites cancer survivors and caregivers to attend a non-traditional, "contactless" Relay celebration on April 24, 2021 at the Parkland Equestrian Center, 8350 Ranch Rd, Parkland, FL 33067.

Relay For Life is a movement, a community of like-minded survivors, caregivers, volunteers, and participants who believe that the future can be free from cancer. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, our community is currently connecting in different ways. While our fundraising might look different right now, our passion to save lives, celebrate lives, and lead the fight for a world without cancer is unchanged.

"During this difficult time, cancer won't stop, and neither will we," said event lead Megan Mila. "Relay For Life is all about togetherness, and the safety of our patients, survivors and volunteers is a top priority. Our contactless Survivor and Caregiver celebration will be a shorter, drive-in style event for a limited number of community participants. Participants will remain in their cars for the duration of the event."



Relay For Life of Parkland, Coral Springs, Margate and Coconut Creek
April 24, 2021, 6pm - 8pm (Doors open at 5pm)
Parkland Equestrian Center
8350 Ranch Rd, Parkland, FL 33067
Relayforlife.org/parklandfl

Event People Lead and Survivor Chairperson Robin Newman explains "Our goal is to host at least 50 cancer survivors and their caregivers. The celebration event will include a special Survivors ceremony. Survivors and their caregivers will also enjoy a complimentary boxed meal. After sunset, we light Luminarias to remember those we have lost, to celebrate cancer survivors, and to show those affected by cancer that they are not alone."

Be part of the Relay For Life movement and continue to celebrate people who have been touched by cancer, remember loved ones lost, and take action for lifesaving change. To register for the April 24th celebration as a cancer survivor or caregiver, visit Relayforlife.org/parklandfl.

The American Cancer Society's mission matters more than ever. The needs of people facing cancer continue and so does our work. Cancer patients still need support during this crisis. Funds raised help the American Cancer Society to continue with cancer research, the 24/7 helpline, and for continuing services to get patients the care and support they need where we can.

Community members can for Relay For Life teams to fundraise virtually and continue the fight through additional new fundraising activities. "We are so honored to host multiple events to support the American Cancer Society in such times of need," said Megan Mila. "We have added a youth Talent Show Fundraising competition in March (tinyurl.com/RelaysGotTalent2021) and a Swing Fore a Cure golf tournament in May (www.swingforeacure.com)." Learn more by signing up at www.Relayforlife.org/parklandfl.

Relay For Life of Parkland, Coral Springs, Margate and Coconut Creek is supported by many local businesses and organizations. This year's sponsors include: Memorial Cancer Institute, JK Closing Attorneys, AutoNation, Coldwell Banker Realty, Van Kirk & Sons Pools & Spas, Burie Group at Morgan Stanley, Pfizer Oncology and School of Rock Broward County, among others.

To learn more about Relay For Life and form a team or register as an individual or cancer survivor, visit Relayforlife.org/parklandfl



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Relay For Life of Parkland, Coral Springs, Margate & Coconut Creek

April 24, 2021

Parkland Equestrian Center

6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Gates Open at 5:00 pm

www.relayforlife.org/parklandfl

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Every Day is Random Acts of Kindness Day

How can we help each other?

What does a community look like during a global pandemic?

How have needs changed when businesses have been shuttered?

FISH Mending Nets, Inc. is a Florida not-for-profit organization dedicated to helping provide basic necessities, technology and education to those in need. The Board is comprised of five strong Parkland/Coral Springs women who have chosen to give back to the communities of Broward, north Miami-Dade and south Palm Beach counties by both creating a private Facebook group where people of all walks of life help each other, and by directly helping to provide basic necessities to families in need.

On February 17th, just three days after the three-year anniversary of the biggest tragedy to strike our community, FISH (Friends Inspiring and Sharing Hope) volunteers visited our local law enforcement and other first responder stations to offer food and friendship to our first responders.

How it works: Reuse – Recycle - Reduce

FISH Mending Nets, Inc. accepts donations of basic necessities, clothing, baby supplies, food and household goods, and offers assistance to those in need. Through the Facebook group, people reach out to each other to ask for, and to give, help.

While for many of us, bulk pick up day is a time to toss away unwanted items, FISH Mending Nets volunteers use these long days to collect items for distribution to those in need. Since a large proportion of families who receive

assistance do not have a reliable form of transportation, #ParklandStrong women are leaving their gated communities to drive pickup truck loads of items to surrounding cities (thus far, as far as Homestead and West Palm Beach). While there are many food pantries, very few consider the transportation needs of those that they serve.

Generous donors also help supply necessary funds to feed people who have fallen on hard times.

Rapid response

Crises strike without warning, and FISH Mending Nets has been ready to step-in, and use all of our collective desires to help one another on a moment's notice. As a small non-bureaucratic not-for-profit, when victims of domestic violence reach out, FISH Mending Nets volunteers are able to quickly and efficiently (and confidentially) offer assistance.

Get Hooked

Americans are altruistic by nature, and FISH Mending Nets is a way to give outside of your traditional social, medical, or religious circles.

You are invited to join the private Facebook group and follow the page - www.FishMendingNets.com

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"Just Get the Emergency Care You Need!"

- Bruce, 73 years young, heart attack survivor



THANKS TO BROWARD HEALTH, BRUCE IS BACK TO ENJOYING HIS GARDEN

For several days, Bruce was experiencing symptoms of shortness of breath, diarrhea and sweating. Believing his symptoms were Covid related, Bruce was waiting it out. With the persistence of his family, he made it to the ER just in time to realize that he was having a heart attack.

"Doctors told me had I arrived 25 minutes later, I would not be here today."



Voted Best ER & Best Hospital*, Broward Health Coral Springs is committed to providing high quality care. With a state-of-the-art cardiac catheterization lab, patients receive advanced and critical life-saving cardiac procedures close to home.

To find an ER near you, visit BrowardHealth.org/ERLocator.

If you are experiencing a medical emergency, call 9-1-1 immediately.

*Awards received by Our City Magazine



3000 Coral Hills Drive, Coral Springs

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