Imagination fueled innovation at Youth STEMposium

BY J.A. JONES

CLEARWATER — On Monday and Wednesday evenings and Saturday mornings, Leslie Henry can be found hosting line dancing classes at the Bocce YMCA in Largo or the Clearwater Neighborhood Family Center.

“I fell in love with dancing when I was about 12 years old,” Henry smiled, softly-spoken and earth charm. Originally from a small town in East Texas, Henry moved to Florida in 2006.

Her story of survival and learning to “embrace life” includes raising her three children, her successful career as an IT Analyst and founding Clearwater’s Embrace Life Groove Squad line dancers.

But like any survivor, her story has a few—childhood abuse that led to emotional stress, dire illnesses and experiencing racism and discrimination as an African-American woman in the male-dominated IT field.

“At a single mother at 15, Henry became a mother again at 16 and again at 19. Looking back, she attributed her behavior and choices during her teenage years to unresolved trauma from the abuse in her past.

“Once I went through some crises as a teenager that really affected my mind, I was always trying to make the things constantly affecting my mind go away,” Henry said.

“Grief, her children were born, Henry’s time and energy turned toward raising them alone as a single mother. I& kept away from the dancing.
From racist to peacemaker: Film ‘Final Solution’ at Sundial next month

ST. PETERSBURG — First United Methodist, 222 Third St. N, invites the public for a free viewing of the film “Final Solution,” the true story of a white supremacist’s radical transformation to a peacemaker in apartheid South Africa.

The story centers on Gerrit Wolfaardt, a cancer in the land. That black South Africans were a threat to the white community. He met two people who would put him on a collision course with his future. His “final solution” meets its greatest obstacle when he realizes he is wrong. The persecutor becomes the peacemaker and begins to seek reconciliation.

The event will take place Saturday, May 11 at 3 p.m. at the Sundial Theatre, 212 Third St. N, invites the public for a free viewing of the film “Final Solution,” the true story of a white supremacist’s radical transformation to a peacemaker in apartheid South Africa. The story centers on Gerrit Wolfaardt, a cancer in the land. That black South Africans were a threat to the white community. He met two people who would put him on a collision course with his future. His “final solution” meets its greatest obstacle when he realizes he is wrong. The persecutor becomes the peacemaker and begins to seek reconciliation.

Before continuing, I want to thank my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ for the many new blessings. I’m a new church member and I have been invited to join the church. I want to thank my Lord the God and Savior Jesus Christ.

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A survivor’s story

and was pretty much just trying to live and care for my children.“ As her young ones reached school age, the battle with illness began. She was diagnosed with breast cancer in 2005 at age 29 after finding a lump while in the shower doing her daily routine.

With no health insur-
ance, the health clinic told her it was probably just “a mast” because she was so young. They advised her to check back at her well-
ness exam in 6 months later. When she returned 10 months later, the lump had grown. And she was sent for a mammogram. A week later the radiologist called back and said, “this doesn’t look good, we need to get you a biopsy.”

Her mother, who was a nurse, contacted the American Cancer Society. They were able to find an organization three hours away in Austin, Texas, that would provide a biopsy for free since Henry was under age 40.

Two weeks later she went back for the results.

“Five doctors walked in the room. Before they even opened her mouth, I knew.” She was diagnosed with early-stage breast cancer.

Two months later she had surgery, en bloc mastectomy because doctors worried it could be spreading to her chest and around her breast and then a partial mastectomy because the tissue around the breast was still cancerous.

Henry went through a year of rounds of chemo and lost every bit of hair on her head. When she woke up from the surgery, she didn’t even recognize herself in the mirror. She was out of all contact with her friends and family who had grown to revolve around her.

Chemo was followed by six weeks of radi-
ation. “Swing with all the other people around me going through the same thing, I was a little depressed, but I made it through.” But as a result of her radiation treatment, she had new problems.

Her period, which had stopped during chemo and radiation, returned, with a vengeance, some-
times lasting seven to eight days. One episode of bleeding was so heavy her mother rushed her to the emergency room.

Henry was diagnosed with endometriosis, a condition that affects the lining of a woman’s uterus. Doctors believed the tissue was invading her uterus. Two weeks later she had an operation in which doctors removed a pessary. Dr. Natasha Walker of Nu Body Fitness.

“I made it through.” But as a result of her treatment, Henry lost 32 pounds of weight. “In 10 months, she had a right to be there.” she acknowledged.

Henry’s children became motivated.”

While she was recovering, Henry’s children became motivated. “During this time they started working out,” said Henry.

The family decided to start attending line dance classes at a nearby studio.

“I found myself really not wanting to do the things that had happened to me as a young girl. I started doing ther-
apy and was diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder related to inci-
ents occurring during childhood.

She sought out a sup-
port group at St. Pete.

Several times a week, Henry’s children became motivated. “During this time they started working out,” said Henry. She spotted by the facility’s director, Rick Yovanowski, who invited her and her children to attend free line dance classes at their center. She took him up on it.

Today, in classes with Clearwater and Largo, traveling with the Em-
brace Life Groove Squad to competitions and par-
ties and doing community service events, Henry has become a line dance fa-
tus in the Tampa Bay area. She said she finds her new job as an IT An-
alyst for the county, where she feels her skills and tal-
ents are used rather than dissipated, fulfilling.

Embrace Life Groove Squad is a fun and ful-
filling and many ladies of Line Dance Connection, a five-year-old troop heading from Tampa. Queen Sheila and her fun-
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For more information on the Embrace Life Groove Squad’s upcoming events, visit Urban Soul Line Dance on Facebook. To reach J.A. Jones, JJones@tampa.com.

Pinellas County School news

Dancing connection and Embrace Life Groove Squad at the Ridgecrest YMCA

The late application period for Choice Pro-
grams is underway

Many magnet, fundamental and career programs have seats available for the 2019-2020 school year.

Geographic area restrictions for several programs have been liberal, allowing students who live in areas the far city to apply. Students should apply, schools with available seats will contact parents to schedule a visit.

Parents can also contact program coordinators to find out the status of their late applications.

For information about Choice Programs, visit www.pcsb.org/choice. If you have questions, call Student Assessment at 727-588-2087.

Summer Enrichment Program in underway

It is time for the Florida Department of Educa-
tion’s annual Exceptional Student Education Parent Survey. Each year, the department surveys parents of an individual education plan (IEP) who receive special education services to determine how well schools are partnering with them and pro-
moting their involvement in their children’s educa-
tion.

If your child attends a Pinellas County public school and receives special education services, please take the survey. The survey helps the state and the school district improve their educational services for children with special needs and their families.

The survey can be accessed online at www.surveymonkey.com. They can or complete a paper survey distributed by their child’s school. If you have any questions or need a paper survey, contact Tracy McMullen. 727-588-0892 or mmcmullen@pcsb.org.

Summer Bridge registration is underway

Registration for Summer Bridge began on Mon-
day, March 25. Summer Bridge program provides opportunities for students to maintain success when the next school year begins.

Most elementary, middle and high school Summer Bridge programs will be June 11 to July 19. Programs will be place Monday through Thursday, 8-1:30 p.m.

For more information on Summer Bridge visit www.pcsb.org/summerbridge.

The community news

Weekly Challenger, Thursday, April 11, 2019

3
Before high school to play at LSU. Clayton asked the coach to come visit him at his flimsy Louisiana home. It turned out that he had not worked his tail off at Sam’s Club, and the manager there had not paid him. He was good at his work, but not at his other jobs. So, he had to do a better job. He didn’t get paid, so he couldn’t pay his rent. Clayton started putting more time into his work, and he started making more money. He started thinking about his future, and he decided to go to college. He applied to and was awarded a scholarship to the University of St. Petersburg. She asked the Ep.
Students. Three college credits will be earned in a fun week-long writing camp with Keep St. Pete Lit teachers! All students will explore storytelling through play, art, writing, and zine-making in a welcoming environment. 2019 Creative Writing Summer Camp is for ages children ages 9-12. The camp is PRICE REDUCED for low-income students. If you don’t qualify for low-income status, tuition is $150.00 per week.

Camp takes place at Morean Center for Clay, 430 22nd St. S, St. Petersburg. For more information and to register for camp, log on to keepstpetelit.org.

Morean Center for Clay

Students have the unique opportunity to meet with city leaders weekly to further their understanding of local government and municipal policies. Through civic leadership workshops and meetings facilitated by the St. Petersburg City Council meetings, community meetings, and selected department presentations. Students will become familiar with the day-to-day tasks and the planning that happens behind the scenes to bring ideas to fruition.

The program runs June 13 – July 17, 2019. General program components include:

• Preparing creative solutions to solve issues in the city, as selected by students.
• Attending City Council meetings, committee meetings, and selected department presentations
• Developing administrative skills
• Touring the evidence locker rooms at the new St. Petersburg Police headquarters

Goals

• Introduce students to local government structure and work in the public sphere
• Foster interest in leadership and civic matters
• Create a high school to career pipeline to ensure a diverse and prepared public sector workforce
• Create an opportunity for our youth to address city issues
• Strengthen inter-generational relationships and improve adult knowledge of youth
• Develop skills and abilities in a new cohort of civic leaders and professionals
• Ideally every student can impact their communities
• Become aware of the voting process and registration rules

Candidate Requirements: Young adults eligible for high school government and municipal policy. Through workshops, presentations, and camps in a fun week-long writing camp with Keep St. Pete Lit teachers! All students will explore storytelling through play, art, writing, and zine-making in a welcoming environment. 2019 Creative Writing Summer Camp is for ages children ages 9-12. The camp is PRICE REDUCED for low-income students. If you don’t qualify for low-income status, tuition is $150.00 per week.

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Summer youth opportunities and camps

This is more than great rates

It will be held June 2 through July 10 from 9:30-1:30 p.m. at St. Pete

Berg College Midtown campus, 2460 22nd St. S, St. Petersburg. The program features hands on STEAM activities, including working with drones and career explo-

ration and education trips and fun, but it is also a time for enrichment, exploration and starting off summer right.

The Cecil B. Reams Summer Enrichment Program is a free summer camp for 8-11th graders featuring Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Math (STEAM) activities. It will be held June 2 through July 10 from 9:30-1:30 p.m. at St. Pete

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The capital, Addis Ababa, is a sprawling city of about 5 million people. The Orthodox Christian church of the Ethiopian Empire (Axum) is a major landmark in the city, with churches that were chiseled and cut into the mountain stone during the 12th century A.D., long before Columbus made his trip to America. Ethiopia is the oldest in the world and one of the oldest in the region that borders along the Nile. Ethiopia was the first Christian nation in the African continent (The sovereign nation of Liberia is often described as the “Christian nation” of the Nile because it was created in 1847 by the United States). All of the other African nations or ethnic groups lost their independence or were enslaved, raped, looted and controlled, but not Ethiopia. Ethiopia fought back against Italy and won. They maintained who they were for centuries and now we can step forward into the 21st century with pride.

Located in Lalibela are the first Christian churches that were chiseled and cut into the mountain stone during the 12th century A.D. The Orthodox Christian World Heritage city of Lalibela. It’s an early 13th century A.D. church which is located in Lalibela, the holy city of the Ethiopian Empire. Lalibela is an early 13th century A.D. church which is located in Lalibela, the holy city of the Ethiopian Empire. According to the Ethiopian Orthodox faith, it is a holy site, a place where Holy Christ was born. The Orthodox Christians of Ethiopia have maintained who they had been for centuries and now we can step forward into the 21st century with pride.

The Ethiopian Empire (Axum) made its mark in the northeast region of the African continent around 980 B.C. in the time before Christ. Ancient African kings such as Solomon, Nebuchadnezzar, and King David (which had language and cultural similarities) were at some point in history considered as a part of the Axumian Empire. According to Ethiopian history, it had a powerful and strong influence on the Red Sea trading system, as well as the rise and development of Egypt. Although Christianity existed in Ethiopia very early after the death of Christ (Acts 8:26-28), it was not until 330 A.D. that leaders and rulers declared it as an official religion. Ethiopia was the first Christian region of Africa and gives the world hope.

The Addis Ababa buildings represent a blending of traditional and modern design that reflect different eras of architectural developments occurring in all parts of the city. In the mix of development, there are older distinct structures such as churches, schools, museums, squares, universities—some dating back as far as the 500s—still remain. Uniquely, the Addis Ababa buildings represent a blending of traditional and modern design that reflect different eras of architectural developments occurring in all parts of the city. In the mix of development, there are older distinct structures such as churches, schools, museums, squares, universities—some dating back as far as the 500s—still remain. The capital, Addis Ababa, is a sprawling city of about 5 million people. The Orthodox Christian church of the Ethiopian Empire (Axum) is a major landmark in the city, with churches that were chiseled and cut into the mountain stone during the 12th century A.D., long before Columbus made his trip to America. Ethiopia is the oldest in the world and one of the oldest in the region that borders along the Nile. Ethiopia was the first Christian nation in the African continent (The sovereign nation of Liberia is often described as the “Christian nation” of the Nile because it was created in 1847 by the United States). All of the other African nations or ethnic groups lost their independence or were enslaved, raped, looted and controlled, but not Ethiopia. Ethiopia fought back against Italy and won. They maintained who they were for centuries and now we can step forward into the 21st century with pride.

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DAB Community Services offers free diabetes education program

By J.A. Jones
Staff Writer

PINELLAS COUNTY — According to the County 2018 Community Health Assessment, 13.1 percent of surveyed Pinellas adults have been diagnosed with diabetes. The county’s death rate from diabetes (20.5 per 100,000) is higher than the state average (19.9 per 100,000).

Uncontrolled diabetes can have serious consequences. It is the most common cause of blindness, kidney failure and amputations in adults and a leading cause of heart disease and stroke.

Health Services Advisory Group, Inc. (HSAG), Florida’s Medicaid Quality Improvement agency, works with physicians, hospitals and health providers to improve the care of people on Medicare Through their Everyone with Diabetes County (EDC) program, they have established peer educators and trainers to offer diabetes self-management education classes.

The classes help people with diabetes and pre-diabetics learn skills to effectively manage their disease through healthy eating, being physically active, self-monitoring blood glucose, taking medication, problem-solving, reducing risks and handling complications.

Classes are taught for two hours each week for six weeks and cover different topics each session. There is no cost to participate.

Developing and Building Community Services (DABCS) Inc.—a nonprofit organization—includes building the sustainability of Pinellas communities by offering service programs that help inform the community on ways to lead healthier, happier lives so patients with HSAG to help educate their community.

DABCS is now offering free EDC six-week self-management program to community churches, community centers, senior citizens organizations and schools that promote health services or classes to adults who are Medicare recipients.

“My first thought was to understand diabetes,” said Faye Watson of DABCS. While she knew a diabetes was impacting a large number of people in South Pinellas, she said she was shocked to find out how many people are impacted.

According to the Florida Department of Health’s Pinellas County, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention states that while the number of people diagnosed with the disease has tripled nationally in the last two decades, one out of every four Americans doesn’t know they have it.

The Florida Department of Health’s estimates that more than 2.4 million people in the state have full onset diabetes, while at least 5.8 million more Floridians are prediabetic.

It lists diabetes as the seventh leading cause of death in the state.

Watson travels the field to recruit eligible participants who have been diagnosed with diabetes or prediabetes to give them a better understanding of how to self-manage their condition.

As a certified peer educator, she teaches diabetes self-management classes.

She explained that a large part of the training program is focused on helping participants understand how diabetes impacts their lives from the microbiome—including the digestive system—to overall health.

In the program, participants are encouraged to talk beyond their disease to create relationships the participants have started building with each other.

“The relationship the participants have started building with each other is a huge part of what is working. We’re not just teaching people how to manage their disease, we’reamplying food. I recommend anyone with diabetes or pre-diabetes to form a support group, and Faye is encouraging us to support each other.”

For more information or to bring the program to your facility or group, you or someone you know is a Medicare beneficiary with diabetes or prediabetes, contact Faye Watson at 727-450-2084, or by email at Faye@dabc8inc.org.

At Suncoast Hospice, your loved one is our priority. For more than 40 years, we have provided compassionate life-care changing care to patients and their families. Our community-based hospice is the only Pinellas County hospice:

• With free standing specialized care centers providing continuous medical care if your loved one has uncontrolled pain and symptoms — improving their quality of life and your peace of mind.
• Where expert staff are supported by nearly 2,000 community volunteers, helping us provide the best possible care for your loved one.

With a local foundation that supports services and care not paid for by insurance, this means your donations and support of our hospice stay in your community.

• That’s part of the larger Empath Health network including palliative care, home health, elder care, advance care planning and more – offering complete support for your loved one.

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Violet Prepost controls her diabetes through medication, diet, exercise and education. She highly recommends the class.

“Excellent class,” Prepost said. “There is lots of information on helping to control diabetes and diet and understanding how the body works with food. I recommend anyone to take the class even if they don’t have diabetes now and want to understand.

Watson believes a large part of obstacles working within the program is the relationships the participants have started building with each other. It is my hope they can maintain these relationships and build support groups beyond this six-week training,” she shared.

For instance, Tilled Johnson is a disabled veteran who was told he had diabetes but not what could happen if he didn’t keep it in control or even how to control it. He said the classes are an eye opener, and listening to other people’s experiences helped him understand the severity of the disease and the need to take responsibility.

“Changing my diet is the hardest challenge next exercise because I walk every day. The class makes you care about people with diabetes, not just yourself. The information is a wake-up call, and I can’t wait to attend. Mr. Watson is encouraging us to form a support group, and I think that is a good idea,” he stated.

As a peer educator, Cornelia Johnson is a diabetic and has spent the last nine years training in any facility building with each other.

“Like medication and diet, we’re teaching people with diabetes, not just them. I think that is a good idea,” he stated.

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COMMUNITY NEWS

ST. PETERSBURG ALUMNUE CHAPETER OF DELTA SIGMA THETA SORORITY

Anchoring our Hearts In

Love PRAYER BREAKFAST

SUNDAY, APRIL 14, 2019
8:30 AM - 11:30AM
HILTON ST. PETERSBURG CARILLON PARK
950 LAKE CARILLON DRIVE, ST. PETERSBURG, FL 33716

Tickets are available at www.stpetedeltas.org A portion of the proceeds will benefit scholarships and community projects.

Preston and Ada Timmons with their niece Shelby Carter

Naomi and Titus 2 Covenant Alliance sponsors kidney drive

PASTORS, from front page

“We are so grateful. We read and learned the Bible and scripture and said if you ask not you have not, and we asked and received,” said Timmons.

“Standing with my husband, I want to really express to you the heart felt thankfulness for the love you rally around,” said Ada Timmons, Preston’s wife of 31 years.

The couple attends Mt. Moriah Missionary Baptist Church but considers Word of Life Fellowship Church as their home away from home.

Pastor Hodge praised his wife for creating NT2CA as a vehicle to help others.

“She’s a big fan of blessing people while they are alive. She’s a big fan of when there’s a need that God presents to you, you’re not supposed to walk away from it or hand it off to someone else,” he said, noting that his wife was feeling under the weather and opted not to go on stage.

The afternoon was filled with fun, fashion and fellowship. The crowds went wild over the fashions and the beautiful women and handsome gentlemen donning them.

Silk n Jeans Modeling Group has been dazzling Tampa Bay audiences since its inception in 1968. Founded by the late Dr. Fredrick Walls and Gloria Bailey, their objective was to develop confident individuals, empowering them to discover their full potential while leaving them with a lasting source of pride.

Marilyn Turman has modeled with the group since the early 1980s, but at the April 6 show, she served as the fashion commentator.

“Our society always does acknowledge our value and our beauty and who we are. And so it’s important, especially with our young people that we show them an image of themselves and beauty and class and confidence,” she said.

The numbers vary from year to year, but there are currently about 30 adult models and 15 youngsters, who are a part of their Klassy Kids Modeling Group. Young boys and girls from age 7-17 are under the tutelage of Fred Dixon, Jr.

“It’s not just about the modeling, it’s tied to their grades or academics and making sure that they’re on point with that,” Turman asserted. “They don’t get to go on stage if they’re not doing well in school and being disciplined.”

She said the modeling group allows the youth to participate in something that instills confidence and value in them.

Silk n Jeans celebrated their 50th anniversary last December with a sold-out fashion show to end all fashion shows. That was Franchesca Dixon’s first time on stage.

“Her mother, Vera Clemons, started modeling with the troupe under Dr. Walls. Clemons and taught many of the models at Saturday’s event. It took Franchesca Dixon 15 years after the death of her mother in 2003 to model, and only being her second time on stage, she strutted her stuff like a pro.

“I really like modeling,” she said.

If you’d like to join Silk n Jeans, call 727-443-1626. Along with helping Timmons raise money for a kidney transplant, the fashion show proceeds will also benefit other NT2CA initiatives, which include their support for girls in college and their mentoring program with Pinellas County Schools.
COMMUNITY NEWS

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Sunday School 9:30 a.m. Praise Time 10:45 a.m. Morning Worship 10:45 a.m. Tuesday Night Live - Prayer Service & Bible Study 7 p.m. Come Worship With the First Baptist Family

BETHEL COMMUNITY BAPTIST CHURCH 2901 - 54th Avenue South St. Petersburg, FL 33712 (727) 866-2567
Sunday Worship Service: 10:00 a.m. Mid-Week Worship: Wednesday 7:00 p.m.

INSPIRATIONS

BY DIERDRE DOWNING-JACKSON
Answering GOD’s Call

“I today I feel a newness in the depths of my heart and soul; for years GOD has been using my gift, to write of HIS gifts of old. I have learned to not question the how, where, why or even when. I feel GOD’s amazing inspiration, living and growing within.

To ask my JESUS every day to use me as an instrument of His peace; Reminds me that HE never fails and that HIS promises never cease.

Today I thank the Holy Spirit for directing and guiding me; And thank my Heavenly Father for HIS son JESUS who set me free.

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And the Lord said unto Moses, Go unto the people, and sanctify them to day and to morrow, and let them wash their clothes.

And be ready against the third day: for the third day the Lord will come in the sight of all the people upon Mount Sinai...

The book of Exodus continues to offer wisdom to us as Pastor Brown seeks continuous times to bring God’s word for us and now as we look at the children of Israel’s journey under the title ‘Going After It’.

The word for then and now as God instructs Moses to say to the people, get in a place where they are ready and text messages and emails to us as Pastor Brown continues ‘Going After It.’ The question ‘Are You Going to join us on Sunday?’. As we continue ‘Going After It?’ we can learn as we continue the third day they were to bring garments and text messages and emails to us as Pastor Brown continues ‘Going After It.’ The question ‘Are You Going to join us on Sunday?’. As we continue ‘Going After It?’ we can learn as we continue the third day they were to bring garments and text messages and emails to us as Pastor Brown continues ‘Going After It.’ The question ‘Are You Going to join us on Sunday?’. As we continue ‘Going After It?’ we can learn as we continue the third day they were to bring garments and text messages and emails to us as Pastor Brown continues ‘Going After It.’ The question ‘Are You Going to join us on Sunday?’. 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