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ELIE WIESEL ♦ 1928-2016

Author, Nobel laureate brought Holocaust to light

BY MARY ROURKE AND VALERIE J. NELSON
Los Angeles Times

Elie Wiesel, the Nazi concentration camp survivor, Nobel Peace Prize winner and author whose seminal work "Night" is regarded as one of the most powerful achievements in Holocaust literature, has died,

Israel's Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial said. He was 87.

Based on his experiences and those of other Holocaust survivors, Wiesel wrote dozens of semi-autobiographical books, memoirs and plays. His message "of peace, atonement and human dignity" earned him the Nobel in 1986.

For a decade, he had remained silent about the horrors he witnessed after

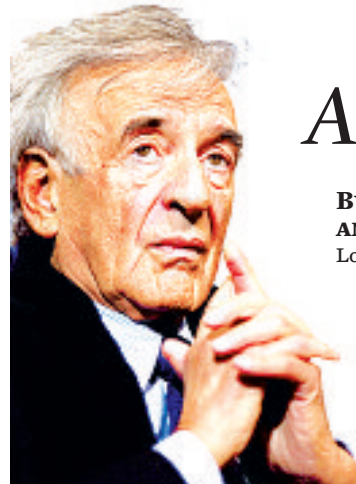
being transported by train to Auschwitz with his parents and three sisters when he was 15.

After a year, he was liberated at the end of World War II with other prisoners from the German camp Buchenwald — and soon learned that his mother and younger sister had been murdered in the

In memory

The editor of the South Florida Jewish Journal reflects on Wiesel's legacy and a personal meeting. **23A**

See WIESEL, 23A



MARLINS ON A MISSION

Sunday night's game at Fort Bragg, N.C., will be the first on a U.S. military base

BY CRAIG DAVIS
Staff writer

ATLANTA — It wasn't that the work day began before dawn at Fort Bragg, N.C. It was the relentless physical pace in striving for excellence that heightened the appreciation Mike Dunn already felt for the military personnel who toil tirelessly at the world's largest military base.

The Miami Marlins relief pitcher got a close-up look at their spirit and dedication during four days of joining in training and interacting with soldiers as part of a group of major league

players who participated in Fox Sports' "Spring Training to the Troops" tour in February 2014.

Dunn recalls the experience as life-changing, and he is excited about the opportunity he and his teammates have to provide a few hours of entertainment for the troops at Fort Bragg when the Marlins face the Atlanta Braves there Sunday in what is believed to be the first regular-season game staged by a professional sports league on a U.S. military base.

It will be televised na-

See MARLINS, 22A



Appetite for DESTRUCTION

At an alarming rate, two non-native termite species are making a home in South Florida. Maybe your home.



AMY BETH BENNETT/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Formosan termites have badly damaged the home of Chris Ellis, who lives west of Delray Beach.

Schools urged to teach students 'people skills'

Employers want more than diploma

BY BRIANA ERICKSON
Staff writer

In addition to the 3Rs, Florida students may soon be taught the people skills that local businesses demand.

CareerSource Florida, the statewide workforce agency, is asking that public schools include in their curriculums such skills as inter-

viewing, communication, teamwork, time management, listening and networking skills.

"These are skills that people would need to succeed in any employment situation," but typically students are not taught these in school, said Tom Veenstra, director of support services at CareerSource Palm Beach, which helps connect businesses with job seekers.

And they are essential for

See SKILLS, 23A

BY DAVID FLESHLER
Staff writer

The ground floor of Chris Ellis' house in West Delray is a showpiece, with big windows that look out on the sun-splashed vista of a golf course.

The second floor is a horror — with exposed beams that look like shredded wheat, floors gone and walls ripped out, a testament to the destructive force of the Formosan termite.

"I have no upstairs at all," Ellis said. "Two bedrooms are gone. The floors are gone. I've never seen anything so destructive. My husband took it hard because this house is his pride and

"I have no upstairs at all. Two bedrooms are gone. The floors are gone. ... My husband took it hard because this house is his pride and joy."

Chris Ellis, whose West Delray home was invaded by Formosan termites

joy. I think it was horrible, just horrible. I didn't realize this little bug could be so destructive."

This little bug, and its cousin the Asian termite, will pay visits to an increasing number of South Florida houses. A new study by scientists at the University of Florida says the Asian and Formosan termites, non-natives that arrived in the past few decades, have spread "exponentially" from the Keys through Palm Beach County, multiplying by many times the number of structures within their range.

The number of South Florida

See TERMITES, 22A

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Money

REAL ESTATE

Paul Owers

Office complex sells for \$86.5M

Steelbridge Capital has acquired SunTrust Center, a 270,000-square-foot office complex in downtown Fort Lauderdale, for \$86.5 million, property records show. Steelbridge bought the two-building property at 501 and 515 E. Las Olas Blvd. from SunTrust Banks Inc., the lead tenant who also agreed to long-term retail and office leases in both buildings as part of the deal. The property includes a 17-story office tower and three-story annex. The new owner said it plans a major renovation, which will include upgrading technology and adding retail space to the annex. SunTrust Center is 77 percent occupied, according to Steelbridge, which is based in Miami with another office in Chicago. This is the second Fort Lauderdale investment for Steelbridge, which also owns Cypress Financial Center. It bought the 200,000-square-foot office building at 500 N. Andrews Ave. for \$32.55 million in 2014, records show.



SunTrust Center

Industrial park fully occupied, officials say

The 108,000-square-foot East Port Center, a Fort Lauderdale industrial park, has reached full occupancy, officials said. Cayoga America Inc. filled the last vacancy by signing a lease for 7,000 square feet. Berger Commercial Realty said it represented the building owner, East Port Center Joint Venture. The park is at the northeast quadrant of Interstate 95 and Marina Mile Road. In a separate transaction, Berger represented the seller, Workers Realty LLC, in the \$200,000 sale of a 1,167-square-foot office building at 361 E. Commercial Blvd. in Fort Lauderdale. The buyer was Mustafa Saleh, who intends to operate a pet grooming center.

Law firm to offer free condo rules seminars

The Katzman Garfinkel law firm will present three free seminars for community associations in July. A course covering previous topics and lessons learned is scheduled for noon to 2 p.m. Tuesday July 5 at the E. Pat Larkins Community Center, 520 NW Third St., Pompano Beach. Bill and Susan Raphan, state education facilitators for the law firm, will teach all three courses. To register, call 954-486-7774.

Operator buys shopping center for \$13.5 million

EDENS, an owner and operator of shopping centers, paid \$13.5 million for Lakeside Centre in Boca Raton, records show. Ocean Properties Ltd. sold the 22.8-acre site at 8144 Glades Road. Marshalls, HomeGoods and Off Broadway Shoe Warehouse anchor the 161,000-square-foot center. It was built in 1991. EDENS, based in Columbia, S.C., has a regional office in Miami.

Brokerage seeks tenants for shopping plaza

The Katz & Associates real estate brokerage is handling leases for The Shops at Mission Lakes near Wellington. The 27,000-square-foot plaza is at 5500-5516 S. State Road 7. Existing tenants include Sal's Italian Ristorante, GNC, Supercuts and Heartland Dental. Katz is seeking tenants for two 1,300-square-foot spaces.

Staff researcher Barbara Hijek contributed to this report.

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SOLUTIONS

How to shop for a plant that will be hard to kill

BY ALISON BOWEN
Tribune Newspapers

You love the idea of plants on the porch or perking up the windowsill. But past experiences featured a thumb more black than green. So how should you shop for plants that might be — how do we put this — hard to kill?

Robin Vice, who works in the nursery department at Lowe's, is used to first-time plant owners coming in with fear. She's found that telling customers stories about their new green neighbors helps. "This is a living thing, like your child or like your pet," she said. "You have to kind of create a story of itself: It's going to need this and it's going to need that. It can't be completely forsaken once you put it in the ground."

Just as you would with a pet, think through what it will need: light, water, space, attention.

"The microclimates of where these plants are going to be is probably the most important thing to discuss," said John Diversey, a manager at Chicago's Gethsemane Garden Center.

Here's what experts tell "terrified" (in the words of Vice) new plant owners.

Start with the light; read the label. "The very first thing that they need to think about is what kind of sun they have," Vice said. "Do they have sun all day? Is it completely in shade? (And) which way their house faces?"

Wherever you want to put a plant, take a Saturday and watch the light for a few hours, monitoring how much you have and where it



LOWE'S

Most herbs are easy to grow in garden pots or on a windowsill with indirect light.

falls. "Pay attention for a couple of days before you decide to shop, and then you'll be able to know more accurately what will work and what you might as well not bother looking at," she said. Also, look at that label. Most plant labels will have zone information; the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Plant Hardiness Zone Map is based on things like light, temperature and duration of exposure to cold.

Cacti are popular for a reason. Yes, desert dwellers can be a good option. "They don't need a lot," Vice said. But don't think that their desert nature means you can just ignore them. "Remember what it's like where this little guy came from," Vice said. "It is hot for days on end, incredibly hot and no rain, and then there's a downpour, and then it's incredibly hot again."

Hop on the herb trend. Consider herbs to add into meals made from farmers market veggies. "Rosemary, thyme, oregano, tarragon," Diversey suggested. "All those dry,

woody herbs that give us that wonderful cooking."

The dry herbs are the easiest, he suggested, because "they don't require as much water, pruning and light."

"Herbs are pretty forgiving," he said. "Everybody says, 'Oh my gosh, how could I grow these herbs?' They have this great reputation of being so hard."

But, in fact, they might do well in a windowsill container, where they can get indirect light.

Collect plants with confidence. Don't be like most first-time plant owners who underestimate their abilities. Consider getting more than one.

Vice suggests going with annuals. Maybe petunias, calibrachoa or marigolds. And if you're considering a planter — think 2 feet by about 6 inches — mix it up.

"Look for plants that will do three things: Something that will be tall in the pot, something that will be medium-sized and then something that will drape."

Finally, don't be nervous about asking someone in a store for help.

"Don't be intimidated," Diversey said. "Ask people. That's why they're there."

Converted silo provides cozy vacation home space

BY SCOTT SOWERS
The Washington Post

As the owner and operator of Port City Brewing Co., Bill Butcher is certainly familiar with silos, since he uses one at his business in Alexandria, Va.

But when his designer pitched the concept of a silo as a major component of a vacation home he was designing for Butcher and his wife, Karen, the couple said not so fast.

"We had an ongoing dialogue with (the designer) on design decisions," Bill Butcher said. "And for the most part, they come up with great ideas. But when he suggested the silo we said, 'Hmm, not sure.'"

Their designer, Mark Turner of Green Spur, a design-build firm based in Falls Church, Va., said the initial skepticism didn't deter him.

"We've always been intrigued by silos," Turner said. "So when you have a client who runs a beer factory with a silo on the side of the building, it's a pretty easy sell."

On the 89 acres the Butchers own along the Rappahannock River in Marshall, Va., sits Turner's vision: a simple, rectangular home with a front porch. It's sheltered by a metal roof and clad with board and batten sheathing painted green.

The main section of the home's downstairs has a living room, dining room and kitchen combination. Upstairs includes a kids room with bunk beds, a guest room, the master bath, guest bath, kids bath and a kids sleeping loft.

The silo that houses the master bedroom upstairs and a den downstairs sits on one end and is connected to the main section of the house via a stepped-down entranceway. The transitional space works as a



JOHN MCDONNELL/WASHINGTON POST

Bill and Karen Butcher's Virginia vacation home silo houses the master bedroom and a den.

mudroom that includes a powder room and laundry room.

The silo came from Brock Grain Systems, which works out of several locations in the Midwest. A crew of silo erectors assembled it on site in about six hours. "They do the roof first, jack up the roof using what looks kind of like car jacks, add a 4-foot section, then jack that up and add another section till it's done," said Turner.

The den on the ground level of the silo is illuminated with natural light from the windows. On the second level, the windows are combined with an overhead custom fixture lit by LEDs. Walking through the space elicits a peaceful feeling, like strolling into a cathedral but with an added quirkiness factor raised by thoughts of grain storage.

"It may not look like it, but there's actually quite a bit of storage space in the house," said Karen Butcher, a lawyer with Morgan Lewis, an international law firm with an office in Washington.

The Butchers bought the 89 acres at the end of a dead-end road near Marshall when the real estate market was booming in the past decade. The deal included an interim house that they planned to use and then resell once they finished building their dream vacation house. But their plans soon changed.

"Sometimes life gets in the way," said Bill Butcher. "We went ahead, hired an architect, had plans made in 2008 just before the market crashed. We had two little kids at the time and decided to put the whole thing on hold for a while."

In 2013, the Butchers saw a newspaper article about a house built by Turner. The designer grew up on a ranch in Wyoming and has a taste for rustic buildings inspired by barns and farmhouses.

The Butchers pushed aside the house plans they already had, and, according to Turner, they told him to "do something cool."

And what could be cooler than sleeping in a silo? Opposite the silo, the open-plan living area is lit by south-facing windows flanking the fireplace, which also provide a source of natural light for the mostly white kitchen.

Beyond the kitchen lies an outdoor fire pit, and beyond that is a unique outbuilding the family has dubbed "The Overlook." "It's a place to hang out. There's a great feeling of seclusion out there," said Bill Butcher.

Scott Sowers is a freelancer.

Good mortgage rate has downside

BY LEW SICHELMAN
United Feature Syndicate

In May, the average 30-year loan rate was 3.6 percent, the lowest it had been in 36 months. But there is a downside.

When rates slip, points out Jonathan Smoke, chief economist at Realtor.com, the availability of credit declines. Lenders pull in their horns because it becomes more difficult to make a profit. "With little margin, lenders become more risk-averse," Smoke says.

While Smoke says he believes mortgage rates are likely to remain under 4 percent through the summer and into the early fall, they could spring up to more than 4 percent by the holidays. His advice: Stay on top of rates, work closely with your lender and become familiar with options like interest rate locks and float-downs (a type of rate reduction).

"Given how volatile rates have been this year," he says, "borrowers are likely to see both lower and higher rates from time of application to time of closing, which is what makes these options potentially attractive. However, they do come at a price, so you need to weigh the potential gains against the costs with your lender."

Above and beyond: There is garden-variety customer service, as practiced by many real estate professionals. There is great customer service, practiced by some. And then there's Jeff Miller.

Miller, a loan officer with PrimeLending in Tucson, Ariz., outshone them all in April, when he officiated the wedding of clients Donovan Riley and Rebecca Noreen.

When working to secure the engaged couple's mortgage in January, Miller half-jokingly told them that he was ordained, and that if they needed an officiant for their wedding, he would be happy to step in. He said he never expected to actually receive a call, but in March he did.

The pair was married, by their mortgage officer, on April 9.

A mortgage is definitely a long-term commitment, but this one came with an "until death do us part" rider. Now that's customer service.

A jet with every condo: President Herbert Hoover promised "a chicken in every pot." Now, South Florida real estate developer Tim Lobanov is promising a jet with every condo.

To boost sales at the Aurora development in Sunny Isles Beach, Lobanov, managing director of the Verzasca Group, is offering complimentary one-year memberships with JetSmarter, a service that allows members to charter private jets.

Surprisingly, prices at the 61-unit boutique condominium on the famed Collins Avenue seem fairly reasonable, at least for South Florida: \$840,000 for a two-bedroom apartment, \$920,000 for two bedrooms and a den and \$1.4 million for a three-bedroom unit.

Program finds ideal house: There's no doubt that the internet has allowed would-be homebuyers to do much of their searching online. There are about 123 million unique visitors per month to the top three real estate web portals, most of whom are seeing what's available and reading the latest "how-to" articles.

Now, QValue, a Denver technology company, has developed a formula that allows the computer to find specific houses based on what buyers say they want. In a test in April, a buyer told the computer and an agent what he liked, and the machine and the real estate professional went about the task of finding just the right house.

The experiment went on for three consecutive days, with the buyer entering different requirements each day. And each day, the computer turned in the buyer's favorite.

The difference: The QValue algorithm runs on "emotionally triggering" qualitative criteria, as opposed to quantitative measures such as price and number of bedrooms.

More Chinese buyers: Chinese investment in the U.S. real estate market has surpassed \$300 billion and is still growing despite China's economic weakness and increased currency controls, according to new research.

Between 2010 and 2015, Chinese buyers bought \$93 billion worth of residential real estate, nearly \$208 billion of mortgage-backed securities and roughly \$17 billion of commercial real estate, including office towers and hotels. The data come from a report by the Rosen Consulting Group and the Asia Society.

Despite those numbers, direct investment from China makes up only 10 percent of all foreign investment into U.S. real estate.