



## LIVE LIKE A TOURIST

### Sarasota sends mixed message

I used to think I knew everything, and had the answers to life's biggest problems. I was wrong.



Christy FEINBERG

COLUMNIST

I recently discovered three words that strangely made my feel like a wise, old woman: "I don't know."

How do we embrace each other and end the violence? I don't know.

How do we end terrorism? I don't know.

How do we end drug addiction? I

don't know.

I faced all three questions this weekend, and while saying "I don't know" sounds defeatist, that certainly isn't my intent. I simply have no idea how to solve these problems, and I'm not naive enough anymore to think we're one Care Bear-hug away from peace and happiness. These are complicated issues, and my brain overloads during a Fantasy Football draft, so I'm not qualified to take on the world's woes.

That said ... I can still read. I can still react. And I can still tilt my head in confusion the way my Boston terrier does when I talk to him.

I lived like a tourist this weekend in downtown Sarasota. It has the feel of a big city with its construction cranes looming, but it also maintains a small-town vibe with inviting water bowls along Main Street for dogs.

Welcome to Sarasota ...

"Your kindness could kill."

Insert Boston terrier head tilt.

"Your kindness could kill" is a sign posted in many of the high-end shops and restaurants along Main Street.

The sign continues to state why you shouldn't give money to people on the street.

"In most cases, you will be helping them to buy the drugs that could kill them," states the sign.

Boston terrier head tilt transitions now to blank stare interrupted by blinks.

I don't know.

I was enjoying downtown Sarasota until I saw these signs.

I loved seeing various cultures blending together along Main Street. I heard at least four languages being spoken. I marveled at the variety of restaurants: Indian, Thai, Vietnamese, Japanese, tavern food, even Whole Foods. The farmers market on Saturdays complements Main Street and may have been the biggest one I've ever seen with fresh flowers, veggies, fruits, jewelry, artwork, meats, seafood, breads, and, of course, gifts for dogs.

I enjoyed checking out all the high-end shops, even though I walked out empty-handed as the price tags are a bit out of my budget.

I took photographs of the sculptures and architecture, and admired the personal touches that give Sarasota its cute identity — especially the subtle message on a Main Street roundabout: "Welcome buddies."

"Welcome buddies" ... "Your kindness could kill."

Your confusing signs left me sad, and not wanting to return. But then I walked to the waterfront, to the famous statue, "Unconditional Surrender."

"The profound joy portrayed in this sculpture was prompted by the spontaneous surrender of the Japanese, thus ending World War II on August 14, 1945," states the sign. "Among the celebrants in Times Square in New York City were a United States sailor and a nurse, embracing amidst the multitude of joy makers."

J. Seward Johnson created the large sculpture. WWII veteran Jack Curran bought it and donated it to Sarasota.

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### CORRECTION

In a July 15 article "Area officials beefing up security" Sarasota Memorial Hospital chair Greg Carter was incorrectly identified as Sarasota Memorial Hospital CEO David Verinder. Verinder was not in attendance at the Council of Government meeting. *The North Port Sun* regrets the error.

## Jury: Mellquist guilty in landlord's

### Warm Mineral Springs man faces life in prison for 2003 killing

By JONATHAN SCHOLLES  
STAFF WRITER

SARASOTA — Deliberating for a little more than an hour, a jury found John Alan Mellquist guilty of second-degree murder in connection with the slaying of his landlord 13 years ago.

Mellquist, 57, who previously has been arrested but is a first time felon, faces life in prison. Sentencing is slated for 1:30 p.m. Monday, Aug. 29 at Judge Lynn N. Silvertooth Judicial Center.

After the verdict was read, Mellquist was silent, showing no emotion or remorse. He was handcuffed by Sarasota County Sheriff's deputies and removed from the courtroom without a word.

Spanning five days, scores of expert and key witness testimonies and instrumental DNA evidence, six jurors determined Mellquist was responsible for the murder of Anneliese



MELLQUIST

Schweickardt, a German citizen whom Mellquist rented a room at the time.

Schweickardt, 68, was in the process of evicting Mellquist from her Sarasota house during the time of her disappearance, which is believed to be April 9, 2003.

Mellquist was arrested in Warm Mineral Springs a decade after Schweickardt vanished. He was

homeless and living in a tent at the time.

Two inmates who served time with Mellquist testified in court that in a drunken rage, following an argument, he shouldered Schweickardt's bedroom door open, dragged her by the hair to the kitchen, where he stabbed her with scissors before killing her with a knife.

Multiple agencies — including Florida Department of Law Enforcement, Bode Cellmark Forensics and DNA Labs International — testified DNA was found throughout the Monte Rosso Road house, matching a female profile believed to be

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## Beef 'O' Brady's wins prestigious award



SUN PHOTO BY MADISON HEID

Glenda and John Downey, owners of the Beef O'Brady's restaurant off Sumter Boulevard, don celebratory smiles with their 2015 operational excellence award that they won last week in Orlando.

By MADISON HEID  
STAFF WRITER

NORTH PORT — John and Glenda Downey are known to North Port residents as owning the local "Cheers" bar — where everybody knows your name.

They are franchisees of the Beef 'O' Brady's restaurant, located at 1037 N. Sumter Boulevard.

The franchise recognized the hard work all the employees have put in at the restaurant, and awarded them recognition for operational excellence.

The franchise held its 2016 partner retreat in Orlando, where five awards were given out to five restaurants. There are 150 Beef 'O' Brady's locations in Florida alone, and 209 locations total in 23 states. It is a franchise of family sports pubs, with an Irish flair.

"I think the operational excellence

award is the neatest award," said John Downey, whose grandfather immigrated from Ireland to America. "It encompasses everything and everyone, including sales, cleanliness and overall operations."

In relation to winning the award, Glenda Downey said, "It felt great."

Other awards given out included a marketing award, most improved award and franchisee of the year.

In addition to the North Port location winning an award, the Punta Gorda location won the award for franchisee of the year.

The Downeys did not have a background in the restaurant business, but became involved in the restaurant when it opened in February 2006.

"We're invested in this place — it's our money," John Downey said.

The Beef 'O' Brady's menu features pizza and flatbreads, award-winning

wings, burgers and crisp salads, along with a kids' menu and a full bar for the adults.

John Downey said half of the patrons at his restaurant are regulars, which says something about the service received.

"We like making people feel like family," Glenda Downey said.

The Downeys have also given back to the community by donating food to schools and other programs in the area.

In an upcoming event, the North Port location will be hosting a ladies' night Aug. 11 from 6-8:30 p.m. The ladies will receive half off appetizers and drinks, and vendors will be available to cater to the women who attend.

Trivia night is every Tuesday, and there is a different special every day. Visit their Facebook page by searching "North Port Beefs" at [www.Facebook.com](http://www.Facebook.com).

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## GOP con: Day 1 drama

By RUSTY PRAY  
SUN CORRESPONDENT

Bill Folchi heard the speech.

Charlotte County's delegate to the Republican National Convention was on the floor in Cleveland on Monday night when Melania Trump gave a speech supporting her husband's candidacy for the Republican presidential nomination.

Her speech immediately drew comparisons to a speech made by Michelle Obama at the 2008 Democratic National Convention in Denver.

The similarities between Melania's

speech for Donald and Michelle's speech for Barack were so striking, charges of cribbing and plagiarism were fired off. Some said Melania Trump's speech was lifted virtually verbatim from Michelle Obama's. The Washington Post published a side-by-side comparison.

Folchi's take?

"I was on the floor," he said. "I wasn't in position to verify anything. I thought she gave a great, moving speech. Sitting where I was, those were her words. She didn't copy anything. The duplicated phrases were common vernacular that might have been used by anyone. Not a

big story there.

"It got the second-best reaction of the night. The best was to Rudy Giuliani's speech on immigration and trade. The audience was in a perpetual standing ovation. That was the most animated I ever saw him."

Folchi also was on the floor when a brouhaha broke out over a procedural motion that was required before the convention could formally begin. Trump opponents called for a state-by-state roll-call vote.

They turned up the volume to do so.

At one point, there seemed to be nine

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