

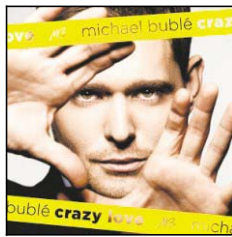
FEATURES EDITOR SUZY FLEMING LEONARD, sleonard@floridatoday.com or 242-3614

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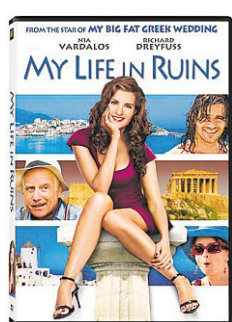
Of news you can use

Tell us your health ideas
Do you have ideas or feedback on the health and medical coverage in FLORIDA TODAY? Contact medical reporter Susan Jenks at 242-3657 or sjenks@florida.com.

Tasty benefit
Tuscany Grill will host a wine dinner to benefit the Junior League of Central and North Brevard at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday. The menu includes pan-seared sea scallops, grilled polenta bruschetta, crispy sliced duck breast, mixed grill and flourless chocolate torte for \$90. The restaurant is at 7640 N. Wickham Road No. 105 in Suntree. Call 757-7220.



New on CD
 "Crazy Love," Michael Buble
 "The List," Rosanne Cash
 "Humanoid," Tokio Hotel
 "American Ride," Toby Keith
 "Give Up the Ghost," Brandi Carlile
 "Get Lucky," Mark Knopfler
 "This Is Us," Backstreet Boys
 "Still," BeBe Winans and CeCe Winans
Joe Bonamassa Live from the Royal Albert Hall, Joe Bonamassa and Scot McFadyen



New on DVD
 "My Life in Ruins" "Year One"
 "The National Parks — America's Best Idea"
 "Nip/Tuck" — Season Five, Part Two
 "Medium": The Fifth Season
 "My Fair Lady"
 "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs"
 "Bones" — The Complete Fourth Season
 "A Miser Brothers' Christmas"
 "I Want a Dog for Christmas Charlie Brown"

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Your complete online guide to news across the Space Coast and from around the world.



Cloudy vision. Dr. Rafael Trespalacios performs a sutureless eye surgery, known as ocular reconstructive surgery, on Cathy Lewis's right eye at the Brevard Eye Center in Melbourne. Photos by Michael R. Brown, FLORIDA TODAY

Sun can produce growths on eyes

UV radiation chief culprit behind pterygium damage

BY SUSAN JENKS
FLORIDA TODAY

The wing-shaped growth on the cornea of Cathy Lewis' eye caused her considerable discomfort. "If you were at the beach and someone threw sand in your eyes, that's what it feels like," the Melbourne woman said, describing the chronic irritation from a fibrous growth, known as pterygium, on the clear, dome-shaped window of the eye. Taking its name in part from the prehistoric pterodactyl or "winged lizard," pterygium spreads slowly over the cornea's surface, doctors say. If left untreated, it can distort the cornea's shape or even cover the pupil completely, impairing vision. Surgery for the condition is often a last resort. But Lewis, 51, said surgery performed on her left eye in August was so successful, she opted for a second procedure to remove it from her right eye. "It's definitely not cosmetic," she said. The damage is inflicted by the sun's ultraviolet radiation, the condition's primary culprit. Florida residents and others living closer



Visual obstruction. Cathy Lewis has pterygium in her right eye.

What is a pterygium?

- A pinkish, wing-shaped tissue growth on the cornea, the clear dome-shaped window at the front of the eye
 - Most grow slowly throughout a person's life.
 - Pterygia are more common in sunny climates and in individuals who spend a lot of time outdoors, such as farmers, fishermen or surfers.
 - Scientists think ultraviolet light from the sun plays a major role in their development.
 - May cause significant redness or irritation, or grow large enough to cover the pupil of the eye
 - Preventive measures include wearing eyeglasses, sunglasses or hats with wide brims.
- National Eye Institute

MORE INSIDE. When eye surgery may be needed, 4D

to the equator are considered at higher risk for pterygium than residents in other areas. "I've seen a lot of it here," said Dr. Rafael Trespalacios, a cornea specialist at the Brevard Eye Center in Melbourne, who performed

the two outpatient procedures on Lewis. "The rule of thumb is that every 1 percent increase in ultraviolet ray exposure increases the incidence of pterygium by 2 percent." See EYE GROWTH, 4D



Workout for two. Rachel Leigh Cook and her dog, Cooper, test "Wii Fit Plus" in West Hollywood, Calif.

Nintendo's 'Wii Fit Plus' adds pet support

BY DERRIK J. LANG
ASSOCIATED PRESS

LOS ANGELES — Pet owners can weigh themselves with their furry friends on "Wii Fit Plus," the follow-up to the top-selling Nintendo workout game. The updated title lets players create avatars of their dogs and cats, enter information such as their pet's birthday, and use the scalelike Wii Balance Board controller to weigh themselves and their pets. The game then continues to monitor the pet's weight alongside its owner. "It's so fun to have a motivator when you're working out," said Katie Cray, Nintendo entertainment and trend marketing manager. "Obviously, if you have a dog, you're

Learn more
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probably out there walking your dog and playing with it, and that's exercise in and of itself, so it's nice to have the ability to track the progress of both your dog and yourself." "Wii Fit Plus," which launched Sunday, doesn't have any training exercises for pets. It does have several new features for users, including three strength training exercises, three yoga activities and 15 balance games. Players can customize their routines, allowing them to focus on working specific body parts.

Grant will help mentally ill use Drop-in Center

BY SUSAN JENKS
FLORIDA TODAY

The Brevard Drop-in-Center has received a \$1,500 grant from the Community Foundation of Brevard to help people with chronic mental illnesses overcome emotional or transportation barriers to its services. "People can't get to our center for many reasons," Jean McPhaden, the center's executive director, said in a prepared statement. Among them, she cited fear, anxiety, lack of motivation and an inability to navigate public transportation systems. The Babcock Street center, which opened its doors in 2006, provides a place for people with chronic and persistent mental illnesses, such as bipolar disorders or major depression, to visit, find support and take charge of the social aspect of their lives. The grant is for one year. The money to the nonprofit group was provided through the Wallburg Fund, established by the Wallburg family and given to the Community Foundation of Brevard. McPhaden said the grant money will enable volunteers to drive people to and from the center and then coach them on how to navigate area buses, including buying bus tickets for people to and from the center. Phone encouragement also will be provided, with transportation assistance repeated up to three times, depending on the need of the potential client or center member.

The National Institutes of Mental Health estimates about 26 percent of Americans older than 19 suffer from a diagnosable mental disorder in any given year. Roughly 6 percent, the federal agency says, suffer from severe mental illness, defined by the National Advisory Mental Health Council more than 15 years ago and including disorders with psychiatric symptoms such as schizophrenia, bipolar disorders and autism. The drop-in center welcomes, at no charge, anyone with a psychiatric illness, McPhaden said, as long as drop-ins have a doctor's note, an empty medical bottle with their name on it or undergo staff screening.

The expectation is the transportation initiative will lead to further growth, so the center is seeking additional members for its Board of Directors. People with a mental health diagnosis who are doing well or members of the community, business, law enforcement and local leaders interested in donating about three hours per month are urged to apply. For further information, contact McPhaden at mcpheadenj@yahoo.com or board member Mary Beth Kenkel, dean of the psychology school at Florida Tech, at 674-8104 or mkenkel@fit.edu.

INSIDE



Ouch-proof your groove

Take a lesson from the sidelined celebs on "Dancing With the Stars": If you don't prepare your body for it, you can get hurt, 7D

People's Herbal Pharmacy 5D
Fitness calendar..... 7D
Health Newsmakers 9D