



SHOPTALK
Whether angular or ample, you will be sitting pretty in these striking and comfortable chairs, **3D**



HAVE YOU TRIED . . .
Causeway Diner on Merritt Island will rock your taste buds with its pies, cakes, **3D**



In session. Curtis Arnett participates in equine-assisted psychotherapy at Forever Florida near St. Cloud. He was able to build trust and establish boundaries with one particular horse. The West Melbourne man was rendered a paraplegic in 2005 after a motorcycle accident. Photos by Rik Jesse, FLORIDA TODAY



Norris Burkes
Spirituality

Don't stand in silence when you hear hateful speech

Ocala pastor Terry Jones put the Koran on trial last month and sentenced it to be burned inside his Florida church.

In doing so, he accomplished an incredible thing: In a day when politicians can't even agree on a budget, his actions miraculously have galvanized both sides of the political aisle.

But, not in a good way.

For instance, President Barack Obama called the burning an "act of extreme intolerance and bigotry."

Before the burning, former Alaska Gov. Sarah Palin tweeted, "Koran Burning Is Insensitive, Unnecessary; Pastor Jones, Please Stand Down."

Ironically, even evangelist Pat Robertson asked his audience to "Imagine a preacher that is so egotistical that he would sacrifice the lives of missionaries and soldiers."

Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, D-Nev., best summarized the thinking when he said, "I think people should understand the consequences of what they do under the guise of religion."

The consequences have been the deadly protests in Afghanistan that claimed 12 lives with scores injured.

Minus the politically correct language, the politicians simply are saying Jones is a real kook. Of course, when I say kook, I mean it in a theological way.

Honestly, it's not particularly brave of me or anyone else to challenge hateful prejudice as glaringly obvious as Jones' actions. What is hard, and what is brave, is to oppose the hate and prejudice we encounter in everyday living.

For instance, what do you say when someone you respect says something that doesn't sound quite right? Perhaps a co-worker whispers a prejudicial word about cultural dress in the office or a relative or a friend attacks another person for their religious or political beliefs. What do you say then?

I ask the questions because I have to believe Jones' hate had a simple beginning.

For example, I can imagine a few scenarios in Jones' past where, thinking he was among friends, he mouthed off in some hateful way. Perhaps it first occurred in a neighbor's home or at a community clergy breakfast or city council meeting.

If so, why didn't anyone say, "Dude, you've spent way too long in the Florida sun." Or "Hey pastor, really? That doesn't ring quite true."

I know what you're thinking. It's scary because you don't know if anyone is going to back you up.

The result is you remain silent.

The price of calling someone out can be high. But we also know the price grows exponentially when someone like Jones encounters not a single word of resistance.

I can imagine these situations, because I've been privy to such conversations, at a neighbor's house and at a clergy breakfast, when someone said something that bordered on bigotry or prejudice. I know, because I, too, have taken a sudden and silent interest in my shoes.

When the 18th century Irish orator, philosopher and politician Edmund Burke said: "All that is necessary for the triumph of evil is that good men do nothing."

I think he was talking about our silence. Today, in the 21st century, we excuse our silence because we don't want to be too judgmental. Yet our silence has become the fertilizer for the seeds of hate to grow unabated.

In the future, I'd encourage Jones and his followers to refrain from burning the holy books of other religions and uncover the burning love promoted in Ephesians 4:29, which says: "Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen." ■

Horse sense

Mental health professionals incorporate equine therapy into approach

BY MEGAN K. SCOTT
FLORIDA TODAY

Chris Hamrick still is haunted by the memories. It was Feb. 27, 1991, during the first Gulf War. His platoon leader stepped on a land mine, injuring the sergeant, killing his best friend and blowing off part of Hamrick's left leg.

"It don't ever go away," said the 44-year-old Palm Bay resident, who sees a therapist once, sometimes twice a week, for post-traumatic stress disorder. "You learn how to cope better. It helps just to be able to vent."

Recently, instead of sitting in an office and talking about his feelings, he tried something different — a therapy involving a three-legged horse named La Nina, who lost one of her hind legs when it got wrapped in a wire fence several years ago. The session was at the Equine Education Center at Forever Florida near St. Cloud.

"The three-legged horse intrigued me," Hamrick said. "That's a pretty heavy animal to try to get around on three legs and develop a gallop. It takes a will to survive. I went through quite a bit myself, complications off and on, being an amputee. You got to decide that you are willing to accept the struggle and keep on going. It's interesting to see how an animal deals with it."

A growing number of mental health counselors are incorporating horses into their sessions, using the animals to treat a host of mental health issues ranging from eating disorders to substance abuse to post-

traumatic stress disorder. NARHA, formerly known as the North American Riding for the Handicapped Association, has been offering equine-facilitated psychotherapy and learning since 1995 and calls them fast-growing disciplines in the equine industry.

The Equine Assisted Growth & Learning Association, which was founded in 1999 and sets standards for equine-assisted psychotherapy and equine-assisted learning, has more than 3,500 members in 38 countries and growing. Half are mental health counselors and half are equine specialists.

Close to home, Sandra Wise, a Melbourne clinical psychologist, recently began offering equine-facilitated psychotherapy and learning at Eye of a Horse at the Equine Education Center at Forever Florida in St. Cloud.

And while not a psychotherapist, Holly Pollock is the owner of Epona Rivers, an equine-facilitated learning and yoga center at Kingswood Stables in Malabar. Pollock was inspired by Linda Kohanov, author of "The Tao of Equus: A Woman's Journey of Healing and Transformation Through the Way of the Horse."

See HORSES, 2D



"If you were to approach the horse and he was to turn around and walk away, that's very impacting. The person would feel something at that moment that could relate to what happens in their relationships."

Sandra Wise,
clinical psychologist in Melbourne

Group wants to stop kids from being kids

Sounds like generational warfare.

The property owners' association in a Volusia County subdivision is proposing new rules to ban kids from playing outside.

The list of rules states: "Minor children will be under the direct control of a responsible adult at all times. Children will not be permitted to run, play tag or act boisterously on the association property. Skateboarding, Big Wheels or loud or obnoxious toys are prohibited."

Yeah, well good luck with that. I guess there must not be any trees around or hanging upside down from branches while making goofy faces also would be forbidden.

Children also would be banned from playing in driveways or the front or rear areas of other units. Parents would get a \$100 fine for



Annette Clifford
Parenting

each violation, which could interfere with putting food on the table.

Obviously, toddlers and young children need close supervision.

But school-age kids have been known to mess around in the dirt, the yard, the driveway, including while riding wheeled vehicles, since the invention of the wheel.

The Persimmon Place community is made up of 48 town homes with an adjacent parking lot and, until recently, housed mostly retirees. Now young families are moving in, and tensions are running high.

The board of directors says the

play prohibition is a matter of safety: There's little open space for kids to romp around, no playground, and driveways or parking lots pose risks to children.

Older residents of Brevard County neighborhoods who are peeved by kids roaming the yards and streets may be cheering.

And the board may be within its legal rights. Homeowners associations can impose all kinds of restrictions on residents, though sometimes they cross the line into illegality.

Condo rules to create adults-only pool time when children can't swim, for example, have violated federal fair housing laws. A community in Port Richey in 2002 tried to restrict a couple from caring for four foster kids, saying it was a business not allowed in the deed-restricted neighborhood, which

See CLIFFORD, 2D

INSIDE



On the Town

Ionia A. Johnson and Eugene C. Johnson of Satellite Beach were on hand for An Orange and Green Affair for alumni on Florida A&M University. The event took place April 2 at Holiday Inn Viera, **8D**

Help! **4D**
Excursions **5D**
Books **6D**
Crossword puzzle **7D**

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