

# FLEET FOCUS

A newsletter from Lee County Fleet Management

2955 Van Buren Street, Fort Myers, FL 33916

Phone: 239 / 533-5338 (53FLEET)

## THE EMPTY HAND

Thanksgiving Day was near. The first grade teacher gave her class a fun assignment -- to draw a picture of something for which they were thankful. Most of the class might be considered economically disadvantaged, but still many would celebrate the holiday with turkey and other traditional goodies of the season. These, the teacher thought, would be the subjects of most of her students' art. And they were. But Douglas made a different kind of picture. Douglas was a different kind of boy. He was the teacher's true child of misery, frail and unhappy. As other children played at recess, Douglas was likely to stand close by her side. One could only guess at the pain Douglas felt behind those sad eyes.

Yes, his picture was different. When asked to draw a picture of something for which he was thankful, he drew a hand. Nothing else. Just an empty hand. His abstract image captured the imagination of his peers. Whose hand could it be? One child guessed it was the hand of a farmer, because farmers raise turkeys. Another suggested a police officer, because the police protect and care for people. Still others guessed it was the hand of God, for God feeds us. And so the discussion went -- until the teacher almost forgot the young artist himself.

When the children had gone on to other assignments, she paused at Douglas' desk, bent down, and asked him whose hand it was. The little boy looked away and murmured, "It's yours, teacher." She recalled the times she had taken his hand and walked with him here or there, as she had the other students. How often had she said, "Take my hand, Douglas, we'll go outside." Or, "Let me show you how to hold your pencil." Or, "Let's do this together." Douglas was most thankful for his teacher's hand. Brushing aside a tear, she went on with her work. The story speaks of more than thankfulness. It says something about teachers teaching, leaders leading, parents parenting and friends showing friendship, and how much it means to the Douglases of the world. They might not always say thanks. But they'll remember the hand that reaches out.

-- Author Unknown

### THANKFUL QUOTES:

Thanksgiving dinners take eighteen hours to prepare. They are consumed in twelve minutes. Halftimes take twelve minutes. This is not coincidence.

- Erma Bombeck

*American Writer, Humorist*

Ingratitude is the most unforgivable of human weakness.

- Thomas Alva Edison  
*Inventor*

Give thanks for unknown blessings already on their way.  
*Native American Prayer*

As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to

utter words, but to live by them.

- *John F. Kennedy*  
35<sup>th</sup> President of the U.S.

### DO I REALLY NEED TO KNOW THIS?

\*\* The most common domesticated turkey, the Broadbreasted White, is so heavy and large-breasted that it can't fly, run or mate naturally. They must be artificially inseminated.

\*\* Long before Europeans came to America, the Aztecs had domesticated turkeys. They used them for food, for religious sacrifices and the feathers for decoration.

\*\* An estimated 271 million turkeys were raised in the U.S. in 2007. The estimate for 2008 was about the same.

\*\* In 2007, the turkeys produced weighed 7.9 billion pounds altogether and were valued at \$3.7 billion.

\*\* The turkey industry employs between 20,000 and 25,000 people in the United States.

\*\* The state game bird of Alabama is the turkey. Alabama has one of the largest per acre populations of wild turkeys of any state.

\*\* According to the National Turkey Federation, about 24% of Americans purchase fresh turkeys for Thanksgiving, and 69% purchase frozen turkeys.

\*\* Thanksgiving Day is celebrated on the fourth Thursday in November in the U.S. and on the second Monday in October in Canada.

\*\* The Plymouth Pilgrims were the first to celebrate Thanksgiving in the fall of 1621 at Plymouth, Massachusetts.

\*\* Sarah Josepha Hale, an editor with a magazine, started a Thanksgiving campaign in 1827 and it was result of her efforts that in 1863 Thanksgiving was observed as a day for national thanksgiving and prayer.

\*\* President Abraham Lincoln established the original date for our National Thanksgiving Day celebration in 1863.

\*\* Congress did not declare Thanksgiving a national holiday until 1941.

\*\* The First Thanksgiving celebration lasted for three days.

\*\* A flea can jump 150 times its size (equal to a person jumping 1,000 feet in the air).

\*\* A house fly's feet are 10 million times more sensitive than a human tongue. (How do they know?)

\*\* Dragonflies can fly up to 50 miles per hour.

\*\* A mosquito flaps its wings 500 times a second.

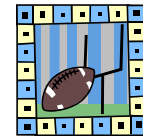
\*\* The lifespan of a firefly is about seven days.

\*\* Someone who sells cheese professionally at a cheese shop or specialty

food store is called a cheese monger.

\*\* Ducks' feet have no nerves or blood vessels, so they never feel the cold, even in icy cold water.

\*\* Australian termites have been known to build mounds twenty feet high and 100 feet wide.



### LAST MONTH'S TRIVIA

How deep is the end zone on an American football field?

- A. 10 yards
- B. 5 yards
- C. 8 yards
- D. 7 yards

The correct answer is "A" 10 yards. Bill MacPhee from Parks and Rec was this month's prize winner.



### HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO U

<b>Marilyn Rawlings</b>	11/4
Laura Bush	11/4
<b>Bobby Cavaluzzi</b>	11/11
Demi Moore	11/11
<b>Bill Prussman</b>	11/17
Danny DeVito	11/17
<b>Steve Herzfeld</b>	11/22
Scarlett Johansson	11/22



### THIS MONTH'S TRIVIA

What was the name of the more expensive but less successful computer

intro-duced by Apple in 1983 before it came out with its popular Macintosh? (C'mon **Clint Dean and IT staff**, can you get this one?)

- A. Granny
- B. Lisa
- C. Fred
- D. Red

Send your guess to Marilyn Rawlings to be eligible to win a prize.



### **HISTORY OF JEANS**

\*\*18th century - American mills begin producing their own jeans. Laborers wear the durable clothing.

\*\*19th Century - San Fran-cisco dry goods merchant Levi Strauss produces "waist overalls"—the early name for jeans. They become a hit with gold miners eager to strike it rich in California.

\*\* In 1886, Strauss adds a brown leather patch to the back. The label, which shows a pair of jeans being pulled between 2 horses, is still affixed to Levi's jeans today.

\*\*1940s - American troops pack their waist overalls when they travel overseas to fight in World War II. The trend catches on in Europe. Lee and Wrangler make their own jeans to compete with Levi's.

\*\* 1950s - Jeans, no longer called waist overalls, became a symbol of the teenage rebel,

particularly after James Dean wears them in the 1955 film "Rebel Without a Cause." Some schools ban jeans.

\*\* 1960s - Jeans dominate college campuses. Students began to personalize their jeans with paint, embroidery and patches.

\*\* 1980s - Designer jeans, such as Sassoon, Jordache and Calvin Klein, emerge. Straight-leg, tight-fitting styles give jeans a new look.



### **FOR BEAUTY'S SAKE??**

\*\* Ambergris - Waxy and flammable, this substance with a sweet, earthy scent comes from the intestines of whales and is used in perfume manufacturing. Both men and women used to mold ambergris into beads so they could be worn as aromatic necklaces. Nowadays, synthetic ambergris is made so that whales are not slaughtered for this smelly product.

\*\* Wax - Although wax may not seem like an unusual ingredient in beauty products, ancient Egyptians placed a cone of pomade, or scented ointment, on the top of their head, and over time, their body heat would melt the wax and give off a pleasant aroma.

\*\* Carmine - Cochineal bugs, common in places such as Peru, Chile,

Mexico, and the Canary Islands, are crushed for the carminic acid they produce, which is used to make a bright red dye called carmine. Carmine is a common ingredient in lipsticks, rouges and eye shadows, but is often produced synthetically today.

\*\* Guanine - Although it doesn't sound too appealing, crystals of guanine, a compound made from fish scales and guano (the excrement of bats and sea birds), refract light in a lovely, pearly way. Next time you notice the shiny appearance of your shampoo or nail polish, you'll know what is actually giving it that luminous glow!

\*\* Chitosan - Chitin, a starch found in the skeletons of shrimp, crabs, and other shellfish, keeps creams in tubes damp and keeps skin moisturized.

\*\* Civet - Closely related to the mongoose, the civet has sacs that create secretions harvested for perfume. However, getting this stuff is painful for civets, so animal rights activists have succeeded in reducing this practice. Fortunately, synthetic materials provide the same stuff without harming the animals.



### **KUDOS TO FLEET**

Andy,

I want to thank you and your team for the excellent job you guys did completing the service, relocating the brake switch, and checking our electrical system so quickly. Also, thank you for keeping me informed on the progress of the truck while it was at Walsh for the factory recall. I appreciate it.

**Randy Hart**

Striping Crew Leader  
Lee County DOT/Traffic



### **THANKS TO FLEET**

I wanted to again say thank you for taking the time to go over your very well-organized operation. I can see that you are very passionate about what you do and it has been driven down very well through your organization. That is something you should be very proud of. I have tried to get around and meet as many fleet managers in the municipal fleet business as I can over the last few years. You try and take away as

much as you can from “the best in class” and I surely put you and your staff in that category. My plan is to also have our organization be the best, and to join you in that category. I again thank you for taking the time out of your very busy schedule to meet with me.

**Mike Quattrone**

**Fleet Manager**  
**City of Rochester, N.Y.**

### **THANKSGIVING QUOTE**

Feeling gratitude and not expressing it is like wrapping a present and not giving it.

- William Arthur Ward  
(1921 – 1997)  
Author / Educator



### **LEE CO. EMPLOYEES ARE VERY THANKFUL...**

During this time of year, we are often reminded of all that we have. Some County employees were asked “What are you genuinely thankful for?” Their responses are listed below:

**Katie Albright**  
(Purchasing)

*I am thankful for family; freedoms we still have and for all the people who put their lives in danger everyday, so we can live in a more peaceful and safe country-the greatest nation-the United States of America!*

**Randy Cerchie** (DOT) - *I am genuinely thankful for those who took the time to teach me.*

**Elin Clemons** (Natural Resources) – *I am most genuinely thankful for my parents and the values which they held dear and upon which they raised their children: God and Country, Family and Friends, Honesty, Integrity and Taking Responsibility – most importantly Love and the Ability to Laugh at Yourself.*

**Peter Cloutier** (Fiscal Pool) - *My family, my friends, my health, & having a job (added bonus: one that I enjoy and with great co-workers!)*

**Clint Dean** (ITG) - *Family and Friends. Life is a precious gift that we take for granted all too often. It's easy to get caught up in the stresses of our daily lives. Things can change in the blink of an eye and make us completely rethink our priorities.*

**George Garcia** (Utilities) - *Having a great family and good friends.*

**Kathy Mayo (Library)** - *Among the many things in my life that I am grateful for is Fleet Management. You all make our lives so much easier and you treat us like valued customers.*

**Cindy Mitar** (Parks and Rec) *I am thankful for my job with the County and that my children are happy, healthy and almost all grown up.*

**Jim Palopoli** (Human Resources) – *I am thankful for my amazing wife, who*

*somehow... miraculously... thinks I'm wonderful; for my two daughters, who have never failed to bring me joy; for my friends... the good ones, the ones who have been there through it all; and for the good health of all those I love. I am thankful for a Chihuahua named Apollo; being blessed with the privilege of independent thinking; for the NY Yankees 27th World Series win; and for the incredible gift we are given every morning...we open our eyes.*

**Karen Shilling** (Fleet) – *I am grateful for my job with the County and am looking forward to the arrival of my first grandchild the end of February.*

**Libby Walker** (Public Resources) - *I am thankful that I have things to laugh about each and every day.*