



OFFICE: 795 County Road 1 • Palm Harbor • FL 34683 • (727) 786-6558

# SOUTHWIND



## BREEZES

### April • 2022

### Issue 2 46<sup>th</sup> Year

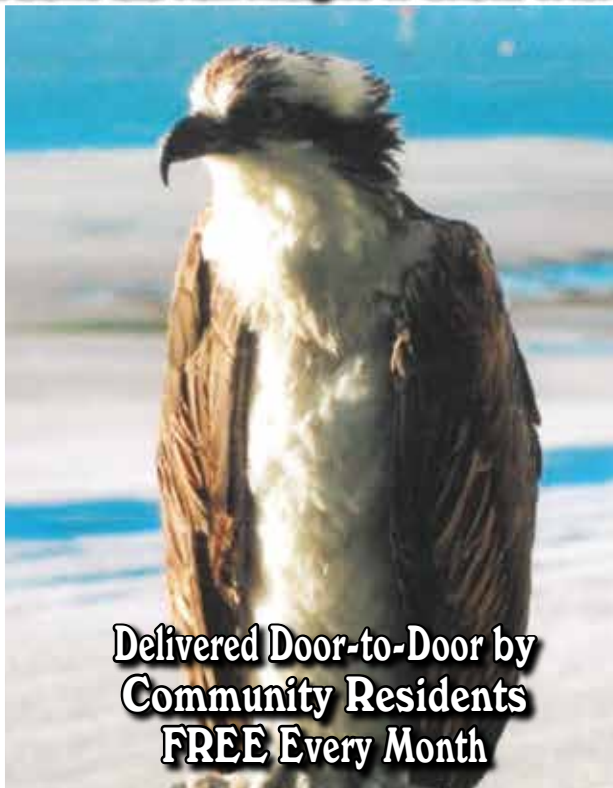


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## Southwind Mobile Home Park

795 County Road 1 - Office, Palm Harbor, FL 34683

### OFFICERS

President.....	Bill Adams - term expires 2023	727-787-1255
Vice President ....	Dale Feiste - term expires 2023	727-365-8474
Secretary .....	Maggie Griscavage - term expires 2025	907-687-3513
Treasurer .....	Karen Ragsdale - term expires 2024	727-267-1270

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Rita Angle .....	term expires 2025	810-348-1131
Frank Komar .....	term expires 2024	315-935-4020
Ken Lynam.....	term expires 2025	727-667-3150
Jack Manning.....	term expires 2024	727-223-3827
John McGraw.....	term expires 2023	727-796-8867

### SECURITY

Non-Emergency Police .....	Palm Harbor .....	727-582-6200
Pinellas County Sheriff Patrol.....		727-582-6200
..... call to set up home checks while out of town, at same phone number		

### ACTIVITIES CHAIRPERSONS

Activities .....	Sally Maloney .....	727-742-1882
Arts and Crafts .....	Sharon Kendall .....	508-246-5268
Bowling.....	Bill Adams.....	727-787-1255
Breezes Editor.....	Terri Campbell.....	727-244-0702
FMO Representative .....	Lyle Neumann .....	217-391-3708
Shuffleboard.....	Frank Komar.....	727-729-8407
Kitchen Safety Advisor .....	Ellie Malloy.....	727-386-4790
Koffee Klatch.....	Sandy McDonald .....	517-795-9241
Library.....	Richard & Jane Szarlan .....	727-781-9238
Newsletter Delivery .....	Sandy McDonald.....	517-795-9241
Offsite Special Events .....	Maggie Griscavage .....	907-687-3513
Telephone Directory.....	Maggie Griscavage.....	907-687-3513
Welcome Committee.....	Nancy Lynam .....	727-667-3150

### UTILITIES

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Spectrum Outage .....	1-855-657-7328
Water Outage .....	call Park Manager Office ..... 1-727-786-6558

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Owners .....	Kingsley Management Corporation... website: www.kmcmh.com
Park Manager .....	Cecilia "Ceci" Maumea .....
	Office 727-786-6558
	Fax 727-786-7398
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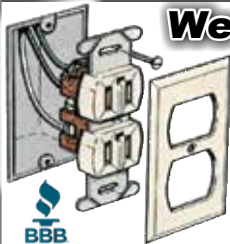
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# ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Bowling League Banquet will be held on April 1st. This concludes the winter season. Summer Bowling details are TBA, and expected to begin in May.

**DO YOU ENJOY LISTENING TO MUSIC AND DANCING? IF YOU DO, YOU'RE IN LUCK!!! ON SATURDAY, APRIL 2ND 7pm – 10pm**, at the Club House, a DJ will be performing for your listening and dancing pleasure. The cost per person is \$5, to pay for the DJ. Guests will need to bring your own beverages and snack foods. The Kitchen will not be open. See Frieda, Lot #33 for more information



**VOLUNTEERS ARE STILL NEEDED  
ANNUAL “HELP YOUR NEIGHBOR DAY”  
SATURDAY, APRIL 9TH 8:45am – 11:45pm  
(rescheduled from March)**

Please check the Club House Board for sign-up sheets – one list for the Volunteers and one list for Neighbors who need help with weeding, raking and gutter cleaning. Please contact Activities Chairperson – Sally Maloney, if you are able help with this special event. Enjoy the word search puzzle for this event.

**POSTPONED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE -  
“NIGHT AT THE RACES”**



**TUESDAY, APRIL 12TH  
VOLUNTEER DAY DINNER  
\*Check the Bulletin Board for Details\***

**DO YOU KNOW WHAT WEDNESDAY NIGHTS ARE?  
CHICKEN DINNER NIGHT? NOPE! TACO NIGHT?  
NOPE... IT'S POKER NIGHT!  
AT THE SOUTHWIND CLUB HOUSE 6PM – 9PM –  
IF YOU'RE SO-SO, OR EVEN AN ASPIRING PRO –  
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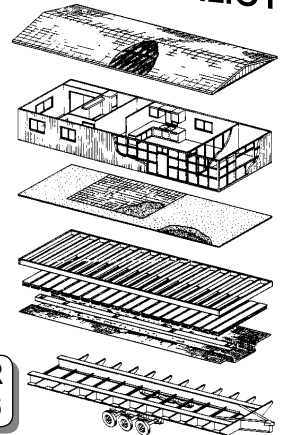
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Crazy Horse Monument, Custer State Park 'the Badlands, Wall Drug Store, tour of Deadwood, tour of Boot Hill, free time in Rapid City and Dogwood.

### 1 DAY TOURS

Wednesday March 9 **HARD ROCK CASINO** Tampa \$30

**JERSEY BOYS** RESCHEDULED to Tuesday May 24. Just a few seats remaining! The Story of Frankie Vali & The Four Seasons 8:00 p.m. at Ruth Eckerd Hall in Clearwater \$89 per person

**HAPPY TOGETHER** Wednesday June 1 7:00 p.m. at Ruth Eckerd Hall in Clearwater \$99 per person featuring The Turtles. Chuck Negron (formerly of Three Dog Night), Gary Puckett. The Association, The Vogues, The Cowsills. The Happy Together Marketplace

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# BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

## APRIL BIRTHDAYS

April 4 Carole Boardman  
April 5 George Stewart  
April 6 Sandra Reedy  
April 6 John Malloy  
April 9 Marsha Rosati  
April 10 Richard Schwartz  
April 13 Louise Carlson  
April 13 Sherry Brown  
April 15 Ed Siers  
April 17 Ronald Miller  
April 22 Lyle Neumann  
April 25 Hank Riviera  
April 26 Clarissa Wagner  
April 29 Lee Taormina  
April 29 Karen Ragsdale  
April 30 Rick Landon  
April 30 Tom O'Shea



## APRIL ANNIVERSARIES

April 19 Michael & Sally Maloney  
April 20 Rick & Sharon Landon  
April 24 Jim & Rita Angle  
April 25 Carl & Marge Mankowski



**BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES LIST UPDATING** – If you would like to be included in the monthly newsletter celebration list, please text or email your name(s); month and day of birth or anniversary and your lot number to: (text) 727-244-0702 or (email) [breezes.editor@gmail.com](mailto:breezes.editor@gmail.com)





# SOUTHWIND BOWLING UPDATE

By Bill Adams

April 1st is the Bowling Banquet at the end of this season. Next month will have all the winter final league results. Our bowlers have been burning up the lanes! The following bowlers have scored more than 200 since the last report:



Week of Feb. 18, the following bowled 200 or better: Jerry Antonczak - 211; Carl Mankowski - 205; George Moore - 201; and Bill Adams - 200.

Week of Feb. 25, George Moore was the only bowler with a score of 216; Jerry Antonczak had a nice score of 211; Cheryl Kittle had a score of 204 and Bill Adams had a score of 203.

We had several league records broken this past month. First we had 4 bowlers with a score of 200 or better on the same day. The other record was by Cheryl and Bill with games over 200 on the same team. This never happened before in the history of our league!

The standings as of March 4th are: “The Addams Family” with a half game lead over “Leave it to Beaver”; with the “Flintstones” in third, only one and a half games out of first. The season ended on the March 18th, with playoffs on the 25th. The bowling awards and banquet are on April 1, at the bowling alley.

Congratulations to Southwind Bowlers on a Great season!

## CRAFTS CLASS

From Sharon Kendall

On February 21st, there were 8 attendees for the Class, and they made Beachy Sea Bowls. What a beautiful decorative item to display or give as a gift!

Keep an eye on the Bulletin Board in the Club House for the next class. If you enjoy crafting and expressing your creativity, this class is great! Sign up quick because there is often a limit of how many can attend, depending on the supply of materials needed.



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# IT'S JUST MY OPINION

By Terri Campbell, Breezes Editor

We, the people of Southwind, the homeowners, the lot renters, are very fortunate to live in this beautiful, friendly and well kept community where property values are high and where residents care about maintaining their homes and property.



Our Volunteers are so generous with their time and efforts to make this place as great as it is! Real Estate Agents have waiting lists for this community and homes sell very quickly and are high in demand. Homes are selling today at about double of what owners paid for them just 4-5 years ago. The peaceful, serene country style setting and our location makes life here comfortable and convenient to everything you could possible desire.

Neighbors helping each other at events such as **“Help Your Neighbor Day!”** are the best ever. Efforts like this only unify this community in a demonstration that **WE DO KEEP THIS COMMUNITY CLEAN AND BEAUTIFUL.**

We DO NOT need “\$ fine threatening” emails and intent of enforcement of the “rules” from Management. I find them offensive and childish. We are not children. So rather than repair the broken down **street vacuum to use after grass is mowed**, Management uses a blower to blow leaves and grass clippings into our individual yards/ lots, **FROM THE STREETS** and then tells us we have to rake and bag it up. I think this is outrageous and totally unacceptable! This kind of email “bullying” (again, my opinion) should not be tolerated, but one person cannot speak for the whole community here. If you’re fed up, you can speak up – to Management. **VACUUM THE STREETS AFTER MOWING, DON’T BLOW IT INTO MY YARD!**

We can fight back. The more volunteers who come out on Saturday morning, April 9th at 8:45am **“Help Your Neighbor Day”** to “clean up” (Management’s failures), will send a message. It’s only for 3 hours, but many, many people showing up to help can accomplish so much! Because this Community is filled with residents who will help one another, these beautification efforts make **SOUTHWIND THE BEST PLACE TO LIVE...** because of YOU, because of US – the **HOMEOWNERS!**

A special thank-you to one homeowner who has been spotted raking up leaves in yards, on her own volunteer time, while listening to music (and singing) – your hard work is very much appreciated, Teresa Russell. She’s just one person making a big difference, imagine a whole group of people and what can be accomplished in just one short day!

If you are physically able to help, for 3 short hours, on one day - Saturday, April 9th, please **DO!** Thank you for reading my opinion.

**A Complete Listing of Resident Services  
can be found on the page before your calendar**

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# HOME OWNERS INSURANCE MEETING

By Terri Campbell

**O**n Monday, March 7th, there was an Insurance Agent's meeting to learn about how to save money on Home Owners Insurance. Originally, it was not anticipated that so many people would attend and the Agents had not planned for the tremendous turnout of about 70 people!

There were mixed feelings about the presentation. Bill Adams, HOA President said " I was both disappointed and glad last night. Glad that we had so many residents in attendance. Did hear some valuable information. Disappointed that they did not go into more detail on homeowners insurance. But I did learn that there is more than one company that sells homeowners insurance. Thank you for turning out, hope you learned something."

Not knowing what to expect, I brought my current policy with me to the meeting, and I'm glad I did. It may not have been what I thought, but I did learn something in the process, something to share with our Community, in the Breezes.

The speakers were Jimmy DiBello, an Independent Agent, and Bryce Mednick, also an Independent Agent for Professional Insurance Systems of FL, Inc. Phone # 800-329-5799. Their business cards list their services as: Auto, Home, Boat, Mobile Home, RV and Motorcycle. The company is a Preferred Provider w/FMO – an organization dealing with Manufactured Homes, such as ours in Southwind.

They said that we now have more options than just Citizens Insurance, and mentioned American Traditions as an alternative. They also said that the market values for insured homes have increased. Because this was not a sales meeting, they could not give cost amounts for coverage as this depends on the age, size and condition of each individual home, as well as your choice of deductibles.

Owners can contact them to set up individual assessments and quotes for each home, and can learn about insurance costs and how to save money while maintaining the best coverage for you, individually. The meeting was brief and door prizes were given out. Congratulations to Tammy M – 1st prize, Ernie S – 2nd prize and Carol C – 3rd prize. Business cards were handed out and individual general questions were answered.


Like many homeowners at Southwind, I have insurance with Citizen's, and my agent is Ross Insurance Company Group on Curlew Rd in Dunedin. My annual premium has gone up this year to \$943, and the liability limits need to be increased.

What I want to share with you is something I learned that is very concerning! My coverage includes \$4,000 for "other structures", which I thought included my carport. WRONG! I was shocked to learn this info.

The actual definition of "Other Structures" says: We cover other structures on the residence premises set apart from the dwelling by clear space. This includes structures connected to the mobile home by only a fence, utility line or similar connection. So in other words – nothing... except maybe the utility meters owned by Duke Energy??? Or the water meter under my home... What? Really? Here's what is NOT COVERED: carports, porches constructed to be open to the weather, patios constructed to be open to the weather or enclosures, any of which have a roof or covering of 1) aluminum, 2) fiberglass panels, 3) plastic, 4) vinyl, 5) fabric. 6) screening, or Awnings.

The one thing that this meeting prompted me to do was to take a hard look at my policy. This

*Continued on page 16*



is my first “Manufactured Home” – the definition of Mobile Home refers to homes built before 1976, and mine was built in 1990. Homes built after 1976 are technically called manufactured homes, and they adhere to this federal building code that makes them safer and more durable.

Southwind was built in 1985, so we actually own Manufactured Homes, with shingled roofs. Another little known fact about Southwind, is that (more than 5-6 years ago), the State of Florida paid for Home Owners to get Free Tie downs installed on their homes, and Southwind qualified for this program. Each home that had the tie downs installed free by the State, received a Certificate – at the time. It’s good for new owners to know this because it may be useful for inspections and insurance costs purposes.

According to the Watchdog Newsletters sent out to FMO members (Bill Adams of Southwind)- FMO is Federation of Manufactured homeOwners, the Mobile Home Tiedown Program is back – here’s some info:

“March 4, 2022

Good News today!! And, a BIG THANK YOU to all of you who helped make this happen by contacting Legislators over the last two months! You know who you are...so please realize that FMO does have PEOPLE POWER!

Today the Legislature took final action on CS/CS/HB 837 and passed the bill 37-0. Earlier this week the House passed this bill 117-0! The bill extends our Program for 10 years.

The Budget has allotted \$7 million dedicated to this MH tie down program.

The Mobile Home Tie-Down Program will be administered by Gulf Coast State College beginning July 1. Tallahassee Community College has assured me that the transfer will be as smooth as possible. They want to continue to be supportive of the Program in this way. As soon as possible after the budget is finalized, FMO will reach out to TCC to offer outreach and assistance.”

Since we’ve already had this program install tie downs here, we don’t expect we would qualify again, but the information may be useful to learn what this is all about, referring to the significance of tie-downs.

More information found on [www.kin.com](http://www.kin.com), is that the Average Florida Mobile Home Insurance Premium ranges from \$894 per year to \$1413 per year, and the average premium are listed by County, here in Pinellas County the average annual premium is \$1,097.

Location, Location, Location...and the age/condition of the home and the proximity to the water are the main factors considered in the cost of coverage.

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*Continued on page 19*

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sure you don't choose a deductible so high it prevents you from using your coverage when you need it.

If you are interested in reading what I found out about the Importance of insuring your carport, please read the attached article. The information is quite eye-opening, but it's best to be well informed right now, because the next hurricane season is right around the corner, and if you wait... it might be too late. Insurance companies typically don't write new policies after June.

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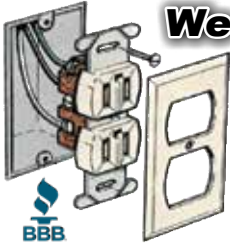
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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday
MAY		
S 1	M 2	T 3
W 4	T 5	F 6
S 7		
8	9	10
11	12	13
14	15	16
17	18	19
20	21	22
23	24	25
26	27	28
29	30	31
	3	4
	9:30 Pool Exercises	9:30 P Exerci  1pm -
10	9:30 Pool Exercises	11 8:30 M B 9:30 P Exercis 1pm - C VOL DAY D
17	9:30 Pool Exercises	18 9:30 P Exerci 1pm - HOA M 7pm (I until N
Easter		
24	9:30 Pool Exercises	25 9:30 P Exerci  1pm -

# Southwind

Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 Bowling Banquet 9:30 Pool Exercises  April Fool's Day	2 DANCE TO DJ MUSIC - \$5pp 7pm-10pm BYOB
5 Pool Exercises  CANASTA	6 9:30 Pool Exercises  POKER 6pm-9pm	7 9:00 am Koffee Klatch 9:30 Pool Exercises  6:00pm YOGA	8 9:30 Pool Exercises	9 "HELP YOUR NEIGHBOR DAY" 8:45 - 11:45am
12 Men's breakfast** Pool Exercises CANASTA VOLUNTEER INNER	13 9:30 Pool Exercises  12:30 Ladies Luncheon**  POKER 6pm-9pm	14 9:00 am Koffee Klatch 9:30 Pool Exercises  6:00pm YOGA	15 9:30 Pool Exercises  6pm SUNSET SOCIAL	16
19 Pool Exercises CANASTA Meeting (last one only)	20 9:30 Pool Exercises  POKER 6pm-9pm	21 9:00 am Koffee Klatch 9:30 Pool Exercises  6:00pm YOGA	22 9:30 Pool Exercises	23
26 Pool Exercises  CANASTA	27 9:30 Pool Exercises  POKER 6pm-9pm	28 9:00 am Koffee Klatch 9:30 Pool Exercises  6:00pm YOGA	29 9:30 Pool Exercises	30



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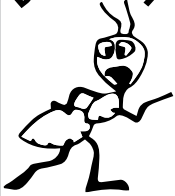
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# THE IMPORTANCE OF INSURING ATTACHED CARPORTS

Research by Terri Campbell

According to an article at Verisk, written By *Jonathan Kinghorn* | April 23, 2015

Carports, awnings, and porches are frequently attached to manufactured homes, despite recommendations from manufacturers to the contrary. Typically they are designed to lower building standards than those that apply to the homes they are attached to, and most building codes allow them to be built to withstand lower wind speeds. As a result, they fail frequently and at lower wind speeds than the buildings to which they are attached. The host building- and quite often other structures nearby- can be damaged when they fail, and the cumulative insurance losses can be considerable.


Carports with poor connections between supporting posts and the ground are extremely vulnerable to wind uplift forces when they exceed the weight of the structure, and failure can occur at very low wind speeds. Because such weaknesses are relatively easy to identify and fix, they were not included in the tests. Beyond such post anchorage issues, the tests noted several types of carport failure:

- roofs buckling at mid-span
- carport separating from home
- beams supporting the roof eave buckling
- connection between roof pans and support beams and channels failing
- wind-induced vibrations cracking roof pans

Analysis of the test results suggested design improvements to address these issues. The results are not just applicable to carports. They apply equally to other lightweight aluminum attached structures, such as porches, awnings, and canopies and to similar structures attached to traditional site-built homes.

As you can see, from these photos, the greatest and most impactful damages in a MHP, like ours, comes from “attached structures”, such as carports and screened porches.





Another source of information is found here  
(check out this research):  
[https://ibhs.org/wp-content/uploads/wpmembers/files/Attached-Structures-High-Wind-Research\\_IBHS.pdf](https://ibhs.org/wp-content/uploads/wpmembers/files/Attached-Structures-High-Wind-Research_IBHS.pdf)

### **Research Applicability**

While this research focused on wind performance of carports attached to factory-built manufactured homes, the test results are equally applicable to lightweight aluminum carports attached to traditional site-built homes. The test results also are applicable to other light-weight aluminum attached structures, such as porches, awnings, canopies, etc.

Posts and Post Connections A carport or attached structure roof acts to some extent like a wing sticking out from a house. Wind uplift forces on this structure can be quite large and the resulting uplift forces on the posts can be hundreds of pounds or even more than one thousand pounds.

The survey of carports in manufactured home parks uncovered a large number with posts that were very small, bent or cracked, poorly connected to the concrete slab, poorly connected to the carport roof, corroded, or attached with small or corroded fasteners.

Having sturdy well-connected posts also is important for holding up the roof and keeping it from collapsing under rain or snow loads. Small size posts can be easily damaged and are more likely to buckle if struck by a car.

Posts can be easily replaced and the connections can be substantially strengthened at relatively low cost.

One possible solution = Retrofits – Check your carport for weak or damaged supports

### **Prioritizing Retrofits for Consumers**

As you check your carport, you may find a number of situations and connections where retrofitting is recommended. However, budget constraints may limit what you can do and at some point the costs become so large it doesn't make sense to keep pouring money into an old carport. Here are some suggestions for prioritizing what to do:

Given that carports are held up by posts along the eave and on the other side by your home or by a fourth wall, the posts and their connections are the items deserving the most scrutiny. Observations have shown that the weakest link for many carports is the anchorage of the posts to the concrete. That is good news because it is one of the easiest and cheapest things to strengthen. Just replace the post bottom brackets with stronger ones, and in the process make a better connection to the concrete.

Weak, damaged, or excessively corroded posts also can be replaced at a reasonable cost. Next, look at the fasteners connecting posts to beams above and to post bottom brackets. If they are screws, replace them with bolts. If they are bolts with lots of rust, replace them. These are inexpensive, easy fixes that will strengthen the connections of your carport.

At the home side of the carport, attachments to the home are usually hidden (difficult to see) and difficult to evaluate. That makes the quality of the connection unknown. However, a general rule is to evaluate what you can see on the carport and assume the condition of what you cannot see is comparable to what you see elsewhere. If many of the parts you can see are weak, then it is likely the attachment of the carport to the house also is weak. You can have a

*...continued on page 31*



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7. Are you able to call your doctor anytime, day or night?
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30 ★ 1

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25 ★ 8

fourth wall added to support the side of the carport next to the house, if one is not there already, and this will relieve the uplift forces on the connection to the house. Expect to spend several hundred dollars on this type of retrofit.

Before you attempt to do more retrofits than those outlined above, check the cost of a new well-designed and well-built carport. You could well end up spending 50% of the cost of a new carport just trying to strengthen an old weak one. It would be worthwhile getting a knowledgeable contractor to make a more sophisticated analysis and recommendation. Photo below: Use of thin sheet metal-like channel to provide beam support at eave of carport.



Photos above: New beam and posts with improved connections supporting old roof

For more information on Retrofitting, check out the .pdf listed in this article at IBHS.ORG, or get a copy of this 17 page document. IBHS has produced a Consumer Safety Guide for Attached Structures with a checklist for homeowners to evaluate existing structures and guidelines for purchasing new structures. Visit this site to see a copy of the 8 page guide: [https://disastersafety.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/ibhs-attached-structures-guidance\\_IBHS.pdf](https://disastersafety.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/ibhs-attached-structures-guidance_IBHS.pdf)

## INSURANCE JOKES

---

### Burn the Barn Down

Larry's barn burned down and his wife, Susan, called the insurance company. Susan told the insurance company, "We had that barn insured for fifty thousand and I want my money."

The agent replied, "Whoah there, just a minute, Susan. Insurance doesn't work quite like that. We will ascertain the value of what was insured and provide you with a new one of comparable worth."

There was a long pause before Susan replied, "Then I'd like to cancel the policy on my husband."

### Confusius Say:

Needing insurance is like needing a parachute. If it isn't there the first time, chances are you won't be needing it again.

Never argue with an idiot client. They drag you down to their level, and then beat you with experience



### **That's one way to pay those hospital bills ...**

Mr. Smith was brought to the hospital and taken quickly in for heart surgery. The operation went well and, as the old man regained consciousness, he was reassured by a Sister of the hospital, who was waiting by his bed.

"Mr. Smith, you're going to be just fine," said the nun, gently patting his hand. "We do need to know, however, how you intend to pay for your stay here. Are you covered by insurance?"

"No, I'm not," the man whispered hoarsely.

"Then can you pay in cash?" persisted the nun.

"I'm afraid I cannot, Sister," he said.

"Well, do you have any close relatives?" the nun questioned sternly.

"Just my sister in New Mexico," he volunteered. "But she's a humble spinster nun."

"Oh, I must correct you, Mr. Smith. Nuns are not spinsters; they are married to God."

"Wonderful," said Mr. Smith. "In that case, please send the bill to my brother-in-law."

### **Spiders know best**

Female spiders eat the male spiders after mating. They know collecting life insurance is easier than child support.



### **Waiting to exhale**

My wife and I took out life insurance policies on each other — so now it's just a waiting game.

### **It's all about GI insurance**

Airman Jones was assigned to the induction center, where he advised new recruits about their government benefits, especially their GI insurance. It wasn't long before Captain Smith noticed that Airman Jones had almost a 100 percent record for insurance sales, which had never happened before. Rather than ask about this, the Captain stood in the back of the room and listened to Jones's sales pitch.

Jones explained the basics of the GI insurance to the new recruits. And then said: "If you have GI Insurance and go into battle and are killed, the government has to pay \$200,000 to your beneficiaries. If you don't have GI insurance, and you go into battle and get killed, the government only has to pay a maximum of \$6,000."

"Now," he concluded, "which bunch do you think they are going to send into battle first?"

### **Je suis Canadiens?**

In Canada, there is a group of people who refuse to speak English. They're called separatists and tend to live in Quebec. In the United States, they're called (insurance) actuaries.

### **Playing doctor**

The seven-year-old girl told her mom, "A boy in my class asked me to play doctor."

"Oh, dear," the mother nervously sighed. "What happened, honey?"

"Nothing. He made me wait 45 minutes and then double-billed the insurance company."

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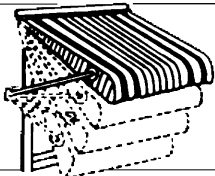


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# Brotherly Love

by Bill Roberts



Sammy Samson your life is about to change, but for the better as you will be meeting your new best friend. A lifelong companion and a sibling that will be known as your younger brother. With this will come a great responsibility as you are now the oldest. You will be the Amanda of my family, the Debbie of my Dad's family, the Norma Jean of my Grandfather's family. Like all of them you will naturally care for, worry about, and always be there for this new person that has been thrust into your life. You will realize all of the things you have learned and accomplished in your young life and will be bursting to pass this knowledge down to this new person who will constantly be tagging along side of you. Papa has faith and confidence that you will shine in this new role as you will both learn and teach as you travel down this road of growing up.

You will naturally concede being the baby and only child as you seek to watch over and take care of him

You will wonder many times over why he had to come along when everything was fine just the way it was

You will forget those thoughts when he reaches up for your hand and you help him up

You will teach him how to share after he unknowingly teaches you first

You will wonder why he has to always play with your toys and will then make sure he has the one he wants

You will learn to convince him to be the one to ask Mom and Dad for something you both want

You will fight with him constantly but will defend him evermore when somebody else tries too

You will pick him for your team to make sure that he gets to enjoy playing too

You will watch over him at school so he doesn't get lost and is never picked on

You will be known as the Hipps boys in school and be forever linked

You will put doubt in your parents mind when something in the house gets broken as there are two of you now

You will unwittingly teach him about girls as you move forward in life

You will stand for him as he will stand for you as best man when you marry

You will provide each other with someone to call when in need

You will learn that no matter how old you two are that he will always look up to you because you are his older brother

You will be his older brother for the remainder of your life and it will make you proud

Well Sammy Samson those are just a few of the millions of thoughts Papa has on this subject. It will be a change in your life but one that will take you on an adventure that you will always cherish. You two will always have each other and will not have to grow up alone. Papa loves the song "Brotherly Love" by Earl Thomas Conley and Keith Whitley and one of the lines says "there is a bond brothers know and it gets stronger as they grow." So Sammy Samson when June rolls around say hello to your "Bud Roe", your confidant, and someone who will always be there. Say hello to brotherly love.

# The Best Is Coming

By Bill Roberts



(A Child For Amanda & Dustin)

The wait... Has it really been days that turned into years? Sleepless nights accompanied by agony, stress, and wondering. Bargaining with God has become an opinion also. Wanting the time of nurturing and nesting that is shared by all of those who become parents. Looking for that special love that is a blessing and fills one's heart for a lifetime. God opening our hearts and leading us another way. Foster to adopt.

The questions are limitless. Learning of foster to adopt? Is this the way to go? A last chance? Yes we can do this. The paperwork. The prying, the questioning, and in-home visits. Would people still be open to having kids if this was the process for all? Yes we can do this. Can we love another person's child? Can we make a difference? Can we ease their pain? What was their pain? Will they love us? Will we be Mom and Dad to them? An infant or a toddler? Yes we can do this.

Yes we can do this and will do this because we want a family. We want the pattering of feet on the hardwood floors, we want toys strewn across the living room, and we want other voices being heard in the house instead of only ours. We are ready for the middle of the night feedings, not having enough sleep to actually make it through the day, and the feeling of a small child falling asleep in our arms. We are ready to read stories as they look up at us as the purveyor of all wisdom. We are ready for those first steps to record in our memories along with every other accomplishment that will follow. We are ready for birthday parties, playing Santa, school plays, and other activities that will keep us on the road for countless hours. Yes we are ready to coach, lead the scout troop, watch the recitals, and provide snacks for all the team members. We are ready to stand and cheer as they are handed their diploma. We are ready to pack them up for college. We are ready to walk them down the aisle or shed tears as she or he walks down the aisle. We are ready to sit in the waiting room as we discuss nicknames for our grandchild. We are ready to live our dreams instead of dreaming our dreams.

It is hard for me to put into words how your worlds will be changing. A journey into the unknown. A good unknown. Make that the best unknown. But, you will be in good company as we parents were all first timers once upon a time in our lives. From the beginning of parenthood where you dip your toe into the water to the full cannonball as you become more experienced, it is an exhilarating ride that has no exit. The joys, triumphs, and missteps you will take in stride. The tears and fears will flow and ebb as you come out on the other side. You will discover that it is the hardest job you will ever have but also the most rewarding. Not a sprint, but a marathon that is run for the rest of your days. The grandest thing that will far exceed anything that you have ever done in your life. Unbridled euphoria that will fuel you from now on. Welcome to the club Amanda and Dustin. The best is coming.



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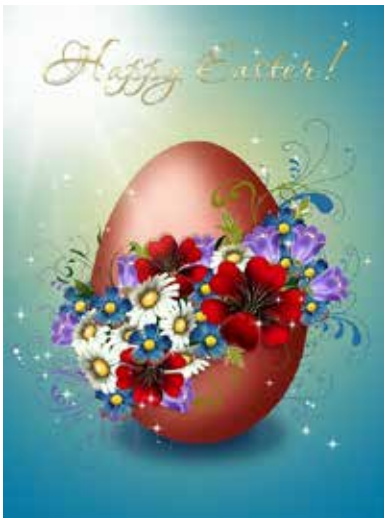

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