

LOCAL: BEALLS WILL UNVEIL ITS PROTOTYPE STORE FRIDAY IN BUFFALO RIDGE PAGE C1



Rays rout Red Sox
Tampa Bay beats Boston 10-3 to move closer to its first playoff berth.
Sports B1

Weather
Scattered Storms
Hi: 85 Lo: 69
Complete Forecast C2



Through the lens
Mary Schaub is the first photographer to receive artist of the month honors.
Lifestyles D1



The Villages®

DAILY SUN

25 CENTS

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 2008

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Republican vice presidential candidate Alaska Gov. Sarah Palin is shown in a file photo, speaking during a campaign rally at Franklin & Marshall College in Lancaster, Pa. Palin is still on track to visit The Villages on Sunday for a campaign rally.
The Associated Press



THE VILLAGES • ELECTION 2008

PALIN'S VILLAGES VISIT IS A GO

Despite confusion, VP candidate to speak at Market Square rally Sunday

By META MINTON
DAILY SUN

THE VILLAGES – GOP vice presidential hopeful Sarah Palin is still coming to The Villages – despite some reports that she had canceled her Sunday afternoon appearance.
Palin's national campaign officials apparently overruled some

state campaign officials who had called for a cancellation of the Sunday appearance in The Villages because of a chance of rain.
A rally for Palin is still scheduled for 3 p.m. Sunday at Market Square in Lake Sumter Landing. Palin has been drawing large, enthusiastic crowds in most of her visits across the country. Crowds for other GOP candidates in The

Villages have numbered in the thousands during the past few years, and her national campaign officials are anticipating a major turnout of supporters here.
Palin, the 44-year-old governor who has spent most of her life in Alaska, is well known for her passion for fishing, hunting, running

ALSO INSIDE:
Details on Palin's visit to The Villages.
PAGE A6

See PALIN, A6

IKE'S AFTERMATH

Galveston residents eager to see what's left

But after waiting hours in gridlocked traffic, they are told they can't go home

By JON GAMBRELL
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

GALVESTON, Texas – Residents of this hurricane-wrecked island city launched an ill-advised attempt to return to their crippled hometown Wednesday, but instead fumed in hours of gridlocked traffic only to be turned away at the bridge.
Traffic backed up for 20 miles along Interstate 45, the one route onto Galveston Island, jockeying for position with utility workers, repair crews and police trying to begin repairs to the city wrecked by Hurricane Ike five days ago.
The city announced Tuesday that people could briefly return under a new "look and leave" plan, causing evacuees all over the state to pack up and head for the coast. Hours later, it abruptly halted the policy out of fear of just the sort of roadway chaos occurring on Wednesday.
Some people in the long line angrily complained that they'd never heard the policy was rescinded.

See GALVESTON, A6



The Associated Press
A Galveston police officer marks an SUV signifying it may not proceed along Interstate 45 on Wednesday to enter Galveston Island in the aftermath of Hurricane Ike.

FINDING LIFE in death

By MICHAEL BAKER
DAILY SUN

THE VILLAGES – Arthur McKee stood in front of a nondescript stoop in Brooklyn, N.Y., racking his brain.
The building seemed familiar, but he couldn't quite place it.
"You don't recognize it?" the stranger on the stoop asked again.

McKee looked at the man and then down at the steps lined with a dozen young smiling faces gazing back at him.
"No," McKee said. Try as he might, he couldn't figure out when – and if – he'd

See LIFE, A5



Villages resident discovers a 'world entire' he saved as a New York City firefighter more than 37 years ago



Our Hero Always

Our cup runneth over, with endless gratitude and praise, We are indebted to you, Mr. Arthur McKee... always! Although it's been many years since that tragic fire Of praising and thanking you we will never tire. You braved burning flames, entering the inferno Risking your life, you became a true hero. From amidst the unbearable heat you grabbed a child of five, Her lungs by then black... we prayed she survive Little Zlate slowly recovered and came back to life Thirty-eight years later, a proud mother, grandmother and wife Mr. McKee, you saved one life, but yet so many more It's for that precisely we are ever thankful for! To save one life is to save an entire world – so precious and dear All due to your outstanding courage and care! In this great merit may G-d bless you with many more happy years With a speedy and complete recovery and many good cheers With much pleasure from your children and grandchildren too Mr. Arthur McKee – THANK YOU! We salute you!!!

From Rabbi and Mrs. Emanuel Pollak (parents); Aron, Usher, and Chaim Pollak (brothers); Pessie Pollak Freshwater, Bassie Pollak Horowitz, and Charna Pollak Bodansky (sisters); Rabbi Moshe Flam (husband); Mrs. Zlate Pollak Flam

September 1, 2008

Photo illustration by Mike Orton / Daily Sun

TOP STORIES: BUSINESS



Government steps in again to bail out AIG; will plan cost taxpayers money? **PAGE A3**

SPORTS: GOLF



Villager Bob Dodds will be working as a volunteer at the Ryder Cup in Louisville, Ky. **PAGE B1**

LOCAL: MADE WITH LOVE



Virginia Cash has found a way to lift soldiers' spirits – by making and sending homemade cards. **PAGE C1**

ECONOMY

DOW TAKES A DIVE AGAIN

After bailout of AIG, Dow plunges nearly 450 points

By ELLEN SIMON
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW YORK – The stock market took another nosedive Wednesday as the American banking system appeared even shakier and investors worried that the financial crisis is spinning so far out of control that even government rescues can't stop it.
The Dow Jones industrial average, which only two days earlier had suffered its steepest drop since the days after the Sept. 11 attacks, lost another 450 points. About \$700 billion in investments vanished.
One day after the Federal Reserve stepped in with an emergency loan to keep American International Group Inc., one of

See DIVE, A7



The Associated Press
Trader Christopher Crotty rubs his eyes Wednesday as he works on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange.

ALSO INSIDE:

White House alters defense of economy's strength. **PAGE A17**

Washington Mutual appears headed for sale. **PAGE A18**

European markets hold, then fall for third day. **PAGE A19**

Dancing in Paradise

New line dancing group forms for those who want an extra place to dance.

Lifestyles D4

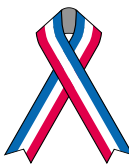


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Villages resident discovers a ‘world entire’ he saved as a New York City firefighter more than 37 years ago

By MICHAEL BAKER, DAILY SUN

THE VILLAGES — Arthur McKee stood in front of a nondescript stoop in Brooklyn, N.Y., racking his brain.

The building seemed familiar, but he couldn’t quite place it.

“You don’t recognize it?” the stranger on the stoop asked again.

McKee looked at the man and then down at the steps lined with a dozen young smiling faces gazing back at him.

“No,” McKee said. Try as he might, he couldn’t figure out when — and if — he’d been here before.

The man’s welcoming smile hinted that the two shared a connection. “A long, long time ago,” he said, “you saved a little girl from a fire, Mr. McKee.”

The Fire

It was Christmas Eve 1970, almost Christmas morning, really, and all Arthur McKee really wanted to do was get home to his family. But those thoughts vanished when the call came in. McKee and his firefighting partner, Vinny Capobianco, raced into action. In minutes they were

speeding from Fire Station 148 in Brooklyn to the nearby home in Borough Park.

It didn't look good.

The house was spewing smoke, flames flaring through the windows.

Without even stopping to put on their masks, McKee and Capobianco clambered through a window seven feet off the ground and entered the smoke-filled home.

The huge conflagration in the middle of the cold night drew quite a crowd, but no one — not even firefighters who arrived later — could see what was going on inside the house.

“You can't see a thing,” McKee remembered recently. “There's thick, black smoke. You're coughing your brains out.”

Sensing his way through the dark, McKee stumbled upon a crumpled heap of a small child. The girl wasn't breathing. If there was to be any chance for her, McKee needed to act fast.

He handed the girl to Capobianco, jumped out of the window he had climbed through and had Capobianco drop the child into his arms.

“She was like a ragdoll,” McKee said. Her limp form was cradled in his arms. It was impossible not to fear the worst: “She's dead. She's dead.”

But his heart wasn't as ready to admit defeat as his brain.

McKee quickly pressed his face to hers and breathed. And breathed. And breathed. And breathed.

No response.

Finally, after what felt like an eternity, the ambulance arrived. McKee climbed into the back, still holding the inert girl tightly to his chest. He thought of his wife, who had died just a few months before. He thought of his own 5-year-old son, John, back home. There was no question: He was staying with her.

McKee held the limp, ashen girl as the ambulance attendant placed a stethoscope to her chest.

The ambulance attendant looked up in sorrow. "She's gone," she said.

"No, she's not," McKee responded angrily, "she's not until I say she is."

Throughout that interminable ride, McKee kept his face locked on the little girl's, breathing and breathing and breathing.

Each seemingly useless breath brought McKee closer to despair. How could he return to his family if this little girl died, right here, in his arms?

And then — with surprising force — the girl coughed.

“Snot, soot, all of this black stuff comes out of her mouth,” McKee said. “When she started crying, I knew that girl was getting somewhere. I could finally feel life in her. I could feel her life.”

McKee could barely bring himself to release the girl when they got to the hospital. But, finally, he hesitantly left her in the care of the doctor and went home to his family to do his best to celebrate Christmas Day.

But his mind stayed, pacing back and forth in that hospital room.

After the Fire

McKee tried to go about his life as normal — fighting fires, tending to his family. Quietly each morning he checked the newspaper, slowly poring over death notices for young girls. But he didn’t even know her name.

Her name was Zlata Pollak. The 4-year-old clung to her life in the hospital for two months.

Her sister, Mindy, 7, died in the fire.

Their family had gone to bed after celebrating the first night of Hanukkah, and a holiday candle had toppled, igniting the whole house.

Eventually, the Christmas fire faded from McKee’s memory. Years of fighting fires passed. “It’s a job just like any other,” he said. But in his

heart he knew his job was different. He often wondered about the people he rescued. What happened to them? Did they go on to have families of their own?

After being injured on the job three times, McKee hung up his fire helmet for good in 1979 and moved to Fort Worth, Texas, to start a real estate business with his second wife.

He moved to the Village of Calumet Grove in 2002 and lives there now in the company of his son, John.

McKee's health is failing him. He is battling prostate cancer, and the doctors say his days are numbered.

But, as he had with the ambulance attendant so many years before, McKee is anxious to prove them wrong. To find life. "I don't feel numbered," he said, "I feel all right."

Fearing the doctors are right, his three sons — John, James and Robert — planned a reunion trip to New York. And despite fleeting health — he spent 10 days in the hospital two months ago — McKee was anxious to see his old stomping grounds.

The trip worked like a tonic. He saw his old homes in Brooklyn and Staten Island and went to a barbecue with some of his former fire buddies, including Vinny Capobianco.

But then his sons brought him to this old Brooklyn brownstone that he was obviously supposed to recognize, but that he just couldn't place.

Back in Borough Park

The man on the stoop spoke softly. “It was almost 40 years ago when you saw her last,” he said.

Just then Zlata Pollak — now Zlata Flam — came out on the stoop. The woman bore little resemblance to the small, unconscious girl he had carried in his arms, but McKee knew right away.

His sons, through extensive research, had unearthed an old article about the fire that McKee had tucked — hidden, really — in the back of a scrapbook.

Serendipitously, two years ago, Zlata’s brother had moved back into the family’s Borough Park home.

“If we had looked two years earlier, they wouldn’t have been there and we never would have found them,” McKee’s son John said.

And through weeks of planning, McKee’s sons finally had him right where they wanted him.

“I want to thank you, Mr. McKee,” the man on the stoop said, squeezing his wife’s hand. “If it weren’t for you, I wouldn’t have this beautiful wife or,” he gestured to the small faces lining the steps, “these 11 children.”

“I don’t cry easy,” McKee said, “but when I saw her, I started crying. Her husband praised me to the highest. It ... it was the biggest surprise I ever had in my life.”

The McKee family and Zlata’s family spent the weekend in the same building that had fallen to flames 38 years earlier.

The Flams were effusive in their thanks for McKee, and the two families ate and sang and rejoiced together.

Zlata’s family had told her little about the fire that claimed her sister’s life. She said that on hearing about the reunion with the firefighter who saved her life, Zlata’s father, Rabbi Emanuel Pollak, wept for 20 minutes.

“Meeting her and her family changed my life for a long time,” McKee said. “I looked at the faces of the children, one after another, each one more beautiful than the last,” he said.

Even Zlata’s first grandchild — just a few months old — was on hand for the celebration.

“I kept saying, ‘This, this is the most beautiful baby I’ve ever seen,’” McKee said. “I kept saying it all day, over and over again.”

And in the truest sense, McKee is responsible for that beauty.

This was not lost on Zlata's husband, Rabbi Moshe Flam. "We are one family together, and that's thanks to you, Mr. McKee. We are indebted to you with the life of my children and all the generations to come," he said.

One of Zlata's daughters wrote McKee a poem and presented it to him on a plaque. She told him of an old Jewish saying that "whoever saves one life, saves the world entire."

Sharing a meal with the woman whose life he saved, along with her husband, 11 children and grandchild, Arthur McKee saw the entire world in that room.

Michael Baker is a reporter with the Daily Sun. He can be reached at 753-1119, ext. 9245