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just some thoughts

This Month: Mote's Dr. Adrienne Atkins



Dr. Adrienne Atkins
Photo by Evelyn England

Mote Marine hired a new veterinarian last fall. That woman is Dr. Adrienne Atkins, a third generation Floridian. Just how many female veterinarians are there in the U.S.? From what I found googling, women hold 78 percent of veterinary school seats, according to the Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges. As of 2009, they found that female veterinarians outnumbered their male counterparts for the first time: 44,802 to 43,196.

Women are on par or even surpassing men in many categories. There are many reasons. For example, statistics show that more women than men are graduating with bachelor's degrees and more female graduates are seeking additional education as compared to men. Women have represented about 57 percent of the enrollment at U.S. colleges since 2000, according to the American Council on Education. Council researchers cite the tendency of women to outperform men in high school and college and men leaving college in disproportionate numbers. Title IX has also helped. But the real takeaway is that women with the desire and the skills can study in the veterinary medicine field—or any field, for that matter.

One area in veterinary medicine that remains a male enclave is food animal medicine. The 2009 breakdown was 82.5 percent male. In the same year, 44.7 percent of veterinarians in companion animal private practice (i.e. your family pet) were male, 55.3 percent female.

So there you have it! Dr. Atkins may be the first woman to hold this job at Mote, but she is an example of this interesting and certainly barrier-breaking trend for women in medicine.

Sarasota Film Festival Continues Through April 9

The Sarasota Film Festival is upon us! And it runs to April 9. To help you prepare, we've highlighted local films, female directors and female-centric films (plus as many other films that we could fit).

Opening Night film was "Take Every Wave: The Life Of Laird Hamilton" directed By Rory Kennedy, it's about big-wave surfer Laird Hamilton—an action figure sprung to life, complete with extraordinary physical abilities, a penchant for criss-crossing the globe, and a complete lack of fear.

Kennedy's documentary followed the charismatic Hamilton during a winter surf season on Hawaii's Kauai Island, where Hamilton grew up and where an approaching El Nino storm system provided unprecedented waves for him to conquer.

As for the rest of the Sarasota Film Festival line-up, there's the Narrative Feature Competition, Independent Visions Competition, Documentary Feature Competition, World and US Cinema Narrative, World and US Cinema Documentary, Spotlight, and Short Films. The festival also has three SFF Focus Panels—LGBTQ Community; Environment, Science, & Sustainability; and Sports In Cinema—along with its Closing Night Awards.

There are lots of women at, and in, the SFF – directors, producers, actors and writers. Aisha Taylor has directed "Axis" As an actress Tyler was in TV's "Archer," "The Talk," "Whose Line Is It Anyway?," "Criminal Minds"), and in her directorial debut, she shot an entire film inside one car in Los Angeles. It's not a great day for Tristan (Emmett Hughes, who is also the screenwriter) – his life is falling apart and everyone is abandoning him at his time of need.

The Closing Night Awards include the Terry Porter Visionary Award, Independent Visions Competition Winner, Narrative Competition Award by Sam Slater & Burn Later Productions and more.

The Closing Night Film—"Paris Can Wait" was directed by Eleanor Coppola. The Awards Ceremony will take place on April 8 at the Sarasota Opera House. Here the festival will honor Diane Lane with the Sarasota Film Festival Award for Cinematic Excellence, as well as the Terry Porter Visionary Award sponsored by the Huisking Foundation, the Narrative Competition award and cash prize donated by Producer and co-Founder of Burner Later Productions Sam Slater, and winners of several other categories.

The Ceremony will be followed by the Closing Night Wrap Party at the Sarasota Sky Bar & Club. For tickets and a complete schedule of films and events, visit www.sarasotafilmfestival.com.

The 18th Annual Through Women's Eyes International Film Festival (TWE) is Saturday, April 1, and Sunday, April 2, at Regal



Rory Kennedy



Aisha Taylor



Diane Lane

Hollywood Stadium 20, 1993 Main St., Sarasota. Every year, TWE presents the very best in new, groundbreaking films by established and emerging filmmakers from around the world.

The complete lineup of exciting films is available at www.through-womenseyes.com. They have chosen 22 films (15 shorts and seven features) from more than 300 submissions. Many of the filmmakers will be at TWE for the screenings of their films.

A farewell to Sarah H. Pappas from the Selby Foundation



Sarah H. Pappas

After serving as president of the William G. and Marie Selby Foundation for nine years, Sarah H. Pappas has announced that she will be leaving effective June 1, 2017. Dr. Pappas has been a wonderful leader in Sarasota first at SCF (State College of Florida) followed by the Selby Foundation. She's always been a champion for women.

We wish Dr. Pappas a wonderful post-career life and hope it is full of new adventures.

That must be a Typo...

April 22 marks the 47th anniversary of Earth Day — a day intended to inspire awareness and appreciation for the Earth's natural environment. Organizers started Earth Day in response to a massive oil spill in waters near Santa Barbara, Calif., in 1969.

There are still events timed for Earth day and Earth Week...such as this one at USF Sarasota-Manatee. USF Sarasota-Manatee has a talk about climate change and its consequences for Florida with noted geologist and expert on sea-level rise Dr. Harold Wanless of the University of Miami.

The Suncoast Climate Change Symposium will be held April 18, 5-7:30 p.m., at USFSM's Selby Auditorium, 8350 N. Tamiami Trail, Sarasota. Dr. Wanless is chairman and a professor in the Department of Geological Sciences at the University of Miami. He is currently overseeing a research project funded by the National Park Service, the National Biological Survey and NOAA to document hurricane impacts on coastal environments.

A frequent consultant to government officials on the effects of sea-level rise, Dr. Wanless was among a handful of scientists chosen in July 2014 to advise Gov. Scott about the consequences of climate change in Florida.

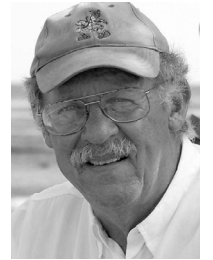
"The high end of the projection by the U.S. government is two feet of sea-level rise by 2048 plus another one foot by 2063 or 2064," he reportedly told the governor. "That basically is going to do in all of the barrier islands of the world."

The symposium will include a presentation by Dr. Wanless followed by a question-and-answer session and refreshments. The event is sponsored by BDH Associates, LLC, which is headed by Sarasota resident Brian Hunter. "This symposium is for everyone, but my hope especially is for city and county officials to attend as well," Hunter said. "We have to start planning and taking a look at what's going on."

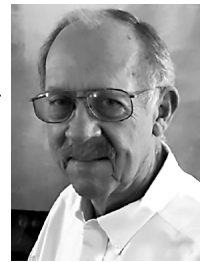
Dr. Paul Kirchman, dean of USFSM's College of Science & Mathematics said he hopes the meeting can bring people together to start thinking about solutions to climate change. "One problem is that this issue has become politicized because of an impression that climate scientists are anti-industry. I don't think that is true," he said. "In fact, advances in industry and technology will help solve the problem. Science has helped us avoid dire predictions in the past and we need to do that again."

"The other problem is that the changes are gradual, so we don't really notice them," Dr. Kirchman said. "If a big meteor was to hit in 30 years, I believe scientists and politicians would work together now on how to avert that, not when it's about to strike the planet. But with climate change, we need to work on this issue before it becomes so obvious to everyone."

Tickets are \$15. To purchase tickets, visit www.usfbdhclimatechange.com or www.bdhinc.net.



Dr. Harold Wanless



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We welcome your thoughts and comments on this column and on other columns and features in this issue. You can reach us at WCWNewspaper@aol.com. We're on the web at www.WestCoastWoman.com.