

**BEST DUMB LAW**

Fort Myers Under-21

Fort Myers City Manager William Mitchell said a lot when he confused 18-to-20-year-olds with “minors” in a memo about why that age group is too immature to be allowed in bars and nightclubs in Fort Myers — unlike anywhere else in Lee County. Assumptions and misperceptions like these have sold this age group short since the law came into being seven years ago. And the Fort Myers Police Department and city lawmakers keep justifying it by vilifying all 18-to-20-year-olds. Other than Councilman Warren Wright, who opposes the law, lawmakers are complicit in defaming the entire age group, repeatedly saying that as a group, 18-to-20-year-olds are responsible for litter and vomit on the streets and sidewalks, the smell of urine, and fights, especially in the River District downtown.

But in reality, there is scant evidence that any particular age group is any more responsible than a variety of other factors, including: poor lighting on downtown streets, more bars and nightclubs overall, a growing number of divorces, an insufficient police presence or the phases of the moon.

The thinking behind this dumb law is as timeless as fearful old curmudgeons who feel safer stereotyping all young people as troublemakers.

BEST MUSTACHE

Lt. Gov. Jeff Kottkamp

When it comes to mustaches, there are endless options. We're somewhat relieved that Lt. Gov. Jeff Kottkamp keeps his tasteful and stylish. He doesn't let it get long and droopy over his upper lip (The Walrus), wax it high up in points on each end (The Dali), or let the ends hang down like an inverted field goal on either side of his mouth (The Fu Manchu). But we'd sure be interested to see him try next year. According to the American Mustache Institute, the lieutenant governor wears a Painter's Brush — that is, “a thick mustache covering the width of the mouth, usually worn short, with slightly rounded corners.”

**BEST PLACE FOR A ROMANTIC TRYST**

Tarpon Lodge

Motel 6 might seem like a good idea now, but you'll probably regret it later. The best place to disappear is Tarpon Lodge, nestled on the water in the sleepy fishing village of Pine Island. You can stay in the 12-bedroom lodge or in a separate cottage for extra privacy. Be sure to time your dinner reservation at Tarpon Lodge Restaurant around sunset.

Details: 283-3999 or visit www.tarponlodge.com

BEST PLACE TO SQUANDER A TAX REFUND

Lookers

If you're gonna squander your tax refund, you might as well go all the way. And there's perhaps no place where a dollar goes further than Lookers, a gentleman's club on Fowler Street. Bring plenty of \$1 bills to tip the dancers. Have a few cocktails. Shake loose the hoarding impulse that's gripping the nation and buy a private dance for yourself and your friends (\$20 per song). By the end of the evening, you'll have unburdened yourself from the wad of cash burning a hole in your pocket, and you'll have gained memories to last at least until next year.

Details: Don't attempt to grope the dancers, unless you want to meet the bouncers.

BEST JUDGE

James Seals

When it comes to compassion and empathy, Judge James Seals is second to none. Although he has the power to exact punishment, his heart really goes into building the self-esteem and spirit of the youth who appear before his ceremonial gavel. A Twentieth Judicial Circuit Court judge, he oversees the Juvenile Dependency Court in Fort Myers.

In 2007, he initiated the local PACE Center for Girls, a school for at-risk teens that also operates in 16 other Florida towns and cities. “With the help of a lot of people, it came into being,” he says with judicious modesty. The program accepts referrals from the court system, the Department of Children and Families, Lee County schools, community services agencies, parents, family members, friends and students themselves. Although staff runs the center now, Judge Seals will always take great pleasure in hearing about progress and accomplishments the PACE students make.

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