

## ILLEGAL!?

Some Florida laws forbid things you might never have imagined



BY JEFF CULL

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If you've ever played with your young children by getting down on all fours and pretending to be a bull while they giggled and taunted you with a pillow case or towel, well, KNOCK IT OFF.

Simulated bullfighting is illegal in Florida.

That's right, legislators in the Sunshine State felt some compelling need to pass a law to regulate the all-too-common simulated bullfight. The law, passed in 2002, says, "It shall be unlawful, and punishable as a misdemeanor, for any person to conduct or engage in a simulated or bloodless bullfighting exhibition."

That's pretty clear — only real, bloody bullfights are legal.

However, since January 2005, 23 people have been arrested on this charge according to the Florida Department of Law Enforcement.

There's no data on what happened in those cases but prosecutions must be light, there's no case law on the books involving simulated bullfighting.

Still, the bullfighting law isn't the strangest in Florida.

As the 2007 Legislative session comes to a close this week, Florida Weekly examined other laws that even cops and attorneys found curious.

For example, a couple living together who are not married can be prosecuted for "lewd and lascivious behavior." It's a second-degree misdemeanor, punishable by up to \$500 in fines and 60 days in jail.

"I'm glad the statute of limitations has

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### Poker run

Go-fast boats hit Fort Myers Beach this weekend. **A4 ▶**



### SOCIETY

See who's out and about in Fort Myers. **C12 & 13 ▶**



### Lord of the Dance

Irish dance troupe at the Barbara B. Mann on Saturday. **C6 ▶**



### Performing arts

Tamara Flannagan in "The Syringa Tree" in Naples. **C1 ▶**



### Making a difference

Teacher Laurie Gill helps hospitalized kids keep up with their lessons. **A10 ▶**

## Tourism, airport set records

More snowbirds are coming and spending more money

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If the amount of taxes collected on hotel rooms is any indication of a successful tourist season, this year's was a smash.

Bed tax receipts — the 5 percent surcharge on hotel rooms and short-term rentals — were up more than 20 percent in

February and March than last year.

The Lee County Clerk of Courts collected \$3.5 million in bed taxes in March, compared to \$2.9 million in March 2006.

"We've had an overall very good tourist season," said Nancy Hamilton, communications director for the Lee County Visitor & Convention Bureau.

That means more money to promote "The Beaches of Fort Myers & Sanibel" and improve the top tourist attraction, the beaches and shoreline. It also shows that more people are making Lee County a tourist destination.

Hamilton said hoteliers added about 1,500 new rooms in the last year and that helped boost occupancy.

"(The tourist tax increase) is really a better comment on our inventory," she said.

Some businesses are also just getting back to form after Hurricane Charley devastated the region in 2004.

South Seas Island Resort on Captiva Island recently opened after completing \$140 million in renovations. And many Sanibel and Captiva businesses are back in full

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