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# Humorist details journey from rags to riches to Fort Myers

Chamber of Commerce speaker here Feb. 21

SPECIAL TO FLORIDA WEEKLY

The Fort Myers Chamber of Commerce has invited author and motivational humorist Yvonne Conte to speak at its luncheon at The Pelican Preserve on Veneto Drive in Fort Myers on Thursday, Feb. 21.

Conte travels first class and stays in the best resorts and hotels, but life wasn't always so sweet. Fourteen years ago the company she worked for closed its doors and left her without a job.

Soon her nest egg turned into a goose egg. The last straw for Conte was losing her home to the bank.

She was devastated and moved into her sister's attic where she thought about how to turn her life around. Her son suggested comedy since she seemed to enjoy making people laugh. Conte contacted a local club and started doing five-minute sets for free.

"It was like therapy to me," she said. "I could talk about all the things that bothered me and people would fall down laughing. That told me they understood how I felt and rather validated what I was going through."

One day, she was called to do a humorous presentation for a group of 200 fund-raising executives. Conte put together a presentation about how laughter affects the way you



interact with others and the executives loved it. It was the beginning of a very lucrative and satisfying career as a motivational keynote speaker.

Conte typically presents 60 keynotes a year at major conferences and conventions across the country. Her publishing credits include over 28 articles and essays and five books including her latest, "Remarkable Women of Faith" and a best seller, "Serious Laughter" which has been translated into Chinese.

Her clients include Xerox Corporation, Continental Tire, Merck and Medeva Pharmaceutical, Time Warner, AT&T and over 500 leading organizations.

Conte arrived in Fort Myers from upstate New York in December with a goal of making her home here and moving her speaker bureau, Humor Advantage, Inc. to the area.

For more information visit her web page at [www.yvonneconte.com](http://www.yvonneconte.com) or call the chamber at (239) 332-2930. ■



COURTESY PHOTOS

Motivational humorist, Yvonne Conte



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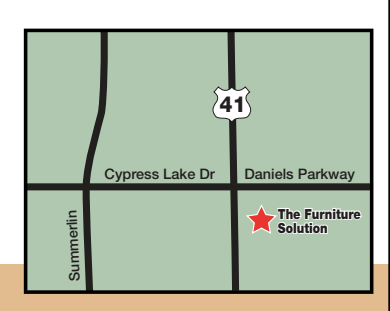
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