

FORT MYERS FLORIDA WEEKLY™

YOUR NEWS AND ENTERTAINMENT SOURCE

WEEK OF NOVEMBER 19-25, 2008

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COURTESY PHOTO

Sammy starred in "Dunston Checks In."

Chimp change: area sanctuary is retirement haven for many

Some great apes are retired movie stars

BY E.I. ROTTERSMAN

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Shawn McKelvy logs about 350 extra miles on her vehicle every week. She's also quit her regular profession.

All for the love of apes.

No monkeying around.

Ms. McKelvy, a slender blonde aesthetician from Fort Myers, made some big lifestyle changes in order to help make a difference in the lives of about 40 great apes, many former movie and TV stars, living in a sanctuary in remote Wauchula, about 60 miles east of Sarasota.

She is one of a devoted group of volunteers who donate their time and resources to serving the Center for Great Apes.

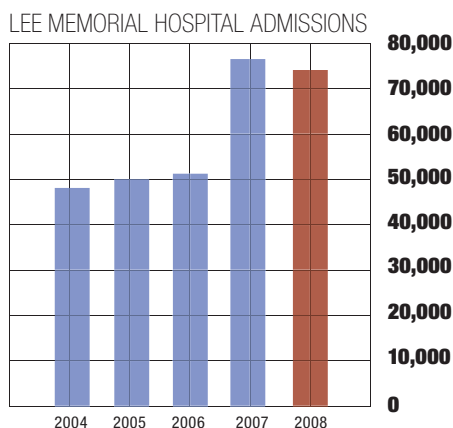
"I always wanted to work with apes," she said. "It was one of the things on my bucket list."

Ms. McKelvy, a diehard animal lover who is married to area veterinarian Dr. Milt McKelvy, said she scanned Web sites looking for a place to work with apes before she found the Center for Great Apes.

Ever since she started volunteering in October she's been getting more and more excited about the work. She volunteers in the center's kitchen as well as helping with cleaning the enclosures. She hopes to some day be able to read to the apes as well as raise

SEE SANCTUARY, A14 ►

After years of growth, Lee Memorial Health System saw a rare decline in admissions in its 2008 fiscal year that ended Sept. 30.



HOSPITALS FEELING THE ECONOMIC PAIN, TOO



EVAN WILLIAMS/FLORIDA WEEKLY

Patients delaying procedures; charity cases up

BY EVAN WILLIAMS

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Hospitals didn't catch a nasty case of economicitis like banks, restaurants and retailers because "people get sick regardless of the economy," said Bruce Rueben, director of the Florida Hospital Association.

But, "the idea that that hospitals are recession proof, it's clear that's not true," he said.

Just like some people are waiting for better times to make big financial decisions like buying a car or home, more patients are delaying costly treatment for things such as back pain, or sports injuries that could require a hospital visit.

"The volumes are down, more than what we expected," said C.W. Murray, director of patient registration at Lee Memorial Health System, with seven hospitals in Lee County.

Admissions at LMHS hospitals were

SEE PAIN, A8 ►

>>Inside:
Those without insurance in area near 30%
A8

Above, Fort Myers resident Inez Mitchell waits for outpatient testing at Lee Memorial Hospital. The hospital cut some shifts due to fewer patients.

INSIDE



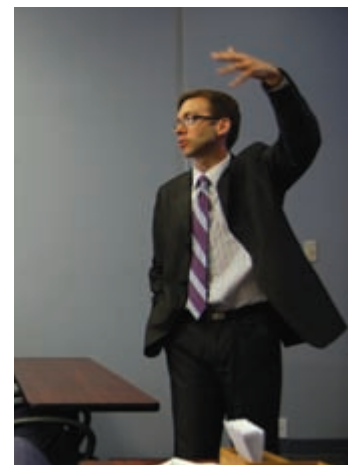
Art Royale

Get "Lost in Translation" at Saturday's arts gala at the Alliance for the Arts. **C1** ►



Edison Ford gala

And other events in Fort Myers' society. **C27, 28 & 30** ►



Back to school

Larson Educational Services is banking that people still want to be real estate agents. **B1** ►



Eye for Design

Southwest Florida watercolorist Christine Reichow relishes variety of painting techniques. **D2** ►

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