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WEEK OF MARCH 12-18, 2014

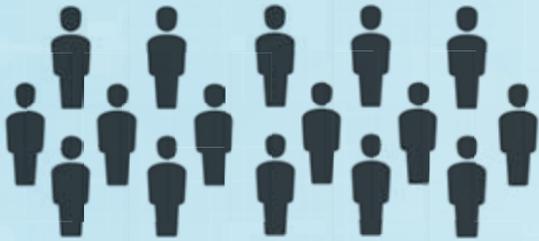
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Vol. VII, No. 48 • FREE

BY THE NUMBERS

1.2

billion dollars that the state is turning down this year



25

percent of Floridians who are not insured



7

million dollars Florida is turning down every day from the federal government

Medicaid expansion

Florida continues to say ‘no’ to the federal offer to help expand Medicaid, leaving the ‘working poor’ uninsured.

BY ROGER WILLIAMS

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IN FLORIDA, WHERE DEMOGRAPHERS EXPECT THE population to surpass New York’s this month to position the state as the nation’s third most populous, about one in four citizens lack medical insurance.

That rate of uninsured, at almost 25 percent, is the second highest in the United States, where each of the 50 states is grappling with the pressing need to change the way health care is delivered to all citizens — but especially to those who remain uninsured.

Political battles have been so clamorous that the point of it all may sometimes seem obscured. But there is a simple pragmatism, at bottom: Citizens with insurance tend to care for themselves before problems become dire. That costs less. Citizens without insurance, usually working people with low incomes, wait until they face emergencies. That costs more and they can’t pay. Ultimately, businesses and individuals who pay for insurance

SEE MEDICAID, A8 ▶

Permitting pooches: Working out a doggie dining ordinance

BY EVAN WILLIAMS

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Southwest Florida restaurants expand their customer base by welcoming dogs to porches and patios, and participating in events such as Pug Fest and Dog’s Night Out.

But a quirk in state rules makes it technically illegal for many eateries, such as



those at the Bell Tower Shops in south Lee County, to accommodate canines outside.

Florida requires city and county governments to pass their own “dog dining ordinances” based on state guidelines. It generally requires restaurants to pay to renew a yearly permit. But since the rule is normally not enforced, some enti-

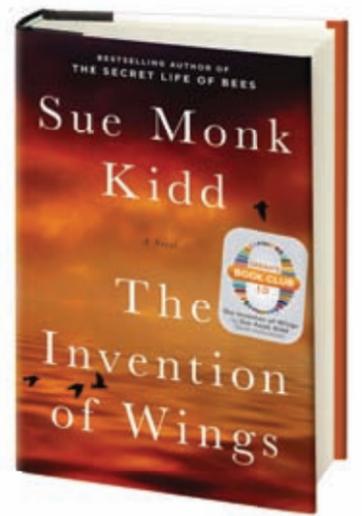
ties such as Lee County have not passed one.

“We were a little surprised to have a law like that on the books,” said Jen Nettles, general manager at the Bell Tower Shops.

Concerned that their businesses might be subject to fines or be forced to turn away customers, the Bell Tower Shops worked with Lee County planners to create the ordinance. If approved by commissioners, it could go into effect by late spring

SEE DOGGIE, A34 ▶

INSIDE



Inventing stories

Marco Island’s Sue Monk Kidd on writing her latest bestseller. C1 ▶



Race for the Cure

And more society shots around town. C28-33 ▶



Video in focus

Economic rebound helps production companies. B1 ▶

Googley eyes

Loveable children prized by collectors. A14 ▶



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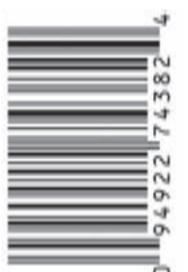


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REAL ESTATE

WEEK OF MARCH 12-18, 2014

A GUIDE TO THE REAL ESTATE INDUSTRY

| B9



COURTESY PHOTO

Designer Kira Krümm decided against using color in her son Marco's room, instead opting for subdued shades that create a restful, comforting environment.

Child's Play

Kids' bedrooms, playrooms and nurseries provide room to grow

BY KELLY MERRITT

Florida Weekly Correspondent

Southwest Florida is a great place to raise a family. Kids have so many activities to keep them busy and thriving. But when they get home, dedicated play spaces and dreamy bedrooms keep them occupied and feeling secure. To make the best use of space and keep little Janie or Joey entertained, parents are transforming ordinary bedrooms and dining rooms into kid-friendly spaces where children can play by day and snooze soundly at night.

For Lee County remodeling expert Kathy Guyitt, a child's delight is a big motivator, no matter what their age. Ms. Guyitt's Golden Remodeling philosophy is to be conscious of what she calls "the domino effect."

"One decision usually leads to another or affects another area and the extent of the remodel depends on that early homework and planning discussion," says Ms. Guyitt. "Clients want minimal or no surprises."

She says deciding to have children or

relocate with children means it's time to think about space planning on a whole new level. Anything goes.

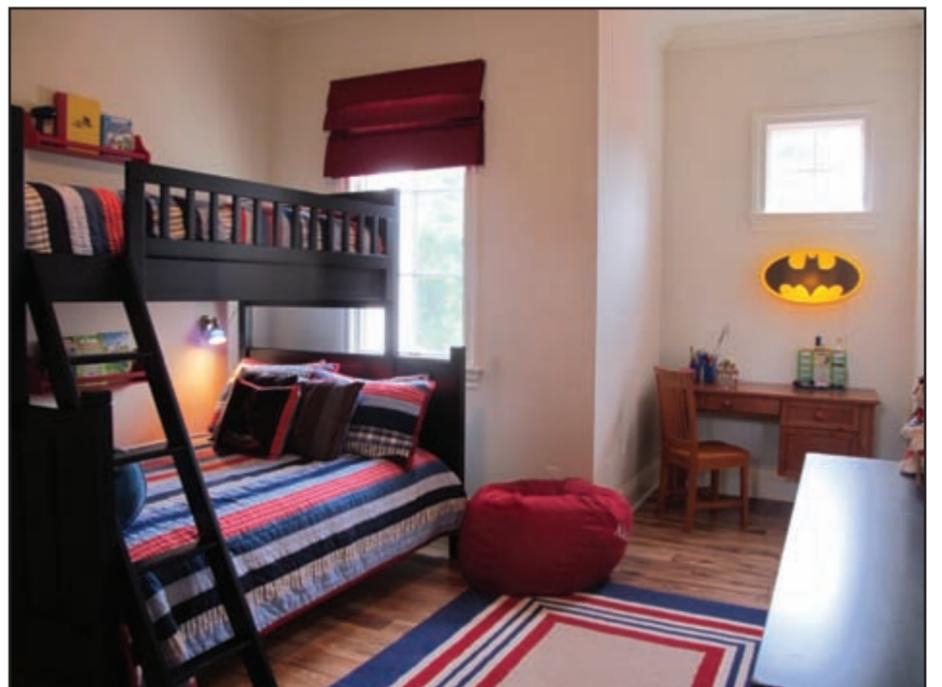
"Bedrooms for newborns, toddlers, grade schoolers, pre-teen, teens and young adults each have their own age-specific requirements — which begs the age old question: 'Where do parents begin?'" she says. "Discuss the rules of space well in advance and if you can provide a separate play room at the onset, everyone will enjoy play time and keep their sanity."

Ms. Guyitt suggest parents never forget that later on, play rooms and children's bedrooms make for great bonus rooms — home offices, craft rooms and mother-in-law or other guest suites.

"For long-term planning, remember to include a full bath attached to or near the play space," she says. "And there are lots of choices for room decor and furnishings — one of my personal favorites is Lambs & Ivy."

Design the room to be used from birth through grade school with just a

SEE CHILD'S PLAY, B22 ►



COURTESY PHOTO

Designer Karen Benson says it's important to ask kids what features they want.

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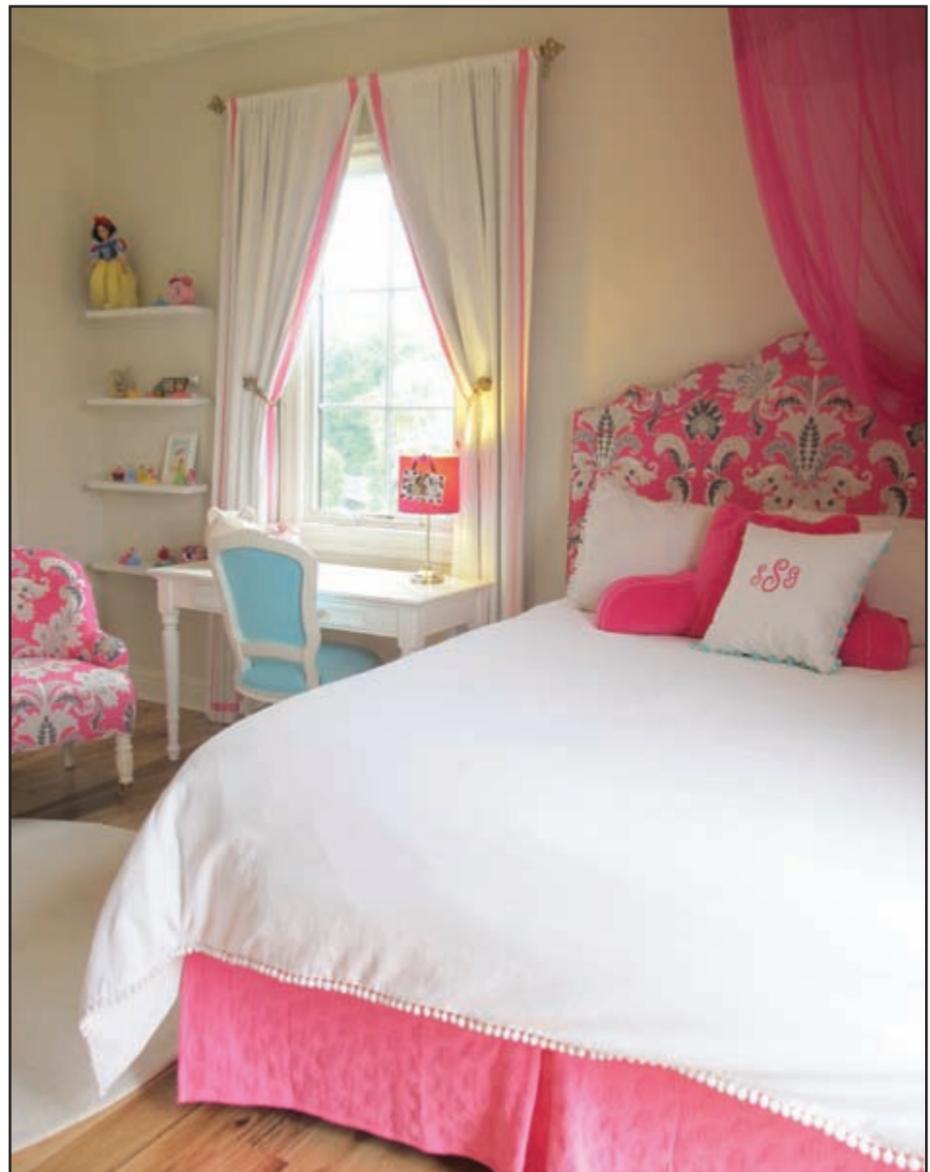


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COURTESY PHOTO

Kid's rooms benefit from as much natural light as possible.

CHILD'S PLAY

From page 9

few minor changes, Ms. Guyitt says. One of her frequent suggestions is to make the room a neutral color scheme and use accessories to define it for specific time periods. Make the furniture flexible and enjoyable long term to cut costs over time.

Clients with Kids

Fort Myers Interior Designer Karen Benson of Karen L. Benson & Associates often works with clients who have kids. She is known in the industry for designing fun, livable rooms that kids can grow into.

“Most homes either have a shared playroom — with several bedrooms adjacent to it, which is used for circulation, a separate playroom off to itself or a stand-alone structure connected to the lanai/

pool area,” says Ms. Benson. The most successful playrooms also have convenient storage solutions to handle toys and craft supplies, Play-Station controllers, billiard cues and such.

And for parents who are fortunate enough to plan for kids bedrooms and playrooms in new construction, Ms. Benson loves the idea of creating a clubhouse space.

“A lower gable roof is great for creating a cozy space for kids, such as making the attic space into a small ‘clubhouse,’” says Ms. Benson, who has designed some siblings rooms that have secret passageways between the closets. “Consider also designing a niche into the wall for a snack area, including a mini fridge and sink which is helpful for painting projects too.” Natural light is very important — so don't impose limits on window openings, she says.

In creating the perfect kids' bedroom or play space, common mistakes abound, Ms. Benson says. The biggest is not asking your children what they want.

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“Kids love having control over their environment and for me, this was actually a very important life-shaping opportunity,” she says. “I was always allowed to select my paint colors and I had furniture that was fairly easy to move around.”

Going green in the nursery

Nurseries are among some of the most decorated children’s rooms in a home. New moms and dads agonize over every detail. New mom Kira Krümm’s new baby is all about going green — little Marco’s nursery is an eco-chic space she calls “baby’s habitat.” Mrs. Krümm is a designer with clients from Fort Myers to Naples and through Southwest Florida. When it came time for her to create her own room for baby, she had a clear concept: create a space that’s good for baby and good for the environment.

“Many people think a nursery must be brightly colored with contrast in order to stimulate the baby, but my approach was the opposite — I did not introduce color,” says Mrs. Krümm. “There will be many opportunities to stimulate him when he is involved in activities, but as he adapts to his new life, the room can change with him and colors can be introduced gradually.”

Mrs. Krümm felt the nursery should be Marco’s retreat — a restful place where he would feel calm and comforted. Her approach was also influenced by the Chinese art of feng shui which is deeply rooted in nature and focuses on balance and simplicity, she explains.

Mrs. Krümm chose a contemporary-style crib made of New Zealand pine wood from sustainable forests in a combination of white and espresso finishes. The crib converts later into a toddler bed.

“My husband and I are both tall and we had a challenging time finding a changing table at a comfortable height, so we opted to convert a dresser into a

changing table so that after the diaper years we could still use it in the room,” says Mrs. Krümm.

Lastly, Mrs. Krümm added integrated speakers for soft music and dimmable lighting for late night changes and feeding, as well as shutters instead of curtains to allow partial or no light which is good for day napping.

Decor by mother nature

Parents are increasingly turning to nature for children’s room themes. Mary Elizabeth Waggener, who owns Aquaticus Creations nautical designers and decorators, says kids love the ocean.

“You can design a play space or bedroom that teaches your children all about the creatures of the sea and emphasize the importance of saving our oceans, beaches and waterways,” says Ms. Waggener, who helps parents collect and assemble sea-themed décor. “Items can include shells, driftwood, fossil rocks and even family photos taken while experiencing a family outing by the water.”

Parents can even create flash cards about the items used in decoration and later incorporate them into the design of the room.

“We have parents who make our gathering trips into a treasure hunt and it’s great for all ages, and it teaches them about different shells and reminds them to respect beaches and oceans,” Ms. Waggener says. “Collected items can become night lights, chandeliers, lamps, murals, window dressings, valances, and much more.”

She recently added light to a piece of driftwood, two types of shells, coral and a sand dollar to make a lamp for a child’s sea themed room.

“When you decorate a child’s space with natural materials, you have made a room of memories and of educational value,” she says. ■



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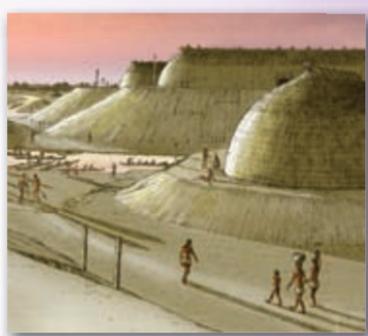
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