

(1927-2014), author; Rob Reiner, actor/director, is 69; D.L. Hughley, actor/comedian, is 53; Connie Britton, actress, is 49; Shaquille O'Neal, basketball player, is 44.

**Today's fact:** The U.S. Census Bureau reported that the median age for an American man in 2014 getting married for the first time was 29.3 years old. The median age for women was 27.

**Today's quote:** "Human beings are not born once and for all on the day their mothers give birth to them, but ... life obliges them over and over again to give birth to themselves."

— **Gabriel Garcia Marquez**

**Today's number:**

**30 cents** — price for 1 pound of Oreos cookies in a novelty can when the cookie was introduced by the National Biscuit Co. (today known as Nabisco) on this day in 1912.

**Bible quote:** "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another."

— **John 13:34**

## Collier 211

Collier 211 information and referral service, operated by the United Way of Collier County, offers free, anonymous, confidential help 24/7, in a variety of languages. Dial 211 or 239-263-4211. Visit [www.Collier211.org](http://www.Collier211.org) for more information.

## Guest commentary

# Historic preservation in Naples: This is our last chance

By **Elaine L. Reed**

President and CEO,  
Naples Historical Society Inc.

The simple idea of saving the past is not so simple, not in Naples.

One of the five initiatives the Naples Historical Society has crafted to preserve Naples history is called the Naples Historic District Initiative. Yes, the Naples Historic District still exists! (It was registered with the U.S. Department of the Interior in 1987.)

This initiative is a massive and complex endeavor that is intended to encourage and celebrate the broad visual integrity in the district. The rough boundaries of the district run from the Gulf of Mexico to Third Street South, and Ninth Avenue South to 13th Avenue South. (See the society's website for a map and more information.)

The Naples Historic District has enormous significance to those of

us who call Naples home, regardless of whether we live here full-time, part-time, over a long time, or just arrived.

The development of what is now Naples began with the Naples Pier, the old Naples Hotel, and what is now Historic Palm Cottage.

Meandering through this neighborhood, between and surrounding these important buildings, structures and sites, we can find the essence of Naples' earliest years. While the housing landscape changed some over the decades, there is still great aesthetic value in the Naples Historic District, something that compels the resident or visitor to treasure the uniqueness and desirability of this part of town.

Capturing the district's personality, its charm and character, for our enjoyment and posterity, is the work of Naples Historical Society, but this is a communitywide effort. Especially now. Yes, charm and character of the Naples Historic District have been hammered, but all is not lost.

We respectfully ask for

your ear and, ideally, for your optimism.

We believe we found a line of intelligence and reasoning that is the best bet to move forward in a dignified and respectful way. We believe this concept has genuine virtue and can speak to all of us in Naples.

If we don't try now, we may miss our opportunity — forever.

With this in mind, Naples Historical Society would like to extend an open invitation to community residents to learn about an initiative for the Naples Historic District.

Mark your calendars for March 21 at 10 a.m. or 2 p.m. Both presentations will be held at Rooney Hall, which is adjacent to St. Ann Catholic Church at the corner of 10th Avenue South and Third Street South. First-come, first-served. Space is limited. (Future informational presentations will be offered — this is just the beginning.)

Moving forward starts by understanding the realities of our market, correcting misinterpretations and knowing what truly constitutes historic

preservation. We will ask that presentation attendees take a deep breath and digest the voluminous and sometimes complicated information offered. There will be time for questions.

A few items are very important to note. This project does not replicate in any way, shape or form any past preservation attempts. It does not seek to regulate your paint color or door knob, your shrubbery, or your interior. This initiative does not include restrictions or introduce economic hardships of any kind that may exist in other parts of the country. This project will not take away one's property rights, nor will it seek City Council's vote, not now.

This project will, on the other hand, showcase the breadth of options for homeowners living in the Naples Historic District plus reveal findings that we think are key to this project. We do not have the final solution, not today, but we have created a good guide for use as we move forward.

At this point, we want to reignite this community's desire to do something in

and for the district because now is the time to do so. The first way to inspire the community is to share information. Before a judgment is made, learn about our thinking in this project.

Let it be noted for the record, this initiative has been fully funded by private philanthropy and through the generous donation of time and expertise from many people; it is this group of individuals who comprise the Naples Historic District Advisory Roundtable, a team that was created over two years ago specifically to see this project move forward.

As you consider the temptation of learning more about the Naples Historic District Initiative as well as consider the realities of Naples' growth (past, present and future), keep in mind what one of Naples' sages, the late Earl Hodges, said in his April 2011 oral history interview: "Change is inevitable. All we can do is to try to keep it on the most desirable track."

More information: [www.NaplesHistoricalSociety.org](http://www.NaplesHistoricalSociety.org)



Elaine L. Reed

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