

Mosquito Control: A little humor, please: pundits try their hand at describing our mosquitoes

By By JEFFREY C. STIVERS, Special to the Daily News

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The deadline has come and gone for the latest mosquito control contest and the entries are in. Now it is time for you, the readers, to decide who has done the best job of describing just how big, numerous and vicious the Naples area mosquitoes really are.

The fact that there are only a few entries emphasizes our feelings here: Mosquitoes are obviously no laughing matter.

Still, there are some of us bitten by the humor bug as well as by mosquitoes, and they offer their assessment of the situation for your entertainment — and in hopes of winning a prize. To vote for your choice, email me at Jeff@cmcd.org. Put “Contest” in the Subject line and, in the body of the e-mail, include the initials of the entrant for whom you are voting.

Some of those who did write submitted more than one description, so please let us know your specific choice. Votes have to be received by Sept. 1 to be counted and, since this is Naples, not Palm Beach, the Collier Mosquito Control District (CMCD) tally is final. Winners will be recognized in the September CMCD article.

Here are the finalists, in alphabetical order. I hope you enjoy their descriptions as much as I have.

BK entry: BK describes a trip across the trail one dark night when his radiator failed. While dipping water out of the canal to refill the radiator he was attacked by mosquitoes so big “They could stand flat-footed and kick a wild turkey in the butt!!” Situations like that are why cell phones and roadside assistance programs were developed.

BR entry: BR is apparently psychic, since he provided a copy of a Naples Daily New article from 20 years in the future. Here is his submission, with some minor editing.

“NAPLES (July, 2026): Twenty 20 years after the 2006 federal ban on aerial mosquito spraying, the Collier Mosquito Control District (CMCD), the Collier County Commissioners and the Naples City Council, held a joint emergency meeting in the basement of the heavily fortified CMCD administration building to develop a unified plan to rid Collier County of giant bloodsucking mosquitoes.

“Two term commissioner Kenny Swattem opened the meeting aided by visual props that compensated for his loss of speech due to the mustard gassing of mosquitoes back in 2010. His recent photographs depicting swarms of mosquitoes as large as pelicans,

emphasized the alarming growth rate of these flying beasts in both size and numbers. Swattem's presentation was violently interrupted when one of the giant mosquitoes broke through the buildings hurricane shutters and siphoned a pint of blood from commissioner Swattem's neck before a deputy sheriff could extricate the bloodsucker.

"Councilwoman Ima Bitten proposed a two-tier mosquito annihilation plan. First, volunteers would force feed birth control pills to female mosquitoes breeding out on 'the trail.' Then, regularly scheduled strafing of mosquitoes not medicated would be undertaken by police trainees in DC 3's. Objections to the plan were voiced by the SPCA and a fly-by-night Pro Life group. The motion was tabled.

"With dusk fast approaching, the director of CMCD, Willie Fester, suggested a cautious adjournment with attendees leaving the building in groups of four under 8-foot sections of chain-link fencing and armed with machetes. With safety in mind, the next meeting was scheduled to be held at Buzzes Lighthouse on Canyon Boulevard, (formerly known as Gulfshore Blvd. at Vanderbilt Beach). A study, underwritten by Fester, concluded that the aerial maneuverability of these bloated bloodsucking beasts would be severely limited by the density and proximity of buildings on Canyon Boulevard.

"As the last group was leaving the building, eyes peeled to the sky, a Naples Daily News reporter couldn't help but overhear Swattem whisper to Fester: 'I guess the solution to the problem remains up in the air.'"

Entry GCA No. 1: We now travel from BR's 2026 back to GCA's 1975, although it doesn't look like things have changed much.

GCA provides a brief history lesson on the development of part of the county.

"It seems in the rainy season, property owners had to use row boats to get to their property. They would carry rocks to fend off the huge mosquitoes, and after making many trips to this part of Collier, they created a path, giving it the name Rock Road." And you thought Rock Road was named for the quarry, right?

Entry GCA No. 2: GCA also tells a tale of true love involving our mosquitoes.

"I came out of the travel trailer with a black shirt on. I was instantly covered with mosquitoes. I screamed very loud, and my husband came out with a big can of bug spray and saved me from being carried off into the swamps. He thought of using a shotgun, but was afraid they weren't thick enough to deflect the pellets, and he might hit me."

I just wonder how many of us long-suffering, er, long-married folks would have made that particular decision? They had to be newlyweds, don't you think?

Entry HKH. This mosquito-bit veteran says, "I tell people we have mosquitoes big enough to harness and run in the Kentucky Derby." And when discussing mosquitoes HKH also warns people, "They're so big the retired ones are bagging groceries at

Publix.” While for the frequent beach goers she points out that, “Our mosquitoes are big enough they have to buy beach stickers to fly over Lowdermilk.”

Entry RC: Last on the ballot is RC, who checks the Naples Daily News via the internet from the Washington, D.C., area. He has some simple but practical advice for visitors: “Stay away from those skeeters masquerading as helicopters!!!!”

There you have it, folks. These are all good descriptions of our local scourge, mosquitoes, but which is your choice. E-mail your choice to Jeff@cmcd.org and we’ll see who comes out the top dog ... or should that be skeeter?

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Jeffrey C. Stivers, Ph.D. is director of research for Collier Mosquito Control District. Contact him at JStivers@collier-mosquito.org or by phone at 436-1000. The district Web site is www.collier-moquito.org.