



GOLDEN GATE

Event to benefit historic building

■ 3-day 'Thanks for Giving' kicks off Nov. 18

By Lisa Bolivar
Special to Treasure Coast Newspapers

STUART — The continued renovation of Stuart's historic Golden Gate Building is getting a boost from a thankful group of North Africa visitors who will be holding a fundraising event with Moroccan celebrities, cuisine and a sporting event.

The three-day third annual "Thanks for Giving" event kicks off Nov. 18 at 7:30 p.m. with a traditional Moroccan seven-course, \$50-a-plate dinner at the Kane Center, 900 S.E. Salerno Road, in Stuart, which includes music and a belly dancer. The dinner is followed Nov. 19 and 20 by a free soccer tournament at the YMCA.

Attending Moroccans also will be celebrating the 36th annual Moroccan Green March Celebration in remembrance of Morocco's liberation of the Moroccan South Sahara from Spain. Proceeds will be donated to the Golden Gate renovation project.

So far, the 1925 building has been structurally restored, but about \$500,000 more is needed to complete the inside, including plumbing, electrical work and then landscaping on the outside, said Moroccan-born Saadia Tsafarides, founder and president of the Friends of the Historic Golden Gate Community, Inc. Restoration efforts began in 2005.

"I am hoping and praying it's not running down because we finished (the outside) in 2008 and with the economy the way it is,

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the last thing people want to give donations for is a building, and it is just sitting there," she said. "Our dream is to make it into a learning center."

Tsafarides said the fundraising event is being sponsored by Aljalía, the American Moroccan Delegation of South Florida and Ajax, Miami, Inc. in appreciation of the friendship offered to a Moroccan delegation that visited Martin County earlier this year.

"Morocco was the first country ever to recognize the United States as a country," Tsafarides explained. "This year is the 225-year anniversary of that." She said when the Moroccan delegation visited, the county gave members a proclamation.

South Florida Moroc-

IF YOU GO

Third annual "Thanks for Giving" seven-course Moroccan dinner

Where: Kane Center, 900 S.E. Salerno Road, Stuart

When: Friday, Nov. 18 7:30 pm

Cost: \$50 per person or \$375 per eight-person table. Reservation needed Nov. 13.

cans have rallied behind Tsafarides in support of the Golden Gate renovation project, said Jamila Chami Bradley, president of the Moroccan-American Social Cultural Center in Orlando, who is helping organize the fundraising event.

"I learned about the Golden Gate community, and since Saadia has been pouring her heart into

SOCCER TOURNAMENT

Where: YMCA Sports Center, 2700 S.E. Willoughby Blvd., Stuart

When: Nov. 19 9 a.m. to 9 p.m., Nov. 20 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Cost: Free with donation of canned goods for Martin County's House of Hope

For more information call Saadia at 772-287-2292 or write to: The Friends of the Historic Golden Gate Community, Inc. at P.O. Box 734, Port Salerno, FL 34992-1527. Call: 772-287-4711. Email: stuartgoldengate@aol.com

it, why not help," Bradley said, adding that the Moroccan-themed event is an opportunity to share her culture as well as give back to her adopted country. "We belong to Florida now, so we need to do something beneficial for all of us."

About 300 people from around the country are expected to attend the event, Tsafarides said, but there is room for locals to come and enjoy the festivities.

The dinner will feature

about 25 Moroccan dignitaries and celebrities, Tsafarides said, including Mohamed Reda, the "Justin Bieber of Morocco," and three-time Olympic gold medal distance runner Hicham Gherrouj, along with the Moroccan All Star Retired Soccer Team.

Those wishing to attend the free soccer tournament are asked to bring canned nonperishable food items that will be donated to Martin County's House of Hope.