



# 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF IRB'S "NEW" BRIDGE

2018 marks the 60th anniversary of the building of Indian Rocks Beach's first drawbridge. It was really the area's second auto bridge; the first bridge, which opened over 100 years ago, was a swing bridge.

In the early 1900s, the only way to get to Indian Rocks was by a ferry owned and operated by Harvey Hendrick, whose dad was one of the first Indian Rocks landowners. He charged 5¢ per crossing.

When the newly invented Model-T Ford and other type cars began appearing in the area, there became a need for roads and bridges. The Indian Rocks Investment Company, owned by Donald and Robert McMullen and J.N. Hardage, all real estate men, built a narrow "swing bridge" to Indian Rocks Beach in the middle of the Narrows. It cost \$7,000 and opened on Thanksgiving Day in 1916. The toll was 15¢ for cars, while trucks paid 25¢. A bridgetender cranked a large screw in the middle of the bridge to open or close it. Harvey Hendricks, the same guy who had operated the ferry was the first bridgetender.

The bridge was not very wide - two large vehicles could not pass without touching each other. It was so unsafe parents refused to let their children ride cross it in a school bus.

"In the early 1950s, Anona Elementary School's bus stopped and let the children off," recalls one of the children. "We would walk across the bridge and reboard the bus when it got to the other side." Eventually, school buses could not cross it and were forced to use the Madeira Beach Bridge instead, adding 20 miles to their ride home.

As early as 1948, Indian residents began to petition the county for a newer, wider bridge. Determined to get a new bridge, in 1953 the IRB Civic Association and the local Kiwanis, two influential organizations, started a campaign, including a petition, to build a modern bridge with the slogan, "WE WANT A NEW BRIDGE NOW."

As car traffic, as well as boat traffic, increased along the beaches, Pinellas County and the State of Florida decided it was time to extend Walsingham Road to the beach. The project was tied with two other projects, the widening of Ulmerton Road from two to four lanes and the building of a third bridge to Tampa that became the Howard Frankland Bridge. "When completed, residents of Indian Rocks Beach will be able to drive to Tampa in only 15 minutes," said Al Rogero, State Road Board Member. The Indian Rocks Beach Bridge was budgeted at \$500,000, paid by the County and State equally. The Tampa company Bay Dredging and Construction won the bid.



The bridge project also occurred during a \$1,000,000 road project that improved and widened Gulf Blvd from St. Pete Beach to Indian Rocks Beach's 5th Avenue, also a DOT roadway.

After ten years of effort, the community was thrilled it was finally happening. Local organizations turned their attention to celebrating the new bridge's opening with a party and ribbon cutting July 4th, 1958 -- 60 years ago. By comparison, the first Belleair Causeway Bridge opened in 1950, and the first Sand Key Bridge in 1963.

The new Indian Rocks Beach Bridge did not have a toll and some Belleair Beach residents, aggravated that the Belleair Causeway Bridge had a toll, would drive 7-8 miles out of their way to use what they referred to as the "Free Bridge."

The County built a modern two-lane bascule drawbridge whose two sides opened in the middle. A bascule bridge uses a counterweight that continuously balances a span, or leaf throughout its upward and downward swing. Near the middle of the bridge was a small building where the bridgetender waited to lift it for coming boats.

The State's FDOT assumed the management of the bridge and in 1993, announced a plan to build two new bridges on the same site—two westbound lanes to the beach and two eastbound lanes to Largo. At the time, most locals questioned why we needed four lanes when two seemed to do the job. Just look at it now! Today, the bridge carries an average of 18-20,000 cars per day. (Source: Pinellas County Traffic Engineering

Story by Bob Griffin, Publisher

Aerial view of bridge - Indian Rocks Beach, Florida. 1958. Black & white photoprint. State Archives of Florida, Florida Memory.

**CREDITS**



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**MAYOR - Cookie Kennedy**

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Phil Wrobel • Phil Hanna • Nick Palomba  
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Planning & Zoning: 517-0404

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**INDIAN ROCKS BEACH NEIGHBORHOOD NEWSLETTER**

Inside, you will find articles and local information about the nearby area. We call it a Neighborhood Newsletter because it is primarily about your neighborhood, Indian Rocks Beach. This newsletter is printed every other month and mailed to every occupied house in the city.

Do you need another copy? Ask for them at USA Grocers, CVS Drug Store, Beach Welcome Center, City Hall, IRB Library.

We hope you enjoyed our newsletter. We want your input. Did you like this issue? What suggestions do you have for future articles? Call or email us with your comments, or take our online survey at beachnewsletters.com.

Thank you for reading,

Bob & Becky Griffin, 727-517-1997  
bob@griffindirectories.com

**SEE YOU AGAIN IN SEPTEMBER!**

**CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS**

**JULY**

- Conversation with Mayor Kennedy 2
- Independence Day 4
- Fireworks Coachman Park 4
- World Chocolate Day 7
- Budget Delivered To City Commission 9
- City Commission Meeting 10
- MLB All Star Game 10
- Sunset Run Sand Key Park 13
- Sip & Shop In The Alley, Belleair 19
- Pitch-For-Pink 20
- Dolphin Tale Actors Visit CMA 21-26
- Parent's Day 22
- City Commission Set Millage Rate 24
- Pinellas Grouper Week 23-29
- Sunset Run Sand Key Park 27
- National Chicken Wing Day 28

**AUGUST**

- Little League Fall Ball Sign Up
- Tax Free School Supplies 3-5
- Conversation with Mayor Kennedy 6
- IRB Community Clean Up 6-8
- Gracie's Big Splash Belleair Rec Center 10
- Public School Begins 13
- Property Tax Trim Notices Mailed 13
- City Commission Meeting 14

- Cool Art Show St Pete Coliseum 14-15
- Sip & Shop In The Alley 16
- Largo's Indoor Garage Sale SW Complex 18
- Buc's First Pre-Season Game 18
- Statewide Primary Elections 28

**SEPTEMBER**

- Gekofest Gulfport 1
- Labor Day 3
- Labor Day Schools Closed 3
- City Budget First Public Hearing 4
- Ladies Tea Church Of The Isles 8
- Action 2000 Service Saturday 8
- Rosh Hashanah 9-10
- Grandparents Day 9
- Buc's First Game Miami 9
- Patriots Day 11
- City Commission Meeting 11
- Public Schools Closed 15
- Mobile Collection Seminole High 15
- IRB City Budget Final Public Hearing 18
- Yom Kippur Begins 18
- Peace Day 21
- Autumn Begins 22
- National Coffee Day 29
- Coachman Park Super Boat Races 28-30
- Rays Season Ends 30

# IRB INVENTORY SHORTAGE!! HELP!!

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# Did You Know



**GIFT STORE RE-BOOT**

The gift store at the Beach Art Center has a whole new look! In April, the area was painted and new shelving installed in an updated design. A call to artists went out and resulted in 227 new pieces of artwork featuring the talents of 26

artists. Among the items for sale are original art, giclees, framed and unframed prints, jewelry, hand-painted gift bags, hand-crafted pottery, greeting cards, and limited edition Indian Rocks flags. The Beach Art Center Gift Store is becoming the "place to shop" for one of a kind gifts for all occasions. Visit Monday-Friday, 10am-4pm, credit cards, checks, and cash accepted.

**PITCH FOR PINK** The Threshers and Morton Plant Health Care Foundation invite you to the 13th Annual "Pitch for Pink" at Spectrum Field, Friday, July 20th. Before the game, breast cancer survivors will walk the bases and the first 1,000 women will receive a commemorative "Pitch For Pink" ladies identity safe wallet, courtesy of Banquet Masters. An auction will be held featuring autographed pink game jerseys worn by Thresher players, autographed pink bats, gift certificates, spa packages and more. Enjoy the fireworks show after the game. Ticket are \$6, \$8, and \$10. Proceeds will benefit breast health services and programs at both Morton Plant and Morton Plant Mease Hospitals. To purchase tickets, visit [ThreshersBaseball.com](http://ThreshersBaseball.com) or call 467-4457.

**PLEASE HELP US IMPROVE** We want to know what you think about our Newsletter. What do you like? What would you like us to include? Would you like to see changes? The online survey is posted at [BeachNewsletters.com](http://BeachNewsletters.com).

**NEW WALKOVER**

The Wetlands Walkway and Wildlife Overlook, a new section of The Florida Botanical Gardens, is now open. It completes a loop in the gardens' trails that will provide visitors a closer look at the native plants and animals that live there.



The walkway includes a boardwalk, viewing areas and new native plantings to attract wildlife by providing additional habitat. It leads guests through part of The Gardens' wetland area and opens into an overlook to give a broader view of the nature and wildlife that reside there including numerous bird species, mammals and reptiles.

The project was primarily funded by donations the Florida Botanical Gardens Foundation collects during the annual Holiday Lights event.



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# and More...

## BEACH RENOURISHMENT BEGINS

In late April, the renourishment project began in Treasure Island, south of John's Pass. Unfortunately, Tropical Storm Alberto suspended work and the dredge was



moved from the Egmont Shoal Area to safe harbors, as were the unloader barge and associated equipment.

They lost more than a weeks work, but still were able to move up to Sand Key in late June. They are now working their way south to Belleair Beach, will skip over Belleair Shores and over the next six months will continue to work their way to Redington—barring additional weather delays.

**NEW DOG PARK HOURS** Indian Rocks Beach leash-free Dog Park, located in the Indian Rocks Beach Nature Preserve, 903 Gulf Boulevard, will close on Thursday each week for maintenance.

**SEE-CLICK-FIX APP** This app on your smart phone helps you communicate with City Hall and Public Works easier and faster. It allows citizens to send reports to the City's website, [www.Indian-Rocks-Beach.com](http://www.Indian-Rocks-Beach.com). SeeClickFix has partnerships with hundreds of governments, including Pinellas County and Indian Rocks Beach, engaging thousands of citizens in the resolution of local issues. In addition to reporting problems, you can see other reported items and the problem's resolution. It is available for downloads on Android and iPhones.

**STAY INFORMED** Do you want to know what is going on in our City's government but don't have time to attend the monthly City Commission meetings? Now you can watch the meetings online, at your convenience. Visit [www.indian-rocks-beach.com](http://www.indian-rocks-beach.com) and choose Meeting Videos. All agendas are posted on the online City Calendar the Friday before the meeting.

## RECYCLE ALUMINUM

Used aluminum beverage cans are the most recycled item in the U.S., but other types of aluminum, such as siding, gutters, car components, storm window frames and lawn furniture can also be recycled. There is no limit to the amount of times aluminum can be recycled. We consume the contents of over 80 trillion aluminum cans every year and over 100,000 aluminum cans are recycled each minute. That amounts to 53 billion cans, not even 1%. A used aluminum can can be recycled and back on the grocery shelf as a new can in as little as 60 days. That's closed loop recycling at its finest! Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV for three hours or the equivalent of a half a gallon of gas.



**OUR NEXT ISSUE IS IN SEPTEMBER** Read this issue, as well as others, online at [BeachNewsletters.com](http://BeachNewsletters.com).

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### TODAY'S WALSHINGHAM BRIDGE

While Pinellas County's bridges are owned by the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), they are managed by a contractor, Drawbridge Services, a subsidiary of Florida Drawbridges, Inc (FDI). The company is owned by Laura Porter and is based in Pompano Beach. FDI has the management contract for a large number of Florida bridges and manages bridges in several other states, as far north as Maine.

FDI employee Sam Miller, area supervisor for this part of Florida, is based in Pinellas. He supervises seven bridges, six maintenance personnel, thirty-two bridgetenders and assists the maintenance supervisor. Miller is the Project Administrator in four nearby counties.



Bridge that Brings People Home by the Plein Aire Cottage Artists



Sam Miller, Project Administrator

Miller oversees all the bridgetenders, and bridge's maintenance, five of his maintenance personnel are located in Pinellas County. He calls maintenance personnel from other areas as needed if a bridge malfunctions or there are other needs.

Thorough FDI, he frequently interacts with FDOT, the US Coast Guard, and even

Homeland Security. Since September 11th, everyone has been taking bridge security much more seriously. Anyone caught flying a drone near a bridge can and have been arrested.

Of all the Pinellas County bridges, the Indian Rocks Beach bridge is opened the fewest times per month. By comparison, the busiest one is the John's Pass Bridge which is opened four times more often. Unlike most other area bridges, ours opens

on demand. This means when a tall boat is approaching, they hail the bridgetender on the marine radio, who then opens the bridge. Many other area bridges are on a schedule and will only open at certain times on the hour and make boats wait.

Our bridge has seven rotating employees. At the moment, two are women. They work 8-hour shifts, four days on followed by four days off. Shifts begin at 6am, 2pm, and 10pm.

Openings are more frequent in the summer months, naturally, but when they are not operating the bridge, bridgetenders read or watch TV. Some, but not all, area bridgetender towers have WiFi. Many of the personnel fly favorite flags (sporting teams, etc.) and interact with the boaters as they pass below. During Christmas, some have even been known to dress up as Santa.

So, the next time you pass over (or under) the Indian Rocks Bridge, give the bridgetender a wave and thank him or her for being there.



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## SWIM INSTRUCTOR SWIM TIPS: DANGERS OF WATER WINGS

By Rebecca Geiger

Living in Florida there are some things that are inherent to the area, water is one of them. With over 20 years as a swimming instructor there are some things I have noticed are issues that are often not mentioned or even thought of until it is too late. If you have any questions, comments, or other suggestions please don't hesitate to contact me!

Water wings have been around for generations. Many times that makes us think they must be safe and useful. Reality is quite the opposite. We continue to grow, learn, and develop. Water wings have done none of these things and are detrimental to children in the following ways:

1. They do not allow the child's arms to move.
2. If a child's arm slips out of one or if one deflates, the other will do more damage than good.
3. They prevent the child from getting forward momentum.

In order to effectively swim a person must use their arms. Water wings prevent this from occurring at all. When we put children in them, it creates a habit of thinking they can swim by only pumping their legs but never using their arms. If they fall in the water without their wings, they will not even attempt to move their arms which would be the only way they could get their head above water. In a pool this is obviously horrible, but if they are in the ocean or a retention pond it is even worse: They cannot break the surface to let you know where they are.

With water wings on, their buoyancy is on both arms with their body simply along for the ride. There is no way they can plane themselves out to get a forward motion. This motion

is what allows them to get anywhere. While in the wings, they are effectively bobbles with little control over where they are going. If they fell in, even a foot or two from the side, they would not be able to get themselves back.



If you want to get something for your child to play with to give both them and yourself some freedom, a much better investment is a good life vest or a "bubble." A puddle jumper is even worse than the water wings. Puddle jumpers are what I refer to as water wings on steroids. They are a wonderful personal flotation device if you are going out on a boat, lake, or ocean. They are designed specifically to ensure that your child's head is kept above the surface of the water and they can breathe at all times. As a swim trainer they do all the negative things that water wings do, but intensified due to the fact the arms are literally strapped to the waist.

My name is Rebecca Geiger (Miss Becca to most of my students). My passion is "Drown Proofing" children and adults. I specialize in private lessons at individual's homes where people feel the safest and where incidents are most likely to occur. Please do not hesitate to call or text me at 813-363-9133 to schedule or ask me anything.

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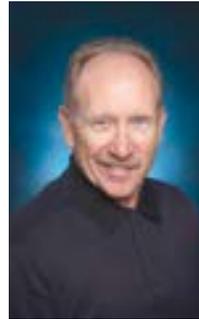
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# Real Estate News

## ART OF THE IRB REAL ESTATE DEAL

### Bidding War is Hell

By Gordon Obarski, Real Estate Broker Gordon Realty House



War is armed conflict between two opposing forces. And, even though bayonets and grenade launchers aren't generally involved, a real estate bidding war is still hell...for buyers and sellers alike. A truce isn't likely for a couple more years since Florida is such a hotbed of real estate sales catalysts: retirees, foreign money, investors, second-home owners, etc. In the meantime, buyers and sellers must retool their arsenal of buying/selling

strategies or be content to "sit it out" for the duration.

Indian Rocks' supply of homes/condos has not kept up with demand. As of mid-June, IRB had 25 active single-family listings. Four of those had been listed 180+ days which, in today's strong buyer's market, could indicate over-zealous pricing or another issue. That leaves us with 21 "good" listings that would take about 4 months to sell off, based on the average number of sales per month over the last year. A 6-month supply is considered a healthy, balanced market so IRB is well short of that. Condo inventory is even scarcer with less than a 3-month supply on hand.

#### ADVICE TO BUYERS

All buyers want a "good deal." And, in a more balanced market that favors neither buyer nor seller, the first offer is generally below asking price, after which a back-and-forth negotiation ensues. In today's seller's market, however, that pattern goes out with the bath water. Some agents even have buyers lined up before the ink on the listing agreement is dry and many good properties don't last until the first open house. Generally speaking, it takes a realistic, "highest-and-best" initial offer to make something happen. "Lowballs" have a snowball's chance and, more often than not, result in a frustrated buyer walking away empty-handed.

Work with a real estate professional who will hunker down and go into battle less than 10 minutes after a new listing pops up. In other words, run your agent ragged and don't feel badly about it. That's the job. Gravitate to agents who kick technology to the curb and aren't afraid to pick up the phone and actually talk to the seller or his/her agent, instead of relying on texting and e-mail. And, don't be afraid of tendering a back-up offer either. "Stuff" happens and deals go south. It's also possible that your offer, although not the highest, brings other benefits to the party.

#### ADVICE TO SELLERS

The most action on a property is generally during the first 3 weeks of listing. Don't make the mistake of blowing off the first offer off just because "it's early." Interest wanes over time and, fairly often, the first offer turns out to be the best.

#### ADVICE TO BUYERS AND SELLERS

Don't think of the other party as "the enemy" and turn the process into an adversarial exercise in extreme aggression. Pay heed to the words of Chinese military strategist Sun Tzu in the Art of War, "The greatest victory is that which requires no battle."

Source: My Florida Regional ML

# BIDDING WARS!



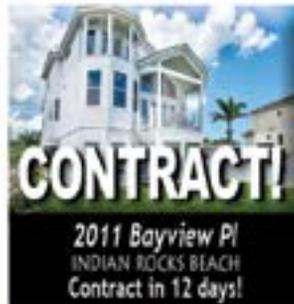
## GORDON OBARSKI

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#1

Indian Rocks Single-Family Home Transactions in 2017

My Florida Regional MLS Buy/Sell Side Transactions



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708 Beach Trail, #B - Indian Rocks Beach

## 39<sup>TH</sup> CLEARWATER JAZZ HOLIDAY LINEUP & ARTWORK UNVEILED

This year's unveiled artwork helps create the overall theme for the 39th Clearwater Jazz Holiday Presented by HCI Group, Inc event. The artist is Elliott Hubbard.



Now in its 39th year, the Clearwater Jazz Holiday is thrilled to present, in concert, between October 18 and 21, 2018: The Doobie Brothers, George Thorogood and The Destroyers, JJ Grey & Mofro, The Devil Makes Three, Morris Day & The Time, Sheila E, Mindi Abair & The Boneshakers, Danny Kusz, Betty Fox Brass Band, The Lao Tizer Band featuring Chiel Minucci, Karen Briggs & Nelson Rangel, Ruth Eckerd Hall/Clearwater Jazz Holiday Youth Jazz Band and more to be announced! The Clearwater Jazz Holiday continues its collaboration with Ruth Eckerd Hall to bring an amazing and diverse lineup of headline acts this year.

Presented in the 20-acre Coachman Park in downtown Clearwater overlooking Clearwater Harbor and the Memorial Causeway Bridge, the Jazz Holiday is four days and nights of some of the best live performances in the world presented to the public. The experience is complemented by the area's mild fall weather and brilliant sunsets.

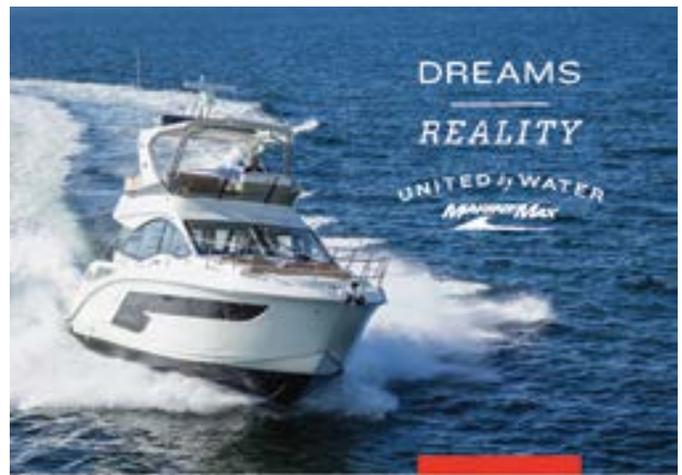
One of the longest-running and well known events in the country, the Clearwater Jazz Holiday has presented in concert multiple luminaries of our generation. The mission of the Clearwater Jazz Holiday Foundation is to be the leading proponent of jazz entertainment and education in Florida through the annual presentation of a world-class, live music festival. The Clearwater Jazz Holiday Foundation, Inc., a 501c3 organization, has been center-stage for numerous scholarship and educational activities to benefit the music students of our community-from the blues-loving beginners to piano-playing protégés, and everyone in between.

Tickets are on sale starting at \$20 in advance. Children 12 and under are FREE. Limited Reserved Seating and VIP tickets are also available. For more information about the 39th Clearwater Jazz Holiday, call the Clearwater Jazz Holiday office at (727) 461-5200, or visit us online at ClearwaterJazz.com or facebook.com/ClearwaterJazz.

## HORTICULTURE PROGRAM AT SUNKEN GARDENS

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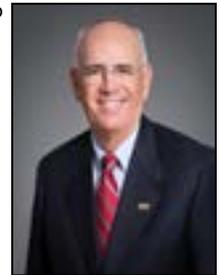
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**WHO CARES ABOUT SEQUENCE OF RETURNS? YOU SHOULD!**

by Ray Ferrara, ProVise Management Group



Equity markets are near all-time highs and bond prices are too. For those getting ready to retire, a bear market may have a significant negative impact on the planned retirement lifestyle.

Suppose you are retiring with \$1 million in savings. Most financial planners feel a "safe" withdrawal rate is 4%, or \$40,000 per year. If the investments grow then all is likely fine. But if the value goes below \$1 million; you need to take a smaller amount. Who likes that idea?

However, there is a bigger issue. You need to wait until the portfolio returns to the \$1 million level before returning to your expected lifestyle. If a portfolio declines by 15% in a bear market and you withdraw 4%, the value of the portfolio is now \$810,000 and it takes a return of 23.4% to get back to even.

Bear markets generally occur once every four years, but we have not had one since March 9, 2009. Therefore, the likelihood of a bear market sometime over the next few years is high. So what can you do to potentially protect your cash flow over time?

Here are two strategies among many. First, keep about 18 months of living expenses in cash equivalents. You will not earn a lot of interest, but that is not the point. The cash equivalents and the income you earn from the portfolio should provide enough cash flow for approximately 24 months. When the downturn occurs, you draw against the cash reserves, giving the portfolio an opportunity to potentially recover.

A second option is the bucket approach. Here you segment your investments into buckets of generally five year increments. Each of the buckets starts with \$200,000 which is designed to provide \$40,000 per year. The first bucket is invested in cash equivalents/short term bonds, the second bucket in intermediate bonds, the third bucket is split 50/50 between stocks and bonds, the fourth bucket is divided 75% equities/25% bonds. The final bucket would be invested 100% in equities. As each bucket is needed, it is converted to cash/short term bonds.

If you are within five years of retirement, or already retired, it is important to have a written cash flow plan. Please take advantage of our complimentary introductory meeting to discuss your retirement cash flow plan by calling 727-441-9022.

V. Raymond Ferrara, CFP®, Chairman and CEO  
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## THE CAMPAIGN TO REDUCE THE USE OF PLASTIC STRAWS



Our area's biggest attractions is the water – the Gulf, Bay, ponds and rivers. Plastics in the water are one of the biggest environmental problems facing our community and the world today. Look at any shore line and you will find plastic washed up on the sand and in the weeds. And it is below the surface.

It is estimated that Americans use over 500 million plastic straws every day. The average person probably uses over 35,000 plastic straws in their lifetime.

The best-case scenario for a plastic single-use straw is it will end up in a land fill and take centuries to decompose. Worst case, about one third of them end up in our waterways where they can be swallowed by marine life.

Not only is plastic waste unsightly, but the Environmental Protection Agency has found plastic to be responsible for the death of roughly 100,000 marine mammals and 1 million sea birds every year.

The cities of St. Petersburg, Clearwater, Gulfport, Treasure Island, St. Pete Beach and others recognize the detrimental effects disposable plastics can have on beaches and marine life. These cities have instituted voluntary programs to encourage local business to discourage the use of plastic straws through the Strawless Summer Challenge for city restaurants, bars and cafés. In an effort to reduce the effect of plastic straws on our environment, participating businesses are abstaining from dispensing plastic straws unless requested by a customer.

**WHAT CAN CONSUMERS DO?** Refuse plastic straws when offered. Drink your beverages without them. Tell the business owner or manager you support providing straws only when requested. Encourage businesses to provide wooden "stirrers" instead of plastic. Talk about this to your friends and family. And remember besides helping keep our water clean, less sucking on straws produces less wrinkles!

*The Florida Extension Service is providing FREE preprinted cards for you to leave at a restaurant still using straws. They are available in packs of ten at Plumlee's IRB Welcome Center on Walsingham Road. Get yours and hand them out.*

**WHAT CAN RESTAURANT AND BAR OWNERS DO?** Do not routinely provide plastic straws. Only offer them when requested or change to paper straws as a substitute. Be creative - one bar is even using uncooked pasta in place of straws! Provide wooden coffee stirrers. In addition to saving money, your reputation as a responsible business owner will be enhanced.

While the City of Indian Rocks Beach chose not to participate in the voluntary program, the following Indian Rocks Beach restaurants, have signed the Go Strawless pledge:

- Crabby Bill's Seafood
- The Loading Dock
- Lulu's Oyster Bar
- Jake's Cantina
- Ready-Set-Go Yogurt
- Aqua Prime
- Chicago Jaqx
- Guppy's on the Beach
- It's Your Day Cafe
- JD's Restaurant
- Jimmy Guana's

- Keegan's Seafood Grill
- Kooky Coconuts
- Pajano's Pizza
- PJ's Oyster Bar
- Red Lion Pub
- Sandy's Restaurant
- Slyce Pizza
- Thai Pan Alley
- TJ's Gourmet Pizza
- Villa Gallace
- 18 On The Rocks

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## Bar & Restaurant News



**FAMILY OWNED FOR TEN YEARS** Keegan's Restaurant has been around for 33 years. But for the last 10 years, it has been owned by the Schonowski family who bought it in August 2010. They have 35 employees, but it is very much a family owned and operated restaurant that is regularly sited as the "favorite restaurant among locals." They are open for lunch and dinner, seven days a week. Pictured here in the middle of the front row are John, Rob and Jacki Schonowski.

**DONUT EXPERIMENT** This new place to get your donut fix opened nearby at 19705 Gulf Blvd in Indian Shores. The donuts are made to order and feature warm donuts along with many specialty coffees. Open seven days a week, 7am to 1pm, it is owned by local Debbie Waldecker. Visit [www.TheDonutExperiment.com](http://www.TheDonutExperiment.com) for menu choices and more information. Call 240-6282 for special orders.

**MONDAYS AT SLYCE** On the first Monday of the month, Slyce Pizza donates 10% of all sales to the Beaches Food Pantry. It averages about \$500 per month. In August, you will find some familiar bartenders and servers that night. City officials and employees will be helping out for the benefit of the Beaches Food Pantry.

**SEAWEED OPENS** The former Marlin Darlin's, in Belleair Bluffs, has reopened as Seaweed. The popular Marlin Darlin Grill, owned by the Baystar Restaurant Group, closed in January for a remodel and menu redo. An outdoor bar and dining area has also been added. Still owned by the Baystar group, the restaurant had a soft re-opening in late June as Seaweed.



**SALT PUBLIC HOUSE** The restaurant owners of the new Salt Public House sports bar have been working hard to get everything ready to open, but it looks like it will be pushed back until August—maybe longer.

"When it is open, it will be worth the wait," says Aiden Bowles, co-owner with his wife and son. Indian Rocks residents, they live on Harbor Drive North. Bowles says it will be a new style sports bar with "good food" and amenities which have never seen in town before. They are hoping to open for pre-season NFL and college football. Find them at 1309 Gulf Blvd, next to Nekton Surf Shop

# Bar & Restaurant News

## YOGURT SHOP OPENS

The Crabby Bill's family of restaurants just got larger with the opening of their Yogurt Shop on Gulf Blvd next to their main restaurant. Called Ready-Set-Go, it operates out of the small building to the north of the Loading Dock at 420 Gulf Blvd between Crabby's and Jake's. They are proud to serve locally and responsibly sourced items. Their coffee is provided by Joffrey's, which has been roasting in Tampa since 1983. You can also find local based retail items, like Richard's Breads and Base Culture's paleo baked goods. Even the frozen yogurt is locally made by Newberry's Frozen Yogurt and the juices are fresh squeezed daily.



**VENUS RESTAURANT GIVES BACK** Mark Norberg owner of the Venus Restaurant for the last two years, has stepped into previous owner Nick Mitsides shoe, who each May fed hundreds of kids from The ARC (previously called UPARC) at the Clearwater Yacht Club. The Yacht Club hosts the annual Fun Day inviting about 200 ARC clients to the Yacht Club for the time of their lives. They had a cookout and danced to live music, then they searched for dolphins on boats supplied by the Clearwater Marine Aquarium. Norberg donated everyone's hamburgers and hot dogs.

**CHEZ COLETTE REMODELS** The dining area of the small French restaurant located at 796 Indian Rocks Rd N, Belleair Bluffs has received a total makeover including new dining tables. France's Bastille Day (their Independence Day) is Saturday, July 14th, but owner Collette says, "Every day is Independence Day here." She bought the restaurant, previously called Le Bouchon, three years ago.

**GROUPEUR WEEK JULY 23-29** A few years ago, Visit St Pete/Clearwater, the people who market Pinellas County's tourism, invented "Grouper Week." While a tongue and cheek nod to Shark Week, it helps to draw attention to Pinellas County's role as the grouper capital of the world. Hundreds of Pinellas restaurants serve grouper since many chefs consider it to be one of the best fish to prepare because of its cloud-like texture. During Grouper Week many restaurants will feature grouper specials. On Indian Rocks Beach, find grouper on the menu at Aqua Prime, Crabby Bills, Guppy's, JD's, Jimmy Guana's, Keegan's, PJ's, Red Lion, TJ's, and Villa Gallace

**FREE GROUPEUR** The BayStar Restaurant Group wants to help you celebrate your birthday. Dine at any of their many restaurants (Salt Rock, Island Way, Marina Cantina, Rumba, the new Seaweed and others) on your birthday, and receive a free grouper entrée. You must show a valid driver's license and purchase a second adult entrée of equal or greater value. Tax and gratuity still apply.

**NEWS WANTED** If you have news or suggestions appropriate for this newsletter, let us know. Our email is [Bob@GriffinDirectories.com](mailto:Bob@GriffinDirectories.com) or call us at 430-8300.

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## Bar & Restaurant News

**COUNTRY DAY VISITS IT'S YOUR DAY BAKERY** Twelve children from Country Day School Victory Academy, Indian Rocks Beach Campus enjoyed a fun afternoon at It's Your Day Cafe & Catering where they learned how to decorate cookies



with butter cream frosting. The cookies were created as a special early Father's Day Gift which were presented to their fathers the next day. The children were also able to learn about the equipment that is used in the commercial kitchen. As you can see, everyone enjoyed their afternoon

**NATIONAL CHICKEN WING DAY IS COMING** Now there is a day dedicated to eating Chicken Wing, July 29th. It has apparently been a thing since 1977, thanks to a Mayor in Buffalo, New York where the Buffalo Chicken wing was first served.

The concept of serving chickens wings was genius. It was the part of the chicken that people threw away, or that your grandmother used to make soup or chicken stock. Now, entire restaurants have been created to showcase these once undesirable chicken parts—Hooters, Wing House, Buffalo Wild Wings.

There's something mildly unsatisfying about gnawing on a tiny avian bone, especially when you consider the work-to-meat ratio. So why are chicken wings so popular? People love the basic idea of a fried and sauced, spicy chicken wing, topped with ranch or blue cheese dressing, accompanied by a cold beer. It has become one of the most popular dishes in the country. According to the National Chicken Council's annual report, Americans ate 1.33 billion chicken wings over Super Bowl Weekend alone!

Most locals say The Red Lion Pub has the best wings. They won our Best Wings Locals Contest six years in a row. They even have "Wing Night" ever Tuesday, which can be standing room only. But there are many other Indian Rocks restaurants that have wings on their menu, too.

### RED LION SOLD

The Red Lion Pub, the only British pub in Indian Rocks Beach one of only two on the beach was sold last month. On Thursday, June 28th, long time owner Lana sold the Red Lion to



partners Brian Carren and Debra Schildt, both Indian Rocks residents. Brian says he used to own and run a similar pub in Germany. "I do not plan many changes except to clean it up and tweak the menu," says Brian. A new roof was installed the week of the sale.

## LIGHTS OUT TO PROTECT SEA TURTLES

Beach residents and visitors reminded to take precautions to protect nests now through until October 31

Sea turtle nesting season is underway, and in order to practice superior environmental stewardship, Pinellas County reminds beach residents and visitors to keep conditions safe for sea turtles to thrive.

The Tampa Bay area averages about 120 nests each season, and each nest can contain an average of about 100 eggs. Females generally nest from early May through August; eggs typically taking about 60 days to hatch.

Citizens are asked to not pick up hatchlings heading toward the water, shine lights or use flash photography. Hatchlings use starlight and moonlight reflecting off the water to find their way to the sea, and if they become misled by artificial light, they can become disoriented and die.

Marine Turtle Permit holders monitor about 26 miles of coastline and report on sea turtle nesting activity. They engage in early morning patrols to locate and mark new nesting sites to prevent human disturbance.

Most Pinellas County beach

communities have ordinances prohibiting lighting that casts glare onto the beach during the May 1 to October 31 turtle nesting season. During nesting season, residents and beach visitors should do the following:

- Shield any artificial lighting that might shine toward the beach. Turn off outside lights, draw drapes and avoid using flashlights or fishing lamps on the beach.
- Remove obstacles such as sand castles or sand pits that may impede turtles or hatchlings making their way to the shoreline. Flatten sand castles and fill in holes.
- Keep the beach clean. Eliminate trash items that may entangle hatchlings and adult turtles. Take all personal belongings from the beach at the end of the day so no obstacles exist on the way to or from the water.
- Stay off dunes and use the designated walkovers for crossing
- Do not approach or harass adult turtles as they make their way back to sea. As a threatened species, loggerhead turtles are protected under federal and state law; disturbing them, their nest or hatchlings, or causing



disorientation from artificial lights, is illegal.

If you are lucky enough to find a turtle nest on the beach, don't disturb it. To report the disturbance of turtles, an unmarked nest, or turtles or hatchlings lost, stranded or wandering in the street, call the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) at 888-404-FWCC (3922).

By obeying the law and following these simple guidelines, residents and visitors can greatly improve the chances of sea turtle survival.

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**FROM THE DESK OF  
 SHERIFF BOB GUALTIERI**  
**Vessel Checks**

Did you know that many equipment requirements for boaters depend on the size of the vessel and/or the boaters' intended destination? While it can be tricky to determine exactly what safety items must be present, where they should go, and when, it is vital to your safety – and others' – that you are well equipped before you set out to sea.

To relieve any confusion, the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office is hosting free vessel equipment checks at Pinellas County boat ramps monthly throughout the summer.

One weekend each month through September, Marine Unit deputies will be stationed on land at two boat ramps in the county. They will circulate throughout the parking lot to ensure boaters have all the legally required equipment specific to their vessels before they launch.

Examples of what deputies will be checking for include:

- The proper number of personal flotation devices
- Fire extinguishers
- Flares or other visual distress signals
- Proper lighting for evenings/nights or periods of reduced visibility, like rain or fog

By conducting these vessel equipment checks, deputies hope to inform boaters who are missing a required item about the issue before they reach the water, where they could be issued a citation for the problem. We also encourage you to use this opportunity to ask deputies questions about boating safety, navigating local waters, and anything law enforcement-related about which you are unsure.

Boats that are in full compliance will receive a sticker from a Marine Unit deputy, showing that the vessel was in full compliance for future reference. If it is determined that the vessel is not in compliance, deputies will educate the boat operator of the missing equipment.

For more information, contact the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office Marine Unit at 727-582-6200. Visit the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) website for a list of other mandatory items based on your boat type: <http://myfwc.com/boating/safety-education/equipment>.

**IRB BOAT CLUB RECOGNIZED**

In May, the IRB Boat Club finished its tenth years. Besides meetings and island parties, the Boat Club cleans the islands in the Intracoastal waterway twice a year. Over the last ten years, volunteers have had twenty cleanups and collected enough trash to fill over a dozen dumpsters.



In June, Keep Pinellas Beautiful recognized the IRB Boat Club for Outstanding Community Service.

In September, Bob & Becky Griffin will be stepping down from running Boat Club. The Club is searching for a new person or persons to run the club. Call 727-430-8300 if you are interested.

## ARE YOU CRAVING SOME AUTHENTIC ITALIAN FOOD?

by Dan L. Hummel

Great Italian food is plentiful in our area. We have dozens of traditional Italian restaurants, each offering their own special appeal. Most are family owned. Many have such knowledgeable staff, that there is no need to ask for a menu because they will most definitely steer you towards their favorites. My wife Vanessa and I decided to visit a few nearby, to see if we could pick a favorite.

Our first stop was **Villa Gallace Ristorante**, in Indian Rocks Beach. Translated, Villa Gallace means the Gallace home. It is appropriate, because when you dine there, they want you to feel like a part of the Gallace family. Select your favorite beer or wine and enjoy their prepared to order cuisine. A couple of my favorites dishes are the Pollo Marsala and their Veal Parmigiana. For starters, you will never regret ordering their Insalada Caprese or generous Caesar Salad for two or any one of their four delicious homemade soups. With an extensive selection of pasta entrées, and so many beef, chicken, veal and fish features, you will have a hard time choosing just one. Villa Gallace, also offers some great daily Chef specials, as well. This is another must visit Italian restaurant on the beach. [www.villagallace.com](http://www.villagallace.com)

Not far from Villa Gallace is **TJ's Italian Café**, an Indian Rocks Beach landmark restaurant for over 29 years. Their dishes are carefully crafted and prepared the classic Italian way with everything made from scratch. Whether it is their juicy hand-rolled 4-ounce meatballs, the brick oven baked bread and pizzas, or the homemade sauces and soups, TJ's menu is comprised of classic Italian dishes that are sure to please even the most particular Italian food fanatic. One of my favorite dishes here is their mouthwatering Chicken Parmigiana



Dan and Vanessa Hummel

served with pasta in their wonderful homemade sauce. TJ's offers an extensive wine list that allows you to pair the right wine with your favorite entrée. TJ's allows you to dine inside, or to enjoy the beautiful weather on their outdoor palm-laden deck. By the way, you can drop in early and order from their early bird special dinner menu. T.J.'s is a remarkable Italian restaurant choice in Indian Rocks Beach. [www.tjsitaliancafe.com](http://www.tjsitaliancafe.com)

For great Italian food and a water view, too, try **Al & Stella's** located on Gulf Boulevard at the Shoppes of Sand Key. Both Al & Stella came to this area from Rimini, Italy, near Bologna, bringing with them many authentic recipes including their fresh, homemade Italian Pasta made from scratch, home baked breads, and fresh caught fish cooked to perfection. Begin your meal with their delicious Bruschetta or the scrumptious Mozzarella Caprese. From there, you will need to take your time in choosing from one of their many featured entrées including the Gnocchi alla Romana or their scrumptious Fettuccine Terra Mare. Al & Stella's menu has no shortage of remarkable dishes. In keeping with Italian tradition, this restaurant offers a wonderful selection of white and red Italian wines by the glass or by the bottle. Dine inside or on their deck which offers a panoramic view of the Intracoastal Waterway. Add Al & Stella's to your list of Italian restaurants to visit soon. [www.alandstella.com](http://www.alandstella.com)

Our next stop was **Cesare's at the Beach** located in Clearwater Beach. Their menu is extensive with over fifteen appetizers, soups and salads alone. For dinner, try their Veal Frank Sinatra, a tender prime veal with chopped scallops, shrimp and crab meat sautéed in a light lemon butter sauce and topped with capers. This is just one of over three dozen delicious entrées offered at Cesare's, in addition to their daily features. If after dinner, there is a craving for something sweet, you won't be disappointed with any of their homemade desserts including their signature Crème Brule. Offering a vast wine and beer selection, and an early menu, Cesare's is a must try. [www.cesareatthebeach.com](http://www.cesareatthebeach.com)

Our final stop for amazing Italian cuisine was in the Belleair Bluffs/Largo area on West Bay Drive at **Amici's**. Chef and owner Carmelo



has more than 40 years of experience preparing Italian, regional and nouvelle cuisines. Upon arrival, you are warmly welcomed, but before being seated, you are shown beautiful photos of his daily specials. Then, browse through Amici's wide-ranging menu and choose from one of their many enticing options. A favorite of mine is the Veal Sorrentina, which is thinly sliced veal topped with fried eggplant and a touch of marinara sauce and mozzarella. You may also enjoy one of Amici's authentic Italian wood fired pizzas made with freshest ingredients and toppings, then baked to perfection. Dine inside, or out on their recently added porch which creates the feeling of an old Italian garden. Offering a well fashioned wine list, served by a very talented wait staff, you will enjoy your outing at Amici's. [www.amiciitalianeatery.com](http://www.amiciitalianeatery.com)

Since there are so many wonderful Italian choices in our area, it may be necessary for us to visit a few more in some later issues. But today, I urge you to do your homework and visit their websites. In my opinion, it's not which one of these restaurants you should choose, but in what order you decide to visit them because they are all wonderful.

Buon Appetito!

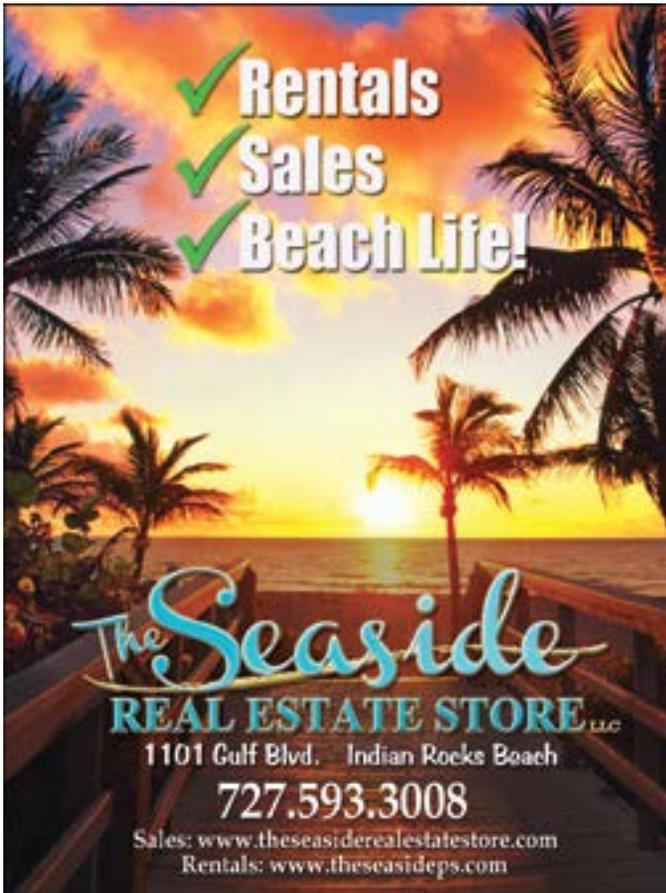
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## FERTILIZERS: AN ENVIRONMENTAL THREAT

In the quest for the perfect lawn, people apply fertilizers and pesticides to their yards each year, priming their grasses for potentially serious ecological and human health consequences. These chemicals run off lawns into local springs, streams, lakes and rivers every time it rains, eventually washing in the



Gulf of Mexico. The resulting process causes more than half of our water pollution, thus harming our waterways and the plants and animals that thrive in aquatic habitats.

Pinellas County's fertilizer ordinance prohibits residents from fertilizing lawns during the rainy season. From June 1 to Sept. 30, fertilizers containing nitrogen and/or phosphorus cannot be applied to lawns or landscape plants. Fertilizers are not plant food. They sometimes can be used to supplement sugars that plants make through photosynthesis.

If you decide to use a fertilizer, use it properly. It's easy:

- Make fertilizer selections based on need. Decide which nutrients will give you the result that you want for your lawn, and then buy only those.
- Use fertilizers sparingly to reduce nitrate levels. More is not necessarily better. Read and follow all instructions of the package.
- Do not fertilize when storm events are forecast. This will help reduce the level of nutrients washing into water systems during and after the storm.
- Select slow-release fertilizers. They are kinder to the environment and are usually more cost effective. Look for terms like "time-released," "slow-release", or "water insoluble nitrogen" on the fertilizer's package.
- Remember to fertilize only when needed. Do not apply more than one pound of nitrogen per 1,000 square feet of grass.

Do your part to preserve our water, coastlines, and wildlife – the very things that help make our area so wonderful. For more information about fertilizers or how to protect our waterways, visit [watermatters.org](http://watermatters.org) or [befloridian.com](http://befloridian.com).

## FINANCIAL HURRICANE PREPAREDNESS

By Phil Wrobel

Hurricane Season is upon us already! I am sure everyone can remember the force and chaos that was Irma last year. For the most part we were spared major damage but many trees were downed, siding ripped away and fence and roof damage was prevalent. Make sure you are prepared ahead of time this year: cut trees away from your home, check that propane tanks are full, generators have gas, you have cash on hand and be sure to protect your financial investment (visit <https://myfloridacfo.com/Division/Consumers/Storm/default.htm> for a downloadable guide for financial preparedness).

It is also very important is to review your insurance policy before a storm approaches. Make sure you have enough coverage and that you are comfortable with the deductible. Most hurricane deductibles range from 2% up to 10%. Even

with a 2% deductible, out of pocket expenses can add up quick-\$10,000 on a \$500,000 home! 40% of all Hurricane Irma losses reported were within the hurricane deductible and thus not covered by homeowners' policies.

To be fully prepared for this year's hurricane season, there is a new product available for supplemental hurricane insurance that will pay your deductible with a category 1 or higher hurricane. For most insureds, this coverage will reduce a homeowners' hurricane deductible down to \$0, it covers your hurricane deductible from your first dollar of loss up to 100%. At Florida Best Quote Insurance we are proud to offer this new Gap Insurance as part of our network of providers. Please call me at 727-596-9999 should you have any questions about your Homeowners policy, or are interested in supplementing with Enhanced Hurricane protection. Our office is located at 500 2nd street on Indian Rocks Beach.

## PINELLAS COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS

The Pinellas County Historical Society had the pleasure of presenting Shana Egan a \$2,500 Scholarship. Shana is graduating with both a high school diploma and an A.A. degree from St. Petersburg Collegiate High School, Gibbs Campus. She was accepted into the Honors College at the University of Arizona this fall and will work toward a Degree in Geosciences, and has earned the Arizona Excellence tuition award. She has an outstanding scholastic record. As well as earning numerous recognitions and awards including the 2017 President's Academic Achievement Award.

Shana's volunteer community support activities for the past 3+ years, in particular at Heritage Village as a Jr Docent since July 2015 and will be continuing this summer as an Intern. She has accumulated over 174 volunteer hours as a Jr Docent. Shana's dependable, confident and competent team leadership and personal qualities have been truly appreciated.

In 1989, Pinellas County History Society presented a Scholarship to University of South Florida student, Jack E. Davis. This year, Dr. Jack E. Davis, is the winner of the Pulitzer Prize for his book on the Gulf of Mexico, *The Gulf: The Making of An American Sea*. Dr. Davis, who received his Ph.D. in 1994 at Brandeis University, is a professor of history, specializing in environmental history, at the University of Florida. We are honored and commend him for achievement.

## FRITO THE TINY SEAHORSE RESCUED FROM FISHING LINE

Clearwater Marine Aquarium (CMA) rescued and is rehabilitating its smallest rescue yet: Frito, the tiny seahorse. Frito, a female lined seahorse, was rescued Sun., June 10 off Redington Shores, by local resident Dawn McCartney and her two daughters.

Dawn says they were snorkeling when they found the seahorse tangled in fishing line among trash, with the fishing line wrapped around its neck several times. She carefully untangled the tiny seahorse and placed her in a water bottle she filled with ocean water. Dawn, a Tampa Bay resident, has been coming to Clearwater Marine Aquarium for years and immediately knew who to call to assist. The CMA rescue team picked up the seahorse and brought her back where she is being rehabilitated for a hopeful release.

It has been one year since the famous rescue, rehab and release of Cheeto the lucky seahorse, watched by millions around the world. Cheeto was followed by the rescue, rehab and release of Funyun the seahorse, who was treated for a buoyancy issue. Frito, the most recent rescued seahorse, has a rescue story similar to many rescued animals at CMA of being affected by fishing line entanglement. Monofilament fishing line floating in the ocean threatens many different species of marine life including sea turtles, dolphins, stingrays, birds, and even seahorses.

"Our mission of rescue, rehabilitation and release applies to all marine life, big and small," says David Yates, CEO of Clearwater Marine Aquarium. "The level of care our team is giving to tiny Frito is inspiring."

CMA staff is providing Frito with a high level of care during her rehabilitation. Frito is being monitored and will be released as soon as she is ready. Visit Frito at Clearwater Marine Aquarium or check her out on the Frito Cam on CMA's website: [www.seewinter.com/Frito](http://www.seewinter.com/Frito)

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# Business Briefs



## BELLA VINO APPEARS ON HOUSEHUNTERS

A portion of a recent episode of HGTV's House Hunters was filmed inside Bella Vino Wine Bar.

A father was helping his daughter find a home Clearwater. They were filmed sitting at Bella Vino's wine bar, enjoying a glass of wine while they discussed the

three homes she was contemplating purchasing. The show aired May 4th.

**MARINEMAX NOW IN ITS 20TH YEAR** The roots of MarineMax date back over 45 years, but the story started when Chairman and CEO Bill McGill moved his family to Florida to turn his lifelong passion into what would become the world's largest boat retailer. Later he, along with a group of America's leading boat retailers, decided the boating industry needed to change. By uniting companies, they could maximize efficiency of operations while sharing best practices on everything from insurance to mobile boat-servicing and allow team members to focus on what's important: getting customers out on the water.

Part of the MarineMax commitment includes offering top-notch brands, but MarineMax is more than a dealer, they are a resource. In addition to boats and yachts, they offer world-class service, financing and insurance, educational programs, and access to Getaways and other boating events. They offer everything that is needed to help you enjoy the boating lifestyle.

"We are constantly focusing on new experiences for you. Our passionate team will continue to focus on your needs, welcome your feedback and the opportunity to continue working to exceed your expectations," stated MarineMax Chairman and CEO, Bill McGill.

In celebration of their 20th Anniversary, MarineMax is planning a plethora of activities. For information on what's to come visit <http://bit.ly/20YearsTogether>.

**NEW COFFEE MILL OWNER** While Largo's Coffee Mill is not new, it does have a new owner. Stacy Kilgore bought the Mill a few months ago. She does not plan to change much, but has added ice cream for now. She is building a small kitchen to offer sandwiches during lunch. They sell coffee by the cup and by the bag. Find them at 12199 Indian Rocks Road, just south of Anona Elementary. Check them out at [CoffeeMillLargo.com](http://CoffeeMillLargo.com).

**INDIAN ROCKS PROPERTIES SOLD** Aqua Prime Restaurant's ownership recently acquired Lighthouse Donuts and another property in the 200 block of Gulf Blvd. They have not announced their intentions, but it appears they will be redeveloping the properties. Rumors are rampant, but no one knows for sure. The previous owner of Lighthouse Donuts says he will be operating the store for two more years.

Shane Crawford, previously Madeira Beach's City Manager, has been hired by ownership group to oversee property redevelopment.

# Business Briefs



## ESCAPE, IF YOU CAN

This new business opening next month, just east of Belleair Bluffs, reflects a national trend in escape rooms. Both fun and

serious, Escape Rooms are a new type of entertainment venue springing up around the country.

Escape Rooms are actually a game room. Teams of 2 to 10 people enter unique themed room with puzzles, clues, codes and riddles that must be deciphered within 60 minutes. One clue leads to another, a way out or a secret surprise, always under pressure of the clock.

Local owners, Gil and Jodi Bakshi, have designed three unique scenarios. The Black and White Room, The Mad Hatter Room and The Zombie Apocalypse Room are each perfect for a birthday party, company team building, group event or special occasion. Escape If You Can, also offers food and drink.

The first ten People who come to Escape If You Can and Mention This Newsletter Story, will receive a voucher for a free admission. Find them at 514 1st Avenue SW, Largo. Book through their web site, [EscapeRoomSaintPetersburg.net](http://EscapeRoomSaintPetersburg.net).

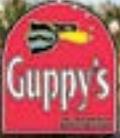
**FOR SALE** In May, the most recognizable stretch of John's Pass Village, the southwest end containing Bubba Gump, Hooter's, the Friendly Fisherman Restaurant, and more, was listed for sale at \$18.5 million. The 138,000 square feet of mixed use property still has 1,100 square feet of vacant space still available for further development. It includes a 325-space parking garage.



**THE BIGGEST ICE CREAM STORE IN THE U.S.** For the last twelve months, Tropical Ice Cream has trying to expand, but now the wait is over. In addition to adding to their public space, owner Craig Severson, added four new ice cream coolers holding 42 new ice cream flavors for a total of 118 flavors. Severson says, "we now carry more flavors than any ice cream store in the United States!" He also added more seating room and handicapped restrooms. Find them at the corner of Walsingham Road and Gulf Blvd.

**NEW STORAGE SPACE** A new storage facility is opening soon on Walsingham Rd next door to Hammock Hardware at 13890 Walsingham Rd. An Extra Space franchise, it should be open by early July and is accepting reservations.

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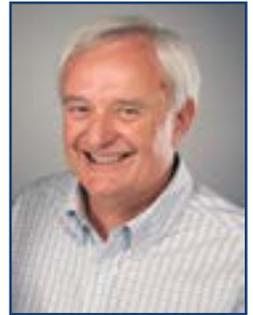
## NEW CONSTRUCTION "FLIPPERS" - CAN YOU DO THAT??

By Tom Smith Owner of GHD Construction Services

With the higher price points and inflationary increases of a new Florida home on the Intracoastal, some of our customers are purchasing a new home from GHD Construction Services, only to "Flip" the home at a nice profit by the time the home is complete in 10-12 months. This is especially profitable to existing homeowners that own on outdated waterfront home, and have the opportunity to not only get the highest profit possible for their existing lot, but also make additional profit by selling a "Package" with the new home and lot included on their existing site. This has proven to be very profitable for these clients. There simply are almost no newly constructed homes for sale, raised to FEMA standards, on the market for buyers today. Almost all buyers today want newly constructed homes, with exciting Florida designs, energy efficient, built to FEMA standards. This housing product is almost non-existent today along the Pinellas beaches!

While doing my homework studying proposed home sales prices in MLS, I've noticed a quite large disparity in home pricing, from what a lot will sell for in a neighborhood, and what GHD charges for a beautiful new home. GHD has a furnished model of 5400sf under roof (30421a) that sells for only \$629,000, and by the time you place a value of the water front property at \$450,000 - \$500,000, add a pool, dock, new seawall, etc., the entire new package would cost about \$1,200,000. However, I'm seeing listings for new homes of this size at about \$1,600,000 asking price. Will they get that? I don't know, but I do know that there is a nice potential profit for an investor to "Flip" a new home package at possibly a very nice profit. Also, some homeowners on interior lots opt to construct a much smaller home priced from the mid to high \$200's to increase their overall property value. That is a definite opportunity for homeowners that own older homes on interior lots.

So many of our customers are searching for a way to invest funds from their lifetime savings, in what has historically been a very safe and profitable venture, Florida real estate. One of our customers remarked that even if the replacement home that they purchased on their lot doesn't sell for his anticipated \$250,000 increased value, at least they have a beautiful new home to enjoy until Florida's inflationary spiral continues to increase in future years.



As another alternative to purchasing a new home for a potential nice profit, some homeowners allow us to advertise their lot in MLS, with a picture and price of a newly constructed home on that lot. They list their lot as a "Coming Soon" package, complete with site sign and color rendering. GHD places the sign and markets the package with customers that come through our model daily, looking at various neighborhoods along the Pinellas beaches. We place the MLS listing which also gets published in Zillow and other social media, along with every real estate office looking for new housing product for their clients. It actually works quite well, and doesn't involve the cash investment of purchasing the new home yourself. Of course, that homeowner does not have the opportunity for the "Up-Side Potential" of selling both the lot and home, but that is an alternative option available today for existing homeowners

GHD Construction Services, Inc. has constructed 6,500 homes since 1971, and has the new 2018 "Key West" home at 239 144th Ave. N, Madeira Beach. If you have any questions pertaining to new home construction, call (727) 800-6600, or email to: [tweisser@ghdcsi.com](mailto:tweisser@ghdcsi.com). Meanwhile, look us up on our web site at [www.GHDcoastalHomes.com](http://www.GHDcoastalHomes.com).



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# Business Briefs

## AERIE LANE OPENS IN LARGO

This new store, that doubles as a gathering place, opened in the Plaza at 1901 West Bay. It is a DIY studio with a new craft bar and work space, next to MIMI, MYLO and ME, also a new store. A craft bar is a place to work in an environment of other crafters and use their products and supplies. Aerie Lane offers workshops, Girl's Night Outs, Birthday Parties and more. Imagine your child's next birthday party with art projects and NO clean up.



Aerie Lane, at the west end of the shopping center, is owned by Belleair Beach resident Renee Lee. Find both stores at 1901 West Bay Drive.

**CHANGES IN THE ALLEY** The Alley in Belleair Bluffs has had a lot of exciting changes recently. *Lemon Tree Vintage Market*, owned by Amy McDermott, has expanded, allowing them to offer a greater variety of refreshed antiques, painted furniture, salvaged goods, home décor, jewelry and gifts. Next door, *Nostalgia*, owned by Rosa Sollecito, also recently expanded. They sell a large line of face and body creams, soaps, shampoo and organic skin care products. Rosa is also a licensed massage therapist and offers professional chair massage to all her shoppers.

In the alley, you will also find *Just Because Gallery*, a home decorating and design service, and *Mango-Etc.*, a funky fruity kind of store. Both will be providing arts and crafts classes soon.

Plan to visit The Alley on the third Thursday of each month for a Sip and Shop night, with extended shopping hours, beverages and other food. The Alley is located at 596 Indian Rocks Road North.

**ILLUME EXPANDS TO SECOND LOCATION** In July, Susan Swander marks 10 years in Belleair Bluffs at Illume Eco Boutique at 784 Indian Rocks Road. To help celebrate, she is opening a second store in The Plaza. She says this store will be different from Illume. This will be a luxury resort style shop in the space vacated by Belleair Optical, next to AAA Travel.

She plans to offer sustainable styles in linen, silk and natural hemp and eucalyptus fabrics, wonderful hand woven hand embroidered artisan pieces from global fair trade artists, kimonos, kaftans long flowing dresses for resort and travel, Linen from cp shades from Cali, Yoga jeans from Canada and Angelrox bamboo from Maine. There will also men's wear from Sweden and men's hats She will still have her fabulous jewelry at 784 Indian Rocks and will be open select days and by appointment. Look for an opening later this summer.

**NEWS WANTED** If you have news or suggestions appropriate for this newsletter, let us know. Our email is [Bob@GriffinDirectories.com](mailto:Bob@GriffinDirectories.com) or call us at 430-8300.

**CELEBRATE WORLD CHOCOLATE DAY**

July 7th is World Chocolate Day, also referred to as International Chocolate Day, is one of several official Chocolate Days celebrated worldwide that always involve the consumption of chocolate - all kinds of chocolate. European references to this type of event can be found as early as 1550. The day is dedicated to all things cocoa-based, and it's certainly not the time to discriminate. Indulge yourself, share with others, and enjoy whatever chocolate you like.

Chocolate comes from the seed of the tropical Theobroma cacao tree. Cacao, which has been cultivated for at least three millennia, is grown in Mexico, Central America and Northern South America. The earliest known documented use of cacao seeds is around 1,100 BC.

The cacao tree seeds have a very intense, bitter taste that must be fermented to develop the chocolate flavor. After being fermented, the beans are dried, cleaned and roasted. Then, the shell is removed producing cacao nibs. The nibs are then ground into cocoa mass, which is pure chocolate in rough form. The mass is normally liquefied, then molded with or without other ingredients. At this point, it is called chocolate liquor

Different forms and flavors of chocolate are produced by varying the quantities of the ingredients or by varying the time and temperature when roasting the beans. Here are the more common types.

**Milk chocolate** is solid chocolate made with milk added (either powdered, liquid, or condensed). The US Government requires a 10% concentration of chocolate liquor. EU regulations specify a minimum of 25% cocoa solids. However, an agreement reached in 2000 allowed an exception from UK regulations creating "family milk chocolate" with only 20% cocoa solids.

**Dark chocolate**, also known as "plain chocolate" contains a higher percentages of cocoa, traditionally with cocoa butter instead of milk, but there are also dark milk chocolates and hybrids. Dark chocolate can be eaten as is, or used in cooking, for which thicker, baking bars, usually with 70% to 100% cocoa are sold.

**Semisweet and Bittersweet** are US terms for dark chocolate and must contain a minimum of 35% cocoa solids. Typically, bittersweet chocolate has less sugar and more liquor than semisweet chocolate, but they are interchangeable when baking. The higher the percentage of cocoa, the less sweet the chocolate is.

**Couverture chocolate** is a high-quality class of dark chocolate, rich in cocoa butter and precisely tempered. It is used by professionals for dipping, coating, molding and garnishing (couverture means covering in French) and contains a high percentage of cocoa.

**White chocolate** is made of sugar, milk, and cocoa butter, without cocoa solids.

**Cocoa powder** is used for baking, and for drinking with added milk and sugar. There are two types of unsweetened cocoa powder: natural cocoa and Dutch-process cocoa. Both are made by pulverizing partially defatted chocolate liquor and removing nearly all the cocoa butter; Natural cocoa is light in color and somewhat acidic with a strong chocolate flavor. And commonly used during baking. Dutch cocoa is slightly milder in taste, with a deeper and warmer color and frequently used for chocolate drinks.

**Unsweetened chocolate**, also known as bitter, baking chocolate, is pure chocolate liquor mixed with some form of fat to produce a solid substance. The pure, ground, roasted cocoa beans impart a strong, deep chocolate flavor. With the addition of sugar, however, it is used for cakes, brownies, etc.

**Whichever type you prefer, celebrate World Chocolate Day eating Chocolate! Here are some ideas and chocolate specialties available in Indian Rocks Beach!**



**It's Your Day Café, 311 Gulf Blvd.**

They make pies, cakes and more. Call for special orders.



**Tropical Ice Cream, 435 Gulf Blvd.**

They have chocolate ice cream and a dozen other flavors mixed with chocolate.



**Candy Kitchen  
311 Gulf Blvd**

hey have all kinds of chocolate candy and fudges



**Ready-Set-Yo  
425 Gulf Blvd**

They have special coffees & chocolate smoothies, too.



**Pinky's Ice Cream  
1401 Gulf Blvd**

They sell chocolate candy covered almonds, almond, malt balls and ice cream



**Cafe de Paris Cafe  
2300 Gulf Blvd**

They make pastries, pies and cakes and pies full of chocolate

# Business Briefs

## DENIM AND DIAMONDS BIG SUCCESS

Largo's Pure Life Med Spa teamed up with Julie Weintraub to host their second annual "Denim and Diamonds Gala" in June at the Belleair Country Club. The benefiting charity was Julie Weintraub's "Hands Across The Bay", a 501c3 non-profit founded by Weintraub to positively impact the lives of as many Tampa Bay residents as possible. The organization helps families in crisis, neglected animals and veterans in need. It also provides domestic violence advocacy and suicide anti-bullying prevention. Pure Life Med Spa was the presenting sponsor. Get more info on this charity at [www.HandsAcrossTheBay.org](http://www.HandsAcrossTheBay.org).



**CLEVER TRAINING CLOSES** Clever Training, the fitness store located between TJ's Pizza and Keegan's Seafood Restaurant, closed June 30th. Clever Training has operated at that location since 2011. The company has been bought by Jack Rabbit, a Denver based athletic company. Clever Training will still sell its retail products on line at [www.CleverTraining.com](http://www.CleverTraining.com).

For many years, Clever Training in Indian Rocks Beach sponsored a running club with weekly runs on the beach. They run every Wednesday evening beginning at 6:30pm starting near Crabby Bill's, at the 4th Avenue Beach Access. Part of the group also does Yoga on certain days. They plan to continue their weekly running program, but it is moving to Crabby Bills (in the brick building) Contact Clever Training at 565-4832 for more information. See [www.CleverTraining.com](http://www.CleverTraining.com) for more details.



## BANK OF TAMPA OPENS IN CLEARWATER

The new branch for Bank of Tampa opened at 900 South Ft Harrison, just south of Publix. Its Market Director, Craig West, should be familiar to many in the Clearwater area. He is a longtime resident and banking professional and is Past President of the Beaches Chamber of Commerce.

"The opening of our new Clearwater office demonstrates our commitment to further improving our client's banking

experience in Pinellas," says Craig West. "We place a priority on convenience, while maintaining our mission to build relationships in the communities we serve—now Clearwater."

For more than 30 years, The Bank of Tampa has been privately held by its employees, directors, and clients. It is one of the largest independently-owned banks in the Tampa Bay Area. Get more information at [www.BankofTampa.com](http://www.BankofTampa.com)

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**BEACH ART CENTER'S POTTERY STUDIO – BEST OF SHOW**



The Beach Art Center has a wonderful pottery studio where students can learn to make interesting pieces of pottery from different kinds of clay. Dick Williams has been a student at the Beach Art Center (BAC) for five of the 20 years he has been living here. He says he is a 'heat bird' instead of a "snow bird" because he's here from October to about mid-May. While here he takes classes at the Beach Art Center and uses their equipment.

When you talk to Dick, he says he works in clay, but that is an understatement. A few years ago he won the Best of Show for his "Totem" sculpture in the Student/Faculty Art Show and competition.

Williams (73) was an administrator professor at the University of Illinois. As an employee, he could take classes for free. He chose art--clay to be exact. That gave him the bug. "Basically, I work with mud," Dick likes to say. "Clay art can either be functional (vases, platters, salt shakers) or artistic—with no actual purpose—just art for art's sake" There are about five to ten regulars taking classes at the BAC where they have 5 pottery wheels but only one small kiln. The clay is pre-mixed but there "are all kinds of clay," says Dick. "The best clay is a mix of different kinds of clay. It is like flour in a bag. The pre-mixed clay used at BAC is of two types—white and/or red clay. It is the glaze that gives it the shine and the color."

In making something out of clay, it is either shaped by hand or thrown on a pottery wheel. Then it is dried, getting most of the water out until it is "leather hard." Firing in the kiln is next which hardens the clay. When it comes out of the kiln, it is bisque which can be glazed. There are various colored glazes that can be applied by dipping, brushing or splashing. Then it is fired in a kiln a second time at a temperature approaching 2000 degrees which brings out the color. It will stay in the kiln for about a day—slowly coming to room temperature.

Dick takes classes at the BAC to utilize their facility. Classes cost around \$100 a month. "I rarely sell my art," Williams adds. "I do this for fun. I usually give my finished clay art away to friends and relatives." He also donates many pieces to the Beach Art Center Gift Store. Visit the store to buy a well-crafted piece made by Dick Williams.

**CONVERSATIONS WITH THE MAYOR**

Cookie Kennedy, elected Mayor of Indian Rocks Beach in March, wants to know what is on your mind. She is holding one-on-one sessions with area residents the first Monday each month in the auditorium City Hall, from 4 to 7pm. No need to make an appointment. Just show up.

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## TBARTA'S NEW NAME AND NEW MISSION

It is all about moving forward

By Karen Williams Seel, Pinellas County Commissioner

It happened more than a year ago. The governor signed the bill that changed the second "T" in TBARTA from "Transportation" to "Transit" to encompass all modes, focused the number of member counties from seven down to five, and also changed the agency's mission. Now, the Tampa Bay Area Regional Transit Authority would be tasked to deliver a region-wide transit system to Tampa Bay.



A year later, the mission is steadily moving forward.

In March, the Florida Legislature approved \$1 million for the Authority to invest in the creation of a 10-year plan for transit projects in the region. This is great news. These dollars will be used to put together the Tampa Bay region's first-ever Regional Transit Development Plan—a strategic plan that has real value and meaning for improving mobility.

The plan—starting with a feasibility study—will make recommendations about which transit projects to invest in to connect the five member counties: Pinellas, Hillsborough, Manatee, Pasco and Hernando. It will also assure the coordination of projects across the region.

The plan will focus on developing the structure for a regional transit service, developing an action plan for implementation, along with investigating alternatives and identifying deficiencies in current modes of transit. In addition, the plan will map out a 10-year regional service and capital improvement plan, including funded and unfunded needs.

One part of the plan could be bus rapid transit (BRT). Recently, TBARTA has endorsed the idea of full dedicated lanes for BRT that would connect Pinellas and Hillsborough counties. The BRT plan is still being developed and is scheduled to be completed in September. The cost of the plan is estimated to be about \$455 million, which brings me to another important provision approved by the legislature in March.

The resort tax on hotel stays—also known as the bed tax—can now be used for, among other things, transportation projects. The expansion of the funding source for transit-related projects will spread the expense of these high-cost projects across all who use our transit infrastructure, including tourists.

Both of these important legislative provisions will give TBARTA the means to address the public transit issues the Tampa Bay region has faced for decades. With an estimated 1.2 million people commuting to work in the five-county Tampa Bay region and roughly 20 percent of workers—nearly a quarter million people—commuting to jobs outside of the county of their residence, the importance of regional transit cannot be overstated.

TBARTA has its work cut out for it, but now has the start-up tools to do the job.

Look for TBARTA's feasibility study to kick off this fall. If you would like more information about TBARTA, visit their website at [www.tbarta.com](http://www.tbarta.com).

As always, I welcome your feedback and concerns. Please email me at [kseel@pinellascounty.org](mailto:kseel@pinellascounty.org). I look forward to hearing your thoughts about our transit future.

## Organizational News...

### FRIENDS OF IRB DOG PARK

*Submitted by Wendell Schott*

Keeping grassy areas in top condition in any dog park requires periodic seeding and constant irrigation and mowing. Large sections of grass at the IRB Dog Park eroded during our rather recent wet months causing areas to be muddy. As a result, man's best friend couldn't stay clean and they would carry the slop home with them even when they were hosed down. Something needed to be done. On May 21 the park began a lengthy closure to allow for seeding and maintenance. As a result of unusually wet weather during the first couple of weeks of seeding, the re-opening of the park was delayed another week. It was worth the wait and the new grass looks terrific. It has been two full years since IRB Dog Park went through a makeover and now it looks even better than ever. Stay cool and have a great summer. Happy Tails To You!

### BEACH MOMS

A new area Moms group formed the first of the year. It is designed to help mothers of all kinds connect with each other. In an area filled with tourists and retirees, that can sometimes be hard. The Beach Moms group has free weekly events and offers a once a month Moms party for moms to get together relax and make friends.

This group is intended to encourage moms to make connections, laugh a little more, and enjoy motherhood with a support system. Their motto is Moms Staying Happy, Sandy, and Connected. They have all kinds of events planned for the coming months including beach play dates, evening family park outings, Monday morning walks, Mother brunches and even a special Make Moms-life Easier event!

The group's founder, Hannah Scott has a one-year old daughter and runs their private Facebook group. You can reach her at (813) 295 -1126.

### GREENTOWN KIDS

*Submitted by Allie DeVore*

GreenTown Kids had a fun and busy May and June. We hosted a Family Composting Event in May, where parents learned about home composting, kids got to make a worm jar, and families made and took home their own composting bins. We kicked-off our #StrawlessSummer Challenge in June, urging everyone to say no to plastic straws all summer long! June was all about Sea Turtles and the Ocean. We attended a World Oceans Day event at the Marine Exploration Center in St. Pete, where the kids learned through touch tanks, and other hands-on activities. Then, Sea Turtle Trackers came and taught our greenies all about Sea Turtles at our June meeting. This July we're continuing the theme with a "Nets on the Beach" event for kids and families to learn about local marine life. We also helped with the IRB 4th of July beach cleanup by handing out biodegradable bags to beachgoers. In August we're planning a fundraiser dinner at Broke N Bored Grill to raise money for our growing cause. Get our updates! Email: greentownkids@gmail.com. Facebook: @GreenTown Kids.

### BEACH COMMUNITY FOOD PANTRY (BCFP)

*Submitted David Kline BCFP Director*

Over the last 6 months, we have been raising funds to purchase a quality used cargo van to more easily manage ongoing, vital tasks. We have raised \$15,000, which we believe should be enough to start the purchase process. Thank you to all that contributed.

### ACTION 2000 INDIAN ROCKS BEACH (A2K)

*Submitted by Julie Hoofnagle*

A2K volunteers love the beach and are proud to be part of the Independence Day Beach Clean Up. To encourage beach visitors to leave nothing behind but their footprints, volunteers will be handing out biodegradable trash bags at nine beach accesses from 9am to 4pm on July 4th. Beach clean up will start at 8:30 am on July 5th with Crabby Bill's hosting a complimentary brunch for all volunteers from 9:30 to 11:30 am.

Sign up today to help keep our beach beautiful at the A2K Facebook page Action2000IRB. We need volunteers for July 4th and 5th. We are looking for volunteers to distribute trash bags on July 4th and help clean their favorite stretch of sand after the Independence Day celebration on July 5th.

Action 2000 seeks to preserve and beautify the Gulf Boulevard Corridor and adjacent commercial, tourist and residential areas creating a vital, thriving, attractive and desirable place to live, work and play.

Want to be part of this organization that is leaving it's mark all over town? We invite you to join us at our next meeting on August 13th at 6:30pm at the Beach Art Center. We will be planning the A2K's 17th annual Oktoberfest on the Beach slated for October 13th from 11am to 7pm at Kolb Park. Come be a volunteer and join the fun.

For more information check out our website [www.irbaction2000.com](http://www.irbaction2000.com), and Action2000IRB on Facebook.

We are still seeking sponsorships and silent auction donations for the Oktoberfest festival. Learn how you can help and get details of the event at [www.oktoberfestonthebeach.com](http://www.oktoberfestonthebeach.com) and our Facebook page OktoberfestIndianRocksBeach.

### CLEARWATER YACHT CLUB

They hosted their annual ARC Fun Day, May 12. "It is our way of giving back to the community," says Tom Brusini, Club Manager. They close the club to members while ARC clients have a fun day of swimming, games, music, dancing, and boat rides. Venus Restaurant of Belleair Bluff's supplied the food. The kids enjoyed Shirley Temple drinks and lots of ice cream. It is one the best days of the year - for both the kids and the club's volunteers.

They are offering a Summer 2018 Membership program, through Sept. 30. There is no initiation fee and dues are \$150 a month, with no monthly food & beverage minimums. This is for use at Clearwater Yacht Club exclusively and includes daytime dockage at the Club. At the end of the summer, you may join in a class of your choice (Full, Social, or Junior) at the then current rates for dues and initiation, but you are not obligated to join. Call or email the office for details, 727-447-6000 or [office@clearwateryachtclub.org](mailto:office@clearwateryachtclub.org)

Chartered in 1911, this is one of the oldest Yacht Clubs and is known as the most fun, family friendly Yacht Club in the area. If you would like to join, you do not need to own a boat. Half of their members don't have one. Most of their social activities center around parties in their own restaurant or at their waterfront Tiki-Bar. Learn more at [Clwyc.org](http://Clwyc.org), e-mail [Office@CLWYC.org](mailto:Office@CLWYC.org) or call 447-6000.

### HISTORICAL MUSEUM NEWS

*Submitted by Donna Vallery*

The Historical Museum will be closed for the months of August and September. Groups of 4 or more can make an appointment through Terry Wollin at 593-5921.

## Organizational News...

### NEWCOMER CLUB

Are you an area newcomer and just have not been able to meet people? This is a social club to help relocated residents develop new friends, but you do not have to be a newcomer to join. The ladies meet monthly at different locations for lunch with guest speakers. Leisure activities vary from card games to field trips and theater shows.

Please RSVP with Ginny by calling 365-3493 or Mary Jane at 352-263-5518. Visit [WelcomeNewComerClub.com](http://WelcomeNewComerClub.com).

### ROTARY CLUB OF INDIAN ROCKS BEACH

Submitted by Michael Schulz

The Rotary Club of Indian Rocks Beach doesn't just service the beach community. Recently, members (Milt Johnson, Harvey Goodman, David Kline, Dave Gerald) volunteered their skills at a Habitat for Humanity build located in the Greater Ridgecrest Community. Additionally, the club donated \$5,000 towards ongoing Habitat build projects. In another part of the county, members (Milt Johnson, Harvey Goodman, Michael Schulz, Vernon Bryant, Pat Marzulli, Rick Walker) planted and maintained trees and bushes at CASA, a facility that temporarily houses domestic abuse victims and their families. Last year the club funded and built a bus shelter at the same campus.

If you would like to find out more about our club and what we do please join us for breakfast. All are welcome! The Rotary Club of Indian Rocks Beach meets every Wednesday morning, 7:15 AM at Jimmy Guana's Restaurant, Holiday Inn, Indian Rocks Beach.

### BEACH ART CENTER

Submitted by Barbara Parker

The Beach Art Center is open and flourishing this summer with a host of activities for kids and adults. We invite you to come by and see what's happening our gallery and gift shop is open Monday – Friday from 9am to 4pm.

The Beach Art Center Kids Camp is under way and will run through the last week of July. Full-day campers enjoy a format that allows them to experience every type of media we offer. The Kids focus on a different artist each week, so no two weeks are alike! In our July sessions the campers will focus on Paul Klee (July 9-13) and Henri Matisse (July 16-20).

The Morning only sessions also offer the campers a different option each week. The remaining 1/2 day sessions are being taught by our newest instructor Jennifer Kikia-Yang. Jennifer's exciting sessions include Painting with Scissors - Picasso, Miro, and Warhol (July 9-13) and Painting with Scissors - Monet & O'Keeffe (July 16-20).

Adult classes are available throughout the summer this year. Teaching weekly are Barb Kuzin, acrylic painting for all levels; Ron Marvin, oil painting, for intermediate and advanced students; and Roberta Romeo, watercolor for beginners and advanced students. There are also a variety of workshops and Art on the Rocks sessions scheduled this summer! For details and registrations go to [www.beachartcenter.org](http://www.beachartcenter.org).

We invite artist and art lovers alike to mark your calendars today for our next Gallery Reception on Friday, August 10, featuring an Open Artist's Choice Show. To learn more about classes, happenings and events explore our website, like us on FaceBook and visit us on Instagram and Twitter for the latest up-to-date information.

### INDIAN ROCKS BEACH LIBRARY

Submitted by Michelle Gardner

The Friends of the Indian Rocks Beach Library organization is accepting contributions for the purchase of recognition bricks to be installed in a new walkway and seating area approaching the front door of the Indian Rocks Beach Library.

Bricks are engraved and measure 4-in. x 8-in., including 1/2-in. block character size, up to 3 lines, with 18 characters on each line. Single bricks are \$100 and double bricks at \$200 that offer twice the characters and lines of the single.

You can pick up a donation form at the IRB Library, located at 1507 Bay Palm Blvd., or download the form from the Friends of the Indian Rocks Beach link on the IRB Library web page at [www.indian-rocks-beach.com/irb\\_library.php](http://www.indian-rocks-beach.com/irb_library.php).

On Monday July 23rd at 11am, the Friends of the Indian Rocks Beach Library is happy to present a free music program at the Indian Rocks Beach Library featuring Mr. Richard, who offers music for modern families with "sing-along tunes about fish, skunks, cool snakes, and girl pilots, Mr. Richard plays music for hip kids." More on Mr. Richard can be found on his website [www.mrrichard.net](http://www.mrrichard.net).

The Friends of Indian Rocks Beach Library is a member-driven, 501 (c)(3) organization that promotes the library facilities, summer reading programs, special events, as well as provides volunteer personnel to staff the library and supports the library director. Please consider becoming a Member and "Like" us on our Friends of Indian Rocks Beach Library Facebook page.

### 100 WOMEN WHO CARE

100 Women Who Care of Pinellas County presented the Community Dental Clinic with a donation of \$11,900 on Friday, June 15th.

The mission of the Community Dental Clinic is to provide low-income, uninsured (or underinsured) adults of upper Pinellas County access to basic dental care and education through volunteer service and community partnerships. In 2009, access to dental services was identified as the number one social service need in Pinellas County. For this reason, the Salvation Army, Clearwater Free Clinic, and The Arc of Tampa Bay collaborated to establish the Community Dental Clinic.

100 Women Who Care of Pinellas County is a philanthropic group that provides an avenue for women to join together to bring financial support to local, charitable organizations that have a 501(c)(3) status. Members commit to attending four meetings per year (one per quarter) and pledge to donate \$100 to an elected charity at each meeting. The members have the opportunity to nominate any organization, three of the nominated organizations are then randomly selected to give a 5-minute presentation, a vote is taken, and then checks are written directly to the winning charity. Since February of 2013, the group has given \$183,000 to local charities. The next meeting is 7:00-8:00 p.m. on Tuesday, August 21st at Cove Cay Golf Club at 2612 Cove Cay Drive in Clearwater. There is a social time from 6:00-7:00 p.m. at the Cove Cay restaurant, where drinks and snacks can be purchased.

## PEOPLE IN OUR COMMUNITY

### Artist Mike Elwell Creates Art in Public Places

If you walk along downtown St. Petersburg's Beach Drive, between Bella Brava Restaurant and 3rd Avenue N., you cannot help but notice the large bronze animals sitting on benches and dozens of people taking their pictures with them.

This art in public spaces was created by eight-year downtown St. Petersburg resident Mike Elwell, at no charge. He has been creating satirical bronze sculptures for public display for 40 years.

Elwell (76) was born and raised in Wichita, Kansas. He has a BA in Political Science from the University of Kansas and became a lawyer, followed by six years as a District Attorney and then for 13 years, he was a District Judge.

In the 1970s, while working as a district judge, Elwell met a wood carver with the beginning stages of Parkinson's disease. He stepped in to help him and together they began creating molds that when filled with melted bronze, became sculptures. That led Elwell to open his own small foundry in Lawrence, Kansas - the Ox Bow Foundry and Gallery, a commercial casting business he owned until 2010.

Over the years, Elwell developed his personal style and became the President of Lawrence Art Center, a Member of International Sculpture Center, and the director of the Kansas Sculptors Association. During his time in Kansas, he created many pieces of art and won many awards, while working with and teaching many up and coming artists and students.

In 2010, Elwell left Kansas and moved to St. Petersburg. Seeing the traffic on Beach Drive, he had an idea - create a series of large bronze animals in satirical poses on benches where people can sit and touch them and have their photos taken with them.

Elwell set about producing his vision at his own expense. He first created The Alligator (Let's Talk) and wanted to install it in front of The Red Cloud Gallery. He talked to the store's owners Steve and Harriet Rambeux, who said they did not own the sidewalk--but wanted to give it a try.

With that decision made, the first of what would eventually be half a dozen originals, was dropped into place, and what a hit it was! "In one day, I counted 125 people wanting to sit next to that Alligator and have their photo snapped on their cell phone," Elwell recalls. "Many took selfies."

So why stop at just one? Elwell went on to design, create and place many more along Beach Drive, including: "The Elephant: Money Talks", "The Alligator: Let's Talk", "The Pelican: Catching Some Rays", and "The Frog: The Prince". People go from one to the next to take a photo with each one.

The Frog is unique because it has a speaker inside the bronze structure. The microphone that controls it is inside the Agora store. Sometimes, Elwell hiding inside the store, talks to kids who sit on the oversized frog." They are always surprised."

This goes to the heart of Elwell's philosophy about art. "Don't take life too seriously," he says. "Try to find the humor in things." If you look closely, you will find tiny messages and images built into his works.

Another bench, not on Beach Drive, is "Salvador Seahorse", at the entrance to the Signature building where Elwell lives.

From beginning to end, it takes about six months to create each piece. First, a small clay model is created, followed by a clay enlargement. That alone is about three months of the process. Next a mold is created, and waxes are cast followed by ten ceramic shell coatings and a burnout of the wax at 2000 degrees. Finally, it is cast into metal, welded together and lastly the patina is added. The bench is created separately from each character, which is welded to the bench.

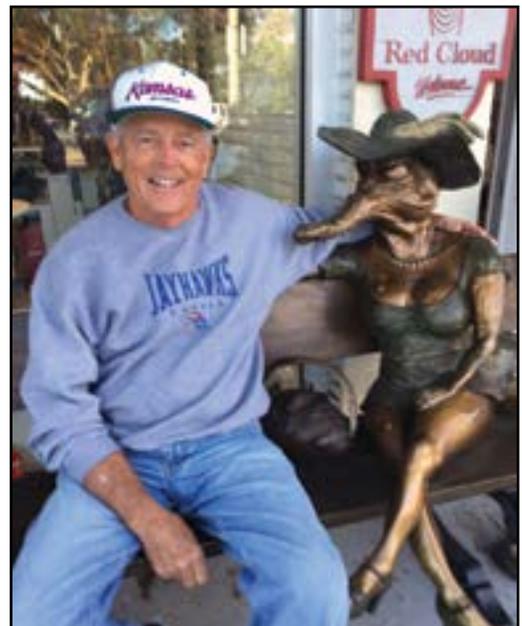
While the benches are for sale, Elwell does not actively try to sell his art. Probably, most people don't even know he sells them. Instead, he prefers to produce his art for others to enjoy—in public places.

If you stroll the sidewalk in front of the Museum of Fine Arts, you will see them lining Beach Drive. You cannot miss them. Feel free to stop and take a selfie. Elwell will appreciate that.

See Mike Elwell's other work, online, at [www.ElwellBronzeArt.com](http://www.ElwellBronzeArt.com).



Mike Elwell posing with two of his creations: "The Frog" & "The Alligator"



Enjoying a hug from a pelican

## WHEN THUNDER ROARS, GO INDOORS

According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), lightning is one of the most erratic and unpredictable characteristics of a thunderstorm. There have already been 5 lightning deaths to date this year in the United States, with two deaths occurring in Florida. In the ten-year period between 2008 and 2017, Florida has led the nation with 47 reported lightning deaths—more than twice as many deaths as Texas, the next highest state with 20 deaths.

Knowing and following proven lightning safety guidelines can greatly reduce the risk of injury or death.

- Most lightning victims are not struck during the worst of a thunderstorm, but rather before or after the storm reaches its greatest intensity. This is because many people are unaware that lightning can strike as far as 25 miles away from its parent thunderstorm—much farther out from the area of rainfall within the storm.
- If thunder is heard, a person is within striking distance and should seek shelter immediately.
- A convenient way to remember this rule is to abide by the motto: When thunder roars, go indoors.
- Persons should also stay indoors until 30 minutes after the last clap of thunder is heard.
- People are urged to not wait for the rain to start before deciding to seek shelter, and they should not leave shelter just because the rain has ended.

The best way to protect from the dangers of thunderstorms is to be prepared. Residents with outdoor plans should familiarize themselves with the latest weather forecast before heading out, take a portable NOAA Weather Radio or AM/FM radio with them, and while outdoors, identify a nearby shelter in the event of a thunderstorm and estimate how long it would take to reach that shelter. A sturdy, enclosed structure with plumbing and electrical wiring is safest, but, if one is not available, most enclosed metal vehicles are safe alternatives.

During outdoor activities, individuals are advised to keep an eye to the sky for developing thunderstorms. If thunder is heard, if lightning is seen

or, even if thunderclouds are developing, they should get to a place of shelter without delay.

For more information about lightning safety, visit the National Weather Service's website at [www.weather.gov/safety/lightning](http://www.weather.gov/safety/lightning).

## CLEARWATER MARINE AQUARIUM SUMMER CAMP

Clearwater Marine Aquarium offering a coastal learning experience, with week-long camps (half or full-day) featuring Winter, Hope and their river otter and sea turtle friends. Camps feature snorkeling in sea grass beds and sand flats, kayaking through local estuaries, meeting our rescued residents and discovering fascinating marine creatures in their natural habitat. Your kids will love the summer fun and you will feel good about the valuable educational experience.

There are eleven weeks of camp this summer from June 4th through August 17. Lunch is included during the full day sessions.

- Learn about our resident animals and the work we do every day at a working marine animal hospital.

- Early learning to High School Career Shadow camps
- Free early drop off before camp starting at 7:00am and late pick-up to 5:00pm
- Learn from marine biologists, rescue team members, and our animal caregivers.
- Hands-on learning in a safe, fun, and friendly environment.
- Snorkeling, kayaking, boating, marine life and more.
- Free t-shirt included for all campers.

For more information and easy online registration email [camps@cmaquarium.org](mailto:camps@cmaquarium.org) or go to [seewinter.com/education/camps](http://seewinter.com/education/camps)

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