



**“WHITE QUEEN OF THE GULF’S” LONG REIGN OVER**

The demolition of the Belleview Biltmore Hotel will bring a final “gone for good” ending to its long and illustrious reign as the “White Queen of the Gulf.”

Many who have witnessed the Belleview’s ongoing decay the past few years have done so with great angst, seeing the full impact of losing a structure that played a prominent role in the development of Florida’s major industry, tourism.

The hotel’s beginning goes back to a time when Florida was known as America’s last frontier. It was the late 1800s when Henry B. Plant, along with his rival Henry M. Flagler, created a network of railroad and steamboat lines with first class accommodations to attract tourists to the Sunshine State.

The Belleview was Plant’s second grand hotel, which he built in 1896, following completion of his “Moorish castle” Tampa Bay Hotel (now University of Tampa). For its site, Plant chose a remote, undeveloped area on a high bluff overlooking Clearwater Bay near the Gulf of Mexico. In keeping with the surroundings, the Belleview style would be relaxed and informal, featuring outdoor amenities such as golf, bicycling, horseback riding and fishing.

The hotel was constructed entirely of wood – Florida heart pine – in the Swiss chalet architecture popular in American and European resort areas.

Despite its “get away from it all” appeal, The Belleview featured every modern amenity, including in-room electric lighting. Telephone and telegraph facilities were just off the lobby. An in-house orchestra even had daily performances.

Plant brought a spur of his railroad down from Clearwater right to the door of the hotel, assuring easy access for the gilded guests who often arrived in their private rail cars. He envisioned a planned community, called Belleair, to be developed around the hotel site.

The Hotel Belleview was an immediate success with its targeted clientele, who valued the getaway appeal combined with first class amenities. Names of the rich and famous populated the hotel’s guest list for years. The hotel became a must stop on the Grand Tour for the nation’s elite. Of the eight hotels in the Plant System, the White Queen of the Gulf was said to be Plant’s favorite. It was certainly the biggest, being advertised as “the largest occupied wooden structure in the world.”

The activities and amenities grew as the years passed. Golf was a favored sport, and the Belleview opened Florida’s first golf course, a six-hole affair, in 1898. In 1915, Henry Plant’s son Morton, who ran the hotel following Plant’s death in 1899, hired famed golf course designer Donald J. Ross to build two 18-hole championship courses. Golfing greats of the day frequented the courses, which were known for challenging and innovative play.

The hotel’s championship bike track was another big attraction. An Olympic sized swimming pool was inlaid with over one million ceramic tiles imported from Italy, and held 200,000 gallons of water. Fishing was a big attraction for many guests, and the surrounding bay and gulf waters were a bountiful source of sought-after species.

An excursion to the Belleview’s beachfront property at nearby Sand Key was a popular venue for guests. Boats left the hotel pier regularly to cross Clearwater Bay to the Gulf.

The planned town of Belleair envisioned by Plant developed on its own as an upscale community. Independent, yet closely associated and identified with its icon, the Belleview.

*continued inside*



Story and Photos by Wayne Ayers, historian and author of *Florida’s Grand Hotels from the Gilded Age*

**CREDITS**



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Bob & Becky Griffin  
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IN AUGUST!**



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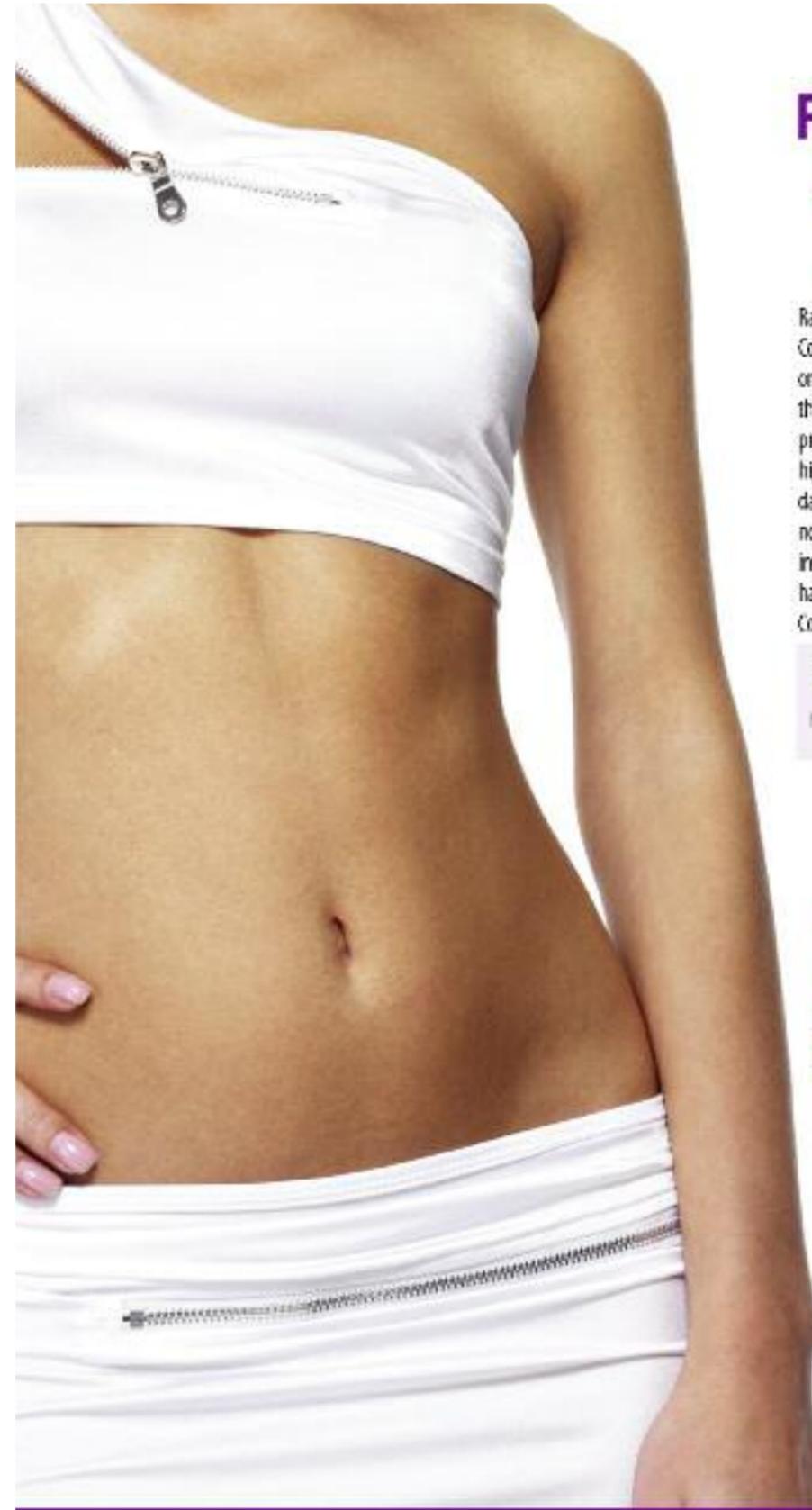
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**CALENDAR OF LOCAL EVENTS**

<b>JUNE</b>		Boat Club Caladesi Island Party	11
Hurricane Season Begins	1	Armed Forces Museum Day	26
Public School Close	2	Parents Day	26
Boat Club's Summer Island Party	6	<b>AUGUST</b>	
Summer Camps Begin	8	Boat Club 3 Rooker Island Party	8-9
Belleair Bluffs Business Assn Mixer	11	Property Tax Trim Notices Mailed	10
Indian Rocks Flag Retirement Ceremony	12	Belleair Bluffs Business Assn Mixer	13
Heritage Village Antique Fair	13	Gracie's Big Splash with Belleair Rec	14
Flag Day	14	Public School Opens	17
FIVB St Pete Open Spa Beach	15-21	Gulfport Gekofest	29
Miss Florida Pageant	16-20	<b>SEPTEMBER</b>	
National Garbage Man Day	17	Grandparents Day	6
Miss Florida Gala	20	Labor Day	7
Father's Day	21	Belleair Bluffs Business Assn Mixer	10
Summer Begins	21	Patriots Day	11
St. Pete Gay Pride Celebration	27-28	Buc's First Home Game	13
<b>JULY</b>		Boat Club Meetings Resume	17
Belleair Bluffs July 4th Celebrations	4	Autumn Begins	23
Independence Day	4	Clearwater Offshore Racing Festival	26-27
Fireworks Coachman Park	4		



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## Did You Know...



**NEW PRINCIPAL** Ann Welch is the new Principal at Anona Elementary. She comes to Anona from Odessa Elementary. Welch replaced Gaye Lively who retired after 30 years with the Pinellas County School System. Welch started her new job in April.

### 5K SUNSET RUNS RETURN

The West Florida YMCA Runner's Club (WFYRC) has returned with their popular Sunsets at Pier 60 5K Sunset Run series. The non-profit runners organization which also organizes the Discover Caladesi Island Run (10K) in February, and the annual Turkey Trot in November will be hosting five summer sunset runs: June 12, July 17 and August 14. Get more information and register at [www.WFYRC.com](http://www.WFYRC.com).

**NEW COMMISSIONER** Belleair Shore's Town Commissioner Jennifer Lindsay recently moved a resigned from the Commission. Dorothy Niewlarowski, a Belleair Shore resident for 29 years, was appointed to fill her term. Niewlarowski is part owner of 688 Liquors in Largo, a business her parents have owned for 35 years.

**HAUL PASS** Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority (PSTA) will haul your kids around again this summer with the Youth Summer "Haul Pass." The 15-week summer pass offers unlimited rides for youth 18-years-old and younger now through August, 31 2015, on all local PSTA and Jolley Trolley routes (excludes Routes 100X and 300X). You can go to the mall, the beach, or anywhere you like. Passes are available for purchase at PSTA terminals or on the PSTA website for \$35. All you need to board the bus with a Haul Pass is a PSTA Youth ID card, middle or high school ID, or government-issued photo ID showing an age of 18 or younger. Check out PSTA's real-time bus tracking at [www.ridepsta.net](http://www.ridepsta.net).

### DUMP THE PLASTIC

Americans use 100 billion plastic bags each year, made from 190 million barrels of petroleum products. Each is used for an average of 12 minutes before being discarded, but they remain in our landfills, oceans, parks and beaches for thousands of years as they never fully break down. Introduced by ExxonMobile in the 1970s, plastic shopping bag are costly, environmentally damaging and unnecessary. They may be free at check-out counters, but retailers spend \$4 billion a year on them and pass that cost on to you. They clog storm drains and damage infrastructure on their way to becoming ocean pollution where seabirds, whales, sea turtles and other marine life eat them and die from choking, intestinal blockage and starvation. What can you do? Switch to environmentally friendly and cost-effective reusable bags.



## and More...



**SCOUTS VISIT SPACE CENTER** Troop 371 took a trip to Kennedy Space Center which allowed the boys to get a jump on their Space merit badge requirements. The troop meets at Christ the King Lutheran Church on Oakhurst Road, Mondays at 7pm. Contact scoutmaster Ray Siewert at [rksiewert@msn.com](mailto:rksiewert@msn.com) for more information.

**REENTRY TAGS** Only half of Belleair Shore's residents have obtain their Hurricane Reentry Tags. Belleair Beach and Shore residents and businesses will be required to have a permit to be allowed to reenter the beach area after a mandatory evacuation. Residents can get their permits at the Belleair Beach City Hall, 444 Causeway Blvd, next to the bridge. Bring a current vehicle registration or driver's license. If that registration does not show Belleair Beach or Belleair Shore, then bring other proof of residency. Call 595-4646 for information.

**NATIONAL GARBAGE MAN APPRECIATION DAY IS JUNE 17** Be nice to your solid waster workers on their day. Give them a water, card, tip or just a friendly wave. Aren't you glad they are here?

### OLYMPIC VOLLEYBALL WORLD TOUR

The Federation International de Volleyball (FIVB) St. Petersburg Grand Slam will be held June 15-21 at St. Petersburg's Spa Beach Park. This is the second of five Grand Slam events on the FIVB World Tour schedule. It is expected to draw the top talent from around the world to compete in the seven-day tournament featuring a maximum of 32 men and 32 women's teams. There will be no more than two teams per country, all vying for a piece of an \$800,000 purse and world ranking points. The results are part of the Olympic qualifying process for the 2016 Rio games. General admission is free. Premium tickets and hospitality packages will be available for purchase soon at [www.AVP.com](http://www.AVP.com).



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

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**BELLEVIEW BILTMORE, continued**

To accommodate an increasing number of guests, the Belleview was expanded several times during its early years. The first addition, made before 1905, extended the main corridor eastward. Another major expansion occurred around 1910, when the north wing was built and the Tiffany Dining Room expanded. In 1924, the addition of the south wing increased the hotel's capacity to 425 rooms.

In 1919, after Morton Plant's death, the Belleview was sold to John McEntee Bowman and added to the Biltmore chain. The name was changed to Belleview Biltmore.

The Belleview Biltmore prospered, along with the nation, during the giddy booming 1920s. According to the book "The Belleview Resort Hotel: A Century of Hospitality," the hotel was crammed with brilliant parties, corridors of famous guests, and the money spilled like vintage wine.

The good times ended with the stock market crash and the Depression years. Following Bowman's unexpected death in 1931, the Biltmore chain collapsed. The Belleview was leased to a series of operators during the 1930s, until purchased by Arnold Kirkeby in 1939.

The hotel was taken over by the military during the war years. In 1944, Kirkeby sold the Belleview Biltmore to Ed C. Wright. Two years later Wright sold the hotel to Bernie Powell but retained the property. Despite shortages of most items needed to operate a hotel, the Belleview Biltmore held a grand reopening on January 10, 1947. Restoration took place, but the hotel never achieved its former glory.

The postwar years brought a new generation of Florida tourists. The gilded guests who stayed for a season were largely replaced by baby boom families whose visits normally lasted a week or two. They traveled by car and preferred the drive-up convenience of motels, viewing larger, older hotels as old fashioned. The Belleview Biltmore continued to successfully operate, buoyed by corporate gatherings and group tours, but on a lesser scale.

In 1969, owner Wright's death brought about a fateful transaction that likely sealed the hotel's eventual demise. Wright's heirs sold the hotel's waterfront property on Clearwater Bay along with its two golf courses to U.S. Steel for \$10 million. The deal would deprive the hotel of the advantages of a water frontage, and take away ownership of what had been its most famed amenity – golf.

Guests were still permitted to use both courses until 1987, when U.S. Steel sold the course next to the hotel to the private Belleair Country Club.

The losses would take their toll over the coming years. Extensive renovations, including construction of a new lobby and a spa, and a decision in the mid-1980s to operate year round boosted the Belleview Biltmore's popularity and prestige for a time.

But a series of ownership changes and uncertainty with its future hastened the hotel's decline. The hotel closed in 2009, for extensive renovations that never happened.

Prospective owners came, made promises and left, while the hotel sat, unattended. Valiant efforts by preservation groups proved futile in the face of "demolition by neglect."

The Belleair City Commission, which had resisted teardown requests for years, finally approved a demolition permit sought by owner-developer Mike Cheezem in December.

Plans are to replace the 118 year old Belleview Biltmore with a condo complex styled after the hotel's design. A portion of the west wing will be preserved, the owners say, as a last reminder of what once was the "White Queen of the Gulf."

**BEING HURRICANE SAVVY CAN MEAN BEING HURRICANE SAFE**

By Pinellas County Commissioner Karen Seel

June 1 marked the beginning of the annual Atlantic hurricane season, a date we know well here on Florida's Gulf Coast. While the possibility of a big hurricane is not a pleasant thought, it is one for which we should all have a plan. Your county is focused on helping with your plan. Thanks to the introduction of new tools to help residents, making a hurricane preparedness plan is easier than ever.

When a major hurricane hits, the biggest threat to life is not wind, instead it is the accompanying storm surge. Storm surge from hurricanes can cause water from the bay and the gulf to move ashore with extreme speed. This water leaves great disaster in its path and hauls items that are not secured throughout the community and possibly out to sea.

In Pinellas County, we live on a peninsula, which makes us extremely vulnerable to storm surge flooding. Thanks to efforts by Pinellas County Emergency Management, you can now see what impact storm surge could have on your home, business or neighborhood, by using our award-winning Storm Surge Protector Web application.

All you have to do is go to pinellascounty.org/emergency and click on the Storm Surge Protector Application link. A new window will open and you can type in your address to view a three-dimensional rendering of your home. The application shows your evacuation level and depicts how much water your home and car would be under, depending on the severity of the storm. You can also see how your neighborhood would do in a storm surge scenario. The app

is easy to use and I encourage you to take advantage of this innovative new tool.

If you live in one of the beach communities, another improvement this year that will aid you with your hurricane plan is the Emergency Access Permit. To give you peace of mind in the event of an evacuation, the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office and barrier island communities are providing these free permits, which will ensure only those who live or work in an evacuated community can reenter immediately after an order is lifted.

The permits will help law enforcement keep trespassers from using a disaster for their personal gain by stealing from those affected. You can pick up a permit from your beach municipality, and you can visit pcsoweb.com/emergency-access-permit for more information.

Make sure you visit our Emergency Management website at pinellascounty.org/emergency to learn more about these and other preparedness measures and to access the storm surge application yourself.

As always, know that your county is here to help. I hope everyone will join me in refining their hurricane plan this year and every year – as being prepared for a hurricane will mean keeping your family safe if one comes our way.



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**P.J.'S OYSTER BAR CELEBRATES 30 YEARS!**

It might seem unusual to name a seafood restaurant featuring oysters after a parrot, but that seems to be what the owners of P.J.'s Oyster Bar did. In truth, it really was the other way around, the restaurant came before the bird!

PJ's Oyster Bar, at 415 2nd Street, is one of the city's oldest yet newest restaurants. It first opened at 500 1st Street on June 28, 1985, 30 years ago. They moved across the street into the much larger building last August.

Today, the restaurant is owned by Rebecca "Bama" Palmer, her husband Steve and their sons Mark and Daniel. They are not the original owners though, it was actually the brainchild of Judy Vermont and business partner Ed Rosicky. Judy and "Mr. Ed", as everyone called him, were both from the south side of Chicago, but they met here when in the late 1970s, Judy owned The Beach Place (now called 18 On The Rocks) and Mr. Ed was one of her partners.

The strip-center where P.J.'s first opened, had been a convenience store before father-son team Bruno and Paul opened it as Bruno's Bar. They fell behind on the rent and Judy bought business. She only bought the lease though, as the building was owned by Largo Ophthalmologist Dr. Michaelos.

When purchasing Bruno's, Judy had a partner named Paul. They decided on the name P.J.'s, P for Paul and J for Judy, but Paul failed to show up to sign the lease papers. Judy liked the sound of P.J.'s and kept the name.

Looking for a new partner, she approached her good friend Mr. Ed. He was a realtor by trade and reluctantly agreed to be a partner in the restaurant. While Ed and Judy were close friends, contrary to what many thought, they were never married.

Both being from Chicago, having Chicago Oysters as the featured menu item was an easy choice. They created the rest of the menu with beachy stuff like grouper sandwiches, hamburgers, fish spread and key lime pie. The menu has essentially remains the same.

Mr. Ed always said P.J. was a name fit for a bird, and shortly after the restaurant's opening, Judy bought a baby yellow nape amazon parrot and named it P.J. "He is an aggressive bird and only Mr. Ed could hold him," says today's owner Bama. "Ed always said it was a good thing she did not buy a monkey," she laughs. That breed of parrot is known to live about 90 years and he is as old as the restaurant - 30 years. PJ still lives in the restaurant.

Dollars started going up on the walls from the day they opened. It was a tradition some boat club members saw in Cabbage Key. Through the years, the restaurant has donated over \$30,000 of their customer's dollars to All Children's Hospital

Rebecca Palmer, moved to IRB in 1982, where she was raising her three small boys, along with attending nursing school during the day and waiting tables at P.J.'s in the evenings. Having been raised in Cullman, Alabama she quickly earned the nickname "Bama".

In 1992, Judy and Ed were looking for a second location. The Newfoundland Pub in St. Pete Beach had just failed and the owners disappeared in the middle of the night. Just like their first location, they assumed the lease and reopened it a P.J.'s Oyster Bar. Bama became that restaurant's manager. Eventually, Judy and Ed offered to sell that location to her, but it was too long drive from Indian Rocks and Bama declined. At Bama's request, she became the manager of the IRB location, closer to home.

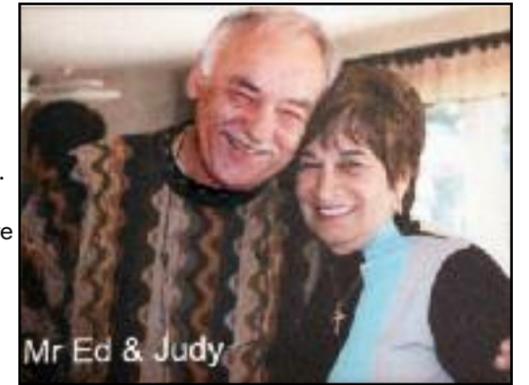
Judy was diagnosed with lung cancer in 2007 and died six months later. Mr. Ed, who was 70, had been thinking about retiring and made Bama an offer on the Indian Rocks restaurant. Bama laughed and pointed out, "you don't pay me enough money to do that." Ed told her he would work something out with her and he did. He stayed on as her partner for a few years, until she was able to buy his half. He wanted to make sure his longtime employees kept their jobs after he sold. To her credit, Bama still has many employees from the old days: Randy, Tom, Jimmy, Billy, Kelly and many others.

Things ran smoothly for a few years, but it became clear in 2012 the building's owner, was planning to raise the rent when their lease expired. The Munce Marketing building across the street was for sale, and over the period of a year, the Palmers bought the old bank building and property, remodeled it and opened the restaurant. When the old location was closed, All Children's Volunteers helped remove the existing dollars from the wall, which amounted to about \$15,000.



The new location was a nice step up. Instead of the 147 seats in the old restaurant, they now have 195. They added a full liquor license, an outside bar, live music, a kid's video game room and additional parking. They serve an average of 700 people a day with up to 1,000 on weekends or during tourist season. Those numbers are sure to increase when the Holiday Inn building, now under construction, is completed next door.

Only two restaurants in the city have been open longer than P.J.'s Oyster Bar. Pajano's has been open 44 years and Crabby Bill's 32 years. Bama, Steve, Mark and Daniel are all glad they made the move across the street. They are especially glad they were able to stay in IRB. Look for their 30th anniversary party, being held later this year.



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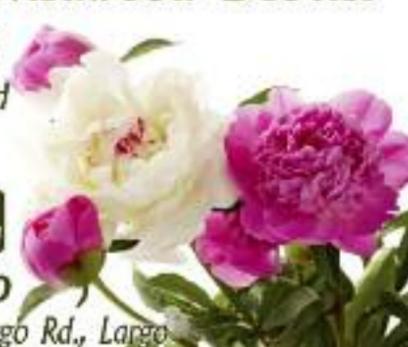
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### WALKING TO CALIFORNIA PART 4

This is a series of articles we have been running about Indian Rocks resident Sam Leonard, who is walking to California.

When we last left Sam, he was home for a funeral and planned to resume walking March 1st. He returned to the edge of New Orleans, heading to Baton Rouge. "Louisiana is very impressive. They have a lot of industry, agriculture and oil," he notes. He figures he has crossed the Mississippi River five or six times. He still walks 3-5 miles, pushing a bike, then rides back to his car to move it.

He took I-10 and Hwy. 90 to Opalosa where he passed through the Ahasalya Basin. "This is some of the most beautiful terrain I have seen so far," Sam says. "Some of the bridges I cross are not safe to walk over. So I drive across the bridges and park my car on the other sides."

In Rayne, La. known as Frog Capital of the U.S., he said "There were frogs everywhere, some real and some not. Storefronts have them by their doors. Gift shops sell all varieties. They have an annual Frog Celebration Festival."

Next was Crowley, the Rice Capital of North America. Then Jennings, LA, where oil was first discovered in America. "It is the birthplace of the oil industry," Sam adds.

Then it was on to Iowa, LA, known for its crawfish ponds and farms. He saw hundreds near the roadway. "I also saw the smallest Wal-Mart I have ever seen."

On March 31st he experienced severe leg, groin and chest pain. He drove home to be checked out. April 6, he drove back to Louisiana and started walking. As we go to press, he has just reached the east Texas border.

For information on his cause, go to [WalkForRehabbingVets.com](http://WalkForRehabbingVets.com). Contact Sam at [WalkCharity123@ComCast.net](mailto:WalkCharity123@ComCast.net).

### BOAT CLUB NEWS

80 people attended the Boat Club's first ever Fish Fry. Members had a great fish dinner, supplied by Crabby Bill's. They spent a fun afternoon in the park enjoying the food, games and a raffle of boat related raffle items.



**JUNE 6: BEGINNING OF SUMMER ISLAND PARTY** The Fall Island Party is so popular, they added a second one. The party on the small island at the north end of the city will be the same, come when you want and leave when you want. Bring whatever you want to grill and a dish to share. BYOB

**JULY 11: CALADESI ISLAND PARTY ON THE GULFSIDE** This popular beach event is moving back to the original location on the Gulf side of the island. Look for their Banner.

**AUGUST 8 & 9: THREE ROOKER ISLAND PARTY** While the Club has been going to Three Rooker for years, they are trying something different. You can come Saturday or Sunday to play in the water. Those that want, can spend Saturday night and play for two days.

The IRB Boat Club is based in Indian Rocks Beach but anyone can join and membership is STILL FREE. Meetings will resume in September at Jimmy Guana's in the Holiday Inn Harborside. Anyone wanting to join can call Bob Griffin at 517-1997 or e-mail [bob@IRBboatclub.com](mailto:bob@IRBboatclub.com) Find details or download an event calendar at [IRBboatclub.com](http://IRBboatclub.com).

### STOP THE CLOCK!!!!

By Stephanie Schlageter, Radiance Medspa

It's never too early to start reversing the signs of aging, especially when you grow up a sun-loving Florida gal like Ashley Lowery. Having spent her youth enjoying outdoor sports without the benefit of sunblock, Ashley entered her 30s happy, but freckled. When her wedding day loomed, and she noticed herself shying away from strapless and backless dresses, Ashley knew it was time to put an end to her sun damage.



Ashley's chest and back before treatment

"I was the toddler with the best tan on the beach," she says. "But by 30, my back and shoulders had become so sun damaged that I was very conscious of wearing anything that didn't cover it up."

Ashley began a series of non-invasive Fraxel Max laser treatments at Radiance Medspa and during the next four months achieved total skin renewal on her chest, shoulders, back and face.

"I received a lot of compliments leading up to the wedding," she remembers. "Friends began saying, 'OK, I know you've done something. You have the skin of a teenager now.'"

In addition to the Fraxel Max rejuvenation, Ashley opted to have BOTOX and Juvéderm injections to relax the subtle lines on her forehead and fill in the hollows under her eyes. At Ashley's young age, these treatments will also serve as a preventative measure to keep the lines from getting worse in the future.

Her goal was always to look better, but not different, and the real test came when Ashley saw her wedding photos. She was happy to see that she appeared completely natural.

She used to cover her skin with makeup to hide imperfections, but now Ashley goes out bare-faced and confident. In fact, she's traded in her foundation for something better – sunblock.

"I wanted to invest in my skin while I was young, and the results are going to benefit me longer," she says. "I feel that it's important for women my age to start to think about anti-aging treatments and feel empowered to make these types of positive changes."

Visit Radiance Medspa at 2894 West Bay Drive in Belleair Bluffs or call 727.518.7100 to schedule a free consultation.

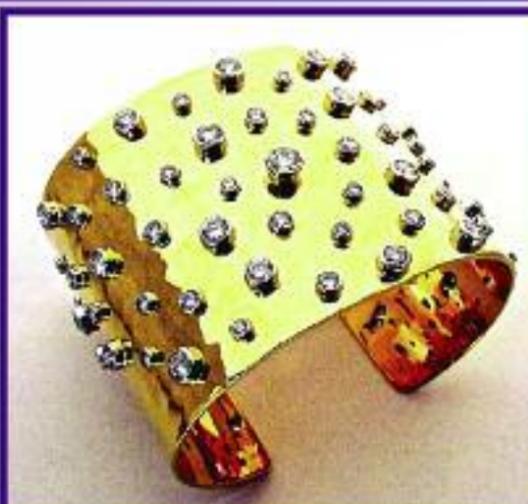


Ashley on her wedding day

# Robert Young

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Business Briefs...



**MOVING UP** What are they doing at the Holiday Inn Harborside? They are adding approximately 200 new rooms. The units near the road on 2nd Street are three stories over parking. But the building closer to the Intracoastal is seven stories over parking. The water park's construction is on hold until the hotel's building is finished. Management has not decided if the water park and slide will be open to the public or just available to hotel guests. With close to 350 rooms, the park may be too crowded if the public is allowed. The buildings' opening date is scheduled for the end of the year.

**SAND KEY FLOWERS MOVES** Sand Key Flowers is not on Sand Key anymore. But, their phone number, 553-9100 and name did not change. Sand Key Flowers moved to the south end of Clearwater Beach to 785 Bayway Blvd., near Sand Key Realty. The shop is still owned by Brian Pelfrey. Their web site is [www.SandKeyFlowers.com](http://www.SandKeyFlowers.com).



**FOUR YEARS ON THE BEACH** Noelle Daniel Wealth Management celebrates four years at the beach! After two years in Indian Rocks Beach, they relocated to a larger waterfront office on the Intracoastal in Indian Shores, at 20001 Gulf Blvd., Suite 8, Indian Shores where they have been for the past two years. Come visit by land or sea! Dock space is available for your boat. Noelle a CFP® Practitioner,

and her dedicated team have worked with individuals and businesses for over 18 years to develop financial plans, create income solutions for retirees and manage their investments. They also offer full investment services, retirement planning and insurance for businesses and individuals. Visit [www.ndwealthmanagement.com](http://www.ndwealthmanagement.com)

**BED TAX NUMBERS BREAK RECORDS** Based on the Pinellas County Bed Tax figures, the 2014 tax revenues were up 12.7% over 2013. January 2015 was up 23% over the same period last year. Calculations show the hotels, vacation rentals and car rentals companies on Clearwater Beach and Sand Key contribute 47% of the total Pinellas County bed tax generated. 58% of the Bed Tax revenue is used to market and promote tourism in Pinellas County. 9% is used for beach renourishment while the remaining 33% funds other things including the Tropicana Dome.

**MORE NEWS?** If you have news or suggestions appropriate for this newsletter, email it to [Bob@GriffinDirectories.com](mailto:Bob@GriffinDirectories.com) or call us at 517-1997

More Business Briefs...



**NEW LOOK FOR PUBLIX** Because until 7 years ago the Publix grocery store in Belleair Bluffs was an Albertsons, it lacks the "Publix look." They are fixing that by giving the inside of the store a facelift. The work is being done at night, but during the day, you will notice plastic covering some of the construction. The pharmacy will move to the front right with customer service in the front middle. The area where the greeting cards were will be offices. The bakery and deli areas are getting a redo too. Manager Mariam Odum says it should be done in September.

**MOVED** Roadside Attraction, a retro-tropical department store, has moved from Antique Alley in Belleair Bluffs to a larger location in Largo at 13836 Walsingham Road. It is next to the Hammock Hardware store. Get more information at [www.RoadsideAttractionVintage.com](http://www.RoadsideAttractionVintage.com).



**BENDER CHIROPRACTIC MARKS 20 YEARS** Dr. Kimberly Bender and her staff opened their office in Belleair Bluffs 20 years ago. They recently celebrated with a cake during a meeting of the Bluffs Business Association. Kim, a former president of BBA, has been active in many of Belleair Bluffs' events.

**NEW LOCATION** On May 1st, Chase Bank moved into its new location at the corner of West Bay and Seminole Blvd. Roger Lurati is the manager of the new location.

**HELP WANTED** If you can cut hair, or you know someone who does, Stefanec's Barbershop in Belleair Bluffs is looking for someone good with scissors. If you have some experience, just drop in. See Irena at 772 Indian Rocks Road N. Call 518-0500.



**BBA PLANS JUNE AND JULY MEETINGS** The Bluffs Business Association's (BBA) next monthly after hours mingle will be Thursday, 5:30pm June 11 at Your Pizza Shop, 1200 8th Avenue SW at the Pinecrest Golf Course, next to the Pinellas Trail. Enjoy refreshments, door prizes and meet new business contacts. Any business, regardless of location, is welcome. The BBA's mission is to promote and improve the business environment and stimulate a vibrant local economy. They also co-promote the City's July 4th Picnic for residents of Belleair Bluffs, from 11am to 1pm. Visit [BluffsBusinessAssociation.com](http://BluffsBusinessAssociation.com) or call President Bonnie Trembulak 686-8797 for info.



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## HOME GROWN BUILDER MIKE CHEEZEM, JMC COMMUNITIES

By Bob Griffin, Publisher

Mike Cheezem, and JMC Communities, has been in the spotlight lately. The company recently acquired the historic Belleview Biltmore property. JMC has received approval to build a multi-family project and has already started demolition of the hotel.

Who is Mike Cheezem, the person behind JMC? Before we can talk about Mike Cheezem, we need to mention his father, Charles (Charlie) K. Cheezem, whose local residential projects date back to the late 1940s. Charlie was a Civil Engineering student at Clemson when WWII broke out. "His entire class was called to serve in the war," says son Mike. "My dad was involved in the Battle of the Bulge and helped build bridges in the reconstruction of France."

"After the war, Dad moved to Florida in 1948 and started a home building business. He always did things in a big way," Mike explained. "He started a company and built homes and condominiums before people knew what a condo was." He built projects in Seminole (Ridgewood Village) and in St. Petersburg's Northeast (Thunderwood Homes). He was one of the first condo builders in Pinellas County and built the Sea Towers on Duhme Road in Madeira Beach, buildings in Sand Key and other major projects.

Then the oil embargo of 1974 hit...and things changed. Sensing there would be more opportunities in South Florida, he built some large projects in Miami's Key Biscayne and South Beach. Charlie sold Cheezem Development Company in 1985.

Mike was raised in Pinellas County. He went to St. Pete High, Northeast High, then FSU and UNC-Chapel Hill where he received his Masters in Finance and Real Estate. He lives in Snell Isle with his family and has an office at 2201 4th Street N in St. Petersburg.

One might think Mike just walked in and took over the family business. That is not exactly how it happened. "I worked for my father starting from when I was 12," Mike reflects. "I helped around the construction sites digging footers and laying sod."

Mike got tired of working as a laborer with his dad's company and asked his dad how to get more involved in the business. His dad said, "Go build something." So he did. While in college, he bought land and built a simple eight-unit apartment building in

Madeira Beach. "Me and my buddies did most of the work ourselves. We sold it and made a small profit. That got me motivated," he remembers. In Tallahassee, while at FSU, he built his first single family home. He continued to work for his dad during the summers in Pinellas and Miami.

In 1978, after he completed his Masters degree, Mike started JMC Communities, a development company.

He has teamed up with partners to build some of the largest and best-known multi-family condos in Pinellas County.

Here is a list of JMC's area projects:

- St. Petersburg: Ovation, Florencia, Bacopa Bay, Dolphin Cay, Winston Park Northeast, Rowland Place
- Clearwater Beach: The Sandpearl Resort, JMC Resort Properties, Belle Harbor Condos, Mandalay Beach Club
- Sand Key: The Grande, The Meridian
- South Pasadena: Harborside & Pasadena Cove
- Tampa: The Bellamy on Bayshore
- Bradenton: Pinebrook & Wood Park at Desoto Square
- Dunedin: Victoria Place, a mixed-use project under construction on Main Street.

So what is planned for Belleair? JMC plans to build approximately 132 living units on the multi-acre Biltmore site in a community to be called Belleview Place. There will be 28 townhomes and four six-level buildings with 26 units each (for a total of 104 condo units) and a small inn called the Belleview Inn.

The main road into the development, the Grand Boulevard, will lead to the Belleview Inn, which is being created by saving and renovating the hotel's original lobby, along with 33 adjoining rooms. The areas to the north, south and west are where the new structures will be built.

"We have cleared all the approvals with the city and other boards," says Mike. The Belleair Planning and Zoning Board voted unanimously to



recommend the zoning change for mixed-use. The Commission gave preliminary approval on May 20. A second and final hearing, and vote, is scheduled for June 17.

"Most of the residents understand that a 400-room hotel is not viable on this site anymore," says Mike. "The original hotel was built in 1897 by Henry Plant. People went there by train and horse-drawn carriages. It is not on the beach and not on any major roadway. Times and habits have changed."

Demolition of part of the hotel has already begun, and construction of the project is planned to begin soon. It is estimated to take three years with an estimated cost of \$125 million.

In addition to saving and renovating the original lobby, which will become the Belleview Inn, "we will salvage and reuse many of the items from the old hotel elsewhere on the property," Mike says, "such as the Tiffany glass in the ballroom, wood floors, bricks, moldings and some doors."

In the Inn, JMC plans to restore the grandeur of the original building built by Plant, with a gracious lobby, meeting rooms, and exhibits on the walls that will share the history of the hotel through the years.

"We hope our development and inn will continue to make the Belleview Biltmore the "social center" of the Town of Belleair," Mike says. "We work very hard on each of our communities to create a unique and special sense of place utilizing historic precedence and timeless architecture. We feel like we are not only giving our owners a spectacular home, but that we are giving back to our communities."

Get more information on JMC Communities on their web site at [www.JMCCommunities.com](http://www.JMCCommunities.com).

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## FEARLESS HEALTH

by Bob Clark, Belleair Christian Science practitioner

You know things are bad when "phobophobia" (fear of fear itself) becomes one of 530 documented phobias now on record.

Many medical doctors agree that a large percentage of disease is rooted in fear and anxiety. These are also the biggest drivers of over diagnosis and overtreatment, which are two chief causes of the upward spiraling cost of healthcare. Gilbert Welch chronicles and analyzes this phenomenon in his 2012 book *Overdiagnosed: Making People Sick in the Pursuit of Health*.

Here are some ideas I've found helpful in battling the fear of disease that surrounds and sometimes overwhelms us:

1. **Tune out.** We can be selective about what we take into thought through the media, especially TV. Tuning out negative advertising can help eliminate the fearful expectation of disease. Images of painwacked actors on drug commercials, descriptions of disease and dysfunction, often stay with us mentally and create fear and suffering. Researchers call this the "nocebo effect", where negative expectations or fear can actually cause symptoms. The New Yorker of March 29, 2013 featured an article titled "The Nocebo Effect: How we worry ourselves sick" which said, "After the 1995 Aum Shinrikyo sarin nerve gas attack in Tokyo, for example, hospitals were flooded with patients suffering from the highly publicized potential symptoms, like nausea and dizziness, but who had not, it turned out, been exposed to the sarin."

2. **Pray.** I find daily prayer a powerful way to counteract

fear. I often start by quietly affirming the presence and power of God as divine love. On this basis, consistent, proactive prayer helps me replace mindless fear with a God derived sense of calm, and this has often brought me physical healing, too.

3. **Recognize and confront the fear of disease.** Christian healer and teacher Mary Baker Eddy, encouraged her patients and students to "master fear, instead of cultivating it" and to "take antagonistic grounds against all that is opposed to the health, holiness and harmony of man, God's image". She went on to explain: "When fear disappears, the foundation of disease is gone." So we have a choice here. We can fear disease and its consequences, or we can research and contemplate the spiritual source and nature of health. We can learn for ourselves how the body is affected by replacing fear with the spiritual confidence that God's love for us is truly substantive and practical.

4. **Love.** Love is the greatest fear buster of all. The Bible tells us that "love contains no fear—indeed fully developed love expels every particle of fear" (1 John 4:18, JB Phillips translation). Developing our innate spiritual ability to love fully and unconditionally is a powerful antidote to all fear, including the fear of disease.

We don't ever need to be overwhelmed by the fear of disease. We can all live a healthier life by identifying and confronting the fear of disease with courage and wisdom...and love.

Read Bob Clark's blog at [simplyhealthyflorida.com](http://simplyhealthyflorida.com).



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## NEW ROUNDABOUT OPENS

Clearwater Beach has one, and now The Town of Belleair has its own Roundabout. Although, it is not nearly as big or as prominently placed as the one in Clearwater Beach, Belleair's Roundabout was primarily proposed for safety reasons.

The Town built the Roundabout at the intersection of Indian Rocks Road and Ponce de Leon over several months. Preliminary work on the large construction project began and then they discovered underground pipes, sewers and electrical lines were not where the plans showed and many were not as deep as expected.

Work on the Roundabout started in November. During construction, detours on the street sent cars into residential neighborhoods, exacerbating the traffic problems. The town added more detour signs trying to send drivers to primary roads, not into the residential neighborhoods. While building the Roundabout, the same contractor was building the new and recently completed Hunter Park Memorial

But now that is over and the Roundabout opened in March. The Roundabout it is a single lane roadway with several paver designed crosswalks. The radius is lined with pavers, and the middle will have low lying shrubs with a date palm in the middle.

Residents have long complained for some time about the speed of the cars and how difficult it has been for children to safely cross Indian Rocks Road. Many non-residents use the road as a short cut from West Bay to Clearwater. 75% of the people using Indian Rocks Road are not residents of Belleair. Mayor Katica says he hopes this will discourage drive-through traffic on the road, and it will slow down traffic.

The cost of construction was estimated at \$500,000.

## THEATER CAMPS

Once again, Largo Cultural Center will offer live theatre summer camps. Teens 12-18 may sign up for *Fiddler on the Roof Jr.*, - June 8-26. Children ages 9-13 may register for *Honk Jr.*, - July 20-August 8. Both are three weeks, Monday through Friday from 9am-4pm. Camps culminating in a live stage performance. Visit [LargoArts.com](http://LargoArts.com) or call (727) 587-675, for information.

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Heike, a Belleair Beach resident, can be reached at [heike@heikegrossi.com](mailto:heike@heikegrossi.com) and (727) 403-1865 anytime

**A NEW SHELTER FOR CASA**

Last year, more than 300 survivors and their children lay their head on a pillow in CASA's (Community Action Stops Abuse) 110-year-old 30-bed shelter, but 1400 others were turned away because there were no available beds.

CASA is now building a new domestic violence shelter which is a true gift to the community. It will be a new solution to help more survivors of domestic violence and their children, who typically arrive at CASA in the middle of the night, scared and confused.

Twenty-eight years ago, CASA bought their aging house in a beautiful historic St. Petersburg neighborhood. When they purchased it, the house had been vacant for years, was in desperate need of air conditioning and repairs, and housed a kitchen that accommodated no more than a small family.

With several grants, the old house was slowly upgraded. CASA staff and leadership poured their love and money into the home and made it a workable solution for three decades. The stairs creaked but the home's six bedrooms accommodated 30 mostly bunk beds and a few cribs. Eleven people share one tiny bathroom, but families cooked together, cried together, even sang and danced together and most importantly, healed together.

But, CASA's staff and Board of Directors could not forget the 1400 survivors, including children, who were turned away each year. After a more than two year search, a five-acre property was found. A state grant awarded \$2.5 million of the \$12 million needed for the project, with the caveat that CASA have families in the new facility by June 30, 2015. CASA received a New Market Tax Credit loan for the construction and a lucrative offer to sell the old historic home CASA used for the last 30 years. Fifth Third Bank agreed to support the loan for the new 100-bed shelter.

Still, challenge continues as CASA's races to raise the full \$12 million for the project. As opening day draws nearer, the Board of Directors and staff remain committed to reaching their goals. There are opportunities to name a room where a family will be laying their heads each night. Your \$10,000 donation to name a CASA bedroom will remind survivors how much this community stands in support of their success. There are additional opportunities, large and small, to make a difference.

Sales tax incentives allow your business to donate materials to CASA, making you eligible for sales tax benefits through the State of Florida. Contact John Biesinger at 895-4912, x105 or [jbiesinger@casa-stpete.org](mailto:jbiesinger@casa-stpete.org) for information.

In June, families will move from the 100-year old, six-bedroom house to a home with 50 bedrooms where only four people share a bathroom. It will have two kitchens, laundry facilities, a children's advocacy center, a community garden, and 32,000 square feet. It will be life changing, not only for CASA, but for their survivor families.

Staff and residents will have private office space, rooms for counseling, addiction programs, mental health services, and legal advocacy. Families will have access to a gym, a health clinic, a computer room, and den to simply relax.

The new shelter has what feels like endless space for children to play inside and out. Soon, the outdoor space will be filled with a KaBoom! playground chosen by the families at CASA and built by more than 100 volunteers.

Help change a family's future! Visit [casanewshelter.org](http://casanewshelter.org) to learn how you can make a difference. CASA's Development Director, Tuesdi Dyer, is always excited to discuss the plans for the new center, and she can be reached at 895-4912, x114 or [tdyer@casa-stpete.org](mailto:tdyer@casa-stpete.org).

**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 [bfloridian.com](http://bfloridian.com).

**NO WINE TASTING**

The 2015 Abilities Wine Tasting event has been cancelled. This popular annual food and wine tasting event, held at the Tropicana Dome for 25 years and then at the Armed Forces Museum last year, will not be held this year, but may return in the future. The event, one of the largest in Pinellas, has netted Abilities over \$4 million over the years. The Abilities Foundation is shifting from special events to focused partnerships. Even their name is changing to Service Source Florida and Frank de Lucia will remain the Director of Development. They will continue to stage wine and food events, but in smaller venues. For information, visit [ServicesSource.org](http://ServicesSource.org).

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## Restaurant News...



### PROINO BREAKFAST CLUB EXPANDS AGAIN

If you like a big breakfast, this is the restaurant for you. Now that the newest location on Walsingham Road has opened, they have started construction

on a third location on the south end of Clearwater Beach between The Reef and Cesar's at the Beach. Serving breakfast and lunch, they have a wide variety and everything is prepared fresh with many different healthy options. Their first location is on West Bay Drive. The Clearwater location is now hiring. E-mail [ProinoBreakfastClub@gmail.com](mailto:ProinoBreakfastClub@gmail.com) if you are interested.

**E & E STAKEOUT GRILL CHANGES TIP POLICY** For many years, the restaurant has automatically added a 15% service charge to each check. They recently discontinued this practice. You will no longer see automatic service charges on your bill. E&E Stakeout was a 2014 Open Table Diner's Choice Winner.

**NEW MANAGER** Panera Bread's new manager Sheena Hogan was relocated from the Hyde Park store. This is a much closer drive for her because she lives in Clearwater Beach. Former manager Travis was moved to the 4th Street store in St Petersburg, which is closer to his home, too.



### OLD TAPAS GARDEN PROPERTY

Plans are moving forward to develop the property at 321 Gulf Blvd in Indian Rocks Beach which was the Tapas Garden restaurant and its storage garage next door. Nothing is finalized yet, but as of now, it looks like there will not be a new restaurant on the property. Plans call for retail businesses.

**VENUS CONTRIBUTES** Nick Mitsides, owner of the Venus Restaurant, looks forward to May every year when he feeds hundreds of kids from The ARC (previously called UPARC) at the Clearwater Yacht Club. The Yacht Club hosts the annual Fun Day Event where the ARC brings about 200 of their clients to the Yacht Club for the time of their life. They had a cookout and danced to music by John Johnson, then they searched for dolphins on boats supplied by the Clearwater Marine Aquarium. Mitsides supplies everyone's hamburgers and hot dogs each year.

**NEW CHEF** Belleair Country Club's new chef is Mark Thomas. He comes to the Country Club with a diverse background that includes being Executive Chef of Lake Jovita Golf and Country Club, as well as a sous chef for the Belleview Biltmore Hotel. Thomas received his a degree from the Florida Culinary Institute and has opened four restaurants. The Belleair Biltmore Golf Club is excited to have such an experienced chef with an extensive background in food, beverage, catering and weddings. Their Sunday Brunch now has unlimited mimosas from 10am to 2pm. Visit [www.BelleviewBiltmoreGolf.com](http://www.BelleviewBiltmoreGolf.com).

## 30 UNDER 30 JUSTIN HELMUS

Justin Helmus only opened his small real estate office in Belleair Bluffs in 2013, and already he is one of the Top 30 realtors nationally under the age of 30.



The 30 UNDER 30 program is a nationwide competition among registered realtors sponsored by the National Association of Realtors. Helmus, now 27, had to apply to be considered for the list. There were originally 400 applicants, then they narrowed the search to the top 50. When Helmus made that list, he had to answer more questions and prove his 2014 sales figures which were over \$16 million in sales.

A panel of judges in Chicago reviewed the list of applicants and narrowed it down to the Top 30. Helmus was one. In fact, he is the only one in the Tampa Bay area and one of only three in Florida.

Two years ago, Helmus opened his office in the old Farm Store building at 305 Indian Rocks Road with partner Scott McNay. The real estate company first was called Homes and Estates Realty, but in November the name was changed to The Gulf Life Realty Group.

"There are a lot of realtors out there, but it takes a lot of drive to reach the top," Justin admits. "My previous experiences taught me three things: 1) No matter what, be in the office early and be prepared before you get there. 2) Always look for opportunities. 3) Put yourself outside your comfort zone. What is the worst that can happen?" he adds.

Helmus, a native of Pinellas County, attended Central Catholic High School, and then Florida Gulf Coast University where he earned his BA in marketing and MBA in Finance. Until recently he lived in Harbor Bluffs, but after getting married in January, he and his wife moved to the Town of Belleair in May.

See his web site at [www.TheGulfLifeRealtyGroup.com](http://www.TheGulfLifeRealtyGroup.com) or call Helmus at (727) 507-1993.

## STINGRAY SEASON IS HERE

There has been a dramatic increase in stingray injuries recently. Approximately 30 people were injured by stingrays in one week on Clearwater Beach. It is important to do the "stingray shuffle" when entering the water. By shuffling your feet in the sand, you will scare off any stingrays that might be around.



If you are stung, the pain can vary and the only real thing you can do is soak the sting in water as hot as you can stand; but don't burn your skin. You can also take Advil or Tylenol, but no aspirin. Aspirin thins the blood and allows the toxin to travel easier.

Soak the foot until it feels significantly better. The pain won't completely go away, but it should feel better. A little swelling is normal. Clean the wound as much as possible. If it looks like the barb is in your foot, see a doctor for treatment.

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by Jon Wilbur, ISA Certified Arborist & Pinellas Tree Service co-owner

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**Trees Cause Millions In Property Damage** - When a hurricane strikes, trees cause millions of dollars in damage to area homes and businesses. You can't stop the hurricanes from coming, but you can significantly reduce your risk of damage to your trees, by taking these three simple steps.

**Step #1: Inspect Your Trees.** First, check out all the trees on your property to make sure that they have not grown too close to your roof, windows or power lines. Tree branches need room to sway in the high winds during a storm. If they are denied this freedom to move, these branches can cause serious property damage.

**Step #2: Prune Your Trees.** One of the worst sights we see after a hurricane has hit is the sheer number of trees that have uprooted. Proper pruning can help your trees survive the storm. Pruning will thin the trees and reduce their susceptibility to high winds. However, be careful not to remove more than 25% of a tree's canopy. This will "over thin" your trees and can adversely affect their long-term health.

**Step #3: Remove Problem Trees.** Problem trees are trees that are dead or diseased. During a storm they can easily split apart and threaten nearby buildings. You may be able to remove small trees on your own, but removal of larger trees usually requires professional help. If you are unsure as to the health of your tree, an arborist will be able to tell you if the tree can be saved or whether it needs to be removed.

**Don't Wait For A Hurricane To Strike** - Trees that have taken years and sometimes decades to grow simply can't be replaced. Once a storm hits and the damage has been done, it's too late. Then, it can take weeks to get help from a qualified tree service company to clean up the mess. Don't wait. Follow these three simple steps to protect your trees and your home from hurricane damage.

Want to learn more? Our **FREE Information Guide: "How To Choose The Best Tree Service Company To Care For Your Trees"** can help. Call us at 727-399-5858 for your copy.

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**CHEZ COLETTE'S FRENCH BISTRO**  
A Restaurant Review by The Love Chef

The French have landed in Belleair Bluffs. The Denis family, son/chef Nicholas, mother Colette and stepfather Bernard are now the proprietors of what was Le Petite Bistro, now proudly named Chez Colette's French Bistro.

This personable and charming family relocated from the South of France's Avignon. They followed their dream of coming to America and bring their experience in French Bistro dining to our neighborhood! Boys and girls we are the BENEFICIARIES!

With my "Princepsa" in tow, we arrived unannounced. The adorable space, more improvements coming, has that real Parisian Bistro atmosphere. Our evening, we found French speaking customers at the Bistro's Bar. (Wine/beer only)

Colette and experienced waiter Justin worked their magic in the dining room. We started our meal with the Chef's Duck Foie Gras at \$17 a plate and one of their several available French wines by the glass.

Impressed, Princepsa asked, "Can we order more of this for dinner? It is first rate!" But we must taste other items for our devoted readers and fans, I say!

I order the pate' at \$5 a plate, followed by Onion Soup at \$7.50. Both were worthy of their French origins.

Each night the chalkboard features a special Chef's Dish. I love lamb and my Braised Lamb Shank at \$19.50 a plate, replete with onions, carrots, mashed potatoes and green beans screamed flavorably Paris Bistro.

The Beef bourguignon at \$19.50 was slow cooked in red

Francis Anthony "The Love Chef" is an author, TV celebrity chef and local resident. You can find his "Cooking With Love" cookbooks on Amazon.com or visit his website www.thelovechef.com. "Cooking With Love" and "The Love Chef" are reg. trademarks.

wine with the traditional carrots, onions and bacon served with mashed potatoes and green beans. It brought big words of praise from my "Princepsa".

Devotees of Duck Leg Confit at \$21 a plate will want to make this their "go to place." The dish rivaled or surpassed the Confit we had on our last visit to Paris.

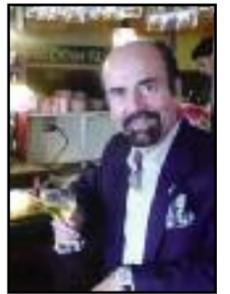
The menu also features Salmon Provence at \$19. The pan seared filet was prepared in the traditional style with garlic, parsley, tomatoes, herbs and white wine and served with rice and green beans.

Dinner Crepes (French style) at \$15-\$17 are also offered and are served with a salad.

As far as dessert, their Crème Brulee at \$6 is a must have. Succulent and flavorful, it is a special labor of love from Chef Nicholas. Dessert Crepes are always great to share. Try my favorite - Suzette at \$10 with butter, sugar, orange, and Grand Marnier all done in a flambé!! It is Wow!!

There are many good changes to come. Shortly, music will be reintroduced on weekends. Already there's a sense of "Joie de vivre!!"

Chez Colette's French Bistro is located at 796 N. Indian Rocks Road in Belleair Bluffs. They serving lunch on weekdays and dinner Monday - Saturday. They are closed on Sundays. Come in, enjoy, meet this lovable family and tell them The Love Chef sent you!



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## BELLEAIR BLUFFS' EIFFEL TOWER

by Bob Griffin, Publisher

In the 1980s and '90s, Belleair Bluff's Le Petit Bistro, was the Eiffel Tower Restaurant owned by Annie and Marcel Sebban. Annie Sebban (then 40) moved to Belleair Bluffs from her Paris, France home in 1982. She leased a former ice cream shop at the north end of the small shopping center at 796 Indian Rocks Road N. and with the help of family opened a small, authentic French restaurant, called The French Bakery and Restaurant. They changed the name to first La Tour Eiffel and later to The Eiffel Tower Restaurant.

Annie and Marcell, started the restaurant from scratch.



Annie had always cooked, but she never ran a restaurant. Food service though ran in her family. Her brother, Joel Normand, was a chef in the Paris President's Palace, cooking for Charles DeGualle and Jacques Chirac.

In the beginning, they opened for lunch, dinner and brunch on Sundays, plus offered bakery items on a walk-in basis. Later, the bakery items were just for dining customers.

They offered French appetizers, salads, and desserts. Entrees, all priced at \$6.95, included Beef Bourguignon, Papillotte, Crepes, Quiche and Puffed Pastries.

Their 1982 menu, included a warning on page 1: "Please be patient with us. We prepare our authentic French recipes with great care and it takes a little longer. Enjoy yourself. Have a glass of wine, beer, cup of coffee or an aperitif."

"We started this restaurant in 1982 with the hope that our area would appreciate having a French family restaurant," says Annie regarding her menu. "It amazed us to see how people enjoyed French home-cooking and how many French speaking citizens visited us here. Our Steak au Poivre and Le Orange Duck quickly became our most popular menu items."



The décor included murals of Paris on the walls. There was a large pillar in the middle decorated with French posters and placards, just like you would see in France.

Annie loved gardening and brought in flowers from her home garden each day. "Every table had a small Eiffel Tower shaped vase," she remembers. The flowers were always red, white and blue, adding to the French feel.

Around 1992, the owner of the strip center approached the Sebbans and offered to sell them the building. As he liked them, it was a very good deal, so they accepted.

Annie and Marcel retired from the restaurant business about 10 years ago and leased their small café to others. The restaurant has remained a French restaurant first as Le Bouchon, followed by Le Petit Bistro. At the end of 2014, Colette and Benard Pommel, and son Nicolas, aquired the restaurant. In June, the name again changed, this time to Chez Colette's French Bistro.

Marcel passed away in 2011, but Annie still reminds us though "a good bottle of wine is a special occasion by itself."

## BELLEVIEW BILTMORE As We Remember It

"My first memory of the Belleview Biltmore is that it was only open during season. My then husband-to-be, Dr. Rudolf Henning, took me to dinner there in 1961 before it closed for the spring. After our September wedding, we returned to *The White Queen* many times that season. The cycle repeated itself each year with a swirl of elegant living, followed by the sounds of silence during the off-season." **Petey Henning, Belleair Resident & Past President of the Civic Association**

"I was the sous chef at the Biltmore up until it closed. It was my job to cook and supervise all the meals served in the restaurant and ballroom. The Biltmore's kitchen was the largest in the state of Florida, but it was always so hot. They had air conditioners but they could not keep up. On holidays, we had two-seatings of 1,200 people each. I remember preparing 700 caesar salads for an event. They used to host hundreds of events during the holidays. It was one of the best jobs I ever had."

**Mark Thomas, Chef the Belleview Biltmore Golf Club**

"My first memory of the Biltmore is attending a benefit luncheon for St. Jude's Childrens Hospital, back in the '80s. We had just moved here and bought our first home. I had heard of the Belleview Biltmore, but had never seen it. Looking back, I think I wanted to go to that luncheon more to see the historic structure than to attend a charity luncheon. I remember the hotel was so pretty and I wanted to come back and tour the building one day, but regrettably I never did. It is unfortunate that things (and buildings) do not last forever. The hotel will be missed by many of us who visited it." **Martha Hickey, President Clearwater Woman's Club**

"Back in the '80s, the Japanese acquired the Belleview Biltmore in a land deal with the former owner of the Belleview Biltmore, Bernie Powell. It included the Belleview Biltmore Golf Club on Indian Rocks Road. That morning, my phone started ringing at sunrise. The Japanese company raised several Japanese flags in front of the golf club. Not a good move in a community full of military veterans. By noon, I had the flags removed." **Mayor Gary Katica, Mayor Town of Belleair**

"I remember going to Sunday Brunch at the Belleview Biltmore with my parents, many times. It seemed like such a large building, even back then. I will never forget those visits." **Mike Cheezem, Developer JMC Communities**

"Back in 1976, Bob Dylan and Joan Baez were touring together and came to the Tampa Bay area. I was working at Tampa's Curtis Hixon Hall and got a call early one morning telling me to get to the Belleview Biltmore ASAP. Television and concert producer Burt Sugarman was filming a reenactment of Dylan and Baez's concert performance inside the Biltmore and we were to act as the audience. The large dining room had been converted into a sound stage. There was a small stage in the middle surrounded by scaffolding. People sat on all four sides of the stage as cameras recorded the performances. I sat about 10 feet, stage-left from Dylan as he played some of his best known songs. Afterwards, Dylan refused to let Sugarman air the production. He considered it too slick for his tastes. **Bob Griffin, Publisher Belleair Area Neighborhood Newsletter.**

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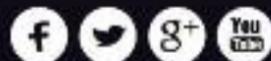
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## QUANTUM LEAP FARM - HORSES HELPING PEOPLE

by Bob Griffin, Publisher

Carla Staats, like her husband Dewayne, the face of the Tampa Bay Rays and TV play-by-play man on The Sun Sports Network, loves baseball. But during any given game, you will probably find her miles from Tropicana Field. Hours before a game's first pitch, Carla likely left her Sand Key home to travel to Quantum Leap Farm (QLF) in Odessa, north of Tampa. She may be less recognized in a major league dug out, but at QLF not only the people, but also by the farm's horses know her well.

QLF doesn't grow crops like an average farm, they grow the hopes and dreams of mentally and physically challenged people. The non-profit facility provides comprehensive equine therapies to both the mentally and physically handicapped, ranging in age from 2 to 92.

Started by Edie Dopking, PhD, this is QLF's 15th year. In the 1990s, while working at St Anthony's Hospital, Dr. Dopking volunteered at the Bakas Equestrian Center, a Tampa therapeutic riding program serving disabled children. With a medical background and experience training horses, volunteering at Bakas led her to found QLF in January 2000 on 10 acres of land she owns in North Tampa.

The QLF program serves kids and adults with physical, cognitive and emotional disabilities. The farm's mission is to help people of all ages and abilities grow strong, achieve therapeutic goals and overcome challenges by engaging them with horses. QLF also offers two summer camps for children of all abilities, from ages 5 to 15.

Participants have a variety of conditions, including Parkinson's disease, multiple sclerosis, muscular dystrophy, stroke, traumatic brain injury, spinal cord injury, Down syndrome, autism and other developmental disabilities.

The U.S. involvement in the Iraq and Afghanistan wars has led to an increase in Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and traumatic brain injury victims. QLF works closely with the James Haley VA Hospital and with Bill Young VA Medical Center to help serve veterans' needs.

In 2008, QLF expanded its services to include At EASE Equine Assisted Self Exploration™ and EEL (Equine Experiential Learning) sessions. This is where Carla Staats became involved. The At EASE team has weekly sessions with traumatic brain injured participants from NeuroRestorative, a Pinellas Spinal Cord & Brain Injury Rehabilitation Center. The At EASE team also has a series of therapeutic weekend retreats for the wives and caregivers of injured soldiers called WOW (Women of Warriors.)

Carla, born and raised in Texas, has always loved horses. She is certified with EAGALA (Equine Assisted Growth and



Carla and Dewayne Staats

Learning Association) as a Mental Health Professional and an Equine Specialist. In 2006, she purchased Doc, an American Paint horse, when he was a yearling. Doc's parents were therapy horses at Cadwalder Behavioral Clinics, where Carla worked during graduate school. The clinic was a residential facility utilizing the EAGALA model therapy for women with Eating Disorders and Addiction. She spent 11 years in Texas as an addiction counselor.

Carla and Dewayne met in 1977 and after both were widowed, they married in 2007, when Carla moved from Texas. When Doc was 18 months old, when he also left Texas and relocated to Quantum Leap Farm.

Carla quickly immersed herself, as Co-Director with Jenna Miller, in the At EASE program they developed at the Farm. She travels from Sand Key to Odessa several times a week to work with clients.

"It seems like she is here every day," says Director of Development Sue Levitt, "She shows up whenever needed." Since its inception, QLF has worked with and helped a broad scope of people with disabilities. Their participant base has continued to grow each year. In 2014, more than 1500 participants were served during 5500 hosted sessions with the help of their nearly 600 volunteers who logged in 7,000 hours. Unfortunately, QLF has a waiting list of participants needing their services.

"There is something about interacting with our horses that helps our clients start the healing process," Carla says.

QLF has 16 horses on site with names like Silver (The Great Gray One), Tie (Black Tie Affair), Sonic, Idaho, Cowboy, Ponce, and of course Doc. In addition, they have two donkeys, three goats, three chickens and a cat and dog. Just like most farms.

Because most of their clients are undergoing financial hardship, many are unable to pay or can pay only a small amount to participate. Service costs are high; horses and facilities require care and maintenance 365 days a year. QLF receives funding from grants, fundraising events and corporate and individual sponsorships.

Community support includes cash and in-kind donations, sponsorships and volunteering. They welcome volunteers, 16 years of age or older, to become involved in any of a variety of ways, from daily work at the farm, to serving on committees and helping with fundraisers. Volunteer activities include helping in therapeutic sessions by being a horse leader or side-walker, or in the barn with horse care and stable maintenance tasks.

Quantum Leap Farm offers their clients "a small step for help, and a big leap" toward their recovery. Find more information about this nonprofit nationally recognized equestrian program at [www.QuantumLeapFarm.org](http://www.QuantumLeapFarm.org) or you may call at 813-920-9250.



photo credit: Pete Magnani

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## Organizational News...

### CLEARWATER GARDEN CLUB

The Clearwater Garden Club meets twice a month from October through May, at 405 Seminole Street, Clearwater. There are no meetings during June and July. For more information contact, President Alice Jarvis at 391-3066 or email at bgjala@aol.com.

### BELLEAIR BEACH LADIES LUNCHEON CLUB

They normally meet the second Tuesday of each month, (October through May) at various area restaurants. There are no meetings during the summer. You do not have to live in Belleair Beach to join, membership is \$15 a year. To join, please call Sherri Morton at 581-8313.

### BELLEAIR ROTARY

The Rotary in the Town of Belleair meets every Thursday at 12:15pm at the Belleair Country Club. The third Thursday of the month is the general assembly and Board meeting. They have events throughout the year that benefit many local charities including Belleair Elementary (Bicycles for Reading, Adopt a classroom), the Salvation Army, Polio Eradication and the Rotary Foundation. To get involved, call Joyce Baskin, 432-7218 email Joyce@Repkajennings.com or visit BelleairRotary.org.

### BELLEAIR WOMEN'S REPUBLICAN CLUB

They meet monthly on the first Friday, with issue appropriate speakers. Meetings are for lunch at 11:30am at the Belleair Country Club, and normally cost \$22. There will be no meetings through August.

To RSVP for meetings, call Sherri Morton at 581-8313 or email her at SherrieMorton@TampaBay.RR.com if you are interested in getting involved. For more information, visit BelleairWomensRepublicanClub.com

### MILITARY ORDER OF THE WORLD WARS

The Clearwater Chapter of the Military Order of the World Wars meets for lunch on the first Tuesday of each month at the Belleair Country Club. Social hour begins at 11:30am followed by lunch and a short program. The next meetings are: June 2 and July 7.

Members are retired active duty Military Officers and their spouses or widows. They welcomes new members. To RSVP for lunch or to consider joining, please call LTC. George Smith at 786-5578.

### BELLEAIR SOCIAL CLUB

The Belleair Social Club meets every Tuesday morning at 9am in the back of Panera Bread for coffee and socializing. They also meet for dinner at a different restaurant on the first and third Sundays at 6pm and for lunch on the second and fourth Wednesdays.

Membership is open to all seniors, living in the greater Belleair area. They plan monthly social meetings, potluck get-togethers, dinners, movie nights and visits to area attractions. They also meet at the Belleair Rec Center for their monthly trips and adventures. Call Marilyn Daminato at 585-9633 for more information.

### BELLEAIR BEACH ISLAND GARDEN CLUB

They meet the third Wednesday of each month (October through April) at the Community Center, Belleair Beach. Now in it's 65th year, membership is \$20 per year and guests are welcome.

There are no meetings now through September.

Call Brenda Licht to RSVP for events at 595-5427. Contact Majorie Rose President, 238-8691 for Club information.

### BELLEAIR GARDEN CLUB

They meet on the first and second Wednesday of each month at the Belleair Garden Club at 903 Ponce de Leon Blvd., in the Town of Belleair (October to May.) There are no meetings during the summer.

Club membership is \$50 per year, couples pay \$55 and seasonal members only \$25. Guests are welcome. For information, contact new President, Laura Katz, 581-4153 or email Gbycwm@Yahoo.com for more information.

### GREATER BELLEAIR YOUNG WOMEN'S SOCIETY

They are 180 members strong with membership consisting of women living and working in Belleair, Belleair Beach, Clearwater, Clearwater Beach, Sand Key, Largo and the surrounding areas. They normally meet monthly (not including June, July and August). The date and the location vary so check their web site, but there are no meetings through August.

Activities include Critics, Dancing Divas, Duplicate Bridge, Girl's Night Out, Lit Ladies, Lunch Bunch, kayaking, movies, scrabble, Theatre Group, and Stitch Niche.

For more info, see their web site at www.GBYWS.org. Contact Bobbi Huntington, President at huntingtonBurke@Yahoo.com.

### BELLEAIR CIVIC ASSOCIATION

The Association is open to all residents of the Town of Belleair. Its purpose is to create goodwill within the community through promotion and support of civic, recreational, and social activities. They would love to have you to join them. If you are not already a member, join for 2015. If you want to help or get involved, call Petey Henning, 584-4874 or e-mail Phenning4@TampaBay.RR.com.

### CLEARWATER COMMUNITY SAILING CENTER

Fun Racing is held on the third Saturday each month. If you are new to racing or an old hand at it, this is a fun way to learn, and keep your skills sharp. Skippers meeting is at noon on the deck, and racing is from 1pm to 3pm. The next fun racing dates are June 6 and August 1. There are no classes on July 4. They also offers instruction in Stand Up Paddle boarding and Kayaking. Visit ClearwaterCommunitySailing.org.

### THE CLEARWATER YACHT CLUB

They are holding a Summer Membership program until the end of September. Membership is \$100 a month, with no initiation fee. There is no minimum spending. At the end of the summer, you can elect to join as a full member, social or junior member.

Half of their members don't have a boat. Most of their social activities center around regular parties. Many events are held at their in-house restaurant or Tiki-Bar out back. Learn more visit www.Clwyc.org, email Office@CLWYC.org or call 447-6000.

### DAUGHTERS OF AMERICAN REVOLUTION (DAR)

They meet on the third Friday of every month at the Belleair Country Club for a luncheon beginning at 11:30am. To join, please call Linda Mintz at 488-1068

### SUNCOAST CAMERA CLUB

This group promotes better photography. Make friends with people who share your interests, improve your photography and share your work. The next meeting is June 23 at The Hospice of Florida, 5771 Roosevelt Blvd at 7pm. For information, visit SuncoastCameraClub.org or call Veronica Serra at 512-4878.

BUSINESS PROFILE



from left: Julie McClure-Norton, ARNP; John M. McClure, M.D.; and Paige McClure Zehnder, RN. The family team enjoys working together to help their patients get well at Orthopaedic Associates of West Florida.

**LOCAL SURGEON WILL MAKE YOU FEEL LIKE FAMILY**

Let's face it: we tend to take our ability to walk for granted. For many people, simply moving around the home can be excruciatingly painful. If your hips, knees, shoulders or other joints are worn out, there is still hope for restoration.

**John M. McClure, M.D.**, board-certified orthopaedic surgeon and fellowship-trained in orthopaedic surgery, specializes in general orthopaedic care, adult joint restoration and conservative care of the hip, knee and shoulder at **Orthopaedic Associates of West Florida** in Clearwater. He has practice locations in Clearwater and Largo, and he performs surgeries at Morton Plant Hospital and the Orthopaedic Surgery Center of Clearwater.

Dr. McClure has been extremely fortunate to have both of his daughters working in his practice for the past 15 years: Julie McClure-Norton, ARNP and Paige McClure Zehnder, RN. Together, the family

team performs a variety of treatments for general orthopaedic conditions, including knee arthroscopy for meniscus tears; surgical repair of the rotator cuff tendon; osteoporosis screening and treatment; osteoarthritis treatment, including viscosupplementation using ultrasound guidance; and joint nutrition. Their patients range from 18-year-olds to adults well into their 90s. Many patients have been coming to Dr. McClure and his team for a long time, which says a lot about their high level of quality patient care and bedside manner.

Dr. McClure graduated cum laude with a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Pennsylvania, where he also attended medical school, earned his M.D. degree with honors, interned and completed a four-year residency in orthopaedic surgery. He was stationed in Subic Bay, Philippines for two years as a general medical officer and lieutenant commander.

After moving his family to Clearwater shortly after completing his residency, Dr. McClure co-founded Orthopaedic Associates of West Florida. The multi-specialty practice has significantly grown over the years. It currently consists of 16 of the most experienced and highly trained surgeons in the area.

Julie earned her bachelor's degree in Nursing from Barry University, and her master's degree in Nursing from the University of Tampa. Paige holds a bachelor's in Nursing from the University of Miami.

"When you come to see us, you enter as a patient and leave as part of the family," says Dr. McClure.

John M. McClure, M.D. and Orthopaedic Associates of West Florida are located at 430 Morton Plant St., Suite 301 in Clearwater. For more information, or to schedule an appointment, call (727) 461-6026. Visit Orthopaedic Associates of West Florida online at OAWF.com.

**LETTER CARRIERS COLLECT NEARLY 55,000 POUNDS OF FOOD**

On Saturday, May 9th, the National Association of Letter Carriers held their 23rd annual Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive. Carriers collected non-perishable food donations left by mailboxes and in post offices and delivered them to local food banks, pantries and shelters. Over the history of the food drive, more than one billion pounds of food has been collected across the nation.

Pinellas County's RCS Food Bank received an nearly 55,000 pounds of food thanks to the partnership of Largo, Seminole, and Highpoint post offices. The effort included 133 volunteers throughout the day and the lease of an additional 3 box trucks to coordinate deliveries.

"The timing of the Letter Carrier's Food Drive is excellent," according to RCS President/CEO Caitlin Higgins Joy. "For many students on free or reduced lunch, school offers their only meal of the day. When schools let out in the summer, families need somewhere to turn to help makes ends meet."

For the 5,500 people that RCS Food Bank serves each month the annual Stamp Out Hunger drive is crucial. "This one day event is a lifeline for the RCS Food Bank, says RCS Food Bank Director Alex Thomas. "Without the donated food and effort of our area mail carriers, our community would struggle during May, June, and July." Over 50% of the members of households served by RCS are children under 18 years old.

Many families really struggle more in the summer months:

- Families with school age children reliant on the free-breakfast and free-lunch programs must find alternative food sources.
- School-age kids on summer break need childcare while parents are working.
- Household utility costs rise with the summer temperatures.
- Reduced seasonal work in the service sector shrinks many parents' income in the summer months.

To learn more about how RCS provides help and hope to people in need visit the website at [www.RCSpinellas.org](http://www.RCSpinellas.org)

**LIGHTING AND SEA TURTLES**

Sea turtles are marine reptiles that spend most of their lives at sea. During the night, from May through September, the 350 pound female sea turtle comes ashore to lay eggs. During a single nesting season, one female will lay 4-5 nests, depositing an average of 120 eggs into a cavity she has dug into the sand. When the 3-inch hatchlings emerge, they use natural light from the moon and stars reflecting off the water to find their way to the ocean. In areas where artificial lighting overpowers natural light, hatchlings can become disoriented, leading to dehydration and death.

If light from an artificial source is visible to a person standing anywhere on a beach, that light is likely to cause problems for the sea turtles nesting there. What can the public do to help sea turtles during nesting season?

- Turn off lights, including flashlights on the beach
- Minimize lights in number and wattage
- Reposition lights behind structures
- Shield lights
- Redirect lights down or away from the beach
- Lower lights
- Use recessed lights
- Draw blinds and move lamps away from windows
- Use timers and motion-sensors
- Tint windows

All sea turtle species in the U.S. are threatened (loggerhead) or endangered (leatherback, green, hawksbill, Kemp's Ridley.) It is important that we do what we can to ensure that nesting activities occur.



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# City of Belleair Bluffs

City Government Informational Publication

Summer 2015



## Independence Day Celebration!

Saturday July 4, 2015

11 a.m. ~ 1 p.m.

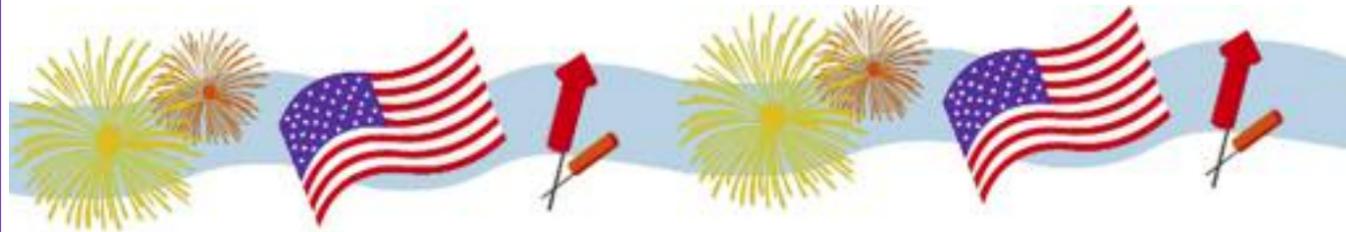
Belleair Bluffs Community

Center & Park



Free Food      Bouncy House      "Dunk your Commissioners"

Mark your calendar and plan to attend the Belleair Bluffs Independence Day Picnic held this year on Saturday July 4, 2015 from 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. Co-sponsored by the Bluffs Business Association. Free raffle tickets will allow you to possibly win prizes from local businesses!



### COMMISSIONERS

Joe Barkley, III  
 Mayor Chis Arbutine, Sr.  
 Jack Nazario, Vice Mayor  
 Taylour Shimkus  
 Suzy Sofer

<p><b>PHONE NUMBERS</b></p> <p>City Hall (727) 584-2151                  Fax (727) 584-6175                  Public Works (727) 581-6808                  Sheriff's Office (727) 582-6200  <b>DIAL 911 FOR EMERGENCIES</b></p>	<p><b>CITY STAFF</b></p> <p>Debra Sullivan, MMC, City Clerk                  Robert David, Public Works Director                  Thomas J. Trask, City Attorney                  Email: <a href="mailto:info@belleairbluffs-fl.gov">info@belleairbluffs-fl.gov</a></p>	<p><b>City Commission Meetings Every 3rd Monday at 6:00 pm</b></p> <p>Visit our web site  <a href="http://www.belleairbluffs-fl.gov">www.belleairbluffs-fl.gov</a></p>
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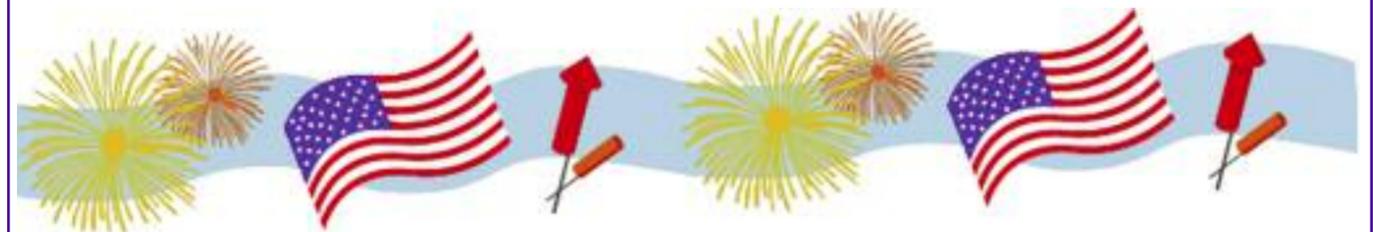
# City of Belleair Bluffs

City Government Informational Publication

Summer 2015

### From Public Works Director, Robert David

When asked to write another article for the newsletter, I noticed the picture to the right, yes that's me but I'm not sure what I was doing. More than likely maintaining lights or trimming trees, whatever the case, it is my joy to work in Belleair Bluffs. What a great community. Of course this brings me to how to keep our city and the waters adjacent to it looking good. Yes, NPDES, I'm not sure how many times I can keep your interest writing about this, but let's try again. Please, when talking to your lawn person have him blow the grass clippings back into your yard instead of the street. I have written several warnings and I do not want to write any more. When washing your vehicle at the house, wash it in the yard to keep phosphates out of the storm sewer system. The entire storm sewer system ends up in the surrounding waters of Belleair Bluffs; extra chemicals only hurt the environment. OK, on a lighter note, how many have noticed the new bait house at the Causeway? It should be finished soon and operational in August or September. The city does have a code regarding the parking of boats and trailers, if you are unclear on this, please call City Hall. OK, my ranting is over, on to some fun...yes, the celebration of our nations independence. I ask you, what better place to live and breathe other than Belleair Bluffs, FL, USA? Come and help us celebrate this year, and remember those who made this country what it is, we have so much to be thankful for. See you here at city hall.



### FROM THE MAYOR, Chris Arbutine, Sr.

It is always wonderful to get the chance to celebrate the birth of this country with our residents at our annual Independence Day celebration. Be sure to attend, it is a great time! I am always available for YOU to voice any concerns or questions YOU may have. Call my cell phone at (727) 458-2148. Of course, I consider our local city government the best as we make many positive changes for YOU the residents. I look forward to seeing everyone this July 4th and hearing from you. Thank You. Chris Arbutine, Sr.

Pinellas County Clerk of Court has a new program called **Property Alert**. Residents can register their name and get emails if anything with their name is recorded at the Court. [www.pinellasclerk.org](http://www.pinellasclerk.org)

### FROM THE CITY CLERK'S OFFICE, Debra Sullivan

**PLEASE PROVIDE YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS SO YOU CAN GET PERTINENT INFORMATION QUICKLY.**

We can notify you of storm updates, event updates and you can receive this newsletter via email!

Send your email address to: [info@belleairbluffs-fl.gov](mailto:info@belleairbluffs-fl.gov)

### SOLICITING IS PROHIBITED IN BELLEAIR BLUFFS

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### FLAMINGOS FOREVER CAMPAIGN

Have you been to Sunken Gardens in recent years? Many in St. Pete have not visited since they were in grade school and toured the Gardens on a field trip.

If you haven't enjoyed a program or plant festival at the Gardens lately, you may not know only two of the original 17 flamingos brought to the Gardens in 1957 remain. Noting that sad state of affairs two years ago, a handful of volunteers were determined to re-stock the dwindling flock, and founded a small organization called Flamingos Forever. No one could imagine Sunken Gardens without flamingos!

Apparently the community agrees. The display in the lobby of the Gardens has generated over \$3,000 in dollar bills and pocket change. A number of individuals, organizations and businesses have purchased naming rights to a flamingo. Friends and neighbors have generously supported the fundraising campaign.

Several weeks ago, the campaign had raised a total of \$45,000, almost reaching the flamingo goal of \$60,000. Then, out of the blue Bill and Marie Raspovik said they wanted to donate the remaining amount needed to purchase the flamingos. What a fabulous surprise! Although Bill and Marie do not even live in St. Pete, they wanted to leave a legacy for future generations to enjoy and thought the flamingos were a wonderful way to do that. So, when the flamingos do come to the Gardens, five of them will be named after members of Bill's family, as well as a beloved pet - Oscar, Willy, Marie, Ali and Ritchie.

Now that Sunken Gardens will have flamingos again, the Flamingos Forever group will continue to raise funds for other projects at the Gardens, including a soft-billed aviary and a children's garden.

### MISS FLORIDA PAGEANT

The 80th Anniversary of the Miss Florida Pageant will take place at the Mahaffey Theatre from June 16 to 20. The event will be open to the public and tickets are on sale. The winner will be crowned on Saturday, June 20th and will compete in the Miss America pageant on September 13, 2015 in Atlantic City televised live on ABC TV. For further information check out the MissFlorida.org web site.

The Miss Florida week of activities kicks off with a "High Heel Hike" at Sundial in St. Petersburg. The 48 contestants will participate in this special event on June 13th. One of the highlights of the Pageant will be a "Forever Miss Florida Talent Show" on Friday night, June 19th at the Mahaffey with former Miss Florida's performing.

Miss Florida receives at least an \$18,000 educational scholarship and another \$50,000 in wardrobe, prizes, etc. during the year. The current Miss America -Kira Kazantsev from New York State - will be attending the Miss Florida Pageant in St. Pete. Dozens of former Miss Florida's along with this year's 48 contestants will converge on St. Petersburg with their families and sponsors as the new Miss Florida 2015 is crowned. In addition, 34 contestants competing for Miss Florida's Outstanding Teen will also be participating.



### FROM THE DESK OF SHERIFF BOB GUALTIERI

As summer commences, teens are swapping school clothes for swimsuits, tucking backpacks into the closet, and preparing to celebrate the completion of final exams that were, for some, their last. But the beach trips and vacation days they've anticipated come to a sudden, possibly tragic halt if they allow their excitement to cloud their good judgment. Teaching students to make the right choices is a joint effort, and the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office encourages parents to talk to their teens about wise behavior when they are unsupervised with their friends.

This year, PCSO School Resource Deputies partnered with several local organizations to kickstart the summer with a powerful, pertinent message: Don't drive while distracted or impaired.

In 2014, Florida experienced more than 42,000 distracted driving crashes, according to the Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles. These crashes resulted in more than 200 fatalities and 35,000 injuries.

To give students a first-hand look at the devastating consequences that could result if they drive while using their phones or impaired by drugs or alcohol, four Pinellas County high schools put on mock traffic crashes. Members from several Sheriff's Office units, first responders from Sunstar, various towing companies, Bayflite, and a funeral home depicted a realistic prom night scenario that we hope left a lasting impression on viewers.

Crashes related to impaired or distracted driving, like the one portrayed in this mock incident, are preventable.

For instance, cell phone apps that disable texting while the phone is in a moving vehicle are available. Explore this option, and discuss it and others with your teens.

Be mindful of with whom your children spend their time. Remind them if they choose to drink alcohol, it is better to risk getting in trouble by calling you than to risk their lives getting behind the wheel. More than 10,000 people died in drunken-driving crashes in 2013, according to data from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. A phone call could save their and others' lives.

The safety of you and your family is our top priority at the Sheriff's Office. We are eager to talk to teens about safe driving, but the conversation needs to start at home. A serious discussion with your teen and consistent reminders about the conversation's key points can help us in "Leading the Way For A Safer Pinellas."

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9 am - 3 pm

at Heritage Village  
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Are you sitting on a goldmine or saving sentimental keepsakes?  
Tampa Bay area antiques experts answer those burning questions!

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Crystal, rings, diamonds, jewelry, Americana, rare and vintage books, guns and armor, clocks and pocket watches, pre-1950 dolls, Depression and other types of collectible glass, musical instruments, furniture and more.

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For information:  
Visit [www.missflorida.org/pageant](http://www.missflorida.org/pageant) or call the Pinellas County Historical Society at (727) 382-2275.




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**NEW BAIT HOUSE COMING TO BELLEAIR BEACH CAUSEWAY**

Before the construction of the new Belleair Beach Causeway, there was a bait house at the Belleair Beach Causeway Boat Ramp. But when the ramps were closed during bridge construction in 2006, the bait house was torn down with plans to rebuild in the future. Now, the Pinellas County Commission has approved the budget to rebuild it and the contract for the design and construction was awarded to Largo's Caladesi Construction Company. Construction began in January.

Plans call for much more than just a bait shop. The new structure will be similar to a convenience store. It will have over the counter food and snacks in addition to bait and fishing supplies. There will be a second level deck facing west, with seating for about 20, where you can watch sunsets when the shop is open.

The structure is raised to meet floodplain requirement with the shop located on the second floor. The first floor will be open-air with space for live bait wells and an ice machine. There is even an elevator. Everything is wheelchair accessible.

The cost of the project is \$675,000 and will be paid for out of the Capital Improvement Program funded by the Penny for Pinellas sales tax. An outside company will run the concessions.

Construction is scheduled to be done by July 8th, but it will not be open to the public until later in the summer.

**BELLEAIR REC**

The Belleair Rec Center has dozens of different summer camps for you to choose from. The Town of Belleair Parks and Rec offers a community center with a gymnasium, game room, tennis courts, multipurpose room and two multipurpose sports fields.

Camps are from June 9 to August 15th, include mornings 8am to 12pm, afternoons 1-4pm and full day camps. Children in all day programs eat lunch at noon. Camp is designed for children ages 6-12. Space is limited to only 100 campers per week. Weekly costs are Mornings - \$50 (\$65 non-members); Afternoons - \$85 (\$100 non-members) and Full Days - \$135 (\$165 non-members).

Specialty Theme camps are also offered, including: Art, Sports, American Girl, Beginner's Sewing, Camp Build-It, Camp Rec, Creative Cooking, Digital Animation and Video Game Design, Dynamite Duo Science, Fishing, For Girls Only, Celtic Soccer, Hip Hop Dance, Nature Park, Mad Science, Magic, Ninja, Rhythm of Africa, Rock-N-Roll Robotics, Sandlot Camp, Scrapbooking, Speed Camp, Tennis Camp, Tournament of Champions, Urban Funk Craft Camp, Volleyball Camp, Wild Boys Camp and the Belleair Teen Camp. For more information, visit www.BelleairRec.com or call 518-3728.



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**ONE ST. PETERSBURG**

The heart of downtown St. Petersburg is beating a bit faster these days, as the Kolter Group reached the milestone of \$100 million in reservations for the luxury condominium residences in ONE St. Petersburg, the developer's 41-story, mixed-use project in the center of the downtown waterfront.

It is an impressive level of commitment from homebuyers from across the region. "The word is out on downtown St. Petersburg. People have caught on to how nice it is to live, work and play down here and they want in," said Kolter Urban President, Bob Vail. "This puts us months ahead of projections, with momentum towards start of construction."

Towering 41 stories above the skyline, ONE St. Petersburg will be the tallest building in St. Petersburg. The project's landmark architecture, luxury tower residences, and array of world-class shopping, dining and hospitality create a contemporary lifestyle unmatched on Florida's Gulf Coast.

"Nothing compares to the total package of residential, retail and hotel amenities assembled here," stated Kolter CEO, Bobbie Julien. "We wanted a world-class destination to serve as the centerpiece of our new downtown. This rush of eager homebuyers tells us we've delivered."

The Residences at ONE St. Petersburg offer 9 floor plans ranging from 1,402 to 2,475 square feet. Pre-construction pricing for the 253 luxury condominiums starts in the \$500s. 450 feet above the city, will be nine exclusive Sky Collection Penthouse Residences, each offering nearly 3,500 square feet of interior space, with unobstructed views in every direction. Penthouse prices start from \$3.1 million.

The early success of the project has enabled Kolter to announce a substantial developer incentive for early buyers that is sure to drive interest to even greater heights. "ONE is truly a unique and compelling offering," stated Bob Glaser, President of Smith & Associates Real Estate, the community's sales representatives. "In over 25 years, we have never seen a developer incentive like this. It's unprecedented, and makes this an even more compelling opportunity."

Beyond its skyscraping height, the most striking feature of ONE St. Petersburg is the seventh-story, resort plaza. An oasis in the sky, this dazzling urban park offers residents a private, 40,000 square foot recreational retreat in the center of the city. Features include a cabana-lined, resort-style pool with 75' lap lanes, shaded lounging and seating areas, and an intimate whirlpool/spa.

Overlooking the plaza, is a free standing, 5,000 square foot fitness complex with a yoga and Pilates studio. Opening onto the pool deck, the informal Splash Lounge serves as the plaza's social hub. A game room allows kids of all ages to enjoy a favorite board, card or electronic game.

Club ONE is the plaza's formal residents' lounge. This sophisticated setting will be the scene of private cocktail soirées, intimate catered gatherings and special events, with superb views of Tampa Bay running to the eastern horizon.

A new 13-story, LEED certified, Hyatt-branded hotel will provide a hospitality component. A full complement of services and amenities includes meeting spaces, dining facilities, fitness center, a rooftop pool and spa with food and beverage service, and full-service lobby bar.

At street level, a variety of upscale retailers, restaurants and services encompass the entire city block, providing conveniences and attractions for residents as well as a seamless synergy with the cityscape that surrounds it.

To learn more about ONE St. Petersburg, call 727-240-3840, visit ONESTPetersburg.com, or the Sales Gallery at 100 1st Avenue N., St. Petersburg.

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Lucky for me, *Fluffy Puppies* is now open on Sundays, between 10a and 3p. I just love the special treatment and care. While I'm being pampered, my human shops for food, treats, toys and accessories. It's just an all-round great day for moi. (Oh, by the way, they groom cats too.)



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## YOURS, MINE, AND OURS A Couple's Guide to Retirement Planning

By: Noelle Daniel, CFP®

While the reasons for earning two incomes may vary from couple to couple, families often face a similar financial challenge: participation in separate retirement programs. As a couple, your combined retirement assets are not just limited to your current employers' retirement plans. You also need to consider older accounts that are still sitting in former employers' plans, or assets moved to rollover IRAs. After inventorying your retirement assets, consider areas where joint planning may help enhance your investment outcome.

**Setting Mutual Goal** - Pursuing the goal of retiring together requires a long-term approach. Start by determining how large a combined nest egg you will need. This will depend on how much you have already saved and when you hope to retire, as well as your retirement lifestyle choices -- where you plan to live, whether you plan to maintain more than one residence, and what you plan to do with your time. All of these factors will affect your retirement income needs.

Keep in mind Americans are living longer and one or both of you could spend 20 or more years in retirement. Also, carefully review the potential financial benefits of delaying retirement. Working an extra few years could enable you to continue making contributions to your IRA or employer-sponsored retirement plan and delay taking withdrawals.

**Asset allocation** - As with any investment portfolio, your retirement accounts should work in unison to pursue a single accumulation goal. Is your overall allocation appropriate for your combined objectives and risk tolerance? Are the portfolios adequately diversified? Are they over-weighted in any one asset class or individual security? Also, consider how your retirement portfolios complement your other assets, such as taxable investment accounts and real estate.

**Distributions** - For couples in or near retirement, an equally important part of the planning process is determining when and how to withdraw money from retirement accounts. Consider which accounts (i.e., taxable vs. tax-deferred) to tap first. It may be better to liquidate assets in taxable accounts, allowing assets in IRAs and qualified retirement plans to continue growing tax-deferred. With few exceptions though, the IRS requires individuals to begin withdrawing money from tax-deferred accounts no later than age 70½, at which point you may want to rethink your distribution strategy. For instance, does it make sense to convert a traditional IRA to a Roth IRA to avoid taking distributions altogether? Your tax advisor can help you consider the tax consequences of conversion, as well as the potential benefits of a Roth IRA.

These are just a few issues dual-earner couples need to consider when managing their individual retirement plan accounts. Since no two couples' financial situations are alike, the best course of action may be to speak with a Certified Financial Planner™ to devise a coordinated plan to meet your financial needs. Contact my office, Noelle Daniel Wealth Management, 727-408-5209 to discuss your unique situation or visit us at 20001 Gulf Blvd., Suite 8 on Indian Shores.

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## RONALD MCDONALD HOUSE - 35 YEARS OF SERVICE

by Bob Griffin, Publisher

Nearly everything relating to Ronald McDonald House uses the phrase *A Home Away From Home*, because that is what it is. A child's struggle with a serious illness can be one of the darkest periods in a family's life. A Ronald McDonald House is a welcome respite from the sterile and scary hospital environment families endure.

The first Ronald McDonald House began with Kim Hill, the 3-year old daughter of Fran and Fred Hill, a Philadelphia Eagles football player. For three years, Kim was treated for childhood leukemia, requiring Fran and Fred to spend many a night camped out at the hospital. They watched other families doing the same thing and learned many had traveled countless miles and could not afford hotel rooms.

Hill knew there had to be a better way and gained the support of his teammates and Eagle's GM Jim Murray. An advertising agency handling the local McDonald's franchise got involved and helped launched a *Shamrock Shake* (green colored milkshake) promotion on St Patrick's Day. Funds raised purchased an old house near the hospital. Thus, in 1974 the first Ronald McDonald House was born as a "home away from home" for families of sick children. With the help of local McDonald's restaurants and NFL teams, the concept spread. By 1979 there were 10 more houses. By 1984 there were 60.

Today, nearly 350 Ronald McDonald House programs operate in 38 countries around the world, providing families with comfort and a place to stay while their children are being treated

There are several Ronald McDonald Houses in Tampa Bay due to the efforts of a few key people: Dennis Sexton, Lloyd Horton and Ed Ameen. Sexton was the President of All Children's Hospital, and Horton was the VP of Development. Ameen was a local McDonald's franchise owner. Sexton approached Ameen to help build Florida's first Ronald McDonald House in St. Petersburg, which was only the 17th Ronald McDonald House in the nation

They found an old house on the edge of Roser Park, costing \$30,000. When it first opened 35 years ago on June 24, 1980, it only had 11 bedrooms. In 1983, the house was expanded to 18 bedrooms to accommodate more families in need. There are separate living areas for bone marrow transplant families requiring a more germ-free environment.

Horton and Ameen realizing they needed help, formed a committee of influential business people and community leaders. The members read like a 1980s Pinellas County "Who's Who".

They officially incorporated June 27, 1979 as the Suncoast Ronald McDonald House, Inc. This group quickly expanded and formed committees for Legal, Finance, Construction, Interior Design and Public Relations. Press conferences were scheduled and even a 30-minute documentary was produced and aired on area TV stations.



Donna Young, first house manager

A house manager, who could live on site and be on call 24 hours a day, was needed. Rich and Donna Young were unanimously selected. In the beginning, Donna, a registered nurse by trade, was the only paid employee. She stayed for 33 years, eventually running four houses, before she retired in 2013. Worldwide, she is the

longest employed person in the Ronald McDonald House organization.

In 1992, a second house was built in Tampa offering 14 bedrooms to families with children being treated at Tampa General, St Joseph's, and Shriners' hospitals. With the house in Tampa, the Board of Trustees expanded to include members from both sides of the bay. The name was change to the Ronald McDonald House Charities of Tampa Bay.

In 1996, a much larger second St Petersburg house opened with 34 rooms. It is still their largest and busiest house. The first house was purchased for \$30,000. By comparison, the second house cost \$1.9 million.

When All Children's Hospital opened their new and modern building next to Bayfront Medical Center in 2010, it featured a fourth Ronald McDonald House inside the hospital, called the Central House. With 14 bedrooms, it is reserved for critical care children's parents. Families visiting for the day may use its facilities for free snacks, showers and naps.

Today, Ronald McDonald House Charities of Tampa Bay offers 80 bedrooms via their four houses to comfort and care for visiting families. Criteria for staying is usually travel distance; families traveling more than one hour or with transportation issues, qualify to stay.

The cost of operating a room today is \$80 per day. Families are asked to contribute \$10 per day, although it is not mandatory. Many cannot afford anything with their overwhelming medical bills and time away from work.

By 2014, the local Ronald McDonald House Charities had served approximately 48,000 families, with an average of 2,000 overnight guests. In addition, Central House served an additional 3,000 day-use families.

The houses would not exist without the 350 volunteers in the four houses doing everything from checking in, orientation, answering phones, laundry, room maintenance and clerical duties, all while providing emotional support to the families. Volunteers work 10am to 9pm in four-hour shifts.

The community meal program provides daily hot meals. Extra meals are frozen for use when no group meals are planned. There is a pet therapy program that brings dogs to the St. Pete East House to provide a welcome distraction for those in residence. Other programs include arts & crafts, hair dressing and massage services.

Here are some 2014 local statistics: The house has a 74% occupancy involving 20,677 room nights costing \$1.6 million (at \$80/night). 1,837 families stayed overnight, and 3,182 families were served with day use. The average stay was 9 days. 1,194 meals were prepared. 325 volunteers worked 19,563 hours (54 were teens working 1,639 hours)

Today, Ronald McDonald House Charities' operational budget is over \$3 million. 70% of this comes from public support and donations. If you would like to volunteer, call Lise Fields at 727-767-8166 or in Tampa call Maggie Somerville at 813-254-2398 Ext 317. Get more information on the Ronald McDonald Houses nationwide at [www.RMHC.org](http://www.RMHC.org) or locally at [www.RMHCTampaBay.org](http://www.RMHCTampaBay.org).

Thanks are extended to many people who helped develop this article, including Janice Davis, Alison Barrick, Roy Adams, Lisa Suprenand, Ann Seidenstricker, Ed Ameen and Sherwood White.



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