

CLEARWATER BEACH NEIGHBORHOOD

including Sand Key and Island Estates

Newsletter 20-25



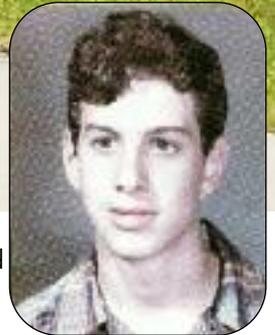
Photo courtesy of Pinellas County Communications



THE PINELLAS TRAIL 25 YEARS LATER



Bert Valery



Albert Valery

December is the 25th Anniversary of the opening of the Pinellas Trail. Before it was built, area walkers, runners, bikers, and skaters had to take their chances on our city streets. Unfortunately, it took the

death of a young man to jump-start the building of the Pinellas Trail. His tragic death is what motivated his father Bert Valery, to make the trail a reality.

On April 1, 1983, 17-year-old Albert Valery was killed while riding a bicycle on the Belleair Causeway. He was returning home from his part-time job. The tragic accident was the catalyst to move the concept of The Pinellas Trail forward, by focusing on its need.

Parents Bert and Patti Valery started a movement to create safer areas for bicycling. Their vision was "bicycle pathways" from one end of the county to the other, 30 miles each way, protected from cars. It would take five years of relentless petitioning and campaigning, numerous presentations to dozens of local municipalities and the twisting of many politician's arms before their concept of a "linear park," a green ribbon running through the county as a recreational trail, took form.

Creating the trail required a vision, but the first steps were unknowingly taken prior to young Albert's death. In 1980, AMTRACK pulled out of Pinellas County leaving their tracks unused. The Seaboard Railroad wanted to abandon many of their county lines. State Senator and environmentalist, Mary Grizzle proposed the State of Florida buy the tracks for \$20-30 million. As a result, in 1983 the FDOT became the owner of hundreds of miles of tracks, with no plan for them.

After Albert's death, his father started his campaign for safer

riding places. To get his message out, Valery spoke to groups big and small--from homeowners to city councils. He also enlisted the help of the media. He did not care if a trail was created over railroad tracks, power line corridors or on the edges of major drainage ditches - as long as it was safe for cyclists. Valery found support from many area biking clubs and cycling shops.

Valery approached the Metropolitan Planning Organization, who controlled transportation project's money. With their support, he made a presentation to the County Commission. "By this time, the Commission knew about the concept and it was well received," says Valery. "Commissioner Mary Sheen Todd made the motion and helped push it through." From that meeting, the Commission created the Bicycle Advisory Committee. Each commissioner assigned three people from their districts to be on it. The first meeting was attended by over two dozen citizens and business owners.

In 1988, Pinellas Trails, Inc., a non-profit activist group and fundraising organization was created. The organization worked to expand the idea of a linear park.

"No one really wanted to build this," Valery recalls. "The head of County Parks was ready to retire and thought the project was too big. Even Fred Marquis (for whom the trail was later named) gave no support in the beginning. He wanted to use the tracks to construct a \$2 billion monorail system. That was nixed by the voters in the late 1980s.

Others saw Valery's vision. Brian Smith, head of Pinellas County's Planning Department, thought it was possible. County Commissioner Mary Sheen Todd also liked the idea.

It was time to create a real plan. The abandoned tracks seemed out of reach. They were not for sale and some of them were still in use by CSX. The possibility of building the trail on easements under power lines owned by then Florida Power was proposed, but Florida Power did not like it, primarily due to liability issues.

Continued inside

Story by Bob Griffin, Publisher

CREDITS



This newsletter is published by GRIFFIN PRODUCTIONS, Inc. and is mailed to every occupied residence in Clearwater Beach's zip code 33767. We are not associated with the City of Clearwater.

PUBLISHER

Bob & Becky Griffin

ART DIRECTION

Becky Griffin

SALES

727-517-1997

CONTACT INFO

P.O. Box 1314

Indian Rocks Beach, FL 33785

517-1997 ~ 517-1998 FAX

www.BeachNewsletters.com

We'd like to hear from you. Is there something you would like to see included in this newsletter? Tell us what you think at

bob@griffindirectories.com

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CLEARWATER BEACH

NEIGHBORHOOD NEWSLETTER

Inside, you will find articles and local information about the nearby area inside. We call it a Neighborhood Newsletter because it is primarily about your neighborhood, Clearwater Beach. It is mailed to the entire 33767 zip code including Island Estates and Sand Key - a total of about 5,000 households - six times a year.

You can pick up another copy at the Beach Chamber Office, The Beach Rec Center, Island Estates Print Shack, Shorty's Gourmet Deli or the Island Estates UPS store.

We want your input. How did you like this issue? What suggestions do you have for future issues and articles?

We hope you enjoyed this issue. Call or email us with your comments, Bob & Becky Griffin, 727-517-1997, bob@griffindirectories.com

Read this issue or others at beachnewsletters.com.

**SEE YOU AGAIN
IN FEBRUARY!**

CITY NUMBERS

CITY HALL 562-4250
112 S. Osceola Avenue
www.clearwater-fl.com

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MAYOR - George N. Cretekos - Seat 1

CITY COUNCIL 562-4042

Doreen Hock-DiPolito (Vice-Mayor)- Seat 2

Jay Polglaze - Seat 3 Bill Jonson - Seat 4

Hoyt Hamilton - Seat 5

CITY MANAGER 562-4040

William Horne

ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER . . . 562-4040

BUILDING PERMITS 562-4567

HUMAN RESOURCES 562-4870

PLANNING & ZONING 562-4567

PUBLIC SERVICES 562-4950

PUBLIC UTILITIES 562-4600

PUBLIC UTILITIES EMERGENCY 462-6633

CLEARWATER GAS 562-4980

SOLID WASTE 562-4920

PIER 60 462-6466

MARINA 462-6954

BEACH REC CENTER 462-6138

BEACH LIBRARY 462-6138

VISITOR INFO CENTER 442-3604

BEACH AQUATIC FACILITY . . . 462-6020

POLICE NON-EMERGENCY . . . 562-4242

FIRE DEPARTMENT 562-4334

POLICE HOTLINE 562-4080

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CHAMBER OF COMMERCE . . . 447-7600

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JOLLEY TROLLEY 445-1200

CLEARWATER YACHT CLUB . . . 447-6000

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Kris Hampsey, President 441-4188

LITTLE LEAGUE

John Murphy 813-486-4430

ROTARY, Clearwater Beach meets every

Thursday, 12:15pm at Carlouel Yacht Club

John Funk 599-3864

CLEARWATER BEACH ASSOCIATION

Beth Prast 859-802-6110

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Alice Jarvis 391-3066

SAND KEY CIVIC ASSOCIATION

Meets first Wednesdays each month at the

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AL Zimmerman 727-593-7379

ISLAND ESTATES CIVIC ASSOCIATION

Mary Lau, President 813-335-6770

www.MyIslandEstates.org

ISLAND ESTATES WOMEN'S CLUB

Lynne McCaskill, President 430-1911

FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY

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CLEARWATER HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Bill Wallace, President 446-2676

PINELLAS COUNTY INFO 464-3000

COMMISSION OFFICES 464-3000

Dave Eggers, Beach/Island Estates 464-3276

Karen Seel, Sand Key. 464-3278

STATE:

Senator Jack Latvala 727-793-2797

Republican, District 20

26133 Hwy 19 N., Ste 201, Clearwater

Latvala.Jack.web@flsenate.gov

Representative Larry Ahern 727-395-2512

Republican, District 66

8383 Seminole Blvd, Suite B, Seminole

larry.ahern@myfloridahouse.gov

Governor Rick Scott

Rick.Scott@myflorida.com

FLORIDA UNITED STATES SENATORS:

Marco Rubio 202-224-3041

www.Rubio.Senate.gov

Bill Nelson 202-224-5274

www.BillNelson.Senate.gov

AREA UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE:

David Jolly 727-392-4100

9210 113th St, Seminole, FL 33772

www.house.gov/jolley

CALENDAR OF LOCAL EVENTS

DECEMBER

Indian Rocks Lighted Boat Parade Sat 19

Santa and Suds Run-Walk 20

Winter Begins 21

Public School Close Holidays 21

CBA Christmas Caroling 22

Carlouel Holiday Golf Cart Parade 23

Christmas Friday 25

Kwanzaa Begins 26

St Pete Bowl 26

Dog Parade Botanical Gardens 27

Outback Bowl on the beach 30

New Year's Eve 31

Fireworks Sand Key Park 31

JANUARY

New Year's Day 1

Outback Bowl 1

Public Schools Reopen 5

IECA Memorial Causeway Clean Up 9

Dunedin Art Show 9-10

Gulf Beaches Road Race 17

Martin Luther King Jr. Day 18

Public Schools Closed 18

Folk Festival/Heritage Village 30

Gasparilla Invasion in Tampa 30

Backwater's Chili Cook-off 31

Blast Friday Cleveland Street 29

Beach Walk-Walk 30

FEBRUARY

Ground Hog Day 2

Florida State Fair Opens 4

Crusader Gallop 5k Run 6

Island Estates Annual Garage Sale 6

Uncorked' Food and Wine Fest 6-7

Super Bowl 7

Chinese New Year 8

Fat Tuesday 9

Ash Wednesday 10

Little League Opening Day 13

Valentine's Day 14

Yard Sale St Brendan's Catholic 13-14

Presidents Day Publics Schools Closed 15

Voter Registration Deadline 16

Clearwater International Regatta 18-21

Clearwater Sea-Blues Festival 20-21

Fan Fest Tampa Bay Rays 20

Sunday Concert in Belleair 21

Blast Friday Cleveland Street 26

Leap Day 29

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Did You Know...



WINTER IS 10 YEARS OLD When she was found stranded on the beach on December 10, 2005, her rescue became one of the most difficult the CMA had ever seen. Today, her story has become world-famous through the blockbuster hit films *Dolphin Tale* and *Dolphin Tale 2*, and her journey is only beginning. Winter is just one example of the extraordinary residents found at CMA. Every animal at the aquarium has a unique story and a lesson to teach the world.

CRUSADE GALLOP Once again, St Cecelia School is hosting the Crusader Gallop 5K run. on Saturday, February 6 at Eagle Lake Park in Largo. There will be a 5k and a 1 Mile Fun Run. The cost is \$25 and \$30. Get more information at www.St-Cecelia.org.

CHANGES IN GARBAGE COLLECTIONS Beginning in January, the City is reducing garbage collection to once a week. The cost of garbage collection will also be rising over the next 2 years from \$25.79 per can per month to \$28.80 by 2018. Second cans are available at a lower fee. By recycling properly, most houses can get by with one can. Exceptions can be made for special occasions such as personal parties and construction debris. Any resident who wants a waste assessment can request one from the city.

LEASH LAW The City of Clearwater does not have a leash law ordinance, however Pinellas County does. Make sure you keep your pets on a leash when outside, or you could be fined.

BLAST FRIDAYS ARE BACK The popular downtown monthly street parties begin again in January. Many well known bands are lined up; here are a few:

January 29: Southside Johnny and the Asbury Jukes

February 26: David Cook, American Idol Winner.

March 25: Atlanta Rhythm Section

Get more information at www.RuthEckerdHall.net

GOLF CART PARADE

The Carlouel Civic Association's annual Holiday Lighted Golf Cart Parade is Wednesday, December 23rd. Participants meet near Eldorado St. about 5pm for socializing and judging. Then, they travel all the roads in the subdivision.

Participants may also use bikes and wagons—but no cars. The parade is for residents only. If you want to participate, please call Kris Hampsey, President of the Civic Association at 441-4188.



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CHARLIE BROWN STAMPS

The U.S. Post Office got in the Holiday spirit by releasing a forever stamp featuring "A Charlie Brown's Christmas," to coincide with the 50th Anniversary of the first airing of the holiday cartoon show. The first animated special featuring Peanuts characters, it was immediately a critical and commercial hit and has become a holiday favorite. The book of 10 stamps features 10 scenes from the TV special for \$4.90.



FLORIDA SENIOR GAMES The City of Clearwater was selected as the host city for this 24th Annual Olympic-style sports festival for athletes age 50 and older. The nine-day event, ran from December 5 to 13th in various Clearwater facilities and was the culmination of various qualifying events held throughout the year to find the State's Top Senior Athletes. Local facilities hosting some of the events include: The Long Center, Ft DeSoto Park, The Innisbrook Resort and Clearwater High School. For more information visit www.FlaSports.com.

HOLIDAYS AT HERITAGE VILLAGE The special Holiday Tours at Heritage Village began Thanksgiving weekend. Historical houses are decorated true to their time period, locality and lifestyle, from an elaborately decorated Victorian home to a simply adorned 1852 log cabin. Heritage Village brings Pinellas County history to life at 11909 125th Street N., Largo where Walsingham Rd meets Ulmerton Rd. It is over 21 acres with 25 historic structures. Next door, Florida Botanical Gardens will be decorated with thousands of holiday lights.

WHEN POSSIBLE, DECLINE THE RECEIPT

When you handle cash register receipts, they are likely thermal paper coated with either BPA or its chemical cousin, BPS. We now know BPA and BPS are absorbed into our bodies from regular receipt handling. It is of particular concern to pregnant or nursing women, women of childbearing age and adolescents. BPA/BPS are endocrine disruptors and can imitate our body's own hormones in a way that could be hazardous for our health. When asked, decline the receipt. Use digital or email receipts whenever possible. If you do get one, throw it away and do not recycle it. The BPA/BPS contaminates the paper in the recycling process.



PINELLAS FOLK FESTIVAL January 30, 2016 from 10 am - 4 pm, listen to dozens of the Tampa Bay area's premier folk musicians with traditional folk, gospel, country and bluegrass music on stages throughout the Heritage Village, 11909 125th Street N., Largo. A \$5 donation is suggested.

OUR NEXT ISSUE IS IN FEBRUARY Read this issue, as well as others, online at BeachNewsletters.com.

Nickolas C. Ekonomides, P.A.

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25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE PINELLAS TRAIL, continued

Then the State passed a law allowing abandoned railroad easements to be acquired by the nearest landowner, if not owned by a local government. This meant a person backing up to a train track could extend their property lines to the middle of the track at no cost.

About the same time, the Federal government wanted to increase public transportation and offered grants to improve methods of transportation. The Pinellas Trail concept qualified and grant money became available.

In 1989, County Manager Fred Marquis proposed using the newly created Penny for Pinellas money to buy the tracks for development of a Pinellas Trail. The Penny for Pinellas was already approved by the voters; all the County had to do was earmark the funds for the never before tried concept of a linear park.

"Fred got the various cities on board with the project," said Barbara Sheen Todd. "He saw it as a use-it-or-lose-it proposal."

The County Commission allocated \$1.5 million to build the first 15-mile segment beginning at Taylor Park and running a short distance north and south. County voters extended the Penny for Pinellas sales tax, which lead to further funding of the complete 35 miles of trail.

On December 1, 1990, five miles of Trail were officially opened from Taylor Park (Largo) south to Seminole City Park. It was the beginning of what would become over 70 miles of roadway, reserved exclusively for people on foot, bikes, and skates. At the same time, two more sections were built at Seminole City Park and near U.S. 19 at Curlew Road.

It would be easy to say "and the rest is history" but that was only the beginning of now 30 years of planning and construction. There were overpasses to build and CSX was still operating in parts of St. Petersburg.

In 1994, sections of the Trail opened north to Tarpon Springs and moved

into the western part of St. Petersburg. By 2002, they built an overpass over Pasadena Avenue and sent the trail on towards downtown St. Petersburg. On the Trail's 15th Anniversary, in 2005, the County purchased the abandoned CSX section of tracks near downtown St. Petersburg and started two years of construction on that part of the trail.

In 2008, the County Commissioners agreed to form the Pinellas Trail Loop connecting Downtown St. Petersburg to an area east of Lake Tarpon. At the same time, downtown St. Pete opened three miles of trail along the waterfront.

Progress Energy eventually agreed to allow the use of some power easements and even contributed money to the project. In return, much of the northeast trail was named Progress Energy Trail (later changed to Duke Power Trail when the companies merged).

After 20 years, the 34th Street overpass opened and construction began on the path running through Clearwater's Downtown area. By 2011, the trail was 37 miles long.

Today, although the loop is not fully connected, a plan is in place to complete it by 2020. The loop will serve as a linear park and a multi-modal transportation pathway directly linking eight municipalities and numerous unincorporated areas

In 2003, the Pinellas Trail was designated as part of a National Recreational Trail within the National Trails System by the United States Department of the Interior and the National Parks Service. The Pinellas Trail has been inducted into the Rail Trail Hall of Fame and has twice received the Best Trails of Florida Award from the State Office of Greenways and Trails.

"It is a shame that it took a terrible tragedy, like the accident that claimed Bert Valery's son's life, to develop something as nice as this Pinellas Trail," says Barbara Sheen Todd.

Although the trail was started with

money from Penny For Pinellas, County, State and Federal agencies have also invested more than \$63 million in expanding and improving the trail over the last 25 years.

It is estimated that an average of 70,000 people use the Pinellas Trail each month. The trail is a priceless haven in a busy, highly urbanized environment. The construction of 10 overpasses and 3 underpasses allow trail-goers to safely travel above and below traffic through some of the County's busiest intersections.

The existing 47-mile trail offers residents and visitors a unique opportunity to enjoy the outdoors close to their home, school or office. The trail is patrolled by the Pinellas County Security Task Force, which are not police but represent law enforcement officers, the County Sheriff, and other agencies. Pinellas County Park Rangers also patrol the trail daily as well as auxiliary rangers who are supplied by Pinellas Trails, Inc.

Each Pinellas Trails, Inc., volunteer travels the trail 12 hours per month. Some walk, or bike while others drive a golf cart bought by the organization. Their program "Trees for the Trail" plants trees along the corridor. They support the Auxiliary Ranger Program to support police enforcement. They pay for maps, signage, benches, water fountains and other amenities along the trail. Fundraisers are held throughout the year to pay for these expenses.

"Our goal is to ensure the viability of the trail," Scott Daniels says. "We stress safety and security. This has become a special source of pride—for me, for Bert, the County, and everyone who lives here and uses the Pinellas Trail."

In the beginning, only three other places had any form of a community trail. Today, over 1,000 cities have them. Almost all have asked Pinellas County for input or visited to see our now famous Pinellas Trail.

Visit www.PinellasCounty.org/Trail or www.PinellasTrails.org for more information. ■

SOME OF THE PEOPLE BEHIND THE SCENES RESPONSIBLE FOR MAKING OUR PINELLAS TRAIL A REALITY

Scott Daniels

An active bike rider, he met Valery as the Trail concept was developing. He was a founding member of the Bicycle Advisory Committee and Pinellas Trails, Inc. and is still their spokesman.



Brian Smith

As the County Planning Director he was involved creating the trail from Tarpon Springs to downtown St. Pete. Although retired after 30 years with the County, he is still on the Board of Directors of Florida Greenways & Trails Foundation, Inc.



Barbara Sheen Todd

A County Commissioner in the late 1980s and early '90s, she helped to push the Pinellas Trail through the Commission and worked closely with Marquis, and other Department Heads.



Fred Marquis

Pinellas County Administrator from 1979 until 2000, he proposed using Penny for Pinellas to fund the trail and took steps to make it happen. The trail was named in his honor.





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Restaurant News...



SHARKEY'S BEACH BAR This new beach bar/restaurant located at 411 S. Gulfview Blvd is now open. They offer a variety of food from beach burgers to BBQ pulled pork, with a daily happy hour from 4-6pm. It is also a great place to sip a margarita by the beach and watch the sunset on the outdoor deck.

IT'S A BEAUTY The new Surfside Tap House was presented with the Clearwater Beach Chamber of Commerce's Beautification Award at their Annual Breakfast this month. New owners bought the Mandalay storefront and spent six months remodeling and updating its look. They were very excited that their hard work was recognized by the Chamber. Surfside is located at 395 Mandalay Blvd, across from the Hilton. They recently began serving breakfast.



TIME FOR BACKWATER'S CHILI COOK OFF

Do you think you have the best chili recipe? Or really like to eat it? Then plan to attend Backwater's 11th Annual Chili Cook Off at their restaurant, on Sunday, January 31st. If you want to be in the competition, registration begins January 1st. The

rules are available on their Web site. Backwater's is located at 1261 Gulf Blvd in the Shoppes of Sand Key. Call owner Larry at 517-7383 or visit www.BackwatersOnSandKey.com for details.

MARINA CANTINA PREPARING TO OPEN Clearwater Beach is about to have a new place to catch a sunset and a margarita. The long awaited Marina Cantina is almost ready to open in the Clearwater. The actual date is not set in concrete yet, but sources say it will open shortly after New Year's Day. The new restaurant has indoor and outdoor seating on the second level, which is open on three sides and a bar. The third level is a large walk around deck with its own bar. The restaurant is part of the Baystar Restaurant Group that owns Island Way Grill and Salt Rock Grill. Frank Chivas is the managing partner.

CLOSED

BEACH SHANTY SOUTH, once across from the Hyatt Regency, is closed and gone. In fact, the building was leveled last month and there are plans to build two new medium sized hotels on the site, which will be part of the Marriott Chain. The other Shanty on Mandalay Ave. is still there and will celebrate 30 years in January.

ISLAND WAY CAFÉ on Island Estates is closed and for sale by its owner, Mark Anthony. The small café is located at 288 Windward Passage next to the Beach Print Shack.

More Restaurant News...



CONSTRUCTION IS FINALLY UNDERWAY

After numerous permit delays, the new Proino's Breakfast Club's construction has finally begun on the south end of the beach. The new restaurant, in the shopping center between The Reef and Cesar's Italian Restaurant will be the third, with other locations in Largo on West Bay Drive and Walsingham Road. All locations serve

breakfast and lunch, but not dinner. They hope the Clearwater restaurant will be open by February.

BAIT HOUSE CLOTHING

Are you still looking for some last minute Christmas gifts? What about a Bait House fishing shirts? The restaurant has added a line of sun-safe long and short-sleeve thermal, microfiber T-shirts. They also have their nearly famous Bait House coozies for sale, too. Both are perfect for fishing or just hanging at the Bait House. Get them at The Bait House in the Clearwater Beach Marina, near the Starlight Majesty. It makes the perfect Christmas gift, even if you are not a fisherman. Call 446-8134 for details.



NEW YEAR'S EVE It's the end of another year - and time to party! Most restaurants are open for dinner that night. But only a few are open until midnight. There will be a fireworks show on the south side of Clearwater Pass and the best place to see it will be Shephards, Jimmy's Fish House in the Holiday Inn, The Sands Beach Bar in the Wyndham and Jimmy's Crow's Nest high atop the Pier House 60.



UPDATED RESTAURANT HAS NEW NAME

Bellevue Biltmore Golf Course's restaurant has a new name and logo. It is now the 1501 Bar and Grille. In addition to the new name, they gave the bar area a face lift with new bar lighting, a foot rest, glass shelving, two 55 inch TVs, and a new coat of paint.

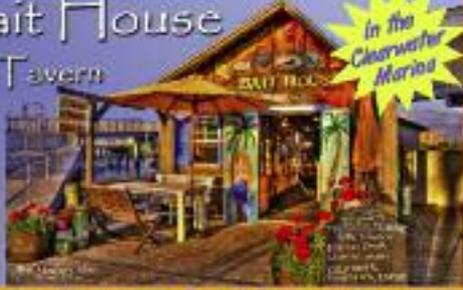
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Business Briefs...

CHAMBER MOVING

The Clearwater Beach Chamber of Commerce will be moving from the south end of the beach to north end next year. Frenchy's, owner of many restaurants and a hotel, has bought the former Ace Hardware on Poinsettia Avenue and is modifying it for office space. The Chamber will be moving its new office to the north end of the building. Work should begin in early 2016.



PRINT SHACK'S FIRST BIRTHDAY Judy and Linda celebrated the first anniversary of their buying the Beach Print Shack and Post Office with an anniversary party last month. They served over 100 free hot dogs and gave away dozens of prizes. They purchased the small Post Office from Les Novak when he retired. For the last four years, it has been the only Post Office in Clearwater Beach because the Beaches Post Office closed. They are located at 294 Windward Passage on Island Estates. Call them at 449-8732.

BELLEVUE BILTMORE GOLF COURSE

UPGRADES They recently finished a \$330,000 renovation of every bunker on the golf course. They removed the old sand, re-contoured every bunker, added new drainage and new G-Angle sand, and finished with sodding each one. They also renovated tees on #6, #8, & #12 by adding teeing area and sodded them with celebration sod. In addition, their golf shop was given a face lift including a new logo, paint, the removal of the slate wall and new golf shop fixtures. It is now stocked with a complete repertoire of new logoed merchandise and members only logo. The next phase of the renovations will begin in April/May of 2016 when they will be renovating all the course's tee boxes.



MEET THE NEW MANAGER



Stuart Evans is the new Director of Sales & Marketing at the Sheraton Sand Key Resort. He replaced Jack Guy, who retired after 26 years. Stuart comes to Clearwater Beach via Scottsdale, Arizona,

where he was Director of Sales and Marketing at The Saguaro Resort. Previously, he was also the National Sales Manager for the Scottsdale Convention and Visitor's Bureau, was with the Westin Diplomat in Hollywood, FL and the Westin Innisbrook Golf Resort here in Pinellas.

WE WANT YOUR NEWS Are you moving, expanding or planning an event at your business? We want to know. If you have news or story suggestions, email them to Bob@GriffinDirectories.com or call us at 727-517-1997

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PASTRY SHOP OPENS

Nick Zahos opened his bakery, Astoria Pastry Shop, in November in Bellair Bluff's Antique Alley. It is just one block from where he lived, until he and his mother moved to Greece when he was 9. When he returned to the U.S., he moved back to Pinellas County and worked in various restaurants and bakeries - most recently Freida's on Ulmerton Road.



Astoria Pastry Shop offers European, traditional and modern pastries, cakes, pies, cheesecakes, and cookies, along with coffee and espresso. Their new patio, under the big oak tree, is a perfect place to enjoy a coffee and pastry.

"We have four or five bakers helping with the baking," says Zahos. "They come in at 6 am and are usually done by 1 pm. Even my mother Maria helps. Big sellers are our spinach pies and quiche. All of our quiches are meatless. We have a three-cheese quiche, too. We offer a line of gluten-free cakes and cookies" Nick adds.

They are open Monday - Saturdays 8 am to 5 pm. (Closed on Sundays) at 560 Indian Rocks Road, Belleair Bluffs next to Petal and Vines. Stop in for something from their large line of holiday specials including pumpkin pies, gingerbread cookies and pastries. Call 585-3777.

ONGOING HOTEL PROJECTS On the south end of the beach, there is a lot of hotel construction going on:

OPAL HOTEL AND RESORT - Set to open in February, it has topped out at 15 floors and already held a job fair.

THE WYNDHAM GRAND - This major hotel, slated to open in 2017, is being built north of the Hyatt Regency and west of the Pier 60 Hotel. It is larger than OPAL with 450-rooms, half of which will be interval ownership.

HAMPTON INN - Located in the parking area west of the Quality Inn, work has started. It will be 12 stories with 90 rooms. The first six floors are parking. It should open next summer.

CLEARWATER BEACH GUEST HOUSE - Being built west of the Holiday Inn, work started in July. The hotel will have 10 floors, with parking on the first 6. There will be 155 rooms. The office and pool will be on the 7th floor. The hotel will not be part of the Holiday Inn.

HOTEL APPROVED - At 401 South Gulfview, the site of the Travelodge will be a 13-story hotel, with 227 rooms. It is still in the planning stages and will start in 2015.

THE VIEWS - A new 14 story, 202 room hotel on the site of the existing Wyndham Garden Hotel will be mixed use with some condos.

SEA CAPTAIN - East of Pier 60 Hotel, it was sold with plans to build a 85-room hotel on its site.

CORONADO DRIVE HOTEL A 10 story, 144 room hotel at 353 Coronado Drive is planned. Now it's a parking lot.

MARQUESAS - Plans are to build this condo/hotel on the vacant lot west of the Sand Key bridge.

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Something Fun To Do Nearby

SPEND AN AFTERNOON AT LARGO'S ARMED FORCES MUSEUM

by Becky Griffin, Publisher

It all started 55 years ago with a grenade. John Piazza, Sr. bought that grenade and began his lifelong passion of collecting military equipment. Over the years, he added to his collection of various weapons, uniforms and even vehicles spanning wars from WWI to Vietnam. Eventually, he had to invest in a large warehouse to store it.

Piazza (76) served as a Marine and is still a member of the local Marine Corp. League. After his service, he worked with a healthcare company that managed Senior Centers. He found the Center's residents enjoyed talking about their years of service and were interested in seeing his assorted artifacts. As the collection grew, he created small exhibits, packed them into a trailer thus creating a small traveling military history museum, enjoyed by his Centers' residents.

About ten years ago, Piazza retired and spent the next 18 months converting his warehouse into the Armed Forces History Museum. He had already assembled 80% of today's collection. Because he never had plans to convert the warehouse into a museum, it is tucked out of sight in an industrial park, but when you pull in, and see the various jeeps and military vehicles, a helicopter on the roof, and even a plane all in the parking lot, you realize there is more here than you imagined. When you walk through the doors into the 50,000 square foot museum, there is an overwhelming feeling that it is like "the Smithsonian meets Disney." The multi-award winning museum featured on the History Channel, TLC, and PBS, boasts the largest collection of military memorabilia in the Southeast, with many interactive displays. With nearly 100,000 artifacts and 50 operational vehicles, the museum is ever evolving.

One of the most popular exhibits is the WWI trench. When you enter, you are immediately transported back in time to experience what soldiers felt. As you walk through the life size trench, you hear the gunfire and see the smoke. Soldiers are radioing instructions from the communications room. Everything you see was actually used in WWI.

From there, you enter the WWII arena. The first thing you see in the center of the room are several large scale models of Japanese ships (appearing to be at sea) that were used in the filming of the movie Tora! Tora! Tora! Numerous American and Japanese uniforms are on display. Actual Pearl Harbor footage is running on a 20-foot screen. You hear radio transmissions from a WWII communication center and listen as a local Tampa hero recalls how he won the Medal of Honor. The exhibits and memorabilia continue, including a MASH tent, the Ho Chi Minh Trail, a special tribute to POWs and MIAs and more. Saddam Hussein's uniform is on display. Large scale model planes appear to fly overhead and they have gone to great lengths to enhance your experience with murals and interactive displays throughout.

A very popular area is the virtual Voyager Motion Simulator. You feel the excitement while experiencing one of ten different virtual encounters. In addition, climb up to the cockpit of a Russian Mig jet, ride a WWII ME reconnaissance vehicle, see an actual Quonset Hut, or peer through a working 42-foot submarine periscope. Piazza created the museum because he wants to pay tribute to our Military Veterans every day, not just on Veteran's Day. He hopes by helping people to experience the battles and relive the history, they will be more aware of veteran's sacrifices.

But, Piazza and the Museum staff are

not just about re-living history. They are also about education. Their Operation: Education initiative, funded through donations and special events, provides Title 1 Schools all-expense paid field trips for their students. Trips include transportation, admission and a boxed lunch for each student. Any teacher may also borrow a duffle bag, filled with artifacts from a specific war, free of charge, which they can use for two weeks. This allows students to touch and hold the same equipment used by a soldier at war.

The museum is available for private parties, and throughout the year, they sponsor many fundraising events. Their very popular Red, White and Craft Beer Brews Fest, held in the spring, has over 75 craft beers, food trucks, museum tours and more. Their Memorial Day Funfest includes crocodile wrestling and a petting zoo. The Stars & Stripes USO Show has grown so large, it is now held downtown at the Coliseum. It is a live re-enactment of a USO Show.

As we said, if you have never been there, The Armed Forces History Museum is hard to find. It is located at 2050 34th Way N., Largo. From Ulmerton Road, turn onto 34th Way N. heading north, where the Citgo gas station is (approximately 1/4 mile west of Belcher Road.) The museum entrance is at the end of the street. It is open Tuesday through Saturday from 10 am to 4 pm and Sundays noon to 4 pm. They are closed Mondays. Admission is \$17.95 for adults, \$14.95 Seniors, \$12.95 ages 13-18 and \$9.95 ages 12 and under. Retired military personnel are free.

The Armed Forces History Museum is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization funded primarily through admissions, donations, and special events. For information, call (727) 539-8371 or visit ArmedForcesMuseum.com to see photos of the exhibits. ■

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BEAUTIFUL SPACE-SAVING FURNITURE

"Space-saving" furniture is one of the fastest growing areas in home furniture today, as people combine their need for more space with their desire for more luxury and function. Many areas in your home can benefit from organizational furniture. Here are some space-saving trends in high demand by today's busy families.

The 100-year-old Murphy bed now offers modern innovations in styling, finishes, and mechanical technology. The bed cabinets can be beautiful pieces of furniture. It also offers the opportunity to create dual purpose rooms. With the lift of a finger, a guest room can become a home office, exercise room or home theater. When it's time for bed, simply lower the bed and the room turns back into a guest bedroom.

Demand for Custom Closets has increased because people have become aware of the benefits a well-organized closet brings, most importantly, better organized clothes. This not only reduces time spent finding special items, but it can help save money in cleaning or pressing bills. Once reserved for high end

homes, custom closets are now a standard in most new homes.

Garage Cabinets have become much more popular as we all collect more and more things we can't seem to part with. A good garage cabinet or wall system keeps many of those things you can't live without tidy and out of sight while still leaving room for the car.

Home Offices have been growing in popularity since the early 1990s. Although laptops, tablets and cell phones have changed space needs, studying, paying bills or working at home is more effective with a dedicated space. Many times, allocated home office space is an odd shape making customizable furniture the only answer. If you happen to have an entire room that can serve as a home office, you will find customizable furniture designed for your way of working greatly improves the potential, beauty, and usefulness of a home office.

One area in our homes that is constantly changing is the Home Entertainment Media Center. The introduction of the big screen TV

started the trend, and it continues to grow with today's wall mounted lower cost flat screen technology. Media centers with music, gaming and ever growing larger TVs are becoming the family gathering place. Once only addressed by furniture retailers with simple TV cabinets, centers now requires more flexible furniture systems that allow for more customization to get the full benefits of the home theater experience.

In the Tampa Bay Area, the leading retailer for this type of furniture is The More Space Place. They have three convenient showrooms and design centers: St. Petersburg west of the Gandy bridge on Gandy Blvd., Palm Harbor, north of Tampa Rd. on US19 and Lutz, 2.5 miles west of I-75 on State Rd. 54. The design centers are staffed with friendly designers that have years of experience in helping clients find the design that best fits your needs. Call 727.580.0405 or visit MoreSpacePlace.com to find the store closest to you. They offer free design service as well as free in home design consultations. Let More Space Place can help make your home work better for you today.



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PINELLAS TRAIL – A QUARTER-CENTURY OF PROGRESS

By Karen Williams Seel, Pinellas County Commissioner

A quarter-century of bike rides, runs, rollerblading and just enjoying the wonderful diversity Pinellas County has to offer. This month I am excited to share some highlights with you about the Fred Marquis Pinellas Trail as we celebrate the trail's 25th anniversary.



Some in our county use the Pinellas Trail as a daily means of commuting. For others, it's used to stay in shape, or just take in the outdoors. The county and partnering municipalities remain committed to continually improving this linear park for the enjoyment and benefit of the thousands of individuals who take advantage of our unique urban trail each year.

In 1990, the first 6-mile section of the Pinellas Trail opened along an abandoned CSX railroad right of way. Over the years it has grown to become a 47-mile greenway that takes cyclists, skaters, joggers and walkers from Pinellas County's southern tip to its northernmost point. The popularity of the first trail link from Taylor Park in Largo to Lake Seminole Park in Seminole prompted citizens to support funding for its expansion from St. Petersburg to Tarpon Springs with the passage of the Penny for Pinellas 1-cent local option sales tax.

The Pinellas Trail is a unique greenway corridor that runs through some of the county's most picturesque parks, scenic coastal areas and residential neighborhoods. The trail averages more than 70,000 users in any given month.

Outdoor enthusiasts can enjoy deep glades of live oaks, trailing Spanish moss, quiet waterways and tidal streams, with all varieties of land and water birds. Ten overpasses and three underpasses aid trail goers in quickly and safely breezing above or below traffic at busy intersections.

The county's partnership with Pinellas Trails Inc., an all-volunteer, non-profit organization, has helped make the trail into a model of outdoor recreation. Whether you use it for a jog, a leisurely bike ride or a safe way to travel to work, the Pinellas Trail is a great benefit to our community. I hope you'll join me to partake in the beauty of our trail, whether biking, running or strapping on your blades and rolling like me.

CLEARWATER'S PINELLAS TRAIL

by Bill Horne, Clearwater City Manager

As Clearwater celebrated its centennial year in 2015, we took a look back at all the milestones in Clearwater. A huge milestone in our 100 years has been the creation of the Pinellas Trail. This trail was a great catalyst for the Clearwater's varied trail system. From the Ream Wilson Trail to the Progress Energy Trail, there are several areas to exercise, recreate and get closer to nature in Clearwater and the rest of the County. The Pinellas Trail is used by approximately 70,000 residents and tourist each month and whatever the city of Clearwater can do to enhance that experience we support. The trails help us to stay healthy and explore Clearwater's bright and beautiful areas from the bay to the beach.

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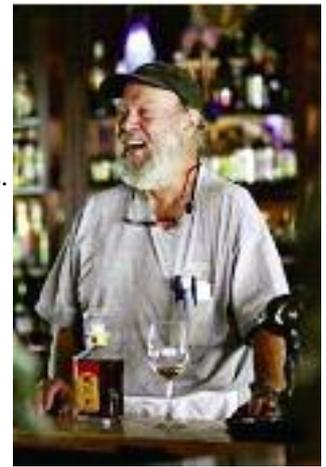
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**TOM PRITCHARD
His Food Lives On**

Tom Pritchard, a partner with Bay Star Restaurants, was one of Tampa Bay's most influential and respected chefs. He passed away November 25th, the day before his favorite holiday, Thanksgiving. Pritchard could always tell a good story. He got his restaurant start by creating a fake resume to get a job in Miami at the upscale Rusty Pelican Restaurant. "I had no idea what I was doing, but I have always been a fast learner," Tom would say. "The secret to learning is being around people who are smarter than you."



Locally, Pritchard opened the 94th Aero Squadron, was the head chef at the Feather Sound Country Club and a few other places. Then, he met Frank Chivas, owner of Baystar Restaurants which include Salt Rock Grill and Island Way Grill among others.

"I've known Tom since the 1970s," said Chivas, long time friend, and business partner. "Tom was a rock star in the culinary world."

Chivas hired Pritchard when he opened Salt Rock Grill in Indian Shores in 1997. Pritchard was the restaurant's Executive Chef. As the list of company restaurants grew, he also oversaw the menus and kitchens at the other Bay Star restaurants including Island Way Grill, Marlin Darlin's, and Rumba Island Bar and Grill.

Pritchard was the main draw at many local fundraisers. The Abilities Foundation was one of his favorite charities, and he helped host big and small events for them.

"We ended up doing maybe 175 wine dinners together," said Frank DeLucia, CEO of the Abilities Foundation. "Tom was a fixture at all our dinners. He was usually the main attraction." Together, they helped raise over \$4 million dollars for Abilities.

Pritchard is best remembered for his willingness and ability to teach, motivate and mentor many of our area's best chefs. The list includes the chefs at Parkshore Grill, Bern's Steakhouse, Z-Grille and many others. He would take the time to really talk to up-and-coming chefs, sharing his knowledge, tips and even recipes. He contributed recipes and ideas for many new restaurant's menus

"What Tom did was make chefs proud of their work and happy to be in the kitchen," said Chris Sherman, former food critic for the St Petersburg Times.

"Tom's favorite holiday was always Thanksgiving," says Chivas. "Tom loved to tell the story of how he once cooked Thanksgiving dinner for 300 expatriates in Majorca. At Salt Rock, he would do all the dressings and gravies himself," Chivas reflects. "We called it Chef Tom's feast."

No one knew more about food and wine than Tom," Chivas goes on. "He was funny--had a great sense of humor. He was the Godfather of our hospitality industry. He was just a beautiful person. He always gave more than he took."

Tom died from complications of Parkinson's disease and was 74 years old. He was in the kitchen cooking until almost the end.

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SUPERVISOR OF ELECTIONS OFFICE IS LOOKING FOR HELP!

By Deborah Clark

With a busy 2016 election year right around the corner – which includes three countywide elections – the Pinellas County Supervisor of Elections Office must rely on qualified election workers to assist in conducting fair, secure and accurate elections.

A countywide election in Pinellas County requires over 2,000 election workers spread across our three office locations, our five early voting sites and our 222 polling places throughout the county. Election work can take many forms:

- **Poll Workers** – Each poll worker is assigned to work at a specific polling location on Election Day. Poll workers must be available to set up their sites before the polls open and must remain at the polling place until after the polls close.
- **Early Voting Workers** – Before all state and federal elections, the Supervisor of Elections staffs 3-5 early voting sites for voters who wish to cast their ballots prior to Election Day. Early Voting can begin from 10-15 days before the election and last from 8-14 days. Early voting hours range from 8-12 hours each day.
- **Other Election Work** – The Elections Office relies on temporary election workers to help answer phones in a Call Center environment, open mail ballots, sort and count ballots for the post election audit, process petitions for future ballot contests and initiatives, and perform other clerical tasks in support of upcoming elections.

Our poll workers serve as the backbone to our operation, offering much-needed assistance for our voters on Election Day. From setting up the polling place, to checking in voters, to handing out ballots and distributing “I Voted” stickers, our poll worker family is a vital element in conducting a successful election.

There are six poll worker positions – Clerk, Assistant Clerk, Machine Manager, Ballot Distribution Manager, Inspector and Precinct Deputy. Each role requires a different set of skills and experience.

Florida law requires the following to serve as a poll worker: Be a registered or pre-registered voter in Pinellas County, be able to read and write English, and attend the required poll worker training classes for the assigned position. And yes, Pinellas County Poll Workers are compensated for their training and for working an election. Depending on the assigned position and number of training classes, a Poll Worker can earn \$265 on average in a countywide election.

Serving as an election worker at one of our three offices requires dedication, long hours and constant attention to duties. Our offices are busy throughout the year with a variety of tasks to complete – many by state-mandated deadlines, and election workers earn up to \$400 a week.

To learn more about being an election worker or to apply, please visit our website – VotePinellas.com – and click on the ‘Be a Poll Worker’ tab on the top right-hand corner of the page, or call (727) 464-6110, or email PollWorker@VotePinellas.com.

We cannot conduct elections without quality election workers. We encourage you to take advantage of this opportunity to fulfill a civic duty and make a difference in your community.

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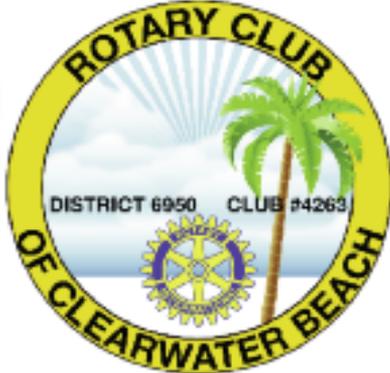
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THE KING AND QUEEN OF THE SILVER QUEEN

The Silver Queen and Belleair Coins, both under the same roof just east of Belleair Bluffs, are one of the state's largest buyers and sellers of gold and silver. The family business, started by Art and Pat Arbutine, both 81, opened in 1972.

"We moved around a lot while Art was in the Air Force," says Pat, "and we knew we wanted to retire in Belleair Bluffs. Art had this idea to open a small coin shop, so when he left the Air Force, we did it."

The Arbutines leased a small 700 square foot shop, where Peter's Tailor Shop operates today, at 778 Indian Rocks Road N. and opened Belleair Coins. In 1979, they created The Silver Queen, a related concept, but specializing in buying and selling china and silver place settings and fine jewelry. Both businesses kept growing and by 1984 needing to expand, they bought land at the south end of their strip center and built a larger storefront (it is now home to a physical therapist.)

They ran both businesses out of that slightly larger space for ten years. When they decided they needed to expand again, they found there were zoning issues in Belleair Bluffs. In 2002, they decided to move their business out of Belleair Bluffs into a new 15,000 square-foot home in Largo at 1350 West Bay Drive, where they remain today.

Art and Pat's three sons, Greg (51), Chris (50) and Jayson (49) all work in the business with specific responsibilities. The third generation is showing the beginnings of a future there too, as their grandchildren are learning the trade.

About 500 people come through their doors each week, although it varies depending on the season. When you enter the store, you are in the middle of The Silver Queen, which is where they

display and sell fine china, silver and jewelry. They have a small area which acts like a museum displaying very old and valuable pieces, that are for sale.

To the right of the entrance is Belleair Coins. This is the area where have your valuables appraised and possibly bought. "We buy almost anything precious, except furniture," says Chris. "This includes silver, bullion and jewelry. People come in with things, but have no idea what it might be worth," Chris adds. "There is no charge for us to estimate their value. If they are interested in selling, we will make them an offer, on the spot."

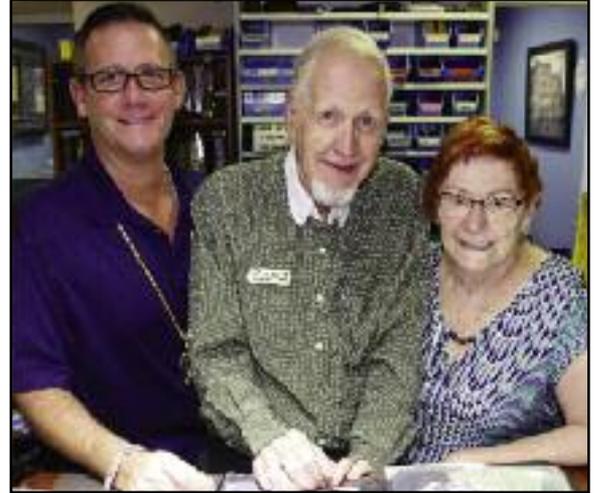
"We are experts in pricing such things. We have been doing this a long time and we are in contact with a network of buyers who expect us to call them with certain types of jewelry and antiques. We may or may not offer the most money, but we are definitely competitive," Chris explains.

Some purchased items are sold at The Silver Queen; others are sent to buyers. Some jewelry and other products are melted down to be resold as solid gold and silver.

"We are not scrap buyers and we are not a pawn shop, either," Chris emphasizes. "We buy value and we buy to resell. We look for nicer pieces of jewelry that we might be able to resell. When we buy something for resale, we make about a 10-20% fee, just like buying and selling a car."

"This business has certainly changed over the years," says Chris. "People in flea markets sell jewelry and silver that may or may not be worth anything. eBay has been popular for about 10 years, but people who use it to sell or buy their stuff do not always know what they are getting. We are local and we have been here for over 40 years. People know us. We even occasionally make house calls," Chris explains. "Sometimes people call us when their family members die and there is just too much stuff or it is too heavy. Our kind of customer service is something you can't find online."

"When buying coins, we



Chris, Art and Pat Arbutine

either buy them to resell to investors or to melt down for their raw value. We have many people in our network - collectors, investors or even auctioneers. Many small dealers buy from us."

The Silver Queen buys and sells pre-owned silver and sterling. "In the old days, hippies would come in and buy our old sterling silverware and turn it into hip jewelry, rings, and bracelets," says Pat, reflecting on the 1970s and '80s. "Now after four decades, we are starting to see our friend's grandchildren coming in selling their grandparents stuff."

The two businesses are like economic see-saws. People selling in down economic times and buying when the economy is moving upwards.

Pat's favorite thing is their museum area. "It is the center piece of our store," Pat proudly exclaims. "We have some very historic pieces and many authentic Tiffany lamps. We used to travel a lot, buying things along the way. I saved it and put it in the back room because I always wanted to have a museum to show it off. It is also for sale, too. Our oldest things are some ancient coins. We have a spoon made by Paul Revere. We also bought some Flying Tiger medals."

"You cannot be a collector and a dealer at the same time," Chris gently reminds his mother. "You can't do both."

"We wanted to be the Tiffany's of Belleair Bluffs, says Pat proudly. "Now we consider ourselves the Tiffany's of Largo."

Get more information on these two businesses on their web sites: SilverQueen.com and BelleairCoins.com. Owner Chris Arbutine has been the Mayor of Belleair Bluffs since 2001. ■





HE PLAYS TAPS

For nearly a year, Ken Deka drives 20 minutes to the beach to the County Park in Indian Rocks Beach to play "Taps" on his bugle exactly at sunset. Traveling from Largo, Deka shows up about an hour early and walks the beach. Many regular beachgoers recognize him and thank him for his nightly performance.

"I used to access the beach at 27th Avenue, but there is very little parking there," Deka says. "So, I moved my base of operations to the County Park at 18th."

Deka, originally from South Bend, IN, joined the Army right out of high school and served for three years. He and his brother are both proud Vietnam veterans.

After his service, Deka went to school and received a degree in computer science. He worked as a computer programmer for about 25 years and is now retired.

Deka never played in a band; he learned to play the bugle at home as a kid. "I liked it because it was loud," he says. He was a military veteran, as was his late brother. They both served in Vietnam in the late 1960s. "While in the military, I always noticed the reaction of the crowd when someone played "Taps," at funerals and sunsets."

"A kid came up to me the other day and asked me why I do this. I told him, in the military you hear "Taps" every night--my favorite time of the day," Deka says. "For me, it was always a nice, quiet and peaceful time. It gives you a minute to stop and think. A lot of guys did not make it home alive. It makes you remember that our Freedom is not really Free."

"Taps" is a 24-note melody normally played on the bugle or the trumpet. It was written for bugle which is the simplest brass instrument with no valves and no means of changing pitch other than the player's mouth. Therefore, "Taps" is composed of a limited range of notes.

An advertisement for Yacht Sensation dining cruises. The background is a sunset over the ocean with a white yacht named 'Sensation' on the water. The text is overlaid on the image.

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EVERY NIGHT ON THE BEACH

Traditionally sounded during military flag ceremonies and funerals including the wreath ceremonies conducted at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier each year, "Taps" is also sounded nightly in military installations. It is often used by American Military schools, the Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts and other youth groups when sitting near their campfires at night.

The name "Taps" is a variation of the word "tattoo" derived from the Dutch word "taptoe" which means "close the beer taps" and send them back to camp. At one time, the military used three single, slow drum beats to signal lights out. It was known as "Drum Taps" or simply "Taps."

During the Civil War, the tune was known as the "Scott Tattoo" as it was arranged by Union Army General Daniel Butterfield which explains why it is sometimes called "Butterfield's Lullaby."

Butterfield came up with the melody to replace a previous "lights out" bugle call used by the French. He hummed the tune to his bugler, Oliver Wilcox Norton, who perfected it. Within months, "Taps" was used by both Union and Confederate troops.

In 1862, Captain John C. Tidball, a member of the Union forces, began the custom of playing "Taps" at military funerals when one of his corporals died in action. They were not allowed to perform the normal three-gun salute, due to the close proximity of the Confederate Army. Tidball suggested playing "Taps" instead. It was soon taken up by others and by 1874 it was officially recognized by the United States Army.

"I did not get serious about the bugle or playing "Taps" until my brother died. He loved to hear too." Deka adds. "A sunset is beautiful to watch and "Taps" is a beautiful song to go with it. It is the perfect way to end a day and to remember someone you love. I guarantee, every veteran on the beach feels like standing at attention and saluting while I play."

When he starts to play, almost everyone stops and stands at attention in silence. As the last note sounds, they applaud his performance. Catch his next performance at the next sunset on Indian Rocks Beach. ■

TAPS

Day is done, gone the sun
 From the lakes,
 from the hills, from the sky
 All is well, safely rest
 God is nigh.
 Go to sleep, peaceful sleep,
 May the soldier or sailor,
 God keep.
 On the land or the deep,
 Safe in sleep.
 Love, good night, Must thou go,
 When the day, And the night
 Need thee so?
 All is well. Speedeth all
 To their rest.
 Fades the light; And afar
 Goeth day, And the stars
 Shineth bright,
 Fare thee well; Day has gone,
 Night is on.
 Thanks and praise, For our days,
 'Neath the sun, Neath the stars,
 'Neath the sky,
 As we go, This we know,
 God is nigh.

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Local Organizational News

SAND KEY CIVIC ASSOCIATION

An issue driven organization, they host open forums at many of their meetings monthly, on the first Wednesday of the month at 7pm, in the Clearwater Community Sailing Center. The next meetings are January 6 and February 3.

The SKCA is a member of the Florida Shore and Beach Preservation Association and actively support Beach Renourishment, shore bird and turtle protection, and responsible development of Sand Key.

All residents of Sand Key condominiums that are members of SKCA are automatically members of the association, too. This year, only 39% of all the individual condo units are members of SKCA." E-mail President Al Zimmerman at AL.Zimmerman2@Verizon.net.

ISLAND ESTATES WOMAN'S CLUB

Their recent Holiday Luncheon was at the Carlouel Yacht Club with entertainment from Largo High School's Madrigal Singers. It was a fundraiser for Clothes To Kids who is



dedicated to clothing low income and in-crisis children. At the event, Coldwell Banker's Joanne Hiller donated \$5,000.

They meet monthly from September – May and the socials include lunch with guest speakers, entertainment, and fundraisers. The group encourages a spirit of goodwill and cooperation in affairs pertaining to the welfare and betterment of the community. Membership is open to all, on the Island and off – for Membership information, call Joan Landreth at 727-812-8078. For club information, call President Lynn McCaskill at 430-1911. Reservations, call Wendy Bouffard at 727-441-8211. Dues are \$20.

CLEARWATER GARDEN CLUB

January 8 (10am): The speaker will be Richard Sanderson of the Suncoast Bonsai Society.

January 29 (Noon) This will be a casual meeting full of games and delicious food. The meeting costs \$15 and includes food. Funds raised from events such as these help fund their programs, including Penny Pines, Coral Reef Foundation, Youth Wekiva Camp, Camp Seek, and the Clearwater Community Gardens.

They meet twice a month from October through May, at 405 Seminole Street, Clearwater. For information, contact President Alice Jarvis, bgjala@aol.com or call 391-3066. Get more information at www.ClearwaterGardenClub.org.

ISLAND ESTATES CIVIC ASSOCIATION

December 19 & 20 th - Annual dockside lighting contest

January 9 (at 9am)- Memorial Causeway Clean Up

February 6 - Annual Garage Sale begins at 8am

This community organization is comprised of Island Estates residents and business owners, with a mission to promote the safety, welfare, spirit and unique lifestyle of the Island Estates community. They promote community interests while assisting and support members. They meet the second Monday of each month in the new Classroom Building in the Clearwater Aquarium. The next meetings are January 12th and February 9th. Contact President Mary Lau at 813-335-6770.

CLEARWATER HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Thursday Tours are held on the first and third Thursdays from 8:30 to 11:30am and Saturdays 10am - 1pm.

They are still trying to finance their new Historical Museum inside the old South Ward Elementary School on South Ft Harrison, which was built in 1906.

Membership is \$10 for individuals, \$5 students, \$20 family, \$150 corporate, \$250 life and \$500 patron. Call Bill Wallace 446-2676 or Michael Sanders 434-1684. Visit www.ClearwaterHistoricalSociety.org for information.

CLEARWATER COMMUNITY WOMAN'S CLUB

They are still collecting applications for their Daisy Grant awards. Several local charities will be selected to receive up to \$2000 in grants at their annual Fashion Show on March 13, 2016. They have been awarding these grants for eight years to local charities who can demonstrate a need for funds and their specific uses. Charities interested in being considered can find applications online at www.ClearwaterCWC.org. Applications must be postmarked by January 6th.

The Club is a member club of the General Federation of Women's Clubs (GFWC), one of the world's largest and oldest volunteer service organizations. They meet monthly on the third Tuesday of the month at 11 am, at the Clearwater Main Library, 100 N, Cleveland Street. For information about any meeting, call Kay Estock at 536-7737 or Martha Hickey at 813-765-6219. Visit www.ClearwaterCWC.org.

PINELLAS REPUBLICAN PARTY

The Pinellas County Republican Party meets once a month on the second Monday of each month. All meetings are held at Banquet Masters, 13344 49th Street North, Clearwater. New members are invited at 6pm for orientation. Call Charlotte Smith, at 539-6009 for more information or visit www.PinellasRepublicans.com.

CLEARWATER YACHT CLUB

On December 5th, they held their annual Change of Watch, one of the Club's oldest traditions. Commodore Rowland Milam became the Immediate Past Commodore, Vice Commodore Johnny Cardosi was inducted as the Commodore, Rear Commodore Ed Proefke, Jr. became the Vice Commodore, and Collin Heimensen was inducted as the Rear Commodore. After the flagpole ceremony, members celebrated upstairs with dinner and dancing. Chartered in 1911, Clearwater Yacht Club, is one of the oldest Yacht Clubs in the country.

READING CLUB FOR KIDS - They started a Book Club for kids and you do not have to be member. Contact the Yacht Club for dates and details.

Even if you don't have a boat, you can still join. Half of their members don't have a boat and most of their social activities center around parties at their waterfront tiki bar on their deck or in the dining room. They are located at 830 Bayway Blvd., Clearwater Beach. E-mail Communications@CLWYC.org, visit www.Clwyc.org or call 447-6000 for information.

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

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RCS'S GRANDE GALA

Clearwater's RCS (Religious Community Services) is a social-service nonprofit organization. The organization provides basic community services including: The Haven of RCS, for women who have experienced domestic violence, the RCS Food Bank, and RCS Grace Homes, which provides housing to homeless families.



Belleair Bluffs resident Devin Pappas and her family moved here from Rhode Island in 2011. Before the move, she was an area supervisor for 9 WEST, a large women's fashion store chain. She oversaw 20 stores with about 350 employees. "When I moved to Florida, I chose not to work anymore, but I wanted to do something," Devin said. "I became aware of RCS and the programs they provide for women, and I offered to volunteer."

Three years ago, Devin created the The Career Club program. The six-week program teaches women, who may be homeless and/or victims of domestic violence, how to recover their independence by learning job and life skills while living in The Haven of RCS. "I teach them the skills needed to get a job," Devin says. "It may be how to write a resume, what to say in an interview, or how to dress."

In January of this year, Caitlin Higgins Joy, RCS President & CEO, asked Devin to chair a new fundraiser. That was all she had to ask. Devin formed a small committee to help plan an event, with food, music and an auction, but she wanted it to be a real party that would be so much fun, people would talk about it for weeks. The first step was to pick a theme - they chose the Roaring '20s.

"We considered holding the event in the RCS warehouse," says Devin. "But we soon decided it was too big and needed too much work and money to make it look classy. Once we visited Banquet Masters near Ulmerton and 49th Street, we knew that was our spot. Although we had to pay for the facility and food, it allowed us to focus our time on other things like the menu, music, decorations, auction and the special elements that would make it unforgettable for all that attended."

"Our goal was to raise about \$80,000 and entertain a lot of important people, i.e. donors," said Devin. "We never dreamed the event, called The 1st Annual Grande Gala for Flappers and Fellas, would evolve into what it did."

The Gala was October 10th. Party-goers posed for photos, sipped Zelda champagne cocktails, nibbled on mini-desserts and danced the night-away—all for a good cause.

The surprise of the evening was during the auction when a donated car was auctioned three times! The first and second winners donated the car back to RCS; the third winning bidder went home with a 2016 Hyundai Elantra donated by Scott Fink and Hyundai New Port Richey.

"It was magical to see the committee's vision come to life," said Devin after the event. "It was spectacular to see the guests dancing in their 1920's attire, enjoying the event and contributing generously during the evening."

The Grand Gala was a super success, raising \$173,000, all for RCS—more than twice the original goal. "We are already planning the 2nd Annual Gala," adds Devin.

RCS is a 4-star charity rated by Charity Navigator.

Enjoy a day at the beach and an evening at the Cork N Brew Bistro. A place where friends meet for an exotic tasting experience. With unique craft beers and fine wines both local and from abroad, you are sure to find the perfect taste for your palate. We also offer a range of small plates and desserts to compliment your beer or wine selection.

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Thursday:
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DON'T LET COOKING OILS SMEAR YOUR HOLIDAY FUN!

Last holiday season, residents brought about 400 gallons of leftover greases, oils and fats to the city of Clearwater for recycling. If you use a turkey fryer to cook a holiday meal this season, bring the leftover oil and grease to the city's grease recycling drop-off center, located at the



Solid Waste & General Services Complex, 1701 N. Hercules Ave. This facility is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and the program is free for all city residents.

Recycling household greases, oils and fats is much easier than one would think. Place leftover cooking greases, frying oils, meat drippings and salad dressings into an old plastic bottle or glass jar, bring to the drop-off site, and pour the contents into the receptacle.

Grease that is poured down the drain causes costly sewer backups and blockages, which then lead to sewer overflows. If you see or smell something you think might be a sewer overflow, report it immediately by calling (727) 562-4960 Monday through Friday between 7 a.m. and 3:30 p.m.

After hours, report the spill by calling (727) 462-6633.

KRISTI CHEATHAM PETTIT Employee of the Month

Kristi Pettit, Tina Tenret and Jim Cantonis were out for an early morning Belleair run, at 5:45 am on Thursday, June 4th, when they smelled smoke. Kristi was the first to notice. As they approached Gardenia Street, she saw smoke in the light of the street lights. Knowing it was too early in the morning for any type of scheduled burning, Kristi took a hard right turn down Gardenia to check for a fire. Running up to the house, Kristi could see smoke coming from the garage and yelled that there was a possible fire. She asked the woman on the front step if they had called 911. The woman seemed disoriented and didn't know. As two more people exited the house, Kristi asked if everyone was out of the house, the woman replied yes but her husband was in the garage, where the smoke/fire was. Kristi, who works for Clearwater Gas, asked if they used natural gas, but the woman didn't know.

As there was no sound of any rescue trucks approaching, and without bringing her cell phone during their run, Kristi ran out to the main road, flagged down a van and asked the driver to call 911. Immediately, a fire engine was dispatched from the Belleair Bluffs fire station. The trio then waited until the truck arrived before completed their run.

Kristi was right on it at the beginning and took charge, doing what needed to be done to insure the well-being of the people. Her quick action got the fire department there promptly, saving the structure and limiting the fire damage to the garage, although the house had smoke damage.

Kristi showed great quick thinking, converted it into action and helped avert greater damage. She certainly did not do this for any honors, but her recognition is appropriate.

The Nomination was submitted by a citizen, Jim Cantonis.

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RAYMOND JAMES MAKES DONATION FOR WOMEN IN NEED

Raymond James donated \$500,000 to St. Petersburg Free Clinic to complete the capital campaign to build the Virginia and David Baldwin Women's Residence. The home is expected to serve close to 150 women a year who are working towards self-sufficiency.

"It's important to the firm that we support and reinvest in our local communities to make them better places to live and work," said Tom James, Executive Chairman of Raymond James. "The clinic does tremendous work to fight homelessness in St. Petersburg and the Women's Residence expansion is an exemplary community service initiative."

The Virginia and David Baldwin Women's Residence is one of eight programs offered by the Free Clinic. The program currently has the capacity to house 20 women at one time working towards independence. The new residence will more than double that, housing 50 women at one time.

"As a board member, I see how crucial the services and programs provided by the St. Petersburg Free Clinic are for so many of our city's residents," said Bill Van Law, Raymond James Investment Advisors Division President and St. Petersburg Free Clinic Board Vice Chair. "Raymond James's donation to help expand the Women's Residence completes the Saving Grace fundraising campaign and will allow the clinic to help more women overcome homelessness. It's a privilege to be a part of both these organizations."

Close to two years ago St. Petersburg Free Clinic embarked on the Saving Grace Capital Campaign to raise \$4.5 million dollars to fund the new women's residence. As of today the capital campaign is complete and the project goal has been more than met all by private philanthropy.

"We started two years ago with a dream to help more of the over 2400 women per year that call us looking for help" said Beth Houghton, Executive Director of St. Petersburg Free Clinic. "We went out into the community and shared that dream and they have come alongside us to make this home a reality. We are so thankful to Raymond James for this outstanding gift that has completed our campaign."

The Virginia and David Baldwin Women's Residence is currently under construction and is estimated to open in February of 2016.

St. Petersburg Free Clinic is a multi-service, independent, not-for-profit human services agency providing neighbors in need assistance with food, shelter and health care since 1970. The Free Clinic is comprised of eight programs that are a beacon of hope for families and individuals who fall through the cracks of existing systems and services. To learn more, please visit www.stpetersburgfreeclinic.org.

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NECK-LESS

By Dr. G. Joseph Fitzgerald

Have you ever wanted a tighter more youthful neck without surgery, scars or downtime? Are you tired of looking at pictures of yourself and seeing a double chin? Or looking in the mirror and seeing your profile and asking yourself the question: What happened to my neck? Chances are you inherited your neck. The dreaded turkey neck is a common concern among millions of people. If neck stretching yoga treatments, firming creams and turtle necks have exhausted you, we have a better and permanent solution: CoolSculpting with Cool Mini.

A double chin is an extra layer of fat below the jaw-line and can be as uncomfortable as it is unsightly. A "turkey neck" is caused from sagging of loose skin, flaccid muscles and excessive accumulation of fat. There are several strategies in treating fat in the neck, which involve anesthesia, incisions, scarring, downtime, facial garments, excessive costs, the list goes on. A neck-lift involves making an incision underneath the chin, removal of fat and 10-14 days of downtime. We are in a generation of fast and easy, budget conscience, no downtime and wanting it done yesterday. CoolSculpting meets the needs of millions of people struggling with fat in their neck by offering them exceptional results with no downtime!

CoolSculpting is an FDA approved technology that uses cold therapy to freeze and destroy fat cells, with NO surgery. It delivers controlled, targeted cold therapy in a treatment that lasts about one hour per treatment area. The skin is treated with cooling plates, which modify the fat's temperature to just above freezing. Energy is extracted from

the fat cell by the cold, causing it to die. Though it is referred to as cryolipolysis, it is not actually "freezing" the fat or the surrounding tissues. Rather, it crystallizes the lipids in fat cells causing the slow collapse of cells as they die. The procedure targets only fat cells and only those in the superficial fat layer close to the skin. The body then carries off the dead cells over the course of 60-90 day for a more gradual, natural result. Treating the neck only takes 60 minutes and the patient can resume normal activities.



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Dr. G. Joseph Fitzgerald, Owner/Medical Director of PureLife Medi-Spa, has been practicing family practice medicine for 20 years.

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By

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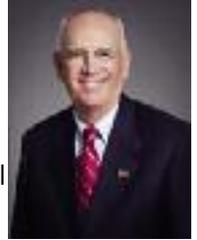
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**BORING? "YES". IMPORTANT?
"ABSOLUTELY"!**

by Ray Ferrara, ProVise Management Group

Ah, the headline got you because you are reading and that may be a very good thing for your financial health. Do you trust your financial advisor(s)? Of course you do, otherwise you would not be listening to him/her. Yet many polls show that most investors do not trust Wall Street.



But for most of us, trusting our financial advisor is easy; it is everybody else's advisor that cannot be trusted. It is a lot like talking about our representative to Congress. Ours is great; it is all the others that are not so good.

Financial advisors work under two different standards – suitability and fiduciary and there can be a world of difference. Under a suitability standard, the advisor need only come to the conclusion that an investment is "suitable" for you given your financial circumstances, knowledge, station in life, etc. It is not necessary for it to be in your best interest.

How can that be? Suppose there are two investment products that the advisor is recommending. One of the products has slightly better past performance, which of course is no guarantee it will in the future, and the other pays a higher commission. Both are suitable, but what if the advisor sells the one with higher commissions...was it in your best interest, or the advisor's?

Under a fiduciary standard of care, the advisor must always offer advice by placing your interests ahead of his/her own and act with the skill, diligence and good judgment of a professional. He/she must provide complete disclosure of all the relevant facts and any conflicts, like the one above. If the conflict is unavoidable, then it must be managed in your favor.

The Department of Labor (DOL) is proposing a rule that would require all advisors who work with investors in pension plans, IRAs, etc. to do so at a fiduciary standard of care. I had the honor of being one of the first to testify in favor of this proposal with some modifications before the DOL, while unfortunately much of the financial industry is opposing it as "unworkable".

When working with a financial advisor there is no reason for them to not work in your best interest. Fortunately, many do even though they are not required to do so. But how do you know for sure? Ask them if they are a fiduciary.

V. Raymond Ferrara, CFP®, Chairman and CEO
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More Organizational News

CLEARWATER BEACH ROTARY

They will present classical pianist Francesco Attesti and Soprano Nathalie Avila in a one night performance, January 30th at 7:15. Tickets, \$39.50 - \$49.50, can be purchased through the Largo Cultural Centers box office or online at www.largoarts.com.

The club will celebrate their 62nd birthday on November 2. They hold weekly meetings at the Carlouel Yacht Club every Thursday at noon. Nick Ekonomides, President, can be reached at 447-1075. ClearwaterBeachRotary.com

SUNCOAST CAMERA CLUB

Make friends with people who share your interests, improve your photography and share your work. Call Veronica Serra 512-4878 or visit SuncoastCameraClub.org.

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. Their next meetings are January 5 and February 2. Members are retired active duty Military Officers and their spouses or widows. They welcome new members. To RSVP for lunch or to consider joining, call LTC. George Smith at 786-5578.

FRIENDS OF THE BEACH REC CENTER & LIBRARY

They support healthy, fun, family activities for Clearwater Beach residents and visitors. They encourage residents to join and membership is free. Donations are welcome and help support the beach library, recreation center and pool. Friends discussions have led to longer evening hours at the Beach Library. They have provided funds for pickleball equipment and lines on the outdoor basketball courts - a great activity, now with the cooler weather. A pickleball lesson is running in the recreation center on a TV the Friends purchased for use to promote activities. Due to floor replacement in the recreation center rooms, the next meetings will be Dec 17th and Jan 21st at the Beach Library at noon. The annual meeting will be in February at Chapel by the Sea. Guests are welcome. Call Linda Owens 260-894-0270.

BELLEAIR GARDEN CLUB

January 6: Ikebana Presentation by Muriel Scrivner (1pm)
 January 13: Field Trip to Sunken Gardens (9am)
 February 3: Annual Orchid Extravaganza (1pm)
 February 10: Orchid Mounting Presentation (9:30am)

The club features a monthly tea & general meeting on the first Wednesday of the month at 1pm, as well as horticulture programs on the second Wednesday of the month at 9:30 am at the Belleair Garden Club at 903 Ponce de Leon Blvd., in the Town of Belleair. The next meetings will be January 21st and February 18th.

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 1bkatz53@gmail.com for more information.

BELLEAIR WOMEN'S REPUBLICAN CLUB

They meet monthly on the first Friday of the month, with issue appropriate speakers. Meetings are for lunch at 11:30am at the Belleair Country Club, and normally cost \$22 (pay at the door; no credit cards accepted.) Next meetings are January 8 and February 5th.

To RSVP for meetings, call Sherri Morton at 581-8313 or email her at SherrieMorton@TampaBay.RR.com. For more information, visit BelleairWomensRepublicanClub.com



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ROBERT PHELPS The Man And His Art

Robert Phelps, a self taught artist, is recognized for his vibrant figurative work and uniquely-colored portraitures. Through his work, he strives to express the raw, intimate beauty of his subjects. His portraits range from a menacingly-brooding Mike Tyson to adorable teacup chihuahuas. He paints what gives him joy, believing this to be the highest form of artistic "statement." Last spring he had a show in The Studio@620 located at 620 1st Ave. South, St. Petersburg.

This is his story, in his own words:

I've always been very artistically inclined and spent my youth and childhood drawing and painting. Our family roots are in rural, mountainous West Virginia, extending out to Ohio, Maryland, and Virginia. I spent most of my childhood exploring the woods with my brother and that affinity for the wilderness and nature has never left me. Most of my work is a celebration of animals, wilderness, and natural beauty. I also spend a lot of time painting "wild" characters - Hells Angels, Mike Tyson (and many other fighters), nymphs, satyrs, and a pantheon of rock stars, writers and celebrities of the more "colorful" ilk (Mick Jagger, Hunter S. Thompson, etc.) My current painting style is most closely aligned with the expressionist or fauvist (French for "the wild beasts") technique where I'm exploring emotional content instead of literal reality in my subjects.

I graduated high school in 1994. I was an Academic Scholar and participated in many electives, Art Club, French Club, National Honors Society, etc. I was a public speaking champion for the Future Business Leaders of America. I also ran track, cross country, soccer, etc. I went to community college for a year or so, but I was a bit too restless for college and soon went to work in 1996 as a scenic painter for Disney's Animal Kingdom. I spent the next three years working for companies as a muralist and decorative painter for hire before moving to St. Petersburg in 2000. I continued working as an independent faux painting subcontractor until forming my company in 2007. I've been doing business as Painted Poetry, LLC since then, www.PaintedPoetryHome.com

In my portfolios, you'll see examples of many residential faux painting and mural projects. I specialize in custom faux finishes and employ a variety of decorative painting techniques. I enjoy doing a variety of mural styles for both commercial and private clients.

Some of my commercial clients include DeBartalo Holdings the owners of the San Fransisco 49ers, DeLosas Pizza, The Hut Restaurant, The Moon Under Water, Gecko's restaurants, etc. You can see my murals at The Hut, Delosa's and most recently the Moon Under Water.

In the ensuing years, I have participated in dozens of solo and group art shows and have been very active in the arts community. I favor doing themed shows. One of note was a 2008 fight themed show called "There Will Be Blood" at Interior Motives (now known as ARTicles gallery).

A few celebrities have my work in their collection or have signed their portraits like Jerry Rice, former UFC champion BJ Penn, director John Waters, and comedian Maria Bamford. The most recent and interesting is comedian Adam Carolla and his cohosts on the TV show *Catch a Contractor*. I've been a longtime fan of Adam's work and was in the process of



painting his dog when I got word the dog had died. I rushed to get a memorial portrait out to his grieving family. Adam was very gracious in mentioning it on his podcast. In thanks to his cohosts who had acted as my liaisons, I painted their dog Kilo's portrait and presented it to them at a function in Atlanta last month.

I have a special fondness for painting dogs and pets as I find the work very meaningful. I find that my expressive painting style is a natural fit for the exuberance and innocence of animals. I regularly donate work to animal rescue charities and participate in their auction events.

You can reach Robert at 727-453-2952. ■





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More Organizational News

CLEARWATER BEACH ASSOCIATION

Their Annual Christmas Caroling night is Tuesday, December 22. Even if you cannot carry a tune, show up at the Mandalay Park beside the Fire Station at 7pm. Bring a chair or blanket. Refreshments will be served.

They meet the second Tuesday of each month at the Chapel by the Sea Church. The next meetings are Tuesday, January 5 and February 2 at 6:30 pm. All members, or those wishing to join, are welcome to attend. New board members and officers will be sworn in at the January meeting.

The CBA is a neighborhood association organized to promote projects of a civic, recreational and entertainment nature. Membership is \$25/household and checks can be made payable to CBA and mailed to PO Box 3295, Clearwater 33767.

For more information about the CBA contact Board Members Beth Prast at esphome@yahoo.com or David MacNamee at DMacNav@TampaBay.RR.com

ISLAND ESTATES YACHT CLUB

The Island Estates Yacht Club holds monthly meetings, events and parties as well as the December Annual Memorial Boat Parade. Memberships are available and owning a boat is not required. Contact Commodore Paul Lightfoot 727-744-1728 or Rear Commodore Mary O'Connor 727-595-5952 for information.

NEWCOMER'S CLUB

Are you new to our area and just have not been able to meet anyone? Joining this new, organization which is really a social club to help relocated residents develop new friends and acquaintances. You do not really have to be a newcomer to join; many existing members already live in the immediate area. The ladies meet monthly at local restaurants for lunch with guest speakers. Afterwards, many stay and play cards or visit. Call Marie Micheel at 530-5194 or visit www.WelcomeNewComerClub.com.

CLEARWATER COMMUNITY SAILING CENTER

New business hours for winter - closed Monday and Tuesday, open Wednesday - Sunday 9-5pm. Closed Christmas Eve and Day, New Year's Eve and Day.

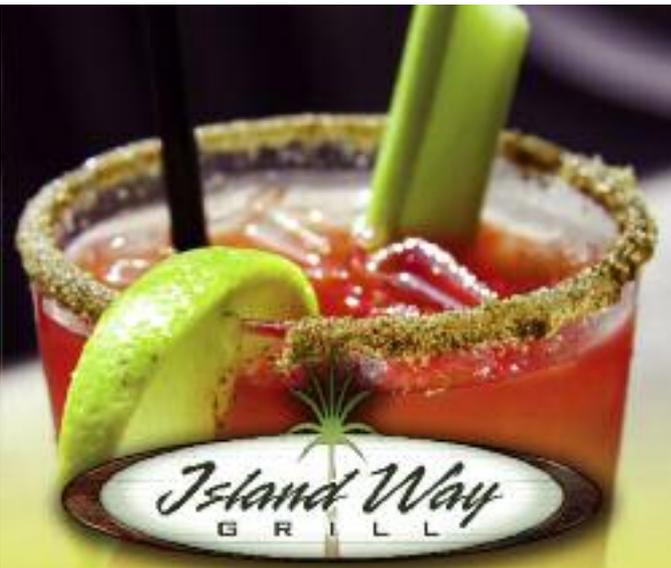
Give the give of sailing. Gift certificates are available for memberships, private sailing lessons, adult course "Adult Learn to Sail" offered on weekends, or rentals.

February 7-14 the sailing center will host the Nacra 17, 49er and 49erFX Worlds. Racing will be in the gulf and the center will be packed with about 400 Olympic level sailors from all over the world.

Fun Racing is held on the third Saturday each month. Skippers meeting is at noon on the deck, and racing is from 1 to 3pm. They offers instruction in Stand Up Paddle boarding and kayaking. ClearwaterCommunitySailing.org.

BEACH ART CENTER

Support the Arts! Become a member! Anyone interested in the enjoyment of the visual arts can join. Members are the heart and soul of the Center and their support makes a great variety of wonderful programs possible for both adults and children. Join or renew your membership and support the arts. Single Yearly Membership: \$50, Family Yearly Membership: \$65, Sponsorship Yearly Membership: \$250. The Beach Art Center is located at 1515 Bay Palm Blvd. in Indian Rocks Beach. Call 727-596-4331 or visit beachartcenter.org to more information.



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END OF AN ERA

Joanne Hiller, former Island Estates Realty Broker/Owner Reflects

"When one door closes, another one opens, they say," reflects Joanne Hiller, who has worked side by side with her husband, Rory, to build Island Estates Realty. The real estate company recently became part of Coldwell Banker.

"We have 46 years of real estate history in this area, and will continue to be your neighborhood professionals, a reputation we have worked hard to earn. Building my father's small family company to this thriving 15-agent, well known and respected firm has been our life's ambition," says Hiller. "Since the Great Recession, other companies have fractured or closed, yet we held strong and grew the company to where we are today – a group of successful professionals with fantastic synergy. I am proud of what we have done, and how we did it. It was all accomplished with hard work and our agent's professionalism," Hiller continues. "Many agents have been here for years and I am eternally grateful for their loyalty and their ethics which has forged a synchronization of values within the firm.

Over the years, Hiller continued to look for ways to improve her company and to provide the very best tools and systems available. "After exhaustive research, and having been courted by every major real estate company there is, I feel I found the best of the best in Coldwell Banker, a leader in world markets, with a multi-national powerhouse of 3100 offices in 50 countries. It is an industry-leader that provides tremendous opportunity for Realtors with financial growth, marketing tools, technology, global presence and the highest quality of service with a magnitude with results second to none. I am elated with our decision! We are proud to be a part of the Coldwell Banker family, yet our Island Estates Realty family is here to stay," states Hiller.

"With the global, international reach of Coldwell Banker, the future is bright for our continued success in our historic Island Estates location. No one else has sold more property on Island Estates than our team, and with our expertise, and the combined strength of our new Coldwell Banker partners, the future is limitless," Hiller concludes.



CHAPEL BY-THE-SEA
Clearwater Beach Community Church



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LAST BILLBOARD STANDING - THE SIGNS CAME TUMBLING DOWN

In 1985, soon after Clearwater City Council member Bill Jonson arrived in Clearwater, he was forced to drive to his new home through a clutter of large gaudy signs and billboards along Gulf-To-Bay Boulevard, undiluted by a sprinkling of trees and landscaping. His first thought was, "Do I really want to live in this city?"

Soon after, Jonson was pleased to discover that the Clearwater City Commission was already working on a new sign ordinance to limit signs citywide to 192 square feet overall and under 14 feet in height. Business owners protested this change fiercely, saying the new ordinance would do away with most large signs and all billboards.

The local efforts to reduce the number of large signs were helped by action that had taken place twenty years earlier in Washington, D.C. Congress had determined the voluntary system used to control outdoor advertising signs, just did not work. In October of 1965, President Lyndon Johnson signed into law the bill commonly called the Highway Beautification Act of 1965. It attempted to limit billboards and other forms of outdoor advertising, as well as with junkyards and unsightly roadside messes, along America's interstate highways. Getting the bill through Congress was a pet project of his wife's, Lady Bird Johnson.

Soon, after his move to Clearwater, Bill Jonson began attending City Commission hearings to support the proposed sign code. Attorneys representing billboard companies, sign manufacturers, and commercial property owners claimed the



proposed code was a way to unfairly take property – they claimed they would have to close their businesses – this violated their freedom of speech. Nevertheless, the Commission was set to vote to have all oversized signs taken down by 1992 until one attorney stopped the process. He erroneously quoted a federal law which stated that the removal of billboards on the Gulf-To-Bay section of Highway 60 would require the City to compensate the owners for lost revenues from the billboards as well as the value of the structures. Unwilling to spend that much money, three Commissioners voted to include an amendment the sign ordinance that would exclude all the billboards along Gulf-To-Bay.

Over the years, the billboard companies have changed ownership and names. Past companies include 3M, Foster & Kleiser, Patrick Media, and Clear Channel. Their products ranged from small paper signs to the monster 40 footer billboards.

Jonson and fellow billboard opponent, William Zinzow, decided what was done wasn't sufficient. Further research showed the Commission had been misinformed about the excessive costs of including Gulf-To-Bay in the ordinance. The two men formed an organization called Citizens For A Better Clearwater, and enlisted other residents unhappy that the city's primary gateway would

continue to be dominated by these giant signs.

Then City Commissioner Lee Regulski informed Jonson and Zinzow of a city charter provision which allows citizens to force adoption of an ordinance. They decided to take that route, although the provision demanded that petitioners gather signatures from at least 10% of the approximately 600,00 registered voters in the City of Clearwater.

The Citizens For A Better Clearwater campaigned intensely and obtained the necessary 6,000 signatures. This required the Commission to either pass the ordinance or hold a referendum and allow residents to vote on the matter. The Commission chose to pass the citizens' ordinance, rather than holding a referendum. The ban against billboards on Gulf-To-Bay was set for enforcement.

During the long process of enforcing the law, there were complications and delaying lawsuits along the way. The city even tried to make a compromise with the billboard companies to allow them to put advertising on bus shelters.

"This should have all happened back in 1992," Jonson adds. "Gulf-to-Bay should have been cleared in 1995." But, one by one, the signs came down and now, thirty years later, the last billboard was removed, within a few days of the November 1, 2015, deadline.

Now in his 11th year as a Clearwater City Commissioner/ Council member, Bill Jonson has celebrated the removal of the last billboard in Clearwater. "Now, improving the looks of our medians and the right-of-ways is next," he says. ■





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HEALTHY EATING STARTS AT THE GROCERY STORE

Grocery shopping can be overwhelming and many shoppers find themselves opting for a quick meal, instead of venturing into fresher, more nutritious ingredients. What you put in your body has a significant effect on your physique. That's why anyone who wants to be healthier should adopt a clean, whole foods diet, said nutrition expert and trainer Julia Zammito, who owns Total Body Results.

Those new to eating clean might have trouble adjusting without someone guiding them. Once a month, Zammito offers a free tour of the Publix grocery store at 13031 Walsingham Road, Largo.

"Most often, people do not know what to eat for overall health & weight loss. The grocery store tour teaches you how to read labels, check for chemicals in ingredients, specific shopping tips and includes a seven-page handout with a list of with my top picks and recipes," Zammito explains.

Zammito suggests a healthy everyday diet incorporates fruits, vegetables, whole grains and lean meats. "We really touch on ingredients and label reading. Labels are important, however, being able to distinguish ingredients within a product is essential. People are very surprised with what's actually in the foods they consume." says Zammito.

Zammito has one universal rule for anyone looking to eat healthier: drop the processed foods. "This means planning your meals so you're not tempted by junk foods," she says. "You want to become label-reading experts, because often what you think is healthy is not. Avoid artificial sweeteners – particularly high fructose corn syrup – sugar, hydrogenated oils, trans fats and high levels of sodium.

"For those who aren't used to incorporating a variety of vegetables into their diet, it won't take long for your body to

crave them," she said. "The more fruits and vegetables that you eat, the more your body wants."

As for whether things should be organic, that's a personal choice, she said.

"If you want to go organic, go for it." She does provide attendees of her tour with a list of the Dirty Dozen –

pesticide-laden fruits and veggies that should be organic – and the Clean 15 – the fruits and veggies lowest in pesticides.

"Tofu and other soy products should always be organic," Zammito states. "You should buy organic meat and dairy, too, because you get antibiotics and hormones directly from the animals." Although, she does stress how dangerous and unhealthy red meats are, suggesting people replace it with ground chicken or turkey. "People also should decrease the amount of dairy they ingest." she adds. "Organic Soy, coconut and nut milks are a great alternative."

Healthy Eating becomes easier with time. It's forming habits. "Our taste buds are like a muscle and with time become stronger. When you begin to eat "real" food, it won't take long for your body to crave real food," Zammito concludes.

Julia Zammito has over 17 years of experience in the Health & Fitness industry. She is the owner of Total Body Results, offering group personal training programs. She is on a mission to inspire & educate as many people as possible on how to eat healthy for overall health and weight loss. For information or to register for a trial workout or consult, visit TotalBodyResults.com or call 727-709-3854



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SNOWBIRDS TO STAYBIRDS Condo & home buyers in training



By Gordon Obarski, Broker Associate,
Doiron Realty on the Beach

An estimated 30% of Florida's one million snowbirds will eventually buy property in the state. If you're considering selling your condo or home this year, it's wise to list it during their "nesting" months. Keep in mind that, in recent years, "snowbird season" has

started earlier and lasted longer. November to April has expanded into October to May.

According to a University of Florida study, wintering in Florida is the "warm-up" to full-time residency. About a quarter of those who moved to the Sunshine State reported "snowbirding" before buying a home and relocating permanently. Another 30%, who had not yet loaded up the moving van and headed south, said they were likely to do so soon.

More and more snowbirds, who own both a "north" and "south" residence, are finding it increasingly difficult to afford both, pushing some to become full-timers here. Difficulty in finding decent seasonal rentals at an affordable price has forced some snowbirds to choose between relocating here--for good--or cutting their stay shorter. Many retirees who have waited years can finally sell their northern homes for enough of a profit to make the numbers work. Add to that a group of aging snowbirds, who just can't "do the drive" one more time and are now seriously contemplating a more permanent escape from the frozen North. On the opposite end of the spectrum is a flock of baby snowbirds chirping about buying real estate in our area. These are younger, telecommuting snowbird executives who, equipped with a laptop and cell phone, can work as easily in sunshine as in armpit-high snow.

This winter's forecast all but guarantees another bumper crop of snowbirds aka potential condo and home buyers. Last winter, twenty-three Eastern states had top-ten coldest Februaries on record. This year, the 2016 Farmers' Almanac forecast is for the Great Lakes, New England and the Ohio Valley to have a "snow-filled and frigid" winter. Trulia, a leading real estate Web site, claims that for every 10-degree temperature drop up north, there is a 4.4% increase in searches for homes and condos in warm weather climates.

Florida's explosive growth has been fueled largely by the metamorphosis of snowbirds into staybirds. The first U.S. Census to include Florida was in 1830 and it estimated the state's population at 35,000. The 1920s boom sent the state well over one million. In the decade from 1950 to 1960, Florida's population increased a whopping 80%. A little over a year ago (December 2014), Florida rather quietly hit an important milestone: It surpassed New York in population to claim the #3 U.S. rank with almost 20 million residents.

If you are considering selling your home or condo this year and want to be certain the maximum amount of eyeballs view your property, list it soon, before the tide reverses the sunbirds migrate back north. Do you know what the state bird of Florida is? It's the mockingbird. Go figure.

RadioStPete.Com - A GRASSROOTS ORGANIZATION

RadioStPete is a unique local (multi-music channel) radio station available online. It can also be accessed with many mobile apps including the station's own free apps available in the Apple and Android app stores.

The station's local focus is St. Petersburg and the Tampa Bay Beaches, with secondary coverage of the greater Tampa Bay Region. It features local events calendars, live coverage of many local events, as well as local talk and interview programs. Many programs are archived after their initial broadcast for on demand listening.

Listeners can choose from Pop music, Jazz, Classical and Country music to accompany the talk content. The station was founded by retired Valpak President Joe Bourdow in July 2013. Bourdow was a commercial radio station owner and on air broadcaster in the 1970s and '80s before becoming active with Valpak on a national level. Bourdow also acts as a consultant to a number of franchise brands and industry suppliers.

In addition to the 24/7 RadioStPete operation, the station originates the national broadcast of the East-West Shrine Game each January from Tropicana Field. The national broadcast is on a commercial radio network that has grown to over 150 radio stations, in addition to national coverage on SiriusXM, plus online and mobile distribution. The broadcast is heard locally on 620 WDAE who acts as the Network's "Flagship Station." Patrick Kinan "Voice of the Shrine Game" and Durham Bulls broadcaster is a partner in RadioStPete.

In the 27 months since its launch, the station has attracted a growing audience locally, as well as over 50,000 listeners in over 150 countries. RadioStPete has been recognized two years in a row by Radio Internet News as one of the "Three Best Single Stream Pure Play Broadcasters" in the world.

RadioStPete focuses on giving local talent a voice in the Tampa Bay area. From the living room of his one-bedroom Old Northeast apartment, Will Kuncz records one of the most highly rated podcasts in the Tampa Bay area, *Homemade Broadcast*. The *Homemade Broadcast* is homemade in every sense of the word; Kuncz himself is responsible for literally every aspect of his show including producing, recording, booking, and hosting it. Despite its humbleness, the *Homemade Broadcast* is truly impressive in scope and range. It focuses on local life, arts, and music and showcases a diverse line-up of special guests, including St. Petersburg's mayor Rick Kriseman. The *Homemade Broadcast* also highlights the local events and special people that make our community so vibrant. Kuncz is truly successful at providing listeners with information about the creative individuals and unique aspects of our community.

The *Homemade Broadcast* began as a fun podcast with a roommate before Kuncz joined forces with RadioStPete. Kuncz's roommate ended up leaving the podcast after having a baby, and Kuncz believed that was the end of things. He jokes, "My life is not interesting enough to envelope 45 minutes of talking by myself." In order to keep the broadcast going, Kuncz began inviting guests to the show, mostly local artists and musicians. He managed to keep attracting more and more notable guests. As popularity grew, guests actually began reaching out to him, including the mayor, whom Kuncz interviewed in September. "I didn't think he would do it. I mean, it's just some stupid little podcast," Kuncz laughs.

Clearly, the mayor disagreed, as do Kuncz's avid listeners. The *Homemade Broadcast* is even more impressive considering Kuncz doesn't have prior radio experience.

After jumping from major to major while in college at USFSP, he ended up with an English degree. After graduation, Kuncz felt a bit aimless, something many recent college grads relate to. He remembered playing "broadcast" as a kid with his boombox, using the Space Jam soundtrack as background ambiance, while talking into a pretend microphone. "I guess I did figure out what I wanted to be when I grew up then, but you don't always remember it as an adult," Kuncz muses. So he started looking for radio jobs, which culminated in the *Homemade Broadcast* and RadioStPete.

Kuncz takes an active role in contributing to the community through the *Homemade Broadcast* by spotlighting local events. He describes it as a "symbiotic relationship," as the events need the publicity and he needs something to broadcast. "We share audiences and we build that web, that connectivity, and that community."

In addition to hosting the *Homemade Broadcast*, Kuncz also hosts a successful open-mic comedy night at Sly Bar which recently took home a Creative Loafing Best of the Bay Award for "The Best Place to Watch Comics Get Better", giving amateur comedians the opportunity to perform while also promoting The #HMB & RadioStPete. This is just another way the Kuncz is participating in and influencing the artist community of St. Petersburg.

Be sure to listen to the *Homemade Broadcast* every Sunday at 6:15 pm on RadioStPete or find it on iTunes on demand. Also, check out the website, HMBradio.com, and The *Homemade Broadcast* on Facebook. RadioStPete is available on their app found in the iTunes or Android stores for free of charge. They are also heard on the Tuneln app or RadioStPete.com.



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CLEARWATER BEACH



RECENTLY SOLD
FOR \$340,000
501 MANDALAY AVE #508
CLEARWATER BEACH



RECENTLY SOLD
FOR \$485,000
501 MANDALAY AVE #507
CLEARWATER BEACH



RECENTLY SOLD
FOR \$290,000
868 BAYWAY BLVD #210
CLEARWATER BEACH



RECENTLY SOLD
FOR \$375,000
620 BAYWAY BLVD #5
CLEARWATER BEACH



RECENTLY SOLD
FOR \$375,000
757 MANDALAY AVE
CLEARWATER BEACH



RECENTLY SOLD
FOR \$340,000
750 ISLAND WAY #401
CLEARWATER BEACH



RECENTLY SOLD
FOR \$260,000
7530 NORMANDY CT
SEMINOLE



RECENTLY SOLD
FOR \$377,000
8001 SAILBOAT KEY BLVD S #403
ST. PETE BEACH



RECENTLY SOLD
FOR \$277,000
521 MANDALAY AVE #401
CLEARWATER BEACH



RECENTLY SOLD
FOR \$325,000
4201 BAYSHORE BLVD #1403
TAMPA



RECENTLY SOLD
FOR \$1,500,000
10 PAPAYA ST #1404
CLEARWATER BEACH



RECENTLY SOLD
FOR \$1,107,000
3509 SHORELINE CIR
PALM HARBOR



RECENTLY SOLD
FOR \$375,000
1600 GULF BLVD #213
CLEARWATER BEACH

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

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Tara Beheshti • 727.417.6620

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