INDIAN ROCKS BEACH
NEIGHBORHOOD Newsletter
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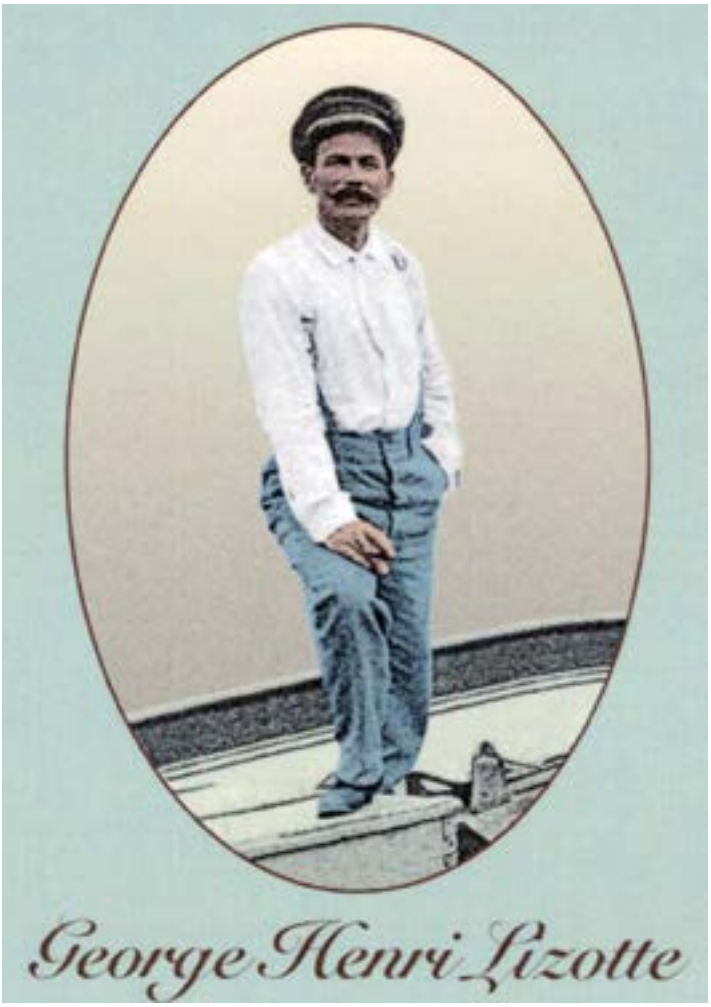
First-Hand Look at Indian Rocks' Past

The book "Pioneer Days on Tampa Bay's Gulf Beaches" brings history to life through the eyes of George Lizotte, who settled on our beaches in the late 1800s. Lizotte wrote his memories of our beaches' settlement and development in 1940.

As an innkeeper in Pass-a-Grille, the largest tourist destination on the west coast of Florida at that time, Lizotte was close to the happenings on the beach strip from Pass-a-Grille to Indian Rocks. He devotes a portion of his narrative to the developments there, including Indian Rocks' maritime past and the difficulties early would-be settlers had in homesteading a location state authorities did not even believe existed.

Here is a taste of Lizotte's account of Indian Rocks' beginnings, reprinted from the book.



A land of fishing camps

Fishing camps were located at convenient localities down the coast, where ice was distributed, and cargoes of fish were carried back to Cedar Key or down the line to Tampa. One of those camps was located at Indian Rocks and known as Lowe's Landing. Mr. Lowe had settled there in 1859 and had attracted a small number of pioneers who had pre-empted land in the neighborhood and formed a small colony which they named Anona.

Further south, near what is now the Gangplank, L.B. Swett had a fishing camp where fish boats from the John Savarese Fish Company of Tampa made regular trips. John Leveque also had a camp near the Seminole Bayou.

"The prettiest and most desirable place…"

In the spring of 1883 a party consisting of Jessie D. Green, L. W. Hamlin, J. H. Hendrick and Judge Bell had met at Cedar Key and decided on an exploring expedition down the coast. They chartered a schooner and started on their way, entering Clearwater Bay and sailing past the Narrows to the Murphy place south of Long Bayou. After a few days there, these modern Argonauts turned back, having decided that they had passed the prettiest and most desirable place they had seen on the coast, the Indian Rocks Narrows.

They first acquired some property on the mainland, but their hearts were set on that beautiful island site across the Narrows, where the rock road ended in after years. They began their investigation and met two brothers by the name of Cochran who lived just across the Narrows. They inquired from them if the land could be purchased and to their surprise found out that the land was unsurveyed government land and that the Cochrans were just squatters. They offered to sell their squatters' claims, which did not satisfy the explorers.

Indian Rocks? "There ain't no such place"

Upon their return to Cedar Key inquiries were made about the Rocks as it was called by the old settlers. They wrote to the state land office at Gainesville. The answer was laconic. "There ain't no such place." Indian Rocks did not appear on the government maps. The shoreline ran straight from the southern end of Clearwater Bay to Boca Ciega Bay; there was no Indian Rocks or Narrows. The oldest settler, Jim Thompson, claimed the land and was preventing people from settling on any part of it.

Continued on page 9

By George Lizotte and Wayne Ayers

Or Current Resident

CREDITS

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INDIAN ROCKS BEACH NEIGHBORHOOD NEWSLETTER

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

Do you need another copy? Ask for them at USA Grocers, CVS Drug Store, or any Indian Rocks Real Estate office.

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

Thank you for reading,

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

SEE YOU AGAIN IN MARCH!

CITY NUMBERS

CITY HALL 595-2517
Mon - Fri, 7:30am to 4pm
1507 Bay Palm Blvd
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CITY MANAGER Gregg Mims **595-2517**
MAYOR - R.B. Johnson
COMMISSIONERS —
Cookie Kennedy Vice Mayor
Phil Wrobel• Phil Hanna • Ed Hoofnagle

Building Dept: Dan Weigner 517-0404
Planning & Zoning: 517-0404
Public Services: Dean Scharmen 595-6889
Mon - Fri, 7am to 3:30pm
Solid Waste/Trash Pickup 595-6889
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PHONE (RESIDENTIAL) 800-483-4000
PHONE (BUSINESS) 800-483-5000
WATER 464-4000
CABLE (BRIGHT HOUSE) 329-5020

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IRB HISTORICAL MUSEUM 593-3861
Wed - Sat, 10am to 2pm
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Joe McCall, President - IRBHome.com
IRB BOAT CLUB
Bob Griffin IRBboatclub.com 517-1997
BEACH ART CENTER 596-4331
1515 Bay Palm Blvd., Mon-Fri 8:45am to 4pm
POST OFFICE 596-2894
204 4th Ave. Mon-Fri 8:30-4:30; Sat 9a-12p
IRB ROTARY, Bruce Sobut, 403-4060
Meets at Jimmy Guana's every Wed. 7:15AM
ACTION 2000 Julie Hoofnagle 400-6672
Meets 2nd Mon each month Beach Art Ctr
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AA & AL-ANON MEETINGS 595-1038

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SHERIFF DISPATCH 582-6177
IRB FIRE STATION 595-1117

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COMMISSION OFFICES 464-3377
Karen Seel 464-3278
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Republican, District 20
26133 US Hwy19 N. Ste 201, Clearwater
Latvala.Jack.web@flsenate.gov
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Republican, District 66
8383 Seminole Blvd. Suite B, Seminole
larry.ahern@myfloridahouse.gov
Governor Rick Scott
Rick.Scott@myflorida.com
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Bill Nelson 202-224-5274
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AREA UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE:
Charlie Crist 202-225-5961
696 1st Ave N., Suite #203, St. Pete
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CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

JANUARY

New Year's Day	1
Outback Bowl Tampa	1
Epiphany	6
Public School Resume	8
Action 2000 Meeting	8
City Commission Meeting	9
Kindergarten Registration Begins	10
IRB Homeowners Happy Hour	11
National Chocolate Day	12
Martin Luther King Day	15
Florida's Arbor Day	19
East-West Shrine Game	20
A2k Service Day	20
Nature Hike McGough Park	20
Beach Art Center Creative Strength	22
Meet The Candidates Night	24
Blast Friday Clearwater	26
Tampa Bay Home Show	26-28
Gasparilla Day	27
Backwater's Chili Cook-off	28

FEBRUARY

Ground Hog Day	2
Super Bowl	4
Community Clean Up	5-7
IRB Homeowners Happy Hour	8
Florida State Fair	8-19
Little League Opening Day	10
Beach Art Center Gala	10
Belleair Sunday Concert	11
Action 2000 Meeting & Social	12
City Commission Meeting	13
Valentine's Day	14
Ash Wednesday	14
Ray's Fan Fest	10
Chinese New Year	16
Winter Fest	17
Nature Hike McGough Park	17
Presidents Day Public Schools Closed	19
Blast Friday Clearwater	23
A2k Service Day	24
Sea Blues Festival Coachman Park	24-25
Eco Fun Festival Pinellas County	25

MARCH

McGough Park Nature Lovers Workshop	3
Sunday Concert In Belleair	4
Women's Day	8
IRB Homeowners Happy Hour	8
Grand Prix St Petersburg	9-11
Tropicana Boat Show	9-11
Day Light Savings Time Begins	11
Election Day	13
Shamrock Run	16
St Patrick's Day	17
McGough Park Nature Hike	17
Great America Clean Up	17
Bus Driver Appreciation Day	18
Spring Begins	20
Historical Society's Spring Luncheon	24
Greenfest	24
Wine Walk Belleair Bluffs	24
Pinellas Schools Spring Break	26-30
Good Friday	30
Blast Friday Clearwater	30

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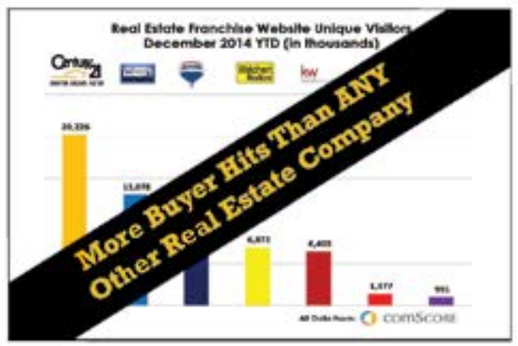

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Did You Know

SAILING AWARD Mika Schulz, son of German Motors owner Michael Schulz, was named the Clearwater Yacht Club's Commodore "2017 Junior Yachtsman of the Year." He received the award from Father Bob who founded the Indian Rocks Family Sailing Association in 2001 at the Calvary Episcopal Church Indian Rocks Beach. The program, now offered at the Clearwater Beach Yacht Club, offers a variety of opportunities to learn to sail for children and adults.

RECYCLE TIPS Home recycling is sorted by machines at a recycling facility. Small bottle tops and shredded paper slip through the machines or cause improper sorting. Plastic bottle caps should be left on the bottle or removed and placed in the trash! Always read the recycling information on your container to "Recycling Right."

DRONE CLASSES OFFERED Did you get a drone for Christmas? St Pete College is offering a four-week UAS Remote Pilot (Drone) Certificate Prep Course at 6pm on four consecutive Wednesdays beginning January 17 at the Tarpon Springs Campus. This course is designed to prepare students to pass the FAA Remote Pilot Certificate exam and covers business, real estate, photography and other areas. Call Fred Tucker at 791-2409 or email him at Tucker.Fred@SPCollege.edu.

ORANGE CROP DAMAGED Thanks to Hurricane Irma, this year's Florida Orange Crop forecast is the lowest in 75 years. Before Hurricane Irma, the forecast was a low 54 million boxes. Now, projections are 31 million—23 million boxes were destroyed by the storm.

SUNDAY CONCERTS IN BELLEAIR The popular Sunday Concert Series is back in 2018. Mark your calendars: February 11, March 4, and April 8. Musical acts will be announced soon.

SAND KEY MEMORIES Do you remember Sand Key before the condos were built? If so, we would like to here from you. We are working on a story about Sand Key—in the 1960s and '70s when it was a party spot. If you have a story to tell, call or email Bob@GriffinDirectories.com.

CHRISTMAS CARDS ON THE ROCKS Did you notice there were many more Holiday Billboard Cards this year?. There were twenty more, actually. The IRB Executive Committee, expanded the IRB Christmas billboard program from 35 to 50 during the 2017 holiday season. Twenty new businesses and organizations added billboards to area streets. Each card cost $350, paid by the participants. Over a dozen artists were involved in creating the signage, which is expected to last 10 or more years.

and More...

FLORIDA'S OWN ARBOR DAY National Arbor Day takes place in April, but Florida has an Arbor Day twist. Florida's Arbor Day is the third Friday in January. Why? This is the proper time to plant trees in Florida. As we frequently hear from our northern friends, Florida is nice and warm compared other parts of the county during "winter." Florida's seasons are quite different from other states and that plays a critical role in the way our trees function. In Florida, we have a dry season and a wet season; the dry season runs from November to April and the wet season from May through October.

MEMBERSHIP IN THE BEACH ART CENTER ISN'T JUST FOR ARTISTS AND STUDENTS If you love the arts and would like to support your community, consider becoming a member of the Beach Art Center. As a member, you will get early notification of gallery shows and courses being offered along with discounted tuition on many of the classes. The Beach Art Center is an independent 501c3 not for profit corporation. Annual membership is open to all and the fee of $65 helps support their efforts.

COMMUNITY CLEANUP The City will conduct its quarterly Community Clean Up February 5-7. On those days, you are allowed to put out larger trash items, such as furniture, and the city will pick it up at no charge. This does not include chemicals, TVs and boat trailers. Call Public Works Department at 595-6889 with questions.

MARTINIS AND MATISSE The Clearwater Free Clinic's largest fund-raiser, Martinis and Matisse is January 20th. It usually draws over 800 people and consistently sells out. Enjoy a mix of drinks, dinner, art, music, and dining. All proceeds benefit the Clearwater Fee Clinic, whose mission is to deliver comprehensive medical care to uninsured families through volunteerism and community partnerships. Tickets are available at MartinisandMatisse.org. Call 331-8149 for information.

ADOPT, DON'T BUY Would you like to have a new cat or dog? Why not adopt a pet from Pinellas County's Animal Services? They have hundreds looking for a home. For a small fee you can choose a dog or cat to be part of your family that has already been vaccinated and sterilized. Animal Services, located at 12450 Ulmerton Road in Largo is open Monday-Friday 9am to 5:30pm and Saturdays 9am to 1pm. Call them at 582-2600 or visit www.PinellasCounty.org/AnimalServices. Remember, pet adoptions make everyone smile.

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

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FROM THE DESK OF SHERIFF BOB GUALTIERI

Join The Teen Citizens Academy

Through extra-curricular activities, youth build stronger relationships not only with their peers, but also with adults who supervise them and act as positive role models aside from their parents.

Just as students learn how to read from their teachers at school, how to make friends from their peers on the playground, and how to swing a bat from their coaches on the field, they can learn how to be involved, upstanding young citizens from their local law enforcement officers.

If they've never interacted with a law enforcement officer, the deputy walking around in a pressed green uniform with a badge on his chest and a gun on his hip might seem intimidating, or even threatening.

But the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office wants young people to know that not every interaction with law enforcement has to be a bad one. Instilling in children a comfortable familiarity with and understanding about the local organizations that work to keep them safe can steer them toward the path to a bright future.

To that end, the Sheriff's Office offers a wide variety of extra-curricular programs for its youth, including the Sheriff's Teen Citizens Academy.

The Sheriff's Teen Citizens Academy is a 6-week program that allows Pinellas County teens the opportunity to take a behind-the-scenes look at the Sheriff's Office.

The program, a modified version of the Sheriff's Citizens Academy for adults, is geared toward teens between ages 15 and 18 who have an interest in law enforcement but aren't able to commit to a long-term educational program or a law enforcement explorer program.

Although dragging a teenager out of bed on Saturday mornings can be a struggle, after the first week, Teen Citizens Academy students will be so ready for the next tour, hands-on training, or demonstration that they'll beat you to the car.

Whether they're weaving through cones behind the wheel of a patrol cruiser, being guided down the halls of the Pinellas County Jail, or learning how to shoot the same guns Sheriff's Office deputies are issued, students learn the agency's ins and outs from more than what they see in movies, on television, or in the news.

At the conclusion of the academy, students attend a graduation ceremony with Sheriff Bob Gualtieri and several agency members at the Sheriff's Administration Building.

Registration for the next Sheriff's Teen Citizens Academy class (scheduled for Saturdays from February 3 through March 10) is due January 19, so complete your teens' applications today!

For the full Sheriff's Teen Citizens Academy schedule, an application, or to learn more about the course in general, visit www.pcsoweb.com/sheriffs-teen-citizens-academy, or contact Community Programs at 727-582-6612 or communityprograms@pcsonet.com.

RULES OF THE ROAD

Bicycles, Walkers and Drivers, this means you! This topic was suggested by a local Sheriff Deputy. "The main violation I see in our area is people riding bicycles and motorcycles while wearing headphones," he said. "It is not only against the law, it is so dangerous. While wearing them, you cannot hear cars, bicycles coming up behind you, sirens or even horns."

There are many other rules of the road for bicycles, pedestrians and cars. Here are just a few.

CYCLISTS - A bicycle is considered a vehicle. Therefore, a bicyclist has the same rights and responsibilities as motorized vehicles, and can also receive traffic tickets. That means cyclists must slow down at yellow lights and stop at ALL red lights and stop signs. Cyclists are allowed on sidewalks, except in designated areas where they may pose a risk to pedestrians, such as in a busy downtown area.

While on a sidewalk, cyclists must yield to pedestrians. They also need to make sure they look for turning motorists, stop at driveways, all intersections and parking lots.

Bicyclists should travel on the right side of the street, with traffic, and if there is a designated bike lane, they should use it. A cyclist traveling slower than the normal speed should ride close to the right curb area.

In a group, cyclists should ride in a single file, unless the bike lane or roadway is significantly wide enough to ride side by side. Cyclists should never ride more than two abreast except on paths and roadways designed for that. This applies even to the early morning hours when there

may be less cars to compete with.

For riders 16 years and under, helmets are required by law. For those over 16, helmets are highly recommended.

PEDESTRIANS - Pedestrians, walkers, joggers and runners have rights too, and in most cases they must be given the right of way. But pedestrians must understand that they have responsibilities, too.

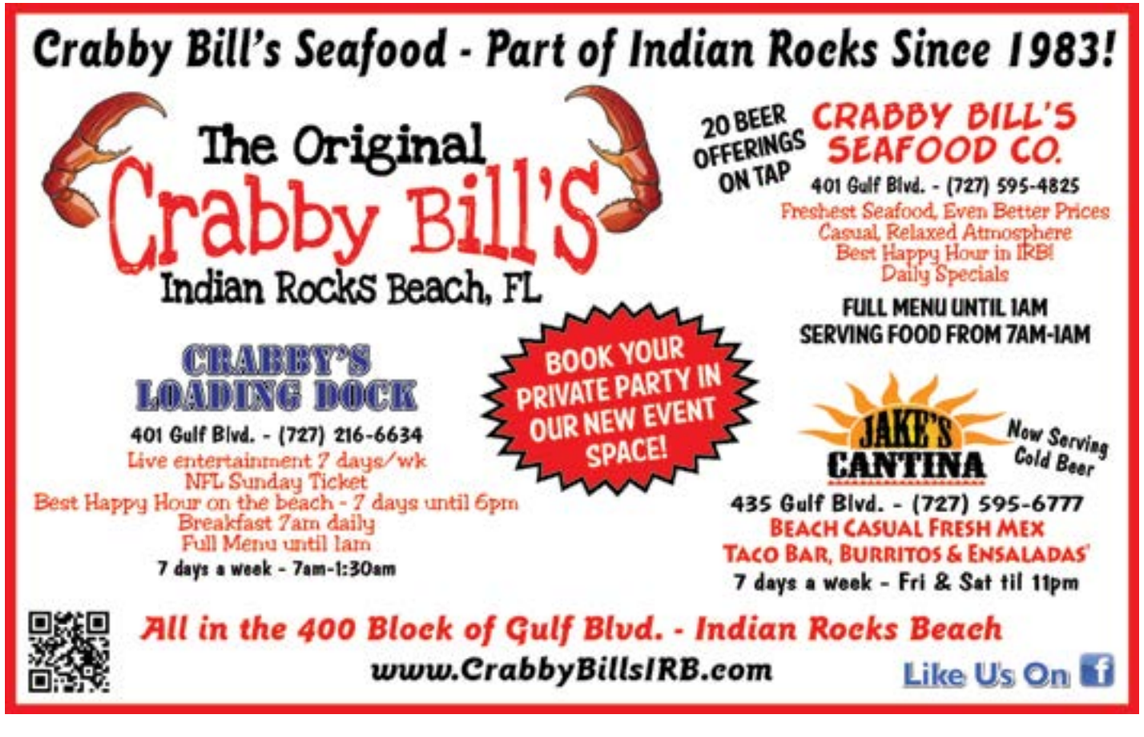
If there is no sidewalk, pedestrians must be on the left side of the road, facing into oncoming traffic. When on a sidewalk, it is OK to walk on either side of the road. If a sidewalk is available, pedestrians must use it, and are not permitted to walk in the street. This includes runners.

Pedestrians may cross the street mid-block, unless there are traffic signals at each end of the block. If they are crossing mid-block, the pedestrian must yield to oncoming vehicles, whether they are motorized or non-motorized. If there is a crosswalk, they must use it.

MOTORISTS - At crosswalks, motorists must STOP if a pedestrian has signaled an intent to cross, whether there is a blinking light or not. Everyone must stop, as soon as the person steps one foot off the curb. Motorists emerging from an alley or driveway that crosses a sidewalk are required to yield to pedestrians.

If the road is too narrow to share, drivers must give cyclists the right of way. When a road narrows, cyclist must be given the time and space to merge left and get in front of the driver. Florida law requires that a motorist keep a safe distance when passing a cyclist. This means at least 3 feet of clearance. Drivers may cross the center line in a no-passing zone to pass a cyclist.

For more information, see www.dot.state.FL.us/Safety.



Real Estate News

2017 IRB REAL ESTATE WRAP-UP

Wrapping paper but no bow

By Gordon Obarski, Real Estate Broker Gordon Realty House

► LOOKING BACKWARD

The prediction for 2017 was for continued slow growth in real estate sales…and that is precisely what happened. Nothing exciting. Nothing to panic over.

Even with a lack of inventory and Hurricane Irma, there were a few more total IRB sales in '17 than in '15 and '16. For the most part, the increased sales were on condos. There were 60 single-family homes sold in '17…3 less than '16 and 5 less than '15.

There were subtle signs that growth over the last few years may be slowing somewhat. While the median sale price of single-families in '17 was up from two years ago ('15), it "blipped" backwards about 5% from '16 while condos prices fell a little over 6%.

The average days a single-family home was on the market went from 116 days in '16 to 67 days last year ('17). Listed. Boom. Sold. Nationally, homes were listed for the shortest time in three decades! That's also why single-family/condo sellers commanded 97% of list price last year. And, since supply exceeded demand, inspection issues were less of a factor as sellers copped a "take-it-or-leave it" attitude.

► LOOKING FORWARD

Zillow predicts average home prices to continue climbing in '18 but at a slightly slower rate. This slowdown appears to have jumped the gun and kicked in a tad early in IRB. Rest assured though another crash is not imminent. A report from Arch Mortgage Insurance shows the Tampa Bay Area among the markets least likely to see home prices fall in the next two years and Florida is expected to remain the best economic performer in the South for at least another year.

That being said, certain external factors have the potential to affect what we report this time next year at 2018's year-end:

--Federal Tax Reform Bill impacts (capital gains, etc.)

--Financial changes (rising interest rates, $30K increase in conforming loan limits, etc.)

--National Flood Insurance Program uncertainties

One national trend to keep an eye on: "Boomers" staying in the workforce longer. In 2000, 13% of folks 65+ were still working, according the Pew Research. Currently, that number is up to 19%. By 2021, 32% of boomers are predicted to still be slugging away, delaying retirement plans and increasing the demand for properties with strong short-term rental history in the interim.

Since those who make New Year's resolutions are 10 times as likely to be successful, here's one I'll make for the real estate industry: To find creative ways to generate more inventory and continue making hay while the sun shines, getting top dollar for sellers. Buh-bye 2017. Whatz up, 2018!

Source: Source: My Florida Regional MLS

PIONEER DAYS, Continued

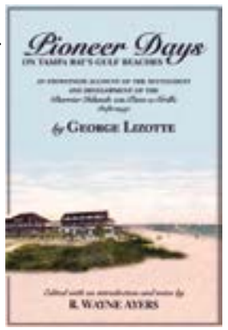
Upon insistence on the part of Mr. Hamlin that the land did exist, the Gainesville end of it denied it again, basing their statement on the map. Consequently the land was known only by the settlers around Lowe's Landing and a few voyagers who had explored it in boats.

These setbacks did not deter Mr. Hamlin or Mr. Hendrick, who were determined to acquire the point and nearby island property if it lay in their power. They appealed to the land office in Washington DC. Washington notified Mr. Hamlin that it was necessary to furnish affidavits from old settlers in the neighborhood that Indian Rocks did exist, that it was not a dream but a reality.

A special trip was made to Lowe's Landing and the proper signatures were gathered on documents stating that hundreds of acres did exist on the point which is now the popular resort, Indian Rocks. New correspondence resulted in the appointment of a deputy state engineer by the name of Rousseau, who ran off the lines verifying the statements of the old-timers that Indian Rocks was really there. So the map of Hillsborough County was changed to include the place that became the logical resort for Tampa and the vicinity as a bathing beach.

Lizotte's narrative continues in the book, with his eyewitness account of Indian Rocks developments, beginning in the early 1900s. He tells the story of Harvey Hendrick's homestead, the early hotels, the auto and railroad bridges to the mainland, and the role of "my old friend Cap Ransom" as bridge tender and in clearing a channel for navigation through the Narrows. ■

"Pioneer Days on Tampa Bay's Gulf Beaches" by George Lizotte. Edited by R. Wayne Ayers. Published by University of Tampa Press. The book is available at Crabby Bill's, Heritage Village, Indian Rocks Museum, and Florida Botanical Gardens gift shops; Haslam's Book Store, Barnes & Noble Tyrone, and other venues; and on-line at Amazon.com and UTpress.UT.edu .



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TO TRUST OR NOT TO TRUST

by Ray Ferrara, ProVise Management Group

Estate planning is an essential part of every financial plan. A cookie cutter approach doesn't usually work well and some of the decisions can be complicated. Do you want to leave the money out right to the children where they are left to their own devices, or is it better to leave the money in trust for them? For those who want to rule from the grave, leaving the inheritance in trust allows one to do so. But there is so much more to consider.

Do the beneficiaries have the time, talent and inclination to manage the inheritance? Does a beneficiary have a special need? Are the beneficiaries going to be happily married forever? Could there be a current or future problem with drugs? Do you want to protect the inheritance from the beneficiaries' creditors? Do you want the inheritance to pass down your bloodline over multiple generations? Answers to these and other questions may help guide your decision about creating a trust with an attorney.

One of the most important decisions to make will be about the trustee of the trust. Often people will want a close relative to oversee the money. However, this can put the relative in an awkward position with the beneficiaries and it assumes that they have the ability to properly manage the assets. Who will take over when they become sick or die?

There are benefits to naming a corporate trustee, including their expertise in trust administration with set policies and procedures. They are impartial when dealing with beneficiaries. Finally, they provide a great deal of continuity and permanence. The beneficiaries should have the right to fire the trustee and to hire a new corporate trustee, but not a friend down the street. Sometimes the beneficiaries can act as co-trustees, but without a power to disburse funds to themselves.

But aren't corporate trustee's expensive? But consider the potential cost of not using a professional trustee? While one often thinks of big banks as a corporate trustee, there are less expensive and equally competent independent trust companies. In working with our clients we look at their needs and desires and then match those against multiple trust companies to determine the best fit.

If you would like to learn more about independent trust companies and their benefits, please schedule a complimentary meeting with us.

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Bar & Restaurant News

CRABBY'S IS TASTE OF IRB WINNER AGAIN During November's Taste of IRB, attendees voted, Crabby Bills Seafood the Best of the Taste of IRB. This was only the second time the contest was held, and Crabby's won both times. They received 24% of all the votes.

Caddy's Pub in Indian Shores came in second and the new Vie's Waterfront Restaurant at Shipwatch was third. For more information about Crabby's and their menu, visit www.CrabbyBillsIRB.com.

BACKWATERS CHILI COOK-OFF Get ready for the 13th Annual Backwater's Chili Cook-off on January 28th beginning at 3pm. This contest, limited to the first 30 applicants, is for those home chefs who have a secret chili recipe. Contestants will have their chili judged by skilled judges. If you win, you receive a plaque and bragging rights for the whole year. If you don't make a great chili — come eat some of the entries. This event is always held the Sunday before Super Bowl, so there is no football.

Wesley Craig recently joined the staff of Backwaters as a Sous Chef. A graduate of Largo High School, he has been working locally at Jimmy Guanas and The Bait House. Wes says, "I enjoy preparing food people can eat with their eyes." He will be working under Head Chef Paul Hobin.

Visit BackwatersonSandKey.com or call 517-7383.

BONEFISH GREAT FOR LUNCH Did you know Bonefish Grill is open for lunch, now? It is a good place to take your out of town guests, or to have your business lunches. They have call ahead dinner seating. 727-518-1230.

MORE BEER WITH YOUR PIZZA Largo's Pizza Shack turned 35 last year. To celebrate, they expanded their beer selection—a lot. Now, they carry 26 beers with twelve of them on tap. Plus, they expanded their wine menu to 21 selections. Of course, Pizza Shack has pizza too—and lots more. They have a complete Italian menu.

Find them just over the bridge at 11963 Indian Rocks Road, across the street from Publix. Call 596-6780 for pick-up and find their menu at PizzaShackItalianGrille.com.

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Pizza Shack Italian Grille
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Best Pizza in the area
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Bar & Restaurant News

SALT PUBLIC HOUSE When the Sandbar closed in August, local family members , Aidan, Sabrina and Sam Bowles decided it would be a great location for their new restaurant called Salt Public House.

photo credit: Brian Goff

They finally just got all their permits, received a needed variance, and now completed a total demolition. They are moving forward with their plans for their new concept.

"This will be a very nice Sports Bar—one of the best in the area," says Aidan, the owner. "We are adding a lot of modern amenities and many more TVs, of course. The layout of the bar and restaurant area will be completely different."

Sabrina, Aidan's wife, is planning the menu and will be running the kitchen. "There will be wings, but a whole lot more," adds Sabrina.

Look for Salt Public House to open in 2018—maybe as early as March at 1309 Gulf Blvd, next to Nekton.

MICROBREWERIES IN INDIAN ROCKS? Recently, the City Commissioner voted to allow microbreweries to operate within the city's limits. It was never anyone's intent to actually forbid them, though. The present ordinance lists businesses that are allowed to operate in the city. When it was written, microbreweries were not as popular and no one thought to add it to the list. A recent inquiry pointed out the omission and Commissioners were unanimous in approving a change to the City Ordinance. Presently, there are no plans for a microbrewery in town, but at least now it can happen.

FOR NOW MARKER 34 IS STILL AVAILABLE Marker 34, known to long time residents as Brewmaster's Steak House closed January 20, 2011—eight years ago. It was the big restaurant at the north end of the Holiday Inn Harbourside, and is visible from the Walsingham Bridge.

"We are re-thinking the use of that building," says Jeff Keierleber, owner of the Holiday Inn. "It is still for lease as a restaurant, but the space is 20,000 square feet, more than most restaurateurs want or need. We are considering cutting it into two, or maybe converting it into more hotel rooms or even condos. Now that the new IRB condos and water park are done, we can turn our attention to the closed restaurant."

CADDY'S AT THE PUB When The Pub was sold, a year ago, it was announced in addition to changing the name to Caddy's at The Pub there would be structural and cosmetic changes.

Those changes are now underway. The entire inside bar and dining area was under construction in December. Next, they will move outside, then to the north deck. The sign saying "The Pub" will change too.

Bar & Restaurant News

CRABBY TURNS 86

Bill Loder, also known as "Crabby" Bill, will have his 86th birthday on January 8th. Bill started Crabby Bill's Seafood Restaurant in Indian Rocks 35 years ago, but has been in the seafood business for over 50 years. Bill, his wife Dolores, and all five of their children, worked in the restaurant in the beginning. Dolores passed away in 2000, but her family continues to grow with 13 grandchildren & 16 great grandchildren. Crabby Bill's family also are the owners of Lulu's Oyster Bar & Jake's Cantina.

In honor of Bill's birthday, from Friday January 5th through Monday January 8th, when you bring Bill a birthday card, you will receive a free Miller Lite draft. Crabby Bill's Don't worry, Be Crabby Logo T-Shirts will be $8 that weekend also.

STONE CRAB SEASON OFF TO A SLOW START Florida's stone crab season has been slow so far this year. Since it opened October 15, crabbers have reported below normal harvests. State wildlife officials say the crabs are affected by cold fronts and there have not been any significant ones yet. Hurricane Irma did not help, either. Stone crab season runs until May 15th. Time will tell if the season improves and harvests return to normal.

XONE A NEW SPORTS BAR XONE (pronounced Zone) is now open just across the bridge in Largo, in the same space previously occupied by Bent Elbow #2. The space was totally, completely remodeled from top to bottom with a new bar to bathrooms. Owners Tony and Amy Marzano have poured their heart and soul (and money) into this new restaurant and bar and it shows.

The former bar did not have a restaurant, but Tony added a complete multi-faceted menu. It is not just typical bar food, although there are wings and nachos, but so much more. Tony originally from Youngstown, ohio has "The Burgh" Italian sandwich with three different meats, great boneless country ribs, and massive XONE burgers.

If you like sports, they have twenty-five flat screen TVs; ten are 70 inches. Naturally they show all the sports—football, Super Bowl, basketball and hockey, and more.

Xone features music with dancing almost every night, DJs during the week, and live bands followed by DJs on Friday and Saturdays.

This is now a non-smoking establishment, but there is an outside patio with TVs too, for the smokers.

They are open for 11am to 3am most nights, and serve lunch, dinner and late night. Get food until after 2am.

Xone is located, near Hungry Howie's Pizza, at 14219 Walsingham Road, Largo. Visit XoneSportsBarandGrill.com.

STEVE MILLER, 40 YEARS OF HEATING AND COOLING

by Bob Griffin, Publisher

Indian Rocks Beach resident Steve Miller, owner of Indian Rocks Heating and Cooling, grew up in Bradenton in the late 1960s. At the end of high school, when his draft number told him he was not going to Vietnam, he registered for trade school to learn a little something about air conditioning.

Miller met his wife Gail, while attending that trade school. She was 19; he was 21. They married and moved to Pinellas County, then to the Indian Rocks. They lived on Bay Drive for 13 years before moving to Harbor Drive North, where they have lived for close to 30 years.

He started his A/C career about 1973, by himself. "I just printed up some business cards, and started handing them out," Miller remembers. "Pretty soon, people started calling me—a lot. I figured I better get some real training, and got certified in the business."

Miller officially started Indian Rocks Heating & Cooling in 1978—40 years ago.

"Ralph Finke was the mayor of IRB when I first started. He hired me to do some work for him and had a small warehouse in town at the corner of 23rd Avenue and 1st Street," Miller explains. "So, I opened up my first shop in his warehouse."

Over the years, Indian Rocks Heating and Cooling has grown and prospered. "We have thousands of customers, many right here in Indian Rocks Beach," Miller says. "We have grown to the point that now we always have six to seven service men. Two other employees work in our office."

Miller has worked for many of the city's area businesses including: Three Palms Vacation Rentals, PJ's Restaurant,

Yellow Banks Groves, Goodyear Tires, Church of the Isles, Calvary Episcopal, The City of Indian Rocks Beach, the PSFRD Fire Station, Pueblo Village, Pajano's Pizza, Hubbel Funeral Home, The Pub Restaurant, Holiday Inn Harbourside, Jimmy Guana's Restaurant and others.

"Even though we have many corporate customers, our base of business is really in residential service," adds Miller. "We have a lot of repeat business from our existing customers. All our work is in Pinellas, from Palm Harbor to St. Pete Beach."

"I worked with Steve in the business for 14 years," Gail adds. "Indian Rocks and the A/C business have been very good to us."

Steve and Gail have two kids, son Kyle (32) and daughter Casey (30). Kyle, who is also certified, works for the company, too. Miller isn't slowing down much, even after 40 years, but enjoys having some younger guys around. "Come July, I don't have to go in those hot attics much anymore," he laughs.

"Steve is great to work for," says Joanne, his office assistant for the past 22 years. "He is really good to his people."

You can reach Indian Rocks Heating and Cooling by calling 727-596-1785.

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WATERFRONT HOMES.... WHY THE INTRACOASTAL?

By Tom Smith Owner of GHD Construction Services

When most people think of a beautiful waterfront home, right away their minds turn to a beachfront home. With lots on the beach now averaging almost $2,000,000 and a beach home costing maybe another $2,000,000 - $3,000,000, the thought of investing $5,000,000 to live on the sand becomes out of reach. That's a lot of savings being spent when there are alternatives that offer even greater rewards at sometimes only 25% of the cost to live on the beach.

There are many vacant waterfront lots and a great many 60 year old tear-down homes where a beautiful new waterfront home can be constructed for about $1,250,000. (Home & Lot!). Beautiful waterfront opportunities are available in all of the beach municipalities between Clearwater and St. Pete Beach. The older housing stock is now being replaced by FEMA compliant newly designed homes, that are energy efficient, meet 150mph hurricane requirements, and have all the amenities and luxuries of new homes today. Literally every week I hear from customers that believe there are no housing opportunities on the beautiful intracoastal, yet that simply is not true. Yes, no new homes exist for sale that conform to FEMA requirements, but building a new home is an opportunity for that piece of the "American Dream" at a price point that is acceptable for many families.

Many additional misconceptions prevail about an intracoastal waterfront home versus a home constructed on the beach. Let me outline my reasoning, and why I personally believe intracoastal waterfront homes are a superior opportunity, at the greatly lower cost. Here's my analysis of this opportunity today:

▶ Much Better Water View: Sorry, but looking out at the west horizon over the gulf really doesn't offer much. On the intracoastal, every day there are dolphins and boat activity, fun to watch from your balcony.

▶ Better Hurricane Protection: The big storm will eventually hit Pinellas. A great deal of extra protection will be realized on the intracoastal due to seawall protection. Sure, the waters will rise, but your new home will be many feet above FEMA requirements protecting all living area.

▶ Keep Your Boat At Home: Why have your boat in a high and dry that you have to drive to instead of in your own back yard when you want to fish or boat?

▶ Boat to Your Favorite Restaurant or Beach Bar: Don't fight the road traffic on Gulf.

▶ Much Lower Real Estate Taxes: Definitely. Why pay the much higher taxes each year.

▶ No Late Afternoon Sun: Some people flock to beach lots for the view only to realize they have to close the blinds as the west afternoon sun beats the windows. Very hot! Most intracoastal lots have east orientations, so an afternoon can be spent around a pool shaded by the home.

▶ Lastly, No Sand Blowing Into the Pool and Patio: Enough said.

How long will this opportunity exist for affordable waterfront homes with all the positive features listed above? Nobody knows that, but the facts are these costs are increasing between 10% and 15% annually, so the opportunity will become out of reach of many families if they wait. Come by our new furnished model and see just what this waterfront lifestyle offers!

GHD Construction Services, Inc. has constructed 6,500 homes since 1971, and has the new 2018 "Key West" home at 239 144th Ave. N, Madeira Beach. If you have any questions pertaining to new home construction, call (727) 954-8345, or email tweisser@ghdcsi.com. Meanwhile, visit www.GHDCoastalHomes.

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2017: A YEAR OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS

By Karen Williams Seel, Pinellas County Commissioner

I hope your new year is off to a great start, full of optimism for yourself and your family. This time of year always seems to prompt optimism. Our goals are renewed. Our hopes for a sunny future burn bright, especially here in sunny Pinellas County!

Part of our optimism is sourced from our past accomplishments. You might have achieved some or all of last year's New Year's goals. If you did, congratulations! If not, set that goal again and keep trying until you do succeed.

As a county commissioner, I, too, look back and review last year's goals as your representative. I can report another year full of "doing things" for the residents and visitors of our county.

These accomplishments align with our vision to be the standard of public service in America while addressing your needs and concerns, today and tomorrow. These "doing things" are guided by our five strategic plan goals. I am proud to provide you some highlights from these accomplishments.

In 2017, the county and our partners achieved many milestones, including the passage of the 2020 to 2030 Penny for Pinellas renewal referendum with an impressive 83% voter approval. The Penny for Pinellas funds capital improvement projects that support our local community. The renewed Penny will continue to support long-term investments in roads, bridges and trails, water quality, flood and sewer spill prevention, preserving parks and our environment and overall community safety and vitality. To see more proposed projects for the renewed Penny, visit www.pinellascounty.org/penny.

We continued to deliver first class services by expanding our community outreach efforts. One of those efforts, the new Voice of the Customer survey tool, gives you the opportunity to provide your input and feedback. The new Ready Pinellas app provides you with up-to-the-minute disaster preparedness information.

To ensure public health, safety and welfare, we coordinated preparation for, response to and recovery from Hurricane Irma. More than 250 county employees were hard at work during the storm at the Emergency Operations Center and all county employees responsible for response and recovery worked at peak capacity to get everyone back to normal as soon as possible.

We practiced superior environmental stewardship by implementing coordinated stormwater and wastewater solutions to reduce sanitary sewer overflows through our countywide Wastewater/Stormwater Task Force partnership. We also reduced our energy use by more than a half a million dollars at our water plants by implementing upgrades in efficient equipment.

To foster economic growth and vitality, we hosted the 2017 Economic Symposium that brought together thought leaders from our community to discuss strategies for positioning Pinellas County and the region for continued economic growth and success.

All of these accomplishments are a testament to our dedicated employees and the strong foundation of our strategic plan. I encourage you to read about the many other achievements of the past year in our 2017 "Doing Things" Accomplishments Report, which will be available in late January in print and online at www.pinellascounty.org.

Again, wishing you another great year here in Pinellas County. Let's make it even better than the last!

2018 BEACH WALK/WALK

A Clearwater Beach tradition is ready to launch. Chapel-by-the-Sea and Religious Community Services (RCS) will kick off the 9th Annual Beach Walk/Walk on Saturday January 27, 2018. Chapel-by-the-Sea and RCS partner to raise funds to provide food and services for the less fortunate residents in Pinellas County. Last year the RCS Food Bank and The Haven for Domestic Violence served over 165,000 needy people. Since its inception in 2010, the Beach Walk/Walk has raised over $100,000 in support of RCS's activities.

From the beginning, the Walk drew heavily in support from Clearwater Beach residents and merchants. Ken Hamilton, owner of the Palm Pavilion, launched the event by opening his doors at dawn to support early registration. Frank Chivas of Island Way Grill followed by hosting a sumptuous pancake breakfast that has been followed in recent years by Dan Shouvlin, owner of Clear Sky Café. Ed and Marsha Droste answered the call by multiple sponsorships including Hooters, Pete & Shorty's, Forever Pillows and Splittsville Bowling.

Over the years the list has grown to include Steve Collins at Island Estates Mobil, the staff at Clearwater Marine Aquarium, Rosemary Windsor of Jolley Trolley and George Lefevre at Windward Bar & Grille. In fact, Molly, a renown Windward bartender, achieved a first by flying a drone to record the Walk. DITEK, Shephards, East Shore Resort, Sand Pearl, Belleair Country Club, Sheraton Sand Key and many other merchants and residents have contributed to the event and supported the Walk's Super Silent Auction.

In recent years, the Island Estates Civic Association has been key in their support of the Beach Walk/Walk. Mary Lau, Heather Brock, Mike Andersen, Dave Allbritton and many local supporters have participated and helped promote the event to the residents, visitors and merchants of Clearwater Beach.

Call 727.446.0430 for information or visit ChapelByTheSea.net for Registration Forms.

WINTERFEST ON THE ROCKS

A full day of family fun is set for Winterfest on the Rocks, Saturday, February 17th, from 10 am to 4 pm at Calvary Episcopal Church.

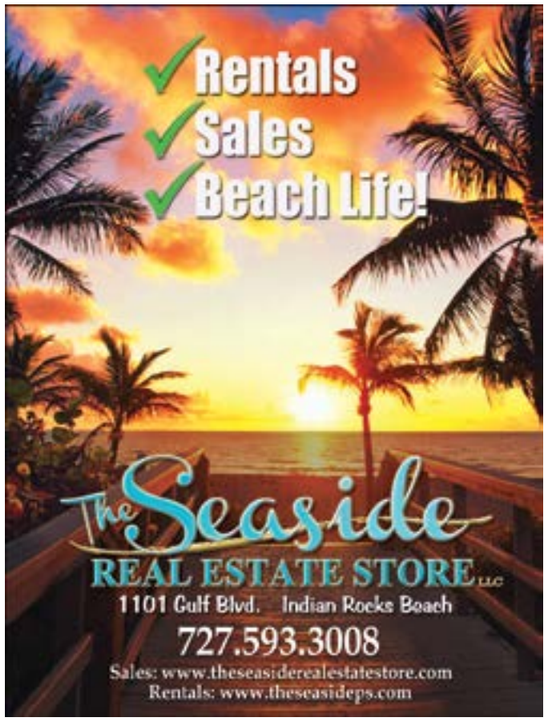
Winterfest will include a Patriotic Pet Parade, Arts and Crafts vendors, a silent auction, Scottish Bag Pipers, a Steel Band, Jazz Band and other entertainment. There will be kid's activities a bake sale. There will be a raffle for new Paddle Board.

Food vendors include Guppy's restaurant and Slyce Pizza. Hot dogs, pulled pork sandwiches, and popcorn will be also available. Beverages include beer, wine, soda and coffee.

Pet owners are invited to dress up their pets in patriotic attire for the popular Patriotic Pet Parade and Contest that begins at 11:30 am. There will be contest prizes for the noontime strut. Registration begins at 11am. There is no entry fee.

Local outreach ministries will benefit from the Winterfest event.

For more information about Winterfest on the Rocks call 727-595-2374 or follow them on Facebook at Winterfest IRB.



WANT TO DO SOMETHING FUN FOR EVERYONE?

How About Trying a Little Time Travel!

by Ted Shannon Belleair Resident

Heritage Village, just off Walsingham and right next to the Florida Botanical Gardens, is where you will find an easy way to go back in time. This 21 acre living history experience is an amazing way to spend a couple of rewarding hours of the time you can control. This wonderful preserve gives you a great view into how it was 50, 75 or even 100 plus years ago.

The Village is open to the public free of charge and while the hours are limited, Wednesday - Saturday from 10am - 4pm and Sunday 1pm - 4pm, with a little planning it is an adventure worth taking. If you want to make half a day if it, there is a walking bridge directly into the Florida Botanical Gardens and you can take in that treat as well, also free of charge.

Heritage Village is a grouping of 31 structures of various periods dating back as early as the 1850's. Each building is able to be entered or viewed and has period artifacts appropriate to that structure. There are homes, a church, school, shops, train station and a store that is full of all the staples of the era! There are even a few vehicles to admire. You will also find a few plants and a garden that is quite interesting. All of the buildings give you a sense of how it was at that time. However, some of the structures have been modified to have modern Air Conditioning so, taking some time there in the summer is an enjoyable event. It really reminds you of how good we have it today in our own temperature controlled, electrically operated homes.

At certain times of the year, there even are special events demonstrations of blacksmithing or sugar mill production and several other activities. You can find the schedule at pinellascounty.org/heritage/annual-events.htm or google "heritage village" and click on "Plan Your Visit." There are some events that history buffs would not want to miss!

Heritage Village is a great "all ages" attraction and it is something all kids should get an opportunity to see. It is also a romantic hand-holding opportunity (without kids). If you do have kids or grandkids make sure that you make the time for this quality entertainment adventure. Tell them it's like a set from a movie only real or something. Tell them they can post pictures on Instagram or Facebook or Snapchat or whatever is the latest selfie platform, proving they went back in time.

Our tax dollars have already paid to create this time preserve of historic structures and artifacts. So, with free admission the price is nice! Plus this place is way less crowded then the theme parks you have to take out a mortgage to visit. Take advantage of what is right up the road from where you live and learn what the Floridians of the past lived like. It is time well spent!

WINTER HEATING SAFETY

As the temperatures drop, the number of fires increase. According to the United States Fire Administration (USFA), an estimated 108,400 winter residential building fires occur annually in the United States, resulting in an estimated average of 945 deaths, 3,825 injuries, and $1.7 billion in property loss. Although cooking is the leading cause of winter residential building fires, heating equipment is second on the list as one of the leading causes of home fires during the months of December, January and February. Heating your home safely is not as simple as the "flick of a switch." Fire & Rescue recommends the following tips:

- Have a professional service heating equipment annually.
- Keep combustibles, or anything that can burn or melt, away from heaters, furnaces, fireplaces and water heaters (at least three feet).
- NEVER use a range or oven to heat your home.
- Never leave a burning candle unattended. Extinguish candles when you leave a room.
- Keep matches and lighters up high, out of sight and reach of children (preferably in a locked cabinet).
- Test smoke alarms and make sure you family knows the fire escape plan.

Additionally, heating and cooking equipment that burn fuel are potential sources of carbon monoxide. Be aware of the dangers and know the signs of carbon monoxide poisoning. Some symptoms include shortness of breath, nausea, dizziness, light-headedness or headaches. High levels of CO can be fatal, causing death within minutes. Carbon Monoxide alarms can provide early detection. However, they are not a replacement for smoke alarms.

TED IRWIN SAIL A THON

By David Kline

The annual Ted Irwin Sail a Thon was held in December at the Clearwater Yacht Club. It was sponsored by the Indian Rocks Family Sailing Association, for the benefit of the Beach Community Food Pantry (BCFP) and chaired by director Ned Covel.

The event was created to honor the memory of Tampa boat builder Ted Irwin, a lifelong sailor and a master boat builder for many years. His family wanted to give back to the community by helping educate young sailors and also to support those who struggle with the daily challenges of hunger.

Each young sailor entering the event was tasked with securing monetary pledges from the community in support of their three hour sailing event. The entry fee for all sailors was four or more cans of food. The BCFP, located at 1615 First Street, Indian Rocks Beach was the recipient of the proceeds.

The BCFP would like to express its gratitude to all those young sailors who participated in the event, as well as the Indian Rocks Family Sailing Association and the Irwin family. It is through this event, and others like it throughout the year, that the food pantry can support over 1300 family members monthly.

If you wish to donate food items or monetary donations in support of BCFP, please contact Director, David Kline at 727-418-1673. For information visit our Facebook page at facebook.com/bcfoodpantryirb

Business Briefs

BLUFFS BUSINESS ASSOCIATION WINE WALK In October, they held their Fall Wine Walk, with the goal of introducing people to the many Belleair Bluffs merchants. Over 400 people walked or rode the Jolley Trolley to sample great wines and snacks at 45 Belleair Bluffs businesses along Indian Rocks Road and West Bay Drive. Shown here are Jeff Ceren, Skip Strittmatter and Jackie Ceren of Clearwater Beach relax at the Belleair Market on Indian Rocks Road. The next Wine Walk will be Saturday March 10. Tickets will go on sale February 1st.

MARINEMAX AIDS RECOVERY Clearwater's MarineMax, the nations largest boating retailer and operator of MarineMax Vacations in the Caribbean, announced they will donate a portion of new charter booking fees to the rebuilding of the British Virgin Islands. "The destruction caused by Hurricane Irma was significant. There continues to be a lot of work ahead as we prepare for the 2018 charter season," says Brett McGill, COO of MarineMax. "We want to help the businesses and residents there rebuild their homes and livelihoods." MarineMax's national headquarters is in Clearwater.

CORNER GAS STATION As mentioned in last newsletter, the gas station at the corner of Gulf Blvd and Walsingham Rd. has been leased with plans to become a Circle K with Texaco fuel. However, there are design delays due to permitting. The owners, United Oil Company of Tampa, have told us the project is currently on hold while they sort things out.

NEW SERVICES ADDED Lisa Gecelosky, LMT Massage Therapist, who has an office at 2401 W. Bay Drive, Suite 429 in Largo, recently added some new services:

Cupping - Using flexible silicone cups of varying sizes, massage cupping is a combination of massage movements and negative pressure. The vacuum produced creates a suction effect, which increases blood and lymphatic circulation while relaxing muscles and releasing "knots." The amount of suction varies from light to deep, depending on your needs. Cupping allows her to do deep work without the discomfort associated with deep tissue.

Facial Cupping - Mini silicone cups with coconut oil are used to massage & smooth fine lines. May help with collagen production, migraines, TMJD, and sinus issues.

Foot Reflexology - Applied pressure therapy that stimulates reflex points located on the feet, which correspond to specific areas of the body.

Reiki - A Japanese technique using universal energy (ki) to tap into your body's own ability to heal & restore to a state of balance. It is also called "hands on healing."

You can call Lisa at 727-412-1444 to schedule an appointment.

Business Briefs

BIG MAN'S MOVING CELEBRATES 1 YEAR One year ago, we introduced you to local newlyweds Josh and Brooke Anderson, who used their marriage gifts to partially fund their first 26' moving truck and start Big Man's Moving Company. After successfully completing nearly 500 moves during their first year, the Andersons would like to thank the community for its support. "We are so fortunate to live in a community where the residents support each other! Many read our story in this newsletter, saved the article, and called us when they were ready to move."

What's next for the couple? In 2018 they hope for continued growth. They know, the most important part of any business is customer service, and recognize their employees are an important part of that. "It's all about finding the right movers with good attitudes," Josh says. Big Man's is licensed for local and out of state moves. E-mail info@bigmansmoving.com, call 727-772-3458, or visit Bigmansmoving.com for information.

GOLF COURSE CONSTRUCTION Demolition of the Pelican Golf Course, formerly known as the Belleview Golf & Country Club, started mid-July. It was delayed during Hurricane Irma, when the Doyle Family who own the property, allowed the construction site to be turned into a temporary waste collection site.

"Now, we are passed demolition and have started working on infrastructure," says Supervisor Johnny Patronis, who works for Triton Building Group LLC. "We are preparing the land, fairways, and greens, putting in sprinkler lines, and doing basic site development." The Golf Course is projected to open in the Spring of 2019.

SHEPHARD'S DONATES TO CANCER FUND Shephard's Beach Resort donated $4,500 to support a local charity that financially assists Pinellas women with cancer - the "Love Your Neighbor Fund." Money was generated in conjunction with their 40th Anniversary Celebration held in October.

The mission of the Fund is to provide financial assistance to female cancer patients who are in active treatment and recovery. The non-profit's goal is to assist patients with financial needs so that they can focus on healing and recovery.

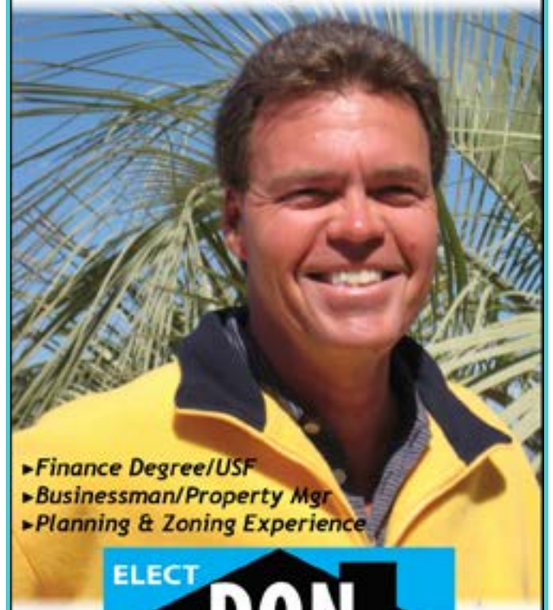
"This donation will have a direct impact on the lives of hundreds of women," says Winna Morrin, a cancer survivor and President of the Love Your Neighbor Fund. "We are touched by Shephard's incredible generosity."

USA GROCERS UPGRADES There have been some changes inside USA Grocers. Owner Nazih is remodeling his entire front counter area. He is adding a full deli with meats, cheeses, and to-go sandwiches. Look for it to be finished early in January. USA Grocers is located at 13th Avenue and Gulf Blvd.

An Open Letter to Mayor R.B. Johnson

As I begin my run for IRB Mayor-Commissioner, it's only proper to thank you, R.B., for your many years of service to our community. While you and I have not always agreed on every issue, your intelligence and dedication have set a high bar for your successor. Should I be fortunate enough to be chosen to serve the people of IRB, I promise to continue that high standard.

Respectfully,
Don House
Candidate for IRB Mayor-Commissioner



Political advertisement paid for and approved by Donald House, Jr. for Mayor-Commissioner

WATER WONDERS

By Lara Milligan, Natural Resources Agent UF/IFAS Extension Pinellas County

Have you ever wondered where your water comes from? In our area, the answer can get a little complicated. It is important for us to know where our water comes from so we can protect our water resources and also ensure a sustainable water supply. Believe it or not, we have seen the days where our water supplies weren't so sustainable; the 1970s "water wars."

The water wars resulted from rapid growth in our region and increased groundwater pumping from water sources in Pinellas, Hillsborough and Pasco Counties. As lakes and wetlands were impacted by overuse, officials realized alternative sources needed to be developed. It took many years, and the transformation of the West Coast Regional Water Supply Authority (formed in 1974) to what is now Tampa Bay Water, to put an end to the wars. Tampa Bay Water developed a plan that was implemented between Hillsborough, Pasco and Pinellas Counties, New Port Richey, St. Petersburg and Tampa. These governments work with Tampa Bay Water to develop regional drinking water supplies. While groundwater sources make up the majority of our water supply, it was important to look at alternative sources to help ensure a long-term water supply and the health of local ecosystems.

Unincorporated areas and 19 of the 24 municipalities in Pinellas County, receive their water from Tampa Bay Water. Sources vary throughout the year and can be found at tampabaywater.org. The end product is usually a blend of groundwater, surface water and desalinated seawater. The exceptions: Belleair has a local groundwater supply; Oldsmar and Tarpon Springs have brackish groundwater reverse osmosis plants; and Dunedin and Clearwater have groundwater reverse osmosis plants. More about these sources:

1. Groundwater- Water that seeps into the soil and percolates through layers, ultimately reaching the Floridan Aquifer, an underground layer of limestone rock. Tampa Bay water utilizes thirteen well-fields in Hillsborough, Pasco, and Pinellas Counties to retrieve groundwater, which is treated at one of the seven treatment facilities before it is sent to one of the local governments or blended with one of the other supplies listed below.

2. Surface (River) Water- Tampa Bay Water utilizes the Alafia and Hillsborough Rivers, Tampa Bypass Canal and stored water from C.W. Bill Young Regional Reservoir for surface water supply.

3. Desalinated Seawater- Seawater or ocean water is pretreated before going through the reserve osmosis process. During reverse osmosis, the pretreated water is forced through a semi-permeable membrane allowing the freshwater to pass through, leaving the salts and minerals behind. The filter membrane has pores the water is forced through, which are about .001 microns or about 1/100,000th the diameter of a human hair!

It is hard to believe a state surrounded by water, covered with wetlands, and spotted with lakes and rivers could ever face water supply problems, but it has happened in the past. Tampa Bay Water is working hard to protect drinking water supplies by using these alternative water resources. We have recovered from the water wars in large part due to these new supplies but also through effective residential and commercial conservation efforts, which will continue to be an important part of our lives.

Find out where your water is coming from and take a trip to see the source of water for yourself. Building a connection with our local water resources is a good start for understanding the bigger picture of water resources in the state. See how much you know about water and watersheds in Pinellas by taking the County's quiz online at: research.net/r/watershedpinellas

ROBERT YOUNG - 25 YEARS YOUNG

Robert Young, who has been operating at his Indian Rocks Road location for 25 years last month, has been a jewelry designer for over 46 years. He is truly, the jeweler extraordinaire.

Originally from New Jersey, Young went to George Washington University and attended The Corcoran School of Art, both in Washington, D.C. Shortly thereafter, in 1971 he began his jewelry career.

Young moved to Tallahassee with a friend and decided he was going to learn silversmithing. On a return trip to New Jersey to visit family, he bought a "How to Make Jewelry" book at New York City's famous Fifth Avenue bookstore, Brentano's. "The next day, I went to a jewelry tool company and explained that I planned to be a silversmith, but I had almost no money. I asked if they had any factory seconds or demonstrator pieces they'd give me. Sometimes, when one asks, one receives, and they filled up a cardboard box with tools that were worth hundreds of dollars. Lucky for me, since then I had less than $200 to my name," Young chuckles.

Back in Tallahassee, he set up his shop; the first was in his attic. "I moved it into a 'head-shop' after a short time, and operated there," Young remembers. "In the mix of waterbeds and incense, they also sold pipes and rolling papers. I put my bench in the front window and made jewelry for hippies."

Young eventually returned to Washington D.C. for five years operating a jewelry store in fashionable Georgetown, where he changed his jewelry and began using gold, gemstones and diamonds. Once again on the move, in 1980 he found a very small storefront in Largo on Indian Rocks Road, next to the Coffee Mill. He leased that space for 13 years.

"When I had the Largo shop, I spoke to a class at Largo High School," Young recalls. "Three of the students who saw my presentation showed up at my store that afternoon and said they wanted to make jewelry with me. I hired them, and they worked for me for many years. One of them, Mark McKinlay, still does. The other two continued and eventually started their own jewelry businesses."

"By 1992, I thought it might be a good time to buy something instead of renting a store. If I was going to move, I wanted to be closer to my clientele, which primarily came from the Belleair area. I started looking and found the building on the corner of Indian Rocks Road North at Sunset Blvd, north of The Plaza. It used to be a restaurant (first Carlson's, then Hollander's). It was not for sale, and could only be leased. I came close, but just across the parking lot, to the north, was another building – for sale. I bought it and turned it into Robert Young Jeweler Extraordinaire, where you see it today. 25 years later, I am still here."

"I love the people I have met here; those who are clients and those about town too," Young says. "My market is mostly a five to seven mile radius. But, I do have my loyal customers who live in many of the surrounding cities and of course the beaches."

There is a side of Robert Young though, that few people know. His interests span a variety of areas, making him a true Renaissance man. Among his pursuits are gourmet cooking, drawing, painting, and travel. He reads a lot: science, political, art history, as well as French language study. His artwork consists of charcoal and pastel nudes, abstract paintings and ink landscapes. Many adorn the walls of his jewelry store. He recently had a one day showing at Galleria Misto in the Plaza.

Young is an artist, and always has been. His artistic sense is apparent in his custom jewelry. "My designs are not just pieces I put together; each piece has some extra artistic meaning," Young explains. "There is always some deliberate reason in what I create."

At times, the purpose of his design is to show off the diamond or gemstone. Sometimes, it is to explore some realm of his art. When looking at his work, you'll see his mix of design, among them are primitives, masks, figuratives (such as a manatee), abstracts (mimicking famous artists), art deco and others.

Often, he's asked to redesign family heirloom jewelry, other times he makes a client a custom piece from new materials. First, he listens to what you want, and draws it. After showing you what he plans to make, he listens again to make sure it is really what you want. Then, he makes it! That is why he is extraordinaire.

Robert Young Jeweler Extraordinaire is celebrating 25 years in Belleair Bluffs. He is located at 250 Indian Rocks Road. Learn more about his services at www.RobertYoung.com, or call him at 584-1110. ■

Organizational News

ROTARY CLUB OF INDIAN ROCKS BEACH

Submitted by Katrina Vargas

The Rotary Club of Indian Rocks Beach held The Big Game Raffle Drawing on December 13th, 2016. A BIG congratulations to the winners! Grand Prize Winner Richard Gerhard, Janesville, WI, 2nd Place Winner Dawn Evans, Florida and 3rd Place Winner Dick Beaucar, Wisconsin. To view the recorded drawing please visit their Facebook page or www.indianrocksrotary.org.

Mark your calendars for April 14th, 2018 for the 1st Annual Rotary Runs the Beach event! There will be a 1 Mile Walk and 5K Run. T-shirts are provided and the race will be chipped. All proceeds benefit the charitable contributions of Rotary and Rotary International. Come and join the fun for a great cause! Please visit www.rotaryrunsthebeach.org for more details and a link to the sign up is available there and at www.active.com.

The Rotary Club of Indian Rocks Beach takes pride in good fellowship and providing service above self to our local and global communities. Meetings are every Wednesday morning from 7:15 to 8:15 am at Jimmy Guana's in the Holiday Inn Harbourside. Check out our website www.indianrocksrotary.org.

ACTION 2000 INDIAN ROCKS BEACH

Submitted by Tim Shears

2017 will go down as a year of major accomplishments for Action 2000 Indian Rocks Beach (A2K).

We started out 2017 with a donation to kick start the "Save our Cottages" Documentary featuring IRB treasure, the Plein Aire Cottage Artists. We also added two Key West Style Pedestrian Shelters, near Villa Gallace and between 8th & 9th Avenue along Gulf Blvd. All six shelters received a new coat of paint this year. New Historical Panels were added around town, with plans to add more in 2018, creating a walking tour project led by the IRB Historical Society. We also beautified the area along Gulf Boulevard in front of CVS. We funded the Pergola in the Pocket Park at the entrance of IRB and we in 2018 will dedicate it to the memory of former Mayor, James G. Driscoll. We also upgraded the landscaping along Gulf Blvd from 17th to 18th Avenue across from Guppy's. At our May Mixer, we awarded four coveted A2K Preservation Awards in partnership with the Plein Aire Cottage artists continuing our mission to preserve and enhance our beach town.

Our first A2K Service Saturday is on January 20th at our 10th Avenue Mini Park project near the Nature Preserve. Our February 24th Service Saturday will be at the County Park at 17th/18th & Gulf Blvd. Both January and February Service Saturdays will run from 9 AM to 11 AM. Come join in the fun and help us Keep IRB Beautiful!

Some of the best things about getting involved with A2K are beautifying Indian Rocks Beach, maintaining the charm and character and building community spirit. Our first meeting of the year is January 8th at 6:30 PM at the Beach Art Center. Join us to find out how you can volunteer in the community and make a difference. We also have a meeting and social on February 12th starting at 5:30 PM at the Beach Art Center.

Each month we meet on the second Monday at 6:30PM at the IRB Beach Arts Center to discuss, plan and implement projects benefiting IRB, everyone is very welcome.

A2K seeks to transform the Gulf Boulevard Corridor and other adjacent commercial, tourist and residential areas into vital, thriving, attractive and desirable areas within which to live, conduct business, shop, dine, recreate & vacation. Visit www.irbaction2000.com/ or on Facebook - Action2000IRB. Action 2000 - Keeping IRB Beautiful!

FRIENDS OF IRB DOG PARK

Submitted by Wendell Schott

With the start of a new year, it's time to take stock of ourselves and think what could we be doing better. In recent weeks, IRB City Manager Greg Mims has issued a warning that unless dog owners begin cleaning up properly, the park will be closed. Pet waste left on the ground and in the dirt used to fill holes, presents a health hazard and it will not be allowed to continue.

Besides being an environmental pollutant, dog waste that remains on the ground can cause serious health problems to our canines such as hookworms, salmonella and parvo. Additional reminders have been posted on our bulletin board to "scoop the poop." Please assist by bringing bags and helping to restock the receptacles. Also, remind offenders of any infractions.

Bringing our "best friend" to a public park designed just for them is a great privilege of living here. Let's not let a few spoil it for the vast majority of responsible owners.

On a lighter note, Winterfest returns at Calvary Episcopal Church on Saturday, February 17th. Check the IRB Dog Park bulletin board for more details including the four categories for which our dogs will be awarded prizes. Who will win Most Friendly Dog of 2018? See you at the dog parade for all the furry-friend-frolicking!

INDIAN ROCKS BEACH LIBRARY

Submitted by Lee Miller, Librarian

They are celebrating the New Year by ringing in 2018 with some new FREE programs for residents.

Sahaja Mediation will be offered 5 - 6 pm on Tuesdays, January 9th and January 23st. Please sign up at the library as spaced is limited to 12 participants. These sessions explain the benefits of mediation and how to start your own practice. They will continue to offer meditation twice a month.

The "On the Rocks" book club is excited to announce the first book selection and meeting. Club members will be able to pick up a copy of "If the Creek Don't Rise" by Leah Weiss from the library to read for the first book club discussion lead by Miss Lee, the City Librarian. They will meet at the Library at 5 pm on Tuesday January 30th. Copies are limited to the number of signed up members. A copy of the book club titles will be available on Overdrive for downloading to your devices.

Story time continues with Miss Lee for kiddos ages one through five on Tuesday mornings at 11 am. Join them for songs, finger plays and a story.

For more information about the Library, membership and programs please contact the librarian, Lee Miller, at lmiller@irbcity.com or call 727-596-1822. You can also find information on the City of Indian Rocks Beach web page www.indian-rocks-beach.com.

SOCCER SHOTS

Learn and play soccer at Soccer Shots. This is not a league but a year-round training program for children 2-8 years old. Their focus is not only on soccer, but also character development. They try to positively impact children's lives on and off the field through our best-in-class coaching, communication and curriculum.

Clinics and leagues are held throughout Pinellas County. For information or to register, visit soccershotspinellas.com or call 308-1200 (X3) and ask for Cory.

- Over 20 years experience in all levels of government for Microsoft
- My goals are:
  - Ensure we keep our community values and small town charm
  - Sensitive to the people's voice.
  - Continue IRB's strong fiscal position
  - Keep our beach beautiful

NICK
PALOMBA
FOR CITY COMMISSIONER

THE NEW AMERICAN ARTS AND CRAFTS MUSEUM

This new downtown museum is already under way on Fourth Avenue N between Third and Fourth Streets. The construction of this $70-million museum is starting as soon as the permits, expected this month, are issued. This is the dream of businessman and collector Rudy Ciccarello who is spearheading and paying for project. It will feature a vast collection of furniture, pottery, tile, metal work, lighting, photography and other decorative arts from the American Arts and Crafts movement. The museum will be a five-story, 137,000 square foot facility.

The $70 million project does not include the $16 million already spent to acquire the 3.2 acres of prime downtown real estate, construction of the parking garage already built and open, architectural fees, consulting and permits. Once started, the museum is expected to take two years to build and decorate.

This is the second privately financed museum recently announced in the downtown area. The first was The James Museum, founded by Tom and Mary James, scheduled to open early next year.

CASA'S SOUP-ER BOWL:
Food Drive Needs your Help

For many people, when they hear that someone is reaching out for help to get out of an abusive relationship their first instinct is to ask, "why didn't she just leave?" Let's put aside the tragic irony of that statement - they're annoyed that someone is trying to escape abuse… because they haven't already escaped abuse. Instead let's just answer it head on.

So, "why didn't she just leave?" It might be because she has nowhere to go. In fact, domestic violence is the third leading cause of homelessness among women and their children.

Thankfully, CASA (Community Action Stops Abuse) and other domestic violence centers have programs empowering people to overcome these challenges and attain a safe home. (24-hour hotline: 727-895-4912.)

CASA provides food to the approximately 133 people at their domestic violence center. No one will ever be forced to go hungry while staying at their emergency shelter, no matter how expensive it gets… and it does get very expensive!

They need your help to sustain its emergency shelter, provide living necessities like nutritious food, and continue programs healing the soul, healing the pain and giving people tools to attain financial independence. Help out by participating in CASA's Soup-er Bowl Food Drive for a Safe Home! They need sponsors, donation drop locations and committee members to make its upcoming "Soup-er Bowl" initiative a success.

They are lining up resources for their January Soup-er Bowl! Last year, 50 businesses, clubs and organizations helped collect five months of nonperishables. This year, please help them reach their goal of eight months of nonperishables, plus financial resources to provide 8 months of fresh food and vital health initiatives! Visit www.casa-stpete.org/SouperBowl or e-mail Mo Venouziou at info@casa-stpete.org to get involved!

LITTLE LEAGUE REGISTRATION

If your children want to play Little League, it is time to register at ETeamz.com/WestPinellas.

West Pinellas Little League is always in need of more volunteers, coaches, umpires and sponsors. E-mail Kenny Wright, President of the Little League, at westpinellaslittleleague@gmail.com to get involved

ABOVE IT ALL: A CRANE OPERATOR'S LIFE

by Bob Griffin, Publisher

The tallest guy downtown has got to be Mike Kell, a crane operator on the construction site of ONE, St. Petersburg, the high-rise at the east end of Central Avenue. Now working on the top floor of the 41-story building, he has been working on the project since shortly after its 2016 groundbreaking.

Kell, who works for the Morrow Equipment Company, operates one of two cranes used to lift supplies to the uppermost floors. Kast Construction, one of many contractors on the ONE project, leases the cranes and Kell's services.

With over 25 years of experience, Kell has helped build many of our tall buildings. His last job was on Sarasota's waterfront. He worked on St Petersburg's Signature Condo, Clearwater Beach's Hyatt Regency and the Westshore Yacht Club. Kell, who has worked for Morrow about five years, lives in Lakeland and commutes downtown each day. He leaves home three hours before sunrise, getting to the job at 4:30 am. "When I get to work, it is dark," say Kell. "I always see the sunrise, a job perk."

He rides one of the buildings newly installed elevators to a top floor, then climbs a ladder attached to the crane, up to his perch. He stays there the entire work day, which can be 12-14 hours. He does this five, or sometimes six days, a week.

"I normally get home about 7 pm," Kell says. "I spend some time with my wife; we have dinner together. Then I go to bed. Whatever she made for dinner is usually my lunch the next day."

Each morning, Kell takes his lunch, a gallon of water and a bucket up with him. Since he does not come down all day, you can probably figure out what the bucket is for. He even has a small microwave and a crockpot up there.

"This job requires teamwork," Kell stresses. "I have Pedro, my partner on the ground. He is my 'eyes on the ground' because I cannot see him or the hook I am dropping - we communicate by radio. Pedro tells me where the hook is and where it needs to go. He tells me the distance I have to the ground - 40, then 30, then 20 feet. I stop at 10 feet and then slowly lower the hook until Pedro tells me to stop."

"Pedro is a good guy," Kell continues. "He is my signal man. I have to trust him and what he says because he is 40 floors below me. We pick up and drop loads very fast, because time is money."

Crane operators are certified and licensed. They are monitored by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA).

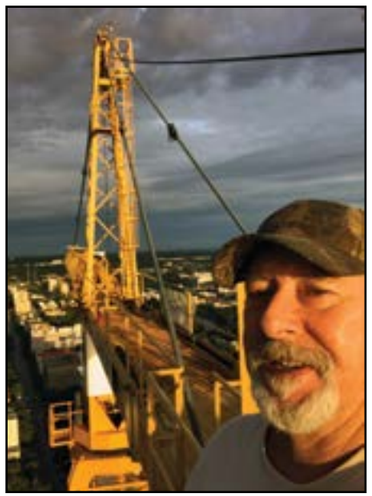
"I had to take several tests to become a certified crane operator," Kell explains. "Much of the test is math and involves calculations. You must know about weights. My crane can lift 18 tons but it may be at the outer end of the crane's arm. That is a lot torque. Wind speed and gusts are some of my greatest concerns," Kell adds. "When I have a load on a 500-foot cable, things can start swinging very quickly if you are not careful. My cockpit has a lot of electronics," he adds. "I have nine screens on the dashboard, much like an airplane.

Kell calls the weather stations when he

sees storms coming. "You can see the weather coming, ten miles away. Cranes are magnets for lightning. I was hit three times in one day," Kell recalls. As we learned during Hurricane Irma, cranes are designed to withstand hurricane force winds. "During severe weather, it is best to put them in neutral and let them swing in the wind, like a sailboat on a mooring," he explains.

Tim Mairn, Sales Manager of Morrow's Florida operations said, "The cranes will be up over 500 feet in the air when this job is finished. Kell is a great operator and is very concerned with safety—his own as well as that of his fellow workers."

"Probably my biggest problem is getting a day off," Kell admits. "When they are pouring cement, you have to be there. It's hard to make doctor appointments, see your kid's school events, or go hunting, which I love to do. Sometimes you work even when you are sick." ■



Organizational News...

BEACH COMMUNITY FOOD PANTRY

Submitted David Kline

THANKS TO THE COMMUNITY - BCFP has been hard at work over the last two months gathering food products for distribution to our needy clients during the holiday season. Although we currently provide normal food products to over 1300 family members each month, we realized that those families may struggle to provide a special holiday meal to their families. This year we distributed over 250 turkeys to our clients at Thanksgiving and a similar amount of hams and turkeys for the Christmas holiday.

We participated in the Sheriff's Holiday Meal Program at Thanksgiving and Christmas, along with our partners at the Rotary Club of IRB, Publix, PSF&R and the Sheriff's Department. A total of over 100 full holiday meals, prepared and assembled by the Indian Rocks Road Publix staff, were distributed to needy households in the area, as determined by the PCSO.

Several our community partners stepped up and provided help for the holidays:

• Beggins/Century 21 Realty sponsored a Thanksgiving Turkey Donation resulting in over 40 turkeys.

• The 'Silly Sinatras' charity singing group (see them on Youtube), donated turkeys, chickens and cash during the holidays. They also stopped by the pantry to sing a few songs to lighten the day for our volunteers and our clients.

• Christy Smith and her energetic group of Zumba dancers sponsored a Zumbathon at the Largo VFW, generating a SUV-full of food donations and cash.

• Indian Shores and North Redington Beach city staffs held food drives that resulted in many boxes of food for us.

• The Indian Rocks Family Sailing Association sponsored the annual Ted Irwin Sailathon, at the Clearwater Yacht Club. This event tasks the young sailors to generate food and cash donations to support an exhibition of their sailing expertise as well as honoring the memory of local sailor and boat builder, Ted Irwin. It resulted in many boxes of food and a sizable cash donation.

• The teachers and students of Country Day School, IRB and Largo campuses, sponsored a food drive resulting in over 30 boxes of food. Students and teachers also delivered and sorted the food, which saved our volunteers much time.

• The IRB Homeowners Association and Action 2000 donated financial support from Oktoberfest and Taste of IRB. Thanks to the many members of these groups who supported us!

These are but a few of the many stories of charity and support we received from our community. On behalf of our clients, whose lives are positively affected by BCFP and its supporters, we wish to express our sincere gratitude to everyone who supported us in 2017. You are making a difference!

We have continued to grow and prosper in 2017 and look forward to an even better year in 2018.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED - As our clientele continues to grow, we need more volunteers who have some time to spare, a desire to give back to those in need, and who would like to work with a great team of giving and caring volunteers. We can use you. As you ready to pass it forward? Please contact Connie Curran (727-482-6167) or David Kline (727-418-1673) for more information.

THE INDIAN ROCKS BEACH TENNIS CLUB

The Indian Rocks Beach group is looking for tennis players of all levels and ages to play at Kolb Park. Their goal is to unite fellow tennis players and to coordinate matches at various times of the day and week. The club hopes to gain enough interest to host a major local tournaments. Find them on Face Book under Indian Rocks Beach Tennis Club, or call Dean Rock at 347-3288.

HISTORICAL MUSEUM NEWS

Submitted by Nancy Ayers

If you have out-of-town visitors who are looking for something interesting to do, the museum is a good place to go! These are some of the comments about the museum on TripAdvisor: "A memorable stop on our short vacation." "Impressive amount of information and history of the area. Beautifully displayed. Well worth a visit." "Loved visiting this little museum. The local people have put so much love into the details."

Stop by the museum gift shop to get a 2018 calendar, featuring paintings by the local Plein Aire Cottage Artists. Makes a great souvenir for visitors to Indian Rocks Beach. We also have a selection of local history books, including the new book, "Pioneer Days on Tampa Bay's Gulf Beaches."

We're located at 203 4th Avenue, across from the post office. Hours are Wednesday through Saturday, 10 am to 2 pm. Check the website at www.IRBmuseum.com.

BEACH ART CENTER

Submitted by Danice Sarcone

The Beach Art Center continues to highlight the importance of creative expression, whether it's a dream for the inexperienced, a goal for the novice, or a passion for the accomplished. For the second year, we ended on a high note of sharing, hosting the HOA Holiday Tour of Homes sponsored by Plumlee Gulf Beach Realty for the benefit of the Beach Art Center and Save Our Cottages. We hosted hundreds of visitors and enjoyed festive music provided by Mastro & Moston and lots of food and refreshments. Thanks to everyone who made this event a success for so many of us in the community!

We're happy to see registrations coming in for our painting and pottery classes and our expanded schedule of Art on the Rocks workshops (a great way to socialize for new or experienced artists).

Mark your calendar for January 12th and join us for our annual "Welcome Back" Gallery Reception from 6 to 8pm. Last year's show featured many loaned works by members of our early days. The show was so popular, we've decided to repeat the theme and have appropriately named it "Let's Do It Again". We invite the community to contact the Beach Art Center if you have a special work of original members you would like exhibited.

On January 22nd, our friends at the Tampa Bay Surface Design Guild will open their monthly gathering to Beach Art Center artists; renowned artist and author Jane Dunnewold presents her Trunk Show and Lecture based on her book "Creative Strength Training". Limited seats are available.

The Beach Art Center is entering its 40th Year! For 40 years, they have been serving members and the community though art classes, workshops, summer art camp and gallery shows. This year they plan to continue these programs and add new opportunities to support their mission to "inspire lifelong learning, empower the individual, and engage the community of all ages in the creative arts.". If you have suggestions – they would love to hear from you! Send ideas to http://www.beachartcenter.org/contact or stop by the art center

On a very special note, the Beach Art Center is planning to celebrate its 40th year a big way. Save the date of February 10th, when we will host our "Heart for Art" Fundraising Gala.

More information and links to sign up for membership and classes can be found on the website, www.beachartcenter.org or stop by the Beach Art Center at 1515 Bay Palm Boulevard, Indian Rocks Beach during office hours, Monday – Thursday 10-4.

Organizational News...

IRB HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION

Submitted by Joe McCall

Homeowners Happy Hours continue at the following restaurants: January 11 – Crabby Bills & February 8 – TBD

These FREE Happy Hours are from 6-7:30pm and are held on the second Thursday of each month. Catch up on what's going on in Indian Rocks, visit with friends and neighbors and enjoy free appetizers and special drink prices while you show your support for our local restaurants and bars.

Movie's in the Park – Community movie nights with Country Day Schools continue Wednesday, January 24 and Tuesday, February 13 and Wednesday, March 7th. Bring your blankets and enjoy a movie in the great outdoors! Popcorn and soft drinks will be available for sale. Check our website and Facebook page for movie listings and details.

Meet the Candidates – Mark your calendar for the 2017 Meet the Candidates Night on Wednesday, January 24th at 7pm. Local residents will have a chance to hear what the candidates for Mayor and Commissioner have to say about serving the community. Visit our website and Facebook page for location and details.

We want to thank the Volunteers and the Community for the support that we received in 2017. The money raised from our events is donated back to the Indian Rocks Beach community to fund projects. HOA 2017 donations/sponsorships include: Indian Rocks Beach Food Pantry, Beach Art Center, Spring City Employee Luncheon, Flag Retirement Ceremony, Hurricane Victim Relief, Youth Mission and Education Programs, City of IRB Pocket Park Signage and Flag Pole, Grace House, Shepard's Village, Families of Mac Dill and Community Movie Nights and Save Our Cottages.

IRB Homeowners Association loves putting on these community events and supporting local projects. We welcome your project suggestions and encourage you to visit our website to submit your ideas and recommendations. The opportunity to get involved and volunteer is open to everyone!

IRB BOAT CLUB

The Club's informational meetings with guest speakers are held at Jimmy Guana's (Holiday Inn Harborside) on the third Thursday of each month, and are open to the public. Everyone is welcome. The next meeting is January 18.

To continue having monthly boating events, beginning in 2018, they are looking for volunteers to help host the events. Everything will be set up for you in advance, and the date of the event can work around your schedule. A hosts main duty is to meet and greet members so they know where the group is and maybe coordinate a group photo. Hosts can sign up for one or more individual events.

Presently, the Club is looking for a host for their January trip to The Pub and their March picnic in Caladesi Marina. To volunteer to be an event host, call Bob Griffin at 517-1997 or e-mail IRBboatclub@gmail.com.

Their annual Island Way Brunch will be Sunday, February 11. This is a very popular event and you will need to RSVP to IRBboatclub@gmail.com so we can reserve enough seating.

Save the date - March 17th is the Spring Intracoastal Cleanup.

The Boat Club, which gives boat owners an excuse to use their boats, is free to join and you do not have to live in Indian Rocks Beach. Join the fun; visit www.IRBboatclub.com.

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PROTECTING YOUR LANDSCAPE FROM A FREEZE

By Randy Lee

We are lucky that we live in a beautiful part of Florida where mild temperatures are the norm. Every few years, however, we get freezing temperatures that can damage our landscapes. About every ten years, we get a freeze that damages all tropical plants. Temperatures below fifty degrees can cause damage. Pinellas County can have a temperature variation from ten to fifteen degrees (north county vs. south county beaches), which affects the landscape. Several factors affect freeze damage: the duration or how long the temperature is below thirty-two degrees - the longer the temperature is below freezing, the more damage. The exposure of your landscape is critical - north and west exposures sustain more damage and the chance for damaging winds is greater.

It is important to protect tropical trees, palms, plants, flowers during these cold spells. Here are so ideas of what to do before a freeze, methods for protecting plants and what to do after a freeze.

Keep updated on the weather if a freeze is predicted - all tropical plants and trees could be affected. Every yard has microclimates where temperatures are cooler or winds are stronger - keep these in mind when temperatures drop and when designing your landscape. Windbreaks are structures that lessen wind damage. They can be permanent structures that brace the wind or they can be made for winter use as panels or an extension of a building. Frost blankets are another trend we see used more commercially, but can be used for residential landscapes. They must stay anchored to the ground and not get blown around. A fresh layer of mulch can help plants and their root systems stay warmer - one to three inches is ideal. Also, a well watered lawn and landscape fair much better than a dry one - just be sure to water before temperatures get below forty degrees. Small trees and shrubs can be wrapped with towels or blankets and tied off at the base - never use plastic since it will burn foliage. Potted plants can be brought indoors or into the garage where temperatures are warmer. A tricky point with cold temperatures is when to use the irrigation system and when not to. The system should be turned off if we are in the mid-thirties for a few hours - this will burn plant material. If, however, we are going to be below freezing for several hours, turn the system on and hope for the best! The water will ice over and act as a layer of heat.

After the freeze, irrigate lawns and shrubs once temperatures climb above forty-five degrees. Make sure you do not keep plants and trees covered for too long - let them breathe when the weather warms and cover them again later if necessary. Prune cold damaged plants lightly after four weeks and reserve major pruning until spring. Luckily, freezes do not happen often but be alert to the weather and what to do when they occur. Protect your plants accordingly so there is less to do when spring rolls around.

<u>January Checklist:</u>

Watch for freezing temperatures
Ideal time to plant flowers and vegetables
Great time to plant cold tolerant trees
Perfect time to install a new lawn
Trimming, mowing and fertilizing are at a minimum

Landscapes By Randy Lee, Inc. is a full service landscape design company here to help you with all of your needs. Call them at 727-421-2715 or visit online at www.landscapesbyrl.com

MARCH IS MUNICIPAL ELECTION TIME

Indian Rocks Beach will have a Municipal Election on Tuesday March 13, 2018 to fill the vacancies of the Mayor-Commisioner seat and two City Commission Seats. Each for a two year term.

Two people are running for the Mayor-Commisioner seat.

DONALD HOUSE, JR

Don has a Finance Degree from USF, owns/manages 25 residential/commercial properties in Pasco County and is a Florida licensed real estate sales associate. He lives in a quaint Beach Trail cottage that has been in his family for 50+ years so being a good steward of small-town IRB is very personal.

Don was previously employed by the U.S. Treasury Department and has designed/constructed entertainment venues nationwide. He served on IRB's Planning & Zoning Board and volunteers for various IRB Homeowners' events. Don feels his skill set would complement those of his fellow commissioners and that his leadership would be more welcoming to intelligent discussion and healthy debate on crucial issues.

Married for 45 years, Don has two grown children and five grandchildren (two sets of twins!). Visit www.houseirb.com and his Facebook page.

JOANNE "COOKIE" KENNEDY

Vice Mayor Cookie Kennedy is a native of Pinellas County. She graduated from Largo High School, attended Eckerd College, and will receive a degree in Public Administration from St. Petersburg College in 2018. She is a graduate of the Advanced Elected Municipal Officials Institute with the Florida League of Cities.

An Indian Rocks Beach business owner for over 30 years, she has served on numerous city boards and as a Commissioner for 12 years in Indian Rocks Beach. She represents the Barrier Islands Governmental Council with Forward Pinellas involving Transportation, Public Safety, Community Planning and Living, and the Tourist Development Council. Her life has been one of public service, volunteerism, and community leadership with honors including Citizen of the Year and Commitment to Excellence in Leadership Honoree. Cookie notes, however, the greatest gift is her son Luke and her proudest achievement.

Three people are Running for the Two City Commission seats

JUDE BOND

Jude was married on the sand in Indian Rocks Beach in 2002 and moved here from Manhattan the following year.

He enjoys the easy-going pace of beach life with his wife, Jeni, two children, Georgia and Ronan, and numerous animals.

A writer, musician, and graphic designer, Jude is the Managing Director of Bond Multimedia, a multi-channel marketing consultancy. He also volunteers at the Suncoast Primate Sanctuary and is a member of the Indian Rocks Beach Planning and Zoning Board.

EDWARD HOOFNAGLE

Ed, a retired CPA, manages residential, long-term leased real estate in Pinellas County. He and his wife Julie are active members of the community, where Ed serves as a City Commissioner and Julie is the president of Action2000. Ed has supported initiatives to maintain the small-town neighborhood feel of IRB, including revisions to our Code of Ordinances. He wishes to continue as a commissioner to work towards enhancing and protecting our small town, and he is known for being approachable to discuss issues that matter to citizens of IRB. The Hoofnagles have three grown children, Chelsea, Jimmy and Andrew.

NICK PALOMBA

Nick was introduced to Indian Rocks Beach when he met his wife in 2008. She and her (now their) daughters had lived here since 2002. They were married on IRB, moved due to careers, and returned in 2015.

He has spent 25 years at Microsoft, working with federal, state and local governments. He believes it is extremely important that as we make strategic decisions for the city, we do so with great care and balance so as not to lose our community focus and small-town charm. As City Commissioner, his goal is to ensure we keep our community values at the forefront.

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