BELLEAIR AREA
NEIGHBORHOOD Newsletter
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Sand Key's Early Days

While producing this newsletter for the past nine-plus years, the subject of Sand Key during the late 1960s and early '70s regularly pops up. Folks frequently talk about the big beach parties held there when they were in their late teens and early twenties. That was before there were any hotels or condos—almost 60 years ago.

Before its building boom, Sand Key (shown above in 1950), was nothing but sand dunes, Australian pines and sandspurs. Lots and lots of sandspurs. The first bridge, a drawbridge, connecting Sand Key to Clearwater Beach opened in 1963. Before that, people had to come by boat or drive through Belleair Beach.

The road through Sand Key, now Gulf Boulevard, was not paved, or even straight. The constant flow of cars, trucks and jeeps created a sandy dirt path that ran between the Gulf and the intracoastal from Belleair Beach's northern city limits, where there were gates that were never locked, to the edge of Clearwater Pass. Often, you could find a car stuck in the deep sand on either side.

Ed Wright, a wealthy landowner, owned almost all of Sand Key. His house was situated in the middle of the island on the Gulf and had its own pier. He spent time there when he wanted to get away from "the city" (St. Petersburg)

"Ed Wright gave us the keys to his beach house," says Kathy Mortensen, former Mayor of Belleair Beach. "He trusted us with his personal house. All he asked was for us to lock it up and keep it clean."

Hundreds of kids in the 1960s claimed Sand Key as their private "party island."

During the day, families pitched their chairs on the beach and on cooler days, started bonfires. At sunset, however, the adults would pack up and leave. As day turned to night, young people from Clearwater, Largo and Seminole High Schools streamed in. Amid sand dunes on the left and a field of trees on the right, guys in their cars and trucks returned, like nesting birds, to their "usual" parking places.

They brought firewood, and possibly some beverages and their dates. Their bonfires weren't the only things smoldering between the dunes as they romanced the night away.

On any given weekend, there would be hundreds of cars creeping their way north to their "desired" parking space after sunset. After a night of fun and romance, they headed home, unless they were stuck in the sand, that is. Hey…it wasn't called Sand Key for nothing !

"Belleair Beach only had one policeman—Sam Whitman, slightly reminiscent of Mayberry RFD. If anyone was going to catch you drinking on Sand Key, it was Officer Sam. But he did not bother us. He would actually help when we got our cars stuck," said Gordon Geissler, a longtime resident of Belleair Beach.

Everything changed when Ed Wright died in 1969. In his will, he left most of his land holdings, including Sand Key, to his longtime personal secretary Ruth Kirby. She promptly sold the property to various developers and left the state. US Steel bought 157 acres.

Over the next decade, the playground for hundreds of families and young people disappeared. The pristine area called Sand Key was slowly converted into condo after condo, with a few large hotels. Today there are two dozen high rise buildings, with approximately 3,000 units that are home to over 5,000 people living on Sand Key. Only Sand Key Park at the northwest end of the island resembles the area's earlier party times.

Continued on page 8

Story by Bob Griffin, Publisher
Photos courtesy of Heritage Village Archives & Library

Or Current Resident

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BELLEAIR AREA NEIGHBORHOOD NEWSLETTER

Inside, you will find articles and local information about the nearby area inside. We call it a Neighborhood Newsletter because it is about your neighborhood. It is mailed to the entire Belleair Area - a total of about 8,000 households - six times a year.

Do you need another copy of this newsletter. You may pick up additional copies of this newsletter at all City Halls, Wildfield Marketplace, Panara Bread, UPS Store and the Belleair Market. Call 517-1997 if you need more than a few.

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,
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SEE YOU AGAIN IN AUGUST

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CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

JUNE

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AUGUST

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Did You Know

FOOD DRIVE Last month was the annual Postal Carriers Food Day. This national event is coordinated by the US Postal Carriers Union, not the Post Office, in conjunction with Food Banks across the nation. Each driver donates their time. The food collected in our area is delivered to to the Beaches Food Pantry, RCS and St. Jerome's.

The Beaches Food Pantry received food from 10 carrier routes. They would like to thank all those who donated food, the Postal Carriers, the neighborhood organizations who helped such as the Indian Rocks Rotary, and the volunteers who helped to unload the trucks and sort the food. Usually, the food collected from this event will only feed their clients for about six weeks.

RAYS PRIDE NIGHT June 8th is Tampa Bay Ray's Pride Night at Tropicana Field. Tickets are $30 and includes a limited-edition Rays Pride hat. When ordering tickets online, use the special code Pride3 to receive the hat. That night, they are playing the Seattle Mariners.

BOATING LICENSE Before operating a vessel with a motor of 10 HP or more in Florida, everyone born on or after January 1, 1988 is required to either have successfully completed a National Association of State Boating Law Administrators approved boating education course, have passed a course equivalence or temporary certificate examination, and have in their possession a boating education ID card and a photo identification card. Identification cards for persons completing the course or the equivalence exam are good for a lifetime. Temporary Certificate exams are available to the public through contractors. The temporary certificate is valid for 12 months from the issue date.

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

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

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

and More...

GIVING BACK As part of that commitment to the community, the Bank Of Tampa made a $4,000 contribution to Clothes To Kids, a Clearwater based charity helping supply school clothes for low-income or in crisis school-aged children. In 2017, CTK provided 10,60 school wardrobes to children in Pinellas County. Find out more at clothestokids.org.

FLUORESCENT LIGHTS Do not recycle or put fluorescent lights in the garbage. Take them to a mobile collection sites. Home Depot and Lowes will accept your CFL (compact fluorescent lights). Batteries Plus will take your fluorescent lights for a fee.

BUY HURRICANE SUPPLIES TAX FREE We all remember the 2017 hurricane season and unfortunately, the 2018 season is just around the corner. To help you get ready, The State of Florida will have a Sales Tax Holiday that will allow you to stock up on hurricane related supplies sales tax free.
June 1 - 7, you can buy flashlights ($20 or less), fuel tanks ($25 or less), batteries or coolers ($30 or less), radios and tarps ($50 or less), generators ($750 or less), carbon monoxide detectors ($75 or less), and other items with no sales tax.

"These tax-free days will serve as a reminder for all Floridians to get a plan and be prepared for the coming hurricane season," said Bryan Koon, Director of Florida's Emergency Management Department. "We appreciate the legislature's commitment to keeping Florida's families safe, while helping to reduce the costs of stocking up on disaster related supplies."

FREE HAZ-TO-GO EVENT The Town of Belleair Solid Waste Department is hosting a free Haz-to-Go electronic and chemical collection event on Tuesday, June 26 from 10am - 1pm in the Public Works Building parking lot (1075 Ponce de Leon Blvd., Belleair). Citizens may drop off chemical and electronic waste, including fertilizer, light bulbs, household cleaners, cell phones, computers, batteries, paint, and more! Staff ensures that items dropped off are disposed of properly and safely at no cost. For information, visit www.townofbelleair.com/haztogo.

OUR NEXT ISSUE IS IN AUGUST Read this issue, and others, online at BeachNewsletters.com.

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TAX REFORM/SIMPLIFICATION? "NO" TAX REDUCTION? "YES"

by Ray Ferrara, ProVise Management Group

Part 2 -

Previously, we talked about the basics of the new 20% pass-through tax deduction on certain business income. This deduction is available to pass-through entities (S-corporation, partnership, LLC, etc.) as long as the taxpayer's taxable income is below $157,500 for singles and $315,000 for joint filers. The deduction will be applied to the lesser of the taxpayer's qualified business income or taxable income less any capital gains.

But what if the taxpayer's income is still over the limits? There is a phase out of the deduction for singles with taxable income between $157,500 and $207,500 and $315,000 and $415,000 for joint filers. Above these levels those in a "specialized trade or business" (accountants, lawyers, financial planners, athletes, performers, consultants, etc.) or any business where the reputation or skill of its employees is the primary asset, they are not eligible for the pass-through deduction.

For everyone else, there are additional complicated rules to consider. The deduction cannot exceed the greater of 50% of the W-2 wages paid by the business, or 25% of the W-2 wages paid plus 2.5% of the unadjusted basis of depreciable property owned by the business.

Sally works for a company that pays hers wage of $350,000. She is married and her husband makes $250,000 in W-2 wages. She owns a small strip mall through an LLC which produces an net profit of $150,000. She pays her brother a salary to manage the property of $30,000. The unadjusted basis in the depreciable property is $1,000,000. She has $80,000 is deductions.

First, we need to determine her taxable income which is $670,000. The eligible business income is $30,000. She must use the lesser of these two ($30,000). Next, we calculate the greater of 50% of the eligible wages ($15,000), or 25% of the eligible wages ($7500) plus 2.5% of the unadjusted basis ($25,000) or $32,500. She uses the lesser of the first step ($30,000) or second step ($32,500) as the pass-through deduction.

This is just a brief analysis of the pass-through provision and by no means should anyone rely on this simple example. In addition to consulting your tax advisor, please be aware that we are awaiting rules and regulations from the IRS who must interpret the new tax law. If you would like to consult about your financial planning you are entitled to a complimentary meeting.

V. Raymond Ferrara, CFP®, Chairman and CEO
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FENCING PROVIDES PRIVACY AND MORE

By Randy Lee

Privacy is one of the biggest trends in landscaping today. Our neighbors may be great but we do not want to see them all the time. Barriers such as walls, fences and hedges make great neighbors. One of the first questions I ask a client is: do they have privacy concerns and where on the property are these? Safety and security are important factors as well. Do you have a pool, pets or small children? Barriers keep people out and people in all at the same time. Fencing is less expensive than walls and will be the topic of this discussion.

Fences create a secure retreat while containing children and pets. Fencing also reduces noise levels. The first question when adding fencing should be - what is the purpose and function of the fence A pool, pets, children, and screening of neighbors are a few reasons to install a fence. A second question about fencing relates to size and the type of fence needed. Most zoning caps fences at six feet in height and must taper down to four feet on the street or water. Check your local ordinances. A fence may or may not need to be permitted as well.

There are several types of fences: wood, vinyl, iron, aluminum and chain link. Personal preference is key here, as well as cost. Wood is the least expensive and aluminum or iron the most expensive. Wood and vinyl allow the least amount of air movement. Chain link, which is available in green and black, allows air movement and is very easy to cover with flowering vines. I like to use chain link because it is durable and easy to cover- in one or two years it will disappear. The gate is another choice. Each type of fencing has a corresponding type of gate. Gates can be detailed and expensive using iron and aluminum. Wood and chain link gates need to be large enough to accommodate mowers, pedestrian traffic or larger items- where a double gate may be needed.

After the fence is installed, it needs landscaping around it. If you have fenced in a small area, I would add plants or use stepping stones, instead of sod, which may be hard to maintain. I like to layer the fence with taller plants in the background and shorter in the foreground. Vines can be used on fences as well and they cover quickly. Flowering vines that I like include honeysuckle, confederate jasmine, passion vine, queen's wreath, allamanda and bleeding heart. The fence may need landscaping on both sides- I like to have taller trees and palms on the inside and then shorter shrubs on the outside for a multi layered effect.

Remember these points when fencing: the purpose, type of fence desired, check local ordinances about height and permits and hire a licensed contractor.

June/July checklist:

- Fertilizer ban is in effect
- Turn irrigation system off during periods of heavy rain
- Time to plant summer annuals and perennials
- Great time to have trees trimmed
- Great time to plant palm trees

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SAND KEY - AS THEY REMEMBER IT

In the 1950s, we used to go fishing on Sand Key. We would put our boats in at the Belleair Beach Causeway ramp and travel across the Intracoastal. What I remember most were the mosquitoes. They were so bad they would carry you away. Many times we had to jump in the water just to get the bugs off of us.

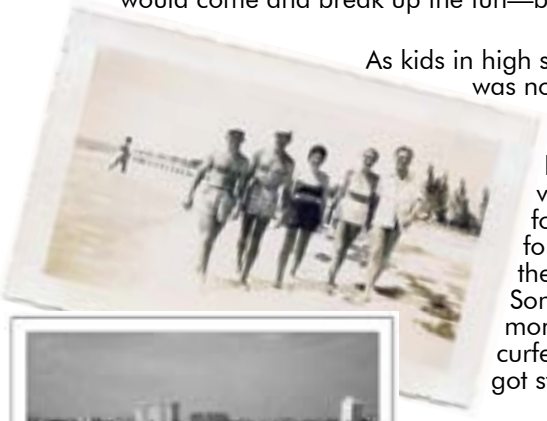
Charlie Harper, President, Largo Historical Society.

About 1961, when my girlfriends and I were 16 or 17 years old, Ed Wright had a big beach house on the Gulf side of the island. It was a typical old-style Florida house with a big porch facing the beach. The inside was all cedar planks. We met Mr. Wright one day while he was home. He was a tall man, to us, in his mid-60s and a very nice guy for being so rich. He said we could use his house for showers and bathrooms. All we had to do was lock it up and keep it clean. What I remember most about Sand Key was the sound the wind made as it passed through the Australian pines. **Kathy Mortensen, former Mayor of Belleair Beach**

As a youngster, we went up there with the Boy Scouts. Our parents used to drop us off at the north end of Belleair Beach with our troop leader. We would hike along the beach, about a mile north to our designated campsite for the night. One of the parents would drive up the dirt road and drop off our tents and lumber for our camp fire. If the weather got bad, our parents would come and pick us up on the sandy road. **Gordon Geissler, longtime resident of Belleair Beach**

I moved to Clearwater Beach in 1971 and rented a house across from the Adams Mark Hotel. I remember going across the old, rickety wooden bridge to Sand Key to party on weekends. It cost a nickel back then. There was not a building anywhere to be seen. Even the Sheraton was not built yet. It was very dark at night. I was very young so my friends and I would congregate on weekends and party all night. There were bonfires, beer, booze, maybe some drugs and lots of fun. Occasionally the police would come and break up the fun—but we just came back next week.

Sharon James, VIP Realty 1



As kids in high school, we used to go to Sand Key, which was nothing but white sand and Australian pine trees. We used to hang out day and night. Some of my more adventuresome buddies could afford four-wheel drive vehicles. They would hang out and wait for someone to get stuck. Then, for whatever cash the victim had, they would pull them out of the sand. Some of those guys made quite a bit of money. If you were late getting home for curfew, you could just tell your parents you got stuck out at Sand Key.

Jerry Newton, Indian Rocks Beach resident

When I first arrived in the area, my fondest memory was playing Frisbee all day with my boyfriend on the beach at what is now Sand Key Park. You could park for free in the sandy lot amongst the beautiful pine trees. You could walk out on the sand to the water's edge or sit under the pine trees for shade. Occasionally, a car would get stuck in the sand and we'd all help to get it out. There was something magical about seeing all those pine trees, sand and water."

Lynn Ewonaits, longtime resident

I grew up on Island Estates and still live there. When we were in our teens, we would go exploring in our jeeps and trucks on Sand Key in and among the dunes. Sometimes, we would take our 16-foot Wellcraft and get to the island on the Intracoastal side. Sometimes we even swam across the pass. Occasionally, we would spend the night camping. We normally had a large camp fire directly on the beach. Who was going to stop us? **Al Leon, Island Estates resident**

In about 1978, I started working at the Sheraton Sand Key. There was almost nothing there, development-wise. The land to the north (now Sand Key Park) and to the south was totally undeveloped. On the weekends, around midnight a party goer would regularly stumble into the Sheraton and ask if we knew who to call to get a tow truck. They were stuck in the sand.

Charlie Creel, Head Concierge, Sheraton Sand Key

Photos courtesy of Clearwater Historical Society

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GREENTOWN KIDS

GreenTown Kids is Indian Rocks Beach's very own kid-centered environmental nonprofit. GreenTown Kids was founded in January by IRB resident, Allie DeVore, and brought to life with the help of a group of six other local moms and friends who shared the desire to do more for their beach town's environment, while involving their kids in the learning process and community service.

GreenTown Kids partners with local experts around the community to educate its members on specific environmental topics each month. The members then plan and participate in related community events and service projects, which create a positive impact on the local environment.

At their inaugural meeting in February, the members learned about native trees and the importance of planting them from local expert, Alicia, at Wilcox Nursery. Each child learned how to plant tree seeds and brought their potted seeds home to grow.

In March, GreenTown Kids introduced themselves to the community at Greenfest with fun eco-activities for kids including a beach cleanup and recycling game, making upcycled planter stations, and eco-friendly lemonade stand.

April was all about plants and gardening. At their April meeting, GreenTown Kids members learned about gardening in the IRB Community Garden from local expert, Trish Burch, and planted vegetables in two Earth Boxes donated by Terry Hamilton-Wollin and Laura Whittle. Members also participated in Wilcox Nursery's "A Children's Tour of Plants". The month of May will be just as fun with a Nature Scavenger Hunt in 10th Ave. Park open to members and friends and a family compost bin learning and making event open to the public. Other topics the group will be learning about this year include keeping our beaches clean and recycling. Dates and locations of all upcoming meetings and events are posted on the group's Facebook page and emailed out in their monthly newsletter.

Pictured left to right: (back row): Ann Hanna (Secretary), Finn Hurley, Callie Poznan, Bonnie Poznan (Treasurer), Allie DeVore (Founder & President), Terry Hamilton-Wollin, Shan Collins. (front row): Sydney Collins, Colin Hurley, Palmer DeVore, Emerie Collins.

The new organization has been met with wonderful support from individuals, businesses, and other organizations in the community as well as the City of Indian Rocks Beach, who is also a sponsor. GreenTown Kids is currently accepting new members (kids of all ages and adults). A Family Annual Membership is just $20. All donations go directly toward furthering their mission and are tax deductible. GreenTown Kids is looking forward to making a difference in the community and "planting a seed for the next generation". For more information please contact Allie at greentownkids@gmail.com or 727-480-3907, and follow the group on Facebook @ GreenTown Kids.

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SWIM INSTRUCTOR SWIM TIPS: DANGERS OF WATER WINGS

By Rebecca Geiger

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

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

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

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

With water wings on, their buoyancy is on both arms with their body simply along for the ride. There is no way they can plane themselves out to get a forward motion. This motion is what allows them to get anywhere. While in the wings, they are effectively bobbers with little control over where they are going. If they fell in, even a foot or two from the side, they would not be able to get themselves back.

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

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

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Business Briefs

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

"The opening of our new Clearwater office demonstrates our commitment to further improving our client's banking experience in Pinellas," says Craig West. "We place a priority on convenience, while maintaining our mission to build relationships in the communities we serve—now Clearwater."

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

YOUR LOCAL BOATING RESOURCE MarineMax Clearwater has everything you need to make the most out of your time on the water. It all starts with finding your perfect boat. With top-notch brands including Sea Ray, Azimut, Boston Whaler, Nautique, Harris, and more, they have the ideal boat for your lifestyle. Once you take delivery of your boat, you become a member of the MarineMax family. This opens the doors for you to enjoy all they offer including world-class service, educational courses, boater events, and getaways!

The team members of MarineMax Clearwater provide a wealth of experience and are all boaters with an incredible passion for the water. Beyond boat sales, they strive to share their joy and enable other boaters to do the same. Visit marinemax.com or call (727) 536-2628 to explore the world of MarineMax Clearwater boating.

JAMES R. RENNER, DMD JOINS SHOWALTER DENTAL PRACTICE Largo based dentist Thomas L. Showalter, Jr., DDS is pleased to announce the addition of James R. Renner, DMD. Dr. Renner (shown here to the left of Dr. Showalter, Jr.) earned his undergraduate degree at the University of South Florida and graduated from Midwestern University College of Dental Medicine-Illinois in Chicago. He is a member of the American Dental Association (ADA) as well as the West Coast District Dental Association (WCDDA).

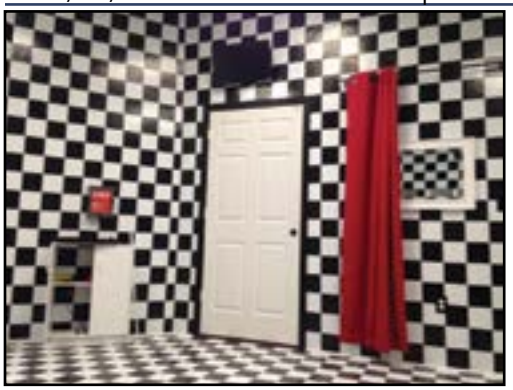
"Our team is beyond fortunate to welcome Dr. Renner, a talented and knowledgeable dental professional, who will continue our practice's 36-year tradition of personalized patient care," says Dr. Showalter. Drs. Renner and Showalter are located at 1678 W. Bay Drive. Phone: (727) 585-7439.

Business Briefs

BELLEAIR MARKET NOW DELIVERS If you have a craving for a Cuban sandwich or some Smoked Mahi Fish Spread, or even need groceries, Belleair Market will deliver your purchase right to your door using their brand new Corner Golf Cart. Note: Delivery has a limited distance and hours and there is a fee. Call them at 584-3697 and place your order.

2018 BEST PLACES TO WORK ProVise Management Group, LLC (ProVise) has been recognized as a 2018 Best Places to Work for Financial Advisers Investment News announced. ProVise was chosen as one of this year's top-50 based on employer and employee surveys delving into everything from company culture, benefits, career paths and more. They were recognized at the first annual Best Places to Work for Financial Advisers Awards Luncheon in Chicago at the University Club.

ProVise is a 30 year old financial planning and investment management firm headquartered in Clearwater. As a registered investment adviser with the Securities and Exchange Commission, it serves about 1,100 clients in over 30 states, managing approximately $1.44 billion as of 12/31/17. 727-441-9022 www.provise.com.



ESCAPE, IF YOU CAN This new business opening next month, just east of Belleair Bluffs, reflects a national trend in escape rooms. Both fun and serious, Escape Rooms are a new type of entertainment venue springing up around the country.

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

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

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

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Business Briefs

AERIE LANE OPENS IN LARGO

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

Aeire Lane, at the west end of the shopping center, is owned by Belleair Beach resident Renee Lee. In June, Aerie Lane has many great ideas for Father's Day gifts. Stop by the shop and see what they have for Dad.

Find both stores at 1901 West Bay Drive.

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

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

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

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

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

Business Briefs

BELLA VINO APPEARS ON HOUSEHUNTERS

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

A father was helping his daughter find a home Clearwater. They were filmed sitting at Bella Vino's wine bar, enjoying a glass of wine while they discussed the three homes she was contemplating purchasing. The show aired on May 4th.

FATHER'S DAY IDEA What do you get your father or husband for Father's Day? What about a real close shave? Stefanec's Barber Shop in Belleair Bluffs is selling "Face Shave" gift certificates for $10 each (well below normal price). That is cheaper than a necktie, which they sell, too. Stefanec's is located at 772 Indian Rocks Road North. .

AMI NOW IRB Mike Fowler used to run his beach chairs and umbrella rental business from Anna Maria Island (AMI). A year ago, he moved it to Indian Rocks Beach and has changed his company's name to IRB CHAIRS. Call ahead for reservations at 841-357-6103 or book online, www.irbchairs.com. Located at 1700 Gulf Blvd., at the Indian Rocks Beach County Park, they will also deliver chairs and umbrellas to your location.

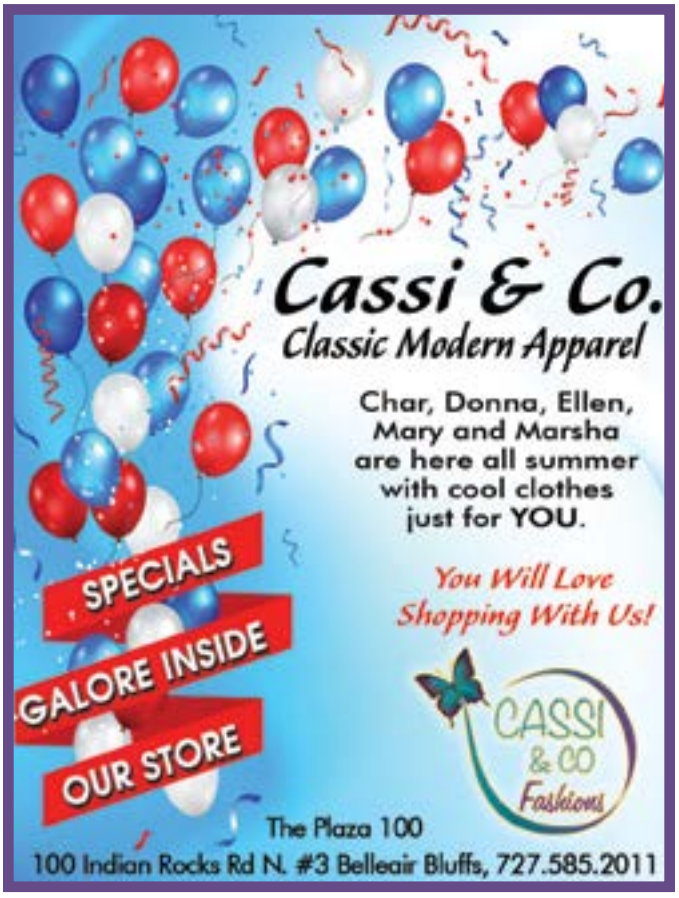
FOR SALE In May, the most recognizable stretch of John's Pass Village, the southwest end containing Bubba Gump, Hooter's, the Friendly Fisherman Restaurant, and more, was listed for sale at $18.5 million. The 138,000 square feet of mixed use property still has 1,100 square feet of vacant space still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

STORAGE SPACE A new storage facility is almost compete and will be opening soon on Walsingham Road. An Extra Space franchise, it is next door to Hammock Hardware at 13890 Walsingham. They are not open yet but hope to open in June. Now accepting reservations.

NEW DOLLAR GENERAL A new Dollar General store opened just south of Walsingham Road at 11601 Oakhurst Street, across from Wendy's. The inventory is very similar to their neighbor, the CVS store.

GET FIT OPEN 24/7 The Get Fit gym, located in the Barclay Shopping Center, recently made a change and is now open 24 hours a day, around the clock. Now you can hit the gym while everyone else is sleeping or first thing in the morning. Get Fit is located at 13845 Walsingham Rd., just north of the Mc Donalds. Call for rates and membership at 595-4505. Get more info at www.GetFitnessClubs.com

NEWS WANTED If you have news or suggestions for this newsletter, please contact us. E-mail news to Bob@GriffinDirectories.com or call 727-517-1997.



PEOPLE IN OUR COMMUNITY

Artist Mike Elwell Creates Art in Public Places

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

See Mike Elwell's other work, online, at www.ElwellBronzeArt.com.

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

Enjoying a hug from a pelican

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FERTILIZERS: AN ENVIRONMENTAL THREAT

In the quest for the perfect lawn, people apply fertilizers and pesticides to their yards each year, priming their grasses for potentially serious ecological and human health consequences. These chemicals run off lawns into local springs, streams, lakes and rivers every time it rains, eventually washing in the Gulf of Mexico. The resulting process causes more than half of our water pollution, thus harming our waterways and the plants and animals that thrive in aquatic habitats.

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

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

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

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

THE CAMPAIGN TO REDUCE USE OF PLASTIC STRAWS

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

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

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

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

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

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

By Tom Smith Owner of GHD Construction Services

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

While doing my homework studying proposed home sales prices in MLS, I've noticed a quite large disparity in home pricing, from what a lot will sell for in a neighborhood, and what GHD charges for a beautiful new home. GHD has a furnished model of 5400sf under roof (3042la) that sells for only $629,000, and by the time you place a value of the water front property at $450,000 - $500,000, add a pool, dock, new seawall, etc., the entire new package would cost about $1,200,000. However, I'm seeing listings for new homes of this size at about $1,600,000 asking price. Will they get that? I don't know, but I do know that there is a nice potential profit for an investor to "Flip" a new home package at possibly a very nice profit. Also, some homeowners on interior lots opt to construct a much smaller home priced from the mid to high $200's to increase their overall property value. That is a definite opportunity for homeowners that own older homes on interior lots.

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

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

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

HISTORIC PRESERVATION PRESENTATION ON JULY 24

In July of 2017, the Town of Belleair was awarded a $50,000 historic survey grant from the State of Florida, and hired Johnson, Mirmiran, and Thompson, Inc. (JMT) to help tell the story of Belleair's rich and unique history.

JMT will be presenting their findings and telling this story at a Historic Preservation Board meeting on Tuesday, July 24 at 6pm at Belleair's Town Hall building (901 Ponce de Leon Blvd., Belleair). There is no charge for this event, and the Town would like to invite all residents with a passion for local history to attend.

This presentation and report will include:

- A background on Belleair's history and the notable events, people, and changes that helped to form the town
- Information on Belleair's pre-1967 homes and structures, along with recommendations for historic preservation for a minimum of 50 of these homes/structures
- Video interviews of seven of Belleair's most knowledgeable residents that provide supplementation information on the history of the Town
- A bound survey report that includes all of the above topics, along with recommendation for how Belleair can grow its historic preservation and recognition program

Town of Belleair hopes you can attend this chance to help celebrate the history that makes Belleair special.

BELLEVIEW PLACE STATUS

The first fully furnished model has officially opened at Belleview Place. The model interior design was created by Clearwater's Decker Ross Interiors. In addition, the first Belleview Place residents have moved into one of the Carriage Homes – a two story townhome with elevator and 2-car garage.

Allamanda, the first mid-rise building, is sold out and residents will be moving in to that building this summer. The second building Brightwater, is under construction and is 60% sold. The third building Sunset, will start construction this fall and is 35% sold out. Plans and sales for the last building will be announced this fall. Visit belleviewplace.com for more information.

PELICAN GOLF COURSE WORK CONTINUES

Behind the fences, work is continuing on the Pelican Golf Course, formerly known as the Belleview Golf & Country Club. The project began with demolition last summer.

"We are have completed the grassing," says Johnny Patronis, Supervisor for Triton Building Group LLC. "We will be completing punch work and allowing it to grow in throughout the summer. Construction on The Grill and Pro Shop building is ongoing and construction of the main club house is awaiting permits."

The Pelican Golf Course is projected to open in the Spring of 2019.

REMEMBERING A MURAL ARTIST

Matthew Callahan (1978-2018)

St Petersburg lost one of its great mural artists last month, Matt Callahan who painted several local well-known murals.

Callahan specialized in large format paintings. The introduction of wall murals in St Petersburg's Shine Project was the perfect format for Matt. A building's wall was his ideal canvas. Locally, he was known as one of the best in his trade.

In he beginnings, Callahan had a Tallahassee company called Callahan Card Company and his early works were signed with the initials "CCC". He eventually became a Tampa resident and owner of St. Petersburg's Man Made Murals.

"He was one of the most skilled painters out there," says friend and fellow artist Bask Hostomsky, also a local muralist. "His skill level and artistic ability was razor sharp."

Callahan's work includes the St. Tampasburg art covering the north wall of The Lure Restaurant at 661 Central Avenue.

In March he painted a mural on Tampa's Morgan Street announcing the NCAA Women's Final Four in 2019.

His attitude toward life was as big as his art.

"He always just wanted to make people happy," said his dad, Michael Callahan.

"He was like Ernest Hemingway to me," says fellow muralist Johnny Vitale, "a creative soul wrapped in a big burly body. We had children the same age and we used to hang out together, so the kids could get to know each other," Vitale continues, "he had a very extensive portfolio."

Callahan painted other wall murals in St Petersburg, including: The Hamburger at The Avenue, Urban BBQ, and The Green Bench Brewing Company sign. He also did a lot of work for Harley Davidson.

Matthew Callahan was assaulted outside a Tampa bar in April. Only 40 years old, he died from a massive brain injury a short time later, leaving his wife Erika and five-year old son, Logan. His ashes were spread off the coast of Cedar Key.

In lieu of flowers, the family asked friends to donate to LeMoyne Arts, to honor Matt Callahan's legacy. Currently, more than $10,000 has been raised to support the "Matt Callahan High School Art Show Scholarship." Donations are still be accepted by check at: LeMoyne Art Gallery, 125 N. Gadsden St., Tallahassee FL. 32301, or call 850-222-8800, with a credit card. Please mention Matt Callahan & The Scholarship fund.

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Bar & Restaurant News

CHICAGO JAQX'S NEW OWNER Gary and Judy Panton sold Chicago Jaqx, but the good news is the new owner Jenn Landry ALSO is a Chicago native. She plans to leave things pretty much the same, but there may be minor changes to the menu, pricing and Happy Hour specials. "I want to get the locals back in here," says Landry, "and I want to get ready for watching sports including baseball, hockey and football."

Drop by and say hello at 1511 Gulf Blvd, Indian Rocks Beach, next to Century 21 Beggins.

NEW READY SET YO Crabby Bill's opened a Yogurt & coffee shop on Gulf Blvd next to their main restaurant. Called Ready-Set-Yo, it will operate out of the small building, previously used as a fish market, north of the Loading Dock. In addition to frozen yogurt, they will offer, Joffery specialty coffee, fresh juices and shakes

HAVANA HARRY'S MOVES Now closer to the beach, Havana Harry's Market and Deli moved five blocks west, but it is still in Largo. They relocated their small deli/ café from 13932 Walsingham Rd., next to CVS to 14219 Walsingham Road, near Hungry Howies Pizza. Owner George Haber, who is an Indian Rocks Beach resident, is already up and running in the new location. The phone number has not changed: 596-5141.

CLEARWATER BEACH TACO BUS IS FINALLY OPEN! It is located on the northeast corner of the new Edge Hotel next to the sidewalk at 505 Gulfview Blvd. One of many in the area, this one opened April 6th. They offer a fresh, authentic Mexican taste experience

NEW DONUT SHOP The new Dunkin Donut store in Largo, across from Publix on Walsingham Road is nearing completion. They hope to open the store in early June.

CRABBY'S ART You do not find many sea horses in our waters, but there is now a colorful eight foot tall one next to Clearwater Beach's Crabby's Dockside.

As part of "Beach By Design," the restaurant's owners agreed to include artwork in conjunction with their new building. They asked Pinellas artist Clayton Swartz to come up with an idea, preferably fish related, or in this case, water related.

"Greg Powers, with Crabby's, contacted me and asked if I could come up with something," says Swartz. "The project took about three months to complete. I love it and appreciate the opportunity."

Crabby's Dockside opened one year ago in May.

Bar & Restaurant News

ALMOST OPEN The new Salt Public House Sports Bar hopes to open in the next month just in time for the summer baseball season and plans to be ready for the start of NFL and college football. It has taken a lot longer than expected, but will be very nice when it is all completed.

"This is the smallest restaurant we have owned," says owner Aidan Bowles. "Most of our other restaurants were in the ball park of 8 to 10 thousand square feet."

The Bowles have lived part-time in Kentucky and part-time in Indian Rocks. They have owned houses in Indian Rocks for over 30 years and currently live on Harbor Drive North.

The Salt Public House is owned by the whole family-- Aidan, Sabrina and son Sam. They plan to be a sports bar with "good food." Look for a June opening at 1309 Gulf Blvd, next to Nekton.

OEC SUSHI This new Sushi and Hibachi restaurant opened in the Barclay Shopping Center just east of the Walsingham bridge. O.E.C. Sushi and Hibachi has a complete Japanese menu and a lovely but small dining area. It is open seven days a week for lunch and dinner, offering dine-in and take-out, but no delivery. They offer a $7.99 lunch special, a larger Bento Box lunch special for $12.99, and dinner specials at $13.99. They are located at 13847 Walsingham, behind the McDonald's, next to Tailgators Sports Bar. Call OEC at 366-6126.

STONE CRAB SEASON ENDS Stone Crab season closed May 15th. Now it is impossible to get fresh stone crabs at favorite restaurant. Don't worry, they will be back in the fall when the season reopens October 15th.

SANDY'S HAS NEW OWNER Christine, the owner of Sandy's Restaurant for the last ten years, sold her Indian Rocks Beach café to her daughter, Natasha. You might know her as a bartender at the Red Lion.

They are only open for breakfast and lunch, and closed on Tuesdays. Find them at 2300 Gulf Blvd., Indian Rocks Beach, next to Café de Paris.

Bar & Restaurant News

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

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

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

TIME TO ENJOY THE DONUTS Only in America do we have a day recognizing Donuts; actually we have two - June 1st the most common and November 5th.

Donuts come in an unlimited number of flavors and toppings: glazed, toppings, twisted, fritters and of course filled. No one really know their history. One theory is Dutch settlers brought them to North America in the 1700s, much as they did other traditional American desserts such as apple pie and cobbler.

The first cookbook mentioning donuts was an 1803 English cookbook which included American recipes. A short story in 1808 mentions "fire-cakes and dough-nuts." Then Washington Irving describes "balls of sweetened dough, fried in hog's fat and called donuts" in his 1809 *History of New York*.

The confection has two accepted methods of spelling: Doughnuts the older form and Donuts. *Peck's Bad Boy*, written by George Peck, in 1900, contained the first known use of the shortened word "donut."

Donuts' popularity started during World War I when Salvation Army volunteers added donuts and coffee to the amenities distributed at their battlefield "social huts." During WWI, these safe huts were a mainstay of military life—and so were the donuts.

The mostly female Salvation Army volunteers earned the name "Donut Dollies" or "Donut Girls". The connection of donuts and Salvation Army volunteers continues today.

The Chicago's Salvation Army created National Donut Day in 1938 as a fund-raiser to help those in need during the Great Depression and to honor The Salvation Army's "Lassies," of World War I.

CRABBY BILL'S FOUNDER DIES

George "Crabby Bill" Loder, Sr. 1932 - 2018

Indian Rocks Beach lost a fixture last month. Bill Loder, aka Crabby Bill, passed away April 19th.

Just recently, the Indian Rocks restaurant celebrated its 35th Anniversary in IRB, and Bill, who has not been in good health over the last few months, celebrated his 86th birthday. Unfortunately, his passing did not come as a surprise.

Bill's roots go back to New Jersey. He moved his family including his wife Dolores, and their five kids, Ellie, Dolores (Cookie), George, Matt and Johnny to Pinellas in 1968, fifty years ago.

Bill's first restaurant was called "Captain Bill's." But he sold that name when he sold the restaurant. He had restaurants in Redington Shores (1975), Madeira Beach, Bay Pines, and Tyrone Blvd. He opened in Indian Rocks Beach in the small building, that was once their fish market, in April of 1983. The building was known as "Wolfies," was a hot dog stand, selling food out of the front window on Gulf Blvd. Coincidentally, they are in the process of reopening that building as a frozen yogurt shop.

Bill and his wife Dottie, before her death in 2000.

"When dad bought that place, we all thought he was crazy," says Matt Loder, who now runs the Crabby Bill's businesses. "We did not even have a sign. We used to park a truck that had our name on it, out near the road."

Six months later, Bill bought a second building on the block from Joe Carbonaro that had been a doctors' office. He opened a second restaurant there.

"In February of 1987, Jim Sparks, owner of The Blue Lagoon on the southwest corner, asked dad if he wanted to buy his bar," says Matt. "Dad was in his 50s. All he wanted was a business that supported his family. One that the family could keep going and pass down to their kids."

That building, which had been Scoop's (an ice cream business), the Mamba Club, Blue Hawaii, and The Blue Lagoon, would now become Crabby Bill's.

"Back then, Indian Rocks was different," reflects Matt Loder. "There were more Ma-and-Pa type motels. Lots of people from Tampa had second homes and cottages over here and came to IRB for the weekends and brought their family and friends. There were less full time people."

Bill Loder's foresight has helped Crabby Bill's to become one of the largest employers and one of the largest sales tax contributors in Indian Rocks Beach. Under his watch, it grew from a small 800 square foot building on Gulf Blvd to include a gift shop, Lulu's Oyster Bar, Jake's Cantina, and Seabreeze Seafood Restaurant located down the road in Redington Beach.

His family has grown too, and includes 13 grandkids and 16 great grandkids. Many of those old enough work in the family business. Crabby Bill Loder had a long and happy life and left a legacy for all to remember him by. The people of Indian Rocks and all of Pinellas County will miss him.

THE 2018 ATLANTIC HURRICANE SEASON IS QUICKLY APPROACHING!

Hurricane preparedness is paramount to ensure our residents stay safe and enhance our community resilience so we can bounce back after such a storm.

In May, the cities of Belleair Bluffs and the Town of Belleair hosted a Mini-Expo with a speaker panel on Hurricane Preparedness. Although 90% of the Bluffs and the Town of Belleair are not in an evacuation zone, they were definitely affected and learned a lot from Hurricane Irma.

Over 200 people attended and listened to speakers from the two cities, the Pinellas County Emergency Management, The Sheriff's office, Police, The Largo Fire Department, Duke Power and Gen X, a generator company.

If you missed this one, the St. Petersburg Fire Rescue will be hosting another Hurricane Preparedness Expo on June 9th, from 9am- 1pm at Lake Vista Recreation Center, located at 1401 62nd Ave S., in St. Petersburg.

Here is some information to help you and your family prepare. After looking at the lists, if you need to purchase supplies, the State of Florida is sponsoring sales tax free hurricane supplies the first seven days of June.

HURRICANE WATCH VS. HURRICANE WARNING

• Hurricane Watch: An announcement that hurricane conditions are possible within 48 hours in the specified area. During a watch, prepare your home and review your plan for evacuation in case a Hurricane or Tropical Storm Warning is issued. Listen closely to instructions from local officials.

• Hurricane Warning: An announcement that hurricane conditions are expected within 36 hours in the specified area. During a warning, complete storm preparations and immediately leave the threatened area if directed by local officials.

BUILD YOUR SURVIVAL KIT

• Nonperishable food & Water
• Radio
• Flashlights & batteries
• Health and sanitation items
• Important documents & Medication
• Cash
• Fuel

PLAN WHAT YOU WILL DO

• Where will you go?
• How will you get there?
• What will you do with your pets?

SPECIAL NEEDS PROGRAM

Residents who need minimal medical assistance can register for shelter and/or transportation by calling 727-464-3800 or www.pinellascounty.org/emergency.

CONNECT TO EMERGENCY INFORMATION

• During an emergency activation call the Citizen Information Center at (727) 464-4333.

• Receive the award-winning monthly newsletter that provides the latest emergency education information compiled from local and national sources. During emergencies, subscribers will receive emergency bulletins and instructions. Sign up at pinellascounty.org/emergency/stayconnected.htm#cellphone.

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VACATION STRESS FREE

By Susan Brown, Cruise Planners® Travel Advisor

Planning a trip for you or your family can be stressful. Why spend hours trying to find the best deals online when you can simply use a travel specialist? In today's demanding world, vacation time is an increasingly valuable asset. An independent travel agent can make the most use of your time by finding unique itineraries for the best price. Let a travel professional plan your next vacation while you kick back, relax and wait to be amazed at the adventures you're about to embark upon. Three benefits of using a travel specialist:

• Value – Travelers often think that they pay "extra" when using a travel professional. In fact using a destination specialist can not only save you money, but also gets you extras and insider access to the hottest activities and retreats.

• Minimize Time Spent Researching – Has the Caribbean recovered from the latest hurricanes? Is it safe to travel to Europe? After so much research and preparation, some travelers complain they need a vacation from their "vacation." Travel experts save you time, so you can focus on what's truly important before and during your trip– the experience.

• A Human Touch – A travel professional listens, researches, suggests, adjusts, and will provide you with the best value for your money. We are there for you before, during and after your trip. It's just one of the reasons booking through an agent is on the rise even with so many travel booking sites available.

Susan Brown recently joined Cruise Planners®, an American Express Travel Representative. She offers a wide range of specialized land vacations, cruise and tour packages. "Everyone loves to travel," Brown explains, "I take the stress out of planning with educated recommendations based on value and budget to customize your best possible vacation. Reached Susan at (727) 303-9050, on Facebook, facebook.com/SusanBrownCruisePlanners, or online, toptravelplanners.com to help plan your dream vacation.

CRUISE PLANNERS
YOUR LAND AND CRUISE EXPERTS

CLEARWATER MARINE AQUARIUM SUMMER CAMP

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

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

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

For more information and easy online registration go to seewinter.com/education/camps or email camps@cmaquarium.org

LIGHTS OUT TO PROTECT SEA TURTLES

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

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

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

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

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

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

• Shield any artificial lighting that might shine toward the beach. Turn off outside lights, draw drapes and avoid using flashlights or fishing lamps on the beach.

• Remove obstacles such as sand castles or sand pits that may impede turtles or hatchlings making their way to the shoreline. Flatten sand castles and fill in holes.

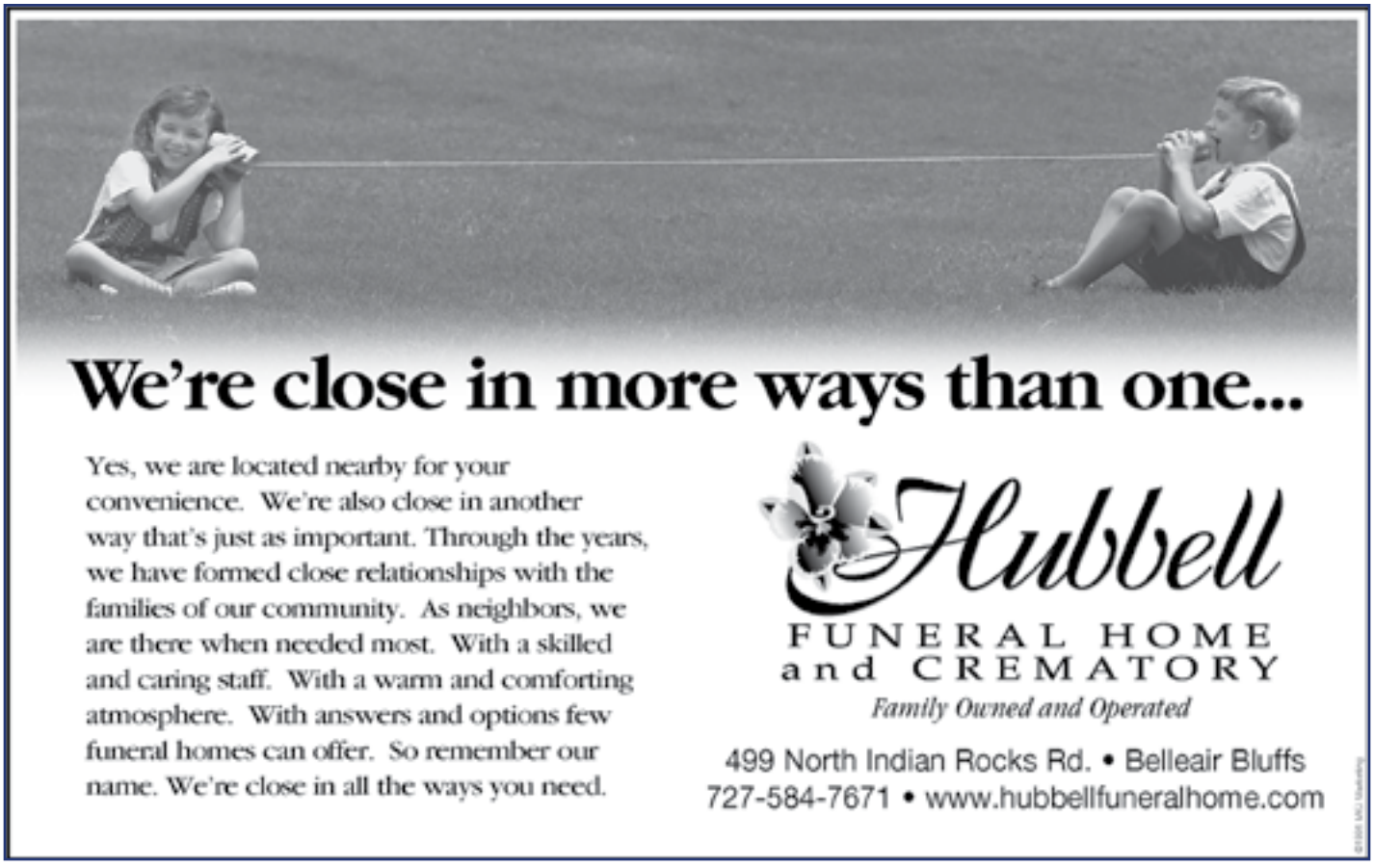
• Keep the beach clean. Eliminate trash items that may entangle hatchlings and adult turtles. Take all personal belongings from the beach at the end of the day so no obstacles exist on the way to or from the water.

• Stay off dunes and use the designated walkovers for crossing

• Do not approach or harass adult turtles as they make their way back to sea. As a threatened species, loggerhead turtles are protected under federal and state law; disturbing them, their nest or hatchlings, or causing disorientation from artificial lights, is illegal.

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

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



BELLEAIR REC NEWS

RECREATION DIRECTOR CHANGES

In early May, longtime Director Eric Wahlbeck left the Belleair Recreation Department to become the managing director of Crystal Lagoons, a new residential development company with locations throughout Florida. Owned by Metro Developments, they build residential communities with large man-made lagoons, surrounded by restaurants, slides, cabanas and more. They are building 10 lagoon properties in Florida over the next five years. Wahlbeck's role will be the communities day-to-day operations.

The Town of Belleair quickly found a replacement, already working here, Ricky Allison, Wahlbeck's right-hand man.

Allison has worked for the Town of Belleair for seven years. In 2001, he was hired to be the head of the Town's Park's Department. He later was put in charge of the Town's road projects and the makeover of the town's parks. Allison has a master's degree in public administration from USF and a bachelor's degree in landscaping from LSU. He is married with two children, and lives in Clearwater

FAMILY GOLF TOURNAMENT

Many families from the Town of Belleair played in the 9th Annual Family Golf Tournament, May 5th. The event was held at the Belleair Golf Course this year, since the new Pelican Golf Club was not open. The tournament was an Adult/Junior Scramble Tournament.

SUMMER CAMPS

Summer Camps start June 4th and run through August 3rd. They are offered weekly, with different activities each week. See the complete listing of Belleair Rec Summer Camps online at www.BelleairRec.com.

GIRLS ON THE RUN

Girls are running at the Rec Center, Tuesdays and Thursdays from 4 to 5:30pm. This is a good way to get in shape and meet other local girls your age. Plus, you will be training for many area races.

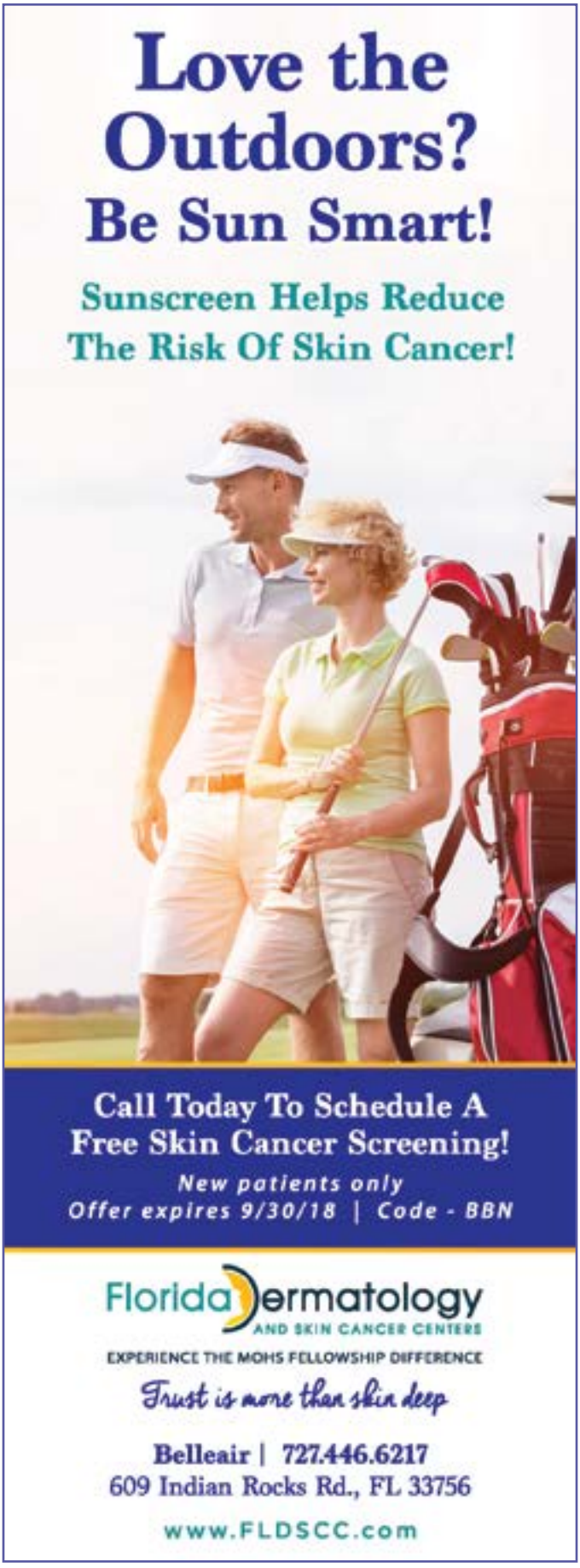
Visit www.BelleairRec.com for other events and sports programs that are planned or call 518-3728.

PLAN THE BEST SUMMER EVER WITH LARGO'S SPECIALTY CAMPS

Looking to keep your children busy and entertained this summer? Take a look at Largo's specialty summer camps starting May 29th. Kids will explore their creativity and have fun learning at these half-day, weekly camps. Largo offers a variety of camps ranging from arts and crafts, education, aquatics, sports and everything in between. Mix and match camps to create the best summer ever for your child. Spots are filling fast, don't miss out! Register at the Highland or Southwest Recreation today.

Parents, if you are looking for full day camps, there are still spaces left at Camp Funshine for children entering K-2nd Grade at Largo Community Center and Science and Nature Camp for children 8-12 years old at McGough Nature Park and Athletic Adventures Camp for children that have completed grades 4-7 at Highland Recreation.

For a listing of all specialty summer camps, as well as Largo's full summer camp guide, visit LargoCamps.com or call (727)518-3016.



BETTER THAN GRASS

By Tim David

I wanted to start this article with "Not your Dad's Artificial Turf", but realized that didn't make much sense seeing how artificial grass is relatively new to the industry. As with most popular new products, artificial grass has developed and evolved rather quickly. Older versions were basically indoor/outdoor carpet, however, over the past ten years artificial grass has become durable, porous, and environmentally friendly, perfect for dog runs, playgrounds, decks and bare spots in your lawn. Durability is one of the biggest improvements, made from polyethylene, the grass blade is non-porous and will withstand animal waste, road salts, and chlorine. It is fire resistant and UV protected. Another major change was to the back of the grass, designed for long term durability the backing consists of a triple layer reinforced stabilizer with a polyurethane coating, that does not allow the artificial grass to stretch or shrink in heavy traffic areas or with temperatures changes. The backing is perforated every few inches and even after heavy rains it allow water to drain quickly, washing away animal waste and other debris.

I am the owner and installer of Better Than Grass. I moved to Pinellas County after serving 20 years as an Infantry Officer in the US Army. I am a General Contractor and built a successful 15 year business, however, I could never grow grass! Looking for alternatives, I met Ivan, the inventor for the Better Than Grass formula. Having installed thousands of sports fields worldwide, Ivan took his knowledge to the residential market. I started with my backyard. I removed tons of sugar sand and replaced it with a compacted paver base screening material, and placed the artificial grass…literally transforming ugly, dirty dirt into lush green gardens overnight!

You can reach Tim at 813-734-7277, BetterThanGrass.com.

LOCAL ARTIST FEATURED IN FIRST SOLO EXHIBITION

Art created by Belleair Bluffs resident Glen DePasse, the 2017 Gasparilla Festival of the Arts "Emerging Artist" winner and a 1st Place winner in this years Martini's and Matisse event, is being presented by the TECO Public Art Gallery.

The show "Beyond the Boundaries" runs from May 1st - June 29th. A self described Mixed Media Photographer, DePasses' large (up to 40"X48") abstract images are created by painstakingly manipulating various textiles via airbrushing, layering, suspension and tensioning into a 'Soft Sculpture' set-up. These set-ups are then creatively lit and photographed. This unique approach results in a natural sense of depth, shadow and color gradation. The images are remarkable when viewed at full size. The artist prints and frames his own work.

The TECO Public Art Gallery is located at 702 N. Franklin St., directly across from Tampa Theatre and is open from 8am to 5pm Monday - Friday. The artist's website is www.glendepasse.com

FROM THE DESK OF SHERIFF BOB GUALTIERI

Summer Boating Safety

All citizens who wish to legally operate a motor vehicle on the road must possess a valid driver's license or learner's permit. However, the same cannot be said about citizens on the water.

Although Florida law now requires boat-operators born after January 1, 1988, to complete an approved boater education course and receive a "Florida Boating Safety Education ID Card," there are exceptions.

This means responsible vessel operators should arm themselves with boating knowledge and rules of the water, as well as remain alert for the many other boaters who don't.

To help prepare citizens and encourage safe, responsible boating, the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office has compiled a list of important boating safety tips:

1. Complete a safe boating course: Driving a car and operating a boat require different skill sets and knowledge about entirely different rules and regulations. Enrolling in an in-person or online boaters' safety course is a great way to learn the rules of the water and familiarize yourself with basic boating principles. Visit the National Safe Boating Council at www.safeboatingcouncil.org for several online courses.

2. Know your boat: Before you set sail, get familiar with the vessel you are operating and the area you are navigating, including water depth, tides, weather, slow or idle speed requirements, and swim exclusion and restricted zones.

3. Get in the zone: Manatee Protection Zones are back in effect through October 31st. Vessel operators should pay close attention to all signs throughout the Intracostal, specifically looking for these zones that have not only been implemented within the last year but also extended to provide extra protection for manatees. Marine Unit deputies will be regularly monitoring and enforcing these zones. Note: Rules and restrictions are constantly changing, so it is important to stay up-to-date, even if you are a seasoned boater.

4. Get equipped: Florida law requires that one personal flotation device (PFD), or "lifejacket," per passenger be readily accessible on the vessel at all times, and children under age 6 must wear PFDs while underway. PFDs aren't the only required boating gear. Visit the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) website for a list of other mandatory items based on what type of boat you have: http://myfwc.com/boating/safety-education/equipment/

5. Scan constantly: There are no stop signs or traffic lights on the water, so you MUST constantly scan the water for other boaters, swimmers, water skiers, or stumps and other landmarks jutting up from the water that could severely damage your boat or harm you and others.

6. File a "float plan": Share your trip details – where you're going, when you plan to return, passengers' names, and boat information – with a responsible person before you launch, in case you lose contact in an emergency. Make sure to contact that person when you return safely.

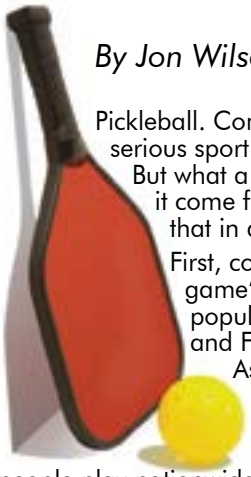
7. Don't boat under the influence: Operating any vehicle – including a boat – while impaired by drugs or alcohol is illegal and can end in a lot worse than a citation. Just as you would before a night out on the town, designate a sober driver for days on the water.

For more boating safety tips, visit the FWC, National Boating Safety Council, and the BoatUS Foundation websites. And, of course, don't forget the sunscreen!

FOR THE LOVE OF PICKLEBALL

Florida Seniors are playing in ever-greater numbers

By Jon Wilson



Pickleball. Come on, is that a serious sport? In a word: Very. But what a name. Where did it come from? More on that in a minute.

First, consider the game's prodigious popularity. The Sports and Fitness Industry Association, a trade organization, estimates up to 2.8-million people play nationwide. In the Villages, a central Florida retirement community, thousands play. Pickleball is a genuine hometown sport there.

The game's governing body, the USA Pickleball Association (USAPA), conducted its annual national championships in November 2017. Nearly 1,400 from 42 states competed.

"Until you start playing, you don't appreciate how addictive it can be," says USAPA spokesman Drew Wathey. Pickleball has flourished in Florida, from the Panhandle to Palm Beach and beyond. USAPA lists more than 30 major centers.

The Villages of Florida is a stronghold. That's no surprise. The central Florida retirement community, with an estimated population of 115,000, is renowned for its athletes and the variety of sports open to them. Think softball, golf, swimming, track and field, archery, tennis, and polo, for starters. There are many more .

"We even have cheerleaders," said Glenn Kaye, a resident recently inducted into the Broward County Sports Hall of Fame, honoring his 50 years as a swim coach. For two of those years, he coached The Villages Aquatic Swim Team.

John Rohan, The Villages recreation director, agrees. "We offer endless lifestyle opportunities," he said. "With our weather, residents get to play their favorite sport all year long."

And then there's pickleball. "Thousands" of the community's residents play it, Rohan said. "We have over 180 courts and its growing."

Villages resident Dennis Sarlo has been playing about 10 years, which coincides with the length of his residency in The Villages.

"I never heard of the game until I game down here. I just started like anyone else, more curious than anything else," said Sarlo, who is 70 and plays every day. "It just became so exciting, it's just a fantastic sport!" he said.

Pickleball originated a half-century ago on Bainbridge Island, Washington. Three dads, including United States congressman Joel Pritchard, devised the game. The trio wanted to play badminton, but couldn't find the equipment. So they improvised with Ping-pong paddles and a perforated plastic sphere known to generations of Americans as a Wiffle Ball. And whack! The game was afoot.

It caught on fast. Friends and neighbors of the original three started making their own paddles, using jigsaws and plywood. They set up courts in their driveways and backyards.

Anybody could play. Grandmas took on their 9-year-old grandsons. Middle aged cousins four times removed got reacquainted on the courts. Which, by the way, are about half the size of a tennis playing area.

Word of mouth spread the news. USAPA organized in 1984 to advance the game nationally. By 1990, it was being played in all 50 states. Curious aerobics devotees and hardcore badminton players saw this upstart sport in community centers, the local YMCAs, and even in phys-ed classes.

They watched the bright yellow orb, three inches in diameter, an ounce in weight, and still looking like the old-school Wiffle Ball. It wasn't long before they wanted to smack it.

"The play is pretty mesmerizing at times," Wathey said.

According to the USAPA website, the sport is exploding worldwide. International clubs are sprouting, and national governing bodies have been established in Canada and India. There is movement to introduce youngsters to what has been viewed as a retiree's pastime.

The game is regarded as not as fast or strenuous as tennis, but quick enough to keep you moving and requiring laser-like focus. You don't have to be a great athlete to play. Good hand-eye coordination and decent footwork are helpful. And it doesn't take long before a newcomer can play comfortably.

"I can take a beginner and in 30 minutes they are hitting the ball back and forth, sustaining a rally," says Villages' Pickleball instructor Steve Richter.

It's also relatively inexpensive to get started. You can get a serviceable, new paddle for $30 or less (although the best models can cost $100 or more). A three ball pack might run you 10 bucks.

Oh yes, we were going to discuss the pickleball name's origins. Two narratives compete. The most widespread story, it was name for Pickles, a cocker spaniel belonging to one of the game's founders. But family members said Pickles did not arrive until two years after Joel Pritchard and friends started the game. Joan Pritchard, founder Joel's wife, wrote a newspaper story some years ago in which she suggested the name came from an aquatic term: the pickle boat.

In the sport of rowing, or crew, that boat is usually the slowest in a race. Mrs. Pritchard, in humorous fashion, thought the early players were reminiscent of such a craft.

Whatever the truth, pickleball is great name – and those who play today love their great game.

WANT TO GIVE IT A TRY?

Belleair Rec offers pickleball play four days a week. All skill levels are encouraged to participate. All games are in the gym and cost $2 a play period.

Currently the hours are: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday: 9:30am to 11:30am and Wednesdays: 11am to 1pm. This will change during the summer.

For information about playing Pickleball, at the Rec Department, call 518-3728.

This article is reprinted from FORUM, the statewide magazine of the Florida Humanities Council. (www.FloridaHumanities.org)

BEACH NOURISHMENT

By Ted Shannon

Putting the sand back that mother nature washes away is part of island living in Pinellas County. Those in charge of this task call it "Beach Nourishment." Replenishing the sand is critical to maintain habitat for birds and sea turtles, to protect property and roads from erosion, and of course to keep our tourism economy thriving. Tourism provides 2.3 billion dollars, while supporting 47,000 jobs and netting $145 million in taxes.

At a recent meeting the details for the upcoming nourishment were explained. The Environmental Management Department of the county and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers are jointly responsible for the project that dredges sand from one location and pumps it to where it is needed.

The upcoming project is the fifth time beach nourishment has been done along the barrier island from Clearwater Pass south. The first project was in 1988, then again in 1999, 2006 and finally in 2012. The 2018 project was set to begin in April, but has been slightly delay. Baring any weather issues it should start any day and continue to November.

First, sand dredged from the John's Pass channel will be placed on Treasure Island's beaches. Then, the project will move north to Ultimar Condos in Clearwater using sand dredged from the Egmont area. They will then proceed south to Redington Beach and should be finished by the end of the year. Sea turtle nesting watch and relocation will occur 24 hours a day during the project.

1000 foot sections of the beach will be partitioned off while sand is pumped into that area. It will usually last only a day or two at each location, but do expect some denied access at times. Once the sand is in place, expect up to 100 feet of wider beach.

The 41.7 million-dollar contract was awarded to Norfolk Dredging based in Chesapeake, Virginia. The Federal Government is picking up the tab due to the damage attributed to Hurricane Hermine. Usually funding is 20% local, 20% state and 60% feds.

During the operation, Norfolk expects to work 24 hour shifts, frequently. To find precise scheduling and a full description of the project with maps and pictures visit: pinellascounty.org/environment/coastalmngmt/sandkey.htm.

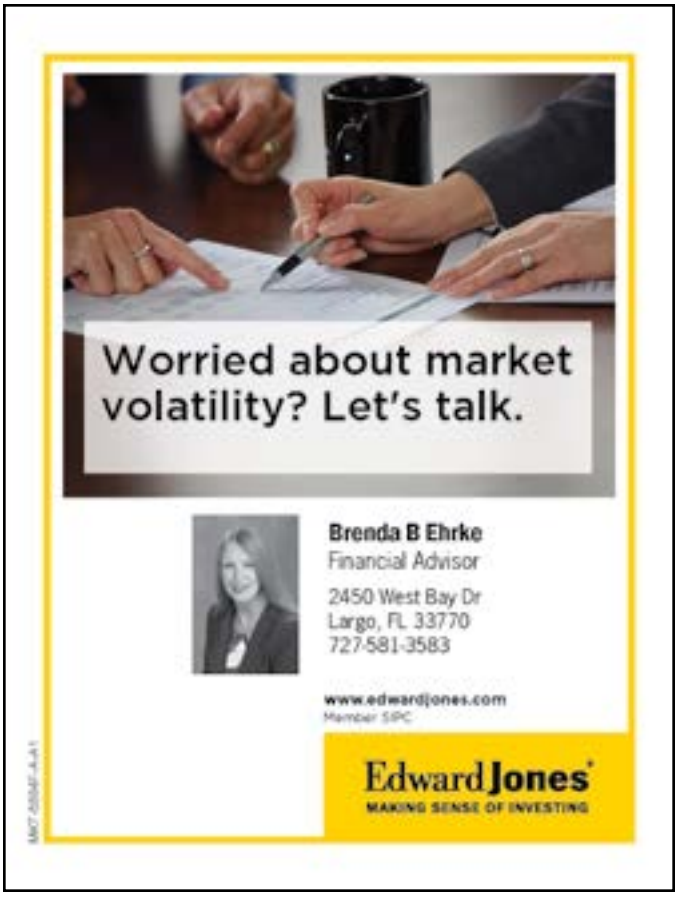
For information, contact County Representative John Bishop 727-464-8766 or Army Corp Representative Amanda Parker 904-232-1576.

STINGRAY SEASON IS HERE

This time of year, there is a dramatic increase in stingray injuries. It is important to do the "stingray shuffle" when entering the water. By shuffling your feet in the sand, you will scare off any stingrays that might be around.

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

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



Organizational News...

BELLEAIR ROTARY

Their 12th Annual Wine & Tapas Extravaganza held April 30th was again a HUGE success. Several hundred guests enjoyed the evening and the big auction. The event raised close to $30,000. Proceeds benefit the many programs of the Belleair Rotary

The event also honored long time member Dr. Allen Baker, who joined the Rotary in 1946 and has 72 years of Perfect Attendance. He is a stellar example of a Rotarian.

Recently, the Belleair Rotary presented a check to the Pinellas Education Foundation for $2,500 to be used for future scholarships.

The Rotary in the Town of Belleair meets every Thursday at 12:15pm at the Belleair Country Club. The third Thursday of every month is the general assembly and Board meeting. They have events throughout the year and proceeds benefit many local charities including Belleair Elementary, Upper Pinellas UPARC, the Salvation Army, Polio Eradication, the Rotary Foundation and many other local causes. Reach President John Funk at BelleairRotary2017@Gmail.com or 599-3864. Their web site is www.BelleairRotary.org.

MILITARY ORDER OF THE WORLD WARS

The Clearwater Chapter of the Military Order of the World Wars meets for lunch on the first Tuesday of each month at the Belleair Country Club. Social hour begins at 11:30am followed by lunch and a program. Members are retired active duty Military Officers and their spouses or widows. They welcome new members. To RSVP for lunch or to join, call LTC. George Smith at 786-5578.

NEWCOMER CLUB

You do not have to be new to the area to join this club. But if you are—this club is for you. This is a social club to help relocated residents, and others in the area, develop new friends. The ladies meet monthly at different locations for lunch with guest speakers. Leisure activities vary from card games to field trips and theater shows.

The July meeting is at the Clearwater Country Club on July 3rd. It is lunch with live music. Stay afterwards for cards.

Please RSVP with Ginny by calling 365-3493 or Mary Jane at 352-263-5518. Visit WelcomeNewComerClub.com.

DEMOCRATIC WOMEN'S CLUB OF UPPER PINELLAS

Established in 1940, the Democratic Women's Club of Upper Pinellas County (DWCUP) has the distinction of being one the first Democratic Women's Club in the U.S. Meetings are generally held on the fourth Monday of the month.

Annual $20 dues are due by June 1. Monthly meetings start at 11:30 am, with the business segment and presentations starting approximately at noon. A light lunch is available for $5. Their next meeting is June 25. Bring in those unused hotel toiletries you have collected and they will deliver them to the women at the Haven by RCS. Visit dwcup.org for more information.

DAUGHTERS OF AMERICAN REVOLUTION (DAR)

They meet monthly at 11:30am on the third Friday, at Belleair Country Club for lunch. Call Linda Mintz 488-1068.

BELLEAIR GARDEN CLUB

There are no meeting until October. Annual membership is $50 per year per person. Couples pay $75. Seasonal members $30. Guests are welcome. Email Kathleen_Hardwick@MSN.com or visit BelleairGardenClub.com.

GULF OF MEXICO SPONGE WAREHOUSE AT HERITAGE VILLAGE

Heritage Village recently celebrated the opening of the Gulf of Mexico Sponge Warehouse. The building arrived at Heritage Village in 2004 as a donation from the Kousaleos family, bringing with it decades of history and culture. Heritage Village staff and volunteers have worked for months to stabilize and restore the interior of the 1930s structure.

Throughout the summer and fall of 2017, a lot of activity surrounded the Gulf of Mexico Sponge Warehouse. Led by Heritage Village staff, preservation volunteers completed the restoration of the structure. In addition to stabilizing the interior of the building, volunteers performed a deep cleaning of the warehouse. This removed several decades of mold, mildew, and grime from the interior walls. Next, all the wood surfaces in the building were treated with a historically appropriate wood preservative. The mixture of linseed oil and turpentine sealed the wood and created a water-resistant barrier that aides in the prevention of rot.

The Curator of Collections at Heritage Village created an exhibit showcasing artifacts from the museum collection that discusses the sponge industry in Tarpon Springs. In addition, Heritage Village partnered with the City of Tarpon Springs to utilize images and exhibit panels to create a cohesive sponging history. Recently, the Curator of Education at Heritage Village added an engaging interactive activity for all ages. Visitors can use historic images to create their own postcard of Tarpon Springs.

The Sponge Warehouse made its opening debut at the 2017 Country Jubilee along with a celebration a few weeks ago sponsored by the Pinellas County Historical Society. The building is a visitor favorite! Heritage Village is a Pinellas County Government program and free to the public. It is open Wednesday-Saturday, 10am-4pm, and Sunday, 1-4pm.

FLORIDA STORIES, DOWNLOAD THE APP

If you like to to research Florida cities before you visit, there is now an app for that.

"Florida Stories" is a free app created by the Florida Heritage Council. It offers free stories and walking tours that will take visitors through the past and the present—step by step. It is packed with photos and intriguing details. Florida Stories will open your eyes to many of Florida's cities and towns in a way you've never experienced before including downtown St Petersburg, Tarpon Springs, Ybor City, St Augustine, Key West and more.

Download the "Florida Stories" app through iTunes or the Google Play stores. You can also visit www.FLStories.org for information and to download it there.

Organizational News...

CLEARWATER YACHT CLUB

They hosted their annual ARC Fun Day, May 12. "It is our way of giving back to the community," says Tom Brusini, Club Manager. The club is closed to members while clients of ARC have a fun day of swimming, games, live music, dancing, and rides on a dolphin viewing boat donated by the Clearwater Marine Aquarium. Venus Restaurant of Belleair Bluff's supplies the food. Members of the Club pay for the clients of ARC to get free shirts. The kids enjoyed Shirley Temple drinks and lots of ice cream. It is one the best days of the year - for both the kids and the club members that volunteer.

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

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

BELLEAIR BEACH LADIES LUNCHEON CLUB

The May luncheon, held at Amici's Italian Restaurant, was their last meeting of the year. Over 50 women attended. Jane Morse-Swett, President of Women with a Purpose, spoke and expressed her thanks for the organizations help and support.

The club's membership now stands at 90 women. Lois O'Donnell thanked her board for their service last year. Nancy Read was sworn in as the new president. Deborah Hendricks is First Vice President and Kiffy Hester Second Vice President.

The next meeting is for October 7th.

BELLEAIR BEACH ISLAND GARDEN CLUB

There are no meetings until October, however, you can still join the club now. Membership is $20 per year and guests are welcome. Mary Carey, President, can be reached at 596-5981 or MLCKC@aol.com. E-mail Marjorie Rose at RoseMarjorie38@Yahoo.com for club information.

CLEARWATER COMMUNITY WOMAN'S CLUB

Belleair Women are welcome to join the Clearwater Community Woman's Club a volunteer service club established more than 40 years ago. General Meetings are held the third Tuesdays of each month, starting at 11am, at the Clearwater Downtown Library. Visit ClearwaterCWC.org or call Martha Hickey, 813-765-6219.

CLEARWATER COMMUNITY SAILING CENTER

They are located on Sand Key, just north of the Marriott Hotel, at 1001 Gulf Blvd. Call 517-7776 or visit ClearwaterCommunitySailing.org for more information.

Summer Camps run June through the week of August 6, for ages 5 to 17. Their Camp Awesome is a sailing program dedicated to teaching children who have high functioning Autism or Asperger's syndrome. Camp Awesome can also cater to youth with high functioning special needs.

BEACH COMMUNITY FOOD PANTRY

Submitted David Kline BCFP Director

Van Funding Project - We have many tasks throughout the year that require a larger vehicle: food pick up (3 times per week), transporting equipment to various event locations and picking up periodic bulk food donations. This ongoing need has been covered by community members who graciously volunteer their time and larger vehicle. We thank them for their contribution.

Over the last 6 months, BCFP has been working on sourcing funds to purchase a quality used cargo van. A utility cargo van will allow us to more easily manage our ongoing, vital tasks. So far, we have raised dedicated Van Project donations of over $10,000, well over half way to our target goal of $17,000. We encourage all to consider supporting this worthwhile initiative.

Please contact BCFP Director, David Kline (727-418-1673) if you wish to donate to the Van Project or if you have any questions about our wonderful community resource. 'Food from the Heart'...we are all making a difference!

BEACH ART CENTER

Submitted by Patricia Thomas

The Indian Rocks Beach Art Center will be open all summer this year with so much going on:

• Creative Kids Camps which run from June 4th – July 20th. Morning and all-day sessions are available for ages 6-13.

• Afternoon and evening pottery, watercolor, acrylic, oil painting and drawing classes for teens and adults will be offered. Visit beachartcenter.org for details and registration.

• The Beach Art Center Gift Shop has been refreshed and refilled with fresh local art and gifts – check it out!

Beach Art Center needs your help to offer Creative Kids Camp to a child in need. In the past, generous donations have allowed them to sponsor children, to attend our Creative Kids Camp, who may have otherwise been unable to attend.

This year, Indian Rocks Beach Rotary and Tamps Bay Surface Design Guild are helping to make scholarships available. They can use additional help. If you would like to sponsor a child to have a creative art experience this summer, please call 727-596-4331 or mail your donation to: Creative Kids Camp-Beach Art Center - 1515 Bay Palm Boulevard- Indian Rocks Beach, FL 33785

BEACH MOMS

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

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

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

CLEARWATER GARDEN CLUB

There are no meeting until October. For information, email ClearwaterGardenClub@Gmail.com, call 316-5504, or visit ClearwaterGardenClub.org.

City of Belleair Bluffs

City Government Informational Publication Summer 2018

Independence Day Celebration!

Wednesday July 4, 2018

11 a.m. ~ 1 p.m.

Belleair Bluffs Community Center & Park ~ 2747 Sunset Blvd.

Raffle Prizes ~ Hot Dogs ~ Hamburgers ~ Dessert Contest ~ Bouncy House
Fire Department: See fire truck up close ~ Pinellas Sheriff's Department ~ Free Kids Fingerprinting

Plan to attend the Belleair Bluffs Independence Day Picnic co-sponsored by the Bluffs Business Association. To enter the dessert contest bring your dessert to City Hall by 10:30am.

NPDES INFORMATION

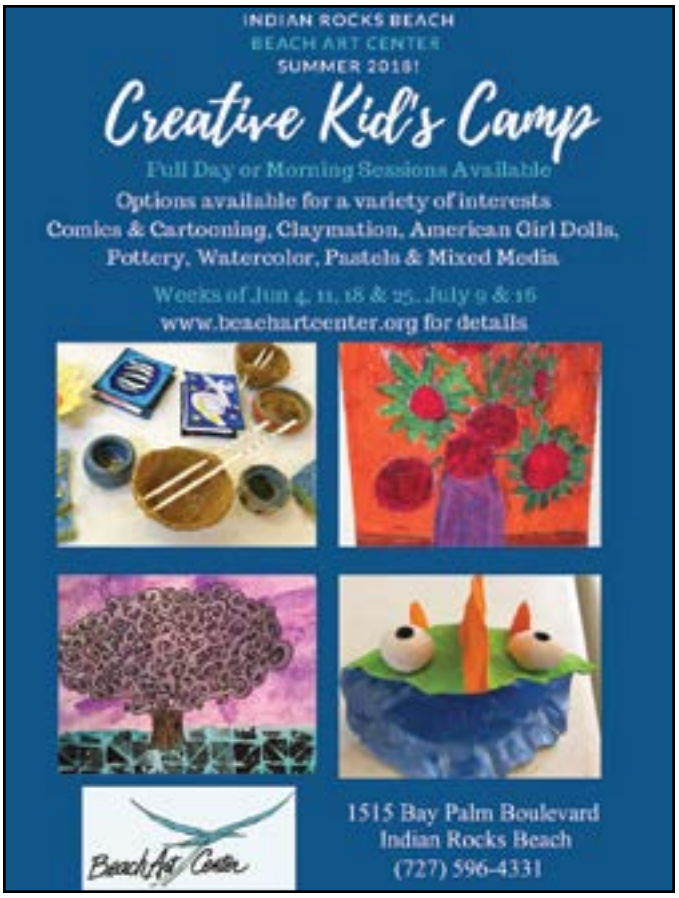
Are the storm sewers the same as sanitary sewers? Stormdrains are the openings you see along curbs and in streets and parking lots. They carry away rainwater and transport it through the storm sewer system to nearby waterways. Water and other debris that enter stormdrains do not go to a treatment facility. In contrast, the sanitary sewer takes household water and waste from toilets, sinks and showers, and transports it to a wastewater treatment facility. There, the water is treated and can be reused for reclaimed water.

What is stormwater Runoff? Stormwater Runoff is rainfall that does not seep into the ground but runs off over our yards, streets, parking lots, and buildings. The stormwater runoff then enters our storm sewer system which flows directly into creeks, lakes, Tampa Bay, or the Gulf of Mexico.

How does stormwater get polluted? As stormwater flows over our lawns, driveways and parking lots, it picks up fertilizers, oil, chemicals, grass clippings, litter, pet waste, and anything else in its path. The storm sewer system then transports these pollutants to local lakes and streams, and eventually Tampa Bay or the Gulf of Mexico.

Homeowners: Homeowners can make a big difference in our local stormwater runoff by minimizing fertilizer and pesticide use, picking up after their pets, and washing their cars at a car wash facility. Other helpful measures include not draining your pool into the storm sewer, recycling hazardous household waste and landscaping.

PHONE NUMBERS		YOUR COMMISSION	City Commission Meetings Every 2nd & 3rd Monday at 6:00 pm
City Hall	(727) 584-2151	Mayor Chris Arbutine	Visit our web site
Fire Dept.	(727) 587-6714	Vice Mayor Taylour Shimkus	www.belleairbluffs.org
Sheriff's Office	(727) 582-6200	Commissioner Jack Nazario	Email: info@belleairbluffs-fl.gov
DIAL 911 FOR EMERGENCIES		Commissioner Suzy Sofer Commissioner Joe Barkley	



NEW TRAFFIC SIGNAL

By Ted Shannon

The new signal at Gulf Blvd and the Belleair Causeway has been a long time coming. In November of 2015, the city of Belleair Beach and the county agreed to work together to replace it with a modern mast arm and intelligent video vehicle identification allowing for Adaptive Signal Control Technology (ASCT). ASCT will change the timing of lights based on actual traffic. Video makes it much more accurate than the old in-ground loop systems. There will be NO RED-LIGHT TICKETING via these video feeds, but 24/7 monitoring by the county can rapidly assist emergency situations.

The Florida Department of Transportation requires traffic signals within five miles of the beach be on mast arms that are rated to withstand 130 MPH wind speeds. And we know why, just last year Hurricane Irma knocked down the traffic signal. Days with no signal were dangerous and required police directing traffic until it could be replaced with temporary wire hung signals

Improvements with the signal include arrows turning north and south onto Gulf Blvd and a blinking yellow arrow for turns onto the causeway. The construction of the signals cost $270,000 and the funding came from Pinellas County as part of the Gulf Blvd Beautification program. The inspector for the project is Chris Gray. Reach him at 727-282-4984 if you have any specific questions.

BLUFF'S OLD FIRE STATION

Now that 50-year old building that was used as a Fire House, on Indian Rocks Road, has been vacated, it is for sale. It sits on prime real estate and is zoned residential/office/retail. But that may be changed. A person has already offered $450,000 and wants to turn it into a Doggie Day Care, a non-profit has offered $520,000.

The City Commissioner chose Belleair Bluff's real estate broker Kelly Kepler, owner of Engel & Volkers to handle the sale. "I want to come up with the right buyer with the right vision of what the city is looking for," says Kepler.

Mayor Arbutine says the Commission, not the Realtor, will determine the fire station's asking price, which he said should be around $900,000. Debra Sullivan, City Administrator, says there have been a lot of inquiries and interest in the property.

FROM CLERK TO ADMINISTRATOR

Debra Sullivan, Belleair Bluffs City Clerk for the last 16 years was promoted to City Administrator, similar to a city manager. She has been providing the services of Finance Director and Public Works Director since Robert David retired last year and also supervises the work of the Pinellas County Sheriff's service in Belleair Bluffs. The promotion included a raise; Her salary increases from $80,000 a year to $105,000. Alexis Silcox is the new City Clerk. The city is pursuing hiring a new public works director.

BELLEAIR BEACH PARKING FEES

Last month, Commissioners approved charging hourly parking fees in the City Hall parking lot, for those not there on city business. Belleair Beach residents can receive free parking stickers at City Hall.

"Most people are using our lot to go to the beach or to walk on the bridge," said Robert Sample, Chairman of the Parks and Recreation Board. Pay stations are currently installed in other lots owned by the city, including Morgan Park, Bayside Park and the City Marina. The city receives about $84,000 a year from paid parking. This new paid lot is expected to increase parking revenue.

Here is the future! This is the Anona Elementary Class of 2018 fifth grade graduates. These approximately 80 kids, from four different classrooms, will be attending Middle School when public school resumes August 13th.

MINDING OUR "Ps" AND "Qs" THIS HURRICANE SEASON

By Karen Williams Seel, Pinellas County Commissioner

When I was growing up, my grandmother would tell us to mind our "Ps" and "Qs" when company was coming. We thought it was a funny saying, but soon learned it meant to be on our best behavior.

Sometimes being on our best behavior means doing what's right, perhaps for ourselves, our families and our communities.

With another hurricane season here, I've been thinking about some "Ps" and "Qs" we could all mind while doing the right thing: staying safe.

My first "P" is "Prepare."
Preparing your family and your home will give you peace of mind and lessen the stress if a storm does come our way. Go out and get your plywood now, before the panic. I know you remember the rush last year during Hurricane Irma. Get your water and non-perishable food supplies now. If you were without electricity last year, you may want to invest in a generator. Learn how to safely use it now. Don't wait until the storm is two days away.

My second "P" is "Protect."
Protecting our loved ones is our number one priority. Will you need to evacuate? If you do, where will you go? Have your plan ready and be sure to let every family member know what your plan is, including out-of-town relatives. Be sure to think about your elderly family members too. Do they have special needs that will need to be addressed if you lose power? Pets are also part of the family. Be sure to make a plan for them as well.

My third "P" is "Patience."
Think about the days and weeks after Hurricane Irma. Many of us had no electricity. Most of us had debris piles in our yards for weeks. Patience will help get you through the uncertainties of a storm's aftermath. Remember, if we get hit, other places in Florida will get hit. We will all be in need of the same resources. It may take days for crews to reach our area to restore power. It may take weeks for crews to remove the hundreds of tons of debris from our streets. An ounce of patience will prevent a pound of frustration.

My only "Q" is "Questions."
If you have questions, Pinellas County has wonderful resources to help keep your family and home safe from any disaster. Visit www.pinellascounty.org/emergency for all the tools you need to survive the storm.

Another tool available to help you prepare is Ready Pinellas. This mobile app lets you look up your evacuation zone, has multiple checklists already built for you and can build a customized emergency plan. You can download Ready Pinellas through the Apple App Store or on Google Play.

I also encourage you to register for Alert Pinellas. This free service will provide you phone, text and email alerts during emergency events, including evacuations, gas leaks, flooding events and other local emergencies. Visit www.pinellascounty.org/alertpinellas to sign up.

And that brings me back to my grandmother. I think she was right. Minding our "Ps" and "Qs" makes everything go a lot smoother when company comes, including uninvited company like Aunt Irma.

Take Off For The Beach

coolsculpting

CoolSculpting permanently removes fat from your belly, muffin top, arms, bra area, back and thighs, by freezing fat cells. Without damage to your skin. Without needles or downtime.

Radiance Medspa has completed more than 8,000 body contouring treatments, including CoolSculpting, over the last 12 years.

Summer is here, let the experts at Radiance Medspa help you take off for the beach. With CoolSculpting.

Save Up to 25% Off CoolSculpting

May not be combined with other specials or discounts. Offer expires 6/30/18.

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