

NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

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Magazine

RUTH KIRBY - ED WRIGHT'S SECRETARY & LIFELONG COMPANION



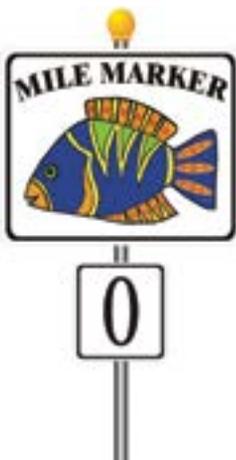
Our last issue featured a story about Ed Wright, who at one time was the richest man in Pinellas and the owner of Sand Key. This issue features Wright's longtime secretary, personal assistant, companion, and eventual executor of his estate— Ruth Kirby.

Ruth Kirby worked with Wright for almost 40 years and understood his various businesses almost as well as he did. When he died, Wright owned approximately \$25 million of land in Pinellas (in 1969 dollars), plus land in 19 other Florida counties. He also had 51,000 shares of the Seaboard Coast Line stock.

When Wright hired Kirby in 1931 his office was filled with ringing phones - his phone bill alone was over \$1,000 per month - teletype machines spitting out stock prices, and Western Union machines clattering financial news. Wright picked her from a secretarial pool to do some filing; she was 18. Neither knew that the one day of work would turn into four decades and then some.

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Also in this Issue:



Mile Marker Signs have been on the beach 15 years

Find out how they got here - page 16

Richard Jacobson

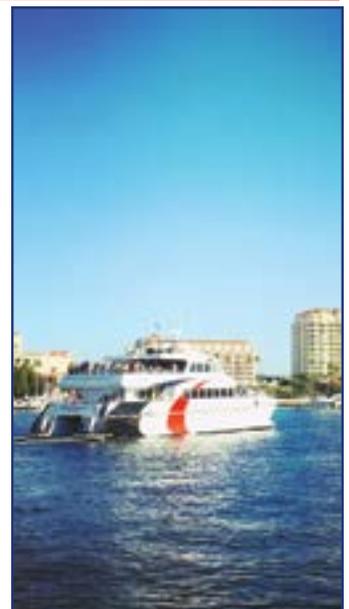
The late philanthropist left a list of accomplishments, now there is a new event in his honor - page 27

Cross Bay Ferry is back for a second season

Already breaking ridership records, the ferry is back with an extended schedule. Visit Tampa, with no driving - page 25

Meet Marcel Sanchez Belleview Inn's New Manager

Hand-picked for the job, Sanchez has a varied background - page 9



CREDITS



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MAYOR - Cookie Kennedy

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Charlie Crist 202-225-5961

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CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

MARCH

- Garage Sale McGough Park 2
- Sunday Concert In Belleair 3
- Ash Wednesday 6
- Women's Day 8
- Public Schools Closed 8
- St Pete Grand Prix 8-10
- Archaeology Class McGough Park 9
- Day Light Savings Time Begins 10
- Spring Break Pinellas Schools 11-15
- IRB Municipal Elections 12
- Homeowner's Happy Hour 14
- Shamrock Run Ulmer Park 15
- Great America Clean Up 16
- Action 2000 Service Saturday 16
- St Patrick's Day 17
- Speaking of History Heritage Village 17
- Bus Driver Appreciation Day 18
- Spring Begins 20
- Rotary Pancake Breakfast 23
- Greenfest 23
- Boat Club Intracoastal Clean Up 23
- History on The Rocks 23
- City Commission Meeting 26
- Blast Friday Clearwater 29
- Wine Walk Belleair Bluffs 30
- Feed the Critters McGough Park 30
- Sunday Concert in Belleair 31

APRIL

- April Fool's Day 1
- Sea Turtle Awareness Day 6
- Rotary Runs the Beach 6
- Citywide Garage Sale 6-7
- Bug Hunt McGough Park 6
- National Beer Day 7
- Coffee With A Cop 9
- City Commission Meeting 9
- Homeowner's Happy Hour 11
- Sugar Sands Festival Begins 12
- Holocaust Remembrance Day 12
- Sugar Sands Opens 12
- Historical Spring Luncheon 13
- Pawfest Largo Central Park 13
- Celebration of Trees McGough Park 13
- Heritage Village Lecture Series 14
- Good Friday 19
- Stations of The Cross On The Beach 19
- IRB Easter Egg Hunt 20
- Mainsail Art Show 20-21
- Easter Sunday 21
- Dyngus Day at Crabby Bills 22
- Earth Day 22
- Blast Friday Clearwater 26
- Arbor Day 26
- Beach Fest IRB 27
- Sugar Sands Closes 28

INDIAN ROCKS BEACH NEIGHBORHOOD NEWSLETTER

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

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

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

Thank you for reading,

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Did You Know



MORE PICKLEBALL The City held a Dedication Ceremony of two new Pickleball Courts on the northwest corner of Kolb Park (along 16th Avenue). Pickleball, a sport which originated a half-century ago, is a racket game for all ages, but has become an especially popular sport among older Floridians. There is a pickup game most mornings at the courts. Stop by and see what it is all about.

GRAND PRIX The 14th Annual Firestone Grand Prix of St Petersburg is March 9-11. The series of races along the 14-turn, 1.8 mile temporary track will culminating with the Verizon IndyCar Series on March 11.

The Dali will be open, although their parking lot is closed. On Thursday, March 8, there is a 5K race on the track. Friday, March 9 will have a Movie In the Park in North Straub Park. Buy tickets in advance - www.gpstpete.com.

BLAST FRIDAYS ARE BACK FOR 2019 This fun, monthly street party is held on the last Friday of the month in downtown Clearwater on Cleveland Street beginning at 5:30pm. It is free or you can buy VIP seating tickets for \$49 each. Here is a list of upcoming bands:

- March 29, The Rippingtons
- April 26, Gregg Billings, Ronnie Dee and the Superstars
- May 31, Mark Farner

NATIONAL BEER DAY
 Sunday, April 7th is National Beer Day. It marks the day the Cullen-Harrison Act was enacted after having been signed into law by President Franklin D. Roosevelt on March 22, 1933. The act allowed people to buy, sell and drink beer containing up to 3.2% alcohol. People across the country gathered outside breweries, some as early as the night before. That first day, 1.5 million barrels of beer were consumed.

Almost every bar and restaurant sells beer, but Pinellas County has become a mecca for craft beer companies. Visit St. Pete / Clearwater publishes a list of all Pinellas County Craft Beer breweries. Download the list at VisitStPeteClearwater.com and go celebrate



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PARKING PERMITS

Have you gotten your new parking permit yet? Your old one expired at the end of 2018. The permits are provided free only to Indian Rocks residents or property owners. Pick yours up at City Hall with a valid vehicle registration and proof of residency (a driver's license, utility bill, lease or tax bill.) Parking Permits are issued for a two-year period. This one is valid through December 2020. The permit must be permanently mounted to the rear of the vehicle in a visible location, such as the rear window or rear bumper. The resident parking permit is not valid at the County Park (on Gulf Blvd. between 17th and 18th Avenues). Call City Hall if you have additional questions.



MOBILE COLLECTION RECYCLING EVENT The next nearby Remote Collection Event for Household Electronics and Chemical Waste will be March 9 at the Largo Home Depot on Ulmerton Road. Collections start at 9am and end at 2pm. Visit www.PinellasCounty.org/SolidWaste to determine if your waste qualifies for this collection.

DOCUMENTARY IN FILM FEST The documentary "Save Our Cottages" featuring our own Plein Aire Cottage Artists has been accepted in to the Gasparilla International Film Festival. It will be screened the week of March 19th.

SPRING BREAK Pinellas County Schools scheduled their Spring Break early - March 11-15. But we know, Spring Break in Indian Rocks Beach begins near the end of February when northern schools start their breaks and visit the area. It will continue until Easter, which is very late, April 21. You will know when it happens, just look for the traffic.

VOLUNTEERS WANTED People are need to help at McGough Park during daily activities and for special events. They especially need help setting up tables, handing out food, directing parking, and other things during events like the Family Picnic in March and the Eco-Fest in April. Contac Kyle Vogel, Nature Park Specialist, 518-3047



GIVING BACK For the third year, the students and faculty of Country Day School held a food drive for the Beach Community Food Pantry. More than 40 boxes of non-perishable food products were collected. Meisha Leibson, Keith Reynolds and staff organized the collection, delivery, sorting and stocking of the donations.

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

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RUTH KIRBY, Continued

"He told me he could use a girl full time and hired me - at \$9 per week," Kirby recalled. "I was scared to death of him and the job."

Kirby's job included listening in on all those phone calls and taking notes. She soon started trading bonds and buying land; she proved to be as savvy an investor as her boss. Over the 40 years, the two never married, though they were said to be engaged.

Early on (in 1958), Wright gave Kirby the deed to Blue Springs, a beautiful piece of nature in Gilchrist County, west of Gainesville.

Kirby loved the place and turned it into an attraction with a dive platform. She charged swimmers, campers and canoeists 10¢ for a day's admission. Eventually, the property was passed on to her nephew.

Wright, 19 years older than Kirby, is said to have given her Blue Springs as a pre-wedding gift. But the two never married. Kirby once explained, "every time we discussed getting married, he got sick or something." So, she remained his employee, but also his lifelong companion.



Ruth Kirby and Ed Wright

Wright lived in Old Northeast with a sister, while Kirby lived nearby with her sister. She kept a stable of horses not far from downtown St. Petersburg and drove a large gold Cadillac—a gift from her boss.

In 1963, the City of Clearwater built a bridge at the north end of Sand Key, which was nothing but a big sandbar, across Clearwater Pass with a road connecting Clearwater Beach to the north end of Belleair Beach. Wright owned most of the island at the time. No one thought it suitable for development and Wright began the process of trying to sell it to a government entity who could turn it into a park, much like Ft. DeSoto.

Wright first approached the U.S. Government for inclusion in the "National

Seashore Program." Then, he approached the State, followed by the County to add Sand Key to their parks system. Finally, he offered it to the City of Clearwater - one report says for \$1 million. The City considered it but determined it would take another million to develop, plus there were the ongoing maintenance costs of another park - so they passed on the offer. Behind the scenes, Wright and City Manager Merrett Stierheim, who went to high school together, continued to talk. Merrett said he would find a way for the city to buy Sand Key. Wright died, before that happened.

In 1966, Wright donated 160 acres near 62nd Avenue NE, adjacent to 200 acres St. Petersburg already owned. Now, with 360 acres, Wright suggested the city build a "golf course, bridle trails, baseball and football fields, tennis courts, swimming pools, and a park with picnic areas." In tribute, the city named the complex, "Ed Wright Park."

At Wright's end, Kirby held a 21-day vigil at his hospital bedside, until he died on February 1, 1969. With 150 people in attendance, Kirby had a front row seat at his funeral. There were 55 honorary pallbearers at the graveside service, including Doc Webb, of Webb City fame, but it was Kirby who received all the media's attention.

Wright's will named Kirby the executor and a benefactor of his more than \$50 million estate. Overnight, Ruth Kirby became one of the most powerful, yet unknown, women in the state.

When she began to liquidate his enormous estate, it quickly became impossible to avoid the limelight. She negotiated each sale and haggled with the State of Florida, the Pinellas County Commission, U.S. Steel and many others who all tried to beat her down and get a better price on Wright's real estate.

Wright left \$6 million to eight different charities: First United Methodist Church, United Way, SPCA, Suncoast Heart Association, American Cancer Society, Infantile Paralysis Fund, St. Augustine Home for the Blind, and the Children's Home Society of Jacksonville.

Twenty beneficiaries, including his three siblings and some relatives, were to split 25% of the value of the estate when it was liquidated. The will allowed Kirby 20 years to sell everything and paid her \$90,000 a year during the process.

U.S. Steel, already building in the area, had been talking to Wright about buying the Sand Key property before his death.



Ruth Kirby shortly after Wright's death

Ruth Kirby continued those conversations. U.S. Steel first offered her \$5 million for the property; with a laugh, Kirby countered at \$18 million. Five months after Wright's death, they agreed on \$11 million—but for only half the island. The deal did not include the Sand Key Park land and some other parcels. Two years later, U.S. Steel sold the Sheraton site.

When asked about the Sand Key sale, Kirby explained, "I had to do some soul-searching before I let the property go to U.S. Steel. But I felt it was best for the community and the estate. It was necessary to cover the inheritance taxes."

Ed Wright's will made many land donations, all executed by Kirby - many still bear his name. Wright donated: 160 acres near Weedon Island for a park, 20 acres on Clearwater's MLK Jr. St. now named "Ed C. Wright Park," and 17 acres for Largo Middle School.

One of Kirby's biggest public fights was with the Pinellas County Commission. At the time, they were using a landfill called "Toy Town" and proposed building more above-ground garbage dumps. Kirby presented a petition with 4,000 signatures to stop new landfills. As a result, the county purchased land from the estate to build the Solid Waste Disposal site still in use today in the Gateway area.

In another fight, Kirby flew to Tallahassee to pressure the Governor into buying Weedon Island for a public park.

Five or six years after Wright's death, some charities and benefactors began complaining they wanted their money. Kirby tried to explain it takes time and well negotiated sales would yield more money. Finally, after seven years, close to 95% of the real estate had been sold.

Ruth Kirby continued to honor her companion's wishes until her death in 1989, at the age of 76. She died at home in St. Petersburg at 3301 Country Club Way South. ■

PINELLAS SUNCOAST FIRE AND RESCUE DISTRICT REFERENDUM

On the ballot this month, in addition to the three people running for two City Commission seats, you will find a Special Referendum by Pinellas Suncoast Fire and Rescue District (PSFR&D). Its purpose is to increase the annual fire protection assessment by \$100 across the board.

Originally, PSFR&D proposed a new ad valorem tax (meaning tied to the value of your property.) While the voters approved the measure, courts deemed that the ballot wording was confusing causing many to not realize what they were voting for. The courts refused to allow the measure to stand.

Now they are trying a more standard different route by asking for an increase in the annual assessment. If approved, it will be their first increase in ten years.

Chief Michael Burton and the local Fire Commissioners say they desperately need more money. "Our fleet is in very poor condition and needs to be updated," says Chief Burton. "The building in Indian Rocks Beach is also in poor condition. During Hurricane Irma we had to pack all the equipment and files into a U-Haul to move them off the beach because this building was built in the '60s and is not hurricane rated. That building has had many years of deferred maintenance. With the added money, we can start contributing to a Capital Fund for future new buildings—three of them."

With an annual budget of \$1.2 million, PSFR&D has 44 full-time employees - 36 are uniformed and the rest are administrative. Its firefighters last had a wage increase in 2010. They own four trucks, three are service/EMS trucks; the fourth is a smaller truck for the District manager. Its three shifts rotate on a 24-hour basis all using the same trucks. They have three stations.

PSFR&D services Indian Rocks, Indian Shores, Belleair Beach, Belleair Shore and some unincorporated areas near Oakhurst. Each area will vote on the issue. Indian Rocks and Belleair Beach were already having municipal elections, so it was added to their ballots. Indian Shores, Belleair Shore and across the bridge, had no election scheduled, so PSFR&D had to pay for a special election in those areas.



Here is the wording you will see on your ballot:

Authorization to increase non-ad valorem assessment rates for delivery of fire protection and rescue services Beginning FY 2019/2020, shall Pinellas Suncoast Fire and Rescue District be authorized to increase its non-ad valorem Annual assessment rates (set in 2008) as follows: Single Residential Unit from \$260 to \$360; Commercial Units: Up to 500 square feet from \$286 to \$386; Motel Units, Mobile Home Lots, Recreational Vehicle Lots (per rental unit/lot) from \$165 to \$265; with all other categories to be unchanged? Yes or No.

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Real Estate News

RISING TIDE OF IRB NON-WATERFRONT REAL ESTATE

Come on out of the water

By Gordon Obarski, Real Estate Broker Gordon Realty House



Don't get me wrong. Living directly on the water—either on the beach or on the Intracoastal—is just about as good as it gets. But, with escalating prices, the scarcity of waterfront listings and increased maintenance costs, living “near” the water, as opposed to directly on it, has become a lot more attractive. That is especially true in Indian Rocks Beach. With a beach access at nearly every avenue, a resident boat ramp and community boat docks, the “waterfront lifestyle” is available to all IRB residents-- regardless of address.

Of the 38 single-family waterfront homes sold in IRB last year, 14 were priced above \$900,000. And, of the 25 waterfront homes currently listed or pending as of mid-February (2019), nearly half are in that price range. When you stop to think that only .5% of all homes nationally are located on a waterway and only 4% of U.S. homes top the \$1 million mark, you are probably not the only guy looking at waterfront and mumbling “Well maybe not.”

What happens if we lower the bar to \$500,000? Approximately 95% of all IRB's waterfront sales last year were above a half mill, which would have given you a choice of two single-family properties. When you take into consideration that only about 6% of mortgages nationwide are over \$500,000, 94% of the country (not paying cash) sees even the low end of the waterfront spectrum to be a stretch. The lowest priced IRB waterfront single-family home sold last year for \$460,000. Roll the calendar forward to this year and the lowest waterfront listing is \$690,000...50% higher than last year's waterfront “cheapie”! According to Zillow, the Tampa Bay area waterfront commands a 39% premium above their non-waterfront counterparts.

Florida's 8,000 miles of coastline ranks the state #6 in waterfront real estate listings. About 3% of the Tampa Bay area's properties are waterfront. For comparison, 6% of Miami's are. When comparing the per-square-foot price of waterfront homes sold Feb 2017-Feb 2018 to those sold Feb 2018-Feb 2019, IRB waterfront increased 4% per square foot but non-waterfront is up 14%! IRB homes OFF THE WATER have been appreciating at a somewhat faster pace than waterfront. However, if the new waterfront available listings (only 17!) sell anywhere close to their asking prices, that trend could reverse in the near future.

Some of you already own waterfront property that you've long ago outgrown. You're packed into your “view” house like sardines but at least you have the option of using them for bait off your dock, so you stay put. You are content to sacrifice space and amenities because (a) you can't find another waterfront house you like better and (b) when you do, it's out of the price range. For most of us, living on the water is more about deciding how much you are willing to give up for a glimpse of H2O. And it's considerable! Predictions are that by 2020—whether waterfront or non-waterfront—over 40% of the U.S. population will live in a county with a shoreline!

Source: My Florida Regional MLS, Single family homes sales/ listings

WATERFRONT UP 16%!
NON-WATERFRONT 18%!
CONDOS UP 18%!

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(My Florida Regional MLS, IRB, Closed price comparison of single-family waterfront & non-waterfront and all condos, 2/15/17 - 2/14/18 to 2/15/18 - 2/14/19)

<p>SOLD! 1 Windrush Blvd #78 INDIAN ROCKS BEACH 99% of list price!</p>	<p>LISTED! 612 Gulf Blvd #101 INDIAN ROCKS BEACH \$619,000</p>
<p>LISTED! 2208 Gulf Blvd INDIAN ROCKS BEACH Vacant Lot/120' X 89' Zoned CT \$799,000</p>	<p>LISTED! 14th Ave - Vacant Lots INDIAN ROCKS BEACH Two Adjacent 50' X 100' lots \$199,000 per lot</p>

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MEET THE MANAGER OF THE BELLEVUE INN

Born in Mexico, Marcel Sanchez (34) was hand-picked to be the first manager of Belleair's newest - yet oldest - hotel, The Bellevue Inn.

The Bellevue Inn is a relocated/remodeled portion of the historic Bellevue Biltmore Hotel, which was originally built by Henry Plant in 1896. Now, under the guidance of Michael Cheezum and JMC Communities, it is a five-star boutique hotel located in the gated community of Bellevue Place.

"Marcel is a dedicated, caring professional who understands true hospitality," says Michael Cheezum, JMC Communities. "He loves to be of service to others. We are fortunate to have him at the Bellevue Inn and we know he will excel in his General Manager role."

Marcel and his family moved from Mexico to Minneapolis when he was five years old. When he was ten, they moved to Pinellas County. He attended school and college here. "I went to the same high school as Mr. Cheezum—Northeast High School," adds Marcel.

Marcel is living the American dream. His first job - a dishwasher at Village Inn. While in college, he worked in hospitality at the Renaissance Vinoy. "I was in charge of the gym, pool and tennis courts," he says. From there, he went to work for the City of St. Petersburg's recreation department's teen programs and special events. He stayed five years.

"I was ready for a change. I knew I wanted to work in hospitality," Marcel explains. "I applied for a job at the Hilton in Carillon Center. That is where I got my training in the hotel business. First, I was a restaurant supervisor, later the Front Desk Manager.

In 2015, Eric Waltz hired me at the then new Sandpearl Resort on Clearwater Beach. "I started as the Assistant Housekeeping

Manager and again moved to Front Desk Manager."

"I wanted to travel and began exploring the cruise industry and

opportunities it offered. They are really just floating hotels. I went to a job fair and Norwegian Cruise Lines made me an offer. I was trained and hired as a Guest Services Supervisor."

"It was fantastic," Marcel recalls. "You travel the world while making a living. You wake up in a new city almost every day."

While working for Norwegian, Eric Waltz sent him a text. "We want you back," it said. "We want you to manage the new Bellevue Inn!" That was an offer Marcel could not refuse.

"I worked with Marcel for 2 years at the Sandpearl and he did a great job in both Housekeeping and the Front Office," says Eric Waltz, General Manager of The Sandpearl Resort. "He has a customer focused personality and is very team oriented as well. When he left to work on the cruise ship, we kept in touch and he expressed interest in the Bellevue Inn position. Even though we were a year from opening, I knew Marcel would be a great fit for the Bellevue Inn as well as the entire Belleair Community.

The inn opened December 8th. Sanchez manages the 35 guest room hotel and supervises 15 employees. "I believe everything happens for a reason," Marcel says. "I am super happy here."

Get more information about the hotel at TheBellevueInn.com



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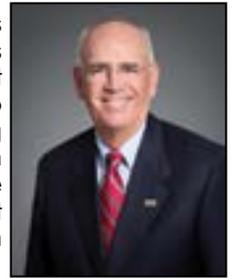
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DON'T RETIRE...REWIRE™

by Ray Ferrara, ProVise Management Group

Many look forward to retirement. Others can't imagine not working because it is more about who they are, then what they do. Either way there is a lot to consider and often it can be confusing and overwhelming. Two common denominators regarding retirement are wealth and health. Without sufficient assets and decent health, the golden years could be tarnished.



There is no time like the present to add to the nest egg if you are still working and maintaining a healthy lifestyle should be a lifelong project. Do you see yourself working and dying at the desk, or do you see yourself thinking about sleeping in every Monday through Friday? Makes no difference as the third common denominator is restructuring your life or as we like to refer to it – you need to rewire.

Okay, let's admit it, the idea of not setting the alarm clock to go to work every day, not opening the computer for emails with that first cup of coffee, not eating lunch at the same places, not making that daily commute to and from the office, etc. may seem appealing. But suddenly, the structure you have had in your life for 40 years or more collapses. We all need and want some degree of structure.

For the first few months, you have lots to keep you busy around the house with all of those projects you always wanted to do. What happens when they are all done? Maybe you visualize playing golf or fishing more, seeing the family more frequently, volunteering, or maybe even starting your own business part time. However, more often than not there is only so much of anything that you can do on a sustained basis. In fact, some folks love their new found freedom so much they resist structure, but that in and of itself is still structure.

One of the basic fabrics of living is having a routine. Many times we have one and don't realize it because the actions become innate. When you get ready for the day, don't you follow a routine in the bathroom and get dressed a certain way each day? These are just two small examples of our need for structure. In the next article, we offer ideas on how you can REWIRE!

In the meantime, why not come to see us for a complimentary session to chat about your pending or actual retirement?

V. Raymond Ferrara, CFP®, Chair and CEO
 ProVise Management Group, LLC
 611 Druid Rd E, Suite 105, Clearwater, FL 33756
 727-441-9022, info@provisemgmt.com

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DROWNINGS CAN HAPPEN IN AN INSTANT

By Rebecca Geiger

According to the World Health Organization (WHO) drowning is the third highest cause of death for children. While scary, this statistic is more than a little abstract. Let's bring it a little closer to home. In the US drowning has consistently been the #2 cause of "preventable death" for children under the age of 15, and the number one cause of "unintentional death" for children under the age of 4 as reported by the National Safety Council. Still this seems like a nationwide problem more than a local one. After all, unfortunately children drown nationwide. Let's bring it a little closer.



In 2018 Florida had 21 pool and spa drownings involving children under the age of 15 from Memorial Day to Labor day. Notice that this is only statistics from a 3 month time period, and only reports on children who actually died from drowning. Statistics on drowning are notoriously hard to find due to the sensitive nature of the incident, possible criminal charges for parents or caregivers, tourism, and incidents where death does not occur are reported differently regardless of the extent of damage.

Still, Florida is a big state. Let's bring it even closer. In order to get the most comprehensive data we must go back to 2016. It is estimated that drowning is reportedly down 9%; however, as you can see the numbers are still staggering.

- Nationwide: 322 deaths
- Florida: 40 deaths
- Pinellas: 17 deaths - over 40 states have fewer pool/spa drownings than our county.

So why are our figures so high? There are a multitude of reasons, but the most logical is the sheer number of pools and spas we have in the area. While barriers are required by law, there are many locations whose pools are "grandfathered" in before barrier regulations. Many old barriers have gaps or holes. Another factor is children by nature are curious.

As we are in winter, it is common for people to think there is less danger than in the summer. After all, as adults we want nothing to do with cold water. However, statistics show that 74% of drownings occur at residential locations, and 70% of those occur during non-water related events.

It is imperative that caregivers have an active tangible way of knowing who is watching the children at all times. While this may sound like common sense, having a child of my own I can attest to how easy it is, especially at gatherings to think that a spouse, relative, or friend is watching when they think the same is being done by you. To remind you of whose turn it is to keep an eye on the kids, I offer free plastic cards on lanyards to anyone that would like one. I have heard of families using a stuffed animal, or really anything tangible that can be used to signify who is "Tagged In" at the time. Similar to the old game of "Tag you're it!" When you are tagged, it is up to you to be aware of where your little ones are. Then, when you want some adult time, make sure someone else knows they have been "Tagged."

I am known as Miss Becca to my students and specialize in Drowning Prevention Education through lessons and group presentations to children and their adults. Please contact me at (813)363-9133.

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Bar & Restaurant News

NEW OWNERS

The Red Lion Pub, the local British Pub and a longtime favorite of locals, has another new owner. Bryan and Debra who bought the Pub in July, sold it to Tom George in January. George is no newcomer to the restaurant business. He owns the Time Out Sports Bar in Seminole, Ft. Knox in Madeira Beach and Eddie's in Dunedin - in total he owns 12 area restaurants. The locals are enjoying the change. Find the Red Lion at 1407 Gulf Blvd in Indian Rocks.



CHANGES AT THE XONE

What was Xone Sports Bar in Largo is now Player Sports Bar, but it still has the same owner. More games and lots of fresh BBQ have been added.

"We decided to mix it up a little," says owner Tony Marzano. "We added Memphis style BBQ as the primary food and added lots of adult games including a pool table, darts, golden tee, and others. Plus, we have twenty TVs. Smoking is still only allowed outside."

Find Player at 14219 Walsingham Blvd. in the same complex as Hungry Howies Pizza.

CASA ITALIA

This restaurant under construction at the north end of Indian Rocks Beach is starting to take shape. Once Stefano's, this new Italian restaurant may open as early as this spring. The building was completely gutted and although it will look like an old Tuscan cafe, it is all new. Owners of Casa Italia say look for a Grand Opening soon at 2699 Gulf Blvd.



SLYCE MONDAYS HELPS THE BEACHES FOOD PANTRY

Don't forget, on the first Monday of each month, Slyce Pizza donates 10% of all the day's sales to the Beaches Food Pantry. It averages about \$500 per month. Things have been tight at the Pantry lately and they can really use your help, so if you are plan to order a pizza that day, buy it from Slyce. You get a great pizza and at the same time help the clients of the Beaches Food Pantry.

RESTAURANT NEWS WANTED

If you have news or suggestions for this newsletter, let us know. Our email is Bob@GriffinDirectories.com or call us at 430-8300.

Bar & Restaurant News



THANK YOU FOR 10 GREAT YEARS "It seems like only yesterday, but it has been 10 years since we first opened," says Allen Edger, owner / operator of Maggie Mae's on the Bluffs. During that time, they have won "People's Choice" for Best Breakfast and Best Lunch many times. "We want to thank the people of Belleair Bluffs and Belleair for supporting us over the years."

CLEAR WATER OYSTER COMPANY OPENS

Indian Rocks' Original Crabby Bill's returned to Clearwater Beach with its newest venture, Clearwater Oyster Company, which opened last month. This is a joint venture between Matt Loder (right) and St. Petersburg native Steve Page (left) of Page Resorts & Hotels, LLC.



Clearwater Oyster Company offers some of the Crabby Bill's best, along with unique and exciting drinks and dishes. Their menu features as many local products as possible including Gulf grouper and wild shrimp, grass-fed and grass-finished beef from Adena Farms in Ocala, and Florida oysters. Serving responsibly sourced domestic and local foods is part of the Original Crabby Bill's Family Brand's mission, and you'll find just that at Clearwater Oyster Company.

Along with Clearwater Oyster Company, the Crabby Bill's will operate Tropix Beach Bar, behind the hotel.

Clearwater Oyster Company is located 655 S. Gulfview Blvd.

BACKWATER'S 14TH CHILI COOK-OFF WINNERS

Backwater's held their 14th Annual Chili Cook-off in January and regardless of the weather it was standing room only! This year over 20 amateur chefs showed up to compete in the cook-off. The judges had a difficult time, since all of the entries were extremely well prepared chili concoctions. The cold and rainy day was perfect for a good bowl of chili.

Seminole resident Carrie Hillard has won the contest two years in a row, but this year she came in second when snow-bird Rob Walsh was declared "The Best." Longtime Clearwater Beach resident Carol Pryor, came in third. Walsh received a First Place plaque and bragging rights for the year.

This event is always held the Sunday before Super Bowl so there is no football to distract the judges. To see more pictures, visit their web site at: BackwateronSandKey.com. Backwater's is located in the Shoppes of Sand Key.

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TACO JESUS - A HOT SAUCE WITH A HEAVENLY TASTE

Bored one day, Jeff Crupper, a business man and Belleair Bluffs resident, decided to invent something - why not a hot sauce? So, three years ago, Crupper created "Taco Jesus Hot Sauce" with the help of a friend (who conveniently is also a bottler) in Texas.



Crupper has a marketing degree but has a background in the restaurant business. He owned several small ice cream stores in the past, although today he works for the Neilson Company in Oldsmar — "that's my real job," he explains.

In 1868, Tabasco was introduced in Louisiana. And for more than 150 years it was the only hot sauce anyone knew. Now, it has hundreds - maybe thousands - of competitors. Almost all of them are small businesses, just like Crupper's.

Naturally, the name Taco Jesus was met with both wide reception and push back. "Actually, the name works in our favor," says Crupper. "It really gets noticed. Many people from our local churches and church organizations purchase the product to give as gifts to pastors, and pastors buy it for their congregations."

"This is a small business—almost a hobby," Crupper says. "We only sell a few cases a month. When it was first delivered, I put a full pallet in my garage and wondered if I was going to get stuck with all that sauce."

But that didn't happen. Many Pinellas area restaurants now offer it to their customers including: Cody's in Belleair Bluffs, Clearwater Beach's Cooters, Bauser's in Dunedin and Rick's Reef in St Pete Beach. You can find it in local farmers markets and at the Belleair Market on Indian Rocks Road.

"This is a great product, from a locally owned company," says Chris Scott, owner of Belleair Market. "It's not about the heat, it is about the flavor. Belleair Market is proud to carry Taco Jesus."

Although Crupper does not do the bottling himself, he does specify the ingredients. With the help of his friend in Texas, they have come up with a dozen different flavors.

"We experimented with many tastes and ingredients from mild to the "Holly Ghost Pepper" which is hot, naturally," says Crupper. "We did not have the desire to create the hottest sauces in the world; we want them to be desirable."

There are many other things on the web site to purchase such as a Taco Jesus action figure (\$28), a Taco Jesus metal emblem for your car (\$7), Virgin Mary Hot Sauce Mix (\$10) and Devotional Candles.

"I give Taco Jesus as gifts at Christmas time," says Mayor Chris Arbutine. "It has become a part of my yearly ritual of the Christmas giving spirit. Before Taco Jesus hot sauce, I was relegated to giving strictly bland and normal gifts that did not stand out. Giving Taco Jesus has made my gifts something friends, family and customers look forward to receiving."

"We do not do any advertising. Most of our sales are repeat business, business-to-business and word-of-mouth." Recently, Crupper was featured on a segment of Great Day Tampa Bay on WTSP (Channel 10).

Crupper is engaged to Suzy Sofer, owner of Cody's Roadhouse in Belleair Bluffs. As an engagement present, he gave her a ring with a taco on it.

To place an order, visit www.theTacoJesus.com.

THE GOAL AND CHALLENGE OF RECYCLING RIGHT

By Karen Williams Seel, Chair, Pinellas County Commission

Did you know that Pinellas County has been the State's top recycler for three years in a row? A lot of the credit goes to our Waste-to-Energy plant which makes electricity by burning garbage, reducing the volume by 90 percent. The rest of the credit goes to you.



When you choose to recycle, re-use or re-purpose materials, you are making a choice to protect our future by diverting materials that would go into our landfill as ash after burning. At this time, Pinellas County's only landfill has a life expectancy of about 84 years, or until the year 2103. The more we divert from the landfill, the longer we can extend its life and that's where recycling comes in. And, that's where you come in.

Although we've gone to single-stream recycling in many areas of Pinellas County to make it more convenient for you, by doing so it's made it more difficult for you to make decisions about what is recyclable. Before, you would have a bin for paper and you knew that only paper went into that bin. The same goes for plastic, cans and glass. Now, everything gets put in one bin and the one bin method seems to invite the opportunity to do more harm than good, meaning more isn't necessarily better. Residents want to recycle everything, but, unfortunately, everything can't be recycled.

The recycling market has changed. Today, buyers of recycled materials are demanding better materials and better means clean. It must be empty, dry, free from grease and food waste, and not in a bag. That means extra effort on your part. But, it's that extra effort that will get us more valuable recyclable materials coming out of Pinellas County and less, ultimately, going into our landfill.

So, what do you do with the rest? Re-use it, re-purpose it, or toss it. One of the great tools Pinellas County Solid Waste provides is the A to Z Recycling and Disposal Guide. You can look up an item by name and see if it can be recycled. I recently had an old propane tank that I was getting nervous about and didn't know how to dispose of it. I went to the A to Z Guide and was provided multiple locations that would take the tank for recycling. You can find the A to Z Guide by visiting www.pinellascounty.org/solidwaste/getridofit.

You can also learn more about your recycling program's guidelines by resourcing Pinellas County's 2019 Recycle Guide at www.pinellascounty.org/solidwaste/recycling-directory. The Recycle Guide provides the perfect way to understand all the do's and don'ts of recycling in Pinellas County, including a complete listing of recycling locations and recycling programs with their contact information.

But, when it comes to the longevity of our landfill, reducing your waste is key. Not everything that you use can be recycled and remade. Think before you buy: buy less, and buy items made from recycled materials.

If you'd like to learn more about the solid waste management facility and recycling, contact Pinellas County Department of Solid Waste for a free tour by emailing recycle@pinellascounty.org. You can also register on Eventbrite.com by searching "Pinellas County Solid Waste" or "free tour."

In addition, Solid Waste is developing their 30-year master plan and would love your involvement. Visit pinellascounty.org/solidwaste/masterplan for information.

Here's to recycling right for bright future!

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MILE MARKERS 15 YEARS LATER

By Bob Griffin, Publisher

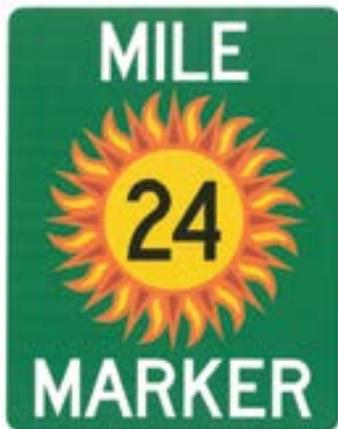
Have you ever noticed the signs up along Gulf Blvd with fish and numbers on them? They are Mile Markers and literally are placed one mile apart.

Where did these come from? I am proud to say that I was the person who pushed for the idea in 1998, but they would not have happened without the help of many people in many organizations.

In the late 1990s, our company had publications in the Florida Keys, where they have FDOT supplied mile markers (MM) from MM-106 in Key Largo to MM-0 in Key West. All the businesses, hotels and restaurants refer to their location by Mile Marker. In fact, their address and their MM correspond, such as, address 106125 Overseas Hwy was MM 106.1 which is in Key Largo.

I thought - what a wonderful idea - that would work on our beaches, and be helpful since our addresses are not sequential. What we call Gulf Boulevard is approximately 25 miles long, beginning in South Pass-A-Grille and ending in Clearwater Beach near the Carlouel subdivision. Some of the road has a different name; it starts as Pass-A-Grille Way, becomes Gulf Blvd., then Blind Pass Road, back to Gulf Blvd., until in Clearwater it is then South Gulfview Blvd. and finally ends at Mandalay Avenue.

I created a mile marker prototype with a special "sunburst" graphic and number in it and took my idea to several local Chamber of Commences. They said, "Great idea, but we do not control the streets or their signage." Then, I suggested it to several City Managers. They too said, "Great idea, but we do not control Gulf Blvd. or its signage, you have to talk to Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT). They control all of that."



Mile Marker Prototype

Off to FDOT's Tampa office I went, and they said, "NO WAY!" Then they explained that even if it was approved it would be those little green mile marker signs you see on the highways and interstates - just like the Florida Keys.

A regional manager for FDOT told me to write it up and he would deliver it at the statewide committee's next quarterly meeting. About 2000, I wrote it up and he presented it at their September meeting. Much to his surprise, they approved it. Not only for Pinellas, but for any tourist town with a relatively straight road like Gulf Blvd.

The approval presented a new problem. FDOT did not have any money for the project; it was not in their budget.

I estimated \$5,000 would buy 50 signs and poles, so I began asking for donations - a sort of an "Adopt a Sign" campaign.

Enter County Commissioner Karen Seel. Then, as today, she was Chairperson of the Board of County Commissioners. When she heard I was having a funding problem, she offered to help. The County was just starting the "2001 Gulf Blvd Beautification Project" and she thought the Mile Marker project could be part of it - and would pay for it.

There were many meetings, which included PSTA who was rolling out the Beach Trolley system with a series of bus-stop signs. It was proposed that the MMs be at every bus-stop, but that idea was dropped for a variety of reasons.

Clearwater Beach artist Silas Beach created the fish graphic with the MM number added below. On July 8, 2003, the MM plan was officially adopted by the Board of County Commissioners and the fish design was approved.

The streets were measured and marked. There were to be two signs per mile, one facing in each direction - 50 signs. Additional signs and posts were to be posted at intersection such as Walsingham Road (16-17) and the Roundabout (23-24) in Clearwater Beach advising drivers about the direction of the mile markers.

They put the signs and posts out for bid. The cost turned out to be more than I had estimated - about three times more - \$18,000.

On January 13, 2004, (fifteen years ago) the County Commissioners signed the resolution and signs started to appear along the beach.



The County also produced a tourism brochure showing the location of each sign. We started adding the MMs to our advertiser's ad. I printed a large easy to read map showing major landmark's MM, such as Corey Avenue (4.2), John's Pass Village (8.0), Walsingham Bridge (16.5), Pier 60 (23.5) and others.

About 18 months later, the County returned and added half-mile-markers to further help tourists and bus drivers. This was another 50+ signs, boosting costs to \$24,800.

Overall, there are 102 signs and posts, plus an additional seven at major intersections. Each costs about \$390.

"This was a project that Bob Griffin brought to the County - using the Key West model for providing mile markers on Gulf Boulevard," says Commissioner Karen Seel. "Bob was very instrumental in advocating for this idea - to bring a unique vibe to our beach communities and showcase our assets to our citizens and our tourists. I took this idea to our local transportation board - now named - Forward Pinellas. Brian Smith, the former director, put the plan in action and Silas Dent was the artist by default for his wonderful fish design. It was a crazy idea but what a great outcome - it has provided great identity for our beach communities and all the businesses. Wow!"

I am proud to have been a part of a project like this and pleased it is still here 15 years later. Big thanks to Commissioner Karen Seel and artist Silas Beach for their contributions, as well as County employees Brian Smith, Gina Harvey and Sandra Knoebel and the Barrier Island Government Council for making it happen.

Hopefully, everyone uses them when on the beach. ■

**HAPPY 15TH BIRTHDAY
MILE MARKERS.**

TWAIN A NEW RESIDENT AT MCGOUGH NATURE PARK

McGough Nature Park in Largo has a new avian resident, and his name is Mark Twain. Twain is a Mississippi kite that was found injured in Hernando County and brought to Owl's Nest Sanctuary in Odessa. Owl's Nest took him to Busch Gardens for evaluation where veterinarians determined he was shot with a pellet gun which damaged his wing permanently, thereby making him non-releasable.

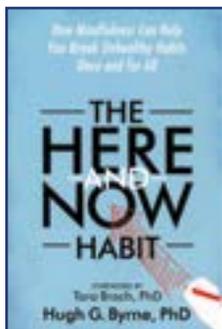


"Mississippi kites only migrate as far south as Hernando. You almost never see them here in Pinellas," said Patrick Bradley, director of the McGough's bird of prey program. But Bradley doesn't believe Twain was migrating because his mate was nearby when he was found. "They were here scouting out a place to nest," Bradley said.

According to Bradley, Twain appears to be about 2 years old because he still has a couple of juvenile feathers. "He's very smart, and gloved-trained in 20 minutes. He's been here less than 2 months and is already an educational bird. Twain is mainly an insectivore. One of his favorite things to do is to kick off the cover of his feeding bowl with his foot and help himself to some juicy worms. Bradley said he learn that maneuver very quickly.

Home to 23 raptors, Twain fits in perfectly at McGough as he helps to educate the public about the illegal hunting of raptors. But Twain isn't the only thing new at the park. Their main walking trail is new, too. Thanks to BP's Oil Spill Restoration Grant, the new mile-long trail is made exclusively from recycled car tires--shredded and dyed to look like mulch--and has received rave reviews from visitors for its comfortable, easy-on-the-joints feel.

A WEEKEND WITH HUGH BYRNE



Recently, a group of Indian Rocks residents had the pleasure of enjoying a "Pop-Up" Conversation with internationally acclaimed author Hugh Byrne. Originally from London, and now living in Washington DC, Byrne is the Co-Founder of the Mindfulness Training Institute, a Guided Meditation Teacher at Insight Meditation Society, and a leading expert in the field of mindfulness and positive habit change.

The remarkable evening, held in a private home, led to such a collective, meaningful conversation that the group is planning to bring Byrne back to our area the weekend of April 5 and 6, for two separate sessions.

The weekend will include: April 5 a Friday evening session - \$25, April 6 a full day seminar on Saturday - \$50 or both for \$65. The number of participants will be limited so as to keep the experience personal.

Plans are still underway and the IRB location and the Eventbrite listing will be announced soon, but if you are interested in participating, email mfasttrackhappiness@gmail.com for more details as they become available.

To learn more about Hugh Byrne, visit www.hugh-byrne.com.



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IRB'S THRIFT CENTER TURNS TEN

The Beaches Community Thrift Center in Indian Rocks Beach (previously called Save Your Seconds) is ten years old this month. Some people reading this story will ask, "We have a thrift center?" We certainly do – at The Church of the Isles (COTI), on 25th Avenue, just east of Gulf Blvd.

Ten years ago, the Thrift Center was founded by church members Nancy Ertz and Jeannie Waller, and it is run totally by volunteers, with over two dozen rotating shifts. On any given day, five to ten people are there to greet shoppers and accept/sort donations. "Many of our volunteers are snow birds and only help when they are in town," Waller explains.

They accept household items, furniture, jewelry, kitchenware, small appliances, toys and clothes - lots and lots of clothes.

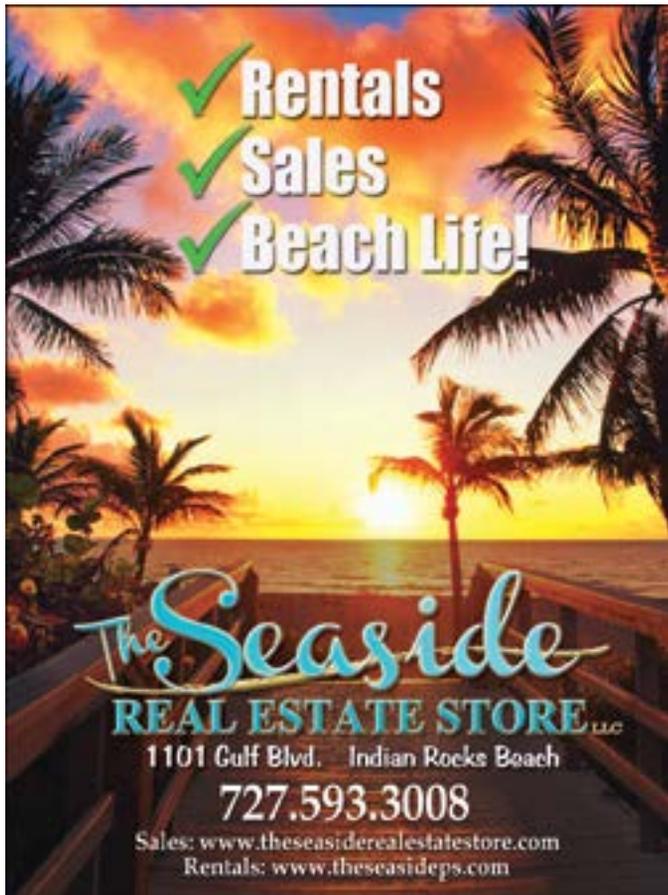
"We probably have well over a hundred shoppers per week," says Ertz. "That is a lot considering that we are only open four days a week and our hour are limited. We accept credit cards for purchases over \$10."

"Sometimes a person comes in and clearly does not have any money. They need the basics," Waller says. "We just give it to them—it is obvious they need help."

"We use the money the store makes to fund the missions of the church," Ertz says. "Once a month, we feed the people at Pinellas Hope and we support many safe houses in Pinellas. We also contribute to the Beaches Food Pantry, local animal shelters, Habitat for Humanity and even Goodwill who gets the things we can't sell."

COTI and the Thrift Store are the promoters of Green Fest, held on their property each spring - this year, March 23 from 10am-5pm. Profits will also help fund church missions.

The Thrift Store is open: Tuesdays, Wednesdays (10-2), and Saturdays 10am-2pm and Thursdays 5 to 8pm. It is located at 210 25th Avenue North, Indian Rocks Beach, next door to the church. If you have questions, or would like to volunteer, please call 444-0339.



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DYNGUS DAY CELEBRATIONS

Dyngus Day is an unofficial holiday that falls on the Monday immediately after Easter Sunday - this year April 22. The day celebrating Polish culture, was started to let people blow off some steam after the restrictions imposed by the season of Lent. It is also an excuse to eat some good polish food, drink some beer, dance and have some fun.

The origin of the celebrations is uncertain, but may date to pagan times (before 1,000 AD). The tradition was brought to the U.S. by Polish immigrants. One of the most common Dyngus Day traditions is for boys to douse girls with buckets of water, squirt guns and wet towels.

Crabby Bill's Seafood has held the largest Dyngus Day Celebrations in the County for the past eight years. They have polish sausage (kielbasa) a live Polish band and a very large crowd, April 22 from 11 to 5pm. Don't forget to wear red.

RUTH KIRBY, AS I REMEMBER HER

By Sandy Simpson

I worked and lived with Ruth from about 1966 to 1970. I was the bookkeeper for the Ed Wright Estate until it ended. I ran Pinewood Farms, which Ruth owned, on her property on 31st Street South.



Before Mr. Wright's death, I was occasionally their driver when he wanted to go visit his properties. Ruth was a very dedicated to Mr Wright and their work.

Ruth was a very private person, and even though she could afford to, she never bought anything extravagant, only necessities. She was very kind and loved animals, especially her horses. The horse pictured on the front of this magazine was really my horse, but she enjoyed riding him. I ran her stables where we boarded horses. We had about twenty at one time. Those were the good ol' days for sure!

Ruth was a very special person. The photo above was taken in 1971 at my wedding, after Mr. Wright's death.

Ruth developed Parkinson's disease, which is what eventually killed her... I wish she was still here.

Sandy Simpson, now 90, lives in Ocala

SIGN OF THE DOLPHIN COLLECTS DONATIONS FOR FOSTER CHILDREN

Locally owned Sign of the Dolphin is helping Eckerd Connects collect much supplies for the children in Eckerd's care. Through the end of March, bring any item listed below to store located at 12999 Park Boulevard, Seminole, and they will go straight to where they are needed most. To thank you for your effort, Sign of the Dolphin will give you a coupon for 20% off any item in the store (some restrictions apply). Those who contribute will also receive a special invitation to the Spring Fling at Sign of the Dolphin on March 31st. The local director of Eckerd will be at the Spring Fling to thank you.

BABY ITEMS: Diapers & Pull-Ups (All Sizes), Baby Wipes, Baby Shampoo, Powder, Wash, Lotion, Sleepers, Onesies, Diaper Cream, Pacifiers, Baby Bottles, Bibs, Baby & Receiving Blankets

SCHOOL SUPPLIES: New Backpacks, Folders, Notebook Paper & Binders, Crayons, Pencils & Markers, Colored Pencils, Spiral & Comp Notebooks, Duffel Bags, New Stuffed Animals

CLOTHING ITEMS: New & Gently-Used Clothing (All Sizes From Newborn To Teens), New Socks, New Undergarments, New PJs, New Shoes (Athletic Shoes Please)

TOILETRY ITEMS: Shampoo & Conditioner, African-American Hair Products, Toothbrushes & Toothpaste, Razors & Shaving Cream, Deodorant, Body Wash & Lotion, Brushes & Combs, Feminine Hygiene Products, Lice Treatment

When children are removed from their homes due to abuse or neglect, they often enter foster care with just the clothes on their backs, seldom have a toothbrush, and they usually carry the few belongings they have in a garbage bag! Eckerd Connects | Raising Hope's Room of Hope is a cheerful room with a store-front appearance filled with clothing, shoes, diapers, hygiene items, duffel bags and much more so that foster children and teens can "shop" for what they need with pride and dignity. Your caring efforts will greatly soften the trauma these children have endured. Remember, no child asks to come to foster care, and they should never carry their life belongings in a garbage bag. Every child deserves HOPE!

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PLEASE VOTE TUESDAY MARCH 12th
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FORMER MAYOR FRANK PROCTOR DIES

Former Indian Rocks Beach Mayor Frank Proctor died Thursday, January 24, 2019. To honor his memory, we are rerunning a story about Frank and his wife Helen that we published in March of 2014. Helen died a year after this article was published and Frank remarried four years ago. An interment was held at Arlington National Cemetery.



Belleair Bluffs March 2014:

Today, Frank Proctor, and Helen, his wife of 68 years, *Helen & Frank Proctor February 2015* live a quiet life in Belleair Bluffs overlooking the Belleair Causeway. But it wasn't always the case. Frank served in the Army at the end of WWII. Part of his service involved training troops in Guatemala. He retired after 30 years and moved to Pinellas County and worked for Honeywell.

"I got my start in politics in 1979 when Bob Driver resigned from the Indian Rocks Beach Commission and they asked me to fill his seat," says Proctor. "When my appointment was up, I ran unopposed."

During his second term, when he was Vice-Mayor, Mayor Hugh Smith resigned mid-term and Proctor became Indian Rocks Beach's Mayor. In 1982, he ran for Mayor unopposed. "Indian Rocks was a quiet little city. During my term as Mayor, there was only one key issue - garbage collection," says Proctor. "Back then, the mayor was unpaid. That was fine with me. The mayor's main job was to run the meetings. I always saw the job like a Board of Directors of a large business. We listen, we talk, and then we vote. It is the city manager's job to carry out the decisions."

"Helen probably did more for Indian Rocks Beach than I did," says Frank with pride. "She helped start their library, helped create the first IRB History Book, was a founding member of the IRB Historical Society and was the driving force to acquire the old Johnson House that became the IRB History Museum. Helen was one of the five founders of the Indian Rocks Beach Library."

"The Library was little more than a corner of the big auditorium," said Helen. "Five ladies decided we needed a library, so we started one. Local resident Betty Rooney was the actual ring leader and really got things done. We raised money and bought most of the books ourselves," Helen continues. "It was all run with volunteers. But eventually we decided we needed to hire a real librarian to run things - and we did."

Both were honored as Grand Marshals in Indian Rocks Beach's 2000 Christmas Parade.

When Frank retired from Honeywell, he had to do something. He always wanted to be a chef, so he approached Erwin Scheueringer, owner of E&E Stakeout and asked if he could work in his kitchen. Erwin made Frank his sous chef. He kept that job until 2007, when he retired for a third time.

"Frank is one of the greatest guys I know," says Erwin. "One day he walked in and asked if he could hang around the kitchen and watch us cook. He was a regular customer who liked cooking and had just retired from Honeywell. He was my sous chef for 18 years."

Frank volunteered. He just liked to cook. He worked here two days a week and had many ideas about menus and food preparation. There are still items on our menu he helped invent," says Erwin. "He is very easy going. We have had many a conversation about life and politics. It has been a privilege to know him."

Frank, now 85, enjoys needlepoint. His Belleair Bluffs condo is a gallery for his art. He never sells it; instead he gives it as gifts to family and friends.

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Business Briefs

NINE YEARS OLD AND GOING STRONG

Cigars and Bait - both in the same store. Who thought of that? Tim Chase that's who, nine years ago. His Old Florida Cigar and Bait Company has been on Indian Rocks Beach for nine years now selling a wide selection of cigars. Plus, he sells everything you might need to go fishing—including LIVE bait. They are the only place to get live bait in Indian Rocks Beach. Check them out at 1401 Gulf Blvd, in the same shopping center as Pinky's Ice Cream.



ASTORIA PASTRY SHOP This small Belleair Bluffs bakery, located at 560 Indian Rocks Road next to Antique Alley, was recently sold. Originally opened by Clearwater resident Nick Zahos three years ago, as of January, the new owners are Leia and Orson Gregory. Stop in and check out their organic quiche, it is unforgeable. Call 585-3777.

SPRING EVENT AT THE ALLEY Belleair Bluff's The Alley is gearing up for their Spring Artisans and Antiques In Bloom Market - A Home and Garden Event Showcasing the local Alley Shops and over 40 vendors and artisans. Plan to enjoy the day, while you stroll The Alley on Sunday March 3rd, 10-4.



ISLAND PEST CONTROL AND PAJANO'S PIZZA FEED THE COAST GUARD During the recent U.S. Government shutdown, members of the Coast Guard were not paid, but reported to work every day. The Coast Guard base in Sand Key has about two dozen service men stationed their.

To help them when they had no money coming in, many members of the community donated dry goods and products for them to use at home. Some even took meals to our maritime first responders, while they were working their 24-hour shifts, including Tammy McCutchan, owner of Island Pest Control in Indian Rocks Beach. She and Pajano's Pizza provided lunch for 20 of their members. Island Pest Control Services and Pajano's shared the cost.

Tampa Bay Veterans Alliance raised over \$3,000 to help support more than 1,100 Coast Guard Members in the Clearwater area.

The governmental shutdown lasted 35 days. CO Tracy Randall wants to thank all the people who called and helped during the unusual period.

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TONS OF "SANDY" FUN IN CLEARWATER BEACH

Plan to Enjoy the Upcoming Sugar Sands Festival - April 12-28

by Dan L. Hummel

This April, there will be plenty of opportunities to enjoy the shore, the sand, and the fabulous Gulf sunsets as the Pier 60 Sugar Sand Festival presented by Visit St. Pete Clearwater gets underway in Clearwater Beach. Running for an unprecedented 17 straight days this year from April 12 to April 28, the festival is a beach celebration packed full of family friendly activities. Because of the late Easter holiday, the event is being extended an extra seven days this year only.

Lisa Chandler, founder of the festival back in 2013, is in her seventh year of producing this mammoth event. According to Chandler, the festival's beach infrastructure takes over two weeks to build as more than 1,000 tons of white Clearwater Beach sand are collected directly from the Pier 60 area for the Sugar Sand activities.

One of the festival's highlights each year is the Sugar Sand Walk Exhibit where fourteen world renowned sculptors travel here from all parts of the world to create magnificent sand sculptures inside a 21,000 square foot tent. This year's theme for the sculptors is, "Sea the World...A Journey Around the Globe."

While the majority of the festival is free to the public, there is a charge to walk through the breathtaking sandscape exhibition. There you may well see some of the sculptors still creating additional smaller versions of their incredible art. Last year over 45,000 people purchased tickets to the exhibition. While tickets are available at the event, festival-goers can enjoy additional perks by purchasing tickets in advance at sugarsandfestival.com

Also, in a separate area called Camp

Hyatt, kids can enjoy playing in the world's biggest sandbox while parents lounge around on provided beach chairs and umbrellas. Sticking with the sand theme, and new this year, is a Pro-Am Sand Sculpting Competition on Saturday, April 20, and a family sand sculpting event on Easter Sunday.

After you shake the sand off, enjoy over a dozen street performers, called buskers, who rotate their shows all day and work for tips. Or, visit the area filled with 75 artisans and crafters whose work is all authentic, and must meet strict criteria in order to have their work at Sugar Sand.

Not exhausted yet? Then, stick around for the "Frenchy's Beach Concerts" that are staggered over the afternoon and evening hours during nine days of the festival. Featuring all types of music, the festival brings in mostly local and regional bands to perform. There are also free movies on the beach each Friday and Saturday night of the event. Bring your blankets and chairs, and enjoy great family friendly movies on America's number one beach.

You may also want to enjoy the Sugar Sand Corn Hole Tournament fueled by Monster Energy Drink, or get cooled off at one of the water slides. If you are thirsty, proceed immediately to the Shephard's Sand Bar where you can enjoy beer and wine while relaxing "on the beach." This year the bar will feature beers from the 3 Daughters Brewery in St. Petersburg, White Claw Hard Seltzer, and various selections of wine. Why not dig your toes into the sand, enjoy a beverage, and celebrate the beautiful Clearwater landscape and sunsets.

On the three Saturday nights of the festival, you can conclude your visit with a bang as Spectrum presents a

fabulous fireworks show over the water beginning at 9 pm.

Another new venture for the festival in 2019 is focused on helping kids in the area. For the first time, the local YMCA will feature their fundraising Fishing Rodeo Tournament on Pier 60 during the festival. All monies raised from the fishing tournament will help needy children be able to regularly visit the YMCA at no cost to their family. Chandler remarked, "This is an amazing opportunity to show our support and give back to our community by partnering with the YMCA. Our goal is to bring more awareness to their fishing tournament so that more children from our area can take advantage of the activities that the YMCA offers. It's a natural fit for our event, it's family friendly, and showcases our world famous fishing pier."

Crowd expectations for this year's extended festival are much higher than the 125,000 people who attended in 2018. Organizers are encouraging attendees to use the festival website and their Facebook page to gain valuable information about traffic, parking, and alternative transportation alternatives like the Jolley Trolley and the Clearwater Ferry.

While the producers of this event are extremely proud of its quality and diversity, there is also a great deal of gratification for its economic viability to the area. As a destination event, last year 56 percent of the attendees stayed overnight in Pinellas County accounting for an estimated 12,106 room nights. Additionally, the total economic impact of the out of county visitors soared to over \$20.5 million.

So, this year enjoy one or more days of the Sugar Sand Festival. No use burying your head in the sand...just you feet! ■

FROM THE DESK OF SHERIFF BOB GUALTIERI

In Pinellas County, there are thousands of individuals who suffer from a mental health condition. Many of them have never been diagnosed, received treatment, or are even aware there is a problem. Nevertheless, the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office is focused on ensuring the safety of these men and women and the individuals around them, as well as reducing stigmas and educating the public about the resources available to help them.

Last year, 40 percent of the homeless men and women who stayed in Pinellas Safe Harbor (Pinellas County Sheriff's Office operated homeless facility) admitted to suffering from a mental illness. In addition, the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office responded to 1,246 calls about a suicidal person, and 3,054 calls directly related to an emotionally disturbed person. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, suicide rates have increased in every U.S. state except Nevada, and more than half of the people who die by suicide are not aware they have a mental health condition.

It is important to know that there are steps you can take to recognize the warning signs for suicide and how to help a person who may be thinking about taking his or her own life. First, get involved; second, be prepared for an emergency by knowing who to call, keeping a first aid kit readily available, and knowing CPR; and third, know about the professional resources available for support and treatment.

If you, or someone you know, exhibits any of the following warning signals, take the possibility of suicide seriously.

Warning Signs:

- Talking about suicide and death
- Sleeping and eating disturbances
- Drastic changes in behavior
- Social withdraw and isolation
- Self-mutilation
- Drug or alcohol abuse
- Difficulties at work or school

Most importantly, be open and sensitive to the person who is suffering from a mental health issue. Talking to people about the problem is a key step to working through the crisis. Counseling, medication, and diet and exercise are all crucial to preventing a suicide attempt or episode resulting from a mental illness.

If you or someone you know is contemplating suicide, you can get help immediately by calling the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 800-273-8255. If you or anyone you know is in imminent danger, call 9-1-1.

You can also receive mental health

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Walking is an excellent dementia strategy for those living with dementia. Join Dr. Cate, Dementia Coach and others as we meet in the food court at Tyrone Mall on the third Friday of every month. Walk with others living with memory changes and enjoy a shared scavenger hunt for fun and steps for brain health.

If you don't want to walk, meet us at 11 am at the Red Robin restaurant mall entrance to enjoy our memory café.

We promise laughter, new friendships, support and camaraderie. Upcoming dates: March 15, and April 19, 10am for walking the mall, 11am for lunch at Red Robin.

Please RSVP so we know to look for you: Vanessa 727-492-4050 or vkroning1@gmail.com or to Dr. Cate 813-384-7571 or catemccarty@gmail.com



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WHO IS GHD CONSTRUCTION SERVICES?



By Tom Smith
Owner of GHD Construction Services

Sometimes companies tend to take things for granted, and aren't really empathic enough to realize that people are wondering about family owned businesses like GHD Construction Services. Maybe it's not that important when buying clothes or food from a local store, but after numerous customers kept inquiring about our company history, I thought I'd take this time to shed some

light on our company. After all, when trusting a contractor with the large dollars needed for a new home to be constructed, it is very important to feel safe with that investment.

GHD Construction Services, Inc., begun as an "American Dream" of Tom Smith over 48 years ago, has constructed over 6,500 quality homes for families in Florida since 1971. After receiving an economics degree from the University of Florida in 1970, Tom began his homebuilding career in Pasco County, and now GHD is being continued under the leadership of the second generation, with son Brian at the helm. Brian also attended and graduated from UF with a finance degree, and has steadily and conservatively grown GHD over the past few years. Aside from the GHD homes along the Pinellas Beaches, under Brian's leadership GHD has become one of the largest producers of quality affordable apartments in the State of Florida, serving veterans and lesser income Americans. Providing safe and sanitary housing for families in need, is an integral part of GHD's business plan to give back to those that served our great nation.

GHD Construction Services, Inc. is now branded as "GHD Coastal Homes" for our new waterfront home designs. In visiting the GHD model home, customers realize the Key West theme that resonates so well for our beach communities. Due to the volume of construction that GHD produces annually, and all the lessons learned from providing affordable housing, it became evident that quality affordable housing can be achieved for all price points of residential homes. With that in mind, GHD has developed home designs for the Pinellas beaches that do not break the budget of those wanting a new home, either on the water or an interior lot in the Pinellas beach communities. GHD customers range from snowbirds now deciding to own a new home in Florida as a second home, to the many that already own homes here, but want a replacement upgrade on their existing home. For those families, GHD provides all the services necessary to demo their existing home, and work with designing a new home that fits their budget, then permitting and constructing their new home. GHD prides itself in being a "One Stop Construction Company", providing architectural services, permitting, design, and home construction, from start to finish, for customers to realize the enjoyment of a new Florida home with all of today's bells & whistles.

As a family owned business, we are very proud of what we have achieved in serving these thousands of Florida families.

GHD Construction Services, Inc. has constructed 6,500 homes since 1971, and announces our GHD Coastal Homes for the Pinellas Beaches. Come visit our "Key West" Home at 239 144th Ave. N, Madeira Beach. If you have any questions pertaining to new home construction, feel free to come by the GHD model, call at (727) 954-8345, or email to: twissier@ghdcsi.com. Meanwhile, look us up on our web site at www.GHDcoastalHomes.com.



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CATCH THE FERRY

Now Boarding



by Dan L. Hummel

This convenient way to get between two great cities is back for the second time. The Cross Bay Ferry returned in November and shuttles passengers between Downtown Tampa and Downtown St. Petersburg. Running Tuesday through Sunday, the Ferry is offering 16 round trips weekly through April 30, 2019. A new feature of the Ferry this year is the addition of late evening trips so that patrons can enjoy the amenities of both cities on the same day, or take in an evening sporting event or concert.

Once on board, you can skip the traffic hassles and enjoy a beautiful ride across Tampa Bay aboard the spacious, comfortable Provincetown III. With affordable fares and convenient departures every day of the week except Monday, it's the perfect way to get to your favorite destinations in Downtown St. Pete and Tampa.

As soon as the service concludes its season here, the 149-passenger Provincetown III will return to Boston to provide a similar summertime service in the picturesque New England city. The boat is owned by Bay State Cruise Company in Boston, and operated by Seattle-based HMS Ferries.

Funding for this second year was led by St. Petersburg with all four previous funding partners from the inaugural year agreeing to provide financial resources for a second six-month operation. The cities of St. Petersburg and Tampa, as well as Hillsborough and Pinellas counties, each contributed \$150,000 to support the service, which is substantially less than the first year due to the Ferry's strong ridership performance. The governments each paid \$350,000 for the 2016/2017 pilot program. In addition, the Florida Department of Transportation contributed \$150,000 this season.

Under terms of the 2018-2019 contract, the first \$200,000 in revenue will be split evenly with the four funding governments. The next \$200,000 goes to HMS Ferries. After that, profits will be split evenly between the member governments and HMS.

Kevin Fisher, General Manager of the Cross Bay Ferry, said, "Business during our first full month of operation has been extremely impressive with over 9,200 passengers traveling between the two cities. That ridership number comes very close to topping the best month we have ever had in the Tampa Bay Area." According to Fisher, the inaugural 2016/2017 season can boast of moving almost 41,000 passengers during the six months of operation.

Ben Lee at the Schifino Lee Advertising Agency who is charged with marketing the Cross Bay Ferry stated that, "We use community partnerships and social media to advertise and market the Cross Bay Ferry. Our community partners include the City of St. Petersburg, Visit St. Pete/Clearwater, Sparkman Wharf, Tampa Bay Lightning and others. These organizations share the Ferry's news and information on their social media platforms, and it's really working well. Tickets sales are on pace to exceed our initial season, which was considered a big success."

Both docking locations place patrons near each city's vibrant waterfronts that offer beautiful scenic views. In Tampa, the boat docks adjacent to the Florida Aquarium where there are great restaurants, museums, and extraordinary entertainment. In St. Petersburg, the Ferry docks near the Vinoy from a temporary pier while the Downtown St. Petersburg Pier is under reconstruction. However, visitors will still find themselves within a

short walking distance of St. Petersburg's fresh markets and fabulous shopping. Parking in St. Petersburg during the pier's reconstruction is free at the Sun Dial Garage at 117 2nd Street North with proof of a Ferry ticket. There is also non-metered parking available along 5th Avenue North.

The vessel is fully equipped with a café serving coffees, pastries, snacks, wine, beer and cocktails. Riders will be able to enjoy their food or drink while taking in the breathtaking views.

The Cross Bay Ferry also encourages bike transit and happily provides space aboard for bikes. For capacity reasons, the vessel can accommodate up to 30 bicycles at a time, and there is no charge to carry on bikes.

This service has been a real passion of St. Petersburg Mayor Rick Kriseman who told the Downtown News Magazine that, "The Cross Bay Ferry started as an idea, not as a single solution to our transportation issues in Tampa Bay, but as one part of a larger strategy. The success of our pilot program was built on the partnership of four partner governments. Working together, we proved that the service is a viable option for travelers between Tampa and St. Pete. Now in our second year, we're already seeing promising signs of success. I have continued high hopes for the Cross Bay Ferry, for our ability to work closely with our partner governments on new, innovative transportation projects, and to find solutions to the transportation challenges facing the Tampa Bay region."

So give this exciting new Cross Bay Ferry a try soon. After all, with its new and improved schedule, you will be sure to know when your ship is coming in!

Find more information at thecrossbayferry.com ■

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RICHARD JACOBSON - BELLEAIR RESIDENT, BUSINESSMAN, AND PHILANTHROPIST

by Bob Griffin, Publisher

Richard Jacobson who died in April of 2016, left his mark on our area—one that will continue for years to come.

Originally from Des Moines, Jacobson worked for the Monsanto Chemical Company before he became an independent agricultural chemical wholesaler and founder of the Jacobson Warehouse Company. Over the years, Jacobson built the Jacobson Companies into one of the nation's largest privately-owned warehouse organizations with over 9,000 employees. The business spun off other companies including: investment, transportation, packaging, staffing, and other companies. He also invested heavily in ethanol and the Hawkeye Renewables Company.

Then, Jacobson moved to Florida—Belleair to be exact, where he met many local business leaders and became involved with many charity organizations. He also made many friends. Three of those friends are movers and shakers in both business and charity work - Frank Chivas (Baystar Restaurants), Ed Droste (Hooters), and Bob McIntyre (Ditek Corporation). The group became close friends attending baseball and football games together; they also sponsored charitable events together.

Jacobson always found ways to give his time, talent and financial resources to help others which fulfilled his goal of "making money to give money." Jacobson's spirit of giving earned him numerous recognitions and awards—both in our area and in Iowa.

The Mayo Clinic received \$100 million from Jacobson to establish a program to create a proton beam therapy cancer

treatment. It was the largest-ever single living donor gift.

With a \$1 million endowment, Jacobson established the Jacobson Culinary Academy at Tarpon Springs High School. It opened in 2009 as part of the Pinellas Education Foundation. That same year, he gave \$100,000 to Tampa's Lee Moffitt Cancer Center for prostate research, where he and Ed Droste on the Board Directors. In 2010, he gave \$1 million to the Education and Marine Life Hospital portion of the Clearwater Marine Aquarium.

In recent years, it is estimated that the Richard Jacobson Foundation donated approximately \$25 million to Tampa Bay area charities. But Jacobson wanted to do more. Before he died, he gave each of his three friends \$1 million for the charity of their choice.

Shortly after Jacobson's death, the managers of his foundation and trust called the three friends and asked for a meeting where they learned Jacobson had left each \$5 million more to go to their desired charities.

Droste's directed his \$5 million to go to support the Moffitt's Center for Excellence for Evolutionary Therapy. This is on top of Jacobson earlier gift of \$1 million. This will also provide scholarships to high school students entering the profession.

McIntyre's \$5 million will be given to the Pinellas Education Foundation to construct a veterinary science building at the Seminole Campus of the Richard Jacobson Technical High School which opened in August. It is the largest single donation in the Pinellas Education Foundation's history. The earlier \$1 million donation created an endowment fund to pay for a variety of career and technical initiatives in perpetuity.

Half of Frank Chivas' \$5 million will go to the Clearwater Marine Aquarium's program for disabled children and veterans who come to Clearwater to see Winter. Half of his earlier \$1 million donation also went to CMA earmarked for their \$66 million expansion.

Chivas directed the other half of the total \$6 million donations to about a dozen Tampa Bay



Charities including the development of a culinary college in partnership with Pinellas County and St. Petersburg College.

Over his lifetime, it is estimated that Jacobson and his foundation gave over \$300 million to charity. The recipients include hospitals, colleges, and libraries, helping countless individuals.

"He never did things that affected only one or two people," says Frank Chivas. "He made sure it was going to affect the masses. He did things here that will last forever."

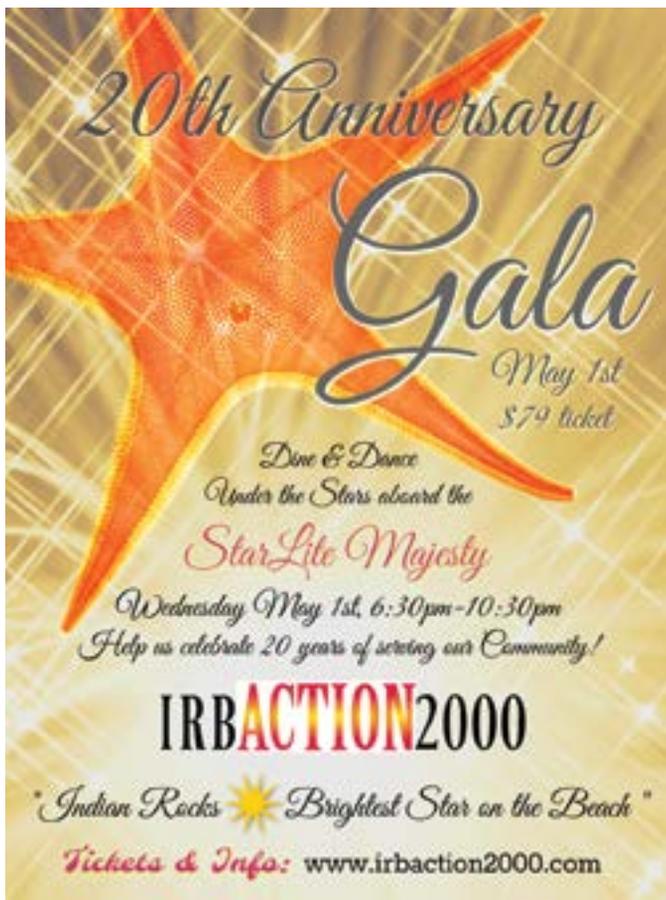
To honor the memory of Richard Jacobson, Chivas, Droste, and McIntyre created a new event: Feast on the Beach. Held last December on Clearwater Beach, the first ever Feast on the Beach, Wine and Seafood Festival was a big hit and a large money maker according to organizer Frank Chivas. It featured food and drinks from many Clearwater Beach restaurants and is said to have raised over \$20 million.

The fund-raiser benefited the Richard Jacobson Foundation and others including Lee Moffitt Cancer Center and Pinellas Technical College (PTEC). The primary sponsors included Duke Energy, Visit St Pete/Clearwater and the Baystar Restaurant Group. Frank Chivas and Chicago Cubs Coach Joe Madden were organizers. There were too many restaurants to mention here, but you can see the list at FeastontheBeach.com

Chivas says this fund-raiser was held basically to honor their friend, Richard Jacobson. There are plans to make it an annual event. ■



Feast on the Beach Organizers



20th Anniversary
Gala
May 1st
\$79 ticket

Dine & Dance
Under the Stars aboard the
StarLite Majesty
Wednesday May 1st, 6:30pm-10:30pm
Help us celebrate 20 years of serving our Community!

IRB ACTION 2000

"Indian Rocks  Brightest Star on the Beach"

Tickets & Info: www.irbaction2000.com

Organizational News...

BEACH COMMUNITY FOOD PANTRY (BCFP)

Submitted David Kline BCFP Director

2019 is well under way and the Beach Community Food Pantry has been busy trying to keep up with the demands of our clients. As you heard, the January government shutdown was resolved but not before excess demand was placed on the food reserves that would normally have been distributed to our clientele and similar people throughout the country.

We have seen our normal channels of inventory from Feeding Tampa Bay and RCS diminish over the last 30 days but we are keeping up with demand. A call was recently extended to the local community for help with our inventory and the response was excellent! We have been receiving donations of food and money from many and our clients could not be more grateful.

Until such time as the government shutdown issues are behind us and our bulk food sources are back to normal, we sincerely appreciate ongoing donations. We seem to always run low of cereal, pasta and pasta sauce, rice, jelly, canned fruit and white bread but, of course, we will accept any non-perishable items.

Donations can be dropped off during pantry hours (Mon & Wed. from 10 am to noon, Thursday from 5 to 7 pm) or during normal church hours, (Monday-Thursday, 9am to 1 pm).

Thank you all for your wonderful support of this critical resource!

BCFP wishes to express our appreciation to two of local schools.

For the third year, the students and faculty of **Country Day School** organized a food drive that culminated in the donation of over 40 boxes of non-perishable food products. Meisha Leibson, Keith Reynolds and their staff organized the collection, delivery, sorting and stocking of this vital donation. Thank you Meisha, Keith and students, for making a difference in the community!

In the first year of their existence, **Richard O. Jacobsen Tech High** principal Marty Giancola, and Student Council Advisor Holly Roush reached out to BCFP discuss how their students could make a difference. Since BCFP is always challenged with supplying pet food to our clients and their animals, we suggested a pet food drive. The students came through in a big way, donating many boxes of wet and dry pet food. Thank you, Marty, Holly and students for supporting the pets of our clients!

GREENTOWN KIDS

Submitted Allie DeVore

Spring is here in IRB and our Sustainable Spring Initiative has begun! We kicked it off with a "Family Movie Night In Nature" for all our members and community. The IRB Nature Preserve was the perfect venue and it was a beautiful evening for popcorn, hot chocolate, and one of our favorites - The Lorax. GreenTown Kids partnered with Action2000 for their February Service Saturday, where our kids and families helped plant dune daisies at the 18th Ave. County Park. Always a favorite activity with our greenies, we had fun playing in the dirt and replanting our Earthboxes for Spring in the IRB Community Garden.

Mark your calendars for March and April:

- March 16: Great American Cleanup in IRB (9-12); GTK will be providing kids' supplies
- March 23: Greenfest at Church of the Isles (10-5); look for our tent with a Nature Nook and seed bomb making for the kids
- April 22: Earth Day Tree Planting Celebration for our members with Action 2000 (6pm @ 10th Ave Park)
- April 27: HOA's Beachfest - Eco-Village (11-4 on the beach 18-19th Ave); bring the family to Eco-Village for fun kids' activities

Join the fun and make a difference! www.greentownkids.org; email: greentownkids@gmail.com; and follow us on Facebook at GreenTown Kids.



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Organizational News...



FRIENDS OF THE INDIAN ROCKS BEACH LIBRARY

Submitted Michelle Gardner

In February, the Indian Rocks Beach Library Volunteer Appreciation luncheon was held at TJ's Italian Café. Also in attendance as special guests were Mayor Joanne "Cookie" Kennedy, City Manager Gregg Mims, and Commissioners Phil Hanna and Nick Palomba. Guest speaker Mary Rose Holmes of the Plein Aire Cottage Artists spoke about how art spared the bulldozing of many of IRB's historical cottages.

What many people may not know is that the Indian Rocks Beach Library began at a card table with a few books in the City Hall Auditorium in 1974 and has since grown into its current form complete with a Children's area, computer and study section, and houses IRB's only bookstore next to City Hall at 1507 Bay Palm Blvd. What has remained the same over those 45 years is that the entire staff has been, and is now, made up entirely of volunteers. It has been only in the last 15 or so years that the City has employed a librarian.

City Librarian, Lee Miller, guides the 20-30 volunteers, ranging in age from teenager to nonagenarians, and who are either part-year or full-time residents, to help create a welcoming and vibrant community resource for visitors and residents alike.

The library is well worth the time to visit and we invite you to consider becoming a part of the all-volunteer IRB library legacy. Become a Friend of Indian Rocks Beach Library with a one-year membership for \$10 or a lifetime membership for \$100.

Friends are accepting contributions for the purchase of recognition bricks to be installed in the walkway approaching the front door of the Indian Rocks Beach Library. Single bricks are \$100 and Double bricks for \$200 that will offer twice the characters and lines of the single. Forms are available at the IRB Library or www.indian-rocks-beach.com/irb_library.php.

COMMUNITY GARDEN

Submitted by Patricia Burch

Community Garden members met at the garden on Saturday, February 16 for clean-up and replanting. Spring vegetables are planted, including spinach, lettuce, onions, radishes, tomatoes, and peppers. We now have two boxes of herbs that are available for harvest by all members.

We still have boxes available for new members, so why not join now? You don't need a green thumb to grow vegetables in Earthboxes. They are practically fool proof. And volunteer coordinator Trish Burch is always available for help and advice.

FRIENDS OF IRB DOG PARK

Submitted by Wendell Schott

Our furry friends enjoyed some great weather at the IRB Dog Park in mid-February following some real chilly wet days during late January. Even with their own fur, some canines wore a sweater or an extra coat. A reminder to all, well behaved pooches are welcome, whether you live in IRB or not. Dogs can be unleashed and need to be licensed. No permit is required!

The winners of Winterfest at Calvary Episcopal Church's Dog Parade should now be posted on the Park's bulletin board. Stop by and see the photos of 2019's Mr. and Mrs. Winterfest and others.

Category	NATURAL GAS COSTS	ELECTRIC COSTS
Water Heating	\$287.30	\$651.11
Cooking	\$76.05	\$172.35
Heating/Cooling	\$253.50	\$574.50
Clothes Drying	\$84.50	\$191.50
Spa Heating	\$292.25	\$670.25

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Organizational News...

INDIAN ROCKS HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Submitted Terry Hamilton Wollin

The IRB Historical Society's new winter program has been a stunning success! A 3-part series of talks debuted in January with local historian Bob Griffin captivating 91 attendees with his talk about Ed Wright and his girlfriend, Ruby Kelly. The over flow crowd prompted a move to IRB City Hall for the second talk in February by local natives, Shera and Billy Bie, entitled "Growing up in IRB in the 1940s." The March 25 program will again be held at 2 pm at IRB City Hall, 1507 Bay Palm Blvd. Popular Bob Griffin will talk about the first documented residents of Pinellas County, about 40 people, who got their land through the Armed Occupation Act of 1842. As always, Society partners Crabby Bill's restaurant and Ready Set Yo coffee shop will provide light refreshments. The talks are free and open to the public.

On Saturday, April 13, friends and neighbors will come together, each contributing to a groaning board of delicious dishes. Our featured speaker will be author Cathy Salustri who will discuss her latest book, "Backroads of Paradise." Salustri's book will be for sale and our gift Shop will be open!

THE BEACH ART CENTER

Submitted by Patricia Thomas

Classes & Workshops - Many new classes have been added to our schedule. You will find options including: Pottery classes, Pastels, Portraiture, Plein Air Painting, Jewelry Making, Pencil Drawing, Watercolor on Aquaboard, Glass on Glass, Encaustic to Making Signs and a "Peace Pole"! These are all in addition to a range of classes in Watercolor, Oil and Acrylic Painting! The best way to explore our catalog is to browse online for the most up to date list of classes. For information and registration go to beachartcenter.org.

Class Categories - You may notice some new categories

- "Limited Series" - "New" These 3 hour classes will be offered for a limited period, generally four weeks. Current options include portraiture, still life or pastels. Watch our schedule for new additions to this series.
- "Weekend Workshops" - "New" Three Full-day sessions offered Friday - Sunday featuring nationally and internationally known guest Artist/Instructors.
- "Weekly Classes" - Generally 3 hour classes which meet weekly specializing in a wide variety of media.
- "Art on the Rocks" (Make it, Take it) - These are a single class, generally offered in the evening. All materials and instruction are included and you leave with a completed project. These are fun classes, many students bring refreshments and friends.
- "Open Studio" - Open time for students to work on projects in open Pottery Studio and Gallery spaces.

Kid's Camp - Great News! The Beach Art Center will be offering additional weeks this summer, running from June 3 through August 9. There will be no camp the week of July 4th.

The price are the same as last year, Full-day sessions \$200/week (Members \$185) and Half-day sessions \$100/week (Members \$92.50). Visit www.beachartcenter.org for details.

Gallery Show - This month we celebrate our students. Please stop by the Beach Art Center during our open hours to see our "Faculty-Student" Art Show where we celebrate work very near and dear to us, that of our students and their amazing teachers. This show runs through March 31, 2019.

Please also join us for the opening of our next show "Artist's Choice", Friday, April 12 from 6-8pm.

The Beach Art Center is located in center of Indian Rocks Beach, across from Kolb Park at 1515 Bay Palm Blvd. The Art Center is open Monday - Friday 9:00am - 4:00pm and available on weekends for private events.



Bring Food Donations

Rotary Club of Indian Rocks Beach
PANCAKE BREAKFAST
 TO BENEFIT THE BEACH COMMUNITY FOOD PANTRY

\$6 IN ADVANCE/ \$8 AT THE DOOR
 PANCAKES, SAUSAGE, COFFEE, TEA & JUICE

NO ONE IN OUR COMMUNITY SHOULD GO HUNGRY. WITH YOUR HELP, NO ONE WILL.

Saturday, March 23rd
 7:30am - 11:00am
 Calvary Episcopal Church
 1615 1st St, Indian Rocks Beach

Non-Perishable Food Donations Collected at the Door.
 Proceeds and donations go to the Beach Community Food Pantry.

Rotary
 Club of Indian Rocks Beach

www.Indian-Rocks-Rotary.org

4:00-8:00PM ~Saturday, March 30, 2019



\$20⁰⁰
 ONLINE - IN ADVANCE

\$30⁰⁰
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 Day of Event at Site charge card sales from 4:00-8:00 P.M.

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Organizational News...

ACTION 2000 INDIAN ROCKS BEACH (A2K)

Submitted by Julie Hoofnagle

County Park Beautification Project. IRB Action 2000 (A2K) was back at the IRB County Park with a Beautification Project on February 23rd 9am to 11am with over 70 volunteers. The County Park is located between 17th & 18th Avenues along Gulf Blvd. Our project partners included the City of Indian Rocks Beach, Keep Pinellas Beautiful, IRB Chairs, GreenTown Kids and Crabby Bill's. A2K is dedicated to keeping this park beautiful all year long for residents and visitors to enjoy.

12th Avenue Park Service Saturday. Join us on April 13th from 9am to 11am to clean up and beautify the 12th Avenue Park along Gulf Boulevard. We will be trimming, weeding and putting down shell mulch. This is the park where we host our annual Christmas Tree Lighting. Come on out and join us for a fun morning. Donuts and coffee will be served.

Monthly Meeting. We invite you to join us for our next meetings on Monday, March 11th and April 8th at 6:30pm at the Beach Art Center. Learn how you can help preserve and beautify Indian Rocks Beach and enjoy a fun, meaningful way to make new friends.

SAVE THE DATE!

"IRB ✨ Brightest Star on the Beach" Gala Benefit Event

IRB Action 2000, Inc. is celebrating its 20th year anniversary! The "IRB – Brightest Star on the Beach" Gala will be held May 1, aboard the StarLite Majesty Dining Yacht in Clearwater from 6:30-10:30 pm. Tickets will go on sale in early March.

The fundraising gala celebration will feature a 3-hour cruise with a full course dinner, music and dancing. It will also feature our annual Preservation Awards as well as silent and live auctions.

"I am thankful for all who are helping us celebrate 20 years of honoring the mission of beautifying and preserving Indian Rocks Beach! I am excited to celebrate and enjoy a once-in-a-life-time event and opportunity to thank and gather some of the most wonderful people in the world who share the vision and have played a role, whether big or small over the years, in helping us keep IRB beautiful." Julie Hoofnagle, President IRB Action 2000, Inc.

Don't miss this event! More information is available at www.irbaction2000.com and visit us on Facebook at Action2000IRB.

IRB HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION

Submitted by Joe McCall

FREE Happy Hours from 6-7:30pm are held on the second Thursday of the month. Catch up on what's going on in town, visit friends and neighbors and enjoy free appetizers and special drink prices while you support our local restaurants and bars. Get details at irbhome.com, LIKE our Facebook page or sign up on our email list.

IRB Easter Egg Hunt - Saturday April 20, 2019- www.irbhome.com

IRB Beachfest – Saturday, April 27st, 11 am - 9 pm - A full day of fun for the whole family is planned for this great event. Head to the beach for the Kids area sponsored by City of Indian Rocks Beach and Greentown Kids along with soaking up the sun with beach activities like, volleyball, Cornhole and other games. Live music all day while enjoying great food from our local restaurants.

Community Donations: In support of our community, the IRB HOA board approved donations to GreenTown Kids, Indian Rocks Beach Food Pantry, Pinellas Hope partnered with Church of the Isles, City of Indian Rocks Beach - Spring Luncheon and Flag Retirement Ceremony and the Community Easter Egg Hunt

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



Saturday, April 6, 2019

5K	8:00 am
1 mile	8:10 AM

Where
Indian Rocks Beach
17th Avenue Beach Access, 1700 Gulf Blvd.

Main Sponsor

Indian Rocks Beach, FL
After party at Crabby Bill's

Rotary Website
www.Indianrocksrotary.org

REGISTRATION
www.runsignup.com
search: Rotary Runs the Beach
Online registration ends April 3rd

5K Cost

Until Feb 28	\$25
Mar. 1 - Apr. 5th	\$30
Day of Event	\$35

1 Mile Cost

Until Feb 28	\$20
Mar. 1 - Apr. 5th	\$25
Day of Event	\$30

Proceeds to benefit:

1. CASA Domestic Violence Shelter
2. Habitat for Humanity
3. IRB Food Pantry
4. Rotary Youth Exchange
5. Books for Local Schools
6. End Polio Now

Rotary
Club of Indian Rocks Beach 

12th Annual
Indian Rocks Beach

GREENFEST

Saturday, March 23rd, 2019
10:00 am - 5:00 pm
24th Avenue & 1st Street
www.irbgreenfest.com



Church of the Isles, UCC
www.churchoftheisles.org

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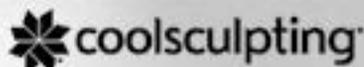
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