

NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

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Magazine



MAAS BROTHERS - CLEARWATER'S GREAT DEPARTMENT STORE

With the demolition of Clearwater's Harborview Center in April, we thought it would be fun to look back on the store that once stood there - Maas Brothers. Everyone shopped there and everyone had a personal relationship with the store and its employees. So how did it all begin and why is it gone?

Maas Brothers was started by two brothers who immigrated from Germany - Abe and Isaac Maas. After the Civil War, they worked with two other brothers in Georgia selling general merchandise, groceries, feed, and dealing in cotton. In 1886, Abe decided to try his luck in Tampa - an up and coming fishing village. There, he opened the Dry Goods Palace. Isaac joined him the next year and they renamed the store Maas Brothers. They had no idea that one day their small 23 foot by 90 foot dry goods store would grow into a chain of 39 stores across the state of Florida. *Continued on page 7*

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Sunscreens

Read what a local doctor says about sunscreens effect on the environment.

- page 16

St. Pete's New Pier

How is the construction progressing on the new waterfront pier? - page 34

Meet Commander Tracy Randall

USG Station Sand Key

She joined the Coast Guard at 17 and rose through the ranks. Now, she supervises 48 active duty personnel and station dog Buddy. - page 20

Thinking about retiring soon?

Get some tips from Raymond Ferrara, CEO of ProVise Management.

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BELLEAIR AREA NEIGHBORHOOD NEWSLETTER

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

Do you need another copy of this newsletter. You may pick up additional copies of this newsletter at all City Halls, Panara Bread, UPS Store and the Belleair Market. Call 430-8300 if you need more than a few.

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

Thank you for reading, Bob & Becky Griffin, 727-430-8300 bob@griffindirectories.com

SEE YOU AGAIN IN AUGUST

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CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

JUNE		
Hurricane Season Begins	1	Sunset Run Sand Key 21
Tax Free Days For Hurricane Supplies	1-6	National Pink Day 23
Summer Camps Begin Belleair Rec	3	Take Your Dog To Work Day 24
D-Day Remembrance	6	Hurricane Prep Seminar Largo 29
Etsy Craft Party Coliseum	6	
Ink Mania Tattoo Expo Coliseum	7-9	JULY
Sand Key Sunset Run	7	Independence Day 4
National Donut Day	7	Belleair Bluffs July 4th Celebration 4
Belleair Bluffs Business Assn Mixer	13	Fire Works Coachman Park 4
Flag Day Ceremony Indian Rocks	14	Independence Concert Calvary Episcopal 4
Flag Day	14	Cool Art Show Coliseum 13-14
Pride Night at the Trop	14	National Ice Cream Day 15
Father's Day	16	Sunset Run #3 Sand Key 19
National Garbage Man Day	17	Pinellas Grouper Week 26-4
Juneteenth	19	Parents Day 28
St. Pete Pride Parade & Festival	19-23	National Chicken Wing Day 29
American Eagle Day	20	
Summer Begins	21	AUGUST
National Selfie Day	21	Sunset Run Sand Key 2
Tampa Bay Tropicana Home Show	21-23	Sales Tax Holiday For School Supplies 2-6
		Bluff's Business Assn Mixer 8
		Public School Begins 14

“MADEIRA BEACH WALK”, A TOWNHOUSE OPPORTUNITY!

By Tom Smith Owner of GHD Construction Services



There is little opportunity today to be able to purchase a new “Key West” style townhouse within one block from the beach. Then too, the Madeira Beach Walk townhomes are fee simple ownership (no Condo Commandos or monthly association fees!!). These townhomes are elevated to FEMA standards and built to all the new Florida hurricane codes. Even better, these townhomes will be priced below \$495,000!

Announcing, “Madeira Beach Walk”, just one block from our beautiful sand beach of the Gulf Coast. These townhomes will have 3 bedroom, 2 bath, 2 car garages, and all updated cabinetry, granite, appliances, and new designs. Added benefits are that while purchasing a newly built townhome, homeowner insurance rates are considerably less due to being constructed under the latest hurricane codes, and of course, no high flood insurance to pay annually. Many families are no experiencing extremely high rates for just flood insurance due to federal changes in the FEMA requirements, sometimes \$10,000 to \$18,000 just for flood insurance annually! That’s a budget buster. However, that doesn’t apply to all new structures raised above designated FEMA elevations. Flood insurance for newly constructed homes built to FEMA standards is less than \$600 per year.

For many of the families that come by our model home in Madeira Beach, their main concern is being able to be within walking distance to the beach. That becomes even more important as we all witness the great increase in car traffic annually along Gulf

Blvd each year. Getting to the beach is becoming a marathon event, not to mention trying to find a parking space. Being just one short block from the beach makes the Florida lifestyle even more appreciated. And, it is just a modest walk to Johns Pass for all of the fun events, stores, and restaurants, while again not having to fight traffic or parking. Not bad!

I mentioned above that these townhomes will have fee simple ownership, not having to conform to stringent condominium laws. There is no association to worry about or the very high monthly fees that are always associated with condos. And best of all, if you are not quite ready to live full time in your new Madeira Beach Walk townhouse, the residential rental market is quite hot now. A family could lock in today’s price, receive rental income, and move in a few years from now when retirement becomes full time.

Is today a good time to buy? The market has an almost non-existent inventory of newly constructed townhouses designed with the Key West look today, and built to all new FEMA and building codes. Purchasing older inventory doesn’t make much sense when today’s new home product costs about the same. If you are possibly considering a Florida townhouse for now of future years, consider coming by our model to discuss that possibility.

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: tweisser@ghdcsi.com. Meanwhile, look us up on our web site at www.GHDcoastalHomes.com.



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Did You Know

5K RUNS ARE BACK

The Sunset 5K Runs held in Sand Key are starting soon. The four separate beach runs are held behind the Sheraton Sand Key on the beach at 7pm. Registration begins at 6pm on site. The Kid's Fun Run begins at 6:45pm.

The dates are: June 7 & 21, July 19 and August 2. Run in one, two, or run in all four. A single race (no shirt) is \$20 advance, race day \$25. A single race with shirt is \$25, race day \$30. Complete series cost \$50 with shirt, race day \$60.

You can register online at SignMeUp.com/130284.



JAZZY JUNK SALE Come find great stuff, while providing needed funds for the operation of the Clearwater Free Clinic Saturday, June 22nd, at their "Jazzy Junk" yard sale benefiting the Clinic's numerous programs.

The sale will be held from 10am - 3pm, at the Clearwater Free Clinic located at 1218 Court Street, Clearwater in the west parking lot. Donations of merchandise will be accepted at the clinic's community room entrance from June 17-20th between 9 and 5. Volunteers are needed to man the booths and provide donated goods. Contact Meredith Reagin at 727-443-3504 or e-mail mreagin@clearwaterfreeclinic.org.

CLOTHES NEEDED Clothes To Kids needs new and gently used clothing, as well as financial donations to buy needed clothing. They especially need elementary school boys and girl's pants, shorts sizes 6-12 including uniform pants, tops S- XL and school shoes and packaged socks. Also needed is junior clothing sizes 0-22 and young men sizes 18-44. Each year CTK clothes more than 11,000 low-income and in crisis school children, PreK-4 to 12th grade.

Families needing clothing can make an appointment to shop at the Tampa, St. Pete, or Clearwater store.

Donations may be dropped off from 9 am to 4:30 pm Monday - Friday at any store: Tampa - 5011-H W. Hillsborough Ave., Clearwater - 1059 N. Hercules Ave. and St. Pete - 2168 34th St. S. Cash donations are also needed. Call 441- 5050 or visit clothestokids.org.

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TAKE YOUR DOG TO WORK DAY

Your dog wants to see what you do at work so take him with you. Monday, For the twenty-first year, June 24th, is Take Your Dog to Work Day. Surprise your boss when you take your buddy to work with you and make him earn his keep.

and More...

UPCOMING CENSUS The 2020 Census will be held in one year to count everyone in the United States. It requires counting a growing population of around 330 million people in more than 140 million housing units. Pinellas County is forming a Census committee to drive local participation. Volunteer to help local efforts by visiting pinellascounty.org/census2020.



PAINTING CLASSES The Clearwater Community Sailing Center (CCSC) is now offering painting classes for \$15 per session. There is no need to sign up in advance and you pay as you go. Students should bring their own materials. The classes are being held at 9:30am on Tuesday mornings. For information, call the CCSC at 727-517-7776 or the instructor at 727-533-6958.

RCS PINELLAS 90 CAMPAIGN RCS of Pinellas is raising funds and food donations to help end summer hunger. They plan to feed school children over their 90 day summer break. During the summer, many children who are not in school also do not have access to school provided breakfasts and lunches. It takes 131 pounds of food to feed a family of four during the summer. Unfortunately, donations drop off during the summer as people are busy traveling. This campaign kicks off June 1 to raise awareness. See RCSPinellas.org for more information. Call 584-3528 to make a donation.

KICK THE PLASTIC HABIT In the U.S., we use 102 billion plastic bags a year. 12 million barrels of oil are required to manufacture them. The bags, which are used to bring purchases home from local stores, have a useful life of about one hour. Unfortunately, they have an actual life of FOREVER. While area grocery stores collect them for "recycling," they just properly disposed of them. No company is recycling the bags - recycling costs more than the cost of making bags from scratch. Bring your reusable bags with you when you shop and think twice before bagging produce. Most of the time it really doesn't need it.

OPERA IN INDIAN ROCKS

Calvary Episcopal Church was filled to capacity for the recent performance of "Apollo XIII", an original opera in two acts composed by Matthew Burke, the church's resident music director. Burke led the orchestra during the performance which was the first of Calvary's Beach Fine Arts Series. Calvary Episcopal Church is at 1615 1st Street in Indian Rocks Beach.



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

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THE TRADITION OF MAAS BROTHERS, *continued*

By 1921, Mass Brother's was Florida's second largest department store and it contained the state's first escalator.

In 1929, the brothers sold their store to Hahn Department stores who owned 28 other stores, but Maas Brothers was kept as a separate division with the Maas family continuing to oversee it. Isaac died in 1935 and Abe died in 1941. Their sons and other family members continued to run the business.

In 1948, *Maas Brothers* opened its first store in St. Petersburg, others followed – Lakeland 1954, Sarasota 1956 and finally 302 Cleveland Street, Clearwater - October 23, 1961. The store's opening coincided with Mass Brother's 75th anniversary.

Cleveland Street was always considered Clearwater's Downtown. As early as the late 1800s it was where people went to shop, eat, and socialize with their neighbors. It was the natural location of the city's newest big thing, a department store.

The new Clearwater *Maas Brothers*, located on prime waterfront property, was 168,000 square feet and had two-and-a-half levels. The lower level was accessible from the west side and showcased electric appliances, TVs, sporting goods, and furniture. They never referred to it as "the basement" even though it was below street level.

The main street level was primarily clothing - women's ready-to-wear, designer, name-brand, men's - they had it all. Plus, you could find any accessory you might need to complete your outfit: jewelry, handbags, cosmetics, men's belts, ties - it was a one stop shop.

When you grew hungry and tired from your shopping, there was *The Suncoast Restaurant*, also on the main level at the west end. restaurant made a profit, but *Mass Brothers* knew not to let customers leave for lunch because they may not come back.

"As a little girl, I remember the Suncoast restaurant having the greatest hamburgers and hot dogs complete with toasted buns. I would go there with my mom - Alva Jones - and Miss Mary, my dad's secretary. I felt so grown up to be included. We sat along the west wall near the windows that overlooked the harbor. They also had a lunch counter," remembers Liz Childress with the Clearwater Historical Society.

The second level was where you found domestics - sheets and towels, fine china, crystal, bedroom or bathroom accessories, and household decor.

"My mother loved *Maas Brothers* and took me there a lot. She bought all her furniture and home décor there. They always carried the higher-end items. Later, when I moved to Clearwater, I shopped at that *Maas Brothers*, mostly out of memory of my mother. I still have two beautiful lamps in my condo that came from that store," Sand Key resident Patti Eikenberry recalls.

The second floor also had the bridal department where newly engaged women would register for their bridal gifts and shop for wedding gowns.

"My wife Carolyn and I moved to Clearwater in 1972 and were married December 31, 1974. We bought our wedding rings at that *Maas Brothers*. They are a gold basket weave pattern and they still sparkle after 44 years of marriage," says Gary Bookou, an Island Estates resident.

Every year, parents would bring their children to the Suncoast Restaurant for breakfast with Santa. The entire store was transformed during the holidays with elaborate decorations. Shoppers listed to piped in Christmas carols playing overhead while browsing through the latest must have gift ideas.

"*Maas Brothers* is where I went to do my Christmas shopping—normally on Christmas eve. You would see the same guys there every year doing what I was doing—last minute shopping. And they actually had people working there who would help you. Those were the days!" Charlie Harper, President of the Largo Historical Society remembers.

The store's parking lot was part of the landfill created when the State of Florida built the Memorial Causeway bridge in the 1950s. At the edge was the Bay Drive Inn restaurant.

"From 1946 to 1969, my grandfather owned the Bay Drive restaurant in *Maas Brothers'* parking lot. In 1969, the City refused to extend his lease because they wanted to expand that parking lot," Billy Drulias says.

The *Mass Brothers* concept proved highly successful. By the mid-1960s, the company was earning in excess of \$50 million in yearly revenue.

Mass Brothers opened their first mall store in Ft Myers in 1965. It was the beginning of the end of free-standing stores. People preferred shopping in conveniently located malls rather than a single store located in a downtown area.



Maas Brothers' Suncoast Restaurant

In 1986, *Maas Brothers* celebrated its 100th Anniversary. It is also the same year Canadian real estate developer Robert Campeau bought the still successful retail chain. A corporate raider, he quickly pulled the company apart, merging and selling assets. Cost cutting and store closures became the norm.

Two years later, Campeau acquired another retail chain - Federated Department Stores, which already owned *Burdines*. Recent competitors, now *Mass Brothers* and *Burdines* were sister stores, but they still competed for shoppers as they were located in the same markets - many times in the same malls. Campeau converted many *Mass Brothers* into *Burdines* stores.

Campeau's firm struggled and was forced to file for bankruptcy in 1990. Within a year, the already under performing standalone *Maas Brothers* stores were closed. That included the flagship Tampa store, Sarasota, St. Petersburg and of course the Clearwater's Cleveland Street store.

The Clearwater store was replaced Stein Mart, a similar but different department store. When Stein Mart closed, the City turned the building into the Harborview Convention Center.

As a convention center, it was only somewhat successful and was slated for demolition in 2010, the same year the hit movie, "A Dolphin Tale" was filmed. The movie's producers asked to use Harborview as a sound stage and studio. After the movie's success, the sets became a tourist attraction for a half-dozen years. That ended last year.

Now, 58 years after *Maas Brothers* opened, the building was demolished last month. The site will become part of the *Imagine Clearwater* master plan. Learn more about what is planned for that site at ImagineClearwater.com.

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DON'T RETIRE...REWIRE™ PART II

by Ray Ferrara, ProVise Management Group



In our previous DON'T RETIRE...REWIRE™ article, we primarily focused on the financial side of retirement by stressing the need for a written financial/retirement plan. But there is more to retirement than just finances.

Retirement is not for the faint of heart and it can be a huge adjustment. For most of your life you were told when, where and how you would do things. Now you wake up one morning and you have nowhere to go. So what do you do?

Here are our Top Ten Things to Consider:

- 1) Make up for lost time – Spend time with your spouse/significant other, family, friends, neighbors and anyone else that you like
- 2) Travel – Go back to that favorite place. Head to the place you always wanted to see. Buy a motorhome or boat.
- 3) New home – Maybe downsize. Move to the country/city. Maybe a second home.
- 4) Go to school/teach – Many states like Florida allow seniors to audit courses at public universities. Study what you want not what is required. Learn a new language. Become a teacher/adjunct professor.
- 5) Develop/Start a hobby – Photography, stamp/coin collecting, painting, gardening/farming, fishing, hunting, learn to play an instrument and creating your own wine/beer.
- 6) Read/Write a book - Whether for fun or learning, reading/writing is a great way to expand the mind and to keep it active.
- 7) Volunteer –Not-for-profit organizations need your help with time, talent, and treasure. Work with those where you have a passion. Mentor students, young professionals, or business owners.
- 8) Go back to work – Work part time which still gives you lots of time for fun. Work at something different. Be a consultant, public speaker, become a public servant/politician.
- 9) Join social organizations – How about your place of worship; can they use you? Maybe a country club, fitness club, bridge club, chess club, or book club.
- 10) Take it slow/easy – There is nothing wrong with doing nothing. Relaxing is good for your long term health. Maybe try yoga or tai chi.

We have worked with thousands of folks just like you. Money is important, but money isn't everything. Many could not make the transition from full time employment to full time enjoyment.

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NATION'S FIRST UNDERWATER VETERANS DIVE MEMORIAL



The first statues for the nation's first underwater dive memorial honoring our veterans are expected to be lowered into place off the coast of Pinellas County in just a few weeks. Called "Circle of Heroes," the attraction will be located roughly 10-miles off the Pinellas County shore and eventually will include 24 different life-size concrete statues of men and women serving in the United States Air Force, Army, Coast Guard, Marines and Navy.

"This underwater exhibit will honor our nation's heroes, while helping sustain marine life in our precious gulf waters as an artificial reef. Its impact will be everlasting and our county and

state are better for it," said former Congressman David Jolly, whose non-profit, Brighter Future Florida, is spearheading the campaign to complete the memorial.

The concrete statues, which stand 6-feet tall, will be placed in a 100-foot circle. A 4-foot high, 5,830-pound monument will be placed at the center of the memorial featuring 5 bronze emblems representing each of the U.S. Armed Forces.

The brainchild of St. Pete College instructor Dr. Heyward Mathews, Circle of Heroes will be located a quarter mile from the popular dive site Veterans Reef, about 40 feet below the surface of the water.

"This underwater memorial will not just honor our veterans, but it will also serve them," U.S. Army Lieutenant Colonel (Ret) Bill Wilson of Clearwater said when the project was announced in 2018. "Diving trips to Circle of Heroes may be used in conjunction with sports therapy programs for disabled veterans struggling with PTSD, depression, trauma and other anxiety disorders."

To date, 12 of the 24 statues for the project have been purchased. Additional money from private and corporate donations and other sources is being sought to complete the underwater memorial.

If you are interested in sponsoring a statue or supporting the project, visit: www.vetmemorial.org

WIN A FRENCH DINNER

July 14th is the French equivalent of our July 4th. Win a dinner for two, (not on July 14, it is too busy) including a bottle of wine, at Belleair Bluff's only French restaurant, Chez Colette Bistro, 796 Indian Rocks Rd. The FIRST person to answer all four questions correctly, by E-mail to Bob@GriffinDirectories.com. is the winner. They will receive an email within 24 hours.



Good Luck and thank you for playing:

1. What is the French name for July 14th?
2. In which French city did the July 14th event occur?
3. What began due to the July 14th event?
4. What is the Bastille?

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Boating Safety

You can never be too prepared when you take a journey out onto the water. In Pinellas County, boating is one of the top and most frequent activities in the spring and summer months. However, according to the U.S. Coast Guard, thousands of boating accidents happen every year throughout the country. The most recent report from 2017 shows that there were 4,291 recreational boating accidents in the United States resulting in 658 deaths, 2,629 injuries, and \$46 million in property damages.

Out of the victims who drowned, 84.5 percent were not wearing a life jacket, and alcohol use was the leading known contributing factor in fatal boating accidents. This means that preventing death and injury when taking your boat out is as simple as wearing a life jacket and not operating your vessel under the influence.

Aside from these two very important safety rules, we do advise Pinellas County citizens to also follow the following tips during boating season.

1. Complete a safe boating course: Florida law requires boat operators born after January 1, 1988 complete an approved boater education course and receive a Florida Boating Safety Education ID Card. Enrolling in a boaters' safety course is also a great way to learn the rules of the water and familiarize yourself with basic boating principles. Visit the National Safe Boating Council website at safeboatingcouncil.org for links to several approved online courses.

2. Make a pre-departure checklist: Before you set sail, use a pre-departure checklist to make sure you have all the necessary equipment on board, including: life jackets,

sound producing devices, distress signals, fuel and oil, fire extinguishers, a radio, anchor and dock line, basic toolbox, first-aid kit, and flashlights. Florida law requires that one personal flotation device (PFD) per passenger is readily accessible on the vessel at all times, and that children under age six must wear PFDs while underway.

3. Watch for manatees: The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission provides a Pinellas County manatee protection zone map. Reduce your boating speed in the required areas from April 1st to November 15th. The Pinellas County Sheriff's Office Marine Unit regularly monitors and enforces these zones. The rules and restrictions can change, so it is important to stay informed.

4. Get a free vessel safety check: The U.S. Coast Guard offers complimentary boat examinations to ensure you have the proper safety equipment required by state and federal regulations.

5. Make a float plan: Inform your close friends and family members about the details of your trip, including the name and address of the trip leader, boat type and registration, the names of all the passengers, and the trip itinerary. Also, make sure more than one person on board is familiar with the boat's operations and general boating safety in case the primary navigator is injured or incapacitated in any way.

6. Don't drink and boat: Remember, operating any vehicle—including a boat—while impaired by drugs or alcohol is illegal and can result in lives lost and thousands of dollars in fines. Just as you would before a night out on the town, designate a sober captain before you head out on the water.

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FISHING WITH MISTY, A REEL FUTURE

By Bob Griffin, Publisher

At the risk of sounding sexist, you don't expect your fishing guide to be a woman. But Florida native Misty Wells is a fishing guide—and more. A resident of Belleair, Wells was born in Clearwater's Morton Plant Hospital.

After graduating from Clearwater High School, Wells started a hospitality career working with many Pinellas area hotels, as well as in Colorado. She eventually became the public relations and assistant manager at the St. Pete Beach Postcard Inn.

"A group of ladies organizing a women's fishing tournament came by to ask if we'd be a co-sponsor," Misty remembers. "The idea of fishing never crossed my mind but sounded really interesting. I personally entered the tournament and got 'hooked' immediately."

That led to lots of other outdoor sporting activities: hunting, diving, fishing, kayaking, and paddle boarding.

"I started writing about all my experiences," Misty explains. "I posted articles about my activities online, created videos and even started a blog. Currently, Wells writes a bi-weekly column that appears in the *Tampa Bay Times* and is also a contributor to publications including *Coastal Angler*, *Women's Outdoor Network*, *Onshore-Offshore Magazine*, *Sunseeker Magazine*, *the Florida Sportsman*, *Florida Sport Fishing*, *Guy Harvey's Online Fisherman*, *Woods N Water Magazine* and others."

Wells is also developing the TV show called *Let's Take It Outside* which is part of the Tampa Bay Times web site. It covers everything from fishing, hunting, gator wrestling and diving to paddle boarding, rafting, race car driving, and even python hunting. Some of her televised work appears on the Discovery Channel, NBC Sports, and the World Fishing Network.

Now a National & International Tournament Director, Wells works with venues & locations all over the country creating fishing tournaments, and occasionally has a time to fish in one or two of them as well.

Wells has been appointed a member of the Advisory Council for the Florida Fishing Industry Council and interacts with Tallahassee and Washington on matters that affect the Florida waters and fishing.

Through those endeavors, she and Captain Tommy LaRouge created a youth-based, non-profit charity called "A Reel Future." It is focused on the next generation of outdoor men and women - targeting kids in group foster care. LaRouge is a professional yacht and charter captain based in Clearwater. He grew up in Pinellas County's foster care system - from age 6-18. Together, they have helped over 2,000 area children get to know and appreciate fishing.

"Our goal is to teach and inspire these foster children", Wells says. "We teach kids to turn off the electronics and enjoy nature."

As all organization, theirs is in need of donations, such as boats, tackle, fishing rods - and, of course, cash. Learn more about this local charity at www.AReelFuture.com.

You can reach Misty at 970-708-7997 or Captain Tommy LaRouge at 727-550-7759. Visit www.MistyWells.com.

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Business Briefs

OUTLAND BOAT TOURS AND JET SKI RENTAL

Indian Rocks Beach has a new water sports business located at the Holiday Inn Harborside. It is not just for tourists, it is for locals, too.

Captain Carlos Ferreira and his wife opened the business in 2017, and added jet skis in March. They operate boat tours that will take you to a variety of places - Three Rooker, islands or even a restaurant of your choice. Tours can be two and a half hours (\$275), half-day (\$375) or full-day (7 hours @ \$675). "It is family-friendly fun," Captain Ferreira says.



Now they offer eight deluxe 3-man jet skis. If you are under 29, you must have a license--which they can issue. Jet skis are \$80 an hour or \$135 for two. If you like, you can have a guide.

"We are proud to already be listed as the #1 Boat Tour company in the Indian Rock Beach area," says Ferreira.

Check in or get more information at their welcome center at the Prestige Collection building, 399 2nd Street, south of the IRB History Museum. Visit OutlandBoatTour.com or call them at 301-6267.

Mention this story and get \$25 off any 4-hour Boat Rental.

MARINE MAX TOP SELLER Popular boat manufacturer Sea Ray, the world's leading creator of superior quality pleasure boats, recently celebrated 60 years in business. At the birthday party held in Texas last month, MarineMax Pompano was named the Top Selling Sea Ray dealer in the world—for the seventh consecutive year. Marine Max, the nation's largest recreational boat and yacht retailer, is headquartered in Clearwater. For more information, visit MarineMax.com and SeaRay.com.

NEW BILTMORE REAL ESTATE OFFICE Biltmore Real Estate, with offices in Indian Rocks and Countryside, is opening an office in Belleair Bluffs at 784 Indian Rocks Road North, next to Chez Collette Bistro. It should be open by June 1st and will service Belleair, Belleair Bluffs, and the Belleair Beaches. They are now hiring "energetic" realtors. Call Jim Mayes, Broker at 727-260-5164.

THE DOG NANNY Meet MJ Arbutine, Indian Rocks' new dog nanny. An Indian Rocks Beach resident, MJ is opening a dog sitting business in Indian Rocks Beach, next door to Chicago Jaqx Pizza. Her boutique style dog care offers boarding and animal enrichment for small and medium sized dogs. Other services including dog walking, and pet sitting (in your home) for all sizes of dogs, cats or other small animals. Dog Nanny is licensed and insured. It is Pet First Aid and CPR certified, and an active member of the International Boarding and Pet Services Assn. MJ hopes to open by mid-May. Hours will be by appointment - call 430-9729 to schedule a complementary assessment and evaluation. Find her at 1511 Gulf Blvd.



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Business Briefs



\$1.50 BOUTIQUE Everything in the store is a dollar-fifty. Well, almost everything. \$1.50 Boutique is a new thrift shop near Indian Rocks Beach that opened this past winter. Most of their inventory is women's clothing and accessories. - all new, bought at auctions. Find them just across the bridge at 11650 Oakhurst Rd., behind Walgreens, next to Wendy's. Call them at 455-2117.

NEW CRAFT BREWERY COMING TO THE BEACH Still under construction, a new craft brewery will be opening in Indian Rocks Beach. Owned by Philip Anderson, the 65 seat facility, which hopes to open by the end of the summer, will also sell growlers to take home. It will be located at 321 Gulf Blvd. between Slyce Pizza and the CVS store.

NINE YEARS OLD AND GOING STRONG Cigars and Bait - both in the same store. Who thought of that? Belleair Bluffs resident 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.



PROTECT YOUR BOAT The weather experts are calling for a "slightly busier than average" 2019 hurricane season with 12 to 14 named storms, including five to seven hurricanes and two to four major hurricanes of Category 3 or higher. Boat owners know the issues of securing their boat, and trying to eliminate damages from swinging and the movement caused by storm force winds. Once the storm hits, thoughts of "I hope it holds up this time" are enough to make one sick until the storm passes.

Luckily, a unique and proven product that quickly and easily secures your lift and boat for hurricane conditions - SwingStopper, designed by Paul Wartens - is available. Produced in Ft. Lauderdale, it provides proven protection and has been FEA tested to withstand Category 5 Hurricane conditions, creating one solid structure between the four corners of the lift and its piling.

Michael Atwell, owner of Clearwater based, Propwash, LLC, recently teamed up with Paul and SwingStoppers LLC to bring this product to our area. Atwell says, "The success of this product over the past decade is unmatched in terms of ease of use, value, and peace of mind with regards to protection of vessels and property." Propwash LLC also provides complete marine management services including storm protection products, monthly management services, detailing, and general, overall care of your assets. For more information, call Atwell at 727-512-4156.



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Business Briefs

NEW APPROACH MOVES

New Approach has a new address. Karen Luff moved her hair salon business from the Bonefish Plaza from the Bonefish Plaza about half a mile to the east. "After leasing space for twelve years and the uncertainty of



new owners buying the Belleair Bazaar Shopping Center, I decided to own," says Karen Luff, owner. "I found a place I could call my own and I bought it. The timing was great. And I want to thank my loyal team and loyal customers for staying with me through my transition and move."

Karen is now at 2120 West Bay, just west of the 20th Street stop light. Look for her golf cart.

THE SPOT IN THE PLAZA



Jon Vella (25), a Massachusetts transplant, opened The Spot Juice Bar two months ago. He makes smoothies and cold press juice. "I press the juice daily in small batches, to deliver the freshest product."

As far as food, he offers organic acai bowls. "Everything is organic, and everything is fresh," Jon emphasizes. That is why he likes to call it a "bowlery".

There is more than food at The Spot. Daily except Sunday, different Yoga teachers use his back room for classes. Their schedule on is his web site, www.TheJuiceNBowlSpot.com.

The Spot also sells a variety of things including handmade goods, jewelry, novelties, local art and supplements.

Vella operated a similar store in Massachusetts, where is also practiced permaculture and sustainable farming. After visiting for years, he moved Belleair Bluffs in February. Find The Spot in The Plaza, 100 Indian Rocks Road North, near E&E Stakeout. He is open Mon-Fri (7am-7pm), Saturday (8am-5pm) and Sunday (9am-5pm).

BELLEAIR MARKET OWNERS WIN AGAIN

Once again, Belleair Market owners Chris Scott and Bruce Van Fleet, both USF graduates, received USF's FAST 56 award. The award recognizes and celebrates the world's fastest growing USF Bull-owned or Bull-led businesses. The awards celebrate their success while providing a forum to pass lessons on to the next generation of Bull entrepreneurs. This is the second time they have won this award.



Business Briefs

MEET THE GRANGERS

Berangere and Gilles Granger recently bought Belleair Opticians. Jim Dundee has not left yet—but he will later this year. The Grangers are both from France. They moved from Paris to Harbor Hills, just south of West Bay Drive, four years ago. They love talking about their world travels and sharing the differences between the French and American cultures, food and wine.

About a year and a half ago the Grangers learned Dundee was retiring and they formed a partnership. Dundee agreed to stay around to show them the ropes of running the Optical business and to introduce them to his clientele. But, the Grangers are not new to this industry; they were in this business for many years in Paris.

"We bring our passion of beautiful and well-made designer frames from Europe—mainly France and Italy but even the U.S.," Gilles explains. "We offer exclusive brands available only here at our shop in Pinellas," he adds. "Our goal is to serve our customers with the best quality and designs available. We promise to provide a personalized service based on your lifestyle and vision needs and to offer a unique shopping experience"

"Thanks to our past experience in the ophthalmic industry as researchers, we are delighted to bring our competencies and know-how about lens technology," says Berangere. "We are able to explain the pros and cons of very complex high-end glasses which your eyesight deserves."

The Grangers moved the shop in The Plaza 100 a few doors down to a larger space next to Belleair Coffee. The new space offers a more modern space with a beautiful touch boutique and now an eye doctor. Belleair Opticians has been recognized as a "Essilor Expert", a rare recognition Tampa Bay.

"We love our loyal customers," both the Grangers say. "And we look forward to meeting new ones."

Belleair Opticians is located in The Plaza at 100 N. Indian Rocks Rd. Visit www.BelleairOpticians.com or call 584-0730.



NEW LOOK The Belleair Bazaar Shopping Center, more commonly known as the Bonefish Plaza, has a new owner who is planning a complete \$1 million makeover. The entire facade will be refaced including a new roof, signage and décor. The face lift should start soon at the west end by Westshore Pizza and working towards the other end over a few months.

The plaza, sold in August to Cardinal Point for \$7.75 million, was constructed in 1969, and was one of Belleair Bluffs' first shopping centers.



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HOW SAFE IS OUR SUNSCREEN FOR OUR ENVIRONMENT?



By Kathy L Anderson, DO, FAOCD

All of us living in Florida, know that we must be using a sunscreen to protect ourselves from sunburn. And, we have heard about all the damage that the sun, the UV rays, can cause to our skin from brown spots to premature aging, causing wrinkles and unfortunately to the development of skin cancers.

So, we buy sunscreen for ourselves and our children. We read the SPF labels, the water resistant claims and we purchase a product and apply faithfully. Sounds simple and safe, right? Well, unfortunately, many sunscreens, in fact MOST sunscreens are made with the chemicals oxybenzone (OXY) and octinoxate (OCT) which provide protection from the sun via a chemical reaction that inhibits the penetration of the UV rays. Why did I say 'unfortunately'? Because, these two ingredients are killing the coral reefs! These two ingredients do not dissolve in water and when a swimmer is wearing a sunscreen containing OXY/OCT, the sunscreen that washes off the persons' skin floats in the water and will eventually settle on the coral reef. This film coats the coral reef, essentially preventing the reef from absorbing the sun's rays, pretty much suffocating the reef, causing coral reef 'bleaching', which causes death of the reef. These products are directly affecting

our environment by destroying coral reefs which are necessary to maintain the ecology of our oceans. The living reefs support marine life that is essential for the ocean environment.

Now, Hawaii has banned all sunscreen products containing these two ingredients beginning in 2021. Key West has passed similar bans. Right now, in Tallahassee, there is a bill, that if passed, will ban OXY/OCT in sunscreen products for the entire state of Florida. And, here we are, living on Clearwater Beach, one of the most beautiful beaches in the world.

Oxybenzone and Octinoxate are relatively inexpensive ingredients which is why the manufacturers use them to chemically protect us from sun damage. These ingredients are also found in many cosmetics, as the FDA has claimed they are "safe" for humans. These two chemicals DO get absorbed into the skin and have been shown to affect the endocrine system as they "mimic" hormones in the body, and as some studies have shown can affect testosterone and estrogen. But, putting that aside for now (to be discussed later!), what options do we have that are safe for the environment, safe for our skin, will protect us from getting sun damage while we enjoy the beach, golf, boating, playing sports and basically living our lives in the beautiful state of Florida?

We can use mineral sunscreens!

Sunscreens containing zinc oxide or titanium dioxide. It is that simple! These minerals, come from the earth, they provide a physical block, to actually reflect the sun's rays off our bodies and do not get absorbed into our bodies, because the particle is too large (non-nano) and there is no chemical reaction on our skin. And, guess what? These ingredients DO NOT CAUSE CORAL REEF DEATH! So, why don't all sunscreens contain zinc oxide in enough percentage to provide a broad-spectrum SPF of 30, for instance, without adding the chemicals? Because it is a more expensive ingredient. You will see sunscreens with a low percentage of zinc oxide on the label, but read further...they still throw in the chemicals to achieve the SPF they want to reach, because it is a cheaper way to get the product on the market. Zinc Oxide alone, when used in the proper percentage can give Broad Spectrum protection, which means it protects against both the UVA and UVB rays and is safe for humans of all ages, safe for animals and safe for the coral reefs! The downside of zinc oxide sunscreens is that they can look 'white' on the skin if too much is used, and the sunscreen will cost a little more. So, don't apply too much of your favorite zinc oxide sunscreen and paying a little more just might be cost effective in the big picture! You can enjoy yourself, not get a nasty sunburn while you enjoy golf for 4 hours or ride your jet ski out to the island or watch your son or daughter play soccer. And, avoiding sun damage will reduce the need for doctor visits to treat sun burn and skin lesions that appear as a consequence of too much UVA and UVB.

Using a sunscreen with only Zinc Oxide or a sunscreen with a combination of Zinc Oxide and Titanium Dioxide will provide complete sun protection and WILL NOT HARM THE CORAL REEFS!

A person can choose what product to buy, for whatever personal reason. That is their choice, But, when a product is shown to have a permanent, harmful effect on the environment, there must be awareness and social responsibility. This is why law makers are looking at this seriously and passing laws, to protect the ocean.

Please, the next time you buy your sunscreen before you head to beautiful Clearwater beach, read the label completely. Know that your decision of what to put on to protect yourself will impact the marine life that we cherish and enjoy in many ways. This is a serious issue that will affect the world our children live in years from now. Protect our Coral Reefs and use our knowledge to protect ourselves as we enjoy our beautiful beaches in the State of Florida.

Dr. Anderson has been practicing Dermatology since 1995 and has been in the Tampa Bay area since 1999. Dr. Anderson has been practicing dermatology in downtown Clearwater for 13 years, specializing in Cosmetic and Medical Dermatology.



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SUMMER FERTILIZER RESTRICTIONS BEGINS JUNE 1

From June 1 - Sept. 30, Pinellas County residents may not apply fertilizers containing nitrogen or phosphorus to lawns and landscape plants. Fertilizer runoff can pollute rivers, lakes, bays and the Gulf of Mexico, cause algae blooms and lead to fish kills. Pinellas County is one of 90 Florida communities that have summertime fertilizer restrictions.

As the rainy season approaches, everyone in Pinellas County is reminded nitrogen and phosphorus fertilizers are prohibited. Phosphorus is restricted year-round without a proper soil test as Florida soils are naturally abundant in phosphorus.

Limiting fertilizer use prevents additional pollutants from entering storm drains and water bodies such as rivers, lakes, Tampa Bay and the Gulf of Mexico. Excess nitrogen and phosphorus can cause harmful algae blooms that can lower oxygen levels and lead to fish kills. Treatment to remove excess nutrients cost taxpayers millions of dollars each year.

Follow these Florida-friendly lawn care practices:

- Look for fertilizers with "0-0" as the first two label numbers.
- Apply iron, to keep lawns green without increasing growth which will lessen the amount of mowing required.
- Use compost to enrich soil.
- Set lawn mower blades between 3.5 to 4 inches for St. Augustine grass for deep roots that resist fungus and pests.
- Buy plants adapted to Florida's hot, humid climate.
- Hire lawn care professionals that display Best Management Practices decals on their vehicles.
- Sweep or blow grass clippings back in your yard. Do not direct them in the road, stormwater system or water bodies.

Visit, www.befloridian.org. Read the ordinance at: pinellascounty.org/environment/watershed/fertilizer.htm

BEACH ART CENTER

By Barbara Parker

Safe Travels to All our Winter Friends! Thank you for a great winter and we will see you next fall! Stay connected with us while away - visit our social media sites like Face Book and Instagram to keep up with what's going on. Keep up with all the exciting growth, as we continue to expand our services and engage in special events and projects at the center and with-in the city.

Creative Kids Camp - For 9 weeks, from June 3rd to August 9th, campers will alternate working in our gallery space and pottery studio, learning about the style of famous artists and applying that to their work in clay, watercolors, pastels, mixed media and more. The price remains the same as last year: Full-day sessions \$200/week (Members \$185) and Half-day sessions \$100/week (Members \$92.50).

Classes - We will be open all summer. A few upcoming highlights...

- Limited Series - Classes offered for four weeks sessions building on the next. Upcoming are "Pastel Techniques" in May and "Absolute Beginners" in June, both taught by Shawn Dell Joyce, the founder and former executive director of a nonprofit NY plein air school.

- Art on the Rocks - Single class session, offered 6-9pm. All materials and instruction are included, and you leave with a completed project. Upcoming sessions include

- June 15th, "Seashell Encrusted Picture Frame". Get ready for Father's Day or just enjoy an evening with Shawn Dell Joyce. Mom's (or Dad) you can bring a child for free.

Go to our website www.beachartcenter.org for more information on these and other events at the art center.

DIFFERENT OPTIONS FOR SWIM LESSONS

By Rebecca Geiger

As the cool weather leaves, it is a good time to start thinking about the best way to teach your child to be safe in the water. There are many options available! You can teach them yourself, take a "Mommy/Daddy and Me" course, group lessons, Infant Swimming Resource (ISR), private lessons, or a combination of any of the above. Knowing which you are looking for helps you find locations offering it in your area.

Many parents chose to teach their children themselves. This is wonderful. If you chose to do this, make sure to take advantage of resources that offer tips and guidelines to help speed up the process of getting the child to safety quickly. I have developed a website - TaggedIn.org - that offers step by step instructions for various ages and stages. The Red Cross also has an abundance of information that can be accessed through RedCross.com.

Mommy/Daddy and Me courses are great for parents who want to be in the water but want a little more guidance. The positive aspect of these classes is they allow parents to be in the water with their child, often in groups, which allows social interaction for both the child and the parent. They are also quite affordable. Some of the pitfalls are that when a child can see a parent they tend to progress slower, if you have a disruptive child in the group it can be distracting, or the time coordination is difficult.

Group lessons provide a faster progression in large part due to the fact that the instructor is the one teaching and the parent's anxiety is not transferred to the student. These classes are offered frequently through the summer at Rec Centers and the YMCA. There are some smaller locations that offer similar options at people's homes as well. Group lessons allow children to have limited interaction and they can benefit from seeing more advanced children perform the tasks the instructor

expects of them. It is also a great option if you do not have access to a pool at your home. The negative aspect of this type of class is that there must be enough supervision to ensure safety and unfortunately the most disruptive children often get the most attention. A highly anxious child can also set off a chain reaction.



ISR has become very popular due to its marketing and viral videos of infants floating on their backs unassisted. These courses are highly structured and taught one on one with very regimented programs. The classes are usually run consecutive days at a set location. Lessons run approx. 10 min per session and are offered for children from 6 months to 6 years of age. The largest complaints I hear about this program is the cost and length of the class versus the time it takes to get there and get set up.

Private lessons are done either at your or the instructor's location. Many Rec Centers offer private lessons at their pools. This allows one on one instruction with the child. Parent participation is at the discretion of the instructor so you would need to find out the instructor's policy on your participation. I can tell you that parental participation substantially slows down the child's progression. Private lessons offer a much greater level of flexibility and faster progression. The downside of private lessons is the cost - they are more expensive than group lessons.

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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MEET TRACY RANDALL COMMANDER, USCG STATION SAND KEY

by Bob Griffin, Publisher

Tracy Randall joined the Coast Guard at just 17. She rose through the ranks before becoming the Commanding Officer of the Sand Key Coast Guard Station.

Commander Randall was born and raised in Southern California and joined the Coast Guard when she finished high school. Her first duty was in Kodiak, Alaska on the Coast Guard Cutter *Storis*, which was at that time one of the oldest in the fleet. "Alaska was interesting, but very very cold, for a Southern Californian," Tracy recalls. "We primarily conducted search-and-rescue missions and fisheries boardings."

"I turned 18 twice onboard *Cutter Storis*," says Randall with a smile. "The ship's captain knew it was my birthday, so he crossed the International Date Line advancing the day forward, then crossing back over the next day to push the day back. Not many people can say they turned 18 two times."

Randall's first command was as the Officer In Charge aboard the *Chock*, a 65-foot cutter based in Baltimore. Her next duty was as Executive Petty Officer at the Key West station from 2011-2013. From there she spent three years as the Boatswains Mate Assignment Officer at Headquarters in Washington D.C.

The Sand Key Coast Guard Station has a new commander every three years. Randall's command began in 2017. She supervises 48 active duty, as well as 22 Reservists. "There are also over 300 active Coast Guard Auxiliary personnel," Randall adds. "They are volunteers and we could not do our job without them."

"We interact with many local groups and authorities, such as, the Clearwater Marine Aquarium, local police and sheriffs' departments, fire departments and others," Randall says. "We were very involved in the Clearwater Beach Power Boat Races in September," Randall continues. "However this September, as

the Patrol Commander I had to shut down the last race, due to a swimmer crossing into the race zone."

"The Pinellas County Sheriff immediately went into action and was able to quickly get to him and save his life before he was hit. He was detained by the Pinellas County Sheriff. The Race Committee elected not to restart the race."

During hurricanes, the local Coast Guard has a variety of duties. The most important is to protect their boats and people. Some boats are pulled out of the water and stored on land. After a hurricane, they return to do whatever is necessary.

"During Hurricane Irma, I stayed in Sand Key with five others just in case. Mainly we monitored communications during the storm."

Always on duty is the station dog, Buddy. He is a seven-year old, brown Rhodesian Ridgeback mix. "We got him from a 93-year-old lady who moved to a nursing home. Buddy lives at the Sand Key station and loves to ride on our boats, whenever possible."

CO Randall wants to thank the community for their help and donations during the January Government Shutdown. The Coast Guard is part of Homeland Security, not the Department of Defense, and did not receive paychecks during those 32-days. Many Sand Key residents and businesses donated food and supplies.

Tracy, now 47, will leave Sand Key at the end of 2020. She plans to retire in 2021 and return to St Petersburg to live. "I am a California girl--but I just love it here," she says.



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Anona Elementary's Class of 2019



Here are the 5th graders are the Anona Elementary School "Class of 2019" They will graduate High School in 2026. This is four classrooms - 125 children in total - along with Charlie, their longtime Crossing Guard in the middle. Many of these kids live in the Belleair area, south of West Bay Drive.

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Bar & Restaurant News



JEWEL CAFÉ GETS TRIP ADVISOR AWARD Belleair Buffs' smallest restaurant was recently discovered by Trip Advisor and was recognized with a special award - "One of the Best Places to Eat in Tampa Bay." Owner Tom Hawn was thrilled to accept the award.

Jewel Café, located behind the Belleair Market, had a surprise visitor by one of Trip Advisor's secret reviewers and he liked what he saw. "Sometimes it's those smaller restaurants with the key personnel, being the owners, that understands what's good," says Trip Advisor reviewer Al Jacobson. "This place is a hidden Jewel." Read the entire review on TripAdvisor.com.

Find Jewel Café at 2601 Jewell Road. See their web site at www.JewelCafeBelleair.com.

GROUPEUR WEEK RETURNS This local county-wide event is designed to draw attention to grouper and to the fact that Pinellas County is one of the main suppliers of grouper for to the east coast of the United States. You find it on the menus of most restaurants near the beaches and during this week, many of those restaurants have specials grouper entrees and sandwiches. Grouper Week runs from July 26 to August 4.

OFFTheGRiD OWNED BY AQUA PRIME OPENS Enjoy Caribbean at BBQ at this new restaurant directly behind Aqua Prime - 208 1st Street, Indian Rocks Beach. In addition to great smoked meats and cold beer, wine or cheap cocktails, enjoy outdoor games like bocce ball, corn hole, giant Jenga, ring toss, plus live acoustic music.

Visit offthegriddcuisine.com or find them on Facebook at OfftheGrid Cuisine to see all the upcoming events, pig & gator roasts, music, and food specials. They are open 10 am to 10 pm, 7 Days a week.



SHIPWATCH GRILL This small restaurant opened at Shipwatch, just across the bridge from the Holiday Inn. The little waterfront hideaway is in the clubhouse of Shipwatch Yacht and Tennis Club, but you do not have to live there to enjoy the restaurant.

They are open for lunch and dinner seven days a week, offering steaks, burgers, seafood and more. They also host a Sunday Brunch from 10:30am to 2pm.

Find them at 11900 Shipwatch Drive, just across the Walsingham Bridge. Call 735-8382 for directions.

Bar & Restaurant News

LIGHTNING HONORS LOCAL RESTAURATEUR

The Tampa Bay Lightning honored Frank Chivas, owner of Baystar Restaurants (including Seaweed) as the 43rd Lightning Community Hero during Game 2 of the Columbus Playoffs. Chivas received a \$50,000 donation from the Lightning Foundation and the Community Heroes program for his works with the Clearwater Marine Aquarium, Chi Chi Rodriguez Youth Foundation and Clearwater Youth. The money was divided and given to the four charities.



TJ'S CELEBRATES 30 YEARS This spring, TJ's Gourmet Italian celebrated 30 years in Indian Rocks Beach. In 1989, TJ (Tom Smith) opened a small pizza take-out restaurant in what is today his parking. He bought the property, tore down an old real estate building and personally built the building you see today. TJ and his wife, Kim, have consistently presented some of the finest Italian food on the Pinellas Beaches. Locals consider this to be one of Indian Rocks Beach's best.

Find them at 1515 Gulf Blvd. Enjoy eating inside, on the patio, take-out or just have it delivered. See their full menu at TJsItalianCafe.com. Call them at 596-1515.

CASA ITALIA Owned by the Starovas family, this restaurant has been under construction for a year and a half, but they are finally seeing an end to the dust and hope to open in mid-June at 2699 Gulf Blvd., in Indian Rocks Beach. The 28 seat Italian restaurant is not the first for the couple. They have owned other restaurants in Dunedin, St. Petersburg and Clearwater. They recently received their beer and wine permit and are just waiting for a few building issues to be completed.

ALOHA ANSLEY In Hawaiian, Aloha means welcome. It is also the name of a new restaurant open just east of Belleair Bluffs. Aloha Ansley Hawaiian Fusion - Ansley is the owner - is both a sit down and take out place with limited seating.

The menu features Poke bowls. You may have noticed more poke (pronounced poh-kay and rhymes with okay) restaurants are opening. For those that are unfamiliar with it, the word poke simply means "chunk" in Hawaiian. Previously, poke was any meat or seafood cut into small chunks and marinated. Poke nowadays is generally seafood and more likely to be like a seafood salad.



In addition to poke, the new menu includes Da Hui Tacos, Oahu Sliders, and Blue Wave Nachos. They also have salads, many sides, desserts, beer and wine—and kid's plates.

Find Aloha Ansley at 1931 West Bay Drive, near the stoplight on 20th. They are closed Mondays. Visit Alohaansley.com. Call Ansley at 953-3757.

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MAAS BROTHERS AS I REMEMBER IT

"I recall being intimidated by the big escalators. I found shopping with my mother boring, so I entertained myself by hiding in the clothing racks. I remember that the milkshakes were especially good." **Rich Jones**

"I am a former Fashion Coordinator for that Maas Brothers. I did in-store training for other fashion employees. I selected the merchandise the display department put in the store windows. I also produced large runway fashion shows and was one of the first coordinators to include men in the shows. We also had a teen board, presented the Clearwater Parade floats and did table modeling in the Suncoast Restaurant. I most enjoyed meeting the hundreds of local shoppers." **Sandee Mikell Pfister, Belleair Resident**

"I was a teenage model for the Saturday Tea Room in the early 1960s. It was great fun being able to choose whatever I wanted to wear and walking around the store and restaurant showing it off." **Tabby Clements**

"I used to work in the display department of that Maas Brothers. I remember being on the roof of the store when someone came up to lower the American flag to half-staff. They told me President Kennedy had just died." **Mike Walbolt**

"My mother worked there in the mid-1960s; she is now over 90. When I told her they were tearing down the building, she asked if I would take her there to see it—one last time. I took her picture standing next to the entrance." **Pat Cope**

"Living in Island Estates, we shopped at Maas Brothers often. My first makeover was at their Clinique counter. During college, I worked at that store over Christmas as a floater working in different departments, including gift wrapping. I still have some martini glasses and crystal and silver baby bottles I bought there." **Sharon Skinner**

"Every Saturday, we went shopping in downtown Clearwater and would end up at Maas Brothers riding up and down on the escalators. We loved running up the down escalators, until we would get kicked out of the store. Those were great times." **Maggie Young Barber**

"Maas Brothers always smelled so good when you first entered the store off Osceola. As a teenager, I felt the Juniors Department was the high-end of fashions and accessories. It was also a place to rummage through the sales rack. They had Lancôme and Clinique makeup, Halston and Ralph Laurent, perfumes, and lots of glittering glass counters in the cosmetics section. I remember my mom buying some Etienne Aigner shoes for me there." **Liz Childress, Clearwater Historical Society**

"Maas Brothers was my second home while I was in high school. I bought all my clothes there." **Jean Mackenzie-Dehart**

"In 1966-67, I worked on the first level in the men's department. It was the same year they introduced men's cosmetics. I was constantly being sprayed with men's cologne as a form of sampling. I would go home smelling like a French whore. I had to have my suit dry-cleaned regularly. I spent more on dry-cleaning than they paid me." **Nathaniel Swan**

"My mother took me to that store right after it opened. I thought it was heaven." **Bonnie Chappel Dove**

"My mother would drop me off at the Library, while she would go shopping at Maas Brothers. I would have preferred the opposite." **Mark Warren**

MAAS BROTHERS' SUNCOAST RESTAURANT AS I REMEMBER IT

"I remember going with my mother when she went shopping at Maas Brothers. As a child I was so bored, but she made the ordeal fun by always going to the restaurant for a milkshake. They had the best milkshakes around—it made the trip worth it for me." **Former Mayor Frank Hibbard**

"We loved shopping there. It was a truly a Department Store. The most memorable thing to me was the restaurant and coffee shop. They had great coffee and fantastic cinnamon rolls. It became "the meeting place" for friends to gather for an afternoon of shopping and talk." **Sheila Cole, Island Estates resident and former President of the Clearwater Beach Chamber of Commerce**

"One of the best items in the restaurant was the 'Hot Fudge Pecan Ball' dessert. My husband and I would regularly go just for that dessert." **Sandee Mikell Pfister, Belleair Resident**

"I had lunch at the Suncoast Restaurant many times, usually to meet with clients. We enjoyed looking out over the waters of Clearwater Harbor. I would go there to pick up many a birthday gift and to go Christmas shopping. Maas Brothers was a special part of Clearwater." **John Doran, former City Councilman**

"The Suncoast Restaurant used to advertise in a magazine I represented. One of my favorite dishes was their Florentine salad. They would never give me the recipe. When it was announced the store was closing, the manager finally gave me the recipe for that salad. I still have it, hand-written by the chef, on the back of a nearby invoice." **Darlene Kole former CEO of Clearwater Beach Chamber of Commerce**

"My memories begin in the late 1960s and continue through the '80s. Some of my happiest memories are shopping and having lunch with my mom at that Maas Brothers. The café, which overlooked the water was very fancy from a young person's point of view." **Melinda Wilson**

"I grew up in Tarpon Springs. Maas Brothers was "The Place to Shop" for those of us who lived up there, too. My mother and sister would regularly shop there on Saturdays. My daddy and I would bring home the cinnamon buns. Yummy." **Mayor George Cretokos**

"I personally remember shopping at that Maas Brothers store in the late 1970s and early '80s with my grandmother. We always had such a good time shopping, then finished the outing with a stop in the Suncoast Restaurant."

Michelle Arnold, City of Clearwater Archives

"I really liked Maas Brothers. My luggage set came from there and lasted forever. I used to work at the First National Bank, which was right across the street and we would always take our coffee breaks there and shop a bit. They had a wonderful apricot pastry. It was a great store." **Wanda Beasley**

"We were volunteers at the downtown Library. We would go over to Maas Brothers to eat lunch a lot. As a teenager, it made us feel so grown up." **Lisa Blyshak Thomas**

"I used to shop there in the 1970s and eat lunch with Mom. That is where I got my Gloria Vanderbilt jeans for school. Such wonderful memories." **Danielle Kahl**

"My friend Barb and I would have lunch there once a week to catch up on gossip. I got my first credit card at Maas Brothers." **Pat Day**

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CLEARWATER FREE CLINIC VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

The Clearwater Free Clinic is a non-profit, non-government medical facility that provides comprehensive medical care & behavioral health services to the low-income, uninsured residents of North Pinellas County. They are currently looking for licensed Internal Medicine/Family Practice doctors and Nurse Practitioners, Ophthalmologists, Radiologists or any other specialties to volunteer at our new state of the art medical facility in Clearwater. Each volunteer shift is usually three hours and may be scheduled weekly, Bi-monthly, monthly or seasonally. Sovereign Immunity, malpractice protection offered by the State of Florida, is available for those professional who hold either an active or limited license. Volunteer opportunities are also available for nurses, medical assistants, pharmacists or pharmacy techs. If you are interested please contact Susan Murbach @ 727-331-8136 smurbach@clearwaterfreeclinic.org.

SLYCE PIZZA BAR A SUPPORTER OF OUR COMMUNITY

By David Kline BCFP Director

Only eight short years ago, Indian Rocks Beach welcomed a new restaurant, however it certainly seems as though Slyce Pizza Bar has been here much longer. In June 2011, founders Jack Bennett, Suzanne Brown and Ken Gillespie envisioned a different type of pizza place - pizza (and many other great selections) with quality and style. Add to that a large patio, craft beer, wine and cocktails, and you have a perfect food and fun environment.

Slyce's goal is to provide quality food, drinks and service in an upbeat atmosphere, where everyone feels like family. But great food, drink, and atmosphere is just their business side. Jack, Suzanne and Ken strongly felt if Slyce's relationship with IRB and surrounding communities was to prosper, they should also give back to the people in those communities.

In their early years, Slyce began supporting various non-profit groups, not only with food donations but also with monetary support. Here are examples of their strong support:

- A few years ago, Slyce offered to support the Beach Community Food Pantry with occasional donations. That soon evolved into monthly donations. On the first Monday of every month, Slyce donates 10% of their total daily sales to BCFP. They currently are the largest single BCFP donor. Slyce also donates food to BCFP during Thanksgiving and Christmas. Thank you Slyce!
- The Brodey Sitton Foundation also benefits from Slyce's support. In 2012, Army Staff Sgt. Matthew Sitton gave his life in Afghanistan. Matthew left behind his wife and 9-month-old son Brodey, who needed help in Matthew's absence. The Sitton family is close friends with a Slyce founder, and in Matthew's honor, the "Sitton Supreme" pizza was created. Until he is 18, Slyce donates \$2 from each large Sitton Supreme to Brodey's

foundation.

- The Love McKinley Organization works with Johns Hopkins All Children hospital to provide resources to families whose children are undergoing treatment for pediatric cancer, including McKinley. (McKinley's parents are long time friends of founder Jack). The Organization sponsors an annual golf tournament, attended by over 250 participants, and raises \$60,000. Slyce donates food for the pre-golf dinner.

- Philip Bryant Melanoma Foundation sponsors multiple fund-raisers. Slyce is this year's golf tournament sponsor.

- Rotary Club of Indian Rocks Beach holds its annual Big Game Raffle Grand Prize drawing on Slyce's patio. Slyce donates appetizers during the 3-hour event.

- Slyce routinely participates in many events. You will see them at Action 2000's Oktoberfest', Calvary's Winterfest, Homeowners Taste of IRB, multiple charity golf tournaments, school and church functions and others.

In 2017, Slyce opened a second location in Madeira Beach that features the same quality menu, live music and weekly trivia - all with an incredible view of the Intracoastal!

The Beach Community Food Pantry salutes Slyce's owners and staff for their strong commitment to community involvement and support, especially to our mission of assisting those in our surrounding area who routinely struggle with food insecurity. - Thank you, Slyce!



Jack Bennett and Suzanne Brown



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CLEARWATER YACHT CLUB

Chartered in 1911, Clearwater Yacht Club is one of the oldest Yacht Clubs in the country, continuing the long-standing tradition of yachtsmen the world over. You don't need a boat, to join in the fun at Clearwater Yacht Club in Clearwater Beach. Half of their members don't have a boat. Their social activities center around regular parties in their restaurant or at their Tiki-Bar out back.

Their Summer Membership program began in May. It has no initiation fee and monthly dues of \$150. Summer members can use the pool, tiki bar, dining room and other amenities, including participating in weekly parties. Kids are welcome and they are pet friendly. Best of all, you can meet new people. It is a great way to see for yourself how much fun it is, with no obligations. You can end your membership whenever you wish, or convert to a permanent member in the Fall. If you are interested, please call Tom at the Yacht Club's office, 447-6000.

Learn more at www.ClearwaterYachtClub.org or e-mail Office@ClearwaterYachtClub.org.

BEACH COMMUNITY FOOD PANTRY (BCFP)

Submitted David Kline BCFP Director

On May 11, for the 27th year, the National Association of Letter Carriers sponsored their 'Stamp out Hunger' food collection drive. Postal Carriers made their rounds to pick up the bags of food donated by the residents. The containers of collected food started arriving at Calvary Episcopal Church at 2 pm and continued until 5 pm. We had a great collection of volunteers who unpacked, inspected confirmed expiration dates, sorted and stocked the hundreds of pounds of food products. These bountiful donations will allow us to support a portion of our client's needs for the coming months.

The Beach Community Food Pantry continues to be supported by our residents through food and monetary donations. We also are blessed with a number of individuals who devote their time to manage and work at the pantry, serving our clients, stocking the shelves, processing and packaging the monthly USDA deliveries, roving the county to pick up food from Feeding Tampa Bay and RCS and staffing our fundraising event---to all of you, our sincere gratitude for supporting our mission---you are making a difference!

We are always in need of volunteers, especially during the spring, summer and fall seasons. If you have a desire to make a difference in the lives of those less fortunate, please contact BCFP Director Connie Curran at 727-482-6167 for more details.

We are also in need of drivers who would like to offer a few hours each month to pick up the food we receive. We have a new cargo van so there is no need to use your own vehicle. If you would like more details, please contact Jim Vacherlon at 319-213-5213.

We thank our friends at Publix for again supporting BCFP through their semi-annual "Food for Sharing" food drive. For 12 days in the spring and fall, Publix collects customers' donations. These funds are used to purchase non-perishable food that is donated to food pantries, including BCFP. This year through Publix, the community donated two pallets of food staples. Our friends at Home Depot helped load the pallets onto our vehicles. Our clients will have access to the staples for the next few months.

Our clients thank everyone for their gracious donations, to Publix, for sponsoring the event, to Home Depot for their assistance with loading and to our great team of volunteers who delivered, unloaded and stored the many cases of food!

BELLEAIR BEACH LADIES LUNCHEON CLUB

They normally meet the second Tuesday of each month at various area restaurants. You do not have to live in Belleair Beach to join; membership open to area residents is \$15 / year. They have no meetings until September.

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Organizational News...

BELLEAIR ROTARY

They meet every Thursday at 12:15pm at the Belleair Country Club. The third Thursday of every month is the general assembly and Board meeting.

John Funk is the current president. E-mail him at BelleairRotary2017@Gmail.com. Visit BelleairRotary.org

MILITARY ORDER OF THE WORLD WARS

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

BELLEAIR GARDEN CLUB

They meet at the Belleair Garden Club at 903 Ponce de Leon Blvd in the Town of Belleair on the first and second Wednesdays of each month. The first Wednesday meetings are a tea and general meeting. They also plan field trips throughout the year. The are on summer break until October with the exception of the pot luck lunches the first Wednesday of each month (11:30am). This is always open to non-members too

They elected new officers recently for 2019-20. The new president is Carol Frecker. She will serve for two years. Annual membership is \$50 per year per person. Couples pay \$75. Seasonal members \$30. Guests are welcome. Email Kathleen_Hardwick@MSN.com or visit BelleairGardenClub.com.

NEWCOMER CLUB

This is a social club to help relocated residents, and others in the area, develop new friends. The ladies meet monthly at different locations for lunch at 11:30am with guest speakers. Activities vary from card games to field trips and shows.

June 4: Luncheon at Cove Cay Country Club, Clearwater
 July 2: Luncheon at Seabreeze Island Grill in Redington Beach
 August 6: Luncheon at Clearwater Country Club

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

BELLEAIR WOMEN'S REPUBLICAN CLUB

June 7 the guest speaker will be Belleair Bluffs resident Sara Mollo, who is the Chief Assistant Public Defender in the 6th Judicial Circuit. She is a candidate for Public Defender in 2020. There will not be a meeting in July or August during the summer Registration and social hour are at 11:30 am, with lunch being served at noon. Reservations are necessary, RSVP to Claudia Thomas at 470-9849 or Nina Pilon at 726-8782. Credit Cards are not accepted at the door; but checks are.)

They meet at the Belleair Country Club, 1 Country Club Lane, Belleair. Get information at BelleairWomensRepublicanClub.com. The club welcomes Republicans from all surrounding communities.

DAUGHTERS OF AMERICAN REVOLUTION (DAR)

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

BELLEAIR BEACH ISLAND GARDEN CLUB

Membership is \$20 per year and guests are welcome. Contact Marjorie Rose, rosemarjorie38@yahoo.com. Their next meeting is in September.



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SHIPWATCH YACHT & TENNIS CLUB

Just south of Walsingham Road and east of the Intracoastal is Shipwatch Yacht and Tennis Club, a hidden gem of the community. Sporting an old Florida atmosphere, the facilities include 11 clay courts, with three lighted for night play, an excellent tennis pro with two assistants offering private and semi-private lessons and clinics for all levels and the on site Shipwatch Grill. The Grill, located at the clubhouse, offers lunch and dinner in a casual atmosphere.



Players in the Club's tournament. The club is open to the public.

Shipwatch Tennis offers play at all levels including local leagues and USTA leagues. Member activities include regular tennis mixers, an annual club championship and social events. In addition, March features an International Tournament, a tribute to our many members from other countries.

Continuing a 30-year tradition, Shipwatch hosts U.S. Tennis Assn. (USTA), Pinellas Area Doubles League (PADL), Suncoast Tennis League, and players from all over the country and world. The current head teaching professional is a well-known former WTA player.

The tennis club is open to the public for membership. Courts are available from 8:30 am to noon and 2 to 9 pm. Seasonal and full-year memberships are available. For vacationers, daily memberships offer a pay-as-you play option. Call the Pro Shop for membership information (727-596-6862).

**TRAVEL TRIBE - PART 6
 Back to the Basics and Home**

By Cassandra Berger

What an adventure! Selling our house, and leaving everything to travel the world full time last year was a leap of bravery. With our 5 year old, Preston, and 1 year old, Penelope, we visited 22 countries - rode countless planes, boats, ferries, and trains. We tried new foods, heard new languages, and made forever friends along the way!



We learned how each country may be a little bit different in what they eat, or how they dress, but when you're at a park filled with tons of little children all speaking different languages playing together, that right there is what's it's all about.

Now that are travels are done we are back in Pinellas county looking for our next forever home. Until our next adventure, Happy Travels

The Travel Tribe - Cassie, Tyler, Preston, and Penelope

JK FLOWERS HOSTS EVENT

Long time Belleair Bluffs business owner Joyce O'Brien, the "J" in JK Flowers has stage 3 ovarian cancer. Her health insurance isn't covering some of the treatment she needs, so on June 13th, at 5:30pm, there will be a fundraising event for Joyce's benefit in the Belleair Bluffs City Hall auditorium. The Bluffs Business Association and Cody's are providing food and refreshments. There is no cost to attend, but this is a fund raiser. There will be games and an auction of donated items. Her daughter Karen is making the arrangements. To help or donate an item for the auction, reach her at (727) 588-4583.

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THE PLAZA'S OWNER DIES

David Berolzheimer, owner of The Plaza 100 died on May 17, 2019. He was 84. Then a Largo resident, he purchased the shopping center in 1973. 46 years later, the stores in the Plaza and the property itself have been remodeled and upgraded.

During a recent interview, David told us, "The Galleries art store and a restaurant called Scruples were my first new tenants. Scruples later became Eugen's restaurant, which was changed to E&E Stakeout, as it is today."

The oldest existing tenant in The Plaza is Jim Dundee with Belleair Optical. He is retiring soon. "I remember many of the old stores that are not here anymore," says Jim. "Dave has been a good landlord and was and always will be a dear friend," he added. "He treated The Plaza like his second home."

"Dave was there to see me through my very nervous purchase of my first business, initially as my landlord. But through the years he became a confidant and was always there to steer me in the right direction" Jim continued. "My office will never seem the same without Dave in my backroom having our daily chats. 'Always in my chair' Dave had the merchants' best interest at heart and strived to make this a place people wanted to come. The plaza will miss Dave's many walk-throughs of his beloved Plaza 100," Jim concludes.

Brian and Cheryl Franzese, owners of Bella Vino remember him fondly as well. "Dave was a hard-working, dedicated, well respected businessman in the community. As a landlord, Dave was a man of his word and always looked out for his tenants' best interests. Because he was a proud man, his Plaza 100 was always well maintained - in fact the most well-kept shopping center in the community. Dave enjoyed fine wine and fine champagne, so we had many wine conversations with him over the years. He will be missed and always remembered."

Every December, David hosted a free Christmas Concert featuring members of the Florida Orchestra. It was a holiday favorite and always attended by many local residents. He was active in the community. In addition to his family, friends and Plaza family, his loss will be felt by many in the Belleair Bluffs area.

"Dave was an enormous presence in the City of Belleair Bluffs community. He purchased the 100 Bluffs Plaza in 1973 and has watched the city grow and change over the years," says Debra Sullivan, Belleair Bluffs' City Administrator. "He would stop by often to share stories, offer suggestions to make Belleair Bluffs a more bike friendly, event friendly, visitor friendly city. He loved the city and wanted to ensure that more and more people learned to love Belleair Bluffs as he did. We honored him last year at our Holiday Event as the Annual Tree Lighter, as a business owner who was so invested in his tenants and the city. Everyone that knew him adored him. I am blessed to have had him take time to visit city hall often and share his knowledge and experiences with me. He will be missed by so many."

"Dave was one in a million," says Bonnie Starr, his long-time companion. "We were together for 45 years, since 1974. Although we never married, he was a man I could not live without."

"His tenants at The Plaza were his friends," Bonnie went on. "He never considered them tenants. He liked them as much as they liked him. He will be greatly missed."



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TOP 10 LANDSCAPE MISTAKES



By Randy Lee

1. Ignoring the curb appeal of the home. Curb appeal makes a statement for your home- it's the first thing people see and it's meant to draw people in.
2. Overwatering the landscape. This includes the lawn, trees, flowers and shrubs. Overwatering is worse than under watering. In the summer months you may want to turn your irrigation system off completely.
3. Not budgeting in advance or not having a realistic budget. Projects always cost more than you think and you may need another 30% as a contingency fund. Do the landscape design in stages- one area at a time if needed but do it correctly.
4. Choosing the wrong plants. I see this all the time. You must take into consideration shade v. sun and dry v. wet conditions. Right plant right place or your landscape will fail.
5. No fertilization plan. Trees, shrubs and sod need constant care and fertilization. Without a plan your landscape will not thrive. Sod also needs insect, weed and fungus control. Find a licensed spray company.
6. Planting too deep. This is a common mistake of home owners. Planting too deep suffocates the root system of plants and trees. Always plant at grade level even with the soil around it.
7. Making patios and decks too small. A common mistake I see often. Again proportion here. Always make larger than you think and remember where furniture will need to go and the space it will take up.
8. Over looking landscape lighting. Many beautiful landscapes have no lighting and cannot be viewed at night. Most of our designs now incorporate LED lighting for nighttime viewing and security concerns.
9. Not accounting for privacy concerns. They say hedges make great neighbors! Areas where you want privacy- bedroom windows, around the pool and hot tub and driveways need to be thought out in advance and how to make them more private.
10. Not hiring a landscape designer that can put a plan in motion. Make sure the contractor is qualified and can design a comprehensive plan for you and your family. I have many clients that come to me after trying to landscape many times and spending lots of money- this is why we are here!

Summer Checklist-

- *Before summer rains occur, water accordingly- it's hot and dry out
 - *Turn off irrigation when summer rains begin
 - *Fertilizer ban is in effect from June 1 - October 1
 - *Great time to plant tropical palms and trees
 - *Prepare yard for hurricane season
 - *Watch sod areas for fungus and bugs- spray accordingly
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DEDICATED TO TOURISM: PHIL HENDERSON, SR. REMEMBERED

by Lynn Fuhler

Clearwater Beach and Dunedin lost another tourism leader with the passing of Phil Henderson, Sr. in mid-February. He joins a small group who charted the course, making Pinellas County the award-winning destination it is today.

Phil was active in local and state tourism, civic, government and charitable organizations and took leadership roles in many. He was not a one-term participant but rather a very dedicated lifetime supporter. Specifically, he was a member of the board of the Greater Clearwater Chamber of Commerce, president of Discover Florida's Suncoast, the tourism sales arm before its responsibilities folded into the convention and visitors bureau (CVB) and a member of the Tourist Development Council (overseeing the CVB). He was a quiet leader involved with the SKAL Club of Tampa Bay, Visit Florida and the Florida Attractions Association, among others.

I vividly recall a letter I sent to him back in the 1980s when I was the tourism director of the then Greater Clearwater Chamber of Commerce, then the lone chamber serving the beach and the mainland. At that time, the Capt. Anderson II Dinner Dance Cruise was based out of Panama City Beach, Fl., traveling to Clearwater Beach since the early '80s to offer cruises from October to May. My desire was to encourage him to relocate his family operation here year-round.

One will never know how much that letter weighed on the decision, but in October 1988 The Capt. Anderson II, later the Admiral, and presently the StarLite Majesty, made a one-way trip to its new home at the Clearwater Beach Marina. Today the vessel is operated by Phil Henderson, Jr.

In 1986, the State of Florida Park Service solicited bids for public water transportation from Honeymoon Island Recreation Area to Caladesi Island

State Park. Phil's Caladesi Island Connection was awarded the contract. The service continues today and can be credited with bringing visitors to an otherwise inaccessible state park and a "Best Beach" by Dr. Beach.

That same year the Greater Clearwater Chamber of Commerce organized a Beach/Mainland Transit Task Force chaired by Lorraine Freitag. Their resulting ferry service proposal was forwarded to the city of Clearwater with the request for a feasibility study. Not since the early 1900s had regular water transportation been available to transfer passengers between Clearwater and Clearwater Beach.

Phil never saw obstacles, only opportunities. He stated then, "Viewed as a means of reducing Memorial Causeway traffic congestion ... One of our primary goals in establishing the service was to reduce the natural barrier created by Clearwater Harbor and assist in unifying the island communities and the mainland. We feel that we will also be able to aid the economic development of downtown Clearwater, while serving as a tourist attraction."

Construction of a downtown dock at the curve on Drew St. began in the fall of 1989. Phil's Clearwater Ferry Service built it. As part of the agreement, after 10 years the dock would revert to the city of Clearwater.

A media event followed in January to officially unveil the dock as well as the Clearwater Express, which would begin operating trips to Tarpon Springs and later dolphin encounter cruises. I recall that morning as thick fog sat over the harbor and Intracoastal Waterway. The newly built vessel had left the boatyard in Tarpon Springs and was traveling south. The ceremony was slated to begin but the boat hadn't arrived yet. We reached out to the bridge tender at Dunedin Causeway who reported she was headed our way ... and just as the vessel arrived the sun peeked out and

the fog lifted. We couldn't have scripted it better. A month later the Harbor Hopper began serving south beach,

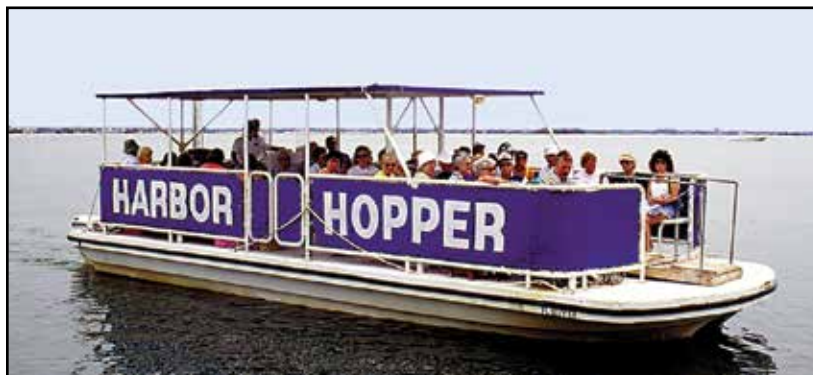


Clearwater Beach Marina and the mainland. To handle increased demand the Harbor Taxi was later added to accommodate transfers to the dock at north Clearwater Beach; both boats transported guests to Caladesi Island, too.

While Phil was a visionary, he also paid attention to details. He knew exactly how many weddings he'd performed (500 on the Admiral as of April 1989) and the date the 15,000th passenger boarded the Clearwater Express for trips to Tarpon Springs (one year after it began). He saw opportunities to support the community, too: a jazz cruise sanctioned by Clearwater Jazz Holiday, a holiday lighting contest for Island Estates residents to decorate their backyards and boats docks, and a program for middle school honor roll, dean's list or perfect attendance students.

While Phil was a client of our tourism-marketing firm, now Flying Compass, he also played a role in our personal lives as well. In 1986 at the chamber's annual meeting at the Belleview Biltmore, a working event for me, I was seated at the same table with Phil and other tourism leaders. Little did I realize that the gentleman seated next to me would later become my husband. As Phil had been there from the beginning, he graciously agreed to officiate at our wedding aboard the Starlite Princess, one of the vessels also in their fleet.

Over the years, my husband Steve Frazier and I were lucky to work with Phil in creating the marketing tools for his boats and handling the PR, too. Phil loved what he did. More than anything, he understood that the visitor experience is everything and he knew how to deliver. The destination is better because of the wet footprints he left behind.



WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH ST. PETERSBURG'S NEW PIER?

The entire Pier District – 26 acres of downtown waterfront – is now an active construction site, with 175 workers on site each day. Massive cranes, giant drills, tractors and other equipment are seen throughout the project, and buildings are rising, offering a preview of what the vertical pier will look like when complete.

The fourth floor of the Pier Head building has been poured, and the fifth floor was poured at the end of May. The Discovery Center glass walls are in place and the roof has been poured. The roof of the Pavilion has also been poured, and construction is well underway with Doc Ford's Rum Bar & Grille.

One of the most exciting developments isn't a building at all. It's the planting of what will be over 500 new trees within the Pier District. The Pier will also be adding over 5 acres of green space throughout.

The week of May 13 saw the beginning of the foundation work for the Janet Echelman Sculpture. Giant drills are moving earth to make way for the casings that will hold the massive structure.

In the Pelican Parking lot, construction is underway for support of the solar Solar PV panel covered parking canopies. The entire Pier District will be filled with sustainable measures, including new breakwaters to mitigate erosion and protect seagrass beds, eco trams and electric vehicle charging stations, and all LED lighting, just to name a few.



The Pier Marketplace is an area near the entrance of the Pier that will showcase kiosk and tent vendors and their products and services (rendering shown here). Seven market stalls and up to 20 tents will be available to lease at this location. Recently, three information sessions were held for businesses interested in vending opportunities at the Pier Marketplace. Applications will be available starting in early June and interested parties should visit the Marketplace page on the www.newstpetepier.com website.

The Pier District is a beehive of activity these days, and it won't be long before residents and visitors alike will enjoy all the new Pier has to offer. Keep up with the latest at newstpetepier.com!



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BOB GUALTIERI NAMED SHERIFF OF THE YEAR

Pinellas County Sheriff Bob Gualtieri is be the recipient of the 2019 Ferris E. Lucas Sheriff of the Year award from the National Sheriffs' Association (NSA).

The award, given annually by the NSA, recognizes a sheriff who has made outstanding contributions to law enforcement and the criminal justice profession, demonstrates exceptional service to his or her community, and has contributed to the betterment of the NSA. The prestigious national award is awarded to any active sheriff who has performed the duties of his or her office in the highest professional manner as well as enhance the Office of Sheriff. The award is given in memory and honor of Ferris E. Lucas, who served as President of the National Sheriffs' Association (1944-1946) and Executive Director of the National Sheriffs' Association (1964-1982).

"Sheriff Gualtieri embodies what this award was created to recognize," said NSA Executive Director Jonathan Thompson. "Not only are there no limits or obstacles for him in keeping his community safe but he has continually answered the call as a national leader on the biggest issues facing law enforcement across the country."

Sheriff Bob Gualtieri began his law enforcement and public service career as a detention deputy working in the Pinellas County jail in 1982. After attending the police academy, he joined the Dunedin Police Department as a patrol officer and later rejoined the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office as a law enforcement deputy. Over the next 15 years, Sheriff Gualtieri served in many components of the agency, including several years conducting domestic and international drug trafficking investigations as part of a DEA task force.

Sheriff Gualtieri earned his bachelor's degree from Eckerd College in St. Petersburg and his law degree from Stetson University College of Law. After graduating and being admitted to the Florida Bar, Sheriff Gualtieri entered private practice. Sheriff Gualtieri is admitted to practice law in all Florida courts, before the U.S. Supreme Court, as well as the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit and the U.S. District Courts in the Northern, Middle, and Southern Districts of Florida.

Sheriff Gualtieri returned to the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office in 2006 as general counsel and was appointed chief deputy (second in command) in 2008. Sheriff Gualtieri served in that dual role until he was appointed sheriff in 2011. He was sheriff elected in 2012 and re-elected in 2016, respectively.

Following the school shooting at Marjorie Stoneman Douglas High School (MSDHS) in February of 2018, Governor Scott appointed Sheriff Gualtieri to serve as the chair of the MSDHS Public Safety Commission. The commission is tasked with analyzing information from the shooting and other mass violence incidents around the state to provide recommendations and system improvements.

During Sheriff Gualtieri's years as sheriff, he established multiple new initiatives in Pinellas County, many of which are being replicated by other jurisdictions: Pinellas Safe Harbor, an emergency homeless shelter and jail-diversion program, Adult Pre-Arrest Diversion program, Intelligent Led Policing Division, Mental Health Unit, Risk Protection Unit, Operation H.O.M.E. (Habitual Offender Monitoring Enforcement) a countywide effort to reduce teen crime, and School Guardian Unit.

Sheriff Gualtieri is active in many organizations and serves on the Pinellas County Homeless Leadership Board, and the boards of directors for the Boys and Girls Clubs of the Suncoast and the Pinellas Sheriff's Police Athletic League. He has also received many awards and recognitions for his effort to improve public safety, including being named 2014 Sheriff of the Year by Crisis Intervention Team International for his work on mental health issues.

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