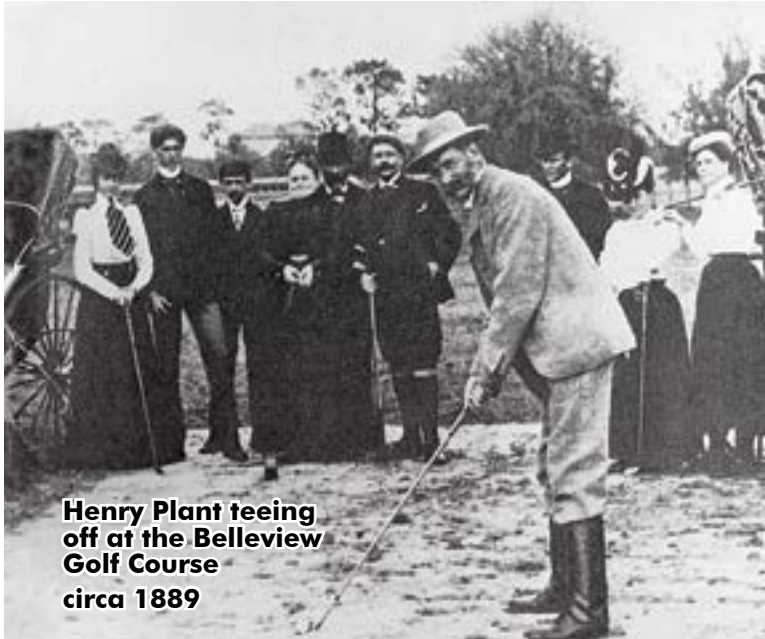


# NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

including Sand Key and Island Estates

Magazine



Henry Plant teeing off at the Belleview Golf Course circa 1889

## HENRY PLANT Built Hotels and Cities

In our last issue, our feature article on Henry Plant began with Plant's teenage years, when he headed off to work on a steamship as a deckhand. He went on to become the owner of thousands of miles of railroads and numerous ships. When we left him, he was looking for a southwest coastal city to build a port that could connect his ships to Key West and Cuba. After a false start in Cedar Key, he targeted Tampa – a city of only 700.

In December of 1883, Henry Plant made his first personal appearance in Tampa, traveling on his own railroad from Kissimmee to Tampa in only 15 hours—the fastest time anyone had ever traveled 70 miles. Within a few months, he would have a 100-mile route from Tampa to Sanford that took only 12 hours.

Plant made Tampa the end of his southern railroad and the home port of his new line of steamships sailing to Havana. This helped

Tampa experience an influx of new workers and created a boom for the Tampa economy - its first ever. In a flurry of construction, boarding houses and new stores popped up. Farmers and others started spending their hard-earned wages, causing prices to start rising. The cost of beef rose to a record 10¢ per pound—unheard of at the time.

With train tracks in place, Plant proceeded to make his Key West connection a reality. He established the Plant Steamship Line to Key West and Havana. His two ships, the SS Mascotte and the SS Olivette, both built in Philadelphia, carried people, freight and the U.S. mail.

- **Continued on page 7**

### Also in this Issue:

#### Happy New Year

It will soon be 2020, let's look back to 1920 and see what a difference a century makes - **page 26**

#### 2020 is a Leap Year

Do you know why and what that means? - **page 10**

#### The Gasparilla Invasion

The annual Gasparilla parade and invasion will be held next month in Tampa. Who was Jose Gaspar for whom it is named and why do we celebrate this each year? - **page 14**



#### Meet Roger Dow

A St. Petersburg resident, he works in Washington, D.C as the CEO of U.S. Travel, a trade organization that encourages foreign visitors to visit the U.S. and works to increase travel to all 50 states.

- **page 35**



CREDITS



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CLEARWATER BEACH NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

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

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

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 FEBRUARY!

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CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

Table with 2 columns: Event Name and Date. Includes December events like Ugly Christmas Sweater Day, City's Electronic Waste Disposal Day, and January events like New Year's Day, Outback Bowl in Tampa, and Florida's Arbor Day.

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## Did You Know



**PUBLISHER PARTICIPATES IN GREAT AMERICAN TEACH IN** Once again, our Publisher Bob Griffin spoke at two nearby schools during November's Great American Teach In. He spoke at Seminole High School to 10th graders and at Anona Elementary to all the 5th graders. "Speaking to 5th graders and 10th graders requires a totally different presentation," says Griffin. "Basically, I discussed where ideas for the stories in our News Magazine come from and described our creative process. I emphasized the importance of leaning how to write well and with the older kids, not letting text habits creep into their writing."

**PARENTS DAY OUT DECEMBER 21 AND 22** It's the last weekend before the holidays... do you need a little extra time? Did you make a list but want to check it twice? Are you looking for a fun and educational experience to engage busy minds? Have your children spend a day at Clearwater Marine Aquarium! Activities will include aquarium tours, cookie decorating, educational games, and crafts all geared towards the holiday season! Call 441-1790 for more information.

**10,000 TURKEYS** The Salvation Army of Pinellas County gave away 10,000 turkeys and food baskets to local families for Thanksgiving. They estimate this helped 40,000 people have a nice Thanksgiving meal. The meals were donated at various Salvation Army outlets, the main one being on Druid Road, and given to clients who registered in advance.

**LIBRARY VOLUNTEERS NEEDED** Friends of the Clearwater Library need volunteers to work shifts at the Friends' Book and Gift store at the Clearwater Main Library. If you like to be around people—and books—this is a great opportunity. Work sessions are generally 3 hours, once or twice a week. To volunteer, call Jan at 441-8812.

**JACKETS NEEDED** As we approach the holidays, please think about donating new or gently used jackets to Clothes To Kids. The cool weather is here and Clothes To Kids has a huge need for elementary school children's jackets in all sizes! Many of these children, Pre-K4 and up, come to school shivering because they don't have a jacket. We also have a big need for elementary school shoes sizes 12 to 6.



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## and More...

### HISTORICAL PLAQUE INSTALLED

The Clearwater Chapter of the Daughters of the Revolution recently installed a commemorative plaque at the Belleview Inn

which incorporates a portion of the original Hotel Belleview that opened in January, 1897. The installation corresponded with Henry Plant's 200th birthday. He built the hotel, once known as the "White Queen of the Gulf."



**STOP HOLIDAY WASTE** The holidays are full of good food and fun, however, it comes at a cost. Americans throw away 25% more trash between Thanksgiving and New Year than any other time of year. That is 25 million extra tons of garbage, or about 1 million extra tons per week! Here are some ideas to curb the waste: When planning large meals, buy only what you need. Use reusable utensils –plates, forks, etc. Give reusable items as gifts – consider to-go containers, reusable food storage containers, water bottles, and shopping bags. These gifts help reducing waste. Encourage your guests to take leftovers so food doesn't go to waste or freeze them to eat later

**K-CUPS** Last year Keurig sold more than nine BILLION single-serve plastic coffee pods — or K-Cups. Placed end to end, they could circle the earth roughly 10 times. Zero could be easily recycled, so they generated substantial plastic waste.



While new K-Cups are advertised as recyclable, they are so small and light, they get caught or jammed in the recycling equipment, or slip through and are sorted as the wrong material. Because of this, no Pinellas County program accepts them. Where they are accepted, you have to peel off the aluminum foil top and toss it along with the grounds and paper filter, then recycle the plastic pod shell – it's not the easiest thing to do. Remember whether recycled or not, the production of each one requires energy, materials, chemicals, water, and transportation.

This doesn't mean you have to give up your Keurig - you can still use it to make a decent cup of coffee with reusable pods. And they can be filled with any coffee you want. It is cheaper and eco-friendly!

**FOLK FESTIVAL CANCELED** The popular Festival held every January in Heritage Village is again canceled. "We just do not have enough volunteers to host this major event," says the organizers. The Folk Festival is promoted and managed by the Pinellas County Historical Society who host meetings and other events at Heritage Village in Largo. For information on them, visit PinellasCounty.org/Heritage.

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

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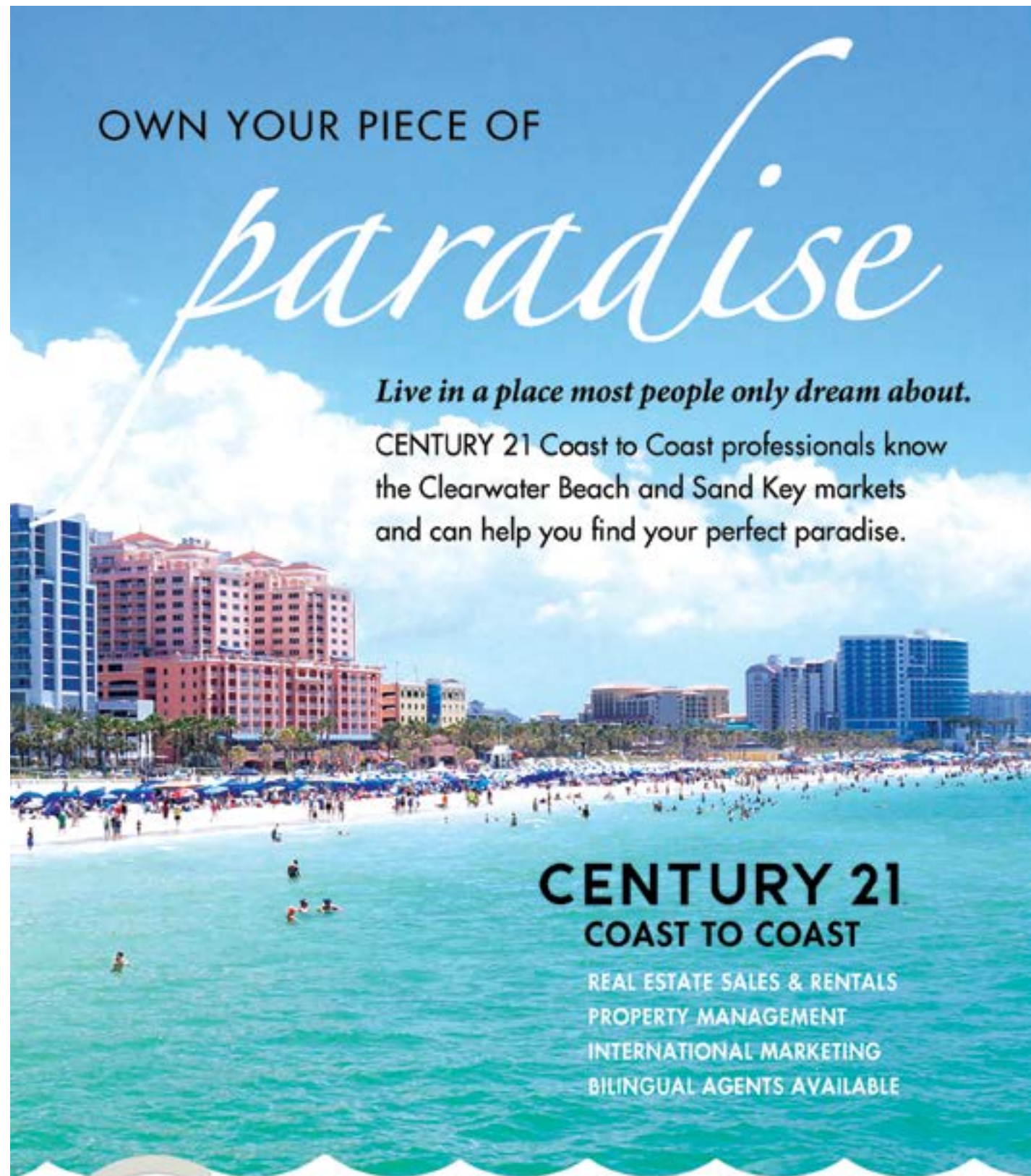
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### HENRY PLANT, CONTINUED

By Bob Griffin

New shipping routes gave Tampa an added economic lift and encourage the cigar industry to move from Key West and Havana to Tampa/Ybor City. Shortly, two of the three largest cigar manufacturers moved their operations and employees to Tampa.

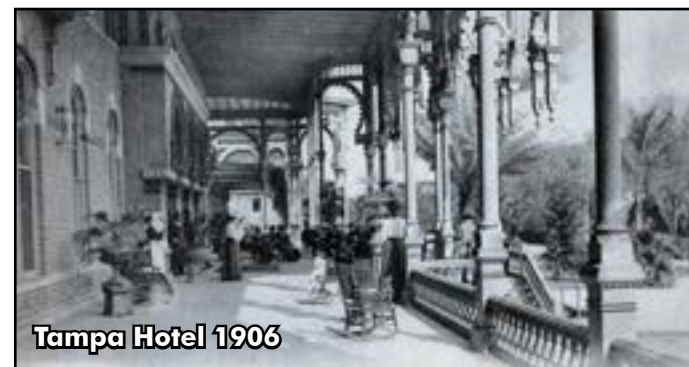
Plant knew having an hotel located at major rail stops encourage traveling and would be important for his company's growth. Around 1887, Plant built the Pico Hotel in Sanford, which had become a major Florida terminus for both his steamers and his trains. The Pico Hotel provided accommodations for his passengers as they traveled in Central Florida. It was so successful, he either built or purchased the Hotel Punta Gorda, Hotel Kissimmee, Seminole Hotel, The Ocala House, and the Ft. Myers Hotel.

In 1888, Tampa was hit with another Yellow Fever outbreak, earning it the nickname "Fever Town." No one knew the disease was caused by mosquitoes, and in fear, people began fleeing the small town.

Plant knew this was not good for his new jewel destination and announced he would spend over \$1 million dollars on a new port, wharf, and a bridge over the Hillsborough River. He also announced the project would include "the most luxurious hotel in the world." He single-handedly proceeded to create Port Tampa - then one of the most efficient harbor operations in the country.

The water at the port was too shallow for larger ships so he built a one-mile wharf extending to deeper water into Old Tampa Bay. On top of it, he built train tracks and the small Port Tampa Inn at the end. Guests could conceivably fish from their rooms.

Plant spent a million dollars in just six months and suddenly Tampa was back in boom times again with one of the most efficient harbor operations in the country, something Plant accomplished almost overnight. The Port of Tampa was fully operational by June of 1888. One month later, he started construction on his new Tampa Bay Hotel.



Tampa Hotel 1906

The Tampa Bay Hotel (now the University of Tampa campus) opened February 2, 1891. The massive hotel mixed Moorish and Victorian architecture at a cost of over \$3 million. Built on six acres facing the Hillsborough River, if you walked completely around the main building, you literally walked a mile

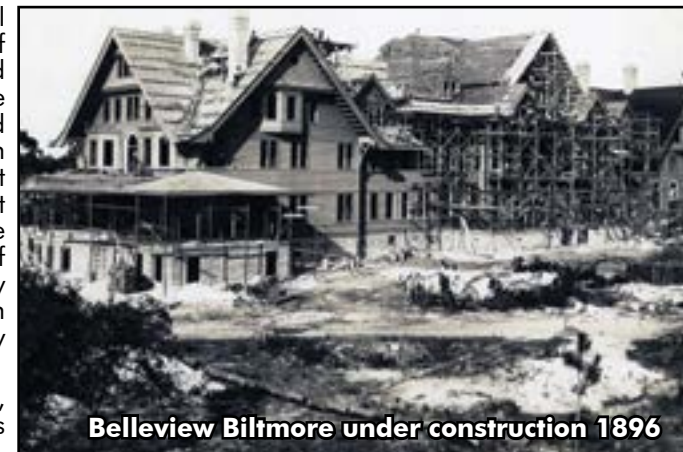
During construction, Plant hired hundreds of carpenters, masons, bricklayers, painters, plasterers, and plumbers, plus a new breed of workers - electricians. The hotel was completely electric, inside and out. Even the domes and minarets were illuminated at night. The hotel opened with 511 rooms, as well as thirteen domes and minarets. The interior was furnished with artwork, statuary, porcelain, and period furniture. Most of the furnishings were purchased in France by Henry's second wife, Margaret - at a cost of close to \$1 million

For the grand opening, Plant held a ball. People came from Boston, New York and Philadelphia. Every room was occupied. Guests arrived by passenger train - his, of course - that pulled up directly to the hotel. Plant invited Henry Flagler, his friend and competitor, to the opening. Flagler had a similar business and had been busy building railroads and hotels along the east coast of Florida. When Flagler received the invitation to attend the Grand Opening, he telegraphed back, "Where the hell is Tampa?" Plant responded, "Just follow the crowds."

The New York Times called the Tampa Bay Hotel "one of the grandest hotels in the country."

While the Tampa hotel was being built, Plant continued to expand his railroad system. His Southern Express Company added the Texas Express Company and several other smaller subsidiaries. By 1895, he employed over 12,600 people, owned over 24,000 miles of track in 15 states, 1,463 horses, and 886 wagons. The Plant Steamship Line stretched from Nova Scotia to Panama.

In October of 1895, members of his family and business associates threw him a large birthday party. Some 3,000



Belleview Biltmore under construction 1896

employees were brought to New York to help him celebrate.

The Big Freeze of 1894 killed most of Pinellas County's citrus trees and that became Plant's catalyst to extending his empire into Pinellas County. Because there was hardly any citrus to ship north, Peter Demen, who had operated a railroad from Tarpon Springs to downtown St. Petersburg, went bankrupt.

Plant bought Demen's fledgling railroad operation for pennies on the dollar.

A new town had recently formed between Tarpon Springs and St. Petersburg called "Clear Water" and he bought most of the land on the bluffs overlooking Clear Water Bay. Doing what he always did, he built a small hotel, but it was very different from the all-brick structures he had been building. This one was constructed mostly from Florida heart pine with a Swiss-style architecture.

A nine-hole golf course, Florida's first, was built on the grounds. The hotel had only 134 rooms (compared to Tampa's 511). Like Tampa, the hotel was all electric; each room came with two light bulbs. Because of the hotel's impressive water views, Plant called it The Belleview.

Henry Plant was 78 years old when the hotel officially opened on January 15, 1897, six years after the Tampa Bay Hotel. He died two and a half years later at the age of 80 on June 23, 1899.

His many legacies live on. In Tampa, much of the Amtrak and CSX rail lines were formerly Plant rail beds. The University of Tampa, once the Tampa Bay Hotel, is a National Historic Landmark. Its minarets are Tampa's architectural icons and the City of Tampa seal contains Plant's steamship the Mascotte. Tampa and Port Tampa streets bear Plant and business associates' names. H. B. Plant High School, opened in 1926, is still a school today. Cities Auburndale, Plant City, Port Tampa, Sanford, and Trilby all attribute their beginnings to Henry Plant.

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**NEW YEAR RESOLUTIONS**

by Ray Ferrara, ProVise Management Group



It is that time of year again, when we promise to turn over a new leaf. Generally, eat healthier, lose weight, start exercising, etc. We want to share ten financial resolutions you should be making and most importantly, keeping.

- 1) RESOLVE to check Social Security (www.ssa.gov) wage information to make sure it is correct. It is much easier to correct mistakes today than at retirement.
- 2) RESOLVE to get copies of all beneficiary designations on life insurance, annuities, retirement plans, etc. to make sure they are correct. At a minimum name primary and contingent beneficiaries. Do not name your estate.
- 3) RESOLVE to see your attorney regarding legal documents and estate plan, if it has been longer than five years since you last updated your documents. It is best to refresh Power of Attorney, Health Care Surrogate, and Living Will every 3-5 years even if there are no changes.
- 4) RESOLVE to make sure that your financial advisor is CFP® fiduciary advisor who must work in your best interest at all times when providing financial advice. You can find one in your area by going to www.cfpboard.net.
- 5) RESOLVE to save at least 10% of income this year. This will help you towards having adequate resources for your retirement that could last 25-30 years. Anything less is inadequate. Better something than nothing, however.
- 6) RESOLVE to increase your 401k contribution to at least receive the match from the employer and/or increase contribution by 10% in any event.
- 7) RESOLVE to reassess your risk tolerance towards investing, especially in light of your current time in life and the economic environment. Then make necessary changes to your asset allocation, if needed.
- 8) RESOLVE to do a written financial plan or to update your current financial plan. With a written plan, your odds of success increase.
- 9) RESOLVE to make sure you have the proper amount of life insurance – too much, too little. Do you still need it? Do you have the right kind of insurance? Term insurance is generally preferred unless the need is permanent.
- 10) RESOLVE to create an emergency and opportunity fund with a minimum of 3 months of household expenses. This safety net will provide comfort in a time of need.

While there are plenty of other potential resolutions to add to this basic list, these give you a place to start and to take a pause. One of the best ways to follow through on these resolutions is to take advantage of a complimentary one-hour consultation with one of our fiduciary financial advisors.

HAPPY NEW YEAR!!!

V. Raymond Ferrara, CFP®, Chair and CEO  
ProVise Management Group, LLC  
611 Druid Rd E, Suite 105, Clearwater, FL 33756  
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The information herein is general and educational in nature and should not be considered legal or tax advice. Tax laws and regulations are complex and are subject to change.

Investment Advisory Services may be offered through ProVise Management Group, LLC.

**2020 CENSUS COMING SOON**

America gets one chance every decade to count its population. With the 2020 Census only a couple months away, the city of Clearwater needs help from the entire community to ensure everyone in Clearwater is counted. The census is used to make sure everyone is equally represented in the political system and that government resources are allocated fairly.

• **Everyone counts.** Everyone who is living in the United States on April 1, 2020, should be counted in the upcoming census. Unlike voting, this count includes everyone regardless of age, citizenship status or criminal history. Don't forget to count children, extended family and non-family members living in your residence.

• **It's about fair representation.** Every 10 years, the results of the census are used to reapportion the House of Representatives, determining how many seats each state gets.

• **It's about \$675 billion.** The distribution of more than \$675 billion in federal funds, grants and support to states, counties and communities is based on census data. That money is spent on schools, hospitals, roads, public works and other vital programs.

1. **Education.** The census helps determine where schools will be located and if the school is overcrowded. It also provides data to allocate funds for Title 1 Grants, the National School Lunch Program and the Head Start Preschool Program.

2. **Economic Development.** Businesses use census data to decide where to build offices and stores, which create jobs. Real estate developers use the census to build new homes and revitalize old neighborhoods.

3. **Local Government.** The city of Clearwater uses census data to decide when a road is overcrowded, where to build parks and libraries, and provides funding for programs such as food banks and homeless shelters.

• **Your privacy is protected.** It's against the law for the Census Bureau to publicly release your responses in any way that could identify you or your household. By law, your responses cannot be used against you and can only be used to produce statistics that are not accessible by any law enforcement agency. There is no citizenship question.

• **The Census is secure.** The census information technology systems are designed to defend against and contain cyberthreats. All data submitted Online is encrypted to protect personal privacy, and the census cybersecurity program meets the highest standards for protecting personal information. Online responses are encrypted; once submitted, your data is no longer Online.

• **You do not have to speak English to take the 2020 census.** The Online or call-in questionnaire will be available in Spanish, Arabic, French, Japanese, Haitian Creole, Polish, Portuguese, Tagalog, Chinese, Korean, Russian and Vietnamese. Language guides will also be available in 59 languages, including Braille.

There are many ways to fill out the 2020 Census:

1. **Online.** For the first time in American history, the census will primarily be completed Online. In March, residents will receive a postcard with a special code to enter on the census website to fill out the questionnaire.
2. **Phone.** Residents can call a toll-free phone number and answer the census questionnaire over the phone with an operator.
3. **By Paper Ballot.** Residents can call the toll-free census phone number and request a paper ballot be mailed.

To learn more, visit [census.gov](http://census.gov) or [pinellascounty.com/census](http://pinellascounty.com/census).

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**MAKING THE LEAP**  
Why is 2020 a Leap Year?

This next year, 2020, is a Leap Year. That means this year, an extra day has been added to our calendar. While an ordinary year has 365 days, a leap year has 366 days. The added day, called Leap Day, is February 29th. It takes the Earth approximately 6 hours longer than one calendar year to revolve around the Sun. The addition of Leap Day syncs the solar year of 365.242199 days with the 365-day Gregorian calendar year. This added day occurs usually every four years, but it is complicated. It happens in most years that are divisible by 4: 2012, 2016, 2020, etc. But, years that are divisible by 100, but not by 400, are NOT leap years. Thus 1800, 1900, 2100 and 2200 are/were NOT leap years while 1600 and 2000 were. The Romans were the first to discovered this during Julius Caesar's rule - in 45 BC. Their calendar, called the Julian calendar named February 24th as their leap day. Coincidentally, February was the last month of their year.

Pope Gregory XIII modified the Julian calendar, correcting problems that had caused a ten day shift over its many years, and introduced a new calendar in 1582. Called the Gregorian calendar many previous dates and months were changed. Leap day was established as February 29th in almost every fourth year. Initially accepted by the Catholic countries of Europe, it took three centuries for all of Europe to adopt it. Greece was the last European country to accept it - in 1923. During the 20th century, the calendar was adopted by most non-Western countries.

The calendar though close, is still not perfect. It is 27 seconds too long each year or adds one day every 3236 years.

A leap-year baby is a person born on February 29th. They are also referred to as a "leapling" or a "leaper." In non-leap years, leaplings celebrate their birthdays on either February 28 or March 1—then some like to celebrate only every fourth year.

This has produced some interesting fictional story lines. In Gilbert & Sullivan's *The Pirates of Penzance*, the title character, Frederic, must leave his beloved and return to a band of pirates he is apprenticed to until age 21. Because of his February 29th Leap Year birthday, he won't hit 21 until he's actually 88!

Defying the odds, a Utah woman has had three leapling babies, two boys and a girl. They were born February 29th 2004, 2008, and 2012.

In some traditions, Leap Day is also referred to as Bachelors' Day. Custom dictates on this day, a woman may propose marriage to the bachelor of her choice. If the man refuses, he is obligated to give the woman money or buy her a dress. In upper class Europe, he must buy her 12 pairs of gloves – all used to hide the woman's embarrassment of not having an engagement ring. In Greece, it is considered unlucky to marry on Leap Day.

After 2020, the next leap year will be 2024.

**ELECTION DAY - MARCH 17, 2020**  
Deadline to Register to Vote is February 18.

It is time for Clearwater's city election. This one will elect a new mayor.

To run, a candidate must be at least 18 years of age, have lived in the city of Clearwater continuously for at least one year proper to qualifying, and be a registered voter. Candidates must obtain and file a form with the City Clerk before you can accept any campaign contributions.

In Clearwater, all candidates run for specific seats. There are five seats, but only three seats are part of in this election. The seats held by David Albritton and Hoyt Hamilton are not included in this election.

**Seat #1** is the Mayor. George Cretekos is term limited and will not be running. The people who have qualified to run for the Mayor's position are: Elizabeth "Sea Turtle" Drayer, Frank Hibbard (former Mayor), Bill Johnson (former City Councilman), Morton Darrel Myers

**Seat #2** is currently held by Jay Polglaze. He is not seeking re-election. Those running for his position are: Mark Bunker, Michael Mannino, Bruce Rector, Eliseo Santana, Lina Teixeira

**Seat #3** is currently held by Dr. Bob Cundiff, he is running for a second term. Those also running for his position are: Kathleen Beckman, Bud Elias, Scott Thomas

The election in March is non-partisan – meaning there is no political party designation. Each voter will vote for one person in each of the three seats. Anyone with questions about running for office in the City of Clearwater can call the City Clerk at 562-4093. Get more information about registering or voting at [www.VotePinellas.com](http://www.VotePinellas.com).

**TREASURES GALORE AT CLEARWATER SAILING CENTER**

By Anne Garriss

December 14 is the date for the annual Silent Auction at the Clearwater Sailing Center on Sand Key. Everyone is invited! It begins at 6pm with live music – steel drums and guitar as well as delicious refreshments, and the annual silent auction which helps support the activities at the Center. Those items available at the auction run from gift cards at your favorite places, tickets to events, a paddle board, a sailboat charter and dozens of other treasures. All proceeds from the auction go to help fund the activities at the Sailing Center. One of these is the yearly "Never Say Never Pirates" camp which was held in October. Each year, the "Pirates" bring to the Sailing Center, young people who have experienced the loss of a leg, or an arm. These young people have several days of games and activities, and the blessing of finding that they are not alone, and that there is much more they can do in spite of their loss. This years Never Say Never participant was the largest ever, with three from outside the U.S. included.

Among the teams sponsored, or hosted, by the Sailing Center this year was the Windsurfing Team who brought back medals from St. Pete, Russia, and one from Italy. Also, the "Red White and Blue" sailors from the Clearwater Sailing Center were a part of the trials for the United States Team, held in New Orleans.

The Center sponsors several Youth Development Teams at their location in Clearwater, one of which went to Canada for the winter Laser Mid-winters competition. The Sunfish sailors held their midwinter Masters competition for sailors over 40 years old at Clearwater's Center.


"Thanks to our Florida climate, we are able to sail year-round," says Rich White, Activities Director of the Center, "and we're looking forward to the addition of activities and participation from our winter visitors."

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### RESTORING ORAL HEALTH FOR THOSE IN NEED

Have you ever considered what life would be like if you could not afford dental care? What if you broke a tooth, developed a cavity, or suffered some other dental distress, but you didn't have insurance or the money to see a dentist? For many people in Pinellas – this situation is all too real.

Take Jesse, for example. As a single mom, she works hard to make sure her children eat right, stay healthy, and have the things they need to get a good start on life. Her income covers rent, utilities, car insurance, clothes, groceries and incidentals for her family of four – but just barely.

When her molars became infected, broken, and painful, she could not afford the \$1,000 needed to fix them. So she just suffered. She had trouble sleeping and eating. Her children asked why she didn't eat the fresh fruits and vegetables she served them (so why should they?)

Fortunately, Jesse learned about us, the Community Dental Clinic. As an independent nonprofit organization, we offer dental care for those who live within 200% of the poverty line and who have no dental insurance.

Jesse enrolled one day and was seen the next. We were able to fill or extract her diseased teeth, relieve her pain, and restore her oral health.

Now Jesse sets a good example for her children, eating nutritious (even crunchy) foods and maintaining a healthy mouth. She practices good dental hygiene and makes sure her kids do, too.

Want to help others like Jesse? Support their cause, volunteer, or find out about their exciting annual fundraiser: Reds, Whites, and Bites. A delightful evening of wonderful wines, delicious food, music and more to benefit the Community Dental Clinic, Saturday, March 14, 2020, 6:30 to 9:00 pm at the Achieva Credit Union Headquarters in Dunedin. Visit [www.communitydentalclinic.net](http://www.communitydentalclinic.net)

### BLAST FRIDAY RETURNS

The popular downtown concert series, Blast Friday, returns in 2020 after a short break. Each event is free and, weather permitting, happens directly on Cleveland Street.

Here are the bands scheduled in the next few weeks:

- January 31: The B STREET BAND (5:30pm)
- February 28: JOHN WAITE
- March 27: PABLO CRUISE
- April 24: 10,000 MANIACS
- May 29: HOME COOKIN' VI

Food and beverages are available for purchase. Each Friday, a Super VIP ticket package is available, priced at \$49, which includes a reserved seat in one of the first three rows.

Get information at [RuthEckerdHall.com/Event/Blast-Friday](http://RuthEckerdHall.com/Event/Blast-Friday)

### SCOOTERS ARE COMING SOON

The City Council recently approved a pilot program to test the market for electric scooters and other micro-mobility devices. They will be allowed to operate on city streets and sidewalks as they are in Tampa, St Pete and other major cities around the United States. The program for now is only in Downtown Clearwater, and does not include the beach. The test program will begin in early 2020 and will allow companies like Lime, Bird, Uber, Lyft and others to rent scooters downtown Clearwater.

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Erika Francis, MD, Medical Director

### THE GASPARILLA INVASION AND PARADE

By Bob Griffin

The Gasparilla Parade, now known as The Gasparilla Pirate Festival, started in 1904, a year before the Ybor City Columbia Restaurant opened.

Ironically, the event and its name are based on a myth—a person that never existed. The legend of Jose Gaspar, a mythical Spanish pirate was the inspiration, that was based on real pirates who terrorized the coastal waters of West Florida during the late 18th and early 19th century.

That first Gasparilla parade, held in May, was the creation of Louise Francis Dodge, society editor for the Tampa Tribune and George Hardee, Director of Tampa's Customs. They molded the legend of Jose Gaspar into a dashing pirate using elements found in New Orleans's Mardi Gras Carnival. Holding it in May gave the once boring May Day celebration a boost.

The first Gasparilla Invasion had nothing to do with boats or ships. It was all held on horseback. They didn't even attempt a sea-based invasion until 1911.

Prior to World War I, it was a military celebration. During WWI it was not held at all, but resumed in February 1920. When the Florida State Fair began in 1924, they coincided. At the time, the fair was held at Plant Field, just north of The Tampa Hotel (now the University of Tampa).



The parade route ended at the fair, drawing thousands of people to its gates. That continued until 1976, when the Fair moved.

In 1936, the Ye Mystic Krewe of Gasparilla asked Tampa Tribune writer Edwin D. Lambright to write an authorized history of the Krewe. The piece included several references to Jose Gaspar. In the story, Gaspar was "a respectable and courtly pirate who resorted to violence only when necessary." Lambright claimed the story was based on official records and on Gaspar's personal diary. However, the diary seemed vanish when he was asked for proof of his research.

After World War II, the parade was held on the second Monday in February and was an official Hillsborough County holiday. Businesses and schools were closed.

In 1956, a small US Navy ship volunteered to be "attacked" by the

many smaller boats, called the "Ybor City Navy" who were armed with only stale Cuban bread and water hoses. After a short battle, the Navy sailors escaped to the streets and had an evening on the town.

Much to the disappointment of school children, the event was moved to the first Saturday in February in 1988. Nearby county residents could attend, but the kids lost their day off from school. Since 2005, the parade has been held on the last Saturday in January.

Today, Gasparilla is more of a season running from mid-January to early March. It features three large parades, a Gasparilla Film Festival, the Gasparilla Festival of the Arts, the Gasparilla Distance Classic (4 races), a Children's Gasparilla Parade and run, the Gasparilla Music Festival, and several smaller events.

The event starts when a "band of pirates," who are leading area business people, demand that the Mayor turn over the keys to the city. When they leave, they threaten to return to "invade and plunder" the city.

During the invasion, members of the Krewe of Gasparilla, accompanied by thousands of smaller personal boats, sail up the Hillsborough Bay on the Jose Gasparilla, a 165' pirate ship built in 1954. Before the Convention Center was built, the ship would sail up the Hillsborough River and the Krewe would disembark at Curtis Hixon Convention Center (across from the University of Tampa). After a lunch, the pirates were bussed to the parade route.

Today, the ship moors beside the Tampa Convention Center with much fanfare and cannons blaring. It is. Once on land, the Krewe and all the pirates hold

their victory parade on Bayshore Blvd.

The parade, the third largest in the U.S., draws an estimated 300,000 people to the area. Tourists from as far away as Canada and Europe attend. WFLA-TV normally covers it live. Studies estimate the economic impact of the Gasparilla parade to be about \$25 million and when all the events are combined, that number doubles.

The event hasn't always been without controversy.

Ye Mystic Krewe of Gasparilla was Tampa's first krewe dating back to the 1904 parade. Historically, the members of the private social club were exclusively well-to-do area business and government officials, all white men. In 1966, a group of women related to members of the men's krewe formed the Krewe of Venus; primarily white women. In 1972, Latin community leaders formed the Krewe of Sant' Yago - all white men.

Some questioned the racial image of the event, but nothing changed until Super Bowl XXV came to Tampa in 1991. At the request of the Super Bowl committee, the event was moved to coincide with the game weekend. Attendees could enjoy the parade and it would show Tampa as a fun place to live.

The NFL made up of over 50% black men, along with the City, put pressure on Ye Mystic Krewe to admit African-Americans members before the parade. The Krewe refused and the parade was canceled.

The City quickly put together a replacement parade called Bamboleo, which was billed as a multi-cultural festival with no pirates. It pretty much flopped.

After the Super Bowl, the Ye Mystic Krewe agreed to accept black members and the next year the annual parade returned. When the Super Bowl XXXV was held in Tampa, the parade was held game weekend with the largest crowd in history - 750,000.

Today, over 50 Krewes participate in the parade. At this point, no one really cares if Jose Gaspar really existed. His legend is a great excuse for a citywide party. That is all that really matters. This year's Invasion is January 25.



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## Bar & Restaurant News



**HOOTERS GIVES-A-HOOT** Hooters recently presented a check for \$45,955 to Moffitt Cancer Center. The donation is proceeds from their "Give A Hoot" program and supports a grant awarded through the V Foundation for Cancer Research. The check includes \$10,000 from Hooter's management to support the effort.

Give A Hoot is held annually in honor of Hooter's Kelly Jo Dowd, once a Palm Harbor store's General Manager. She succumbed to breast cancer in 2007. Fund-raisers in Hooters nationwide that include buying pink bracelets, a percentage of proceeds from specific drinks, rounding up your check, and \$1 from every Hooters Calendar sold, raised the money.

Hooters has raised more than \$5.8 million over time to support the fight against breast cancer, much of it through the Kelly Jo Dowd Breast Cancer Research Fund benefiting the V Foundation for Cancer Research.

**EGG NOG AT BACKWATER'S** When you are out running your last minute errands on Christmas Eve, don't forget to add a stop at Backwater's. Plan to be at Backwater's in the Shoppes on Sand Key between 5 and 7pm for their Annual Egg Nog Toast. "This is a complimentary event to say, thank you for your patronage, friendship and fun times over the past year," says Larry Edger, owner and operator.



Save the date - plans are underway for their 15th Annual Chili Cookoff on February 2, 2020. About 25 local residents and snow birds will bring their chili concoctions to Backwaters to be judged. All are hopeful to be crowned in one of the top three places with prizes, awards and, most of all, bragging rights for the best chili in the area. The event is free and open to any non-professional cook in the area.

A half dozen judges will evaluate the different entries from 3 to 5pm, with winners announced about 5:30pm. During the waiting period, customers may taste all the chili and compare.

**NEW BREAKFAST SPOT** Benedicts, now open in Largo, just east of Belleair Bluffs, is known for their breakfast and also serves a great lunch. This is their fourth Pinellas County location. They open at 7am, seven days a week.

Find them at 201 West Bay, just west of the railroad tracks or call 444-0371. See their menu at [www.Bendicts.com](http://www.Bendicts.com).

**SMOKE AND BARREL** Jay Thomas, owner of The Brown Boxers and Tap-and-Token, is switching things around. Tap and Token is moving from Bayway Blvd. to the store above the Mandalay Avenue Brown Boxer that was previously a gym. A new restaurant called Smoke and Barrel is opening where Tap and Token was. They hope both will reopen by mid-January

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## Bar & Restaurant News



**HEAD CHEF RETIRES** The award-winning chef at the Sheraton Sand Key, John Harris, who has been there for 30 years, recently retired.

He is well known for his skills and has won several awards. In 2019, Chef Harris and his talented team were honored with the eighth consecutive Golden Spoon Award from Florida Trend Magazine for Rusty's Bistro. The Tampa Bay Times also recognized Rusty's Bistro as one of the top 50 restaurants in Tampa Bay.

"John has been a tremendous asset to our resort. His outstanding leadership, culinary skills and dedication to this team for 30 years is unprecedented," said Kimball.

"It was an honor to work with this talented team and create life-long friendships. I will truly miss it here at Sheraton Sand Key, it has become my second home over the past 30 years," said Chef Harris.

**NEW STARBUCKS** Coffee drinkers are celebrating the opening of a Starbucks on Clearwater Beach. Located at 307 Coronado Drive, across from the Hyatt Regency it is attached to the Residence Inn. As you probably know, they have more than coffee. They have breakfast and lunch items, plus sweet snacks too.

**CAPTAIN'S MOVED AGAIN** Captain's Pizza, formerly located on Mandalay Avenue across from Bob's Heilman's Beachcomber, moved to the south end of the beach inside of Pan Filio's. Now, they have their own stand alone location, with the same owners. The restaurant moved back to the other end of the beach, into the Pelican Plaza, in Formaggio's Pizza's former space. Find Captain's Pizza at 483 Mandalay Avenue. Call 446-1799 for delivery.

**NEW TO THE HYATT** Things are really moving quickly with 3 new eateries being built on the bottom floor of the Hyatt. Look for We, the Pizza, Good Stuff Eatery and World's Best Soft Serve to open in the near future.

**WESTSHORE PIZZA STILL OPEN** The owners of the Westshore Pizza in the Bonfish Plaza want you to know that they are open! With all the construction happening around their front door, many people assumed that Westshore Pizza was closed.

"It is not true," says Denise Gillis, one of the owners, "we are open. For a few months our front door was closed off. But that is over now and the contractor put up a temporary sign for us. It certainly hurt our sales this quarter, but we hope to make it back in the near future. And we certainly appreciate the support of our loyal customers."

Visit them at 2989 West Bay Drive or call for delivery at 585-6974.

**POST CORNER PIZZA STILL OPEN** Post Corner Pizza was sold in October to Ocean Properties, the owners of Opal Sands. Eventually, the property will be part of a large hotel, but in the meantime, it is open and business as usual.

**CLOSED FORMAGGIO'S PIZZA** in the Pelican Plaza

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**KATHLEEN BECKMAN**  
New Leadership for Clearwater City Council

Kathleen Beckman is a retired high school English teacher and a lifetime public servant who is running for Seat 3 on the Clearwater City Council. A full-time, hands-on volunteer, Kathleen helps families and neighborhoods to improve their quality of life through a variety of non-profit organizations.



Kathleen will advocate for the diverse needs of our families, neighborhoods and small businesses throughout Clearwater. In her extensive community outreach, Kathleen knows that residents have numerous concerns: traffic, parking, safety, ordinance enforcement, short term rentals, over-development, and sustainability of our environment that is so vital to our health, quality of life and economy.

Kathleen has been, and will continue to be, a strong voice for continuous accountability and transparency of city plans, actions and spending. Being accountable to residents is essential for a fully functional city government.

Kathleen will collaborate with neighborhoods and city staff on a continuous basis to shape goals and plans that will create positive, long lasting outcomes - saving the city money, protecting our environment and health, and increasing opportunities for our residents - leading to a better future for Clearwater.

Kathleen loves hearing from residents. Please contact her via email [KathleenforClearwater@gmail.com](mailto:KathleenforClearwater@gmail.com), or phone (727) 266-0822 and follow her on Facebook [www.facebook.com/KathleenBeckmanForCityCouncil](https://www.facebook.com/KathleenBeckmanForCityCouncil) and her website [www.KathleenforClearwater.com](http://www.KathleenforClearwater.com).

Vote for Kathleen Beckman on March 17, 2020!

*Political advertisement paid for and approved by Kathleen Beckman for Clearwater City Council.*

**NEW TRASH RECEPTACLES COMING SOON**

As hard as they try, the City's Solid Waste employees can't always keep up with the amount of trash generated on the beach. During peak season and spring break, employees make two or three trips a day to Clearwater Beach to empty all the cans and haul the trash away.



To solve the problem, the City is acquiring seven Italian-made underground trash storage units. These new "compactors" have most of their parts underground. "The new trash bins will not have to be serviced as often," says Earl Gloster, Director of Solid Waste. If this is successful, they will invest in more units.

Three of the new containers will be near the beach at Mandalay Park, three will be near Pier 60 and the Hilton Hotel, and the final one will service Spectrum Field which is specially busy during spring training.

The city is spending \$1.6 million on six receptacles and the manufacturer donated the seventh one. Look for them soon.

*Business Briefs*

**DREAM VIEW HOTEL GONE**

Belleair Beach resident Uday Lele, sold the Dream View hotel last year to Dr. Kiran Patel. Hurricane Irma damaged many of the rooms causing a need for major repairs. The storm motivated Lele to sell. Dr. Patel already owns Clearwater Beach's Wyndham Grand Resort, one of the area's newest hotels.



The Dream View was closed and fenced off in the Spring. Now demo has begun in preparation of building a new JW Marriott condo/hotel.

The future JW Marriott will be a mixed used concept with a proposed 202 hotel rooms and 36 residents to be used as vacation rentals. But, site plans have not been finalized or approved by the City.

Call 727-443-0321 for sales information. See their web site at [www.JWMarriott.com](http://www.JWMarriott.com)

**DAVIS MOVES TO BERKSHIRE** After 20 years in real estate, Amber Davis has changed companies and moved to Berkshire Hathaway Home Services Florida Property Group in the Publix Plaza on Island Estates.

"I recently made the move to Berkshire and moved my office back to Island Estates," says Amber. "My experience and knowledge of local real estate will give you the edge when buying or selling on the Island or the area beaches."

The new Berkshire Hathaway Home Services Florida Properites Group is located at 136 Island Way in the Publix Plaza, near the UPS Store. Call Amber direct at 743-2722.

**CLEARWATER PADDLEBOARD** Besides a large rental selection and a huge retail shop, Clearwater Beach Paddle Board and rental company now offers very affordable electric bikes, electric folding bikes, electric scooters and electric skateboards - all ready for that last minute Christmas gift.

**NEW OWNER'S** Richard's Foodporium next to Bonefish Grill has a new owner. Bulk Nation Foods of Florida, a large natural food store company, recently bought all the Richard's stores. The new owners plans to carry more local products.

Richard's was founded in 1979 and operated 12 stores in Florida. Their home base was in Bradenton. Find Richard's at 2927 W. Bay Drive. The Website [RichardsFoodPorium.com](http://RichardsFoodPorium.com) is still the store's official site.

**NEW HOTEL STATUS REPORT**

**Marriott Courtyard**, 443 East Shore Drive; 139 units; in permitting

**Hotel next to Pier 60 Hotel (previously Sea Captain Hotel)**: 40 Devon Drive; 98 units; no permits issued yet; site plan needs to be amended.

**Chart House (replacement)**: 850 Bayway; 60 units; Hotel Density Development Agreement approved by City Council. Site plan not submitted yet.

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# Business Briefs



**THE PLAZA 100 SOLD** David Berolzheim, owner of The Plaza 100, in Belleair Bluffs for over 45 years, died last spring. For months the tenants had no idea who the next owner would be; now they know. Chef Erwin, the main chef and co-owner of E&E Stakeout

since 1985, purchased the strip center in the middle of Belleair Bluffs. It is home to over a dozen stores including: AAA Travel, Bella Vino Wine Market, Belleair Coffee, Belleair Opticians, Cassi and Company, Galleria Mistro Gallery, Harold Freeman Jewelers, Headlines Salon, Lala's Boutique, Melendy Real Estate, Shoes by Beverly and The Spot.

**HELP AROUND THE HOUSE** Do you need a helping hand around the house? Someone who will climb that ladder to change smoke alarm batteries, light bulbs or air conditioning filters? Do you need a shelf or picture hung or a minor electrical or plumbing repair? Then Chris Noyes is your man. His company, Helping Hand Household Maintenance, specializes in small household jobs that get harder to do as we get older. They will clean windows or mirrors, paint, power washing, just about anything you need. All you need to do is just ask. You don't need to climb that ladder; they are here to help. Senior Assistance is Their Specialty!

Please call Chris with your "honey-do" list, 727-687-9892 or email HHhouseholdmaintenance@aol.com.

## CLEARWATER BEACH FITNESS UNDER NEW OWNERSHIP

Clearwater Beach Fitness, the legendary old-school gym owned by WWE Hall of



Famer "Bushwhacker" Luke Williams, closed its location on the north end of the beach and reopened in the Clearwater Pass mall (behind Cesare's Italian Restaurant). The new gym has the same name and a new owner - Juan Carlos Garcia - with Bushwhacker's blessing. A long-time trainer and facility manager for the former Clearwater Beach Fitness, Garcia knows the ropes and shares Bushwhacker's passion for personalized service. The new gym opened September 21.

The new Clearwater Beach Fitness still has bodybuilders, but it has evolved to focus on improving strength, speed, mobility and endurance. It also offers customized programs for weight management, athletic performance, illness and injury recovery, and more. They offers flexible pricing plans for locals, snowbirds and tourists. It just won the 2019 "Top Rated Local® Fitness Center in Florida" award for.

Don't be surprised to catch Bushwhacker Luke and Hulk Hogan pumping iron with old friends there. The spirit of an old-school, home-town gym is still alive in these parts.

Find them at 795 Bayway Blvd, Clearwater Beach, 286-8918. Visit Clearwaterbeachfitness.org.

# Business Briefs

## ISLAND ESTATES MOBILE BEGINS THEIR 30TH YEAR

Steve and Lee Collins opened the Island Estates Gas and Service station in 1990.

Since then they have been a Chevron ('90), Texaco ('91-98), Amaco ('99), BP (2000-'14) and now Mobile (since 2014). But the Collins Family has been there from the beginning. And they thank you for your loyalty.



**NEW HOTEL PLANNED** Ocean Properties, the developers of Opal Sands Resort, have purchased most of the block across the street, which includes Post Corner Pizza and several mid-sized hotels. They own 401, 411, 421, 425 and 431 South Gulfview Blvd.

They not only plan to build a large hotel on the east side of South Gulf Blvd (up to 248 rooms), but they want to build a walk-over bridge connecting the two hotels about 30 feet above the street. To build it, the city must grant the developer an easement for the air rights. They are considering it.

**PELICAN GOLF COURSE** They have been playing golf on the new course for almost a year now, but the big club house is still under construction. The Ladies LPGA is scheduled there in May, so they expect it to be open before that. The golf course is private; you must be a member.

**THE FISH WITH ATTITUDE** Who's behind those dark, mysterious shades, and wide toothy grins? Why it's Bob the Fish, Jim the Shark and John the Shark... the original fish with Attitude! Which one of these best fits the Bob, Jim or John in your life?

- If Bob ain't happy, ain't nobody happy
- S.O.B. sweet old Bob!
- Bob... the Man, the Myth, the Legend!
- Don't mess with Jim, he's got attitude
- Who's the man? John's the man
- You gotta love Jim
- It's all about John!

No matter what type of Bob, Jim or John you have, we got him covered! Be the coolest fish on the beach this season and put your Bob, Jim or John into a Florida state of mind. Get him a Bob the Fish, Jim the Shark or John the Shark T-shirt, hat, tank top, long-sleeve, or sweatshirt. They carry ladies, mens and kids sizes. Order securely Online at [www.BobtheFish.com](http://www.BobtheFish.com) with FREE SHIPPING! Check them out at [Facebook.com/bobthefish](https://www.facebook.com/bobthefish). If you need bulk discount pricing for a Bob, Jim or John party or group event, call 813-254-3636.

Live by their motto - "Attitude is Everything" and remember, if Bob ain't happy, ain't nobody happy!.

**CIRCLE MART** The convenience store at 601 Mandalay Avenue (across from Speedway Gas) has closed. At this time, the entire plaza has no tenants.

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**SOCIAL SECURITY ANSWERS**

By Erin Emmett, Financial Planner at Rogan & Associates  
All our lives, we have been contributing to Social Security, but what do we really know about our benefits? As we approach retirement age, questions arise. When should I begin collecting my benefits. How much will I receive? Can I still work? How does this affect my taxes?

Here are seven most often asked Social Security questions.

1. When should I take my benefit? Are my options only age 62, or full retirement age? What most folks don't realize is that you can file at 63, 64, and beyond until you reach full retirement age. In fact, generally speaking, the longer you wait, the larger the benefit.
2. Do I have to take my benefit by full retirement age? Can I wait longer than that? You can wait until after you reach full retirement age. By doing so, your benefit will increase by a maximum of 8 percent per year for each year you delay between full retirement age and age 70.
3. Can I file and continue to work? You can, but there are income limits prior to full retirement age that may affect your benefit. Your benefit may be reduced dramatically so it is important to consider this prior to enrolling.
4. What if I decide to go back to work after reaching full retirement age? Will my benefit be reduced? Once you reach and surpass full retirement age, your benefit will not be reduced if you continue to work.
5. Must my spouse and I choose the same options/timing? No, there are several options you and your spouse can individually consider when choosing your benefits. It is important to come up with a strategy that makes the most sense for your situation.
6. Is my Social Security taxable? Two things are inevitable: death and taxes. Your benefit may be taxable, but it depends on your combined income. Discuss this with your tax professional before you enroll or file.
7. Shouldn't I just enroll as early as possible in case I pass away? While this is not something anyone wants to think, it is a factor to consider. Filing early means a lower benefit, and if you live to be 100, your benefit will always be based on that lower amount. If you file early and do pass away, your spouse may receive a lower death benefit than if had you waited longer to file. Too often we think of Social Security in terms of when instead of what. To have a successful retirement, it's important to think about what income you need vs. when you should file.

Social Security is likely very important to you—and we want to help you see the big picture as you prepare for retirement. Rogan & Associates will be hosting two **FREE Educational Happy Hour Social Security Workshops** - Wednesday, January 29 or Thursday, January 30 from 5:30 to 6:30 pm at the offices, 200 Ninth Avenue North, Safety Harbor. Open to the public.

Michael Lynch, managing director of strategic markets for Hartford Funds, will be on hand to help you get the information you need. Mike, who has been quoted in prestigious publications such as Fox Business, Today.com, US News & World Report, and MarketWatch, will conduct an engaging yet educational workshop to help you anticipate and prepare for the long-term during your retirement.

Please call 727-712-3400 to reserve your seat.

All information provided here is for informational and educational purposes only and is not intended to provide investment, tax, accounting or legal advice. As with all matters of an investment, tax, or legal nature, you should consult with a qualified tax or legal professional regarding your specific situation, as applicable. The preceding is not intended to be a recommendation or advice.

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**LONG-RANGE FORECAST: SUNNY AND BRIGHT WITH A CONSTANT CHANCE FOR FLURRIES**

By Karen Williams Seel, Pinellas County Commissioner  
As a native Floridian, I'm like an excited kid when it comes to the thought of snow. It's magical stuff, bringing with it wishful thoughts of curling up by a fireplace with a cup of cocoa and a good book. This wishful thinking only intensifies when I see forecasts for flurries for our neighbors up north. The thought of snow always heralds the approaching holiday season for me even when we're drenched in sunshine and sand.

Here in Pinellas County, we have flurries around the holiday season too, although a different brand. There's the flurry of shopping, wrapping, baking, cooking and getting together with family and friends. There is also the flurry of giving.

You might buy holiday wrapping paper to help raise funds for the local high school. You may round-up your total at the cash register for a good cause. Or, you might donate your time to help others during the season of giving.

Our Pinellas County employees give too. During this time of year, along with most every workplace in the county, employees choose to give of themselves to provide holiday cheer to those in need.

One of the many ways Pinellas County employees choose to give is the annual Christmas Bicycle Drive. Throughout the year, employees donate money to purchase bicycles for children of families who are clients of the county's Human Services department. The bicycles are put on display in the lobby of the county courthouse in Clearwater and then loaded up and delivered to these families, so a shiny new bike is under the tree. Last year, employees raised enough money to provide 100 bicycles to families and hundreds more through the drive over the last 32 years.

In addition to the bicycle drive, employees also contribute to individual department campaigns to bring cheer to families in Pinellas County. Some departments "adopt" a family and provide gifts for children and parents, alike. Many employees really enjoy this type of giving because they get to go shopping with a list and usually come back with more than was asked for, excited that they have made a child's and, most-certainly, a parent's holiday wishes come true.

Our county employees give throughout the year too. Last year they contributed 420 volunteer hours through paid administrative leave to mentor local students.

Some of you—1,524 citizens, to be exact—gave more than 204,000 hours of service last year to the county by volunteering. These volunteers gave their time across all areas of Pinellas County, including docents at Heritage Village, our Master Gardeners who take care of the Florida Botanical Gardens, caretakers at our Animal Services shelter and many more. Their contributions were valued at more than \$5.1 million in 2018.

This flurry of giving is heart-warming. It's a testament to the kindness and generosity of our employees and our volunteers.

Whatever you do this year to brighten the holidays for others, why not try to keep the flurry of giving going? If you don't already, why not pledge to give your time or talents to others throughout the year? I think you'll find giving is good for the soul. Your long-range forecast: sunny and bright, knowing that you gave something to others.

May your holidays be wonderful and bright with, perhaps, a flurry or two.

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Our own roast turkey breast!  
Signature recipe Chocolate Chip Cookies  
Maggie Burger - Juicy, Good!

## WELCOME BACK, EARLY SNOWBIRDS

By Tom Smith Owner of GHD Construction Services

It's the 2020 tourist season, and with all the northerners that are visiting Florida this year, it's predicted to be a record year for many northern families to change their residency and move to Florida permanently. The Chamber of Commerce and myself believe that Florida has more to offer than most of the northern states, and that is why I moved here from the north many years ago. Better weather, lower cost of living, and lower taxes are spearheading the increased number of families migrating from the north each year.

What does that mean for housing opportunities for those that want to settle along a waterfront attractive beach community in Pinellas County? When families that consider relocating for either a permanent or second home in Florida, most do their due diligence and compare both cost and quality of life issues in different areas of Florida. Housing cost is always a main factor, and it's easy to see that Pinellas County is considerably less cost than the areas of Naples and Sarasota. In addition, Pinellas offers close proximity to America's best airport, Tampa International, a quick way to get back home to visit the grandkids. Although we have traffic concerns during the tourist season, they are far less than the east coast communities or very busy Naples and Sarasota. Pinellas is definitely worth considering.

As many families have realized this and purchased homes in our beach communities these past few years, it has led to a housing shortage of properly priced attractive homes. Most of the remaining listings of the realtors are either overpriced or just not attractive. Most were constructed in the 1950s and 1960s, and are not raised to FEMA standards, much less have 150mph windows and doors, are energy efficient,

or have today's desired amenities for room layout or in kitchens. That is why so many decide to construct a new home with everything they want when they decide to relocate. One family we are building for in desirable Indian Rocks Beach is constructing a beautiful new home on a non-waterfront lot for under \$700,000. Also, GHD has their furnished "Key West" model for customers that might want the lifestyle of a waterfront home with pool as well as a dock for boating to restaurants or fishing.

Choosing the right lot in the beach community of your choice is a main concern. There are a few vacant lots available, or maybe a very desirable lot that needs the 60 year home torn down. Site selection is what GHD Construction Services offers its customers as part of their services for a new home. GHD has the only furnished model home along the beaches, so that customers can see the amenities offered in a new home today, as well as the quality of construction expected from families today. We offer "In-House" architecture included in the home price, so that families don't have to spend tens of thousands of dollars with outside architects and designers. GHD likes to consider itself a "One Stop Shop" for all your new home construction needs.

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](mailto:tweisser@ghdcsi.com). Meanwhile, look us up on our web site at [www.GHDcoastalHomes.com](http://www.GHDcoastalHomes.com).



## JAMES CONLIN

James Conlin, a Senior Vice President of Raymond James, recently passed away after a long illness. He managed the Belleair Bluff's office on West Bay Drive.

Conlin was known for much more than his work. He was very involved in many area organizations, especially the arts community.

"He goes way back with us," says Sue Osbourne, with the Central Park Performing Arts Foundation.

"Jim was one of our founding board members and was committed to the arts without question. He was the voice of reason on our board and a wonderful mentor and friend to me."

In 2017, Conlin was the recipient of the Central Pinellas Chamber of Commerce "Inspire" award, presented to him on behalf of his work with the arts in Pinellas County. "The award is for people who inspire others," says Tom Morrisette, president of the Central Pinellas Chamber.

He was also a board member of Ruth Eckerd Hall, the Florida Orchestra, the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society of the Suncoast, The Lions Eye Bank, Habitat for Humanity and Big Brothers / Big Sisters.

But, the people who will miss him the most are those he worked with at Raymond James for over 20 years. "I still cannot believe he is gone," says Lucia Mulcahy. "The entire office is devastated and we will all miss him. He brought a smile to everyone's face when he was around. He had a great sense of humor and was very witty."

Conlin lived in St Petersburg, with his wife Nora. He died October 24 at the age of 64. Donations in his honor can be made to Central Park Performing Arts Foundation, PO Box 1030, Largo, 33779



## U.S. COAST GUARD AUXILIARY 2020 BOATING SAFETY CLASSES

The U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary announces their schedule of safe boating classes for 2020. The weekend class, called "About Boating Safely," covers topics that include:

- Know Your Boat
- Before Getting Underway
- Navigating the Waterways
- Operating Your Vessel Safely
- Legal Requirements
- Boating Emergencies

Individuals who successfully complete the course and exam meet the Florida boating certification requirements and are awarded certificates and wallet cards. Boaters born after January 1, 1988 must complete a National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA) approved boating safety class to legally operate a boat or personal watercraft (PWC) in the state of Florida.

Upcoming Weekend Program class 2020 dates:

- January 11 & 12 - 8am - 1pm
- February 8 & 9 - 8am - 1pm
- March 14 & 15 - 8am - 1pm
- April 11 & 12 - 8am - 1pm
- May 16 & 17 - 8am - 1pm

Classes are located at 510 North Ft. Harrison Avenue, Clearwater, FL 33755. The fee for materials, instruction and final exam is \$40. To register visit [www.clwboatingsafety.com](http://www.clwboatingsafety.com), email [clwr.auxboating@gmail.com](mailto:clwr.auxboating@gmail.com), or call 727-469-8895

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# HAPPY NEW YEAR! HAPPY NEW DECADE!

## Looking Back at the Year 1920 - What a Difference a Century Makes

By Bob Griffin, Publisher

Here it is, almost 2020—not only a new year, but a new decade. We tend to remember years by the events that happened during them and we thought it would be fun to look back 100 years to 1920 and see how far we have come.

The 1920s was nicknamed the Roaring Twenties because of the decade's exuberant, freewheeling, popular culture. Unfortunately, the decade that began with a roar, ended with the Stock Market Crash in 1929.

Also, known as "The Jazz Age," the 1920s began with the last of the American troops returning home after World War I. Most of the soldiers had never been far from home before and their experiences changed their perspective on life. After seeing Europe, they wanted the finer things for their families. Many were about to buy their first car, their first radio and their first telephone. This ushered in an energetic and stylishly higher standard of living, which kick-started a decade of change.

Jazz music and its dance styles were gaining nationwide popularity. Musicians like Louis Armstrong and Jelly Roll Morton were becoming household names. Young women who wore short skirts, short hair, and listened to jazz music were nicknamed "flappers."

The Art Deco style, which started to appear just before World War I, was becoming the rage. Its geometric forms and bright colors influenced the design of fashion, jewelry, buildings, furniture, cars, ocean liners, and everyday objects. It represented luxury and glamour.

The 1920 Census shows the U.S. population was 106,021,537. In Florida, Jacksonville was the most populous city with 91,558 people. It was the only Florida city in the top 100 U.S. cities. Pinellas would soon see people traveling to the area in droves. The first half of the decade led to a flurry of construction - roads, bridges, homes and buildings.

Specifically, the year 1920 saw many world-shaping events, including:

**League of Nations Was Established:** In 1919, shortly after WWI, and prior to the birth of the United Nations, President Woodrow Wilson proposed the idea of a worldwide organization of peaceful nations. On January 16, 1920, the League of Nations held its first executive council meeting. It consisted of 58 members, most of the major countries in existence at the time. Oddly, the United



States was not among them.

**Prohibition Begins:** The year before, Congress had ratified the 18th Amendment, which prohibited the manufacturing, transportation and sale of alcohol within the United States; it went into effect January 1920. The National Prohibition Act, popularly known as the Volstead Act, was enacted to provide the means of enforcing Prohibition.

**U.S. Essentially had a Female President:** In 1920, President Woodrow Wilson suffered a blood clot that caused paralysis, partial blindness and brain damage. For the remaining one and a half years of his term, his wife, Edith Wilson, pretty much ran the country. She controlled access to her husband and guided his hand as he signed important documents. She also made policy decisions and was known by insiders as "Madam President."

**We suffered the Worst Terrorist Attack in Our Then History:** On a busy day in September 1920, a horse-drawn cart, carrying a massive number of explosives was detonated on Wall Street. Thirty-eight people were killed, and hundreds of others were injured. This was our worst terrorist attack until the 1995 Oklahoma City Bombing.

**J Edgar Hoover Starts the Precursor to the FBI:** After a series of bombings, the U.S. Attorney General Mitchell Palmer mounted a campaign to deport foreign radicals. Raids were organized by a young J. Edgar Hoover, head of the "Bureau of Investigations." The raids backfired and Mitchell Palmer was removed. Hoover went on to help form the FBI, which he ran until 1972.

**Women Gain the Right to Vote:** The Women's Suffrage Movement was born years before and by 1920 every state west of the Mississippi River

allowed women to vote. But, that was not the case for nine states to the east. One more state approval was needed for ratification of the amendment to make it law. On August 18, 1920, the Tennessee Legislature barely approved it—by a vote of 50-49—but that was enough and the 19th Amendment to the United States Constitution was ratified prohibiting the states and the federal government from denying the right to vote to U.S. citizens on the basis of sex.

**The Lost Generation Transforms American Literature:** A group of writers, mostly living in Europe following WWI, became a force in American literature. "The "Lost Generation," as they were called included Sinclair Lewis, F. Scott Fitzgerald, and Ernest Hemingway.

**The Ponzi Scheme Was Invented:** Charles Ponzi, an Italian immigrant, discovered a way to buy and sell "international reply coupons" to foreign investors. Word spread about this method of making money fast, leading investors to bring in more investors, which was essentially to continue funding commissions. The system ultimately collapsed, but the name Ponzi lives on to describe similar schemes.

**Media Was Born:** No other event in 1920 would have more of an effect on the future than the birth of radio. In November 1920, the first commercially licensed radio broadcast was heard, from KDKA in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The popularity of "the talking box" exploded and only two years later, 100,000 radios were sold. Soon, radio became a family experience. Everyone would gather around the radio and listen to the news, comedy shows, and music. By 1926, over 700 licensed radio stations were broadcasting in the U.S. This was certainly the beginning of today's media.

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...or anything else you need

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Call Chris with your "honey-do" list, 727-687-9892 or email HHhouseholdmaintenance@aol.com

**CHI CHI RODRIGUEZ WELCOMED JACK AND BARBARA NICKLAUS**

In celebration of the Chi Chi Rodriguez Youth Foundation's 40th Anniversary, Chi Chi and his Academy students, teachers and local dignitaries welcomed Jack and Barbara Nicklaus to the re-dedication of the Nicklaus Family Center (NFC). Festivities included unveiling the latest Nicklaus family portrait followed by Jack and Barbara sharing time with the students, dignitaries and members of the press. The NFC, possibly the busiest space on the Foundation campus, is a multi-purpose room that serves as a nutrition kitchen for breakfast/lunch every school day, as well as an area for student recognition events and a quiet space parent meetings. It features A/V resources and can be used for eligible community meetings seating 50 or less.



Dedicated to at-risk children in our community and funded by Chi Chi's non-profit 501(c)3 Foundation, the Academy serves up to 90 struggling students in 4th through 8th grade and over 3,000 community children annually in North Pinellas County through The First Tee Life Skills Experience.

**"HOLIDAY LIGHTS IN THE GARDENS"**

By the Florida Botanical Gardens Foundation.

The Florida Botanical Gardens Foundation is proud to sponsor the 19th Annual "Holiday Lights in the Garden" Friday, November 29 through Saturday, January 4, 2020 including New Years Eve and New Years Day from 5:30 to 9:30pm. Admission is a suggested donation of \$5 for those over 13.

The Gardens will sparkle with 1 million, twinkling, LED lights in a multitude of colors. Vibrant laser lights and lighted figures round our display to wow guests of all ages. The Train Guys, will be back again for the event's opening weekend. Their model trains will surround the 18 foot evergreen tree, bedecked in nature-inspired splendor, in the heart of the Wedding Garden.

Food, drinks, and ice cream will be available from our partner, St Pete Concessions. Light-up items for the kid in all of us will be available for purchase on the Botanical Bounty Gift Cart. In addition, nature-inspired seasonal gifts and décor will be available in our Botanical Bounty Gift Shop, located in the main building. Both will be open nightly.

To add to the sights and sounds, a variety of local volunteer talent will perform nightly. Check their website for a weekly schedule. Santa visits regularly through December 23, but call in advance to confirm. Updates are on the Hotline: 727-582-5800.

Please be advised, this is a high-volume event. To avoid crowds, arrive early or view on weeknights. The Gardens are handicapped accessible and most walkways are ADA Compliant: allowing access for wheelchairs, walkers and strollers. However, they DO NOT have wheelchairs or scooters available. Well-behaved dogs that don't mind crowds are welcome, but they encourage you to attend on weeknights.

Parking, including handicapped parking, is available at the primary event entrance, at 12211 Walsingham Road. Additional parking will be available at the Ulmerton entrance, but parking is limited so come early or choose to visit us on our non-peak days— primarily weeknights. Groups are encouraged to contact our office in advance, so we can help make your experience a memorable one.

This event depends upon the support of hundreds of volunteers. Sign up at [www.fbgfoundation.org/volunteer](http://www.fbgfoundation.org/volunteer).

Proceeds provide financial support to the Florida Botanical Gardens to fund events, purchase plant, improvements, maintenance, renovations and Garden staffing.

After the lights are put away for the year, they hope you will return to the Gardens during the day to see their natural beauty. The Florida Botanical Gardens is located in Largo. For general information visit [fbgfoundation.org](http://fbgfoundation.org) or follow them: [www.facebook.com/FIBotanicalGardens](https://www.facebook.com/FIBotanicalGardens).

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**ECKERD CONNECTS' RAISING HOPE**

**Lucky 7 Casino Night "Have a Heart" Fundraiser**

Eckerd Connects' Raising Hope will host its 7th annual "Have a Heart" event on Saturday, February 1 at 6:30 pm. This year's event will be a fun-filled casino night in Dunedin, the birthplace of the Raising Hope program 15 years ago. The event aims to raise money to continue to supply clothes, hygiene products, and school supplies to local foster children.



"The Have a Heart event is our largest fundraiser of the year," says Kelly Rossi, Raising Hope Director. "Everyone who attends truly 'has a heart' for the plight of foster children, and wants to help. Their caring allows local foster children to have the items they need and deserve."

The Casino Night will feature heavy appetizers, silent auction, fun casino games, and piano music, all in a roaring 20s theme. Attire is smart casual, business casual or your best Roaring 20s theme is optional!

Don't miss out on the early bird pricing for the Lucky 7 Casino Night Have a Heart fundraiser! Admission, if purchased by December 31, is \$70 per person or \$130 per couple. On January 1st, admission is \$75 per person or \$140 per couple. Sponsorships are available at different levels. Buy your tickets or sponsorship level Online at [www.eckerd.org/haveaheart](http://www.eckerd.org/haveaheart).

Eckerd Connects Raising Hope provides emergency and comfort items for kids entering the foster care system. Every two minutes a child is removed from his or her home due to abuse or neglect Kids do not ask to come into the foster care system; they are brought there as victims. Kids entering foster care often have only the clothes on their backs, seldom have a toothbrush, and they carry the few belongings they have in a trash bag. The process can be very traumatic and leave them feeling less than human as their belongings are treated like garbage. Providing these children with hope and dignity is essential to their ability to heal.

Rooms of Hope are set up like small stores and are filled with fresh clothing, pajamas, shoes, hygiene items, diapers, school supplies and other necessities. The kids come in and are able to "no-cost shop" for the items they not only need but deserve. Every child can receive a new duffel bag for their belongings!

Kids are able to have items to call their own when everything they have has been lost, plus they are able to retain their dignity and have hope during a very traumatic time in their lives. For more information about the organization, visit [www.eckerd.org/raisinghope](http://www.eckerd.org/raisinghope).

 **AREA HOLIDAY EVENTS** 

**Now through December 29**  
**ENCHANTMENT AT THE DOME**  
Tropicana Field, St Petersburg

This new event includes a light maze, Christmas market, ice-skating, and a visit with Mr. and Mrs. Santa Claus. Get more information on their FaceBook page.

**Through January 4 5:30 - 9:30**  
**HOLIDAY LIGHTS IN THE GARDEN**

Florida Botanical Gardens, 12520 Ulmerton Rd , Largo  
The Gardens sparkle with 1 million, twinkling, LED lights. \$5 suggested donation. [FLBGFoundation.org](http://FLBGFoundation.org).

**December 12-22**  
**HOLIDAY SPARKLE WITH THE ST. PETERSBURG OPERA CO.**  
Opera Central, 2145 1st Ave S.

They take you on a musical journey with soloists, chorus, and orchestra through the most wonderful holiday music, from the sacred to the popular! [www.stpeteopera.org](http://www.stpeteopera.org)

**December 21 - 7pm**  
**INDIAN ROCKS BEACH HOLIDAY BOAT PARADE**

The parade starts at the Holiday Inn Harborside and heads north. Watch the beginning behind Jimmy Guana's.

**December 21 - 8 am**  
**ST NICHOLAS GOLF CLASSIC**

At the Mangrove Bay Golf Course  
Dress in your favorite Santa or Mrs. Santa attire and play golf. Golf carts are also decorated. Benefits the Children's Dream Fund. Call 896-6390. [www.ChildrensDreamFund.org](http://www.ChildrensDreamFund.org)

**December 21, Noon**  
**OLD FASHIONED CHRISTMAS PARADE**  
Downtown Largo, near West Bay

This neighborhood parade will ignite your Christmas spirit! [www.Largo.com](http://www.Largo.com)

**December 22, 6:30pm**  
**REDINGTON/INDIAN SHORES LIGHTED BOAT PARADE**

Viewing locations include Seabreeze Restaurant, Indian Shores City Hall, or Salt Rock Grill.

**December 22 - 30**  
**HANUKKAH**

This eight-day Jewish celebration commemorates the rededication of the Second Temple in Jerusalem

**December 26**  
**THE NUTCRACKER**

See the original Moscow Ballet's great Russian Nutcracker performed live. [www.TheMahaffey.com](http://www.TheMahaffey.com)

**December 26 - January 1**  
**KWANZAA**

Week long celebration honoring African heritage

**December 31**  
**FIRST NIGHT ST. PETE**  
Downtown St Pete

Ring in the New Year with eight hours of family friendly music, dance, aerial arts, an Interactive Art Park. [FirstNightStPete.com](http://FirstNightStPete.com).

**December 31**  
**LIGHT UP CLEARWATER**

Bring in the New Year with fireworks. See them from Sand Key or anywhere along the southwest end of Clearwater Beach.

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## Organizational News...

### THE ROTARY CLUB OF CLEARWATER

The Club donated \$2000 to ShelterBox USA to help families in the Bahamas devastated by Hurricane Dorian rebuild their lives after losing everything to the natural disaster. ShelterBox was the first officially recognized Project Partner of Rotary International and remains Rotary's only Project Partner in disaster relief.

The funds will be used to provide life-saving shelter and equipment to set up a household, which could include relief tents, tools to repair damaged buildings, as well as supplies such as solar lights, water purification, thermal blankets and cooking utensils. ShelterBox tailors the form of aid after each disaster based on assessments of the affected community's needs.

"We are pleased to help provide shelter and life-saving supplies to families struggling to survive," said Andrew Denis, President of the Rotary Club of Clearwater. "As a Florida Rotary Club who knows the devastation hurricanes can bring, we know this donation will help transform lives by providing warmth, dignity, and hope to those in need. These funds were raised through the club's fundraising efforts, the generosity of our members, and earnings from our local endowment."

"The global support from the Rotary International network, including the Rotary Club of Clearwater, is the cornerstone upon which ShelterBox is built," said Kerry Murray, President of ShelterBox USA. "Rotary helps us go further, support more people in need, and access areas that otherwise would be impossible to reach."

Since 2000, ShelterBox has provided shelter, warmth, and dignity following more than 300 disasters in over 95 countries. ShelterBox responds urgently to earthquake, volcano, flood, hurricane, cyclone, tsunami, or conflict by delivering boxes of essential shelter aid and other life-saving supplies. Each iconic green ShelterBox contains a disaster relief tent for an extended family, blankets, a water filtration system, emergency lighting, and other tools for survival. ShelterBox USA is based in Sarasota, Florida and Santa Barbara, California.

ShelterBox is an official Project Partner of Rotary International. Tax-deductible donations to the organization can be made at [ShelterBoxUSA.org](http://ShelterBoxUSA.org) or by calling (941) 907-6036.

### THE BELLEAIR BEACH LADIES LUNCHEON CLUB

The Belleair Beach Ladies Luncheon Club, now in its 66th year, will start the New Year with a special luncheon at Bon Appetite Restaurant in Dunedin on January 14th. Social hour begins at 11:30, with lunch at noon, followed by Radiance Med Spa presenting information on the latest beauty procedures available. Don't miss this one! Guests are always welcome. Make your reservations by calling Sue Edmunds, Treasurer, at 727-596-5710

For information about our Club, please call Sue Edmunds or Lois O'Donnell at 727-595-1349.

### THE BELLEAIR WOMEN'S REPUBLICAN CLUB

Belleair Women's Republican Club (BWRC) will open its January 3, meeting with speaker Bernie McCabe, State Attorney of the 6th Judicial Court. The State Attorney is the chief prosecutor for the Sixth Judicial Circuit, which includes both Pinellas and Pasco counties. McCabe, a native Floridian, has been the Sixth Circuit State Attorney since 1992. McCabe oversees an office of 165 lawyers who investigate and prosecute criminal and civil cases—roughly 132,000 felony, misdemeanor, traffic and juvenile cases a year on behalf of the State of Florida.

Programs are held at the Belleair Country Club; One Country Club Lane; Belleair. Registration and Social Hour begin at 11, with lunch and meeting noon to 1:30 pm. Necessary reservations need to be made by 5 pm December 30, by emailing Renatta Cochran at [renfilco@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:renfilco@tampabay.rr.com) or by calling 727-595-6678. The Club welcomes Republicans from all surrounding communities.

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## LOCAL AUTHOR'S NEW NOVEL TOUCHES ON HIS CLEARWATER YOUTH

Fans of thought provoking and yet heartfelt stories will enjoy *Ages of Entanglement*, written by Dr. Robert Jackson. Robert was born in Clearwater and also grew up there before graduating from Clearwater High in 1994. His new book, *Ages of Entanglement*, is post-apocalyptic in nature, but is set in the southeast United States some time in the future. Through the tale of an individual's trek through a fallen world, the book explores the spiritual, psychological, and scientific entanglement between humans, and if we should and can truly escape it.

Robert's writing career had its beginnings in Mrs. Roby's English class at Clearwater High, where she entered his essay on sailing into a state wide writing competition. Although it did not win, it inspired him to continue writing through the years. His youth was spent sailing on the Intracoastal and the novel's final scene actually unfolds in a similar setting. The main character uses his sailing skills to survive and protect the ones he cares for. Robert's sailing interests started with lessons at the Clearwater Yacht Club, but he now sails mostly on landlocked Lake Martin in Alabama. Robert also competed on the CHS Swim Team and was an Eagle Scout of Troop 456. He remembers earning a sailing merit badge at Boy Scout Camp Soule in the heart of Clearwater. He also relishes memories of visiting Sandy's bookstore that used to reside in downtown Clearwater until sometime in the '80s.

In the novel, three decades have passed since a mysterious illness brought on by quantum entanglement suddenly decimated the human population. Quantum entanglement is a strange and counterintuitive phenomena, even though it is scientifically proven. This connection between two materials allows for instantaneous control regardless of the distance between the materials. By harnessing quantum

entanglement, mankind had tapped into a dangerous power able to alter the very matter of our existence. The story of the main character, Samson, explores the metaphorical relations between human connections and quantum entanglement.

Samson long ago gave up searching for his family and now wanders the earth with no purpose, while avoiding entanglement with other souls. But then he meets Selene—an orphaned, but strong and independent girl. She sees in him what he has forgotten. They journey together toward a utopian island merely rumored to exist. The only evidence is a brochure of the island's lighthouse and a handwritten message. Along the way they meet others also seeking to overcome the obstacles of the age, but in their own ways. This includes a village aiming to rebuild the world, a ghostly ferryman who carries his passengers across a glassy lake; a rock star without an audience, and gladiators of devolved sporting events.

Will Samson help Selene to make her way in this dangerous world, and will she help him to find his lost humanity? Or is Samson already too far gone, a relic of the previous age?

*Ages of Entanglement* is available on Amazon.com.

*Robert L. Jackson is a professor of engineering at Auburn University, a researcher, and a poet. He has published many scientific papers and poems. His work often explores the boundaries between art and science. He grew up in Clearwater, graduated from Georgia Tech, and currently lives in Auburn, Alabama*



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**GET YOUR VIEW TODAY**

**MEET ROGER DOW - CEO OF U.S. TRAVEL**

By Bob Griffin, Publisher

Roger Dow lives in Old Northeast, but he works in Washington, D.C. He is the President and CEO of U.S. Travel, the largest travel association in the United States—and possibly the world.

At 7am every Monday morning, you will find him at Tampa International Airport hopping on a jet to Washington or some other U.S. city. Then on Thursday afternoons, he flies back to Tampa, to spend the weekends in St. Petersburg with his wife, Linda, and friends.

U.S. Travel is not well known to people outside the industry. It is a trade organization for the entire United States whose mission is to foster and improve tourism from other countries and to increase domestic travel. They study the benefits and problems with travel, then lobby and communicate their findings to government officials and politicians. They work closely with thousands of U.S. hotels and tourism related businesses.

Dow helped create Brand USA, a marketing entity for the entire industry to use. The unique thing about Brand USA is that its \$200 million budget is funded by international visitors and the travel industry - not by taxpayers. They produce ads, TV commercials, billboards and more—seen all around the world—telling overseas tourists that the U.S. is still a great and cost efficient place to visit. "For every dollar spent on marketing, Brand USA adds \$25 to the U.S. Economy," Dow declares.

"Half of our job is lobbying," says Dow. "We are a trade organization and represent all related businesses in the U.S. Our mission is to increase travel to all 50 states."

"We also work closely with major tourism destinations," Dow adds. "Among the biggest are Tampa, Pinellas County, Orlando, Kissimmee, the Miami/Ft Lauderdale area, really the entire state of Florida."

They work directly with the airport and airline industries. "We interact regularly with 15 major airports including Tampa's," says Dow. "We helped develop the TSA Pre-check and Global Entry systems now in effect."

"We were involved in improving and extending the Visa Waiver program for other countries, making it easier for tourists from other countries to come here with little more than a passport."

"We study the habits of foreign travelers and target our advertising to places where we get the most return for

our dollar," Dow explains. "We found travelers from South Korea, China, Israel and Brazil spend more per visit than other countries. On average, overseas tourists tend to stay 16 nights and spend \$4,300 per person per visit."

"As far as the amount spent, tourists from China are more attractive than Canadian tourists," Roger explains. "A Chinese traveler will spend approximately \$6,700 per person per visit while a Canadian spends about \$1,200."

U.S. Travel also puts on the IPW, a major world-wide trade show held yearly in different U.S. cities. Orlando (Disney/Universal) and Miami have hosted it many times. Next year it will be in Las Vegas. It has been held for over 60 years and is a big event to educate and sell foreign travel agents on the travel opportunities in the U.S. In 3 days, they book over \$5 billion in future travel to the U.S.

"Basically, my organization, U.S. Travel, helps generate \$2.4 trillion (that is with a T) in economic outputs and supports 15.6 million jobs - 1 in 9 American jobs."

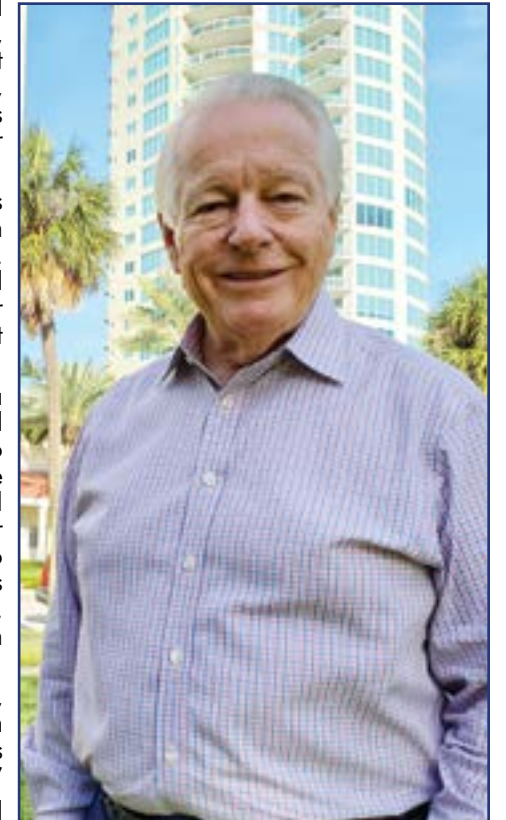
In 2014, Dow and U.S Travel launched Project: Time Off. The initiative aims to shift culture so using personal time off is not considered frivolous, but essential to strengthening families and improving personal health—a business investment with proven returns and an economic necessity.

The average worker in America uses about 17 days of vacation each year. Approximately 52% of American workers are not using all their vacation time. They are leaving a whopping 758 million unused, paid vacation days on the table.

"Time off is understood by many but not practiced enough," Roger explains. "Time off is essential to the personal well-being and professional success of individuals and their businesses. Plus, it benefits the travel industry."

"Unused days off translate to overworked Americans who are stressed, unhappy, and less productive at home and at work," says Dow. "Changing the mindset and behavior of our overwhelmed culture isn't just a boon for the economy; it's the right thing to do."

Dow has been in tourism from the beginning of his career. While in college, he was hired as a lifeguard at one of the Marriott properties in Saddlebrook, N.J. At the time, there were only six Marriott hotels in the U.S.



Today there are over 7,000.

Long story short, he got a job in sales management with Marriott International and stayed with Marriott for 34 years. He rose to be the Senior Vice President of Global and Field Sales.

In 2005 and approaching retirement, he was offered the job as CEO of U.S. Travel, an organization he knew well.

Roger and Linda were looking for a place to settle down, but not in Washington. As CEO, he travels all over the U.S. and can really live anywhere. They looked at many cities including several in Florida. "We attended the Super Bowl in Tampa in 2009," Roger explains, "and we were very impressed with the Tampa Bay area - especially St. Petersburg."

"We found a house and renovated it in Old Northeast - just north of the Vinoy. We love the weather, the parks, the restaurants, all the things to do around here and the people."

Where does the Dow family go for their vacation? "We enjoy Steamboat Springs, Colorado, where we have a second home. We like going there in December to enjoy a white Christmas every year."

Get more information about U.S. Travel at [www.USTravel.org](http://www.USTravel.org).



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## Organizational News...

### GFWC CLEARWATER COMMUNITY WOMAN'S CLUB

For more than 40 years, they have been awarding grants to local charities at their annual Daisy Grants Fashion Show and Luncheon, which is held in the spring. The charities can receive up to \$2000.

In order to receive a grant, the charity must be open to Pinellas County residents, a non-profit organization and the funds must be ear-marked for a specific use. Applications and rules are available at [GFWCClearwatercommunitywomensclub.org](http://GFWCClearwatercommunitywomensclub.org).

The applications must be sent by USPS, postmarked no later than January 9, 2020, and received no later than January 15, 2020. The winners will be notified in late February or early in March 2020, and the grants will be awarded at the Daisy Grants Fashion Show and Luncheon at the Belleair Country Club, on March 31.

Their Annual Luncheon Fashion Show will be Saturday, February 15 at the Belleair Country Club to benefit "Women On The Way," scholarships to St. Petersburg College.

The GFWC Clearwater Community Woman's Club is a non-profit organization, whose members live the volunteer spirit. Meetings are held the third Tuesday of each month from September through May; meetings are at the Clearwater East Library on the campus of St. Petersburg College, 2465 Drew Street, Clearwater, at 11 am, with social time at 10:30 am. For information, E-mail [MoreCCWCinfo@gmail.com](mailto:MoreCCWCinfo@gmail.com).

### SAND KEY CIVIC ASSOCIATION

The Sand Key Civic Organization is a non-partisan, not-for-profit organization of residents and businesses, dedicated to improving the quality of life on Sand Key by researching issues, distributing information and representing our members' views and positions. They participate in The Barrier Island Government Council, The Florida Shore and Beach Preservation Association, and maintain contact with the city and state departments that impact Sand Key. Some board members attend the three-day Florida Shore and Beach Preservation Association conference that occurs yearly all over the state.

They support the Clearwater Sailing Center and they are corporate members. The welcome sign to Sand Key had been damaged and we now have two new signs for our island, thanks to the Association.

Meetings, often with guest speakers, are usually held on the first Wednesday of the month at 7pm in The Sailing Center on Gulf Blvd., and are open to all residents of member condominiums and businesses. Interested individuals are welcome to attend and observe. We're excited to have another new board, low condo membership fees, bylaw changes, and we are eager to initiate new plans to enhance our neighborhood.

They are now members of the Sand Key Sailing Club.

They are happy announce they have a presence on the Internet! Visit [www.sandkeycivicorganization.org](http://www.sandkeycivicorganization.org) to view information of interest to all residents of Sand Key, including copies of upcoming meeting agendas, notes from previously held meetings, happenings at Sand Key and more. Come get to know the board, and help them grow! Introduce yourself at their next meeting!

For more information contact Brian Pelfrey, President, at [skcainc@aol.com](mailto:skcainc@aol.com).

### BELLEAIR SOCIAL CLUB

They meet at 9am every Tuesday in the back of Panera Bread for coffee and socializing. They also meet for dinner at different restaurants on the first and third Sundays, and for lunch on the second and fourth Wednesdays each month.

This organization is open to all seniors, living in the greater Belleair area. There are no dues and couples are encouraged to join the fun. Call Marilyn Daminato, 585-9633.

**FUN! SUN! SAND!**

**11th Annual Beachwalk/Walk**  
A Clearwater Beach Tradition

**Saturday, February 1, 2020**

Walk from Palm Pavilion to Pier 60 & return

Registration: 7:30 am Start: 8:30 am

\$30 per walker (\$35 same-day registration)

\$10 ages 6-18/\$75 Household maximum

Includes full breakfast from Clear Sky Cafe, t-shirt, goody bag, access to the silent auction.

All proceeds go to Religious Community Services (RCS) in their ongoing efforts to provide food and services to Pinellas County residents.

Register at [www.chapelbythesea.net](http://www.chapelbythesea.net) or call 727.446.0430



[www.chapelbythesea.net](http://www.chapelbythesea.net)

## Organizational News...

### CLEARWATER GARDEN CLUB

They meet on the third Saturday of each month at 10:30am, at their Clubhouse on Seminole Street. Meetings are \$5 for members; \$8 for non-members. They also hold demonstrations on the third Saturday each month.

- January 15: Sip and Paint BYOB all paint material provided by the instructor, Kathy Thomas an award winning artist and former High School Art Teacher. \$25 per person.
- January 18: Floral Design & Demonstration with Marion Crane, Accredited Flower Show Judge at 10:30 am. Marion Crane will share Dos and Don'ts of Competitive Floral Design. This is a class for participants to learn from an expert and just in time for area flower shows. \$5 members/\$8 non-members. Light refreshments will be available and an opportunity drawing will be held. Grow and Share Table – Bring a Plant, Take a Plant!
- January 31: Game and Card Party with Lunch and Opportunity Drawings, \$15 includes Lunch
- February 7: Spaghetti Dinner with a 50/50 drawing, \$20.
- February 15: Carnivorous Plant Care and its History at 10:30 am. Learn carnivorous plant care and their history presented by a vegetarian! With over 650 species globally, it's easy to find one that grows for you. Kenny Coogan, of Critter Companions, is a local middle school science and agriculture teacher who co-founded a carnivorous plant club in New York. Coogan grows and sells carnivorous plants in the Tampa area, where he has lived for the past seven years. Light refreshments will be available and an opportunity drawing will be held. Grow and Share Table – Bring a Plant, Take a Plant!
- March 7: Clearwater Garden Club Parking Lot Trunk Sale, 9 – 1 pm. Find a treasure just by walking through our lot and viewing the bargains that many will offer. If you've been paring down on your possessions to "spark joy" and want to sell from your car in our lot the cost will be \$25 per car. To sell inside our building the fee is \$50 per space (only 10 spaces available).

E-mail [ClearwaterGardenClub@gmail.com](mailto:ClearwaterGardenClub@gmail.com), call 316-5504, or visit [ClearwaterGardenClub.com](http://ClearwaterGardenClub.com), for information..

### CLEARWATER BEACH ASSOCIATION

They meet the first Tuesday of the month at the Chapel By-The-Sea, except during the summer. Quarterly happy hours are on going (see their Website).

October 19: The now Annual North Beach Pub Crawl begins at Hooters at 6:30pm, There will be drawings for prizes.

This neighborhood association promotes projects of a civic, recreational and entertainment nature and be a voice to City Government on issues that affect our community. Membership is \$25 per household. Checks made payable to CBA should be mailed to 294 Windward Passage, Suite 408, Clearwater, FL 33767 or visit their website to pay by PayPal.

Contact President Sam Hutkin at [Hutloan@AOL.com](mailto:Hutloan@AOL.com), or visit [ClearwaterBeachAssoc.com](http://ClearwaterBeachAssoc.com) for information.

### BELLEAIR BEACH ISLAND GARDEN CLUB

They start off 2020 with the January 15th meeting at Sacred Land, 8389 Elbow Lane N, St. Petersburg, at 10 am with a 75 minute tour. Lunch will follow at Jungle Prada Tavern, adjacent to Sacred Land.

For more information on Belleair Beach Island Garden Club, contact Marjorie Rose at [rosemarjorie38@yahoo.com](mailto:rosemarjorie38@yahoo.com) or visit [belleairgardenclub.com](http://belleairgardenclub.com).

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# Organizational News...

## PEACE MEMORIAL CONCERTS

Peace Memorial Presbyterian Church 110 South Ft. Harrison, Clearwater is continuing their concert series. The free concerts are every second Sunday at 3pm.

January 13: VOICES & SPIRITS SOAR - This concert is led by Artistic Directors Shenita Berrian and Yetta Hansell. The Tampa Bay Spiritual Ensemble features some of the area's finest voices. They are dedicated to bringing our community inspiring concerts and Black History programs that celebrate African-American traditional music and other works by rising black composers.

February 9: CUPID DOES JAZZ - Almost time for Valentines Day, this concert will put you in the mood. It will feature jazzy renditions of your favorite romantic tunes. Selections by Gershwin, Cole Porter and many more.

March 8: HONORING LUDWIG - The the last concert in the Spring Series, the music honors the 250th anniversary of the birth of Ludwig. Features the Con Brio String Quartet.

## CLEARWATER/ST. PETE SKI & SPORTS CLUB

This all seasons travel and social club is currently looking for single roommates (male or female) and also couples for several 2020 Ski Trips (and also for the African Safari). They offer a Variety of Group Trips: Snow Skiing, Safaris, New Zealand, Bike and Barge and other International destinations

Social club with events planned all year:

- Kayaking, Paddle Boarding, Diving, Snorkeling
- MLB Rays Games, NHL Lightening Games
- Picnics and Camping weekend
- Christmas Party and Monthly Social Meetings (dinner at Mike's Pizza Clearwater)

They are a volunteer not for profit club to promote snow skiing and other physical sports activities. Find them on Facebook or at [www.Snowshark.org](http://www.Snowshark.org), email: [president@Snowshark.org](mailto:president@Snowshark.org).

## 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. Their social activities center around regular parties in their restaurant or at their Tiki-Bar out back.

For the first time, they are offering a Winter Membership program began November 1. It has no initiation fee and monthly dues are \$150, with no food minimum. Winter members can use day dockage, the pool, tiki bar, dining room and other amenities, including participating in weekly parties and host private parties. 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 when the program ends March 31. Call Tom at 447-6000, or e-mail [Office@ClearwaterYachtClub.org](mailto:Office@ClearwaterYachtClub.org).

Learn more at [ClearwaterYachtClub.org](http://ClearwaterYachtClub.org).

## PINELLAS WEAVERS GUILD

Their ROC Day will be January 4, 10am - 1pm at Heritage Village, Largo in the Daniel McMullen House. This is when all the holiday decorations are put away, until next year, and they bring their equipment back out and start working again. It is a lovely event for anyone interested in the fiber arts. All are invited to bring any fiber art they do and join them in "working".

They have been doing this for the last 10 years.

## MILITARY ORDER OF THE WORLD WARS

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

## SONS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

The Clearwater Chapter meets monthly on the third Wednesday at the Dunedin Golf Club, 1050 Palm Avenue at 11:30 to socialize. Lunch begins at noon. Programs normally pertain to the Constitution or Revolutionary history. New members and guests are always welcome. Call Jim Phillips at 447-1616 or email to [JPhillips1936@icloud.com](mailto:JPhillips1936@icloud.com).

## DAUGHTERS OF AMERICAN REVOLUTION

DAR is celebrating their 129th Anniversary this year. The Clearwater Chapter meets monthly on varying dates at the Belleair Country Club. Social hour begins at 11am followed by lunch at 11:30am. Everyone is invited to join. RSVP for meetings with Diane Richardson at 871-9773 or [BradSkate@AOL.com](mailto:BradSkate@AOL.com). Contact Cathy Athanson at 510-7135 or [Dubinwv41@Gmail.com](mailto:Dubinwv41@Gmail.com).

## ISLAND ESTATES WOMEN'S CLUB

Their 12th annual "Pink is Beautiful" fundraiser to benefit the Pinellas County Mammography Voucher Program raised over \$11,000 thanks to local individuals and businesses.

They are gearing up for an awesome year of fun! The year will kick off on January 21st with a luncheon at The Hyatt Regency on Clearwater Beach. A City of Clearwater representative will speak about Home Safety and Storm Preparedness.

Luncheons begin at 11am for social time with program and luncheon 11:45-2pm. Cost is \$25 and reservations are required. Book online @ [www.islandstateswomensclub.org](http://www.islandstateswomensclub.org) or contact Patti Jucha [pattijucha@yahoo.com](mailto:pattijucha@yahoo.com) or 661-477-1741.

Tuesday March 17, 2020 the annual "Spring Fling Scholarship & Fashion Show Fundraiser to benefit graduating Clearwater High School women to further their college educations.

Membership is open to all women EVERYWHERE. They meet through May with a fabulous line up of monthly lunch venues, speakers, activities, happy hours, bowling and even an annual cruise in February. Please visit [islandstateswomensclub.org](http://islandstateswomensclub.org) for a schedule of events. For membership information, call Joan Landreth 727-812-8078. For club information contact Club President, Karen Stevens 727-642-4711.

## 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 with guest speakers. Activities vary from card games to field trips and shows.

The January 7 luncheon meeting will be at Clearwater Country Club. A speaker from the Pinellas County Speakers Bureau will explain the impact of the 2020 census on Florida's political landscape. Reservations must be received by Tuesday, December 31. Enclose a \$20 check payable to Welcome Newcomer Club.

RSVP for the above to Diane McCune, 301-693-0219 or [tucklove@brighthouse.com](mailto:tucklove@brighthouse.com). [WelcomeNewComerClub.com](http://WelcomeNewComerClub.com).

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2 BD | 2 BA | 1,821 SQ FT | U8065078



JUST LISTED FOR \$629,000

670 ISLAND WAY #905 | CLEARWATER BEACH  
3 BD | 2 BA | 1,854 SQ FT | U8062981



OFFERED AT \$2,114,000

501 MANDALAY AVE #1002 | CLEARWATER BEACH  
3 BD + DEN | 3.5 BA | 4,192 SQ FT | U8054122  
WITH 50 FT BOAT SLIP & 2 PARKING SPACES



OFFERED AT \$1,439,000

11 BAYMONT ST. #1206 | CLEARWATER BEACH  
2 BD | 2.5 BA | 1,972 SQ FT | U8026300



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608 OSCEOLA AVE. | CLEARWATER  
5 BD | 5 BA | 4,090 SQ FT | U8036252

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