

NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

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Magazine

INVASION OF CLEAR WATER HARBOR

By Charlie Harbor Harper,
Largo Historical Society

Great naval battles have taken place that changed the fate of nations, won and lost wars, and have been immortalized in stories passed down through the generations. Trafalgar Jutland, and Leyte Gulf bring immediate visions of great navies, the roar of cannons and of admirals like Nelson, Jellicoe, and Nimitz. But have you ever heard of the naval engagements that took place in Clear Water Harbor and at Lowe's Landing? The incident that took place in February of 1862 certainly did not have famous ships or admirals, but it did have intrigue, dangerous weather and adventure.



The area we now call Pinellas County was not quite like it is today; no hotels, no fancy beach and almost no people lived here. A *New York Times* correspondent on board a U.S. Navy ship blockading the Tampa Bay area wrote in 1862: "What a miserable, God-forsaken hole, this portion of Florida is. The land of cadaverous inhabitants, land of mosquitoes and swamps." - **Continued on page 7**

Also in this Issue:

LPGA Coming to Belleair

It is estimated 50,000 people will attend some portion of the May LPGA Golf Tournament at the Pelican Golf Club. Plans are underway to prevent local disruptions - **page 27**

Time to Buy Your Girl Scout Cookies

Over 200 million boxes are sold each year, but cookie sales end March 8. Get yours now before it is too late. - **page 11**

Painting Sunsets

If you enjoy the beach and painting, artist John Comer can teach you techniques to paint a sunset - **page 16**



Boating Safety

Are you one of Florida's 950,000 boat owners? Take a safety class now, and be ready for summer boating weather. - **page 26**

CREDITS



This newsletter is published by GRIFFIN PRODUCTIONS, Inc. and is mailed to every occupied residence in Indian Rocks Beach's zip code 33785. We are not associated with the City of Indian Rocks Beach.

PUBLISHER

Bob & Becky Griffin

ART DIRECTION

Becky Griffin

SALES

727-430-8300

CONTACT INFO

P.O. Box 1314

Indian Rocks Beach, FL 33785

727-430-8300

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1507 Bay Palm Blvd
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CITY MANAGER Gregg Mims 595-2517

MAYOR - Cookie Kennedy

COMMISSIONERS —

Ed Hoofnagle Vice Mayor

Diane Flagg • Phil Hanna • Nick Palomba

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Planning & Zoning: 517-0404

Public Works: Dean Scharmen 595-6889

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Solid Waste/Trash Pickup 595-6889

ELECTRICITY 443-2641

PHONE (RESIDENTIAL) 800-483-4000

PHONE (BUSINESS) 800-483-5000

WATER 464-4000

CABLE (SPECTRUM) 329-5020

EMERGENCIES: 9-1-1

SHERIFF NON-EMERGENCIES 582-6200

SHERIFF DISPATCH 582-6177

IRB FIRE STATION 595-1117

AA & AL-ANON MEETINGS 595-1038

POST OFFICE 596-2894

204 4th Ave. Mon-Fri 8:30-4:30; Sat 9a-12p

IRB LIBRARY 596-1822

Mon-Fri 10-5pm, Sat 10-1pm

IRB HISTORICAL MUSEUM 593-3861

Wed - Sat, 10am to 2pm

IRB HOMEOWNER ASSOC. 692-7867
Joe McCall, President - IRBHome.com

BEACH ART CENTER 596-4331
1515 Bay Palm Blvd., Mon-Fri 8:45am to 4pm

IRB ROTARY, Bruce Sobut, 403-4060
Meets at Jimmy Guana's every Wed. 7:15AM

ACTION 2000 Julie Hoofnagle 400-6672
Meets 2nd Mon each month Beach Art Ctr

LITTLE LEAGUE 409-5024

IRB WELCOME CENTER 595-4575

BEACH FOOD PANTRY 517-2534
1615 First St. M-W-F 10 am-12 pm

BEACH THRIFT STORE 596-8868
Tue & Sat, 10am to 2pm, Thu 5 to 8pm

PINELLAS COUNTY INFO 464-3000

COMMISSION OFFICES 464-3377

Karen Seel 464-3278

STATE:

Senator Jeff Brandes 727-395-2512

Republican, Dist. 24

3637 Fourth St. N., Ste 101 St. Pete

Brandes.Jeff.web@flsenate.gov

Representative Nick DiCeglie 727-588-7090

Republican, District 66

1940 West Bay Drive, Ste 4, Largo

nick.diceglie@myfloridahouse.gov

Governor Ron DeSantis

Ron.DeSantis@myflorida.com

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www.Rubio.Senate.gov

Rick Scott 202-224-5274

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AREA UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE:

Charlie Crist 202-225-5961

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CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

MARCH

- Sunday In Belleair Concert 1
- Antique Alley Event Belleair Bluffs 1
- Belleair Bluffs Garage Sale 7
- Day Light Savings Time Returns 8
- City Workshop - Street Parking 10
- Homeowner's Happy Hour 12
- St Pete Grand Prix 13-15
- Shamrock Run Ulmer Park 14
- A2K Service Saturday 14
- Speaking Of History Heritage Village 15
- Sunday In Belleair Concert 15
- Pinellas Public School Spring Break 16-20
- St Patrick's Day 17
- President Primary Election Day 17
- Spring Begins 19
- Historical Society Spring Luncheon 21
- Keep Pinellas Beautiful 21
- No Public School 23
- History On The Rocks City Hall 24
- Blast Friday Clearwater 27
- Wine Walk Belleair Bluffs 28
- IRB Rotary Pancakes Breakfast 28
- GreenFest 28
- Garage Sale McGough Park 28
- Pawfest Largo Central Park 28

APRIL

- April Fool's Day 1
- Census Day 1
- Sea Turtle Awareness Day 4
- Rotary Runs the Beach 4
- IRB City Wide Garage Sale 4-5
- Homeowner's Happy Hour 9
- Sugar Sands Festival 10-26
- Good Friday Public Schools Closed 10
- Stations Of The Cross on the Beach 10
- IRB Easter Egg Hunt 11
- Holocaust Remembrance Day 12
- Easter 12
- Dyngus Day 13
- City Commission Meeting 14
- Coffee With A Cop 14
- Federal Tax Day 15
- Action2000 Mixer 16
- IRB Beach Fest 18
- A2k Service Saturday 18
- International Tree Day McGough Park 18
- Mainsail Art Show - St Petersburg 18-19
- Speaking Of History Heritage Village 19
- Earth Day 22
- GreenKids Earth Day Celebrati on 22
- Ramadan Begins 23
- Blast Friday Clearwater 24
- Arbor Day 26

INDIAN ROCKS BEACH NEIGHBORHOOD NEWSLETTER

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

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

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

Thank you for reading,
Bob & Becky Griffin, 727-430-8300
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Did You Know



WINDSURF MIDWINTERS ARE MARCH 12 - 15

Clearwater Community Sailing Center's annual multi-class windsurfing regatta regularly attracts both national and

international windsurfers. It showcases remarkable skill and competition all while drawing appreciation to Pinellas County's beautiful Intracoastal waters. For information about spectating, competing, or windsurfing lessons and rentals, contact Clearwater Community Sailing Center at 517-7776

COMMUNITY CLEANUP The City will conduct its quarterly Community Cleanup Week on May 4-6. That week, you are allowed to put out larger trash items and the city will pick them up at no charge. This does not include chemicals, TVs and boat trailers. If you have any questions, call Public Works Department at 595-6889.

GRADUATES Pinellas County Schools are celebrating a record high graduation rate for the 2018-2019 school year. Official reports show the district's graduation rate rose to 88.44%, up 2.44% from last year's record high, and more than 16.5% higher than 2013. Pinellas County achieved the highest graduation rate among the state's ten largest districts.

CODE ENFORCEMENT Indian Rocks Beach is committed to neighborhood maintenance and upkeep. They would like to make you aware of some of the city's ordinances:

- All vehicles on a residential property must be in running condition and have current tags.
- Boats, trailers, and campers with current tags must be parked in your yard or driveway.
- Trash and recycle carts must be concealed from street view. Carts must be kept in one's back or side yards, carport and/or garage; or concealed by fencing, shrubs or hedges.

For more Information, call Code Enforcement at 595-2517.

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and More...

TAMPA BAY UKULELE SOCIETY

The Library is offering an introduction to the ukulele. If you are interested in learning more about playing the ukulele, sign up at the Library. Don't have a ukulele? Come anyway! You can check one out from the IRB Library or Largo Public Library; check with the libraries for more information. The ukulele classes will be on Tuesdays, March 3 and 24, at 5pm in the Library. This is a FREE class and ages 10-99 are welcome. Class is limited to 12. Please sign up with the Library.



PARKING LOT CLOSED The City of Indian Rocks Beach closed the Keegan Clair Park parking lot, as a result of a planned upgrade to the Master Lift Station by Pinellas County. It is tentatively scheduled to be reopened in November

DYNGUS DAY This Polish Holiday is always the Monday after Easter. After the long Lenten holiday, Dyngus Day is a day of fun. Indian Rock's Crabby Bill's has one of the area's largest Dyngus Day Celebrations. It begins around 4pm, on Monday, April 13th with lots of Polish food, drinks and music. And Water! Dress accordingly, there will be a wet zone. Crabby Bill's is located at 405 Gulf Blvd.

EARTH DAY Celebrate Earth Day's 50th Anniversary, as well as the 20th Anniversary of the Florida Botanical Gardens, in the gardens at 12211 Walsingham Road, Largo, Saturday, April 18th, from 10am-2pm.

Throughout the morning, teach-ins will be held in the auditorium on conservation and pollination. Browse booths from local nonprofit organizations focused on sustainability, environmental management, and more. This event is free to the public, but donations will be accepted.

DISPOSABLE CHOPSTICKS Each day, the U.S. manufactures about 130 million pairs of disposable chopsticks. That translates to 45 billion pairs each year. Globally, 80 billion pairs are discarded each year. In China alone, the equivalent of 3.8 million trees are used to manufacture disposable chopsticks, yearly. That is a lot of wood being wasted, while the world is trying to increase its forest coverage.



Disposable chopsticks also pose risks to consumers. China has production standards, but very lax enforcement. Industrial-grade sulfur, paraffin, hydrogen peroxide and insect repellent are among the harmful chemicals Chinese investigations have exposed during production.

More and more, people are purchasing their own permanent chopsticks and bring them to restaurants when they dine out. They are easy to find, inexpensive and can be works of art. Quality bamboo chopsticks, made in the U.S., can last 2-3 years, but for health purposes, it is advisable to replace them every 3 to 6 months, depending on the frequency of use.

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

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CIVIL WAR INVASION continued

There may have been 100 families scattered over the entire peninsula, we now call Pinellas, when the Civil War started in 1861. The only stores and gathering spots in the central part of the area were on the bluff overlooking Clear Water Harbor, and an even smaller community about four miles south down the bay called Lowe's Landing in today's southwest Largo. Both locations had docks or wharfs for coastal schooners to load and off-load cargo.

By 1862, the federal government had implemented a naval blockade of the South from Virginia on the north to Texas on the southwest Gulf Coast. The Tampa Bay area was included in the Gulf Blockading Squadron which used Egmont Key (and Ft De Soto) as a local staging point. The headquarters of this squadron was located in Key West. With its vast and mostly vacant coastline, Florida was used by the blockade runners throughout the war. Clear Water Harbor and Lowe's Landing were no exception. Fort Brooke, a Confederate stronghold, (in present day Tampa) was raided numerous times including two federal bombardments by gunships of the U.S. Navy. The small outposts along the Florida Gulf Coast were raided by the Federals for food and provisions as well as to stop the flow of military goods coming in and trade goods going out.

Most of the residents of this area of Florida remained loyal to the State of Florida and the Confederacy. There were, however, some in the area who chose to stay loyal to the Union. For the most part these "loyalists" found living in the area very difficult during the war; most moved to Key West, though some stayed on Egmont Key under protection of the Union Navy. Some who stayed were Union spies or informers. When ships came into Clear Water Harbor or Lowe's Landing these Union spies would on occasion make contact with Federal ships, giving locations and what stores were being loaded and unloaded.

On the cold and windy morning of February 17, 1862, the Federal gunboat U.S.S. *Ethan Allen* anchored north of Clear Water Harbor; the mission was to pick up a local Union Spy, Mr. Girard, who would pilot the *Ethan Allen* down the coast and into the narrow passage (Little Pass) of Clear Water Harbor. On the same day, the *Allen* would be supplied with provisions by another local agent of the Federals, a Mr. Griner. Due to the strong winds and heavy surf, the *Allen* was delayed in picking up the spies, but by late in the day they were ready to head south toward Clear Water Harbor and a date with local history.

Leading the coastline around what is now Hudson, and heading south along the coast, the gunboat the *Ethan Allen*, under the command of Acting Volunteer Lt. William B. Eaton, made the entrance to the Clear Water Harbor just after sundown on the evening of February 18, 1862. Now was the moment of decision for the young lieutenant. As full darkness fell, Mr. Girard, acting as a pilot, started to enter the narrow passage. First, however, to avoid suspicion from the local residents, the U.S.S. *Allen* raised the Confederate flag and proceeded into the harbor. The gunboat carried a hand-picked crew. In addition to Lt. Eaton, Mr. George Faxon the Surgeon's Steward and Union refugee Mr. J.E. Whitehurst, there were ten well armed sailors. Under cover of darkness and flying the Confederate flag, the *Allen* sailed toward the dock at Clear Water. The crew, fully prepared to fight, was surprised indeed when it found no crews aboard the sloops *Atlanta* and *Caroline* anchored in the bay, or the schooner *Spittfire* that was tied to the dock. Working with full speed, the Yankee sailors took possession of the ships making them ready for sea. Leaving just two on board the captured ships, the *Allen* made its way south toward Lowe's Landing where Union spies had said yet another ship was preparing for sea. Arriving at Lowe's Landing early the next morning, the *Allen* found the sloop *Cayto* tied to the dock. Within moments *Ethan Allen* sailors boarded the sloop, took the supplies and burned the *Cayto*. A history of the Lowe family notes that J.T. Lowe's three-year-old son, Wesley, was hiding in a nearby mangrove and witnessed the Union forces board and commandeer his father's ship, the *Cayto*. He allegedly ran to his mother and said, "*Cayto* gone." With the *Cayto* burned, Lt. Eaton and his crew, had completed a very successful raid. They took the captured prize ships and headed back into the safety of the Gulf of Mexico. Not a shot was fired; the crew of the *Ethan Allen* captured or sank four Confederate ships. This brave action prevented the blockade runners from heading back toward Havana fully loaded with local goods to trade for arms and war supplies for the Confederate Army.

During the remainder of the war, the sleepy little town of Clear Water Harbor would be raided numerous times by Union ships looking for provisions and blockade runners. So far as we have been able to determine, Lowe's Landing was not attacked again. J.T. Lowe was off fighting for the Confederacy when his ship was taken. At the end of the war, Lowe was with Lee in Virginia. He and his brother, Alfred, had fought the good fight and now they walked home, all the way from Virginia. According to Lowe family history, when young Wesley Lowe saw a man with a long beard and as approach his home, the young child fearfully hid and his mother fainted. That bearded "stranger" was none other than Capt. J.T. Lowe returning to his homestead.

After war's end, Capt. Lowe returned to the sea, once again sailing in and out of Lowe's Landing, which would soon take a new name – Anona. The area so long lost to history is now known to be located in southwest Largo. Clear Water Harbor would be Clearwater, a major vacation and tourist location and the county seat of what in 1912 would become Pinellas County. And the land that the newspaper correspondent in 1862 called a "... God-forsaken hole..." well we all know what happened to that place, it is the most beautiful of all locations, Clearwater and Largo.


Grateful acknowledgment goes to James A. Schnur, author, historian, and friend of local history buffs. The book, "*Heritage Villagers*," written by Schnur was quoted in this article. I also wish to acknowledge the assistance and friendship of local historian, Robert Delack of Clearwater/Largo. Material used in this article was also obtained from the National Archives and Records Administration, Washington D.C. and from the book, "*War of the Rebellion*," by Charles W. Stewart, July, 1984.



Captain Lowe after the Civil War

Photo Credit: Pinellas County History Society

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MARITAL BLISS...DISRUPTED (PART I)

by Ray Ferrara, ProVise Management Group

This three-part series will deal with death, dementia and divorce and the devastating impact these three "Ds" can have on a marriage.

While death often is mostly associated with older folks, it can strike at any age. Our experience shows that most spouses are not prepared for the financial and personal issues.



Did you do any preplanning with a funeral home? Did you write an obituary and choose a picture? How will the long-distance friends be notified? Did you express a desire for charitable donations? What Social Security benefits will be available to the surviving spouse? Did you leave the passwords for all of your digital life, especially those involving money? There is much more to consider.

At the most basic level, it is important to have the current documents in place like a will, living trust, power-of-attorney for financial and health care, and a living will. Some may do it, but fail to update the documents on a regular basis. Go see your attorney NOW!

The first step following a death is to visit with the attorney, the accountant and the financial advisor. Do both spouses know who they are? Have both met with them? When is the last time you checked all of the beneficiary designations on your life insurance, annuities, retirement plans, etc.? Get copies of each beneficiary form.

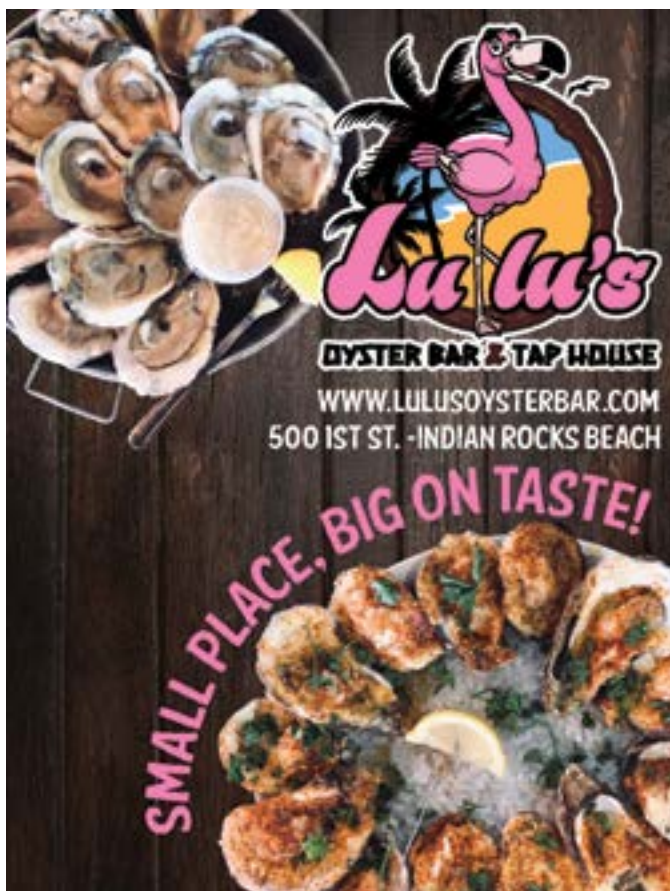
A bank, savings or investment account with only one name is frozen and the surviving spouse will not have immediate access. If it isn't necessary to have the property in only one person's name, consider making the registration joint with rights of survivorship or tenants by the entirety.

Do you have enough life insurance to pay off the debts (mortgage, cars, student loans, credit cards, estate taxes, etc.?), provide for replacement of income, and perhaps to cover the cost of education for the children?

We advise surviving spouses to avoid making any major financial decisions for at least six months, perhaps as long a year. This is an emotionally stressful time. Take it one day at a time.

One of the best ways to prepare for death from a financial standpoint is with a written financial plan. In one place you will have net worth statement, cash flow analysis, budget, tax information, retirement plans, life insurance, education planning, investments, estate plan and much more. Take advantage of our complimentary one-hour consultation.

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HELP US HELP YOU: THE 2020 CENSUS

By Karen Williams Seel, Pinellas County Commissioner

I love the movie, Jerry Maguire. The highly-acclaimed 1996 romantic comedy-drama starred Tom Cruise. If you've never seen it, it's about a sports agent who—after being fired by a top agency—is trying to make it on his own with just one client: major-league football player Rod Tidwell, played by Cuba Gooding, Jr. In one scene, where Tidwell is being especially difficult, Jerry implores Tidwell to help him by saying, "Help me, help you. Help me, help you." In another famous scene, Tidwell is on the phone with Jerry and has him yell, "Show me the money," over and over to prove that Jerry is committed to getting Tidwell a higher-paying contract and stay his agent. Film critics say that Cuba Gooding, Jr.'s performance in that scene won him the Oscar.

The movie reminds me that when asking for the best results we do need to help others to help ourselves. That includes, without a doubt, participating in the 2020 Census.

America gets one chance each decade to count its entire population – the 2020 Census is your chance to make sure we get our fair share as a community. The census count determines both the size of our state's political representation and how billions of dollars are spent on federal and local programs. Public transit, affordable housing, school lunches, Medicaid and SNAP nutrition assistance are just a few examples of programs that rely on census data. This spring, your home will get an invitation by mail to take the census online. Your response is secure, confidential and protected by law. This short survey is a civic duty laid out in the Constitution and it's also vitally important to our community's future.

You can be assured that your information will be handled

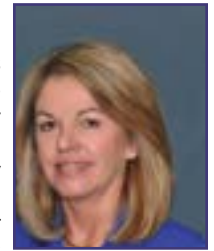
with complete confidentiality. The Census Bureau collects information only to produce statistics. By law, they cannot share your data with other government agencies, including immigration authorities, law enforcement or courts of law. Federal law also prohibits any government agency from using your personal census information against you for any reason whatsoever.

The U.S. Census Bureau will begin to contact households through a series of mailings. Most people will receive a postcard with instructions on how to complete the questionnaire online or over the phone. Some might receive a paper form to mail back if they live in an area without broadband Internet access. In addition, in early May 2020, the Bureau will send field staff to visit households who have not yet responded - gathering the information in person.

The 2020 Census will collect information about each household (number of people living there, home ownership, phone number) and the people living in that household, including everyone's name, sex, age and race or ethnicity. The census will not include a question about citizenship. The census collects less personal information than many other basic government services, such as your school enrollment or tax returns. The census will never ask for your social security number.

Help us help you count in the 2020 Census. That way we can "show you the money" and improve life in Pinellas County. For information about the 2020 Census and local projects funded with federal dollars, visit PinellasCensus.org.

As always, I welcome your feedback and concerns. Please email me at kseel@pinellascounty.org.



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Real Estate News

WHOOMP... 'DER IT GOES! IRB real estate flying off the shelves

By Gordon Obarski, Real Estate Broker Gordon Realty House



Saying that homes and condos in IRB are selling quickly is putting it mildly. Of the 21 transactions in Indian Rocks Beach (IRB) so far this year, nearly 40% were actively listed for only 13 days or less! Buyers who blinked missed out.

Nationally, homes are listed about 86 days before they sell. This year, properties sold in IRB were listed an average of only 64 days--6 fewer days than in 2019 and nearly a month less than the 88 days it took to sell an IRB property in 2018.

Nationally, housing inventory dropped 14% in January, the steepest decline since we began measuring it. In IRB, the "drought" is so pronounced that even properties listed "awhile" are selling...although the definition of "awhile" has changed somewhat. A 4-BR single-family home advertised for over 4 months at \$625,000 closed in February at \$13,000 OVER asking price. A luxury, high-end, aggressively priced townhouse sold for within 3% of asking price after sitting on the market for half a year. A 5-BR canal-front home, priced at \$1.6 million, sold only 4% under asking, after being available for 3 months. At one time, 3 months would have been considered a relatively short listing span. Today, it's often the poster child for "languishing" on the market. And, something you rarely see: There was even a price INCREASE on a property in February.

Locally, the lack of "stuff to buy" is putting a great deal of pressure on our real estate market. With little new construction to speak of and existing homeowners staying firmly planted, we find ourselves in a virtual stalemate. Some beachfront owners bought Gulf front properties in the \$350,000 range a couple decades ago while they were still working and woke up one morning to find themselves retired on a fixed income in a home worth well over \$1 million. That's great except cashing out and buying anything else in town—even off the water—would cost more than keeping their Gulf view. So they sit. Behind the scenes, there's also the "family affair" phenomenon. Out of desperation to find a beach house for a prospective buyer, I knocked on the door of an IRB owner who lives in Belleair and asked if he might consider selling his beach house. His response: "I'd love to sell it but my kids and grandkids would never talk to me again!" Generations clinging to their cherished traditions of good "family times" in IRB are also contributing to market stagnancy.

List prices and days-on-the-market truly reflect supply and demand's imbalance. Tight inventory here locally is directly to thank for median sales prices being up another 18% in IRB in the first seven weeks of 2020 as compared to all of last year. Can there be any better news for sellers and owners! And, somewhat surprising, too, given the "slim pickins": There were 7 more sales so far this year than during the same time last year.

Real estate represents 16% of our state's economy. In fact, when combined with leasing, it's Florida's #1 industry. Not citrus...not tourism...but REAL ESTATE! The real estate biz is good—we just need more of it. And better sooner than later.

Source: Stellar MLS

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GIRL SCOUT COOKIES

It's that time of year again; time to buy your Girl Scout cookies.

The Girl Scouts were started by Juliette Gordon Low in Savannah, Georgia. A meeting in 1912 with Sir Robert Baden-Powell, the founder of Boy Scouts, inspired Juliette to establish Girl Scouts.

Girl Scout cookie sales are the major fund-raiser for our local scout troops. The girls have been selling cookies since 1917 when a troop in Oklahoma had the first cookie sale. In 1922, *The American Girl*, the Girl Scout's magazine, suggested cookie sales to other troops and provided recipes. The first recipe was a sugar cookie that the girls baked the cookies themselves. In 1933, the Girl Scouts organized an official sale of homemade cookies with displays in the windows of local utilities. By 1936, they started licensing commercial bakers to produce the cookies in mass production.

During World War II, the Girl Scouts sold calendars in addition to a few cookies. Because of shortages of flour, sugar and butter, baking was nearly impossible. In 1942, a box held 48 cookies - either chocolate or vanilla - and were limited to two boxes per family.

Nationwide, the Girl Scouts sell over 200 million boxes per year. The girls have always sold cookies to relatives, friends, and even door-to-door to their neighbors. In recent years, because of safety concerns, an increased emphasis has been placed on cookie booths, allowing girls to sell cookies from tables in public areas under the supervision of adult troop leaders and parents. Door-to-door sales are discouraged.

Each Girl Scout Council operates its own cookie sale. 100% of the proceeds stay in the local Girl Scout Council, including the portion that goes directly to the troop selling the cookies. Revenues are used to pay for Girl Scout events and activities, plus maintenance of the councils and Girl Scout camps. Many troops also sponsor a program that send cookies to troops overseas.

Two companies, Little Brownie Bakers (owned by The Ferrero Group), and ABC Bakers (a subsidiary of InterBake Foods) makes and boxed the cookies sold nationwide. The Girl Scout Cookies found in west central Florida are made by Little Brownie Baker.

Thin Mints make up 25% of their sales. Other currently available cookie varieties are Samoas, Tagalongs, Do-Si-Dos, Trefoils, S'mores, Lemon-Ups, and Toffee-tastics.

In addition to raising funds for each troop and the organization as a whole, the fund-raising is intended to teach Girl Scouts valuable skills in planning, teamwork, finance, organization, communication, and goal setting.

The Tampa Bay area is part of the Girl Scouts of West Central Florida. If you want to join the Girl Scouts locally, go to GSWCF.org or call 1-800-881-4475.

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Restaurant News

BEST CHILI WINNERS

January 26th, two dozen people competed in the annual Backwaters on Sand Key Chili Cookoff. The winners are:

- 1st Place - Carrie Anne Hillard
- 2nd Place - Rob Walsh (last year's winner)
- 3rd Place - Mary Lonnemann



This is the fifth time in five years Hillard, a resident of Seminole, has been a winner - three times she has been in first place. What is her secret?

"I am using a recipe I have developed over the past 8 years," says Hillard. "I cook the meat and chili for an hour, and then I remove the juices and put them in a second pot, add spices and make a roux. Then I add that back into the main chili and simmer for about 3-4 hours."

Carrie Anne says that she may not enter next year to allow someone else a chance to take the Championship.

One family, the O'Briens, had entrees from three generations. Butch (the 2013 winner), his son Kevin, and granddaughter Caitlin submitted their best chili. Caitlin came in fifth.

Congratulations to all who participated and sampled.

FRENCHY'S TO GO The Frenchy's group is opening something new. Sometimes called a "ghost kitchen," with no seats or tables, the new facility will only prepare delivery and take-out orders. Located at the corner of US 19 and State Road 580 in an old Chick-Fil-A building, not being on the beach will open up a completely new market for them. The concept is still being developed and is not open yet.

TJ'S NEW DECK COMPLETED

TJ's Italian Café remodeled their outside deck and its roof. The result makes eating outside cooler and rain-free. The redesign and construction were done by Eric Meyers, of Dynamic Property Services, who is based in Indian Rocks - keeping it local. Find T.J.'s at 1515 Gulf Blvd. Call them at 596-1515.



25 YEARS OLD Pompeo Gallace bought a small convenience store at the south end of Indian Rocks Beach in 1995—and the rest is Italian history. Pompeo, his son Luigi, and their family have built Villa Gallace into one of the most respected authentic Italian Restaurants on the beach.

CLOSED The Globe is already gone. The small family restaurant at 12125 Indian Rocks Road, near Anona Elementary, was sold.

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

Restaurant News



ANECNOTE BREWING COMPANY
 Craft Beer breweries are popping up everywhere - now there is one in Indian Rocks Beach. Anecdote Brewing Company opened in late February. "Anecdote

Brewing, like a good anecdote, is unique and memorable with beers that might just surprise you," says owner Philip Anderson. "The newest and closest brewery to the Gulf Beaches is proud to call Indian Rocks Beach its home and looks forward to putting this town on the map with the best brews in Florida." It is located next to the CVS store at 321 Gulf Blvd, Indian Rock Beach.



DA POLLANI'S CELEBRATES FIRST YEAR Falino and his family opened their Italian restaurant in Largo one year ago next month. For the last year, he and the family have worked hard to make it the kind of restaurant you want to come back to over and over. Falino and his wife, Antonella, are from Carini, Provincia Di Palermo (Sicily). Pictured here are (Lt to Rt) daughter Alessia, Falino, Chef Antonella, and daughter Christina. They are located just over the bridge at 13688 Walsingham Rd. (near Starbucks). Call 239-7855 for reservations and take-out. See their menu at DaPollanis.com.



SPGGTACULAR Speggtacular a new breakfast place, opened in January in the location of now closed The Globe at 12125 Indian Rocks Road. Specializing in breakfast and lunch, their breakfast menu includes benedicts, crepes, waffles, omelets and lots of fresh fruit. They have 10 years of experience and operate two other locations, one in South Clearwater Beach and one at 7924 Ulmerton Road in Largo. www.speggtacular.com



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Bar & Restaurant News



MAGGIE MAE'S CELEBRATES 11 Maggie Mae's on the Bluffs, has now been open in The Bluffs for eleven years. One of the most popular breakfast/lunch spots, each year they continue to win awards for both - Best Breakfast and Best Lunch (The Belleair Bee, People's Choice.) If you haven't been lately, stop in for a great meal. Find them in the Bonfish Plaza.



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NEW BREAKFAST SPOT

Benedicts, now open in Largo, just east of Belleair Bluffs next to the railroad crossing, is known for their breakfast and also serves a great lunch. They have beer and wine available with dine-in meals.



"Benedicts is a great place for breakfast or lunch," says owner Ali Ismail. "We are known for our omelets and a great quiche," Ali adds. "Customers tell us we have the 'best quiche' they have ever had and we sell whole quiches to take home."

"We also have home-cooked breads," Ali continues, "and one of our most popular items is our signature cabbage brisket soup. The City of Largo was a pleasure to work with and the people here are extremely nice. Largo has welcomed us with open arms."

The new store is open from 7am to 3pm Mon-Sat and 7-2 on Sundays with a very popular Sunday Brunch. This is their fourth Pinellas County location. Other locations include Pinellas Park, Clearwater, and Dunedin. Find the Largo restaurant at 201 West Bay, just west of the railroad tracks or call 444-0371. See their menu at Benedicts.com.



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NEWSUSHI RESTAURANT

Shomi Sushi and Seafood opened in Largo recently. You can dine in on all the normal sushi items with classic, tempura, and specialty rolls and seafood (broiled, fried and spicy), beer, wine and saki, or have it delivered by DoorDash.



They are open seven days a week, during the week at 4pm and Saturday and Sundays at 11am. Find them at 13680 Walsingham Road, near Starbucks. Call them at 400-5535.

STICKER SHOCK, YEAR AFTER YEAR.....

By Tom Smith Owner of GHD Construction Services

Although most real estate professionals tend to quote home values based strictly upon the living area square footage of a home, this is at best an "average" valuation that doesn't take into consideration many factors in a home. Is a home elevated per FEMA requirements, how many bathrooms, age of the home, and especially all the additional square footage of roofed area for porches, garages, verandas, etc., are all factors that have to be considered in order to obtain an accurate home value.

With that in mind, how does an informed customer determine a realistic value for a particular home? Equally important, how does a prospective home buyer accurately determine the increased cost of a new home in Pinellas from last year, this year, or a possible future cost should they decide to wait 12-24 months to build their dream home? There are in fact statistics that we see in the Sunday newspapers stating inflationary costs, and these prove to be somewhat accurate based upon the "average" living area square footage. However, what is a realistic and true cost increase for a new home today?

I'm glad you asked! Being the only builder with a model home along the beaches in Pinellas, for the exact same home with the exact specifications, I am experiencing inflationary cost increases each quarter, and the reasons for these uncontrollable additional costs vary. For instance, last year new building codes went into effect, mandating new construction items. Then, "creeping inflation" is the curse in our industry, as prices escalate based upon volume and supply and demand. Government has also been a culprit, as new impact fees get passed in certain municipalities raising costs sometimes thousands of dollars per home. Try as we do, these items are not controllable by contractors.

What does this mean in dollars and cents? Doing everything I can to keep costs as low as possible for my customers, our model home has increased about 11% this past year. That's great for those that already purchased at the lower price and are enjoying the 11% return on investment, much higher than they realize in their stock investment portfolio. It's not so good for those that are seriously considering a new home but did not pull the trigger last year. My best "guestimate" is that our industry will experience a 6% - 9% home cost increase in 2020.

Some folks are waiting for retirement which is understandable, yet many of my customers are buying at today's price, realizing that when the home is complete, they are one year closer to their retirement years. I realize how difficult a decision is to invest (transfer) savings into a new home investment, but remember that a new home along the Pinellas beaches will most probably offer a much higher return than today's stock investments. And..... you end up with a beautiful new energy efficient, hurricane resistant raised home for you family to enjoy for generations to come.

In March, GHD Construction Services Inc. will commence construction on a new waterfront home, with even more bells & whistles than our present model. Feel free to come by our existing model and speak with our sales team with any questions you may have for a new home.

GHD Construction Services, Inc. has constructed 6,000 homes since 1971, and has a new model home at 239 144th Ave., Madeira Beach. If you have any questions pertaining to new home construction, feel free to email me directly at: info@ghdcsi.com, or request a meeting at our new model.



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PAINTING SUNSETS WITH A TWIST

"Some painters transform the sun into a yellow spot. Others transform a yellow spot into the sun..."

Pablo Picasso

By Bob Griffin

Did you ever witness a breathtaking sunset and say, "I wish I could paint that?" If so, local artist and self-declared beach bum John Comer can help you do just that with his "Sunsets With A Twist" art classes.

Comer, an artist for over 30 years, has been in Indian Rocks Beach 17 years. He has been teaching art for nearly two decades and offers Art Therapy in over three dozen retirement communities. He does 20 of these per week; that averages about 60 classes per month—in addition to his "Twist" classes on the beach.



Comer has also done mural work throughout the United States as well as internationally. He offers private painting classes inside 18 On The Rocks and samples of his work are hanging inside. Many have nothing to do with sunsets, and most are for sale. More samples can be found on his website, 99ShadesofCrazy.com.

Comer has taught hundreds of would-be-artists how to paint, right

here on the beach with their toes in the sand.

"I had some trouble getting started," Comer says. "What started with only two or three people quickly grew to a dozen under two or three tents. One day, two sheriff officers walked up and asking to see my permit."

Comer not only did not have a permit, he did not know he needed one. So, temporarily, he moved the easels onto a participant's patio and continued painting the sunset.

"I have worked out my permitting problems with the City, State and Federal Government and now can again offer my Painting With A Twist classes on the beach," he explains.

Classes are very popular and are limited to about a dozen people. Each cost \$45 and includes three hours of personal instruction, a paint board, brushes, paint and a great experience. You bring your own refreshments.

His beach classes are not regularly scheduled, but he targets one or two Saturdays or Sunday a month. If you would like to join the fun, register online at www.IRBEvents.com or on FaceBook - Sunsets with a Twist.

Comer is also available for private events and parties.



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BEACH TREASURE HUNTER

"Today is the day." That is what Al Howry says every day when he heads out the door to a beach somewhere with his Minelab 800 Equinox Metal Detector.

Howry, an admitted snowbird, temporarily lives on Indian Shores. He likes to get to the beach early and search for buried treasure. Sometimes it is a small coin; sometimes it is something much bigger and more valuable.

"I don't do it for the money," says Al. "I am retired. It gives me something to do that is pretty interesting."



He and his wife are known to go to any beach — from Honeymoon Island to Pass-A-Grille — where he pulls out his metal detector. "It pays to go where the people are or have been recently," adds Al. Al is from Pickerington, Ohio. He has been snowbirding in Pinellas County for four or five years. He has owned a metal detector for almost as long. "There are a lot of differences in detectors," Al says. "Some only give you little beeps. Some show a digital readout. Some do both. The one I have was \$800."

"I wear headphones so the beeping does not disturb surrounding sunbathers and the headphones help me hear the beep clearer. Different types of metals make different types of sounds."

Metal detectors put out a magnetic field. It only responds to metals: iron, aluminum, stainless steel, silver, gold and titanium.

In January, Howry made a major find. While sweeping the beach on New Year's Eve, his Minelab 800 found something big buried in the sand. It turned out to be a very large USF college ring. You could still read the name inscribed on the band - lancarlo Collado. Howry tracked down Collado through FaceBook who drove to Indian Shores to retrieve his ring. "He tried to pay me, but I refuse," Al says. "I was just happy to see them reunited."

Howry has also found money (small change). Sometimes the coins are very old and worth something. Because of this, he has become educated in the value of old coins.

So, if one day you see Howry on the beach, or someone like him, remember they just might find one of your lost keepsakes one day. Until the next big find, they will be satisfied with the mystery of the hunt, and a little spare change.

BEST KING CAKE

Recently the Tampa Bay Times held a contest to decide who offers the best King Cake in Tampa Bay. Out of the four Tampa Bay bakeries, our own Café de Paris - was number one!. Ten out of ten judges picked Xavier and Valerie's King Cake as best.

A King Cake, sometimes referred to as a three kings' cake, is a French tradition associated with Epiphany and pre-Lenten celebrations culminating n Fat Tuesday.

What started roughly 300 years ago as a dry French bread-type dough with sugar on top and a bean inside, comes in many varieties. Today they have a small figurine, called a fève, hidden inside. The person who gets the fève in their serving receives good fortune and must provide next years cake.



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INDIAN ROCKS TACKLE
The Oldest Business In IRB

By Bob Griffin, Publisher

Indian Rocks Tackle, the oldest continuously operated business in Indian Rocks Beach, is even older than the City itself, by a few months. April will be the shop's 65th anniversary.

In the early 1950s, local businessman Jimmy Frank bought half the block between 13th and 14th Avenues fronting on Gulf Blvd. - a two-lane poorly paved road. With only a few hundred residents, there was not much around Indian Rocks then - the old IRB Fishing Pier was across the street.

In the middle of the property was the two-story, white building where Pajanos Pizza is located. Jimmy lived upstairs and leased the store downstairs. It was a variety of retail concepts; none stayed long.

To the south was a basic flat-topped concrete building. He leased it to a lady who opened a women's clothing store before eventually selling it to Ken McMichael. Together, Jimmy and Ken opened Indian Rocks Tackle and Paint in 1955, the same year the City of Indian Rocks incorporated.

Being across the street from the IRB pier, they sold bait and fishing supplies, but business was slow. To increase sales, they included paint and hardware products.

"My parents and I would come to IRB in the '50s and stay in our RV in the trailer park at 7th Avenue where they built The Cove. It was behind the Haven Beach Hotel," Donna Greenway, owner of Indian Rocks Tackle, recalls.

"My parents bought a house in Seminole. I met Bill in Clearwater and we got married - young. One day Bill was talking to Ken McMichael who asked Bill if he wanted to buy the place," Donna explains. "Bill jumped at the deal. He loved to fish. I thought he was crazy. We bought it in April of 1971. We were barely 21."

Initially, the Greenways leased the south end of the building to a small restaurant - The Islander. They expanded the store to include a scuba diving operation.

The Islander did not last long and was replaced by a real estate office. Years later, Bill and Donna expanded the shop to the south encompassing the realty office. They did a full remodel in 2005 to what you see today.

It has been a family run business since the beginning. Even their son, Bill Jr. worked there on weekends. "Basically, Billy grew up in the store," says Donna. Bill Sr died of cancer in 2011 and Donna runs the shop mostly by herself now. Although, her grandson Ollie loves to hang out in the shop and has a section he calls his own.



Indian Rocks Tackle is located at 1301 N. Gulf Blvd.

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CIRCLE OF HEROES

The Circle of Heroes is the nation's first-of-its-kind underwater dive memorial honoring our veterans. It officially opened August 5, 2019, putting Tampa Bay in the national and international spotlight.

Located roughly 10 miles off the shore of Clearwater, Florida at a depth of 40 feet, Circle of Heroes is currently made up of twelve life-size concrete statues representing the men and women serving in all branches of the U.S. Armed Forces. The centerpiece of the circle is a four-foot, 5,830-pound monument, featuring bronze crests to represent the United States Air Force, Army, Coast Guard, Marines and Navy.

The idea to create the memorial is credited to longtime St. Petersburg College professor Dr. Heyward Mathews. The local biologist has been part of the diving community on the west coast of Florida for a half-century. Mathews wanted to honor the men and women of the military in a unique way, with a reef that serves our service members, environment and community.

Circle of Heroes is a therapeutic dive site for disabled veterans suffering from PTSD, depression and trauma. Since its opening, dozens of veterans have dived the site to feel a sense of peace and tranquility unlike any other. Not only does the memorial help veterans cope with pain and loss, but the statues will hopefully become an artificial reef to help sustain marine life in gulf waters.

People from around the world are already traveling to the St. Petersburg/Clearwater area to visit the iconic Circle of Heroes. The increase in dive-related tourism will help support and grow new local businesses. SCUBA diving is the fourth fastest growing sport in America. Circle of Heroes is expected to support 84 new jobs, with an economic impact exceeding \$7.6 million per year (Fishkind and Associates, 2017).

By the end of 2020, the goal is to add an additional twelve statues to complete the 100-foot Circle of Heroes. The next statue to be submerged will honor Seaman Apprentice William R. Flores. While serving in the U.S. Coast Guard, he died saving the lives of his shipmates.

When the Cutter Blackthorn was sinking off Tampa Bay's coast in January 1980, Flores didn't abandon ship. The 18-year-old stayed on board to help free as many shipmates as possible. Flores sacrificed his own life to save others, demonstrating extraordinary courage and devotion to duty, especially in light of his youth and limited shipboard experience.

It's these stories of heroism that the memorial seeks to honor, with a legacy that will be admired for generations. This treasure of the Gulf will forever remind us of their sacrifices and their service to our country. But finishing the memorial will not be possible without generous support from our community.

Private donations are essential to help fund and submerge the next 12 statues to complete the Circle of Heroes. Will you help us make history by finishing this one-of-a-kind memorial? For more information or to make a donation, visit VetMemorial.org.

13 ANNUAL GREENFEST RETURNS

Saturday, MARCH 28, from 10 am—5 pm

Church of the Isles is once again proud to present Indian Rocks Beach GreenFest, a wonderful eco-friendly event for families and friends of all ages from our community and beyond.

There will be many vendors with products and services made to keep our footprint green, as well as representatives from non-profit organizations, local food, beer & wine, baked goods, a children's area, handmade gifts, and live music!

Contact them if you are interested in being a vendor, would like to be a sponsor, or just want more information. GreenFest is the place to be on March 24th!! (IRBGreenfest@gmail.com; 727-595-1038 for church office). www.irbgreenfest.com

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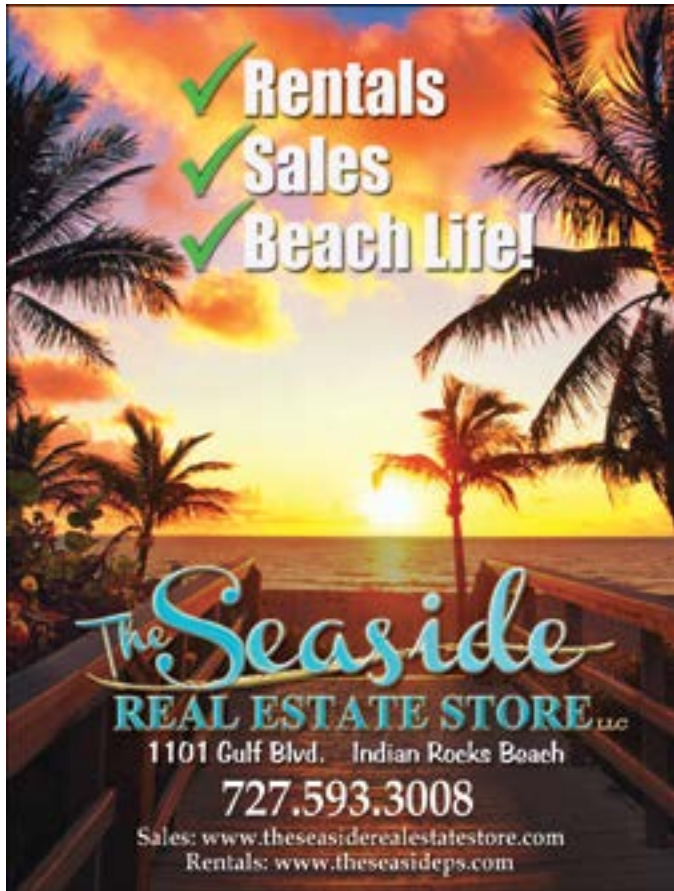


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Business Briefs

PET SITTER Cecily Pond Benga, better known as "CC" has been a professional pet sitter and caretaker for over 28 years. She would love to take care of your pets while you travel. She has lived in the area for over 40 years and some may recognize her as a local bartender. Call, text, or e-mail her and she will give you a quote and supply you with her many references, cred1823@yahoo.com or 727-424-4589.



TAKE 5 OIL CHANGE OPENS
This new place to get an oil change opened on Indian Rocks Road, where Checkers was, in late February. They have special offers during their Grand Opening, plus special deals:

- \$10 OFF coupon Online at Take5OilChange.com
 - 25% OFF for all Veterans
 - 25% OFF for Ride Share drivers (print coupon Online).
- In 1984, Take 5 opened their first store in Louisiana. They currently operate in 18 Southeastern states.

2 YEARS OF BLISS
Beachfront Bliss Villas celebrates the second year of business on March 18, 2020!
In the Fall of 2017, Gary & Bliss Huggins purchased a 4-plex at 814 Beach Trail. They remodeled it and now it has become a popular place to vacation. Through their love of salt water, Beachfront Bliss Villas was born!



Gary was born and raised in Gulf Breeze, FL and Bliss grew up in the Republic of Panama where the Atlantic and Pacific oceans are only an hour apart by car!
In just two years, they have hosted guests from 35 states and 14 countries, with many return guests. Their Charter Fishing Boat the "Reel Bliss" was added to the mix last summer. Gary & Bliss are delighted to be a part of the Indian Rocks Community
If you have friends and family looking for Beach Rentals, visit www.BeachfrontBlissVillas.com or call 727-798-4257.

PLAZA REMODEL The Bonfish Plaza remodel is in full swing. The center changed ownership last year, and the new owners are redesigning the fascia and installing a new roof. "The work began at the west end, near Westshore Pizza and is progressing to the east—store by store," says Justin McSweeney, project manager. "We expect to be done this spring."

Business Briefs



1960

WELCOMING FOR 60 YEARS The Welcome Center on Walsingham Road and Gulf Blvd. opened in January of 1960 as the home of the "Holiday Isles Chamber of Commerce," a combination of cities north and south of Indian Rocks Beach.

Money to build it was raised through auctions, donations, and pledges by area businesses and residents. It was a Welcome Center for years, but due to Chamber mergers and budget constraints it closed in the early 2000s.

In 2006, Plumlee Real Estate bought the building and reopened it as a "Welcome Center." It is a membership-based company, similar to a Chamber of Commerce, with over 150 members.

Pictured here are longtime greeters: Norma Keesler (left) and Kathy Breland.



NEW CHILDREN'S BOUTIQUE A new children's clothing store, Em & Mac Children's Boutique is opening in Belleair Bluffs at 596 Indian Rocks Road next to Petal and Vine. The store is named for owner Kayla's children - Emmet and Macie.

They carry both boys and girls clothing and are sharing space with a second company selling women's clothing as well. They are finishing interior construction, with hopes for a Grand Opening on Saturday, February 8th.

They will be open most days beginning at 10am, except they are closed Mondays.

GET FIT'S NEW OWNER TAKES FIRST PLACE Meet Cyndy Dube, local resident and native Floridian. She and her husband Mike are the new owners of Get Fitness in Largo.



Recently, Cyndy took First place as the Overall Champion in the masters bikini division at the NPC Ultimate Muscle Extravaganza. It is a notable accomplishment given that the overall winners are almost always selected from the younger divisions. She also took First place in the over 45 Bikini Division, and Third at IFBB Tampa Pro Bikini Over 40 Division.

She and her team at Get Fitness have a passion for health & fitness. Helping others achieve their health and wellness goals is important to the club. She is pictured here with her trainer, Hope Boullianne. No goal is too big or too small for her and her team. Get Fit, Never Quit!

BUSINESS NEWS WANTED If you have news for this newsletter, please e-mail Bob@GriffinDirectories.com or call 727-430-8300.

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Organizational News...

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.

They would love to help you host your next family or High School Reunion, Celebrations of Life, baby or wedding shower, engagement party, rehearsal dinner, anniversary, birthday or any other event, personal or business.

E-mail Office@ClearwaterYachtClub.org, call Tom 447-6000, or visit ClearwaterYachtClub.org.

INDIAN ROCKS BEACH HOMEOWNERS ASSN.

Submitted By Joe McCall

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

March 12th – Chicago Jaqx April 9th – Red Lion

Get details at www.irbhome.com, LIKE our Indian Rock Beach Facebook page or sign up on our email list.

In March, Joe McCall will be stepping down as President and will be sworn in as a City Commissioner. Joe has been the HOA President for 5 years. Under his leadership the main fundraisers have grown. We thank him for his leadership and know he will be a great addition to the City Commission.

The current Vice President, Marybeth Dunn, will assume the remainder of the President's term. A new Vice President will be appointed at the collective board meeting March 9th. JT Moore was voted in for a second term as Secretary and Randy Schuster will remain as Treasurer.

IRB Easter Egg Hunt - Saturday April 11, 2019- see www.irbhome.com for additional details

IRB Beachfest – Saturday, April 18th - 11 am - 9 pm - A full day of fun for the whole family is planned for this great event. Head the beach for the Kids area sponsored by City of Indian Rocks Beach and Greentown Kids along with soaking up the sun with beach activities like, volleyball, Cornhole and other games. Live music all day while enjoying great food from our local restaurants.

If you'd like to volunteer to help at any of these events please send an email to irbhomeowners@gmail.com.

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

SECOND TIME AROUNDERS

Founded in 1983, members are adults who played a musical instrument in their high school and college bands. There are no try outs to be a member, just prior experience and a willingness to attend the rehearsals and performances.

March 14 - Concert in Curtis Hixon Park at the River O'Green Festival, then Ybor City's St. Patrick's Day Parade at 8pm.

March 28 - Chasco Fiesta Parade in New Port Richey

April 11, Pinellas Festival of Community Bands

For details and updates visit www.secondtimearounders.org

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Organizational News...

INDIAN ROCKS HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Submitted by Terry Hamilton Wollin

History on the Rocks is back by popular demand March 24. Dr. Gary Mormino, PhD, well-known Florida historian, returns to tell us about the National Historic Landmark District's unique and storied beginning and evolution of the remarkable hidden jewel. Ybor City was founded in the 1880s by cigar manufacturers and was populated by thousands of immigrants, mainly from Cuba, Spain, and Italy. For the next 50 years, workers in Ybor City's cigar factories rolled hundreds of millions of cigars. Ybor City grew and prospered during the first decades of the 20th Century. Thousands of residents built a community that combined Cuban, Spanish, Italian, and Jewish culture. "Ybor City is Tampa's Spanish India," observed a visitor to the area, "What a colorful, screaming, shrill, and turbulent world."

Join us for the third in the 2020 series of History on the Rocks and learn about this remarkable Tampa neighborhood. Tuesday, March 24 at Indian Rocks Beach City Hall. This event is sponsored by Sarah's Seaside Cottages located in IRB. Society partner "The Original Crabby Bill's Family Brands" will provide light refreshments. Doors open at 2pm. All Indian Rocks Historical Society programs are free and open to the public. Your support and donations make them possible.

ACTION 2000 INDIAN ROCKS BEACH (A2K)

Submitted by Julie Hoofnagle

County Park Beautification Project - IRB Action 2000 (A2K) was back at the IRB County Park with a Beautification Project on February 22nd 9am to 11am with over 70 volunteers. The County Park is located between 17th & 18th Avenues along Gulf Blvd. Our project partners included the City of Indian Rocks Beach, Keep Pinellas Beautiful, IRB Chairs, GreenTown Kids and Crabby Bill's. A2K is dedicated to keeping this park beautiful all year long for residents and visitors to enjoy. A special thank you to The Original Crabby Bill's for serving a wonderful brunch to all volunteers after the project.

12th Avenue Park - Service Saturday. Join us on April 18th from 9am to 11am to clean up and beautify the 12th Avenue Park along Gulf Boulevard. We will be trimming, weeding and putting down mulch. This is the park where we host our annual Christmas Tree Lighting. Come on out and join us for a fun morning. Donuts and coffee will be served.

Monthly Meeting - We invite you to join us for our next meetings on Monday, March 9th and April 13th at 6:30pm at the Beach Art Center. Learn how you can help preserve and beautify Indian Rocks Beach and enjoy a fun, meaningful way to make new friends.

SAVE THE DATE! - Our May Mixer will be Saturday, May 16th. It will also be the Kick Off event of the app-based historical walking tour we have been working on with the Indian Rocks Historical Museum and the Florida Humanities Council. The event is currently being planned. More information is available on our website and Facebook page. On May 16th, will be presenting our annual Preservation Awards with the Plein Aire Cottage Artists as well as the IRB Star Award. The Preservation Award is dedicated to the spirit of maintaining and preserving properties reminiscent of the small town atmosphere of Indian Rocks Beach. The IRB Star Award is designed to recognize an individual who passionately champions beautification and preservation of our small town and exemplifies the true nature of volunteerism. Nominations for the IRB Star Award can be made via our website until April 16th.

More information is available at www.irbaction2000.com and visit us on Facebook at Action2000IRB.

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Organizational News...

CLEARWATER/ST. PETE SKI & SPORTS CLUB

The Clearwater/St. Pete Ski club and Rapp Brewing Company are co-hosting a Girl Scout Cookie and Beer Pairing fundraiser to support the Bay Pines Disabled Vets on March 14, 2 to 6pm.

A discounted four flight of beers that pair with cookies will be available for purchase at the brewery. A suggested donation of \$5 for the cookie samples will support the vets when they attend the Winter Sports Clinic in Snowmass, Colorado. See co-hosts Facebook event pages or contact president@showshark.org for more information.

FRIENDS OF THE DOG PARK

Submitted by Wendell Schott

My love for the Dog Park started in 2003 with the introduction of my American Bulldog puppy Spanky. An article appeared in a 2015 issue of the IRB Newsletter with a story and photo of my chihuahua mix Tabitha. I had just donated a 30-foot flagpole to the Nature Preserve/Dog Park in Spanky's memory. Shortly after that I joined the FOTIRBDP, an organization formed with the purpose of maintaining and then greatly improving the park for our pooches and owners alike. This was met with great encouragement and cooperation by the community as well as our many City officials. Although the FOTIRBDP has since disbanded, the City is continuing with weekly maintenance and some additional upgrades. The community has also assisted with supplying waste disposal bags, cleaning supplies and even some toys for Fido. As I complete this final column, I look forward to the new decade with anticipation of relaxing at this doggie paradise with now 6 year old "Tabby." I will continue to post articles of interest on the bulletin board, such as February's Winterfest parade, which was certainly cool this year. Thank you to the community and to the companions, both human and canine. We will be FOTIRBDP in our hearts forever. Happy Tails To You!

ROTARY CLUB OF INDIAN ROCKS BEACH

Submitted by Clifford Koch

Pancake Breakfast - It's that time of year again when the Rotary Club of Indian Rocks starts planning its annual Pancake Breakfast, for the benefit of the Beach Community Food Pantry. All gross proceeds from the event are donated to BCFP.

This year's event will be at Calvary Episcopal Church, 1615 First St., IRB, on Saturday, March 28, 7:30 to 11 am.

Tickets can be purchased (\$6, presale; \$8 at the door/day of event) at the at Calvary's front desk, from any Indian Rocks Rotarian or from Rotarian Michael Schulz at German Imports, 14286 Walsingham Road, Largo (727-596-1374). In addition, we would appreciate any non-perishable food donations you can bring to the event.

Breakfast will consist of delicious pancakes and sausage, orange juice, coffee and tea.

We invite you to join us for a great breakfast and to support the good works of the Beach Community Food Pantry. Thank you IRB Rotary!!

Rotary Runs the Beach - This 3rd annual 5K run and 1 mile run/walk takes place on the beach in beautiful Indian Rocks Beach, Saturday, April 4th at 8am.

This event, whose main sponsor is The Original Crabby Bill's, is for seasoned runners as well as those who are more casual runners or walkers. All ages and levels are welcome.

The price is \$30 for the 5K and \$25 for the 1 mile from March 1st through April 3rd. T-shirt is included in the price! The time to register is now, rungsunup.com/Race/FL/IndianRocksBeach/RotaryRunsTheBeach

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Organizational News...

BEACH COMMUNITY FOOD PANTRY (BCFP)

Submitted by David Kline BCFP Director

Once again our partners at Publix and Home Depot have come through to help the Beach Community Food Pantry feed those in our community who need assistance.

Many of you may be familiar with the Publix, Food For Sharing program. Twice a year, in April and September (and for 2019 only, November as well), Publix solicits donations from their clients when they check out with the cashier. Generally the FFS program runs for two weeks. All of the donations received during the program are used to purchase various non-perishable for donation to local food pantries. Calvary has been blessed to be the recipient of a portion of these donations over the past few years.

We normally receive a substantial quantity of peanut butter, jelly, instant mashed potatoes, soup, pasta sauce, mac and cheese, canned green beans and fruit - all staples of our inventory.

The two pallets of these donated food items are delivered to our local Publix store but we are on our own to get those pallets to the pantry. That is where our friends at Home Depot, Largo, step in. Pro Department Supervisor, Drew Lane, along with one or more helpers, load the pallets onto one of their rental trucks and deliver them to BCFP. They also help us unload and stock the large number of cases of food.

It is with the support from the donors, to Publix, to Home Depot and to our BCFP volunteers, that we are able to supply our clients with the food they need to keep 'food insecurity' at bay.

CHURCH OF THE ISLES - 200 24TH AVE N

They welcome and celebrate all people, regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity, race, or spiritual path. They don't run from the challenging questions but embrace the opportunity to learn from other's experiences. Sundays worship services are at 9am.

Contemplative Prayer- Every Thursday at 10am, Pastor Shelly invites all to join her in the practice of Contemplative Prayer. Contemplative Prayer is an opportunity to center yourself with silence, readings, meditation, breathing, and prayer with one another. We gather in the chapel and often on the beach!

A Spiritual Study - Each Sunday of the Lenten season (March 1-April 5), 4:00-5:30pm in the library. The film series and discussion will examine a central theme - the topic of suffering. The series, featuring a variety of theologians is entitled, "Marching from Pain to Possibility." What is the meaning of pain? How can I survive it? What do I do with it? We will grapple with the unintelligibility of pain and our deepest longings for healing, restoration, and fulfillment.

IRB Greenfest - Saturday, March 28, 10-5pm on 24th Avenue. A Family-friendly, eco-friendly party! Don't miss it!!

INDIAN ROCKS BEACH LIBRARY

Submitted By Lee Miller, Librarian

Saturday Story Time (11am) with Ms. Lee and Friday morning Play and Grow Music (11am) with Ms. Shalini continue with the support of the Friends of the IRB Library. These programs are for kids between 0-6 years old. Join us for a story, a song, finger plays, movement and music. It is scientifically proven that these activities are great for our kids' developing minds and bodies. See you on Fridays AND Saturdays at 11!

On the Rocks Library Book Club meets on the last Tuesday of the month at 5pm in the Library. A copy of the selected title is available from the Library and on Overdrive e-books. For information about the Book Club, please contact the Library.



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Oh, and there are no brakes, either.

So before you back that boat down the Seminole Boat Ramp and head for the Gulf or before you decide that Caladesi Island State Park is a good place to try out the used ski boat you just purchased, it's time to go to class.

There's Driver Ed for all of those 16-year-olds raring to get on the road, and it is equally important for boat owners of all ages to get educated on the ways of the water before they take that maiden voyage. Wait ... given the no-brakes factor, it could be even more important.

The cooler and unpredictable days of winter are some of the best times to take a boating safety class. A class is a great way to prepare those new boaters for their first season on the water and refresh the experienced ones on the rules of the watery road, and the latest in safety equipment and practices.

The Clearwater Coast Guard Auxiliary is offering "About Boating Safely" taught by certified instructors at 510 North Ft. Harrison Ave, Clearwater. The class meets on the second weekend of the month from 8am to 1pm.

"We like to offer these courses throughout the year. Given the changeable weather in winter and early spring, our early courses give people plenty of time to prepare for the warmer weather boating season, instead of having to rush once the first nice weekend of spring gets here," said Karen Miller, the Clearwater Coast Guard Auxiliary Public Education officer. "Learning about the safety aspect of boating first also gives them time to make sure they have the necessary safe boating equipment."

Boating safety is an increasingly important priority since strong boat sales mean more craft on the water. The National Marine Manufacturers Association recently announced that the 2019 sales figures show that approximately 280,000 new powerboats were sold in the year, the second-highest total since 2007.



Each season brings new boaters out on the local waters, and there is certainly a lot more to boating than they might realize," Miller said. "For those new to boating, the class is so important. The statistics show that people who take a safe boating class are less likely to be involved in any kind of accident on the water."

Coast Guard studies from recent years indicate that in cases where the boating instruction status of the boat operator was known, 74 percent of deaths occurred on vessels where the operator had not received boating safety instruction.

The boating safety class is also a requirement for many boaters in Florida. In the Sunshine State, anyone born after Jan. 1, 1988, must successfully complete a boater safety course approved by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) in order to operate any boat powered by more than 10 horsepower, and they are required to carry their boater education card with them when out on the water along with picture ID.

Miller also said the safe boating course might be the best first step for anyone considering buying a boat since the knowledge they will gain from the class will make that a much more educated purchase. "It is a very good starting point for people who are thinking about buying a boat. They should do this first, to see what they are getting into," she said. "The instructors who teach the class are experienced boaters and can give information

on what kind of boat might fit each person's needs."

It isn't just new boats bringing a fresh crop of boaters to the waterways in the region since NMMA data shows that some 975,000 pre-owned boats were sold in the U.S. in 2019. The U.S. has an estimated 11.9 million registered boats, and about 95 percent of those are less than 26 feet in length and capable of being trailered. The boating industry expects 2020 to be another strong year for boat sales, given the solid economy and consumer spending numbers. Florida has more than 950,000 registered vessels and that doesn't include canoes, kayaks, and stand up paddle boards!

Miller said that regardless of whether it is a new or used boat, and whether the boater is experienced or a rookie, taking the safety class is time well spent. "We cover the basics of trailering, launching and retrieving, along with boat ramp courtesy and the rules of navigation, but our main message is risk mitigation," Miller said. "We want to use the course to minimize the risk of an accident taking place, and minimize the effects of the accident. What to do in case of an emergency is one of the most important aspects of this class."

Contact the Coast Guard Auxiliary, Clearwater Flotilla, for boating safety classes at: www.clwboatingsafety.com or by email at clwtr.auxboating@gmail.com or call 727-469-8895.



LPGA GOLF TOURNAMENT COMES TO BELLEAIR

By Bob Griffin, Publisher

The LPGA Golf Tournament is coming to Belleair May 11-17 and with it comes an estimated 50,000 people.

The new Pelican Golf Club, which is still under construction as of this writing, will be hosting the tournament with a field of 144 players and a purse of 1.75 million dollars.

The tournament is sponsored by Tampa's DEX Imaging, formerly owned by Belleair's Doyle family. 6,000 patrons per day are expected to attend, which is predicted to have a 15-million-dollar impact on our area.

The golf course green ways are finished and have been open to members, however, the clubhouse and restaurants are not. Construction is continuing and they plan to be ready for the tournament.

With 50,000 people expected to visit the Town of Belleair, promoters, golf course managers and the Town's police are discussing plans for a crush of people never before seen in this small town. Besides a successful event, the goal is prevent disruptions to the surrounding residents.

To help appease the locals, all residents who front on the golf course are being offered four free tickets to the tournament on the day of their choice – most will probably attend on Sunday.

The tournaments entrance will be at the corner of Poinsettia Rd & Golf View Dr. That is the only entrance and where the vendors will set up with their promotional signs. The usual bleachers will be located at the first tee and the 18th hole for those fans who like to sit and watch. Of course, other fans will likely roam and follow the golfers.

No fences will be outlining the course, so visibility will not be obstructed.

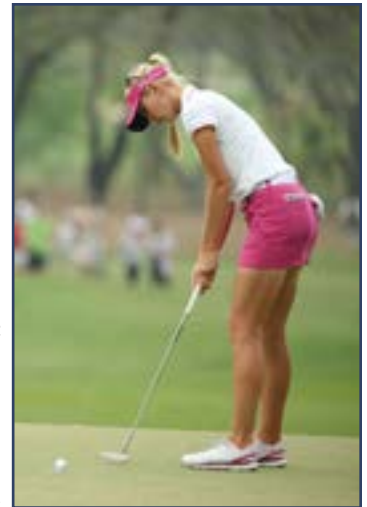
There will be closed player practices Monday and Tuesday. Wednesday will be a Pro-Am round where local golfers can rub shoulders with the Pro Ladies. The actual tournament begins on Thursday. The field of 144 will be cut in half (72) by Saturday. The final day is Sunday, May 17th.


The biggest challenge is getting enough volunteers to work the entire week - they estimate they need about 600.

"We need volunteers to be marshals, standard bearers, walking scorers, to assist with transportation, hospitality and a variety of smaller functions," says Sam Mok of Eiger Marketing, who is responsible for that task. "We already have 200."

Volunteers pay \$55 to \$65 to volunteer, but they receive a few perks: a parking pass, a free shirt, a pre-party and a free round of golf. To register and get details, visit PelicanLPGA.com/Volunteer.

Planning for this inaugural event is on going. Get more information on the tournament at www.PelicanLPGA.com and more on the LPGA at www.LPGA.com/Tournaments.







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Organizational News...

GREENTOWN KIDS

Submitted by Allie DeVore

This year's free Recycle Right 2020 event, held in January, was for all adults in the community. Dean Scharmen, Indian Rocks Beach's Public Services Director, gave an update on the city's current recycling program, noting an impressive 67% of IRB residents recycled 2,685.92 tons of recyclables in 2019. These numbers are high, but the concern is a portion of what people recycle, is not actually recyclable in Pinellas County.

Jan Tracy, Pinellas County Department of Solid Waste Recycling Program Coordinator, discussed what's happening to our recyclables, and exactly how to recycle right. The main takeaway of the night was, don't be a "wish-cycler." Something we may all be guilty of. This means, don't throw something in your recycling bin, wishing it could be recycled. Don't throw something in you're unsure about, hoping it will get sorted out if it cannot be recycled. Instead, only put items in your bin that are actually recyclable. Because the reality is, items that cannot be recycled don't always get thrown out at the recycling facility. Many, like plastic bags, end up clogging the sorting machines. Other items end up in our pallets of "recyclables", contaminating what we are trying to sell to other countries. Buyers are looking for high quality recyclables that have extremely low percentages of contamination, which can be made into new quality products. While buyers like China have stopped buying from us, Pinellas County is working on getting new buyers around the world.

How do we do our part and recycle right? Education. Follow the charts set out by Pinellas County Department of Solid waste at: pinellascounty.org/recycle, and hang the Recycle Right flier, created by GreenTown Kids, on your fridge. Only recycle the items on the "In the Bin" side. Don't go by the numbers in triangles on plastic items. Don't be a wish-cycler. And, don't bend the rules. Throw out what should not be recycled. The more you recycle right, the more items will get bought and made into something usable again - the ultimate goal.

If you're surprised how restrictive the lists are, you're not alone. When recycling plastic, ONLY bottles and jugs are acceptable. This means plastic egg crates, plastic produce containers, plastic takeout containers, plastic toys, and basically all other plastics are off limits. When recycling metal, ONLY food and drink cans are allowed. When recycling glass, ONLY bottles and jars are accepted. Also on the NO list: all caps and lids - including - bottle caps, jar lids, and metal can lids, shredded paper, greasy jars, greasy pizza boxes, straws, single-use plates, cups, and anything smaller than an index card.

Help our county produce more sellable pallets. Educating ourselves and following the guidelines is crucial to city recycling programs succeeding and future generations living in a more sustainable planet. To get involved or learn more, visit GreenTownKids.org.

NEWCOMER CLUB

This social organization meets the first Tuesday of each month at different venues. Doors open at 11:30am, with a speaker at Noon. Lunch is served at 12:30 pm and is \$25 or less.

March 3 they will meet at Countryside Country Club for the Installation of Officers & a speaker from The Haven.

April 7 they will meet at the Dunedin Golf Club. A representative from Clearwater Aquarium will speak.

Reservation deadlines are the Tuesday preceding the lunch and payment is due with a reservation. Reservations may be made to Diane McCune, 301-693-0219, or tucklove@brighthouse.com. After lunch there is bridge, mahjong, dominoes, etc.

THE BEACH ART CENTER (BAC)

Submitted by Barbara Parker

Roaring 20s Gala a Big Success with Community Support
We had a blast at our Roaring 20s Fundraiser on February 15 and are so grateful for your support of the BAC! Thank you to our Event Sponsor, Smith & Associates Real Estate and to The Original Crabby Bill's for providing an amazing spread! Thank you also to our Gala Patrons for their support and to the team of volunteers who put this event together.

We had over 140 guests, the Roaring '20s costumes were incredible, the music by Gloria West & the Gents fantastic, the Speakeasy out back was very popular, and the auction of local experiences and art was a winner all involved.

The Beach Art Center is a not for profit 501c3 organization. Because we are located next door to City Hall, we are often thought of as a city service, but we are not. We are an independent not for profit. The Beach Art Center is run primarily by volunteers, which helps keep our expenses low, but the Art Center doesn't exist without donations and the recent Gala is an important part of making our budget work. If you would like to support the Beach Art Center, please stop by the Art Center or go to www.beachartcenter.org/support.

Classes - You can see the entire schedule, pricing, registration and materials list at beachartcenter.org. Please register in advance online or at the BAC. You don't need to purchase a package; you can just come week to week. You will find classes for all levels in: Watercolor, Oil, Acrylics, Pastels, Water Media, Plein Air, Drawing, Photography, Pottery & Sculptures (pottery requires 3 classes to finish your projects.)

Art on the Rocks - Classes (\$38) are offered every month, 6-9pm, and led by a talented instructor, all materials are included, and you take home a finished piece of art. Students often bring their own refreshments. Previous experience is not required - just come and have fun!

- March 4 - Seashell Heart back by popular demand. This sold out in February.
- March 6 - Painting Sandpipers on Wood

Special Workshops

- Chris Brandley "Painting Alla Prima Style" Feb 21-23.
- Shawn Dell Joyce "Learn to use Pastel in 4 Hours" March 7
- Julie Hansen "Fire & Light: It is all about Color" March 7 & 8
- Suzanne Natzki "Contemporary Approach in Watercolor" March 14
- John Clayton "Plein Aire Color Bootcamp", March 28 & 29
- Shawn Dell Joyce "Learn to Draw in 4 Hours" on April 11.
- Violetta Chandler, "Impressionist Landscape Painting by Violetta" on April 25 & 26.

Annual Members Meeting - Friday, March 13, 5:30, before the Student Teacher Show reception. In addition to organization updates, we will select a new Board of Directors.

Student/Teacher Show - 6 -8pm on Friday, March 13. No charge and open to the public. Art take-in will be March 2-5

Creative Kids Camp - We will be offering 8 weeks of full and half day options, June 1 through July 31. (No camp June 29-July 3). Camps will explore artists and the arts.

Purchase/Renew Your Membership Online. Memberships are \$65 per year for an individual and \$95 for a family and help to run the art center. Members receive a discount on many classes and a discounted commission when selling in the gift shop and gallery.

HORIZON OIL SPILL TEN YEARS LATER

It is hard to believe it has been ten years since the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill happened. How the explosion of the oil rig and subsequent oil spill affected you depends on who you are and how you earn a living.

On April 20th 2010 when the oil rig, owned by Transocean and leased by the oil company BP, exploded 11 people died. The rig sank and for 87 days spilled an unknown number of barrels into the Gulf. It fouled the coasts of Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama and Florida. The well was partially capped on July 15th and officially sealed September 19th.

So what has happened since the spill ten years ago?

The disaster was even worse than previously believed and may have released as many as 200 million barrels. Scientists have discovered the spill area was 30 percent larger than previously known and reached the Tampa Bay coastline. The discrepancy between previous official estimates and what is known today is the discovery that small concentrations of oil are invisible to satellite imagery. Satellites were used to track the oil.

BP subsequently committed tens of billions of dollars to clean up the mess and \$5.5 billion to compensate victims. It ultimately sold off its U.S. arm. Transocean reached a \$211 million settlement with those claiming damages, while Halliburton, who provided the cement intended to seal the well in the event of a disaster, reached a \$1 billion settlement.

All three companies were found to be negligent and four lower ranking BP employees were charged. BP was charged with gross negligence and paid \$4 billion in fines and penalties.

The spill had a strong economic impact to the Gulf Coast's economy affecting fishing, real estate and tourism. 86,000 square miles of commercial fishing areas were closed resulting in a \$2.6 billion loss. The US Travel Association estimated the economic impact on tourism exceeded \$23 billion.

A portion of the compensation was distributed in Pinellas County. Area businesses received differing amounts, but how much they received and what they did with it is private. However, we do know what local governments did with their settlements.

PINELLAS COUNTY RECEIVED \$7.1 MILLION.

"Pinellas County government received \$7.1 million in a settlement from the BP Trust Fund," says Bill Berger, Director of Office of Management and Budget. "We then invested that money in a variety of projects across the county. Additional funds are being invested via the Gulf Coast Restoration Trust Fund."

Over 30 projects including library expansions, affordable housing, foster care, PSTA, parks, landscaping, sewer upgrades, ferry systems, and wounded warriors were funded. Some have been completed, others are ongoing. Get more information at www.PinellasCounty.org/BPUupdates.

CITY OF CLEARWATER RECEIVED \$6,400,000

"We received \$8,139,039 in the settlement with BP," says City Manager Bill Horne. "\$1,650,000 went for legal expenses to acquire the money. The balance, over \$6,480,000 was used by the City of Clearwater in a variety of projects after 2015."

INDIAN ROCKS BEACH RECEIVED \$982,000

"In 2015, the City Commission of Indian Rocks Beach, approved a settlement of \$982,000," says City Manager Gregg Mims. "This was worked into the 2016 operating and capital budget and used in a variety of ways."

\$471,110 was used for street resurfacing and curbing, \$280,000 was used to purchase a new street sweeper truck, \$100,000 was used to help relocate the Solid Waste building and park renovations. The remainder was used in replacing a beach rake, tractor, and pick-up truck.

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GreenTown Kids
Planting a seed for the next generation

RECYCLE RIGHT
pinellascounty.org/solidwaste/getridofit

IN THE BIN "Empty, Dry & Un-bagged"	LEAVE IT OUT "When In Doubt, Leave it Out"
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Metal - Food & Drink Cans • Glass - Bottles & Jars Only • Plastic Containers - Bottles & Jugs Only (Gallon or smaller) • Paper - Newspaper, Printed, or Writing Paper, Wrapping Paper (except foil/glitter) • Cardboard Boxes (Flattened, Empty, No Grease) • Cereal Boxes & Other similar Paperboard Containers • Cartons (Milk, Broth, etc.) • IF IT'S NOT ON THE "IN THE BIN" LIST, LEAVE IT OUT! 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plastic Bags, Plastic Wrap • Bubble Wrap, Packaging, Film • Plastic Straws • Plastic Silverware • Caps & Lids • Paper Towels, Tissues • Paper Plates, Cups • Shredded Paper (too small) • Wrapping Paper or Cards with glitter or foil • Photo Paper, Receipt Paper • Wax Paper, Foil • Styrofoam, Foam Containers, Foam Packaging • Hard Plastic (i.e. Buckets; Food Trays, Reusable Food Containers, Toys, Hangers) • Curtains, Blinds • Peanut Butter & Salad Dressing Jars (too greasy) • Cords, Wires, Hoses • Anything smaller than an index card

REDUCE REUSE RECYCLE

GreenTown Kids greentownkids@gmail.com
greentownkids.org

4:00-8:00PM - Saturday, March 28, 2020



\$20⁰⁰ ONLINE - IN ADVANCE
\$30⁰⁰ DAY OF EVENT AT SITE

Purchase Tickets at:
www.BluffsBusinessAssociation.com

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Taste Wines and Shop with 45+ BBA Member Merchants:
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Online - In Advance sales end 5:00PM, March 28, 2020
 Day of Event at Site charge card sales from 4:00-8:00PM

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DESK OF SHERIFF BOB GUALTIERI **Online Dating Safety**

According to a new study published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, couples are more likely to meet a romantic partner online than through personal contacts or connections. Furthermore, the publication noted that a 2017 survey revealed that meeting online has become the most popular way couples meet, eclipsing meeting through friends for the first time in 2013. The dating app, Tinder, reported as of September 2019 that it had approximately 7.86 million active users in the United States.

However, online dating has its dangers. Predators can create fake identities to lure in victims to gain access to their finances or instigate sexually or physically abusive relationships. The Pinellas County Sheriff's Office Economic Crimes Unit works to prevent fraudulent scams, like the common "Romance Scam." Once a relationship has been established online, the out-of-town suspect convinces the victim to wire money so the person can travel to visit them or help them with a dire personal emergency.

Fraud is a preventable crime if you know what to look for. Here's how you can keep yourself from becoming a victim:

1. Never send money.
2. Carefully examine their profiles.
3. Use reverse image search on their pictures.
4. End the relationship if they refuse to meet you face to face.
5. If you do meet the person, pick a public place and let a friend or family member know where you are.

If it sounds too good to be true, it most likely is. A loving relationship would never ask you to step beyond your personal boundaries financially or otherwise. If you are the victim of the Romance Scam, or any type of fraudulent scam, contact the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office at 582-6200.

LIONS AND TIGERS AND SAND SCULPTURES, OH MY!

Sugar Sand Festival Announces 2020 Theme

From architectural masterpieces created from Clearwater's famous sugar sand to concerts, performers and daily entertainment – the Pier 60 Sugar Sand Festival Presented by Visit St. Pete Clearwater is a fascinating event attracting visitors from around the world each year. The festival returns to Clearwater Beach in 2020 for its 8th and biggest year yet with the theme "SANDimals, An Animal Adventure."

Fourteen world-class artists craft elaborate sand sculptures from Clearwater's internationally famous sugar sand. The works of art are on display in a 21,000-square-foot structure. More than 1,000 tons of Clearwater sand takes on a new life, bringing visitors on a "sandtastic" adventure. Last year's event drew more than 200,000 visitors throughout its 17-day run. Due to the overwhelming success of last year's Sugar Sand Festival and the 2020 Easter Holiday, this year's festival will stretch for 17 days again - April 10-26. This will allow people more time to visit and also give those visiting for the Easter holiday a chance to see this incredible and affordable festival.

General admission to the sculpture exhibit will be \$10, \$8 for children 4-10 years old and free for children 3 years old and younger. Tickets will also be \$8 for those 60 and older, military personnel, police officers, firefighters and teachers. These discounted tickets will be available at the gate only with proper identification. All other tickets can be purchased Online at SugarSandFestival.com.



CAN YOU DIG IT?

PIER 60
SUGAR SAND FESTIVAL
 Presented by
ST. PETE CLEARWATER

April 10-26, 2020

AN EVENT SCULPTED TO PERFECTION!
 This 17 day sand sculpting festival pays tribute to Clearwater Beach's two most notable assets: our famous sugar sand and sunsets!

Buy your tickets now!
SugarSandFestival.com

FRANCIS WILSON PLAYHOUSE MID-SEASON UPDATE

The 90th Epic Season of the Francis Wilson Playhouse (FWP) is more than half over. Have you seen their dynamic presentations so far this year? Most have been sold out, with additional performances added – if you have the time, make an effort to see some, if not all, of the remaining shows.

Brigadoon by Lerner & Loewe welcomes Spring to the stage, opening February 20 and running through March 8. It is a classic musical fantasy, a feast for the eyes and ears. Set in a mythical cursed village in Scotland which appears only once a century, it is a love story for the ages. The classic score features such standards as Almost Like Being in Love, the Heather on the Hill, Waitin' for my Dearie and many more. Come to the Fair and join in the fun, romance and timeless magic of Brigadoon.

Next on the calendar is one of FWP's immensely popular one-day Broadway-inspired concerts: The Best of Times, March 14 (2 pm and 8 pm), celebrating music from the shows of Jerry Herman. Herman was a composer and lyricist best known for his hit Broadway musicals Hello Dolly!, Mame, and La Cage aux Folles. In 2009, he received the Tony Award for Lifetime Achievement in the Theater. In 2010 he was the recipient of the 2010 Kennedy Center Honors. Recently deceased (12/29/19), his impact on musical theater was tremendous.

In March, we are treated to a classic comedy by George S. Kaufman and Moss Hart: The Man Who Came to Dinner, running March 26 through April 5. In this show, the renowned critic Sheridan Whiteside (based on Alexander Woolcott) is stranded in a small Ohio town due to an injury. To pass the time, he has the varied denizens of his world (all based on Broadway and Hollywood personalities of the 30s) come to him, wreaking havoc on the lives of the locals. Laughs abound in this madcap comedy.

The season's grand finale is a more recent Broadway hit: Follies, with music and lyrics by Stephen Sondheim and book by James Goldman. The show will run from April 30 to May 17. An old theatre in New York City faces the wrecking ball, so a reunion of Follies girls descends for one last night in this musical drama. Ghosts of the past haunt the proceedings, causing many in attendance to reflect on the follies of the past while questioning the future. This blend of tuneful nostalgia, showbiz razzle dazzle and emotional regret won 7 Tony Awards, including Best Score for composer Sondheim. The Clearwater premiere is a haunting, wistful trip down memory lane, at times touching, funny, beautiful and melancholy.

The City of Clearwater's recent renovations around the theatre have provided lots of convenient, well lit, FREE parking for the Playhouse. Ignore the signs stating you must pay when you come to a show!! A new sound system installed for this season has enhanced performances – there are no bad seats! If you have not visited recently, remember that the theater and lobby were remodeled in 2015!

Visit FrancisWilsonPlayhouse.org, for tickets and more information. Performances are scheduled Thursdays through Sundays. Seating is reserved, and tickets can be purchased online (small service fee) or by calling the box office directly, 727/446-1360 (10:30 am to 5 pm).

Stay tuned for coming announcements of the 91st season. Consider purchasing season tickets to guarantee your place with this vibrant, yet historic, theatre.



Brigadoon
by Lerner and Loewe

February 20 – March 8, 2020

90 francis wilson
PLAYHOUSE

90 YEARS OF GREAT LIVE THEATRE IN TAMPA BAY

302 Seminole Street, Clearwater FL 33755
Tickets: FrancisWilsonPlayhouse.org - 727-446-1360



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Free, Family Fun including:

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For more information visit us at:
facebook.com/Floridawaterfestival
http://www.fwea.org/water_festival_wcc.php
Or contact Sheva Dunifon at sdunifon@pinellascounty.org

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Pinellas County



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