

NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

including Sand Key and Island Estates

Magazine

Clearwater's Fisherman's Wharf



The most famous Fisherman's Wharf is in San Francisco, but in the 1960s, Clearwater Beach had one, too. Owned by Dalip Tzekas and his family, it was located at the northeast end of the Clearwater Pass Bridge. Then, the wooden bridge was low to the water with a drawbridge section in the middle.

Tzekas, born in 1914, was Albanian. He was imprisoned in his native Yugoslavia (which no longer exists) because of his anti-communist sentiments. He escaped into Greece on foot enduring frostbite along the way. From there, he made his way to America where he had family members. He was forced to leave his wife, Rabije his and their three small children behind. He settled in the Chicago area and opened a truck stop diner. Eventually, he and his nephew opened a larger restaurant. It would be 13 years before his wife and children could join him in the United States.

In 1960, Tzekas moved to Clearwater Beach. Three years later, he partnered with Ed Ralston and others to open a restaurant called "Ed Ralston's Fisherman's Wharf." It opened August 23, 1963 and in 1968, Tzekas bought out his partners allowing his wife and children to join the business.

- *Continued on page 7*

Also in this Issue:

Local Mural Painter

Mike Jenney, a local mural painter has been painting walls around our area for over 30 years. You will find his creations inside and out many local homes and businesses.

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Herb Brown's Efforts to Eradicate Polio

Through his work as President of Rotary International, Clearwater Beach resident Brown vowed to eradicate Polio.

- page 13

Noah Lyons Makes Olympic Bid

Clearwater Community Sailing Center member plans to compete at the Sailing World Cup Miami 2021 in the iQFoil class.

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Belleair Bluffs Cleaners

Ever wonder what goes on behind the scenes after you drop off your clothes to be dry-cleaned? And why is it called dry cleaning? Find out inside.

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CREDITS



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CLEARWATER BEACH NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

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

You can pick up additional copies of this magazine at the Beach Chamber Office, The Beach Rec Center, Shorty's Gourmet Deli, Sand Key Realty or the Island Estates UPS.

We hope you enjoy our newsletter and 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.

Keep up to date with your local news; follow us on Facebook at Neighborhood News Magazine.

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

SEE YOU AGAIN IN AUGUST!

CITY NUMBERS

CITY HALL	562-4250
600 Cleveland St, Ste 600, clearwater-fl.com	
MAYOR OFFICE	562-4050
MAYOR - Frank Hibbard - Seat 1	
CITY COUNCIL	562-4050
Mark Bunker - Seat 2	
Kathleen Beckman - Seat 3	
David Albritton - Seat 4	
Hoyt Hamilton - Seat 5	
CITY MANAGER	562-4040
William Horne	
ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER	562-4040
BUILDING PERMITS	562-4567
HUMAN RESOURCES	562-4870
PLANNING & ZONING	562-4567
PUBLIC SERVICES	562-4950
PUBLIC UTILITIES	562-4600
PUBLIC UTILITIES EMERGENCY	462-6633
CLEARWATER GAS	562-4980
SOLID WASTE	562-4920
PIER 60	462-6466
MARINA	462-6954
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BEACH LIBRARY	462-6138
VISITOR INFO CENTER	442-3604
BEACH AQUATIC FACILITY	462-6020
POLICE NON-EMERGENCY	562-4242
FIRE DEPARTMENT	562-4334
POLICE HOTLINE	562-4080
NEIGHBORHOOD LIAISON	562-4554

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE	447-7600
429 Poinsettia Avenue, Clearwater Beach	
SAND KEY PARK	588-4852
Shelter Reservations, PinellasCounty.org/park	
CLEARWATER AQUARIUM	441-1790
249 Windward Passage, Island Estates	
JOLLY TROLLEY	445-1200

CLEARWATER YACHT CLUB	447-6000
830 Bayway Blvd S.	
CLEARWATER SAILING CTR	517-7776
CARLOUEL HOMEOWNERS ASSN	
Sue Williams, President 446-4471	
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Sharon Skinner 515-1532	
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ISLAND ESTATES CIVIC ASSOCIATION	
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ISLAND ESTATES WOMEN'S CLUB	
Karen Stevens, President 642-4711	
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Linda Owens 260-894-0270	
CLEARWATER HISTORICAL SOCIETY	
Allison Dolan 754-8017	

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COMMISSION OFFICES	464-3377
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FEATURED PROPERTIES



NEW LISTING
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FOR SALE
1200 GULF BLVD #100, CLEARWATER BEACH
2 BD | 2 BA | 1,821 SQ FT | \$849,900



FOR SALE
525 MANDALAY AVE #610, CLEARWATER BEACH
3 BD | 3 BA | 2,087 SQ FT | \$1,155,000



FOR SALE
505 MANDALAY AVE #1202, CLEARWATER BEACH
3 BD | 3.1 BA | 4,192 SQ FT | \$2,574,000



SOLD
1540 GULF BLVD #1606, CLEARWATER BEACH
2 BD | 2 BA | 1,579 SQ FT | \$739,000



SOLD
501 MANDALAY AVE #1009, CLEARWATER BEACH
3 BD | 3.1 BA | 3,425 SQ FT | \$2,250,000



SOLD
10 PAPAYA ST #1104, CLEARWATER BEACH
2 BD | 2 BA | 1,675 SQ FT | \$855,000



SOLD
670 ISLAND WAY #905, CLEARWATER BEACH
3 BD | 2 BA | 1,854 SQ FT | \$610,000



SOLD
2724 VIA MIRANO #638, CLEARWATER
3 BD | 2 BA | 1,769 SQ FT | \$230,000



SOLD
31 ISLAND WAY #1202, CLEARWATER
2 BD | 2 BA | 1,350 SQ FT | \$262,900



SOLD
490 ISLAND WAY #507, CLEARWATER
2 BD | 2 BA | 1,150 SQ FT | \$338,000



SOLD
3650 DORAN ST, PALM HARBOR
2 BD | 2 BA | 1,816 SQ FT | \$340,000



SOLD
1931 OAK RIDGE CT, CLEARWATER
5 BD | 4 BA | 3,946 SQ FT | \$575,000



SOLD
292 WINDWARD PSGE #309, CLEARWATER
3 BD | 3.1 BA | 2,050 SQ FT | \$675,000



SOLD
11 SAN MARCO ST #402, CLEARWATER
3 BD | 2.1 BA | 2,000 SQ FT | \$1,280,000



SOLD
19730 GULF BLVD, #500 | INDIAN SHORES
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Did You Know



PARAMEDICS OF THE YEAR Sunstar Paramedics employees, Emergency Medical Services Dispatcher/Paramedic Christopher Kannenberg and Emergency Medical Technician Jason Melzer are among the recipients of the 2020 Pinellas County Emergency Medical Services Professionals of the Year.

This award is presented to public safety professionals who stand out because of their outstanding contributions to EMS or for heroic actions.

CLEARWATER FREE CLINIC They rescheduled their annual golf tournament event at Innisbrook's Copperhead Course to Monday, June 29th. Please stay tuned for more details about the event as they make adjustments to ensure everyone's safety. For now, you can help support by purchasing Helicopter Golf Ball Drop tickets! Each ticket gives you a chance to win \$1,000. Visit clearwaterfreeclinic.org.

TOURNAMENT MOVES TO NOVEMBER The LPGA Golf Tournament scheduled at Pelican Golf Club in Belleair has been moved to November 16-22. It is one of five rescheduled LPGA tournaments. Visit PelicanLPGA.com or www.LPGA.com/tournaments.

DALI SUMMER CAMP Their flagship Junior Decent Art Camp is going online this summer. Suggested for both elementary and middle school students, ages 9-14, this week long online camp, held June 15-19 or June 22-26 introduces new ways to interpret and create art. Participants will become empowered to think independently about art and express their own thoughts in a fun and interactive environment. The camp is free, with an option to purchase art supplies. Donations are welcome. Visit www.thedali.org.

FIREWORKS Clearwater has canceled its signature 4th of July fireworks show this year. As of press time, St. Petersburg and Largo were still undecided about their shows.

SEA TURTLES ARE NESTING

The 2020 sea turtle nesting season has begun and turtles have already been seen on our beaches. Three of the world's seven sea turtle species, choose to lay their eggs in Pinellas County.



Human impact is a major contributor to the success of sea turtle nesting. You can help in a few small ways:

Reduce beach obstructions: Knock down sandcastles, fill in holes, remove trash discouraging scavenger species who eat the trash and baby sea turtles, remove chairs, tents, umbrellas, and sand toys

Reduce light pollution: When at the beach, turn off your lights and don't use flashlights. If you live at the beach, change your residential external light source to a sea turtle friendly option and close your blinds at night.

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and More...

A NEW CHILDREN'S GARDEN

A Children's Discovery Garden is in the works for the Florida Botanical Gardens. Its focus will be hands-on and experiential education in an outdoor setting. The two and a half acre area will include areas for unstructured play, engaging nature activities, seating, and amenities for parents and supervisors. A fun and engaging access to this area will be by a rope bridge through a stand of bamboo. Roots and Shoots is an area where children will be able to get their hands dirty by potting plants, sowing seeds and playing with garden tools. A hand water pump in this area will be a source for play and watering plants.



Support from the community is essential for making this a success. Individuals and organizations can donate by visiting www.flbgfoundation.org/CDGdonate or by mailing donations to the FBGF Offices, at 12520 Ulmerton Road, Largo, FL 33774. All contributions are tax deductible within the limits allowed by the law.

DON'T RECYCLE BOTTLE CAPS Did you know you are not supposed to recycle plastic or glass bottle's lids? They are considered contamination. Recycling processing facilities use optical readers to sort plastics and the caps often come loose. They are too small to be identified, so they either end up being improperly sorted, which can lead to damaged equipment, or being mixed with unlike materials. If the number of contaminated items in a pallet of recyclables, reaches a certain proportion, the entire batch is discarded.

SALES TAX FREE Yes, school has barely ended and some people are already planning the start of the next year. Sales Tax Free School Supply days are August 7-9 this year. Check your local stores as many will be running specials that week, to help you save even more.

AUGUST ELECTION In August, Florida will hold a Primary Election. The Ballot will include state and local officials and Circuit Judges. The following dates are important: Deadline to register to vote - July 20; Last day to request a Mail In ballot - August 8; Early voting August 8 - August 16; Election day - August 18.



This will be the first election overseen by our newly appointed Pinellas County Supervisor of Elections, Julie Marcus. She replaced Debroah Clark who retired in March after serving 42 years.

Get more information about registering to vote at VotePinellas.com.

OUR NEXT ISSUE IS IN AUGUST Read this issue, and others, online at BeachNewsletters.com and follow us on Facebook at Neighborhood News Magazine - for ongoing local news.

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Fisherman's Wharf, Continued

The Tzekases had three more children in the United States for a total of six: Ronnie, Emo, Enver, Artie, Sefer and Ferdie, their only daughter.

The entire family worked at the restaurant—from the kitchen to waiting tables to greeting diners. Tzekas, himself, was normally the host stationed at the front door. Ronnie ran the bar and later managed the front door. Emo and Enver ran the kitchen. Artie bussed tables and was a bartender. Sefer bussed tables and served food. Ferdie watched the cash register. Eventually, the grandkids worked there, too.

"Dalip always showed a willingness to help those in need and brighten people's lives," said daughter-in-law Sylvia, who married son Artie. He would always say 'God saved us. He gave me a second chance at life.' Everyone respected Dalip."

"We served a lot of people over the years," Sylvia adds. "We did have a lot of tourists, but the locals were our best customers."

After 27 years, the Trekas family closed The Wharf. In 1990, they leased the property and building to Leverocks Seafood, a chain of seafood restaurants based in St. Pete Beach. Leverocks added the lighthouse to the roof, the deck out back and a tiki hut bar near the water's edge. Leverocks closed many locations including that one, 13 years later.



Fisherman's Wharf in the 1970s



Leverocks Restaurant, circa 1980s

"That was clearly our most profitable store in the chain", says George Lewis, owner of Leverocks today. "Dalip was a gentle man and a pleasure to know."

"Dalip knew many people still living in Albania," Lewis explains. "He helped many immigrate to the U.S. If they had proper papers, we gave many of them their first job in one of our Leverocks restaurants."

In 2004, after Leverocks closed, Shells Seafood moved in to the Clearwater location. They only lasted four years before the company went bankrupt in 2008.

The last restaurant on that site was simply called "551," after the address of the property. It opened in 2011 with many upgrades and closed the same year, after the death of the new owner.

The Tzekas family still owns the 3.2 acres of waterfront property. The building, always known for fine seafood,

was demolished at the end of April. "It has been an emotional time for the family seeing the building being torn down," Sylvia says. "We had a lot of good memories, there."

The property is for sale for \$27 million, which is comparable to other waterfront commercial property. The most likely use will be a future condo or condo/hotel. It has been approved for 120 condo units or 150 condo/hotel units. It could also be a mixed-use development with retail on the ground level. If you are interested, call Georgette Gillis with View Point Realty at 448-3533.

Dalip Tzekas passed away in 2005 at the age of 90. Many of the Trekas children opened restaurants of their own in Pinellas County including Sea Sea Riders in Dunedin, Sunset Grill in Clearwater and Paradise Restaurant in Safety Harbor.



Dalip Tzekas owner of Fisherman's Wharf (circa 1980s)

AS THEY REMEMBER IT



"They had the world's best seafood platter." *Lefty Dave Smith*

"I was there a lot in the 1960s. They had great food and service." *David Dean*

"I worked there in the summer of 1965. The building had an unusual basement." *John Usher*

"When I worked for the Clearwater Police Department, I had to check out the building because of a burglary report. I was surprised to find they had a basement." *Rick Stahl*

"That was my first real job." *Brandi Carol King McDermott*

"My dad dragged us there every Friday night in the '70s. He loved that place." *Laura LaPorte*

"I have known the Trekas family for years. Back in my early days, I used to sell them fish and seafood. Actually, I still do—at the restaurants they have today. They are a great family. They had a practice gun range in the basement. I used to go there with the Trekas brothers and practice shooting." *Frank Chivas, owner of the Baystar Restaurant Group.*

"One of my mother's favorite restaurants." *Janet Ramsdell Rockey*



TIME TO THINK ABOUT HURRICANE SEASON AGAIN.

By Tom Smith, Owner of GHD Construction Services

In past articles, I have written about what new homes offer today with the increased Florida and Federal Building codes. As an industry in Florida, we are constructing homes that meet or exceed the 150mph wind speeds, to insure the best amount of safety and security for new homes. Some homes can be retrofitted to add some of these features, yet other homes remain susceptible to high tides and severe water damage. What can be done today for the homes along our beautiful coastal island communities?

Everyone is now aware that hurricane resistant windows and doors should be a "must" for any home. Those are the areas that will be first to fail when the high wind and water comes our way. Although pilings cannot be installed in existing homes with any practicality, they are very helpful in keeping the stability of the home sound, especially along the beaches. Then as I have mentioned in the past, the most important item for homes is that they are raised above FEMA standards, to keep the flood waters from ruining the home and furnishings. Sorry, but as I see homes playing the game of FEMA's 50% Rule, I can't help but wonder why families are investing hundreds of thousands of dollars to re-build a home on grade. Not a good investment or decision!

Many of our home customers today are inquiring about whole house generators for their new homes. My wife and I are personally installing one in my new home, as it makes sense to protect against power failure, especially if you live in beach communities where power is the most likely to fail during a storm. A natural or propane gas system that fuels the generator can actually have enough power for the entire home, including air conditioning. I'm told by the gas company, that they do not turn off the gas after a storm, as it is necessary for hospitals and other first responder needs.

Sure, a gas generator can be temporarily used from your garage for the refrigerator and a few lights, but having the entire home uninterrupted after a storm is a major plus.

As I write these thoughts on building a strong home, it's funny, but I remember one of the favorite books that my mother read to me was the "5 Little Pigs". I don't know why this is in my memory 67 years later, but I guess it rang a bell in terms of building a home substantial enough to keep that "Big Bad Wolf" from destroying a home. Our wolf is the potential Florida hurricane. We all know it's coming, but we can't predict the year we will experience it.

If you are considering remodeling or building a new home, maybe some of the items listed above might give you cause to reflect on what items you want to install.

...keep that "Big Bad Wolf" from destroying a home. Our wolf is the potential Florida hurricane. We all know it's coming, but we can't predict the year we will experience it.

GHD Construction Services, Inc. has constructed 6,500+ homes since 1971. If you have any questions pertaining to new home construction, feel free to call Todd at (813) 956-8633, or email to: tnegoshian@ghdcsi.com. NOW OFFERING VIRTUAL HOME TOURS: Visit our website at www.GHDcoastalhomes.com to see the "Key West" and "Bahama Winds" homes.

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DARING TO PROVIDE DENTAL CARE

Who thought dentistry might be so dangerous and difficult? At the Community Dental Clinic in Clearwater, new practice safeguards and scarce clinic supplies challenge us every day, but our patients are in pain and need our services.



Because we work directly in the mouths of our patients, the COVID pandemic compels us to change the way we work. We respond to new requirements, adapt our procedures, and search continuously for protective supplies like masks, gowns and disinfecting wipes.

Yet, in the face of all of this, the Community Dental Clinic remains committed to helping low income uninsured Pinellas residents in dental distress. Following the Florida Board of Dentistry guidelines, we reopened May 11, providing exams, extractions and fillings for more than 83 people in the first 12 days! In June, we added crucial deep cleaning and debridement services to dental treatments.

We've helped people like Jon who lost his job and developed excruciating pain and swelling from an abscessed tooth, all in the same week. We fixed his tooth, relieved his pain and enabled him to search for a new job.

We've improved life for people like Barry who suffered so much pain from tooth decay that he had to put all his food in a blender just to eat. Our team alleviated his decay, extracted a tooth, and helped him regain his ability to chew and eat properly.

After treatment Diamond said, "This clinic has literally saved my life. They gave me a way to get my teeth fixed without having to worry about the financial side that I could've never afforded. I have cried happy tears because the Clinic has been so good to me."

We are truly a community clinic, provided by our community for our community. Our dentists, hygienists and assistants are supported through partnerships with the Florida Department of Health, Pinellas County, and local hospitals; generous civic groups; and grants from thoughtful foundations like the Pinellas Community Foundation, Florida Blue, Sun Coast Osteopathic, Patterson Dental and Delta Dental.

Mostly, and most thankfully, we are supported by the gracious donations of caring individuals in our community who realize dental care is a key component of overall health, and who champion our mission to provide urgent dental care for the low income uninsured adults of Pinellas. Would you like to help? Visit our website www.communitydentalclinic.net to learn more, support our cause, or volunteer.

AMERICAN STAGE

American Stage will continue to postpone their programming at least through the end of June. When their doors do reopen, things will look a little different. They are planning for social distancing within the theatre, and will take every precaution to help us all feel safe and comfortable experiencing live performances together once again. They will have another update next month.

They plan to present FOOTLOOSE when they host American Stage in the Park and their GALA UNDER THE STARS in October. More details will be available as the dates grow closer.


They have officially launched their Virtual programming (both Stage and Academy) on their Web site. Their Virtual Academy gives students of all ages the opportunity to explore new people, places and ideas safely from home and will include their Summer Camp. Visit americanstage.org for information.

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MARITAL BLISS...DIVORCE (PART III)

by Ray Ferrara, ProVise Management Group

In the previous two articles, we covered Death and Dementia. Now the third "D" – Divorce. Regardless of how long a couple has been married; divorce comes with emotional, physical and financial issues that are rarely easily resolved.



While you want to look for an experienced divorce attorney, try to avoid those that have a reputation as being combative. The longer it drags on, the more you end up paying. You might want to consider collaborative divorce, or perhaps mediation. Do not try to hide assets. Be truthful and flexible. While you might be mad at your spouse, trying to stick it to the spouse only makes the difficult conversations harder and adds to your stress. Consider hiring other advisors like a financial planner, mental health professional and/or a CPA.

Start with a net worth statement to understand the assets and liabilities. How are the assets titled? Not all assets show up in the net worth, i.e. term life and disability income insurance, future pensions, etc. Look back through all financial transactions over the past several years to see if there were any unusual transfers of money. Cancel credit cards in joint name and get new ones just in your name. However, you cannot get out of joint debt like a mortgage. Also, set up bank and investment accounts in your name.

In dividing assets, be aware that it might be equal, but is it equitable? Consider not just the value of the assets, but tax implications. Are the assets potentially non-taxable like cash, artwork, jewelry, etc. or taxable at either capital gain or ordinary income rates? What is the trade-off of giving up more assets to avoid greater alimony?

What are the living expenses and income expected after the divorce? In short, do a budget. Your financial planner can help with a written financial plan. How will health insurance, child support and educational costs be paid? What Social Security benefits might be available in retirement from the former spouse?

Complete a new set of legal documents with your estate-planning attorney and do not forget to change the beneficiary on insurance policies, annuities and retirement programs.

It is impossible to cover all of the unique issues in this article. Assemble a team of professionals to help guide you. Start by taking advantage of our one-hour complimentary consultation.

V. Raymond Ferrara, CFP®, Chair and CEO
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FRANCIS WILSON PLAYHOUSE Updates and Virtual Events

As Florida works its way into reopening safely, the All Stars of the Francis Wilson Playhouse are preparing a summer full of Friday Night Virtual Concerts on select Friday nights to keep us entertained and maintain contact with this diverse troupe of talented local entertainers.

The performers have missed their audiences and were delighted with the response to their first live streaming event on May 8 which featured songs from a wide variety of Broadway shows. Several of the final performances of Francis Wilson Playhouse's 90th Season had to be postponed to the summer of 2021 due to social distancing concerns and the support of the first virtual concert's audience was gratifying.

Did you miss the first concert? View it now on the Francis Wilson Playhouse FaceBook page or on the theatre's web site: FrancisWilsonPlayhouse.org/concert. The newly scheduled summer series will also be viewable both places. Check the web site as summer progresses for the updated schedule. "Live" streaming occurs at 8 pm on Friday evenings. Get to know your SmartTV and access its Internet option to enjoy the concerts from the comfort of your favorite chair or recliner. Add popcorn – perfection!

May 29th was the first of the summer series: Comedy Tonight! - a little Laugh In meets Francis Wilson Playhouse!

The rest of the summer season is planned, but the dates are not finalized yet:

June is Bustin' Out All Over – a Broadway-style concert of summer and vacation themed songs and remembrances.

Red, White, and Blue Broadway – a patriotic celebration of America, with songs by George M. Cohan, Irving Berlin and more.

Hello, My Baby – a lively celebration of the great songs from the 1890's to 1930's including pop songs, ragtime and selections from comic operettas.

Radio Days – An old-fashioned filmed radio broadcast, complete with great 30's/40's songs, commercials and a sound effects man!

Broadway in the 50's – the best songs from the Golden Age of Broadway, from shows including Damn Yankees, My Fair Lady, The Pajama Game, The King & I and many more.

Francis Wilson Playhouse is planning for its 91st Season – LIVE at the Playhouse. Auditions for the first production, the blockbuster Disney's Beauty and the Beast, are scheduled for June 14 and 15, with the highly anticipated opening date of August 20. Visit the Francis Wilson Playhouse web site for more details on this exciting upcoming season



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Bar & Restaurant News

FRESH MARKET AT SALT CRACKER

Several Baystar Restaurants, including Salt Cracker Fish Camp, Island Way Grill and Seaweed, opened small Fresh Markets inside the lobby of their restaurants. In addition to being able to pick up takeout, you can purchase steaks, and fresh seafood. Fresh Market items can either be shopped inside the restaurant or you can call ahead and an employee will put the order together for you to pick up.



ISLAND WAY REMODEL While it was closed, Island Way Grill underwent a face-lift to allow for better social distancing. It is also adding a coffee bar. It has since reopened following State guidelines.

HELP WANTED Rich in history and tradition, the Clearwater Yacht Club is one of the oldest yacht clubs in the United States. It is a private full service restaurant, and is always hiring different positions. If you are interested, please e-mail office@clearwateryachtclub.org with your qualifications and they will provide more information. The Club is located at 830 Bayway Blvd., Clearwater Beach.

CLOSED

Poke 88 on South Gulf View, next to Gondolier, is not reopening.

Cafe Ponte - the iconic Clearwater restaurant will not be reopening. It was a combination of COVID-19 and a failed lease renegotiation. Owner Chris Ponte will be concentrating on his Tampa restaurants.

OUT OF BUSINESS

The San Diego based Sweet Tomatoes has permanently closed all their 97 restaurants. With the recommendation of discontinuing self-serve food stations including salad bars and buffets, their business model could not survive. The store in Countryside will not reopen.



POPCORN GIVE AWAY Lynn Roberts, owner of Popical Popcorn has been donating bags of her store's organic gourmet popcorn to nursing home employees in Pinellas County. Popical Popcorn is located at 2551 Drew St. in Clearwater. Find more information about her store at popicalpopcorn.com.

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.

ERADICATING POLIO

By Ann Garris

The Corona Virus is not the first epidemic to shut down a large number of activities in our country. A little less than 80 years ago, most of the places where people gathered - swimming pools, movie theaters, bowling alleys, and more - were closed because of an epidemic called "polio." The disease could cause paralysis of everything from legs to lungs. Reports of people who could no longer walk were mixed with pictures of a terrible machine called the "iron lung" in which people were doomed to spend the rest of their lives, because "polio" had destroyed the action of their lungs and they needed the machine to help them breathe.

Thankfully, Dr. Albert Bruce Sabin eventually came up with a medicine, which successfully provided immunization against polio and slowly began eliminating polio in the U.S. It was, however, slow progress, as polio victims from other countries brought new cases to the U.S. and spread it to other countries, By the 1940s, there were an estimated 350,000 cases of polio a year in the world and the elimination of polio in the U.S. was hampered by infected visitors from other countries.

In 1988, polio was endemic world-wide, when an international businessmen's club, named Rotary International, joined other organizations in formulating an ambitious plan to eradicate the dreaded disease from the entire world. They named the project "Polio Plus."

The project was named Polio Plus because it became obvious that other contagious diseases could and should be included with the Polio immunization. These included tuberculosis, diphtheria, whooping cough, tetanus, and measles. The Clearwater Rotary Club, with Clearwater Beach businessman Herb Brown as president, participated in the Polio Plus project from the beginning.

In 1995, when Brown was elected president of Rotary International, the world-wide Rotary Club, he chose pursuing the eradication of Polio as a major project. The development of Polio Plus grew rapidly, involving donations from Rotary Clubs throughout the world. Brown was a major volunteer in the Polio Plus Program, serving as chairman of the U.S. Polio Plus Committee which initially brought in a pledge of more than \$120 million to the cause. Today, many other organizations are involved including the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

Currently polio is reported abolished from the world, with the exception of two small countries where the Polio Plus effort is still underway. It cost billions of dollars and untold volunteer hours, but the eradication of Polio, has been successful.

In addressing the 1995 Rotary International convention, Herb Brown said, "I bring news of hope today, that Rotarians, serving with love, are keeping their promise with integrity. Our goal is to eradicate polio by the end of the 20th century. "And," he added, "it will be done."

Clearwater Beach Resident, Herbert Graham Brown's past business experience showed him equal to the challenge of participating in the seemingly impossible task of wiping out polio. At the age of 17, after his father's death, he had taken over his family's appliance store in Opelousas, Louisiana, expanding it into a furniture store. Then, after serving two years in the U.S. Army during World War II, he came home to establish eight furniture stores, a shopping center, and several agricultural enterprises. In 1970, he joined forces with Jack Ecker, founder of Eckerd Drugs, and together they combined Brown's 40 stores and Eckerd's 105 stores into a success discount drugstore business.

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MIKE JENNEY, LOCAL MURAL PAINTER

By Bob Griffin, Publisher

Have you been seeing the big, brightly painted murals on the outside of many local buildings? There is an artist behind each of them and chances are, Mike Jenney is that guy.

In 1983, Jenney who was born and raised in Pinellas County, was paid to create his first mural. His Clearwater Central Catholic High School art teacher recommended he be chosen to complete a painting on a wall near the art department. "The scene was a series of athletes in progression," Jenney remembers. "I wasn't paid much—just minimum wage—but it gave me my start."

"I have been interested in art since I was in kindergarten," Jenney says. "My first art teacher said I had an 'eye for detail,' and I always remembered that." He attended Holy Family Catholic School in St. Petersburg (grades 1-8) and earned a scholarship to Clearwater Catholic High School.

"I played sports in my early years, but I got hurt a lot—so I decided to stick with my art," Jenney chuckles.

"When I graduated from high school, I thought I wanted to go to the Ringling School of Art in Sarasota. But they teach more Fine Arts, which was not what I was looking for. I was interested in learning commercial art. After some research, I discovered Tampa Tech's program and enrolled there."

Jenney, who has been working in the commercial art industry for over 30 years now, says he has a natural ability for art and considers himself mostly self-taught. He is very talented in airbrushing which he loves to do because of its versatility. He really considers himself really an "airbrush" muralist.

While he specializes in wall murals, he can paint anything on anything. He has worked on automobiles, trucks and structures including mailboxes. He has created marine-life replicas, painted fiberglass, and even custom 3D sculptures.

You will find Jenney's work in and outside many area restaurants, recreation centers, city parks, water parks, resorts, motels, and schools. He recently finished a wall mural inside the new Largo Spegggtacular Restaurant. He also painted the mural inside Proino's Restaurant on Walsingham Road.

Recently, Jenney created the artwork at Off The Grid behind Aqua Prime, including the walls, tables and stools. He painted a wall at the Bay Pines Marina and Tiki Bar and another inside the Beach Pizza Plus in Redington Beach.

He produced the mural outside the new St. Pete Beach Sea Hags, too.

In Clearwater Beach, the wall inside of Ryan's Island Café is his handy work, too.



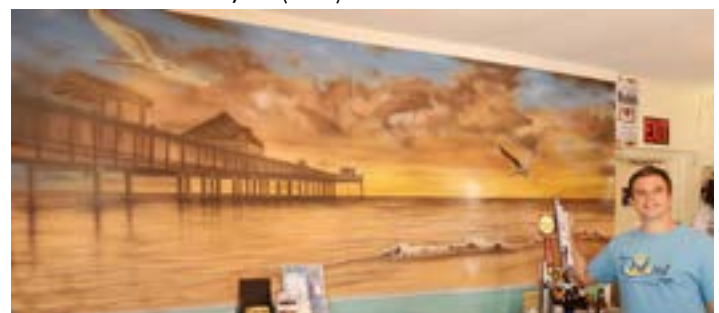
In addition to commercial businesses, he has done hundreds of murals inside the homes of friends and acquaintances. All and all, Jenney thinks he has painted over 1,000 commercial and residential murals throughout the United States, with many here in the Pinellas area.

His prices range from \$500 to many thousands; it all really depends on the complexity, size and length of time needed to complete the project. The amount of time is dependent on several variables including of course size and subject, but also on whether he has to work on a lift or around obstacles. He completes 90% of his projects in less than two weeks.

Every mural is unique and designed by Jenney. He will be happy to give you a quote. "I work within everyone's budget," Jenney says. To start he would need a description of the project and its size.

"Trusting a mural artist with your home or business is a leap of faith. I feel extremely privileged to do this work and feel incredibly grateful to each and every client who has trusted me with their walls over my 30 years as a professional mural artist," Jenny says.

To see more of his work online, visit www.MikeJenneyMurals.com or his Facebook page MikeJenneyMurals. You can reach Mike Jenney at (727) 365-5639.



Ryan's Island Cafe

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Business Briefs

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BELLEVUE PLACE MOVES SALES CENTER

Now entering its final phase of residential construction, they moved the Welcome Center to make way for the last two Carriage Home buildings. The Welcome



Center is now located at the Carriage Home model home on 6 Hibiscus Lane, off Bellevue Boulevard. The office will be open weekdays from 10 am until 5 pm and on weekends by appointment (727-469-7070). Safe distancing and sanitary precautions will be in place.

The last two Carriage Home buildings, one at the end of Bellevue Boulevard and the other overlooking Country Club Lane, will offer a total of seven townhome-style residences. The carriage homes feature two-story, maintenance-free living with 2,142 to 3,306 square feet of living space, two or three bedrooms, private elevators and two-car garages.

CLEARWATER MARINE AQUARIUM'S FUNDRAISING Many are not aware CMA has a boat, car and RV donation program which can provide a much needed source of funding for animal care. Selling a car and especially a boat can be frustrating and time consuming. If you have a boat or car you no longer need, CMA can eliminate the hassle of selling. The "rescue, rehab and release" of your unneeded boat or car through CMA is a quick and easy way to make a difference for marine life and receive a tax deduction. Contact Randy Cooper, 727-441-1790, ext. 800, rcooper@cmaaquarium.org or seewinter.com/donate.

COURTYARD MARRIOTT Under construction at 443 East Shore Drive, it is just east of busy Mandalay Avenue. A \$22 million project, the Courtyard Marriott is just north of the Clearwater Marina District Boardwalk with 139 units facing the Channel.

DREAMVIEW HOTEL DEMOLISHED Demolition is now complete and construction of a JW Marriott will begin soon. The mixed used concept will have both hotel rooms and privately owned vacation rental units. It is proposed to have 202 hotel rooms and 36 units available for purchase.

BACK TO BUSINESS AMPLIFY Clearwater has a new campaign, "Tying the Business Community Together"! Businesses receive a Back in Business sign and ribbon; they photograph their team tying their ribbon as a symbolic gesture of bringing the community together as it re-opens. The images and stories are shared through websites, e-newsletters and social media channels. To request a sign, please reach out to Sydney at Sydney@amplifyclearwater.com.



BUSINESS NEWS WANTED

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BEACH BUDDIES PET SITTING
Meeting Pet Owners' Needs Amid Pandemic

With the coronavirus forcing many to work from home and others to limit public contact or travel, Beach Buddies Pet Sitting continues to offer much-needed services to pet owners. "While our company has seen a decline in business due to people working from home and travel cancellations, we are still available to offer daily dog walking and pet sitting services," said Beach Buddies owner Celeste Bergman Moore. "We are following all CDC safety measures so we can help our neighbors and their pets stay happy and healthy during these difficult times," added Moore.

Beach Buddies has been in business on Clearwater Beach since 2006 and is a member of Pet Sitters International (PSI), the world's leading educational association for professional pet sitters and dog walkers.

"During this time of global uncertainty, professional pet sitters and dog walkers continue offering vital services in their local communities, providing pet owners with peace of mind that their pets are receiving the best care," said PSI President Beth Stultz-Hairston. "We encourage pet owners to continue supporting and using the services of their local professional pet sitters and dog walkers. People's livelihoods—and pet owner's continued access to reliable pet care—are depending on it."

Pet owners don't have to rely on untrained or unwilling friends, family members or neighbors—or "pet sitters" who have listed their services on an app but lack the experience, education and insurance needed should a pet emergency or other situation occur.

For pet owner's peace of mind, Beach Buddies is insured, licensed by the City of Clearwater, and able to provide client references and proof of background checks.

To learn more about Beach Buddies Pet Sitting, visit beachbuddiesfl.com or call 727-612-2269.

CLOTHES TO KIDS IS OPEN FOR SHOPPING!!

Clothes to Kids (CTK) is committed to providing clothing to low-income or in crisis school-age children, free of charge in the best and safest way possible. They continue following CDC and state and local guidelines by protecting the health and safety of the staff, volunteers and shopping families.

One of the most important parts of their mission is the shopping experience and at this time, they cannot provide an in-store shopping experience. However, they are excited to announce that they have re-imaged their shopping model and are announcing CTK Personalized Bonus Bags.

A Bonus Bag will include 5 pairs of underwear, 5 pairs of socks, 2 tops, 2 bottoms, 1 dress (optional) and a pair of shoes! Personalized Bonus Bags will NOT count as a regular shopping visit. Also at this time, CTK is not requiring a child's free or reduced-price lunch letter. CTK does require children live and attend school in Pinellas or Hillsborough County and be ages PreK-4 – 12th Grade.

For the a Personalized Bonus Bag, complete the form at clothestokids.org/personalized-bonus-bags-to-go.

Donations are needed. Please go through your closets and donate any gently used school clothing and shoes. Cash donations can be sent to Clothes To Kids, 1059 N. Hercules Avenue, Clearwater, FL 33765. Drop off donations from 9 am to 4 pm Monday through Friday.



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CCSC'S NOAH LYONS MAKES OLYMPIC BID

By Noah Lyons

At the age of 6, I began my journey as a sailor and immediately fell in love with the sport. 13 years later as a college freshman, I can say I still love the sport just as much if not more. I raced in the optimist until I was 11, where I then discovered windsurfing. My youth windsurfing career led me to numerous different classes such as the Techno 293, RSX, Kona, and the Open Windfoil. Alongside my path as a windsurfer, there was also a path of sailing. After the optimist, I competed in the 420 from age 12-15, and from age 15-18 the 49er Olympic class skiff.

Sailing the 49er brought opportunities to train on the US Sailing Olympic Development Team, and to compete against some of the world's best sailors. It was common at any 49er regatta to be racing against a boat that had been to the Olympics. My windsurfing journey was equally beneficial. I have competed in three world championships, two of which I placed third.

In January, I was invited to an Olympic development training for windfoiling to see how I stacked up against the nation's top windfoilers. I came out of this camp feeling confident and set my goal to attend Sailing World Cup Miami 2021.

Beginning in late 2004, the windsurfing Olympic class transitioned from the Mistral, to the RSX. After the London Olympics in 2012, Neilpryde (Creator of the RSX) changed ownership. Gear became horrendously unreliable, and extraordinarily hard to obtain when something would break.

Between the 2012 and 2016 Olympic Games, windsurf foiling began to rapidly gain popularity. Reputable companies began manufacturing foils, and people became "loyal to the foil" due to the adrenaline rush of foiling. Going 20mph in 10mph of wind is intoxicating, made even better by the smooth ride, as if you're riding on glass. It truly reinvented the sport and is drawing many retired professionals back into windsurfing.

This new technology, combined with a frustrated RSX community, led the International Olympic Committee to reevaluate the Olympic windsurfer for Olympics following 2020. The alternative chosen was the iQFoil - a one design windfoil class with the board and foil made by Starboard, and the rig made by Severn. It excels in almost every area compared to the RSX, except the iQfoil costs more.

My goal is to be the top American at the Sailing World Cup Miami 2021 in the iQFoil class. To achieve this, I have a few hurdles to overcome. I do not own any foiling gear. The only way I was able to race regattas in the past was through the generosity of friends letting me borrow their personal gear.

The iFoil board, and foil, are very similar to what I have sailed before, but the sail is quite different making practice time before Miami essential. I have been invited to three US Sailing Olympic Development Clinics specifically for the iFoil. Two are in Long Beach California, and the third is in Miami.

My home club will host approximately two to four windfoil regattas in the next ten months. This is excellent practice for the world cup as in all likelihood the top Americans will attend.

Finally, the Clearwater Community Sailing Center will be the primary training location for over 50% of the iFoil sailors in the United States, making us the primary U.S. squad. There will be no other place in the U.S. that will have the density of iFoil training partners, and that is something I greatly want to be a part of. Appropriately funded and equipped, I will be given the opportunity to meet and exceed my goal of being the top windfoiler in the United States.

Reach Noah Lyons at 727-479-5890 or Noahlyons797@gmail.com

THE STATE OF FLORIDA REAL ESTATE POST COVID-19

By Amy Tougaw, Realtor, Sand Key Realty

As we begin to emerge from the gloom of the Covid-19 crisis and the havoc it has wrought on our state's economy, many are dusting off their crystal ball to see how, when, and to what degree the economy will rebound. The Real Estate sector is often looked to as a leading indicator of the health of the economy. But, with Covid-19... all bets of certainty are off. Some renown economists have commented that a national financial crisis is likely if workers are still without jobs in three months, stating "the house of cards will likely collapse." Of the 50 most vulnerable housing markets in the country, according to Attoms Data Solutions (April, 2020), Florida had ten of them (Flagler County in the Top Ten and Lake, Bay, Clay, Broward, Hernando, Santa Rosa, Osceola, Highlands, and Charlotte Counties.) Pinellas County was not among them.

There is no denying that April was a rough month: We took a big hit in closed sales of single-family homes (20.7% year-over-year drop) and a 36.5% plummet in condo-townhome sales during the same period. New listings in April were down over 27.2% year-over-year in the single-family category and were down 38.5% for the condo-townhouse sector (the lowest in twelve years). But there is good news! According to Florida Realtors Chief Economist, Dr. Brad O'Connor, the median sale price of both single-family homes and condos/townhomes actually rose in April (6% and 7.7% respectively over 2019). In fact, early data suggests that real estate sales will have a year-over-year increase in May.

When the state began to reopen, the beaches were full, restaurants were doing a brisk business and, of course, traffic was back! Demand for housing seems to be coming back as well. Our colleagues report that they are as busy as they have ever been. "Buyers are serious, and I am getting multiple offers on my listings," said Brian Pelfrey, Sand Key Realty's top listing agent. "But we do have a supply issue. Like most industries, we were successful in adapting and being very innovative with tech-based marketing solutions during the pandemic, but many sellers still took their homes off the market in April and the first half of May. We need to see sellers put their homes back on the market. This is a great time... there's very little competition!"



Brian Pelfrey

Overall, Florida has a lot going for it. Pre-pandemic, we had over 1000 people per day moving to the state from all over the country. People from harder-hit Covid areas are flocking to warmer climates and we have a tourism industry that draws lots of visitors. While the future is far from certain, all signs point to the Real Estate industry being okay in the near term and thriving once again by 2021.

About the Author: Amy is the daughter of real estate brokers in Kentucky where she was born. After spending a number of years as a consultant in the M&A and small business space, she transferred her knowledge of small business to the real estate world where she is a partner with Million Dollar Listing Partners, a division of Sand Key Realty, the largest independent and locally owned real estate brokerage in Pinellas County. Sand Key Realty has sold billions of dollars in waterfront property in the Clearwater area since 1974.

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Organizational News...

ISLAND ESTATES CIVIC ASSOCIATION

They will continue a Summer version of their popular Town Hall Meetings, each with two Community speakers held via Zoom. You do not need to download the App. They will post a link on their Facebook page prior to each meeting. Island Estates residents only will have access to the Zoom link

- July 14: Dave Albritton, Councilman and IE resident; Greg Dixon, Code Enforcement, City of Clearwater
- August 11: Frank Dame, CEO CMA and John McDowell, Clearwater Parks and Rec.

E-mail questions for the speakers up to two weeks before meeting. They are accepting questions for July now.

Updates, reminders and how to ask your questions will be posted on our Facebook page as well as Nextdoor. If you are a Island Estates resident and haven't already signed up, visit www.facebook.com/groups/islandestates

CLEARWATER YACHT CLUB

Chartered in 1911, Clearwater Yacht Club is one of the oldest Yacht Clubs in the country. You don't need a boat to join in their fun, most of their social activities center around parties in their restaurant or at their Tiki-Bar.

They are offering a membership special to make it easier to join the Club. With a \$500 deposit towards the initiation fee, you can make monthly payments on the balance of \$125 a month for twelve months. The initiation fee is \$2000, plus tax. This is available for a Full membership (\$185 a month) or Social/Seasonal membership (\$145 a month). Call 447-6000. Learn more at ClearwaterYachtClub.org, or e-mail Office@ClearwaterYachtClub.org.

CLEARWATER GARDEN CLUB

The Clearwater Garden Club, founded in 1950, and one of the oldest Garden Clubs in Pinellas County, announced the appointment of Howard Warshauer as Chairman of its Board of Directors. Warshauer, who joined the Club in 2014, succeeds Anne Fogarty-France, who served as Chairman since 2018. The Club is located in the upcoming North Marina Area neighborhood at 405 Seminole Street, Clearwater.

Warshauer implemented a Zoom Video series named Garden Talks and held the first Board of Directors meeting on Zoom. He said, "We are taking a summer break as a result of the CoronaVirus Pandemic and will begin the new season October 17th with a special Garden Party Mingle".

ROTARY CLUB OF CLEARWATER BEACH

After 60 years, the Club is dissolving in July. They only have 4 semi-active members and four non active members. They will try to have a zoom meeting before they dissolve June 30th

GFWC CLEARWATER COMMUNITY WOMAN'S CLUB

The club held their May 19, 2020 Installation of the 2020-2021 officers on Zoom. The outgoing District 14 Director, Virginia Papadopoulos and the incoming Director, Laura Connelly did the installations

The 2020-2021 officers are: President, Susan Luce; First Vice President, Belinda McAbee; Second Vice President, Martha Hickey; Third Vice President, Dena Colgan; Recording Secretary, Debbie Foley; Corresponding Secretary, Dottie Stutler; Treasurer, Sue Meier; Member-at-Large, Kay Estock.

The Club, formed 49 years ago, is in the process of planning their 50th Anniversary celebration for 2021.

Visit GFWCClearwatercommunitywomansclub.org, the Club's Facebook page: GFWC Clearwater Community Woman's Club, or E-mail: MoreCCWCinfo@gmail.com for information.

THE COLLECTION ON PALMETTO



The Collection on Palmetto is a newly-built, state-of-the-art museum located at 2116 Palmetto Street in bright and beautiful Clearwater. Rare, Brass Era automobiles drive the collection. The earliest vehicle is the 1886 Benz Patent Motorwagen, considered the first modern car. The most recent acquisition is a fabulous 1952 Allard J2-X, the "pinnacle of '50s race cars." All of the automobiles are operational and have enjoyed award-winning restorations through the years.

Equally interesting are the antique steam engines, hand-painted murals and 1/8th scale steam train which encircles the five-acre property. A working machine shop and railroad exhibits will round out the collection upon their completion. The lushly-landscaped grounds are inviting, with a turtle-filled lake and picnic benches.

Visitors will enjoy self-guided audio-tours during operating hours, with docent-led tours available by appointment. Special events will be offered throughout the year.

Marvin and Linda Feldman are the founders of The Collection on Palmetto, a nonprofit organization intended to bring to light all the marvels associated with

early automobiles, including methods of propulsion, innovation, technology and design. Marvin's interest in cars dates back to his teenage years. His father, David, had a strong interest in steam, a passion he conveyed to his two sons. Marvin and Linda together enjoy participating in car tours around the country, many of which have been completed in their beloved Stanley Steam Cars.

For more information, visit thecollectiononpalmetto.com, like us on Facebook or follow us on Instagram. The Collection on Palmetto looks forward to hosting visitors and groups in the very near future, while adhering to all safety guidelines. For more information, contact Laura Giner at (727) 403-3086 or laura@collectiononpalmetto.com.

The Collection on Palmetto will also be available for private parties, events and weddings. You can be one of the first to host your event among these timeless treasures". For information on events contact Stacy Rogers at (985) 966-5435 or stacy@collectiononpalmetto.com.



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BELLEAIR BLUFFS CLEANERS - HOW DO THEY DO THAT?

by Bob Griffin, Publisher

Belleair Bluffs Cleaners may not be the only dry cleaner in town, but they are the oldest hands down. Gary Dawson, owner and third generation dry-cleaning operator, opened the storefront in June of 1981 - 39 years ago.

Most people have no idea what happens inside a dry-cleaning store. All they know is you drop your dirty laundry off one day and when you come back your clothes are clean, hanging on hangers and ready to be worn again. It is all pretty impressive.

Behind the scenes, what actually happens when you leave your clothes is a little more complicated. When you drop your clothes off, your order is checked in at the front counter. The number of items you have, what they are (shirt, dress, pants, etc.), and whether you want the items laundered or dry cleaned are noted. Any special items such as decorative bangles or sequins are noted too.

Each item is labeled because during the cleaning process it may be combined with other people's clothing. Then it is inspected for tears, missing buttons, or stains. Stains are pretreated. If you know there is a stain, it is best to point it out when you drop off your order. Avoid the temptation to treat a stain at home. You are more likely to make it worse by pushing the oil, dye, or food deeper into the fabric making it more difficult to remove.

Everything is then sorted and goes to different stations in the back, depending on what it needs. Employees are assigned a specific jobs at each station — dry cleaning, washing, ironing shirts, or ironing pants. Once a week they clean drapes and other household items such as bedspreads, comforters, blankets, rugs, and sheets.

The term dry cleaning is really a misnomer. The process cleans clothes and fabrics with a chemical solvent that contains no water. The solution is petroleum based and does not penetrate a fabric's fibers like water does in a washing machine. The process uses NO water - thus the name "dry cleaning."

The clothes are loaded into a drum laundry machine and gently agitated in the solvent to loosen the soil. The solvent is drained, filtered, and recycled. The clothes are "rinsed" in a fresh solvent to flush away any remaining soil.

The final step gets the garment ready to wear. They are steamed or pressed to remove wrinkles then hung or folded to await pickup. Normally the clothes are covered with a plastic bag to help keep your clean clothes clean until you can get them home.

Dry cleaning is typically used when fabrics cannot tolerate a standard home washer and dryer due to shrinking, fading or stretching. Plus, it preserves the lifetime of the fabric.

Belleair Bluffs Cleaners offers regular wet cleaning too for washable items like starched shirts, slacks, and household linens and can press 35-40 shirts per hour. Employees inspect each shirt for proper pressing, stains, and even missing buttons.

If you went in the back room, you would notice it is hot. Gary has added fans and some air conditioning, but it still stays hot. "We use a mixture of electricity and gas in our operation," Gary explains. "Our electric bill is around \$1000 per month, and the gas bill ranges another \$1800-\$2000 per month."

While the main part of our business is regular clothing, we see a lot of police, fire and sheriff uniforms," Gary says. "We also get a lot of medical clothing, like lab coats."

On a normal week, Belleair Bluffs Cleaners sees 300 to 400 customers - most are repeats. The average person brings in 5 to 10 items with each order so that can be up to 4,000 pieces of clothing per week. To cover that workload, Gary employs fourteen people. On any given day ten are on duty—spread out in the front and the back.

Normal cleaning time is three days. They do offer "Same Day Service" upon request on weekdays if your order is in by 10am. In addition to regular laundry and dry cleaning, they also offer cleaning services for suede and leather but it is not done in house; it is sent to a specialist.

"During this pandemic, we have seen more household items coming in," says Gary. "I guess people stuck in their homes are doing lots of housecleaning."

Find Belleair Bluffs Cleaners at 2924 West Bay Drive, near Panera Bread. Call them at 585-1101. They are open six days a week, Monday-Friday (7-7), Saturdays (8-5).





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