

NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

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Magazine

WHY DID TALLAHASSEE BECOME OUR STATE CAPITAL?

By Bob Griffin, Publisher



Florida's first civilian governor William DuVal. In 1824, he designated Tallahassee to be Florida's Capital.

We all know Tallahassee is our State Capital. But why was a spot at the northern end of the state, over 600 miles away from the southern tip, chosen? Ironically, at the time, everyone thought it was very centrally located,

When the Spanish owned Florida (1513 to 1763) very few people lived here. Those that did, lived along the coast—primarily in St Augustine, Key West, and Pensacola - all areas with a military forts.

In 1763, through a trade, the British acquired Florida. St. Augustine became the central colony of East Florida and Pensacola the western colony.

Twenty years later (1783), through another trade, the Spanish reacquired Florida, but really did little to settle or develop the area. This led to skirmishes with the newly formed United States, and its states Georgia and Alabama. The Spanish continued the tradition of managing Florida from St. Augustine and Pensacola, although instead of colonies they were renamed "missions."

The distance, by land, from Pensacola to St. Augustine is 400 miles. But for them, travel by land was hard. The Spanish used the old Indian trails—they were renamed "mission' trails." To move people and supplies to the missions west of St. Augustine, the Spanish used a common road called the "El Camino Real" roughly translated to "Royal Road." The only alternative was by river to the Gulf of Mexico.

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Also in this Issue:

Beth Warmath

Is an artist transforming the old Red Lion building, inside and out into the new Hurricane Eddie's.



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Frenchy's Restaurants

Meet Mike Preston, the man behind the Frenchy's restaurants. He opened his first one forty years ago.

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Clyde Butcher

The famous photographer has an exhibit in Clearwater's Main Library.

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Beach Community Food Pantry

After being closed during the early parts of the Pandemic, the BCFP is open again, and has expanded. Its mission is just as important today as it was when it opened 17 years ago.

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This newsletter is published by GRIFFIN PRODUCTIONS, Inc. and is mailed to 8,000 households occupied residence and business in Belleair Beach, Belleair Bluffs, Harbor Bluffs, and part of Largo. We are not officially associated with any city government.

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BELLEAIR AREA NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

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

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

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

Thank you for reading,

Bob & Becky Griffin, 727-430-8300 bob@griffindirectories.com

SEE YOU AGAIN IN FEBRUARY

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Stephen McNally • Taylour Shimkus

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www.cityofbelleairbeach.com
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Fire Dept: 595-1117

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Dave Gattis Vice Mayor • Rita Swope

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Ron.DeSantis@myflorida.com

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Rick Scott 202-224-5274

www.RickScott.Senate.gov

AREA UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE:

Charlie Crist 202-225-5961

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CALENDAR OF HOLIDAYS & EVENTS

JANUARY	
Public School Closed	20-4
Holiday Lights Botanical Gardens	1-31
Winter Begins	21
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NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

Magazine

Wishing You
and Your Family



Merry Christmas
and Happy New Year!

Bob and Becky Griffin

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Did You Know



LARGO HOLIDAY LIGHTS It is time for the Holiday Lights in Largo Central Park. It will held nightly through January 2 from 6-11 pm, weather permitting. Park admission is free. There is a stunning carousel and seven-story Ferris Wheel. Rides are \$5 each. Food will be available for sale on site. Don't forget to visit Mr. Bill's Fine Foods, he will be located near the rides selling funnel cakes.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED Tampa Bay Network to End Hunger works hard to ensure our neighbors have the food they need to survive. Whether you can volunteer once a week, once a month or once a year; individually or with a group, every hour of assistance helps us ensure our neighbors have access to food. Visit networktoendhunger.org/Volunteer or call 813-344-5837 for more information.

BOAT SHOW RETURNS The big St. Pete Power and Sailboat Show returns to downtown St. Petersburg January 20-23. Most of the boats for sale are in the water next to the Dali Museum. Get more details at www.StPeteBoatShow.com.

RULES OF THE ROAD A bicycle is considered a vehicle. Therefore, a bicyclist has the same rights and responsibilities as motorized vehicles, and can also receive traffic tickets. That means cyclists must slow down at yellow lights and stop at ALL red lights and stop signs. Cyclists are allowed on sidewalks, except in designated areas where they may pose a risk to pedestrians, such as in a busy downtown area



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SANTA SATURDAYS

Capture a memorable moment with Santa while experiencing an "old fashioned holiday" at Heritage Village - take a "selfie" with Santa or a picture of the entire family. Santa will be waiting to hear from you on the front porch of the McMullen-Coachman Log Cabin, Pinellas County's oldest existing structure! The park will include antique and classic cars "dressed up" for the holidays, a holiday scavenger hunt, and sweet treats such as steamy hot chocolate, gourmet coffees, and other goodies. This event

is sponsored by the Friends of Heritage Village (Pinellas County Historical Society) and the Pinellas Model A Restorers Club. December 4, 11, and 18 from 10am to 2pm.

Heritage Village is located at 11909 125th Street N. in Largo.

and More...

BOAT PARADE

PLANNED Clearwater Beach's holiday lighted boat parade will be held this year. There was no boat parade last year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. For the first time, The Island Estates Lighted Boat Parade is being managed by the Clearwater Yacht Club (CYC). On Saturday, December 11, the parade will begin at dark and the route will basically be the same – beginning just north of the Clearwater Memorial Bridge near the Clearwater Marine Aquarium. You do not have to be a CYC member or even live in Clearwater Beach to have your boat in the parade. More details will be available as the event gets closer. To participate or if you have questions, please e-mail Hoyt Nichols at HoytNichols.CPA@gmail or call 447-6000.



SMOKE ALARMS FOR THE DEAF

There are smoke alarms and alert devices that alert people who are deaf or hard of hearing. These devices include strobe lights that flash to alert people when the smoke alarm sounds. Pillow or bed shakers designed to work with your smoke alarm also can be purchased and installed.

CITIZEN OF THE YEAR

Longtime attorney and Largo business leader Bruce McManus was recognized in November as "Citizen of the Year" by the Central Pinellas Chamber of Commerce. McManus (who has his office near the Wells Fargo Bank on West Bay Dr.) was recognized for helping to facilitate construction of the Central Park Performing Arts Center and is a founding member of the Florida Botanical Gardens Foundation. "Largo is one of the nicest places to live in Florida," said McManus. "And it is getting nicer every year."

CONGRATULATIONS MCPO ABRAMS

Timothy Abrams, Commanding Officer at the United States Coast Guard Station Sand Key, was recently promoted to Master Chief Petty Officer (MCPO). The rank of MCPO is the ninth and highest enlisted rank. They are considered experts in their field specialty

SAY NO TO CLOG REMOVERS

All the chemicals in clog removers are not good for our waters. If you have a clogged drain use a plunger or make your own clog buster with equal parts of baking soda and vinegar. Add a half cup of baking soda down the drain. Let it sit for a bit, then add a 1/2 cup of vinegar. The bubbly reaction should clear the drain. Remember - what you put down the drain has to go somewhere and will ultimately end up in our water supply



OUR NEXT ISSUE IS IN FEBRUARY

If you need another copy of this newsletter, you may pick up one up at all City Halls, Panara Bread, The UPS Store and the Belleair Market. Call 430-8300 if you need more than a few. Read this issue, and others, online at BeachNewsletters.com and follow us on Facebook for ongoing local news.

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LUNCH • DINNER • LATE NITE

WHY TALLAHASSEE? continued

Even though it was still under Spanish control, in 1818 during the First Seminole War, United States General Andrew Jackson burned an Indian village in the Panhandle called "Anhaica." The capital of the Apalachee Province, it was rebuilt and renamed Tallahassee.

The name Tallahassee is based on a Muskogean Indian word, "Talawa", meaning town and "Ahassee" meaning "old." Together it is "old town" or "old, abandoned fields," in honor of the Apalachee settlement previously there.

The U.S. acquired Florida in 1821 and sent then retired General Andrew Jackson there to "run the Spanish and the Indians out." He was Florida's only military governor and was charged with creating a government.

Jackson again designated St. Augustine the Capital of East Florida and Pensacola the Capital of West Florida. He also chose the mayors, judges, and sheriffs to run the cities. Three months later, he handed the reins over to William DuVal, the first civilian governor of the Florida territory.

Governor DuVal decided the territory only needed one capital. Emissaries of the two capitals were tasked with finding a suitable location to build the new capital midway between St. Augustine and Pensacola. At the time, the Apalachicola River was the dividing point between east and west Florida. Few people lived in the middle and southern parts Florida, so those area were not even a consideration.

In June of 1823, Pensacola's Col. John Lee Williams traveled along the Gulf of Mexico to St. Marks, a small colony due south of today's Tallahassee area. Waiting there was Dr. William H. Simmons, who had traveled by horseback from St. Augustine, 205 miles away. Today the area where they met, is still called Midway, Florida.

Together, they traveled to the Indian Village destroyed by Jackson. It was almost exactly half-way between the two existing capitals. Picking that area as the state's new capital was truly a "matter of convenience." They chose to keep the name Tallahassee.

Together, Williams and Simmons found some flat land, near today's Cascades Park about a half of a mile south of the current Capitol building, and determined it was a good place to build the new capital. They liked its elevation, the location was beautiful, and they noted "the water is plenty and good."

Chief Neamathla of the Creek tribe lived nearby. Williams and Simmons made a deal with him to peacefully acquire the area. Later, Neamathla recanted threatening to kill all the Americans. DuVal had a regiment of U.S. Army soldiers remove Neamathla and ordered all those Indians to a reservation on Egmont Key.

In November 1824, the Legislative Council met for the first time in Tallahassee in a small log cabin built for that purpose. At that same session, the Council created the county of Leon, presumably name for Juan Ponce de Leon, who discovered Florida.

That same year, the U.S. Congress authorized Florida's first Federal Highway connecting St. Augustine with Tallahassee. Called the "Bellamy Road," it was named for its architect, John Bellamy. It ran from St. Augustine to the Ochlocknee River, slightly west of Tallahassee.

The city was incorporated in December of 1825; its first elections were held in January of 1826. At the time, it was estimated that 12,000 people lived in Florida, and half of them were either slaves or Indians—or both.

William DuVal served as Governor for 12 years—longer than any other Florida Governor. During Florida's first 80 years, its Governors provided their own housing or lived in area hotels. DuVal lived in a very small house on the site of today's Florida A&M University and worked for what he called "a poor-man's wage."

When they chose the Tallahassee area as Florida's capital, a city had to be built. This created a new economic area, referred to as "Middle Florida." It encompassed the land south from Georgia to the Suwanee River and west to the Apalachicola River.

Settlers started moving to the area immediately. According to the Niles' Register, in April 1824, "the first wagon, with a small party of persons and their effects, arrived on the spot where Tallahassee now stands." By the fall of the next year, twenty farms were created, and an estimated 2000 people had moved into the county by 1826.

The United States offered settlers 160 acres in the Florida territory, if you agreed to live on it and clear at least five acres for farming. The fertile area attracted immigrants from Virginia, South Carolina, Kentucky, and Tennessee. Tallahassee soon became

known as a wild and dangerous place to live. The city filled with new citizens and politicians, gained a reputation for "vice, intemperance, gambling and profanity." Author Ralph Waldo Emerson visited Tallahassee and wrote that it was "a grotesque place rapidly settled by public officers, land speculators and desperados."

Primarily growing cotton, plantations with names like Wacissa and Lipona sprang up in the area surrounding the capital. Farmers shipped their crops through Tallahassee to Port St. Marks (20 miles to the south), then on to other markets around the country. By 1840, Leon County would be the most important agricultural center in the Florida Territory, producing over 5 million pounds of cotton a year – half of the cotton in the territory.

By the mid-1830s, railroads began to crisscross Florida. One ran from Jacksonville to Pensacola and another down to Cedar Key. The "Tallahassee Railroad" connected Tallahassee to St. Marks—which facilitated shipping cotton and other crops.

A Yellow Fever epidemic hit the city and wiped out many of the troublemakers, as well some upstanding citizens. Tallahassee suffered a fire in 1843 that destroyed most of its downtown. By the time of the Civil War, a new city had been built using new building standards requiring masonry construction.

A Look at Tallahassee Today

The city's population as of 2019 is over 195,000 people. It has seen a lot of growth in recent years—mainly in the areas of government and the research services associated with it and Florida State University. A growing number of retirees are finding Tallahassee an attractive alternative to South Florida's high housing prices and urban sprawl.

Tallahassee's Capital Building is the third tallest capitol building in the US.

The area Williams and Simmons choose for the first capital building, which no longer remains, was renamed "Centennial Field" when Tallahassee reached its centennial year. It was the site of Florida State University's first football game and today it is a city park with a bandstand.

CREDIT: Some of information for this article was found in the book: Thompson, J. Kent. *Remembering Florida's Forgotten Coast*. Lulu Press, 2015 ■



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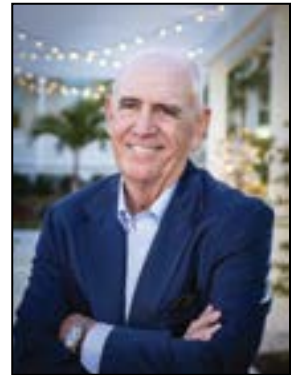
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**DOCUMENT RETENTION
 KEEP OR SHRED?**

by Ray Ferrara, ProVise Management Group

Not every document should be digitized, but not every document needs to be kept either. Do you know what to shred or keep and how and where to keep it? To help we have put together a checklist. A lot of what to keep or shred is a personal choice. Some of us just can't throw anything away and that is why digitizing lets you declutter.



The rules vary as to what, when and where to keep documents. You generally should keep a tax return and the supporting documents for at least three years since this is the audit time period unless you under reported your income by 25% or more, then you will need them for at least six years. Of course, there is no statute of limitations for a fraudulent return.

Estate documents, including a will, living trust, power of attorney, healthcare surrogate and living will should always be kept in their original form. As an example, if using a power of attorney for a real estate transaction many governmental agencies will require the original.

Keep these estate documents in a safe place like a fireproof and waterproof safe. Do not store them in a safety deposit box at the bank as the documents may be needed to get into the box in the first place. If you have a Do Not Resuscitate (DNR), it should be kept on the refrigerator.

You always want to keep originals of your birth certificate, Social Security and Medicare cards, marriage certificate, prenuptial agreement, divorce papers, citizenship card, current passport and driver's license to name a few.

When it comes to investment statements it is best to keep the current year's statements, but you can probably trash these if you get a summary statement at the end of the year. You should keep this for at least three years with your tax records.

Real estate closing documents and mortgage documents can be digitized, but you always want to keep the original of the deed. Title to autos, boats, motor homes, etc. should stay in original form.

Our checklist includes all of these and other records. It recommends the length of time to keep them, whether to keep them in original or digital form and suggests where to keep them. To get your copy of our checklist either call our office at 727-441-9022 or email us at info@provisem.com.

V. Raymond Ferrara, CFP®, Chair and CEO
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The information herein is general and educational in nature and should not be considered legal or tax advice. Tax laws and regulations are complex and are subject to change.

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

SEASONAL COLOR IN YOUR LANDSCAPE

By Randy Lee

Seasonal weather is back in Central Florida and it is time to add color to the landscape. With sunny, cooler weather it is time to get out in the yard and finish end of the year details like trimming, fertilizing and planting flowers. We plant both annuals (living only one season) and perennials (living for several seasons) during this time of the year. My favorite time to plant is the first of November since the heat is gone and the holidays are right around the corner. We plant thousands of annuals in November and December so get your trowel out and let's get started.

There are many annuals to choose from: sweet alyssum, geranium, pansy, begonia, petunia, snap dragon and salvia. These are the more popular annuals. Popular perennials include crown of thorn, penta, lantana and blue daze. I prefer perennials in the summer months and annuals in the winter. Annuals are generally planted from October through May, so take advantage of them during these months. Impatiens is also very popular in Florida. The two varieties we grow in Florida are Sunpatiens and New Guinea.

Before selecting your flowers keep a few things in mind. First, what colors do I want to use and how do I want to use them in the overall design in the landscape? Colors are grouped into two groups: the cooler lighter colors and the hotter more vivid colors. Cooler colors include white, pink and blue. Vivid colors include red, purple and orange. Most people have a preference. You may want to layer the flowers with a shorter flower in front like sweet alyssum and a taller plant in back like geranium- this layering effect can be very dramatic.

Second, the area should be prepped with a light fertilizer and good potting soil- the ground may need to be loosened as



well. A granular fertilizer can also be used every eight weeks to keep the flowers looking their best. I typically will mulch before planting if using smaller flowers since mulching after is difficult.

Next, remember to use the right flowers in the right place. Is the area wet or dry? Are the flowers in full sun or shade or somewhere in between? Each type of flower has a preference. Be sure to space the flowers correctly and do not be afraid to use a lot of plants. Follow these few steps for many months of beautiful flowers.

Checklist:

- Fertilizer ban is lifted
- Great time to plant fall color
- Ease off on the mowing and trimming
- Great time to plant large trees
- Redo pots and containers at this time

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LOCAL FASHION DESIGNER EXPANDING

Donna Kay Malloy and her family relocated to Belleair Bluffs from Ft. Myers Beach In 1983. What initially attracted her to the Bluffs was its designation as a "Bird Sanctuary" and its proximity to the beach. As an artist, both are common themes in her acrylic paintings - nature and landscapes.

After an art exhibit, she was approached by a Canadian manufacturer who wanted to reproduce her original artwork into wearable art. Fast forward to today and she has a private label: "Seaside Art Studio." The ready-to-wear,

machine washable clothing line features a variety of styles including long or short sleeved dresses, reversible travel dresses, turtleneck and ballet neck tops, straight skirts with matching scarves, flattering long vests, workout wear, and men's wear. Manufactured by Le Galeriste, the factory is in Montreal, Canada and each item is custom ordered.

Seaside Art Studio has added popular household items such as shower curtains, pillows and tote bags.

Plans are underway to feature Malloy textile designs in area boutiques. In the meantime, you can order directly from her: www.legaleriste.com/seaside.art.studio or 727-254-2562.

The holidays are fast approaching. Give the gift of an original wearable art design this season.

MARKET IN THE BLUFFS The Market in the Bluffs, is being held on the Second Saturday of each month through May from 9am until 2pm. The November Market had twenty-five vendors in the street in front of City Hall - 2747 Sunset Blvd. The vendors will rotate, by include handmade items, local honey, jewelry, gourmet foods, art, plants & pet items. The market is pet friendly.

For information or to be a vendor, e-mail EventsbyJK@aol.com.

YELLOW BANKS REOPENS FOR ITS 70TH YEAR

Yellow Banks Groves, our closest source for citrus, orange juice and ice cream, has reopened for the 2021-2022 season - their 70th year. It is still owned and operated by John Buck. They are now taking orders for their "Honeybell" oranges and grapefruits.

Read their entire history online at YellowBanks.com

Find them at 14423 Walsingham Road in Largo.




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Business Briefs

FIRST HOME BANK NOW OPEN In the former site of BB&T, on the corner of Indian Rocks Road North and Indian Avenue, First Home Bank is open. It is based in downtown St. Petersburg and has five Pinellas locations and one in Tampa. Learn more about our new bank at www.FirstHomeBank.com.



The new manager is Jennifer Winger, who comes to First Home Bank from the Seminole Wells Fargo.

Find them at 401 Indian Rocks Road North, Belleair Bluffs.

HOPE AND LOVE This new Veterinary Hospital opened in October on Walsingham Rd. in Largo right before the bridge. It is owned by Dr. Tiffany Gisel, DVM.

"We strive to offer the best care and medical guidance to support our pets' needs," says Dr Gisel. "Our motto is 'Welcome to the Family.'"

They are located at 14308 Walsingham Road, across from Yellow Banks Grove. Get more information at www.HopeandLoveVet.com

BEST TAMPA MOVER AWARD

Big Man's Moving Company was named the Best Mover in TAMPA Magazines' 2021 Best of the City list. More than 200,000 votes were cast to determine the winners in 81 categories.



Owners, Josh and Brooke Anderson, experienced a terrible move themselves which fueled their desire to start a moving company. Using wedding gifts to purchase their first truck in January 2017, the fleet has now grown to 7 trucks. "Reinvesting into our business has always been a top priority. 5 of our 7 trucks are brand new, and this offers reliability for our customers." Big Man's Moving has completed 3800 successful local, statewide, and out-of-state moves and offers packing services.

"Honestly, this award is dedicated entirely to our team. They are good, honest people who genuinely care and work very hard," says Josh. "The greatest challenge and reward in business ownership has been finding the right people with a positive attitude and mindset." Big Man's movers are all full-time, W2 employees covered by workers compensation.

Contact Big Man's Moving Company at Bigmansmoving.com or call 727-772-3458.

MOVED RE/MAX closed the West Bay Drive location last month and relocated to South Ft Harrison. The old location may be demolished.

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

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Business Briefs



GABBY IN THE BLUFFS Belleair resident Gabby Holcombe recently opened a new State Farm Insurance office, next to Bonefish Grill. She is pictured here (on the left) with associates Allie Holcombe and Cody Lighthiser. Find them at 2955 West Bay Drive or reach her at 239-4693.

SOLD OUT, "The Walk," a new development of 32 townhomes, being built on Gulf Blvd. at 24th Avenue in Indian Rocks, is now sold out. A few units are still pending, but all units are under contract. Being built by Taylor Morrison Development, who also built "The Cove" at 7th Avenue, "The Walk" is the largest development the city has seen in many years. It will add a significant amount of money to the City's tax base through real estate taxes.

NEED A HANDYMAN?

Having lived in several states, local resident George Lyle now calls Clearwater home. Still healthy and vibrant, he finds retirement not an option. Now, Lyle is putting his over 40 years experience as a home builder and renovator to good use by doing home repair-handyman style. While focusing mainly on electrical and plumbing work, he will most likely consider whatever work it is you need done. With his many years of experience he quickly gets the job done.



One favorable point is when you hire him, he is the one that does the work. He does not pass it off to someone else. Many customers take comfort knowing that. His in-home estimates are free and there's no pressure - George Lyle prides himself on honesty and quality work. You can reach him at 970-946-5200 or e-mail georgelyle72@gmail.com.



SURF SHOP EXPANDS, Indian Rock's Island Surf Shop got bigger when the longtime surf shop, near Slyce Pizza, expanded into the space next door. Owner Bob Kopald offers a lot more than surf and skim boards, they also sell clothing and beach related gear. Check them out at 309 Gulf Blvd.

RECORD BREAKING TRAVEL

This summer, St. Pete-Clearwater International Airport (PIE) celebrated the biggest month in the history of PIE with 262,681 passengers flying in July 2021. The airport will soon serve 64 non-stop destinations overall, the most in their history.

Business Briefs

CAPPELLO IS BACK

Cappello & Co Jewelry was located in Belleair Bluffs before they moved to Seminole. Now, they are back in the Bluffs - at The Plaza.

Owner and Belleair Beach resident Joe Cappello moved into the space previously leased by Galleria Misto, next to E&E Stakeout Grill. Joe has been in the jewelry business 35 years. "This is truly a family business," he stays. "My son, Victor and daughter Jennifer, also work here." There is a staff of five people providing a variety of services from custom design to jewelry repair. All work is custom. They also offer discreet collateral lending. Call them at 585-5700 or visit www.CappelloFineJewelry.com.



NATURE'S FOOD PATCH HELPS FEEDS THOSE IN NEED For the eighth year in a row, your local and organic natural foods grocer, Nature's Food Patch Market & Café in Clearwater and Downtown Dunedin, is collecting healthy foods to donate to families in need through December 31st, 2021.

Customers simply purchase a pre-packaged \$10 bag of natural, healthy food and Nature's Food Patch will donate it directly to the corresponding charity. All donations from their Clearwater store will go to Homeless Empowerment Program (HEP). Last year, they collected over \$16,000 of food.

To encourage customers to bring their own re-usable bags for groceries, they offer a 5¢ donation per bag that will also go to HEP during November and December.



NEW OWNER AT MY SALON

Now owned and operated by Alison Hall, My Salon located in The Plaza at 100 N. Indian Rd, is a full-service salon & spa. Alison is an international stylist with nearly 40 years of experience specializing in color correction and the

latest cutting and coloring techniques. She proudly uses top of the line products and retails Moroccan Oil. Alison encourages complimentary consultations to ascertain your hair care needs.

My Salon also offers massage and facial services. Megan and Christine are licensed in massages and facials and their services include: Therapeutic Deep Tissue, Relaxation, Myofascial Release, Cupping, Therapeutic Stretching, and Sports Massage. It's their passion to help you look and feel your very best!

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CLYDE BUTCHER PHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBITS IN CLEARWATER

by Jason Aquilar

Bay area residents and visitors currently have a unique opportunity to see the work of one of Florida's "Top 100 Most Influential Floridians" for free inside the Clearwater Main Library. Photographer Clyde Butcher was on hand for the opening of his America's Everglades Exhibit on November 6th along with his wife Niki and daughter Jackie. Visitors to the exhibit were lined up outside the front door waiting to get in when the library opened at 11 am. They were there to see Clyde's photography and have an opportunity to meet Clyde himself. Clyde was autographing books and calendars that were available for purchase. Seated amidst the gallery, he took time to interact and pose for photographs with attendees.

Born in Kansas City, Missouri in 1942, Clyde graduated with a degree in architecture from California Polytechnic State University. After visiting an Ansel Adams exhibit in Yosemite National Park, he was inspired to photograph landscapes, and left the architecture field in 1970. Clyde began his photography career in color, but later vowed to photograph images only in black and white after the loss of his 17-year-old son Ted who was killed by a drunk driver in 1986.

Clyde met a Florida native who introduced him to the interior of the Big Cypress National Preserve and the Everglades and took him on his first swamp walk. The mystery and natural beauty of the area helped to soothe and restore his soul, inspiring him to take black and white photos of the swamp.

Clyde often waits patiently for hours until the light, clouds and composition all come together to create the perfect image that he wants to share. Besides the subject matter and the vivid monochrome feel of Clyde's work, what distinguishes him from other landscape photographers is his huge mural sized

prints, some with dimensions of up to five by nine feet. Their enormous size allows you to view the image in the immersive way Clyde saw it when he created it, standing amidst nature.

Clyde also is recognized as

a conservationist for showcasing the delicate nature of the environment and in particular the Florida Everglades and its importance in our ecosystem. "It is my hope that the vision I give to you of the Everglades will inspire you to love and protect it for generations to come," Clyde Butcher said of the Clearwater exhibit. Clyde hopes his images transcend politics and his philosophy is "The World is Round" which essentially means that what we do in our region also affects the entire planet and all its inhabitants.

"The Everglades exhibit is an opportunity for us to not only showcase a nationally acclaimed artist but also the importance of our environment," said Amanda Thompson, Community Redevelopment Agency Director. "We welcome residents and visitors to experience this new gallery overlooking the waterfront and all the opportunities for arts and entertainment that Downtown Clearwater has to offer."

This exhibit is on display until May 31, 2022, during regular library hours at 100 N Osceola Ave, Clearwater.



Clyde Butcher with author Jason Aquilar

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HURRICANE EDDIE'S BRINGS NEW ART TO THE BEACH

By Lora Griffin Magnani

The new paintings on the face of the old Red Lion—now called Hurricane Eddie's - is nearing completion. It is the result of a combination of owner Tom George's ideas and artist Beth Warmath's talents.

Warmath, born in Memphis, began her artistic journey drawing the woods, lakes, and fields of Tennessee with crayons and colored pencils. She earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from the University of Memphis and started her professional career as a graphic designer. She eventually relocated to Florida and transitioned into creating large scale murals for businesses and public art displays.

The iconic facade at Frenchy's Rockaway Grill was her first local composition, followed by a mural for Jimmy Guana's restaurant inside the Holiday Inn Harbourside.



The cyclone-themed piece on the exterior of Indian Rocks' Hurricane Eddie's is her fifth work for restaurateur Tom George, the last being Prohibition Kitchen in Dunedin.

Her work on Hurricane Eddie's began in September; she hopes to complete it by November with help from contributing local artists John Comer, Ilona Fries, Terri Gray and Hanna

Warmath. The mural begins on the north side of the building depicting the calm before the storm and flows to the south

into a hurricane. It also includes a red lion handing keys to "Gator", Eddie's trademark image. Numerous local pedestrians have stopped by Hurricane Eddie's to chat with Warmath about the progress. One couple even brought her donuts.

Her art is not limited to the outside. There will be more of Warmath's colorful painting inside the restaurant, as well.

Warmath's passion is using her talents to bring beauty to unattractive spaces. "My lifework is to make the world a beautiful place by painting over the unsightly concrete walls, buildings, and undesirable areas with beautiful color. This brings communities together, and I give back by morphing my naturalistic art into the surrounding area."

In addition to her full-time career as an artist, Warmath has taught mural camps at several schools and art centers. She also contributes to public art projects and creates wearable art.

Hurricane Eddie's owner Tom George tells us he hopes to be open by the end of the year. He has been delayed due to problems acquiring the necessary equipment to finish the kitchen and the stainless steel for the bar.

In the meantime, he is sponsored a Beach Clean Up on Indian Rocks Beach in November with an after party on Hurricane Eddie's patio.

If you'd like to contact Beth Warmath, e-mail her at WarmathWalls@Gmail.com.



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LOCAL AUTHOR'S FIRST NOVEL

Clearwater Beach author, Jan M, Walton has been writing fiction since her teen years. RIVER AVENUE though, is her first novel. Walton coaches people in developing their personal stories as a Guided Autobiography instructor, certified by the Birren Center for Autobiographical Studies.



Originally from Michigan, Walton lived and worked in New York for decades and now savors the beach life in Clearwater.

Her novel RIVER AVENUE is the story of a boy who must decide what kind of man he is when his family is forever changed. It takes place in 1930 in a hardscrabble western Pennsylvania town where life revolves around the rough labor of mining and burning of coal to make "coke" for the Pittsburg steel mills.

Dan, the oldest of seven children growing up on River Avenue, is the quiet peacekeeper in his family, staying out of the way of his domineering father. Dan's emotional center is his loving but distracted mother. When she deteriorates in grief after the death of her five-year-old son, Dan supports his mother's slow efforts to rejoin their family life. On the day he is most hopeful for her recovery, she disappears. Dan struggles to hold life together for his siblings as he seeks answers about his mother. When Dan uncovers devastating secrets his parents kept from each other, he must confront their tyrant father.

Older Dan reflects on the life-altering choices he made and the man he became to save his family.

RIVER AVENUE has received 5-star reviews from readers on Amazon. It is available on Amazon and Barnes&Noble.com.

Learn more about Jan Walton at janmwalton.com.

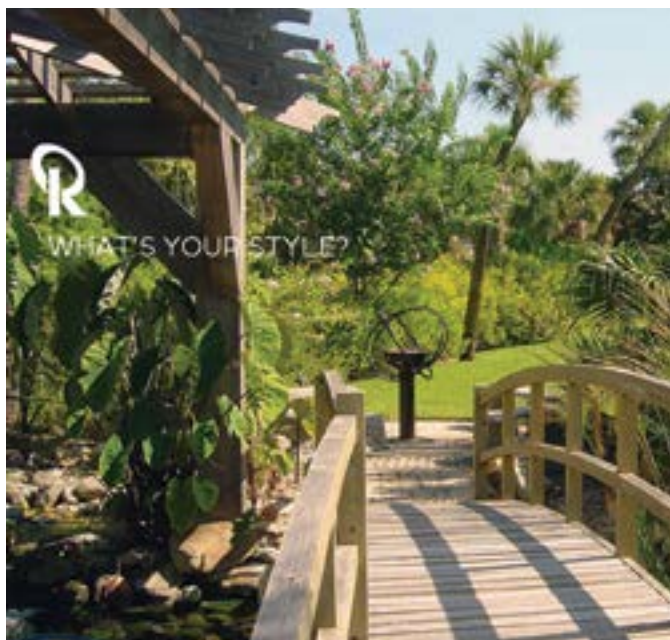
PIER 60 SUGAR SAND FESTIVAL RETURNS IN 2022

The Pier 60 Sugar Sand Festival returns to bright and beautiful Clearwater Beach in the spring of 2022! Event organizers are thrilled to announce the festival's return on in 2022. From architectural masterpieces created from Clearwater's famous sugar sand to concerts, performers and daily entertainment, the Pier 60 Sugar Sand Festival is a fascinating event attracting visitors from around the world each year. The festival returns to Clearwater Beach in 2022 for its eighth and biggest year yet with the theme "SANDimals, An Animal Adventure."

The festival will again stretch for 17 days - April 8 to 24, 2022. This will allow more time to see it, and give those visiting for Easter a chance to see this incredible and affordable festival.

General admission will be \$12 per person, free for children 3 years old and younger. Discounted tickets for military personnel, police officers, firefighters, teachers and healthcare workers can be purchased for \$10 each on "Frontline Fridays," which are April 8, 15 and 22. These discounted tickets will be available at the gate only with proper identification. All other tickets can be purchased online at SugarSandFestival.com beginning in December 2021.

Out of an abundance of caution due to the ongoing pandemic, the festival was cancelled in 2020 and 2021. Event organizers are preparing a festival that is safe and fun for everyone. Safety guidelines will be announced closer to the event.



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THANKFUL FOR THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

By Karen Williams Seel, Pinellas County Commissioner

I so look forward to the holidays every year. It's a chance to slow down a little, spend time with family and friends and enjoy the fun and beauty of this special time of year. And even though COVID-19 is still impacting our lives, there is so much to be thankful for this holiday season.



I am thankful for my family and grateful that they are healthy and happy. I am also thankful for my friends and co-workers who add so much to my life. You all are a blessing to me. I am thankful to live here in Pinellas County with its beautiful land and seascapes to enjoy year-round. And I am thankful to be able to serve you as a Pinellas County Commissioner.

I am also thankful to see so many of our traditional holiday events resuming this year. With the proper precautions, these events are safe and add so much to the season.



One of my favorites is the Florida Botanical Gardens' Holiday Lights in the Gardens. The 35-acre gardens in Largo will absolutely glow with more than one million environmentally friendly LED lights, laser lights and Florida-themed displays. Holiday Lights in the Gardens will be open nightly from 5:30 to 9:30 pm through Jan.

2. For more information and a listing of nightly entertainment, visit flbgfoundation.org.

Holiday boat parades are back again this year. Be sure to find your spot along the Intracoastal to cheer on your favorites in the many boat parades scheduled around the county.

Speaking of parades, take the whole family out to enjoy the many community parades and festivals throughout the season. An up-to-date listing of holiday events is available at visitstpeteclearwater.com/topic/2021-holiday-event-guide.

Be sure to protect yourself and your family by following CDC guidelines when attending holiday events. Visit cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/holidays/celebrations.html, to learn about the latest recommendations.

I hope you are able to get out and enjoy the holidays in beautiful Pinellas County. I can't imagine a better place to spend them than the place we call home. We can all be thankful for that.

All my best to you and your family this holiday season.

WINTER WONDERLAND

St. Jerome Early Childhood Center will host a Winter Wonderland Saturday, December 4th.

The Marketplace begins at 5pm in the Parish Center with food & drink and vendors selling homemade crafts including doll clothes, jewelry, Christmas decorations and more. Vendor participate is \$40 payable at the ECC office.

The drive-through light display and Live-Nativity begins about 6:30. The property will be a festive display of Christmas lights and inflatables, fire trucks, music, dancing, and snacks. The Living Nativity will have a live "holy family" and real animals! While there is no admittance fee, Jolly Elves will be collecting donations.



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FRENCHY'S RESTAURANTS - 40 YEARS OF SEAFOOD AND FUN

By Bob Griffin

There have been Frenchy's restaurants on Clearwater Beach as long as most of us can remember. Frenchy's Original Café on Baymont Avenue has been here the longest—40 years in October.

The Baymont Avenue restaurant was the beginning of the Frenchy's legacy that today consists of five Frenchy's restaurants, three Clear Sky restaurants, a gift shop with many custom items, a waterfront hotel on East Shore Drive, a seafood market that ships fresh seafood and stone crabs all over the United States, and a fleet of fishing boats and processing center.

Famous for their grouper sandwiches, today, the name Frenchy is synonymous with Clearwater dining. The restaurants' laid-back atmosphere and food is not only enjoyed by visitors, but a favorite of locals, too. With all the choices out there, that says a lot.

Michael "Frenchy" Preston is the man behind the Frenchy's empire. He was born in Quebec, a French-speaking province of Canada. When he was in middle school, his family moved to Ann Arbor, Michigan. Preston grew up in a bilingual household, and when his new Michigan friends heard him speaking French with his mom, they started calling him "Frenchy" and it stuck.

Shortly after high school, Frenchy, and some friends, took a vacation to Clearwater Beach. He loved it so much he decided to stay and got a job at a local restaurant. He worked hard learning every job as he progressed from dishwasher to manager. After eight years in the industry, he was ready to make his dream a reality – opening his own restaurant.

Frenchy's goal was simple: to have a friendly, laid-back place where people could come to enjoy a cold drink and fresh seafood. In 1981, Frenchy's Original Café, the quaint restaurant on a tiny side street on the north end of

the beach, opened its doors to the beach community. The Café became an instant success, with lines of people stretching out the door, daily.

To ensure a constant source of fresh fish to his Café, Frenchy purchased a fleet of fishing boats and eventually opened Frenchy's Seafood Company.

With these resources in place, Frenchy's became "famous" for its fresh Super Grouper sandwich, leading to the opening of five more restaurants: Frenchy's Saltwater Café in 1989, Frenchy's Rockaway Grill in 1991, Frenchy's South Beach Cafe in 2003, Frenchy's Outpost Bar & Grill in 2013, and Frenchy's To Go in 2020—plus the Frenchy's Off The Hook gift shop, located next to the Original Baymont Café.

For the last four decades, the Frenchy's restaurants have been regarded as the place to go for delicious, fresh-from-the-Gulf seafood (and stone crabs) at reasonable prices - in a fun and casual beach atmosphere.

Probably the best known and most visited is Frenchy's Rockaway, named for its address - 7 Rockaway Street – directly on the beach. "Rockaway" as it is known by locals will be 30 years old in November.

Located in Palm Harbor, Frenchy's Stone Crab Company is the only processing plant solely dedicated to Florida stone crab claws. Their state-of-the-art facility cooks the fresh catch the same day it is harvested to provide the freshest claws possible.

For more than 30 years, Frenchy's Stone Crab Company has worked with independent crabbers that focus only on the Florida stone crab. With the support of these professional crab boat captains – many who've been crabbing

for Frenchy's for over 20 years - they harvest, cook and ship stone crabs fresh, never frozen from October 15 to May 15.

Their fresh seafood is shipped overnight to other restaurants, seafood markets, dealers, caterers, supermarkets and distributors around



The first Frenchy's restaurant - Baymont Avenue

the country. You can order seafood from Frenchy's Stone Crab Company and have it shipped fresh overnight to your front door.

Frenchy partnered with Dan Shouvlín to open Clear Sky Beachside Cafe on Mandalay Avenue. That popular restaurant led to three more - Clear Sky on Cleveland, Clear Sky Draught Haus in Dunedin, Clear Sky Club Haus in Palm Harbor and soon a future Clear Sky in Seminole.

In 2010, Frenchy continued building his Clearwater Beach enterprises with the purchase of the former Olympia Motel, located on East Shore Drive. After months of extensive renovations, Frenchy's Oasis Motel opened, boasting a 15-unit waterfront property, classically designed in retro style of the 1960s, offering fantastic modern accommodations.

37 years ago, Frenchy held the first Stone Crab Festival in Clearwater Beach, corresponding with the opening of Stone Crab Season (October 15th). The street party became so popular, it expanded into a three-day festival with live bands closing the street. Unfortunately, this year's festival, planned for October 22-24, will not have a street party. Due to Covid concerns, it is being held inside each restaurant.

Frenchy has done his part for the local community, too, donating to many area causes and hosting an annual tennis tournament for charity.

"Michael is an amazing success story-- from being a dishwasher to becoming a restaurant icon," says Mayor Frank Hibbard. "The best thing about Frenchy is that he remembers his roots and has given back to organizations like big brothers and big sisters. He wants to help people succeed and live the American dream." ■



The original Frenchy's restaurant on Baymont Avenue, today



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Bar & Restaurant News

BACKWATER'S HAS A NEW OWNER Twenty-one years is enough - enough of the good times and good food. Larry Edger, owner of Backwaters on Sand Key, sold the restaurant.

The new owner is George Pappas, a local but with other restaurants in Chicago. He is no relation to the Pappas family of Tarpon Springs. Pappas bought the popular waterfront restaurant November 1st and says he plans very few changes. He even plans to continue with the Chili Cooking Contest, scheduled for January 30th.



Larry will continue to own and operate both Maggie Mae's..

BELLEAIR CAFE Big Big news for the cafe. Just before Thanksgiving, they started serving beer, wine, champagne, mimosas & bloody Mary's! To kick off their new cocktails, they are planning more food specials than ever.

SEKUSHI SUSHI

Everyone is excited about this new restaurant and impatient for its opening. Owner Frank Manella tells us he hopes to open this month at the north end of The Plaza.



Manella says, "the restaurant will have a full bar with plenty of outside dining and a dedicated area for curbside pick-up."

The restaurant is accepting reservations for private holiday parties in their private room that is suitable for groups of 30. See their web site and menu online at www.SekushiOnTheBeach.com.

JIMMY GUANA'S MANAGER RETIRES

After 22 years, Ken Peterson, Food and Beverage Manager of Jimmy Guana's in the Holiday Inn Harbourside, has retired.

"It is time to learn how to play golf," Ken smiles. "I was fortunate to have been employed at this local landmark, which is located in the best beach city in Florida. Indian Rocks Beach is a very special place and Jimmy Guana's is a very special restaurant. I will miss all my area friends and organizations."



The new manager is Lisa Mirochna.

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Bar & Restaurant News



CAFÉ LARGO SOLD

Owners Dominique and Kathy Christini recently sold their popular French restaurant and have retired. Of the sale, Dominique says, "our 35-year journey has come to a close and we wanted to convey our greatest thanks for the many years of doing what we love. Your support has been tremendously appreciated."

New owners Linus and Yvonne Richenbach are from Switzerland and Chef Linus will be serving some of the old favorites as well as some of his specialties. It has not been confirmed when they will reopen.

The website will remain the same: cafelargorestaurant.com and the phone also remains the same: 727-596-6282. The new email address is Info@cafelargorestaurant.com.

TEMPORARILY CLOSED Caddy's Indian Shores is closed for remodeling, with a construction fence around the building. They are replacing the entire deck and making improvements to the building. They hope to reopen any day.

MEET PIPO & BETTY

They are the inspiration for The new Cuban Cafe owned by the Crabby's family. "Getting back to our roots, we decided to rebrand the Cafe into Pipo N Betty's. My father is Pipo and my mother is Betty," says Maria Loder. "Growing up, the kitchen was the heart of our home. The best memories were made while my mother was baking and my father sipping his coffee. This tradition continued as my own children were growing up. We want to share this experience. Step into our kitchen and enjoy homemade traditional Cuban pastries and locally sourced coffee."



The new Pipo N' Betty's Cuban Cafe is open from 7am to 2pm daily at 435 Gulf Blvd., Indian Rocks! The menu includes fresh coffee, espresso and tea from Joffrey's Coffee & Tea Co. and fresh baked Cuban pastries and bread! They cannot wait to welcome you into their kitchen.

CRYPTO STREET This small restaurant is opening soon in Clearwater Beach in place of Cousin's Maine Lobster. The new concept will have Crypto Currency decor while serving American food with a Latin flair including hearty sandwiches, homemade soups, premium ingredient charcuterie boards, salads and serving fine wines and specialty beers. They are projecting to open this month.

CLEAN EATZ A new specialty café, called Clean EatZ owned by Belleair Beach residents Craig and Jenn Schmidt, is coming to the Bonefish Plaza. The menu includes a variety of healthy style foods, including bowls, salads, wraps, smoothies, protein bars and energy drinks. Look for this to open later in the Spring of 2022 in the space vacated by Richard's Food Store. You can find them on Facebook at [CleanEatZBelleairFL](https://www.facebook.com/CleanEatZBelleairFL).

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Bar & Restaurant News



COCO'S CONSTRUCTION CONTINUES Coco's Crush Bar & Grill is still remodeling the old 18 On The Rocks. This will be their second location, their first is in Clearwater Beach. Plans call for some major changes to that building and the interior as been completely demolished.

Look for the new location at 2405 Gulf Blvd, Indian Rocks Beach to open in a few months. Visit CocosCrushBar.com to get a sneak preview of what they have to offer.

STOCKING STUFFERS

Looking for that perfect stocking stuffer for Christmas? Why not pick up a gift certificate from a local restaurant? Many restaurants in the Belleair / Largo area offer them. Here is a list of those area restaurants:


BELLEAIR BLUFFS:

- Bonefish Grill
- Chez Collette Bistro
- Cody's Roadhouse Grill
- E&E Stakeout
- Maggie Mae's
- Panera Bread
- Venus Restaurant
- Westshore Pizza

LARGO:

- Alfanzo's Restaurant
- Amici Italian Ristorante
- Café Largo
- Hungry Howie's Pizza
- Papa John's Pizza
- Suncoast Café
- Thai Basil
- Your Pizza Shop

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NEW OUTDOOR MURAL The Village Inn on Walsingham Road has joined the trend by adding outdoor art. They had a mural painted on an outside wall overlooking their outdoor patio. The BBA is helping them cut the ribbon at the unveiling on Thursday, December 16 at 5:30pm. Danny Leham is the restaurant's owner. Find the Village Inn at 13105 Walsingham Road, Largo.

RESTAURANT NEWS WANTED If your restaurant has news or an upcoming event we can use in this News Magazine, please e-mail it to Bob@GriffinDirectories.com or call 727-430-8300.

CHANGING GRIEF TO GRATEFULNESS

If you face into the sun all the shadows behind you will disappear

Belleair resident Norman O. Olsen, a father of seven children and grandfather of five grandchildren has a love of storytelling and seeking adventure.



Norman and his dog Ronnie

Born in 1930, Norman grew up sailing with his parents and became an avid lifelong sailor. As a young man his best friend was his dog Ronny, an Irish Setter, whom he shared incredible adventures with that continue to influence his life and storytelling to this day.

He took his real-life experiences, and the lessons that come with them, to create an entertaining and enlightening book - *Ronny Come Home* - that highlights what is truly important in life.

Set on the east coast in Maryland, *Ronny Come Home* is a series of short stories that follow the adventures of a young boy named Norman and his best friend, an Irish Setter dog named Ronny. This true story follows Norman and Ronny as they grow up together and embark on some of life's greatest adventures and challenges, spending time together navigating the local bodies of water sailing and exploring the nearby woods. The center of the story focuses on their unique friendship and the lessons they learn from their time spent together, and ultimately the heartbreak of losing a best friend - by focusing on the good times and being grateful for the time they spent together. This story is for all ages and especially for those who love dogs. A portion of the proceeds will be going to the Clearwater Community Sailing Center

CLEARWATER FREE CLINIC: A Safety Net for Uninsured Families

What does it mean to be a safety net? At the Clearwater Free Clinic, it is to serve the low-income, uninsured families in our community with comprehensive medical and mental healthcare. Clinic patients struggle to make ends meet even without the high costs of health insurance premiums and copays. This means that accessible healthcare is often out of reach. Many patients are working either full-time, part-time or are self-employed, which can disqualify them from government-funded, community-based healthcare resources. Others may have lost their job and their health insurance along with it. With health conditions and without any other options, where would you go for your care?

It is common for the uninsured to rely on emergency rooms for access to medications or treatment for non-emergent health problems. The Clearwater Free Clinic is a medical home for the uninsured; nearly any service needed is delivered by CFC staff, volunteers, or community partners who donate life-saving procedures and diagnostic testing that are not available at the Clinic's facility. Yes, this includes just about every specialty! We work to keep the community moving by providing follow-up and preventative care through an integrated healthcare approach. Quality is not sacrificed because we do not charge a fee for services. In fact, many Clinic patients who were previously insured say they receive better care here than they ever did at a traditional doctors' office!

We have been helping our uninsured neighbors for 44 years. To help, visit clearwaterfreeclinic.org to donate or volunteer.

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December 12 - OPENING CELEBRATION

Station Square | 6 - 9 pm

Kick off the 12 Days of Christmas at the tree lighting at station square. A few VIP Guests will be attending as well - Mrs. Clause, Cindy Lou Who and The grinch. Write your letter to Santa and listen to Mrs. Clause read a classic holiday story. Food and beverage will be available.

December 13 - MOVIE NIGHT

Capital Theater | 6 - 8 pm

A family holiday movie at the capitol theatre.

December 14 MAKING SPIRITS BRIGHT PARADE

Clearwater Beach | 4 - 5:30 pm

Spread holiday cheer! Local businesses and residents alike are welcome! The parade begins at Island Way Grill, line up is at 3:30pm. Donations will be accepted to participate. The parade will travel from North Beach to South Beach and then back to Island Way.

December 15 - PET PHOTOS WITH THE GRINCH

Island Way Grill | 3 - 5pm

Bring your furry friend to meet the Grinch! Photo Cost - \$10.

December 16 - CAROLING

Around Clearwater Beach | 7 - 8 pm

Hop on the complimentary Jolley Trolley for a caroling ride around North and South Beach!

December 18 -

All events located at the 400 block of Cleveland Street.

BREAKFAST WITH SANTA | 9 - 11am

MATINEE MOVIE | TBD

PAW-RADE & GRINCH PHOTOS | 11am - 2pm
Photo Cost \$10.

December 19 -

Both events located at the 400 block of Cleveland Street

BREAKFAST WITH SANTA | 9 - 11am

MATINEE MOVIE | TBD

December 20 - MOVIE NIGHT

Capitol Theatre | 6:30 - 8:30 pm

Family holiday movie

December 21 - 24 - STROLL OF TREES

Visit participating local businesses to view themed Christmas trees. Collect a sticker for each tree you visit. If you collect them all you will be entered to win a free hotel stay at a sponsor hotel.

TOYS-FOR-TOTS - COLLECTING TOYS FOR ALMOST 75 YEARS

The Toys-For-Tots program started in 1947 and was the brain-child of Marine Corp Reserve Major Bill Hendricks, and his wife Diane. Diane was the real inspiration for the program; she had a few handcrafted dolls and asked Bill to take them somewhere that supports children in need.

After searching his own town of Los Angeles, he reported to her that he could not find a place like that. She instructed Bill to "start one." That first year Major Hendricks and the Marines in his reserve unit collected and distributed 5,000 toys. The rest as they say is Toy history.

Later, in his civilian job, Hendricks was Director of Public Relations for Warner Brothers Studios. He was friends with many celebrities, who supported the effort. Walt Disney was a personal friend and designed their first poster, which featured a miniature three car train with Santa in it. The design became the official logo for the program.

In 1991, Toys-For-Tots' Foundation incorporated as a non-profit so the Marines could continue to stay involved. Presently, the Toys-For-Tots Program distributes 18 million toys to approximately seven million less fortunate children—each year!

The basic mission of the program is still the same. All year, members of the U.S. Marine Corp collect new unwrapped toys and distribute them to children in need at Christmas. The goal is to bring the joy of Christmas and send a message of hope to America's less fortunate children.

2020 was the hardest year in the program's history. The post office, who had always been a partner in collecting toys, decided to stop participating. Then of course the Pandemic prevented people from shopping and dropping off toys.



Locally, Ed Zaleski, heads up the Toys-For-Tots efforts in Pinellas County. Ed a past Marine lives on Clearwater Beach in Island Estates. He has been doing this for 11 years. In Pinellas County, there are over a hundred donation outlets and Toys-For-Tots provides toys to over 9,000 kids.

If you would like to donate, visit www.ToysForTots.org, find your county (Pinellas) and zip code. Every official donation location will be listed. Please only donate new, unwrapped toys. Books and handmade toys are also desired. You can donate in Memory or Honor of an individual anytime throughout the year. Instead of fruitcakes, consider donating to Toys For Tots this year in recognition of your clients, business associates, family members or friends.

If you or someone you know needs toys this season, ToysForTots.org has a Request Toys link at the top of the page. You can register with a brief description about why toys are needed.

The DEADLINE to contribute for this season is December 15th, but you can donate all year long. If you would like to volunteer, visit St-Petersburg-FL.ToysForTots.org or call Ed at 301-332-9663.



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Belleair Opticians	727-584-0730
Cappello & Co	727-585-5700
Cassi & Company	727-585-2011
E&E Stakeout Grill	727-585-6399
Harold Freeman Jewelry	727-586-2577
Illume Apparel	727-422-3630
LaLa's Home Decor	727-240-1200
Melendy Real Estate	727-657-8912
My Salon	727-421-9091
Sekushi Sushi, Dumplings & Noodle Bar	727-4223449
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Refreshments will be Served

*100 Indian Rocks Road
Belleair Bluffs*

**SUNCOAST CONCHOLOGIST
SHELL CLUB**

There it is! That beautiful seashell on the beach. Their intricate colors and shapes draw your attention to their beauty. You cannot walk on the beach without noticing them. Do you enjoy the beach as a resident, or as a Winter visitor? Have you ever wondered where the seashells come from and how they are created, do you have a collection, or want to know more about them?



If so, you may want to join the Suncoast Conchologists. What is a conchologist? According to Webster, it's "a student of or a specialist in conchology; one who collects shells."

This educational organization is a shell club that brings together people who share their common interest. You'll meet beginners and experienced shellers alike, enjoy interesting and educational shell programs, and share in the camaraderie of field trips.

Suncoast Conchologist is accepting new members. They have monthly guest speaker to learn about shells, and a shell display every month along with refreshments. You will have a chance to meet other people who love seashells and are just beginning to learn about them, along with meeting some of their expert members and scientists.

During the year, they have field trips that take you to grass flats to look for shells, Seashell Museum tours, fossil shell finding, and various activities. They will help you learn about the shells that you find on our beaches, as well as exotic beautiful shells found all over the world. Throughout the year, they participate in Shell Shows and Shell Competitions providing you with the opportunity to discover new shells and meet new friends who are also shell lovers.

Join them on the first Tuesday of the month, excluding December, June, July, and August at Grace Lutheran Church, 1812 N Highland Avenue in Clearwater.

Yearly membership is \$20 or \$25 for a family and includes an e-mail copy of their club newsletter, Suncoast Shorelines. In May, they end their club year with a picnic and in December, they celebrate the holidays at their "Holiday Shellabration."

If you would like to join them or need more information, text, or contact Debi McCreary at 727-480-4939, or email suncoastseashells@gmail.com. You can also visit suncoastconchologists.org.

UPCOMING HOLIDAY EVENTS

HOLIDAY LIGHTS in the GARDENS

Florida Botanical Gardens
Now through January 2, dusk to 9:30pm nightly
www.FLBGFoundation.org

ENCHANTMENT

Tropicana Dome downtown St. Petersburg
Now through January 2, 4:30-11pm nightly
This lighted holiday maze has also illuminated synchronized stars on the dome's roof. It includes ice skating and Santa.
www.EnchantChristmas.com

CHRISTMAS IN THE PARK

December 4, 11, and 18, Largo Central Park
Each week has a different theme with various vendors allowing attendees to shop, listen to music, and eat.
www.PlayLargo.com

SANTA at HERITAGE VILLAGE

December 4, 11 and 18, 10am-2pm
On the front porch of the Old McMullen home.

LIGHTED BOAT PARADES

December 11 - Clearwater Beach/ Island Estates
December 18 - Indian Rocks Beach
December 19 - Indian Shores / Redington

CREATE YOUR OWN HOLIDAY WREATH

December 2, 4-5:30pm, Florida Botanical Gardens
www.FLBGFoundation.org

CHRISTMAS at THE PLAZA

December 3, 6-8pm, 100 Indian Rocks Road, Belleair Bluffs
The annual event features music by the Fresh Brass of Belleair and Largo High School Madrigal Singers as strolling carolers. Refreshments will served and merchants will be open with specials for Christmas.

BELLEAIR BLUFFS CHRISTMAS TREE LIGHTING

December 3, Belleair Bluffs City Hall, 6pm - residents only.
Followed by a party in the Community Center

ST JEROME WINTER WONDERLAND

December 4. 5-9pm, 10895 Hamlin Blvd, Largo
Marketplace, live nativity, decorations, Fire trucks, and Santa

BELLEAIR BEACH CHRISTMAS TREE LIGHTING

December 6, 5pm, Belleair Beach Community Center
Followed by a Holiday Party inside

TOWN OF BELLEAIR HOLIDAY PARADE & AFTER PARTY

December 5 at 4:30pm, Town of Belleair's Rec Center.
Party is in the Dimmitt Community Center field.

HOLIDAY STROLL in ANTIQUE ALLEY

December 11, 6-9pm
Stroll and Shop Antique Alley in Belleair Bluffs. Merchants will be open, with Holiday gifts and specials. There will be a variety of vendors, food and more. Free Poinsettias and Champagne, snow and a visit from Santa.

BELLEAIR'S POLAR PARCEL GIFT DELIVERY

December 15-17
Presents delivered to the children of Belleair. Pre-registration is required. Call the Rec Center.

BREAKFAST WITH SANTA

December 18, Largo Community Center, Keene Road
Breakfast with Santa, Mrs. Claus, crafts, games and more.
\$8 per child. \$5 per adult. Buy tickets at any Largo Rec Center. www.LargoEvents.com

HAPPY Holidays

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Winter holidays are a time for families and friends to get together. But that also means a greater risk for fire. Remember: More than a third of home decoration fires are started by candles. Forty-two percent of decoration fires happen because decorations are placed too close to a heat source. Following are a few simple tips that will ensure a happy and fire-safe holiday season

Holiday decorating

- Water live Christmas Trees daily to avoid drying out
- Be careful with holiday decorations. Choose decorations that are flame resistant or flame retardant.
- Keep lit candles away from decorations and other things that can burn.
- Some lights are only for indoor or outdoor use, but not both. Use them as instructed.
- Replace any string of lights with worn or broken cords or loose bulb connections. Read manufacturer's instructions for number of light strands to connect.
- Use clips, not nails, to hang lights so the cords do not get damaged.
- Keep decorations away from windows and doors.

Holiday Entertaining

- Never leave holiday cooking unattended
- Test your smoke alarms and tell guests about your home fire escape plan.
- Keep children and pets away from lit candles.
- Keep matches and lighters up high in a locked cabinet.
- Stay in the kitchen when cooking on the stovetop.
- Ask smokers to smoke outside. Remind smokers to keep their smoking materials with them so young children do not touch them.
- Provide large, deep ashtrays for smokers. Wet cigarette butts with water before discarding.

Before Heading out or to Bed

- Blow out lit candles when you leave the room or go to bed.
- Turn off all light strings and decorations.

New Year's Resolution

Check your smoke alarm batteries. Better yet, invest in a 10 year battery powered smoke alarm, so you never have to change the batteries. They make great Christmas gifts for your all your loved ones.

NATIONAL FIRE PROTECTION ASSOCIATION
The leading information and knowledge resource on fire, electrical and related hazards

Business Anniversaries



SUZETTE'S - 15 Years

Laura Busch originally opened her women's store, "Suzette's On The Rocks" in 2006 two miles to the south in Largo. She moved to her current location, October of 2013. Her sister operates "Suzette's Two" next door.

Find them both at 400 Indian Rocks Road North, or call her at 595-8700.

MAGGIE MAE'S - Lucky 13 Allen Edger opened Maggie Mae's in Belleair Bluffs thirteen years ago in January. Since then, they have repeatedly won awards as the Best Place for Breakfast and Lunch. Edger wants to thank all the locals for their support over the years and through the recent Pandemic.

STEFANEC'S - Ten Years

Irena Nolasco opened Stefanec's Barber Shop in Belleair Bluffs ten years ago, November. Since then, she and her small staff have been turning heads - and cutting hair - for thousands of customers. For her anniversary, she held a party with a barbershop quartet, food, and cigar lounge with some of her first customers.



Nolasco specializes in men's haircuts—young and old. Check out her classic barbershop at 772 Indian Rocks Road, just south of Mehlenbacher Road.

WILLIAM DEAN - Ten Years Owner Bill Brown first opened down the street in Largo in 2007, 14 years ago. He moved to the Bluffs' Shopping Center in 2011—10 years ago. Now, he is opening a new store in Tampa, near the Westshore District.

"The store in Tampa is not open yet," says Brown. "We are trying to open by December."

Find William Dean Chocolates in Belleair Bluffs at 2810 West Bay Drive in the Bluffs' Shopping Center. See more at WilliamDeanChocolates.com.



COASTAL AIRE DESIGNS - One Year

Owner Chelsea Anderson (on the right) is celebrating her first anniversary in December. If you haven't been in, they are much more than a furniture store.

"We are passionate about helping others build their coastal dreams in their own homes," says Chelsea. "Your home should be a place where you feel your best; we want to help you provide that."

Find Coastal Aire Designs at 596 Indian Rocks Road in Belleair Bluffs or call 286-8686. Get more information at www.CoastalAireDesign.com.

Celebrating 16 Years in Belleair Bluffs
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January 28th • 6:00-8:30 PM
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THINGS TO DO NEARBY - ST AUGUSTINE

By Bob Griffin, Publisher

During the Pandemic, we purchased a camper and a new truck to pull it. In the past year, we have traveled all over the south and northeast. We visited Key West, Pensacola, Nashville, and went as far as Maine. Pulling a camper, we can drive about 350 miles on a tank of gas.

St. Augustine is 200 miles - about 4 hours from our house with a camper - and less than a tank of gas. That makes it a great destination for easy getaways. There are a few campgrounds in the St. Augustine area. The most well know, Anastasia State Park is directly on the Atlantic - but you must book that park many months in advance.

We discovered "North Beach Campground" five miles northeast of the city in Vilano Beach. It is a classic, private campground with all sites separated with lots of oak trees and palmettos. It is a short drive to the heart of the Historic District, giving us plenty of time to explore the city. We have stayed there a few times.

St Augustine is the site of the first colony established in North America in 1565—decades before Jamestown, Virginia. Because of this, many historical sites have been preserved.

The fort, "Castillo de San Marcos", built in 1695 is National Monument and the most famous attraction. Today's fort is the 11th version. The first ten were burned by Indians or the British.

Railroad tycoon Henry Plant is credited with turning St. Augustine into a tourist destination in the 1880s. He bought the Jacksonville / St Augustine railroad that became the East Coast Railroad, eventually connecting with Key West. He knew a luxurious destination would encourage people to ride his railroad, so in 1885 he built the Hotel Ponce de Leon, a massive project with 540 rooms. Today it is Flagler College.

He also built the Hotel Alcazar, which is the "Lightner Museum" today. Not satisfied, he bought the Hotel San Marco, across the street from the Ponce de Leon. Still a hotel, today it is a 5-star Renaissance / Marriott.

If you have never been to St. Augustine before, we recommend the first thing you do is to take the Old Town Trolley Tour. They have several starting points along a circular route. If you ride and don't get off, the entire trip is about two hours. But you can get off at any stop and return to the tour at another stop. It is an easy way to see the city and avoids trying to find parking. The trolley driver will tell you about the history of St. Augustine and

its buildings. Adult tickets start at \$32.60. Multi-day tickets are a discounted price. Visit TrolleyTours.com.

St Augustine was established 280 years before Florida became a state. Because of that, there are dozens of long-standing historical sites and attractions including: Ripley's Believe It or Not, Potter's Wax Museum, the Pirate Museum, Medieval Torture Museum, the Old Wooden School House, the St. Augustine Distillery, the San Sebastian Winery, and Gatorland (on the beach).

At the Fountain of Youth, they admit that it is not the place Ponce de Leon came ashore in search of the long sought after fountain. But it was an early Timucuan's Indian village, as well as the site of the first fort built by Pedro Menendez de Aviles and his team of settlers. (It is about 1 mile north of today's fort.) There is a lot more there than a fountain, such as displays and reenactments including firing of guns and cannons, an operating blacksmith shop, a boathouse, and a replica of the Indian Village. The cost of admission is \$20. Visit FountainofYouthFlorida.com for more information.

The Old City Jail is the site of St. John's County's second real jail. It is just north of the Fountain of Youth on San Marcos Avenue. Henry Flagler paid the city \$10,000 (in 1885 dollars) to build a new jail away from the city. He did not like having the first jail next door to his new grand hotel. Opened in 1891, it originally was designed to hold about 70 people, but was known to house over 200 at a time. When you see the cells, it is a scary to think people were actually kept there until the mid 1950s. The jail tour is led by a person dressed like a convict of the time. Some of it is serious, while some is meant to be humorous. The cost is \$15.

There are also several "Ghost Tours" operating in the city. Previously, groups walked the streets pointing at area businesses and graveyards. Now, the Old Town Trolley Tours offers a riding version. The advantage is you see more places and you don't have to walk. There is also a ghost tour in the evening at the Old City Jail.

St. George Street, only five blocks long and barely ten feet wide, is a quaint



walkable street in the historic district. No cars are allowed. You can stroll through the many shops and restaurants in what many consider to be the heart of the city. As with many other tourist destinations, the stores do not really carry high quality merchandise.

Named one of the ten best Christmas displays in the country, their Annual Nights of Lights includes more than three million lights throughout the historic district. Lasting for two months, this year it runs from November 20 to January 31, 2022. The trains and trolleys offer special seasonal tours through the best areas, and there are specialty tours — everything from walking to electric cart tours, and even tours to see the lights from the water and from the air.

There are many of restaurants in the historic area. Most have been opened in the last fifty years, but there are a few historic older ones. O.C. Whites, faces the harbor, and has a history dating back to the 1790s. Other historic restaurants include The Old City House Inn, Raintree Restaurant, and Café Alcazar in the Lightner Museum. There is also the Columbia Restaurant in the heart of the district, built in 1983.

During our stays, we have eaten at Harry's, the Floridian, St. Augustine Fish Camp, Old City House Inn, The Reef, Aunt Kates, and the Ice Plant Restaurant at the Distillery—all of which we recommend.

There are many Bed-and-Breakfasts near the downtown area. The most famous is the historic Collectors Inn next to the Lightner Museum. It is on the edge of St. Augustine's Old Town, within easy walking distance of the city's most celebrated attractions. Of course, there are the usual hotel chains—some are near the beaches.

We recommend you plan a visit—with or without a camper. This web site has everything you need to know to plan your stay, www.VisitStAugustine.com. ■

HERITAGE VILLAGE EVENTS

Historic House Concert Series - Every First Saturday of the month from noon to 1pm. Join Heritage Village and Radio St. Pete, Sunshine 96.7FM for their Historic House Concert Series, featuring live, local musicians on the porch of the 1852 McMullen-Coachman Log Cabin. Enjoy a FREE show during the beautiful fall Florida weather while grabbing a bite to eat at the featured food truck. Can't make it in person? These events are on Facebook Live as well as recorded and re-broadcast on 96.7FM.

Speaking of History - Second Saturday of the month at 2pm. This series, in partnership with the Florida Humanities, highlights historic and cultural presentations focusing on Florida. Join them in the Heritage Village Pinellas Room or on Zoom.

Author Talk Series - Join Heritage Village Operations Manager, Monica Drake, for a chat with local Authors. This series is in partnership with local publishing company, St. Petersburg Press. Upcoming Authors/Books:

- Dec. 3: Josh Ginsburg, *Tampa Bay Scavenger*
- Feb. 18: Tom Gribbin, *The Last Florida Boy*
- March 18: Melanie Bowman & Meredith Gaunce, *Traveling St. Pete: A Girl's Guide*
- April 15: Midge Trubey, *Rock doesn't Roll on an Empty Stomach*

ROC Day Tampa Bay - Saturday, January 8, 10am-1pm. Join the spinners of Pinellas Weavers Guild to celebrate Roc Day as part of your New Year's celebrations. The annual event is held at the McMullen House (also known as the Fiber Arts House). Guild members demonstrate fiber crafts including weaving and spinning, answer questions about fiber crafts, and share stories. Enjoy mini-classes and demonstrations, tell funny holiday stories, recruit new spinners and weavers, and generally have a fun time. There will be vendors selling fiber and spinning equipment, and a fiber exhibit by members. Roc Day, also known as St. Distaff's Day, is the traditional time for women to put away their holiday baking pans and get back to fiber. The name comes from the distaff used in spinning linen, also called a roc - the medieval symbol of women's work.

Heritage Village is located at 11909 125th Street North, Largo. It is free and open to the public. Donations to the Friends group, the Pinellas County Historical Society (PCHS), are always welcome. For more information on how to support PCHS and Heritage Village, visit www.pinellascountyhistoricalsociety.org.



The collage consists of three posters for the Tampa Bay Times Masterworks series. The top poster is for 'Beethoven's Symphony No. 9' conducted by Michael Francis, featuring the Master Chorale of Tampa Bay, scheduled for Jan 28-30. The middle poster is for 'Prokofiev's Romeo & Juliet' with Gershwin's Piano Concerto, featuring Raymond James Pops, scheduled for Jan 8 & 9. The bottom poster is for 'The Wild West' featuring Karen Gomyo playing Brahms, in partnership with The James Museum, scheduled for Jan 14 & 15. To the right of the bottom poster is another poster for 'Karen Gomyo Plays Brahms' featuring Debussy's La Mer, scheduled for Jan 22 & 23. At the bottom of the collage is the logo for 'THE FLORIDA ORCHESTRA' and the text 'Making Waves in Tampa Bay | FloridaOrchestra.org | 727.892.3337 or 1.800.662.7286'.

PEACE MEMORIAL CONCERT SERIES CONTINUES

To awaken your holiday mood, December 12, Peace Memorial Presbyterian Church will feature the beautiful voices of the QoL Quartet. They enjoyed this ensemble so much last season with their Broadway hits, they invited them back this year for a program of popular songs and carols of the holiday season.

Seating is first come, first served and no tickets are needed but an offering will be taken (\$5-\$10 suggested). Doors open at 2:30 to avoid congregating at entries. The concert begins at 3pm.

CDC Covid-19 protocols at the time of concert will be followed. Also, to minimize risks, all must show full immunization (at least 14 days since final dose), a COVID-19 PCR negative test result within 72-hours, or a negative COVID-19 antigen test result within 6-hours prior to entering. Masks indoors and valid government issued ID required to verify required immunization status. If you cannot attend, there will be an online concert option for a small charge on their Web site.

Peace Memorial Presbyterian Church (the pink church in downtown Clearwater) is located at 110 S. Ft. Harrison Avenue, at the corner of Pierce Street and Ft. Harrison Avenue. There are four parking areas: 1) West and behind the church off of Pierce Street 2) East across Ft Harrison Avenue in the large County lot - reserved for church events on Sundays 3) In the lot north of the church's fellowship hall and 4) West in the City Hall lot.

For information, visit peacememorialpresbyterian.org or call Music Director Timothy Belk at (800) 479-8846.

OCEAN ALLIES HELPING THE WORLD...ONE BEACH AT A TIME

The Ocean Allies organization began in Clearwater Beach and has spread throughout the state and nation. The non-profit is dedicated to merging the goals of conservation with tourism and business by educating the public about ocean health, ocean debris and the real-life benefits experienced by businesses that become "ocean friendly."

Ocean debris has become a tragic problem for the oceans, marine life, and even humans. The worst offender is plastic. Ninety percent of the garbage floating in the ocean is plastic. Small changes like switching away from Styrofoam to compostable take-out containers can make a big difference, because once Styrofoam enters our waterways it stays for a very, very long time - it takes 500 years to decompose. It will quickly break apart into little balls though, which float, and many times are consumed by fish and other marine animals.



Ocean Allies was founded by Clearwater Beach's Sheri Heilman, owner of Heilman's Beachcomber Restaurant. Since its inception in 2018, hundreds of hotels, restaurants and other businesses have joined the effort to conserve and protect the environment. Those who agree to adapt most of its principals receive an Ocean Allies Certification.

Many Clearwater Beach businesses are founding member of Ocean Allies and continue to support it. Their board members include Sheridan Boyle, City of Clearwater, Sustainability Ordinator, Kistina Alspaw, Clearwater Region Chamber of Commerce, Karen Jubrail, Clearwater Marine Aquarium. Trish Rodriguez, Clearwater Ferry Service and Alan Mock, Publisher, Resort Magazines. They continually work to inspire entire communities to make simple switches to protect the marine ecosystems vital to human health and hearts of the world.

Sheridan Boyle explains the concept. "It is about witnessing the effect our collective choices have on our surrounding ecosystems and the other animals we share our loved places with. It shows that even in the smallest of ways, we can make a massive impact when we work together."



Founder Sheri Heilman with some examples of "Ocean friendly" take out containers

Ocean Allies started with an initial meeting of environmentally concerned community members. At first, they limited their efforts to Clearwater Beach because of its proximity to the water and that it receives so many visitors from around the world. It quickly became apparent; ocean debris is a global issue, and every community contributes to it. Thus, there was a need to expand Ocean Allies efforts. The team developed initiatives in communities across Tampa Bay.

"Our vision is to take what we accomplished in Clearwater Beach and provide a model to other beach communities—worldwide," adds founder Heilman. "We believe in connecting tourism, businesses, residents, and conservation with strategies that allow all to thrive, while maintaining jobs and increasing the protection of our communities, oceans, environment, and marine life."

The list of certified Ocean Allies businesses has continued to grow over the years. "We have seen the wonders that ocean friendly initiatives have on business, tourism and overall community pride," says Heilman.

Certification also results in considerable cost savings including:

- Decreased waste costs
- Purchasing of less products
- Saving on repairs to dishwashers, drains, and pipes.
- Decreased electricity use
- Less litter on your property

- Buying products through the Co-op which lowers costs.

"It is an honor to be the "only" hotel on Clearwater Beach to be Ocean Allies Certified and CMA-Sea Turtle Friendly," says Juli Norberg of the Hampton Inn and Winter's Dolphin's Beach Club in South Beach. "We were officially certified on August 16th. Contributing to preservation of our environment is very important to our team, ownership and our beloved beach."

Ocean Allies recently participated in The Big Clean Up, October 11-16, held all over Pinellas County.

In addition to cost savings, businesses find the process increases morale among the staff and improves the businesses brand image when promoting Ocean Allies programs. They encourage everyone to get involved and enhance community involvement. Get more information, see a list of participating restaurants, hotels and other businesses, or make a donation to their cause at OceanAllies.org. To join the team and start the process to get certified, email to Support@OceanAllies.org. ■



DON'T TRASH THE HOLIDAYS

Remember to Reduce, Reuse and Recycle during the holiday season. Here are some suggestions:

Reduce – buy items you think will be used by the receiver. An expensive gift might better than two items that won't be used or might quickly break. That reduces the need for wrapping paper, too.

Reuse – use bows, ribbons, gift bags, tissue paper and tags year after year. Even reusing a Christmas tree year from one year to the next or buying a live tree to plant in your yard saves waste.

Recycle – wrapping paper, and gift or cardboard boxes. Foil wrapping paper or paper with glitter goes in the garbage because it cannot be properly recycled with regular paper.

Real trees can be recycled into mulch after the holidays if your city or hauler separately collects yard waste. You can also bring your real tree (bare – no ornaments, lights, tinsel) to Pinellas County Solid Waste, 3095 114th Ave N, St. Petersburg. The price is \$3 for up to 5 Christmas trees.

Some common mistakes people make is to put all their "package wrappings" in the recycling bin. The hard plastic casing that protects items from breaking should be placed in the trash. Styrofoam packing should not be placed in home recycling containers because the Material Recovery Facilities (MRF) where the recycled materials are sent to be sorted and sold for recycling do not want Styrofoam. The plastic bags wrapped around products can be reused, but should not be placed in home recycling containers because they become tangled in the various sorting machines in the MRFs.

In Pinellas County, garbage is burned to generate electricity for over 40,000 homes per day; the material placed in the garbage is "recycled" into energy. For information and suggestions, use Pinellas County's A to Z Guide for recycling and disposal - www.pinellascounty.org/solidwaste/getridofit.

IT IS A TIME FOR GIVING

Holiday time is a time to be Thankful and a time for Giving. Clothes To Kids hopes you can help them. Children in Hillsborough & Pinellas are in need of new and gently used clothing and shoes in all our stores. Clothes To Kids clothes children from Pre-K4 to High School. Our inventory is low in the following areas:

- Young Men shorts (size 29 - 40)
- Boys' shorts (size 4, 5, 6, 16, 18 and 20)
- Boys' shirts (small and medium)
- Girls' dresses (size 12 - 18)
- Girls' pants (size 14 - 20)
- Girls' shorts (size 12 - 18)
- Girls' Shirts (size large and x large)
- Shoes – All Sizes

"Drop off" donations from 9 am to 4 pm Monday through Friday at any of our three stores: Tampa - 5011-H West Hillsborough Avenue, Clearwater – 1059 North Hercules Avenue and St. Pete - 2168 34th Street South.

Clothes To Kids, a nonprofit organization, provides clothing to low-income or in crisis, school-age children, free of charge. For more information or an appointment to shop, please call in 727-441-5050 or visit www.ClothesToKids.org.

If you qualify for free or reduced lunch and live in Pinellas or Hillsborough counties, make appointment to come shop with us in person. To shop at CTK in person at our Clearwater and St. Pete stores, please call 727-441-5050.



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Community News

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For information & Sponsorship Details
 Call the Community Dental Clinic at 277-216-6155 x5
 Or visit: www.communitydentalclinic.net

BELLEAIR WOMEN'S REPUBLICAN CLUB

They will host their annual Christmas meeting on December 3rd at Belleair Country Club, One Country Club Lane, Belleair. Social time is 11:30 until noon, when the program begins. Christmas music will add to the festive gathering. There will be a voluntary collection for Guardian ad Litem Foundation Late Shelter Children, and the staff at Belleair Country Club will be presented with thank-you gifts from BWRC.

The cost of the meal is \$28. Reservations must be made in advance by mailing a check to be delivered by November 29th to: BWRC Treasurer Robin Schenck, 301 Belleview Blvd., Belleair, FL 33756. No walk-ups can be accommodated.

They will celebrate their first meeting of 2022 on January 7th at Belleair Country Club, One Country Club Lane, Belleair. Social time is 11:30 until noon, when the luncheon, followed by the program, begins. The speaker will be Pinellas Clerk of Court, Ken Burke, who also serves as Comptroller of Pinellas County. He grew up in Pinellas County and attended high school and college locally, becoming a CPA. Elected to the office in 2004, he's served since January 2005, being unopposed in 2008, 2012 and 2016. As Clerk of the Circuit Court, he manages all courthouse records, has a budget of approximately \$43 million, and has around 550 employees.

The cost of the meal is \$28. Reservations must be made in advance by mailing a check made payable to BWRC to be delivered by January 3rd to: BWRC Treasurer Robin Schenck, 301 Belleview Blvd., Belleair, FL 33756. No walk-ups can be accommodated.

FLORIDA BOTANICAL GARDENS

Annual Gift & Plant Sale - Saturday, December 11, from 10 am-4 pm. With more than 45 vendors on site, shop from an assortment of plants, including tropical plants, orchids, herbs, bromeliads, citrus, bamboo, begonias, and fruit trees. Specialty vendors will be set up in the gardens with a variety of items for gift-giving: unique clothing, jewelry, garden art, ceramics, body lotions, candles and more. The Botanical Bountiful Gift Shop will also be on site, offering exquisite botanically-themed products. See the list of vendors: flbgfoundation.org/gpsale21.

Annual Holiday Lights - They are proud to announce the dates and times for its annual Holiday Lights in the Gardens event. This year's celebration will begin on Friday, November 26, 2021 and conclude Sunday, January 2, 2022. The Gardens open every evening from 5:30 to 9:30pm for viewing. Admission is a suggested donation of \$10 per person, over the age of 13. In line with tradition, the Gardens will sparkle with 1 million, twinkling, LED lights in a multitude of colors. Vibrant laser lights and lighted figures round out the display to wow guests of all ages. New this year will be our Children's Candy Cane Area with family- focused fun and activities. Please consider joining us as a sponsor and help us spread lots of holiday cheer!

Latin Nights: Holiday Lights - They are hosting a ticketed event on December 31st, from 6-9pm during Holiday Lights in the Gardens. Guests will enjoy a sit down dinner filled with latin-inspired food, live music from local flamenco and jazz musicians, and a cash bar. General Admission is \$60, FBGF Members receive discounted admission of \$50. Visit: flbgfoundation.org/latinnights to learn more.



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Enter a beautiful Christmas setting with Santa and take a selfie or picture of the entire family.

Have your secret conversation with Santa before the photo.

Enjoy some sweet treats and ice cream.

You can even join the Scavenger hunt through the piney woods.

The Heritage Village Foundation is sponsoring



Community News

BEACH ART CENTER

Submitted by Patricia Thomas

There is always something new at the Beach Art Center. We have been adding some new options to our schedule of creative art classes. Here are just a few.

Art on the Rocks – For these sessions, materials are included, and you will receive step by step instruction. Advanced registration is required.

December

3rd - Clay Night with Karen – Great opportunity to try pottery \$38, 6pm

3rd - Twinkling Palms – Create a holiday twinkling palm sunset, \$38, 6pm

10th - Colorful Pet Portrait – Paint a wonderful personal gift \$38, 6pm

11th - Vintage and Holiday Card Making, \$38, 1pm

Workshops with Special Guest Instructors

December

4th - Black Scarf Magic with Sara Pinkerton, Painting on silk fabric. 1 – 4pm, \$44

4 & 5th - Painting Waves with Special Effects, 2 Day Workshop with Robert J Simone 9:00 – 4:00pm each day, \$225

January

8 & 9th - Figurative Painting with Watercolor with Carol Carter. 2 Day Workshop 9am – 4pm each day, \$350

You can find all the details of these classes and our full selection of drawing, painting and pottery classes on our website, www.beachartcenter.org. We are open Monday-Friday from 9am-4pm for you to drop in, view our current Gallery Show or to get answers to any questions you have.

Fine Arts Holiday Show & Sale – Through Dec 17

All works are created by local artists and make a fantastic gift (even if it's for yourself). You are welcome to come view our shows during all open hours at the Beach Art Center.

Gift Shop News – the Gift Shop is currently closed for some maintenance work. Keep in mind that the Gallery is open and works are available for sale.

Holiday Hours – the BAC will be closed Dec 23 – Jan 2.

COMMUNITY DENTAL CLINIC

The Community Dental Clinic provides quality urgent dental care at no cost for disadvantaged adults in Pinellas County, improving their overall health & well-being. Since September 2020, they performed over 10,000 free dental procedures totaling more than \$1.5 million in dental care.

They help those in our community who do not have insurance or the resources to seek the care they desperately need – people like Bill, a 62-year-old US Navy veteran who lived on a steady diet of baby food because it was too painful to chew. Bill lost 20 pounds on his dental pain diet, and his job due to the pandemic, before he was referred to the CDC. They performed critical cleanings, fillings and one extraction to eliminate his pain and improve his overall health. Free from dental distress, Bill is able to find a new job and get his finances back on track. Despite the challenges, he is smiling now – no more pain and no more baby food! The Community Dental Clinic is located at 1008 Woodlawn Street, Clearwater. Reach them at 727-216-6155 or visit www.communitydentalclinic.net.

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BEACH COMMUNITY FOOD PANTRY NOT ONLY SURVIVES THE PANDEMIC - IT EXPANDS

By Bob Griffin, Publisher

The Beach Community Food Pantry (BCFP) has long called Indian Rocks Beach home, but it serves more than just Indian Rocks' families, it helps needy families off our beach as well. It started in 2004 - 17 years ago - as an outreach mission of Calvary Episcopal Church.

Over the years, many in our community have helped manage BCFP. The first were Carol Beauchamp, Deacon Dennis McManus and Father Bob Wagenseil. Over the years, Harvey Brillat, Chuck Pond, and David Kline stepped in. Now it is managed by Connie Curran.

Carol Beauchamp is credited with noticing the need for a food pantry. "One day while I was at a service in Calvary Episcopal Church and a man walked up to the front doors of the church," Carol remembers. "He asked me if anyone had any food. That touched me so much, I asked Father Bob if there was anything we could do."

From there, members of the Church set out to create the Beach Community Food Pantry. The Church donated a small room. Church members volunteered. Soon, others in the community volunteered. People and area organizations started donating food and money, and their time.

Over the years, there have been many changes - but the need remains. Harvey Brillat was BCFP's first true manager. "I reorganized the volunteers into an efficient business like entity," remembers Harvey. "We had a qualified management team, a sustainable source of prepackaged non-perishable food and the means to connect with the community for support and fund raising."

"We had a new name and a new system," Harvey continues. "Among church members, we had a motto: 'I can-one-can every week.' We told people our 'Food comes from the Heart'. Patrons [food recipients] were allowed to pick out the food they wanted. We had no computer. Food was delivered from a Tampa warehouse in a school bus that belonged to nearby Church of the Isles."

During Harvey's time, BCFP served approximately 40-50 families or about 250 people per month.

Today, BCFP is open two days a week: Wednesday mornings (10am-noon) and Thursday evenings (5-7pm). About

35 volunteers rotate through the various shifts. Others collect food from area sources on Mondays and Tuesdays.

Connie Curran, BCFP's Director for the past four years, estimates she works 40-50 hours a week managing the non-profit.

Connie states, "There is a lot more than just opening the doors. There is paperwork, bookkeeping, and scheduling of volunteers."

The Covid-19 Pandemic has been financially hard on many families. When it first hit, many lost their jobs (temporarily or permanently) when many business closed. Unfortunately, when it was needed most, BCFP was forced to close for several months. Those charged with the operation of the non-profit knew that they would reopen and decided to use the down time to remodel, expand and purchase new refrigeration equipment.

C&P Construction, a local company, removed a wall and doubled BCFP's available space. Another local company tiled the floors. Then, an area resident donated money to buy two new commercial freezers—a value of \$8,000.

The new space is named after longtime volunteer Peggy Pond, who passed away this year. "Peggy loved this place," says her husband Chuck Pond. "She started volunteering here back in 2006, shortly after it opened."

Publix regularly donates food to BCFP. When you approve an extra dollar at the cash register, it is used to buy discounted food from Publix. They deliver the food in several pallets each Spring and Fall.

Many are surprised to learn BCFP offers meats, all of which must all meet FDA requirements. There is a constant need for donations of packaged and canned foods and frozen meat. They also need toiletry item--such as toothbrushes, toothpaste, and deodorant.

The best donation item though is money.



Using donated money, they can buy far more than you for the same amount because they receive discounted prices from other area non-profits.

The Beach Community Food Pantry is a community venture if there ever was one. In addition to the individuals who donate money and time, many area businesses, including Plumlee Realty, Crabby Bill's, Century 21 Beggins, and Slyce Pizza, donate too. Most local organizations, including the Indian Rocks Rotary, Indian Rocks Beach Homeowners Association, and Action 2000 do also.

As Father Jon Roberts of the Calvary Episcopal Church explains it, "the Church's mission - to love God with all our heart, mind and soul - is complemented by the other command, to love our neighbors as ourselves. We do not define our neighbor, but we are defined by our neighbor. If we truly love and care for them, by feeding them with a bit of nourishment for instance, then we are simply living up to our calling. Calvary has been the proud parent and partner to our neighborhood, providing both the space and resources to help operate the BCFP. We welcome all who wish to join in that basic challenge to care for others, To love our neighbor as ourselves."

The Beaches Food Pantry and Calvary Episcopal Church are located at 1615 1st Street, just east of Guppy's Restaurant.

Learn more about the Beach Community Food Pantry on the church's website www.CalvaryIRB.org. If you would like to donate (time or money), please contact Connie Curran at 595-2374. ■

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Community News

ROTARY CLUB OF LARGO

The Holiday season is fast approaching, and the members of the Rotary Club of Largo are in full swing planning the 25th annual Death By Chocolate event, December 3rd from 7 – 9pm at the Central Park Performing Arts Center, 105 Central Park Dr. in Largo.

"We are all really pitching in and getting our committees together," says Scott McLane, President of the Rotary Club.

The event is the first of many planned around the wonderful light display in Largo Central Park. During Death By Chocolate, the lights can be seen from the Parkview room.

Last year more than 20 vendors shared samples of their chocolate specialties. The event also features a silent auction and a wine toss. "The wine toss, a chance to win bottles of wine, was a big hit last year," claims Sue Osborne, chair of the toss.

All of the proceeds will go to support local children's charities. The Club has donated nearly \$500,000 to help children in our community.

For information, to become a sponsor, or to purchase tickets, email Sue Osborne at soz123@aol.com. The Rotary Club of Largo meets Mondays at noon at Sages Bistro in Largo.

BELLEAIR BEACH LADIES LUNCH CLUB

Proudly celebrating sixty-two years in existence, members of the Belleair Beach Ladies Luncheon Club began meeting again. Meetings this past season were interrupted by the Covid virus and reservations for the few meetings that were held had limited seating, but President Linda Christian and her Board members did an outstanding job enabling some to attend.

This year the ladies will support the efforts of Shepherd's Village, a local organization providing development, housing and growth opportunities for single mothers.

For further information about becoming a member, please call Lois O'Donnell, Past President, 727-595-1349

BELLEAIR GARDEN CLUB

The final first Saturday the Club is accepting donations for the 2022 annual "Junk & Jewels" fundraiser is December 4th from 10am to noon at the Belleair Garden Club, 903 Ponce de Leon Boulevard, Belleair. It will be member staffed.

Eclectic junk, jewelry, housewares, artwork, books, handbags, scarves, hats, belts, shoes and table top decor will be accepted. Other items may be accepted on a case-by-case basis. Items that will not be accepted are: furniture, electronics and appliances.

The Huge Junk & Jewels Sale will be held at 903 Ponce de Leon Blvd, Belleair on February 18-19 from 8am to 1pm. The Presale (with a \$5 entry fee) will be February 17 from 4:30-7pm. Net proceeds support club scholarships & historic preservation programs

The Belleair Garden Club, a non-profit organization in its 71st year, raises funds to support historic preservation programs and education scholarships for horticulture and botany studies for post high school students.

For further information about donating to the Belleair Garden Club and the "Junk & Jewels" fundraiser, or attending the event, please contact Jan (727) 412-2344 or visit www.belleairgardenclub.com.

Community News

100 WOMEN WHO CARE OF PINELLAS COUNTY

They presented \$12,100 to Showered and Empowered on September 30, 2021. Showered and Empowered provides the access of mobile shower and laundry facilities to the homeless community of the Tampa Bay area. The group will also receive a \$5,000 matching grant from the Richard M. Schulze Foundation.

100 Women Who Care of Pinellas County is a philanthropic group that provides an avenue for women to join together to bring financial support to local, charitable organizations that have a 501(c)(3) status. Members commit to attending four meetings per year (one per quarter) and pledge to donate \$100 to an elected charity at each meeting. For each meeting, the members have the opportunity to nominate a charity, three of the nominated charities are then randomly selected to give a 5-minute presentation, a vote is taken, and then checks are written directly to the winning charity.

Since February of 2013, the group has given \$330,950 to local charities. The next quarterly meeting (with options of both Zoom and live) will be 7:00-8:00 p.m. on Thursday, November 18, 2021, at Cove Cay Golf Club, located at 2612 Cove Cay Drive in Clearwater. There is a social time from 6:00-7:00 p.m. at the Cove Cay restaurant, where drinks and snacks may be purchased. Contact Brenda George at 727-515-1868 for more information or visit www.100womenpinellas.org.

WEST PINELLAS LITTLE LEAGUE BASEBALL

Submitted by Troy Sanders

Registration for West Pinellas Little League Baseball is now open! The Spring season runs from late February to early May, 2022. Players aged 4 - 14 are welcome to join the fun! To play, volunteer or donate, visit www.westpinellaslittleleague.org. Sign up now.

CLEARWATER YACHT CLUB

Clearwater Beach's holiday lighted boat parade will be held this year. There was no boat parade last year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. For the first time, The Island Estates Lighted Boat Parade is being managed by the Clearwater Yacht Club (CYC). On Saturday, December 11, the parade will begin at dark and the route will basically be the same – beginning just north of the Clearwater Memorial Bridge near the Clearwater Marine Aquarium. You do not have to be a CYC member or live in Clearwater Beach to have your boat in the parade. More details will be available as the event gets closer. To participate or if you have questions, e-mail Hoyt Nichols at HoytNichols.CPA@gmail.com or call 447-6000.

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

Their Winter Membership program is beginning. It has no initiation fee and monthly dues are \$150, with no food minimum. Winter members can use the pool, tiki bar, dining room and other amenities, including participating in weekly parties. Best of all, you can meet new people. It is a great way to see for yourself how much fun it is, with no obligations. You can end your membership whenever you wish, or convert to a permanent member in the Spring. Call the Yacht Club's office, 447-6000. Learn more at ClearwaterYachtClub.org, or e-mail Office@ClearwaterYachtClub.org.

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