

NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

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Magazine

THE DUNEDIN BOAT CLUB AND HOW IT HELPED SHAPE THE MUNICIPAL MARINA

By Pete Magnani

Many Dunedin residents do not realize there is a bit of "Old Florida" history located directly in the Dunedin marina. On the west side across from the marina entrance, occupying two small blue buildings, is the Dunedin Boat Club. The clubhouse is the northernmost of those two buildings.

The late 1800s was a period of development in the small settlement later known as Dunedin, culminating in the arrival of the Orange Belt Railway in 1888. The railway brought with it people and businesses, helping the population reaching 100 within 10 years. Dunedin was granted a charter and incorporated as a town in 1899.

Some of the town's more affluent residents built grand homes along Victoria Drive. Some were avid sailors and in 1903 they incorporated the Dunedin Yacht Club. The club held sailing races and an annual regatta, however most of the club's members had aged out by the late 1920s and interest in the yacht club waned. On September 3, 1929, 35 charter members formed the Dunedin Boat Club. Dr. H.E. Winchester was the first commodore and membership dues were four dollars per year.



Dunedin Marina with the Dunedin Boat Club building in the background circa 1930.

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The Majeed Discovery Garden

The newest feature at the Florida Botanical Gardens will give children a unique experience in nature.

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Bicycle Safety Month

Sheriff Bob Gualtieri offers tips for bikers and drivers to get along safely.

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Next Generation of Marine Biologists

SCUBAnauts International is teaching kids to love science and marine preservation through a program based on underwater exploration.

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Dunedin High Senior Is Charging Ahead

Joshua Ward has set both a Dunedin High School and Pinellas County record.

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CREDITS



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DUNEDIN NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS MAGAZINE

Inside, you will find articles and local information about the nearby area. We call it Neighborhood News because it is primarily about our neighborhood, Dunedin. This newsletter is printed every other month and direct mailed.

Do you need another copy? Ask for them at the Chamber of Commerce, History Museum, Community Center, Library, and the UPS on Main St.. We hope you enjoyed our magazine. We want your input. Did you like this issue? What suggestions do you have for future articles? Call or email us.

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

Thank you for reading,

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SEE YOU AGAIN IN JULY!



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We'd Like to Introduce Ourselves!

We are Lora and Pete Magnani and we're proud to present the first issue of the Dunedin Neighborhood News Magazine! Our family has been producing these publications in Pinellas County for almost 20 years. Pete and I took over the Indian Rocks Beach publication in January 2022.

I was born and raised in Tampa; Pete grew up in New York before coming to Florida 23 years ago. We moved to Dunedin in 2019 to get more involved in the family business and quickly fell in love with this awesome city.

We're excited to bring this publication to our hometown because we honestly believe it will be beneficial to Dunedin's residents, businesses, and visitors. The Neighborhood News features content such as history, positive local news, and profiles of area residents and their accomplishments. The space in our Restaurant News, Business Briefs, and Community News sections are available for free to give our local businesses and neighborhood organizations another avenue to get their message out to our neighbors.

We value your input and want to hear about anything you may want to see included in this magazine. Let us know if you have a neighbor or friend who deserve to be recognized. We would appreciate any suggestions and we look forward to providing you with a useful and informative news magazine. You can reach us at (813) 239-6862 or email Pete@MagriffProductions.com.



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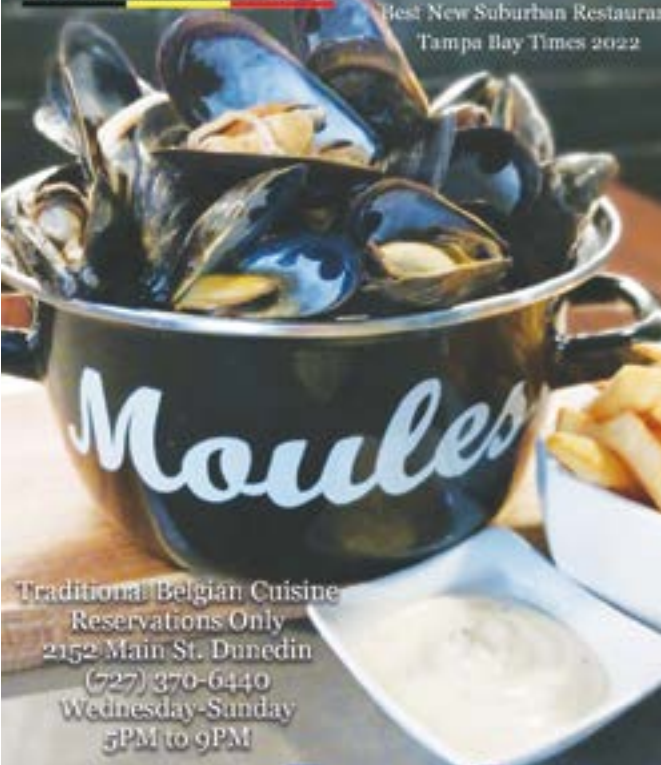
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Did You Know

LOGGERHEAD TURTLE NESTING SEASON BEGINS

From May 1st through October 31st, Loggerhead Sea turtles successfully nest and hatch along the beaches of St. Petersburg and Clearwater. With over 20 miles of shoreline, our area is prime real estate for turtle nests. Female turtles come ashore in the dark, dig a hole and lay 100 to 150 eggs at a time. During the course of a season, a single female lays three to eight nests. After a 45 to 70 day gestation period, hatchlings emerge from the nest at night and follow the moonlight reflecting off the Gulf.



Sea turtles can be disoriented by lights visible from the beach causing hatchlings to become attracted inland. When this happens, they most often die of dehydration, predators or are run over by motor vehicles. Occupants of beachfront properties are asked to minimize the use of lights that shine directly on the beach. Information about turtle friendly beach lighting can be found in the Sea Turtle Lighting Guidelines on the MyFWC.com website.

If you're interested in learning more or would like information about what you can do to help protect the Sea Turtles please contact Fort De Soto Park in Tierra Verde, Sea Turtle Trackers in St. Pete Beach, or Clearwater Marine Aquarium.


COACHMAN PARK GRAND OPENING The city of Clearwater and Ruth Eckerd Hall announced a week-long grand opening celebration jam-packed with events, concerts and the return of the "Clearwater Celebrates America" Independence Day fireworks over Clearwater Harbor.

To celebrate Clearwater's diverse attributes, each day will be themed to highlight a different aspect of the community and feature musical performances such as The Black Honkey's Band, Rumbeo's De Tampa Bay, Colbie Caillat and Gavin DeGraw, Dave Koz Summer Horns Tour with Special Guests Candy Dulfer & Eric Darius, Peter Frampton, The Florida Orchestra and more.

Daily recurring events will include health and fitness classes, food and beverage experiences, exhibitors, children's games, as well as activities and park amenities such as a splash pad, large playground, walking trails and more. The celebration will begin Wednesday, June 28th. For more information, visit MyClearwater.com.

SEAGRASS LOSS REVERSES PROGRESS The paradigm that made Tampa Bay an international success story for nearly three decades is changing. More than 30 percent of the bay's seagrasses have been lost since 2016, with acreage in Old Tampa Bay at the lowest level ever recorded. Throughout the bay, seagrasses declined by 11,599 acres of seagrasses from the high of 41,655 posted in 2016. Water quality parameters are still meeting targets set in the early 1990s. The exact causes are unknown

OUR NEXT ISSUE IS JULY If you need another copy of this newsletter, you may pick up one up at the Chamber of Commerce, Dunedin History Museum, Hale Senior Center, Community Center, or Library. Read this issue and others at BeachNewsletters.com. Follow us on Facebook for local news.



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and More...

GRAND OPENING FOR NEW CITY HALL The public is welcome to the celebration on May 19th at 5:30pm. The new 39,000 square foot City Hall will be the home to nearly one hundred city employees who currently work out of five different buildings. Departments and divisions relocating to the new City Hall include: City Clerk, Communications, Community Development – which includes Planning, Code Compliance, and the Building Divisions, Economic & Housing Development, Engineering, Finance, Human Resources & Risk Management, Information Technology, Utility Billing, the Office of City Manager and the City Commission. The Grand Opening ceremony will include a ribbon-cutting ceremony, tours of the new building, and refreshments from local restaurants.

USCG SAFE BOATING COURSES The Coast Guard Auxillary has moved to 510 North Ft. Harrison Avenue, five blocks north of Cleveland St.

The Coast Guard Auxiliary in Clearwater is offering Safe Boating Classes "All About Safety." Unlike some internet courses, the class is taught by certified USCGAUX instructors who can answer your questions and share their experiences about our local waters. Topics include: Boating Emergencies, Know Your Boat, Getting Underway, Navigating, Operating Your Boat Safely and Legal Requirements. All graduates receive a Florida State certification card.

The next scheduled classes will be held May 20-21 and June 24-25 from 9am-2pm. The cost is \$50.

The Auxiliary also offers free vessel safety checks at both the Seminole (CW) and Belleair Causeway boat ramps on the first Saturday of every month.

There are other classes offered throughout the year. For more information, see www.BeSafeInc.net.

NEW TROLLEY TOURS Jolley Trolley is excited to offer a number of new adventures with their new tours. Their Haunting Tours feature the mysteries and the haunting of our area's past. Haunted Clearwater tours began last year and Haunted Dunedin tours began in March.

A pirate trolley sets sail by land, to bring mates to local breweries; the Clearwater Sightseeing Tour debuted in February, showcasing the coastline communities of our beautiful region.

Jolley Trolley Transportation, serving the Clearwater Beach area and beyond, has enjoyed forty years of being in business as a non-profit community organization. Through its partnership with PSTA, it provides daily route services 365 days a year, from Tarpon Springs to Clearwater Beach. Additionally, Jolley Trolley provides private charter services specializing in weddings and corporate events, which are an outstanding way to enjoy events with family and friends, all aboard together! To book your next adventure visit ClearwaterJolleyTrolley.com.



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Dunedin Boat Club, Continued

A main goal of the city, Boat Club, and Dunedin residents was to improve the marina. Its use was outgrowing its capacity and it was in dire need of dredging. The Boat Club organized fundraisers that included fish fries, dances, and raffles, and improvements to the marina began. Pilings were put in, new docks and bulkheads were constructed, and running water and electricity were installed.

To address the dredging issue, Boat Club members and the city explored the possibility of a Public Works Administration grant. To qualify, the marina could not be privately owned, so the club relinquished the rights of the marina to the city and leased the property back. This opened up funding for further improvements including construction of the clubhouse, which was originally built over the water on pilings. As the marina improved, the Boat Club expanded its membership, hosting sailing races and regattas. They also began letting other nautical civic organizations use their facilities.

In 1947, in a speech to the Clearwater Optimist Club, Major Clifford McKay laid out a four-point plan to curb juvenile delinquency. His plan included the creation of a baseball diamond, swimming pool and recreation center, and a sailboat competition for young people. McKay's idea for a youth racing competition was born out of his son's love for sailing and both of their frustrations with the soap box derby, which was popular at the time. The premise of the derby was a simple car that could be built by the average father and son as a bonding experience culminating in a downhill race where the children competed. The vehicle would be used once or twice and usually ended up as firewood before long. McKay believed a sailboat would hold a child's interest much longer and teach them responsibility and self-confidence. The idea was well received by the Optimists, and the next day McKay reached out to Clark "Clarkie" Mills.

Mills was an accomplished boat builder, hand-crafting sailboats from his shop located on the site of today's Dunedin Woodwright Brewing Company. McKay wanted Mills to design a vessel that would cost less than fifty dollars, could be crafted from two regular sheets of plywood, and use a bed sheet for a sail. Mills accepted the challenge, and the Optimist Pram was born. Pram racing immediately



Members leave a boat club meeting circa 1930

became popular, with races being sponsored regularly by the Dunedin Boat Club. The club also sponsored the first statewide regatta. Mills built twelve prams for the City of Dunedin which were used for early races. One of the original twelve has been preserved and is on display at the Dunedin History Museum.

Over the years, the Boat Club continued its partnership with the city to improve the marina. More dredging was completed and seawalls were built, filling in the water under the clubhouse structure and joining it with mainland. In 1964, land was filled in both to the south and to the north of the marina where Edgewater Arms and Bon Appetit stand today. The clubhouse itself also underwent several expansions and renovations, but the original structure still exists at its core.

While hosting races, benefits, and community events throughout the years, The Boat Club continued sharing their facilities with other nautical clubs. In 1967, a group of women organized to share their love of sailing, and The Windlasses were formed. They originally rented their prams from the Clearwater Optimist Club and sailed out of the Maritime Youth Center on Clearwater Beach. In 1974, they moved to the Dunedin Marina and began using the boat club facilities. They also joined the Florida Women's Sailing Association and began participating in interclub races and regattas. Membership in the Windlasses has grown to approximately 150 sailors.

The Dunedin Boat Club membership has grown from the original thirty-five charter members to over four hundred today. While maintaining their focus on boating, they continue their charitable work and dedication to fostering interest in boating. When the Dunedin Youth Sailing Association was formed in 2009, the Boat Club offered the use of the clubhouse for instruction, events, and fundraisers. The Dunedin Boat Club organizes races and regattas annually and welcomes boating enthusiasts as members. The club is an all-volunteer organization with no paid staff and members are expected to volunteer their time each year. They sponsor civic events throughout the year, with the highlight being the annual lighted holiday boat parade. The event begins at Marker 1 Marina and proceeds south through the Intracoastal Waterway. Santa Claus (the incoming Dunedin Boat Club Commodore) rides aboard a Sheriff's boat, lights and siren blaring, into Dunedin Marina and arrives at Edgewater Park to kick off the holiday season with the lighting of the City Christmas tree. For more information visit DunedinBoatClub.org

Information for this article was provided by Vincent Luisi, Executive Director of the Dunedin History Museum and Commodore Bill Goocher and Terry Hopkins of the Dunedin Boat Club.

Photos Credits: Dunedin History Museum and Dunedin Boat Club.

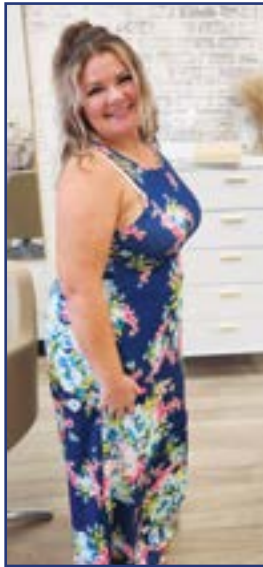


Present day race sponsored by the Dunedin Boat Club

Business Briefs

NEW SALON ON PATRICIA AVENUE

Melinda Ruskey is the new owner and stylist at Beach Babe Salon in the Dunedin Plaza shopping mall. Ruskey was born in West Palm Beach, but raised in upper Michigan. She moved to Dunedin in July 2022. Ruskey received her degree in cosmetology in 2003 and has owned five salons. She currently owns one in Michigan and Beach Babe on Patricia Avenue. Melinda plans to focus on her Dunedin location as her daughter graduates from Dunedin Middle School and attends Dunedin High School next school year. To view a menu of services or book an appointment visit BeachBabeSalon.com or drop in and say hello.



FEWER WORK DAYS, BETTER PRODUCTIVITY?

Four days of work and three days of play is a concept being considered by politicians in Massachusetts. State Representatives Cutler and Fernandes have proposed a bill to make it a reality, with tax incentives for businesses that transition. South Africa, the UK, Spain and Ireland have tested the schedule and have observed higher productivity as well as more satisfied employees.



INTRODUCING THE DUNEDIN NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS MAGAZINE

We are excited to announce the addition of Dunedin to the Beach Neighborhood News Magazine family. The publication is direct mailed to approximately 6,000 homes, businesses, and vacation rentals in zip code 34698. It is also distributed at the Chamber of Commerce, History Museum, Hale Center, Rec Center, and at other retail outlets.

Our family has published more than 350 issues over 15 years. For information on advertising in Dunedin or any of our markets, email Lora at Lora@MagriffProductions.com.

CLICK TO CANCEL? The Federal Trade Commission recently proposed a provision to make it easier for consumers to cancel subscriptions they no longer need. "Click to cancel" aims to make it as easy for subscribers to cancel as it was for them to sign up.

The proposal is part of the commission's ongoing efforts to combat unfair or deceptive practices relating to subscriptions, memberships, and other recurring payment programs that lead to thousands of consumer complaints annually.

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Bar & Restaurant News

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OLDEST BAR IN DUNEDIN TURNS 62 Sully's Tavern celebrates their 62nd birthday in July. It is owned by Matt Sullivan who renamed it from Tumbleweeds when he purchased the bar seventeen years ago. The original establishment was the source of much consternation when it was awarded a liquor license despite the objections of local religious leaders. Visit Sully's at 424 Patricia Avenue across from Dunedin Lanes.

**HAPPY ANNIVERSARY
TO SEA SEA RIDERS**

The popular seafood restaurant is celebrating thirty-five years in business in Dunedin. Family owned and operated since 1988, Sea Sea Riders recently completed renovations including improvements to their side dining room which is now available for private parties and events, including a private bar. The restaurant is located at 221 Main Street. Visit SeaSeaRidersDunedin.com to view their menu.



BEER, BACON, AND BBQ Clear Sky Draught Haus hosted a charity event in April to benefit the Hope Villages of America Food Bank. Raffle prizes donated by local businesses included hotel stays, restaurant gift cards, and a trip to California. Clear Sky donated a percentage of beer sales and the event raised thousands for the food bank.



RESTAURANT NEWS WANTED If you have news or suggestions for this newsletter, let us know. Our email is Lora@MagriffProductions.com or call 813-361-7376.

Bar & Restaurant News

ROSIE'S TAVERN OF DUNEDIN HAS A NEW OWNER

The popular downtown bar was recently purchased by Jason Seibert, who also has owned Flanagan's Irish Pub on Main Street since 2016. Seibert says he does not have any changes in mind and intends to keep Rosie's the same fun bar it has been since 2010. Rosie's Tavern is located at 730 Broadway.



BON APPETIT RESTAURANT AND BAR JOINS THE ORIGINAL CRABBY BILL'S FAMILY

The Loder family recently acquired Bon Appetit at The Best Western Hotel. The Loders say they intend to keep the Bon Appetit concept largely the same with some aesthetic updates. The family has been serving up great food in Indian Rocks Beach since April of 1983. The classic seafood tradition started by "Crabby Bill" Loder has stayed a family business with son Matt Sr. as CEO and his wife Maria as CFO. Their children Matt Jr., Alecia, Mia and Pauly each oversee various aspects of the family's thirteen restaurants and food service locations.



SMALL TOWN ON THE BIG SCREEN

Jody Pucello, owner of The Wild Iris Cafe was featured in "A Taste of Love" which was filmed in Dunedin in 2021. You might also recognize Sea Sea Riders as the backdrop of the film, which debuted at The Sunscreen Film Festival held in St. Petersburg in April. The movie stars Erin Cahill

as a chef that returns to her hometown to save her parents' restaurant. "Valentine's Town" was filmed at The Wild Iris in April and also featured Pucello. The movie is scheduled for release on Valentines Day 2024. R.A.D.A.R.:The Adventures of the Bionic Dog was filmed in Dunedin last year and is scheduled for release June 27th.

Wild Iris Cafe has expanded their hours and are now open until 10pm on Friday nights.

PEARLY'S BEACH EATS UNDER NEW OWNERSHIP

The beach-themed restaurant at 903 Douglas Avenue was purchased by Kassie Schmidt in February. Originally opened in March of 2018, the restaurant and bar features locally brewed craft beer and a menu of "Gulf Coast Grub" such as tacos, burritos, Baja bowls and sandwiches. Schmidt is a familiar face in Dunedin, having graduated from Dunedin High School and working in local bars. She has plans for some changes at the bar, but intends to keep the beachy and laid-back atmosphere.



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PIER 60**



**HIGHLANDER GAMES
HIGHLANDER PARK**



**MARDI GRAS
MAIN STREET**

LOCAL STUDENT RECOGNIZED FOR HIS ACHIEVEMENTS

Joshua Ward is a Senior at Dunedin High School who is turning a late start in the construction trades into a chance for national recognition and possibly a successful career.

Last September, Brandon Szymanski, who was recently hired to teach construction trades courses, asked Joshua what trade he wanted to learn. Joshua had an interest in being an electrician and jumped into the electrical program. Students begin learning residential wiring, then move onto commercial applications. Usually, students begin the program much earlier and have two or three years of electrical training by the time they are seniors. Joshua had been in the construction program for almost four years, but had only been specializing in electrical since September. Mr. Szymanski, however, saw Joshua's potential and recommended that he enter the SkillsUSA electrical competition.

SkillsUSA is a nonprofit national education association with a goal of ensuring America continues to have a skilled workforce. The SkillsUSA Championships are career competition events that showcase the best technical education students in the country. Competition categories range from occupational fields such as engineering and medical fields to skilled and technical sciences including construction, mechanics, and firefighting. Contests begin locally and winners progress to the state and national level.

Joshua competed at the regional competition in January, winning the bronze medal and earning a spot at the state championships in April. There, he took the gold and will compete in June for the national title in Atlanta. He will also be the first student to represent Dunedin High School in the nationals, as well as the first from Pinellas County.

Along with the recognition comes opportunity. "Joshua was already offered jobs in two counties as a result of going to states," says Christina Ward, Joshua's mother. "I'm sure going to nationals will open up a world of opportunity." Joshua has already earned his Occupational Health and Safety Association and CPR certifications. After completing the program at Dunedin High, he will be certified by the Home Builder's Institute, which will allow him to test out of his first year of apprenticeship.



"Joshua was presented with opportunity to learn a trade, and he went from being a high school student to being a young adult," said Mr. Szymanski. "He came to class every single day and even picked up a teacher's assistant role so he would be able spend an extra period each day in my class." An added bonus to Joshua's success was his impact on fellow students. "When Josh won at the state championship, other students had been moving away from the construction trades," Mr. Szymanski said. "Now they are entrenched in staying in these programs to get their chance to shine."

Joshua's mother set up a GoFundMe page to help defer some of the costs of travel, lodging and admission to the national competition. Donors can find it at [GoFund.me/9b72e9cd](https://www.gofundme.com/9b72e9cd). For more information on SkillsUSA, visit [SkillsUSA.org](https://www.skillsusa.org).

CELEBRATE NATIONAL SAFE BIKE MONTH WITH SAFETY

From the Desk of Sheriff Bob Gualtieri

Pinellas County has miles of beautiful multi-purpose paved trails for bike riders. In addition, many roads have designated bicycle lanes to make your recreational ride or commute safer. With the warm weather here, more bikes are on our roads. As a bicyclist you must take measures to have a safer ride. And as a driver you need to be aware of a bicyclist's vulnerability. May is National Bike Month, and the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office (PCSO) wants you to enjoy your ride safely.

As a bike rider:

Bike riders and passengers under 16 are required to wear a helmet – but it is a good idea for ALL bike riders. Of all bike fatalities in Florida, 40 percent are from traumatic brain injuries. The helmet must be worn properly to be effective: low on the forehead and strapped snugly under the chin.

When you are riding on the road you must obey all traffic control devices, just like cars. Stay in marked lanes, obey lights and stop signs, and signal any turns. Always go in the same direction as traffic.

Florida law states that if you ride your bike at night, you need a headlight that is visible from 500 feet, and a taillight and reflector on the back that are visible from 600 feet.

Don't wear headphones that prevent you from hearing traffic and other things around you. Florida statute prohibits operation of a vehicle while wearing headphones. The exception is a headset used with a cell phone that only has sound in one ear.

Be visible and predictable. Don't dart between vehicles or make maneuvers that a motorist can't anticipate. Wear bright colors for visibility.

You can get a DUI on a bicycle. Aside from legal considerations, riding a bike while impaired puts you at greater risk for an accident. If you are too impaired to drive, you are too impaired to ride a bicycle. Call a friend, taxi, or utilize a ride share service. You may even be able to get a ride share that can transport your bike too. If not, lock it up and get it when you're sober.



It is legal to ride a bike on the sidewalk, even if there is a bike lane available. When riding on the sidewalk, Pinellas Trail, or other path for pedestrians, wheels yield to feet. Let walkers and runners have the right of way. When passing someone who is on foot, give an audible signal, such as a bell, horn, or say, "Passing on your left."

As a motorist:

Always be alert for bicyclists and other pedestrians. Slow down in high-pedestrian areas.

Drivers must give bicyclists at least three feet of clearance when passing or driving alongside of them.

Yield to bicyclists and other pedestrians entering crosswalks. Remember that all sides of an intersection are considered crosswalks, whether marked or not. Don't pass a stopped vehicle at a crosswalk – the stopped car might obscure a pedestrian.

If you come to a turn when there is a bicycle in the bike lane, let them make their turn first.



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Community News

DUNEDIN PARKS AND RECREATION

Highlander Pool offers group swim lessons for infants and children. Learning to swim should be a priority for every family. It's an important life skill that can play a key role in helping to prevent drowning.

Sessions begin May 15 and run throughout the summer. Each session includes six classes held Monday-Wednesday for two weeks at 4:30pm, 5pm, 5:30pm or 6pm. Times may vary depending on age or level. The cost is \$40 with a Rec Card and \$60 without a card (per session).

They also offer Water Fitness Classes. Exercise with low to zero impact on the body to tone muscle, increase joint range of motion, reduce pain and stiffness, and get a great cardiovascular workout. Now until May 27 classes will be held Saturdays from 9-10 am. June 3 - Sept. 29 classes will take place Mon, Wed and Fri from 9-10 am. The cost is \$4/day. A \$40 punch pass is also available which includes 12 classes.

Register on line at DunedinGov.org or in person at Highlander Pool or the Dunedin Community Center.

DR. WILLIAM E. HALE SENIOR CENTER

Submitted by Elaine Swinehart

The Hale Center will host a Painting Party on Friday May 19 from 12-2pm. To learn methods of acrylic painting, please register in advance by May 17.

The center offers the following free health screenings:

Leg Vein Screenings - 2nd Tuesday of the month at 9am

Blood Pressure Check - 3rd Tuesday of the month at 9am

Hearing Screening - 4th Tuesday of the month

Memory Screening - For Appointment - Call 298-3299

We also offer many daily recurring programs. Visit DunedinGov.com/City-Departments/Parks-Recreation and click on Hale Senior Center to view the schedule.

HOPE VILLAGES OF AMERICA

Join their Mac 'N Cheese Food Drive. With summer approaching, the need for food is increasing quickly.

Help them prepare for summer food loss by participating in their inaugural Mac 'N Cheese Campaign. Did You Know 100 pounds of Mac 'N Cheese can feed 200 children as a main dish?

You can help them stock the Food Bank with boxes of Mac 'N Cheese. Donations can be delivered to the Food Bank, 700 Druid Road, Clearwater, Monday - Friday, 8:30am - 3:30pm OR simply make a monetary donation at hopevillagesofamerica.org/mac-n-cheese-campaign. All funds raised will be matched, up to \$500.

MILITARY ORDER OF WORLD WARS

The Clearwater chapter of the Military Order of the World Wars meets first Tuesdays at the Dunedin Golf Club, 1050 Palm Blvd., Dunedin.

Social hour is at 11:30 am followed by lunch and a short program. Active duty, retired, or former Military officers and their spouses, or widows, are invited to attend. The MOWW welcomes those interested to RSVP for lunch, by calling Richard Gouin at 727-789-6754.

STUDIO 1212 ART GALLERY

Submitted by Colleen Baxter

Fine Art Summer Sale at Studio 1212 Art Gallery, 234 Monroe Street in downtown Dunedin. Opening reception on Sunday, June 11, from 1 to 4pm. Free and open to the public, here's your opportunity to attend a new fine art exhibit themed "Play It Again" featuring art by local, award-winning artists at very affordable, reduced rates. Enjoy a light buffet, wine and music outside on our large patio under the shade of the old oak trees. Voted best small art gallery cooperative in Tampa Bay Magazine, this exhibit will run throughout the summer, Wednesdays through Sundays, 11am to 3pm. Check out our fall 2023 exhibit schedule, workshops and view additional art online at studio1212.org.

FLORIDA BOTANICAL GARDENS

Join their Holiday Lights "Workshop Elves," a select group of volunteers who assist in preparations for our Holiday Lights in the Gardens event. Every month, volunteers gather to help plan and implement the Holiday Lights display. This includes testing lights, building displays, repairing items, and decorating trees. Workdays are held the second Saturday of the month with two-hour shifts from 8am-3pm, with a break for lunch. They continue throughout the summer until installation begins in the fall when assistance with the placement of various display items will be needed. Shifts take place in our light storage area. To sign up, visit FlbgFoundation.org/Volunteer.

DUNEDIN PRIDE WEEK

Dunedin Pride Week is back and better than ever. Presented by Dunedin Chamber of Commerce and sponsored by Duke Energy and The City of Dunedin, the annual event celebrating the diversity and inclusion of the LGBTQ+ community will take place from June 16-28.

The volunteer-led Dunedin Pride Committee has organized an incredible lineup of events for this year's celebration. The festivities kick off with the Pride Gay-Lah event presented by Duke Energy and the City of Dunedin on June 17th at the Conmy Center at Our Lady of Lourdes Church. Tickets for this event are now on sale for \$200. 21 and up only.

In addition to the Pride Gay-Lah event, Dunedin Pride Week will feature a Pride Golf Cart Parade, which is always a colorful and fun-filled event. There will be events happening all over Dunedin, including businesses such as Blur Nightclub, The Honu Restaurant, Crown & Bull and Pisces Sushi.

Dunedin Pride Week will also host a variety of educational and cultural events throughout the week, including film screenings, art exhibitions, and guest speakers. These events are designed to promote awareness and understanding of LGBTQ+ issues and provide opportunities for community members to engage in meaningful conversations. Visit dunedinpride.com for more information and a complete schedule of events.

WELCOME NEWCOMERS CLUB

This club is open to the women of Pinellas County; all are welcome to come and socialize. Our luncheons are held the first Tuesday of each month at Belleair Country Club. There is always a guest speaker or other entertainment. Please contact Mary at 727-709-9906 with any questions.

Community News

CLEARWATER YACHT CLUB

In August 2022, Clearwater Yacht Club commenced the largest capital project in their history involving their most valuable asset: their docks. Thanks to the work of Terri Skapik of Woods Consulting, along with Waterline Construction and Phillips Solutions, their marina and electrical contractors, respectively, they completed the renovation of the docks in early January. They were extremely fortunate to have great partners as well as financing from Flagship Bank. This project concluded many months of planning meetings involving many Clearwater Yacht Club members.

The entire marina was replaced with new pilings, supports and top decking. Thanks to volunteer members, the new docks also have beautiful solar lights along the main docks. Construction stayed on schedule even with the two storms.

While the docks are fully operational, due to various supply chain issues, they are awaiting final delivery and installation of their new electrical/water/cable pedestals. The next project is to repave the parking lot and landscape the property. Please stop by and visit the Clearwater Yacht Club and see the great new marina for yourself.

Their Summer membership opportunity runs through September 30th. It has no initiation fee and monthly dues are \$250. Club Members can use the pool, tiki bar, dining room and other amenities at the newly remodeled club. Members also can enjoy day dockage on the club's brand new docks. Learn more at ClearwaterYachtClub.org or call 447-6000.

TAMPA BAY WATCH

Their new Oyster Shell Recycling Program allows them to utilize discarded shells from restaurants as material in living shoreline projects, keeping shells out of local landfills. They are seeking the help of a few tenacious volunteers willing to collect shell donations from partner restaurants on a weekly basis. Volunteers will participate in all aspects of the shell recycling program including picking up the recycled shell, dropping them off at the curing pad, and delivering clean buckets to the restaurants. For further information, email rarndt@tampabaywatch.org.

Get hooked on the silver king by joining Tampa Bay Watch for the 18th Annual Tarpon Rodeo on June 16! Every team entry directly benefits the mission to make the Tampa Bay watershed a more resilient habitat for native species. Each year, funds raised through the tournament are redistributed back into the community through living shorelines, childhood marine science programs, and volunteer projects to improve our waterways. Teams from across the bay will fish their secret spots for \$3,000 in prizes and a plaque on the perpetual trophy. The tournament launches from Fort De Soto Boat Ramp on June 16 at 7am sharp with an award ceremony at The Island Grille in Tierra Verde from 1- 3pm. Gold and Silver Teams receive a professional guide and Bronze Teams may provide their own vessel. Go to tampabaywatch.org to register for Tarpon Rodeo.

COMING SOON: CONSTRUCTION OF THE NEW CHILDREN'S GARDEN AT THE FLORIDA BOTANICAL GARDENS

By: Emily Goot, Executive Director, Florida Botanical Gardens Foundation

The new Majeed Discovery Garden (MDG) will be a free and accessible children's garden, located inside the Florida Botanical Gardens—a public, Pinellas County Park. The 2+ acres site is located along McKay Creek with five hundred linear feet of frontage. It is also adjacent to 1+ acre of wetland and native plant buffer on the east and southern boundaries of the Garden and will include a pond area for additional exploration of aquatic ecosystems.

Excavation of the pond has been completed and awaits spring and summer rains to fill. The pond includes a wood deck for the observation overlook. Major efforts by volunteers of the Florida Botanical Gardens and the FBGF have been completed to remove invasive plants within the tree protection zones, which required many hours of pruning and pulling to clean the site of the invaders.

While a major portion of the site work has involved improvements of underground utilities, several features have begun to take shape above ground, including framing of the future Outdoor Classroom, which awaits exterior finishes. The Outdoor Classroom will be a 600 sq. ft screened-in building, that will serve as a main feature of the MDG - a hub for workshops, classes, field trips, and private events to be held in the garden. Adjacent to the classroom building is the 'Roots n Shoots,' another educational area that will include a potting shed, raised beds for planting, a Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ garden, and the RainKeep, a functional rainwater harvesting sculpture by artist Allison Newsome, which can hold up to 550 gallons of rainwater. As the final step, a large log sourced from Fort De Soto Park, from a fallen Green Buttonwood Tree, was placed in the future wetland to enhance the habitat. This uniquely shaped log will provide a site for turtles and small alligators to bask in the sun, while the portions of the log that rise above the emergent wetland will certainly be a favorite perching location for birds.

Site grading is underway throughout the MDG along with preparation for the new ADA-compliant concrete walkways. The grading includes a mound that will house a play feature; either the beetle climber or temporarily a site with giant foam building blocks from Imagination Playground. These 'Big Blue Blocks' sets are said to inspire creativity and engagement and allow for the construction of tunnels, channels, or children's own inventions. To learn more about the Majeed Discovery Garden, and how you can give back to the project, contact Emily Goot at emily@flbgfoundation.org.



Local Students Learning to Make a Difference Underwater



SCUBAnauts International began in 2001 as Scuba Scouts USA with a group of six newly certified teen divers led by Captain David Olson, who wanted to use SCUBA as a means to teach kids about the marine environment. The science-based nature of the group distinguished it from other dive clubs, and Olson developed partnerships with several marine research scientists to introduce the young divers to informal science education through underwater exploration. Interest in the program grew, and today SCUBAnauts consists of six chapters in Florida and Georgia.

Katie Cooper became involved with SCUBAnauts in 2013 while working as a SCUBA instructor. At that time, there were two branches of the program in Tarpon Springs and St. Petersburg. She began teaching science classes to the students, then helped to start a new chapter in Tampa. She currently serves as the organization's Chief Operations and Dive Safety Officer.

"Our mission is to build character and leadership skills through scientific diving and other water-based research activities," said Cooper. Each chapter meets monthly for lessons on science and oceanography, dive safety instruction, and student-led presentations. Dives take place throughout the year with students participating in reef surveys, fish counts, and coral restoration.

In addition to obtaining their Open Water SCUBA, First Aid and CPR certifications, students are required to complete the American Academy of Underwater Sciences' (AAUS) Scientific Diver course. This intensive 100-hour training program teaches dive theory, physics, and emergency accident management, as well as scientific data-

gathering methodologies. Students participate in classroom and in-water learning, then complete written tests and check-out dives.

In 2006, the program became an organizational member of the AAUS, giving them increased credibility in the scientific community. "When you approach National Marine Sanctuaries and say you have a fleet of divers willing to do research for free, they say 'Great!'" said Cooper. "Then you tell them they're teenagers and they say 'Oh, never mind.' Having that backing and showing that our students have gone through that rigorous training gives us the validity and strength to make those partnerships." The certification also gives a benefit to students who intend to pursue a career in marine sciences after graduation.

The culmination of the SCUBAnauts annual efforts are the summer expeditions where the students and mentors embark on a week-long mission to destinations that have included the Bahamas, Belize, Jamaica and Hawaii. They identify a science project, then outline a trip and a dive plan to suit it." In 2020, the group traveled to Thunder Bay in Michigan, which is a National Marine Sanctuary.



"There's an ongoing project to make 3-D maps of the shipwrecks within the sanctuary," said Cooper. "We were able to do some imaging and give that over to the researchers to assist in their modeling."

Another summer mission brought the SCUBAnauts to much warmer waters, Cayos Cochinos is a group of fifteen small islands located approximately twenty miles off the northern coast of Honduras. The islands are part of a Marine Protected Area which includes part of the world's second-largest coral reef system, the Mesoamerican Barrier Reef. The sanctuary is managed by the Honduras Coral Reef Foundation, an organization that works with the Honduran government to preserve the reef. The foundation makes conservation decisions based on biannual surveys of a few sites, which offer a limited data set. Since the survey methodology used by the foundation is one that SCUBAnauts also utilize, the students were invited to Honduras for a week of underwater research. "We were able to add two sites to their long-term dataset," said Cooper. "That allows them to do a little bit better decision making in terms of what are and are not permitted in the protected area."

The staff of SCUBAnauts is an all-volunteer group of SCUBA instructors/divemaster, licensed boat captains, scientists, and educators and is always in need of additional help. The program relies on donations for funding as well as sponsorships with local dive operations and businesses. For further information on participation as a student, volunteer, or sponsor visit scbanautsintl.org.



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