

# NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

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Magazine

## JACK ECKERD - THE MAN BEHIND THE DRUGSTORE CHAIN

By Bob Griffin, Publisher

If you lived here during the 1970s, '80s or even '90s, you know the name Jack Eckerd. He created a drugstore chain, featuring his name, that at its height had over 2,600 stores in twenty states.

Eckerd was born in Delaware in 1913 and graduated from Culver Military Academy. His father, Milton Eckerd, started the Eckerd Drug Store chain in Erie, Pennsylvania. Then, the chain had thirteen stores. In 1940, at the age of 27, Eckerd bought a 25% interest in two of his father's stores.

World War II changed his plans. As a First Lieutenant in the Army Air Force, he logged over 2,000 flying hours. By the end of the war, he was a Major and had received three Air Medals and a Presidential Unit Citation from Harry Truman.

He went to the Boeing School of Aeronautics to be a commercial pilot but there were too many other pilots after the war. So, at age 32, with no available airline pilot jobs, and a wife and child to support, he returned to the drug store business. After their second child was born, the couple divorced.

In 1952, Eckerd moved to Pinellas County and bought three existing Pay Less Drug Stores that he added to the Eckerd chain. Eckerd found another Tampa location he liked, and within three years, he added two more stores for a total of six.

On a blind date in 1957, Eckerd met socialite Ruth Binnicker Swann. He was a divorcee with two children in Delaware, she was a widow living with her three children in Tampa. They were married six weeks later. Together, they had two more children – for a total of seven.

"When I met Jack, he said he worked in the drug store business," remembered Ruth. "I thought he was a pharmacist or something."

*Continued on page 6*



### Also in this Issue:

#### Sugar Sand 2023

The ninth annual Sugar Sand Festival showcased memories spanning five decades.

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#### New Leader at Anona Elementary

Denise Ballard brings more than twenty years of experience as an educator to her new role at the Largo school.

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#### Daytona International Speedway

Only 160 miles away, a tour of the Speedway makes a fun day or weekend trip even you if don't follow racing.

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#### The Majeed Discovery Garden

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

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**CREDITS**



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**INDIAN ROCKS BEACH NEIGHBORHOOD NEWSLETTER**

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

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

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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**CALENDAR OF HOLIDAYS & EVENTS**

*As always, this is subject to change.*

**MAY**


School Principal's Day 1  
Stone Crab Season Ends 1  
Clearwater Free Clinic Golf Tourney 1  
Loggerhead Turtle Season Opens 1  
Beauty & the Beast Francis Wilson 4-21  
Cinco de Mayo 5  
Tampa Riverfest 5-6  
Greentown Kids Garden Party 6  
Derby Day 6  
National Nurses Day 6  
City of Seminole Tacofest 6  
IRB Community Cleanup 8-10  
Teacher Appreciation Week 8-12  
City Commission Meeting 9  
Postal Workers Food Drive 13  
St Pete Tacos and Tequila Fest 13  
Mother's Day 14  
HOA Mingle at Grouper's 17  
Armed Forces Day 20  
Downtown Clearwater Art Walk 20  
Preakness Stakes 20  
Third Saturday at Pinewood 20  
Safe Boating Week 20-27  
Pentecost 28  
Last Day of Public School 25  
Memorial Day 29

**JUNE**

No Fertilizing (June-Sept) 1  
Hurricane Season Begins 1  
St Pete Pride Parade 1  
Safety Harbor Food and Music Fest 3  
National Cancer Survivors Day 4  
Beach Art Creative Kids Camp Begins 5  
D-Day Remembrance 6  
Ink Mania Expo St. Pete 9-11  
Belmont Stakes 10  
City Commission Meeting 13  
Flag Day 14  
Rotary Flag Event Chic-A-Si Park 14  
Beaches Chamber Mixer at Slyce 14  
HOA Mingle Hurricane Eddie's 15  
Father's Day 18  
Juneteenth 19  
Summer Begins 21  
The Sound Coachman Park Opens 28

**JULY**

Independence Day 4  
Fireworks at The Sound 4  
City Commission Meeting 11  
Bastille Day 14  
HOA Mingle at JD's 20  
City Millage Rate Meeting 25



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# Did You Know



### POSTAL FOOD DRIVE

The second Saturday in May, letter carriers in more than 10,000 cities and towns collect nonperishable food from their postal customers, when they participate in the Stamp Out Hunger National Food Drive — the largest one-day food drive in the nation.

Food collected from Indian Rocks Beach is taken to the Beaches Food Pantry. Just

leave your donations by your mailbox Saturday May 13th and your local Mail Carrier will pick it up.

### 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 from the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission 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 weeklong 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, Rumbero'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.

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# and More...

**DOLPHIN SCULPTURE UNVEILED** On March 1st, 2023, the City of Indian Rocks Beach unveiled their fifth public sculpture located in front of Pinellas County Public Parking, at the 17th Avenue Beach Access. A pair of bronze dolphins from the Randolph Rose Collection was chosen by the city and purchased with a donation from Indian Rocks Beach Homeowners Association.

Representatives of the City of Indian Rocks Beach City Team, IRB Homeowners Association, and the public were in attendance.

"The City of Indian Rocks Beach appreciates the generous donation by the Indian Rocks Beach Homeowners Association and our mutual commitment to aesthetics and public art throughout the city," said, City Manager, Gregg Mims.



**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.

**RENTAL ORDINANCE PASSES FIRST VOTE** Indian Rocks Beach City Commissioners voted 3-1 to approve the short term rental ordinance at the April 11th Commission Meeting after lengthy debate and public comment. Under the new ordinance, certain rentals would have occupancy caps of twelve occupants for the next two years and ten occupants thereafter and would be required to have one parking space for every bedroom. Rental owners would have to register their property with the city, pass an inspection and be required to have a representative available to respond to complaints at all times.

The ordinance will have to pass a second vote before being enacted. Commissioners are also closely watching a state bill that, if passed, would impose greater limitations on the ability of local governments to regulate short term rentals.

**DETOUR CONTINUES** Indian Rocks Road, within the Town of Belleair, is still under construction. They predict the road closures and detours between Mehlenbacher and Poinsettia Road will continue until September. Information and the timeline is updated on their website, TownofBelleair.com.

**SAFE BOATING WEEK MAY 20-27** Memorial Day is around the corner and that is the official start of boating season. Is your boat ready? The Coast Guard Aux will inspect your boat for free. You can find them at the Belleair Boat Ramp, May 20-21 and May 27-28.

**OUR NEXT ISSUE IS JULY** If you need another copy of this newsletter, you may pick up one up at the Beach Art Center, Library, Beach Welcome Center, USA Grocer or CVS. Read this issue and others at BeachNewsletters.com. Follow us on Facebook for local news.

# JACK ECKERD, Continued

In 1959, George Jenkins, owner of Publix, asked Eckerd to team up his drugstores with his grocery chain. Jenkins proposed that they build shopping centers together and everywhere Publix went, Eckerd would go, too. And that is what happened.

"Actually, dad wanted to sit on his dozen or so stores and live a quiet manageable life," says his daughter Nancy Eckerd Nichols. "But George Jenkins' proposal was too good to pass up. It kick-started his expansion plans."

Jenkins asked him to be a part of the next five Pinellas County Publix stores. Eckerd knew it took about \$150,000 to get a store off the ground - he would need \$750,000.

Ruth's previous father-in-law, James Swann, was President of the National Bank of Tampa. Swann suggested borrowing the money from his competitor — the Exchange Bank of Tampa. So, he did

Now 45, Eckerd had reached the big time. "It was double or nothing," Eckerd said. "I was going for it all." Ultimately, Eckerd and Jenkins built over 150 supermarket drugstore combinations.

In 1961, with still only twelve stores operational, The Jack Eckerd Corporation went public on the US Stock Exchange.

"My reason to go public was the common reason," Eckerd said. "I needed capital to sustain our rapid growth without constantly having to borrow from the banks."

"I remember Jack Eckerd well," says George Feaster, founder of Serenity Funeral home. "We were both active in local organizations. At one meeting, members were dealing out stock certificates to the new Jack Eckerd Corporation like they were playing cards. I asked them what it was, and they said it was Jack's stock - \$10 a share. I told them I would take 100. Then, I had to come up with \$1,000," Feaster says with a grin. "After splitting several times, I sold it for over \$100,000."

"I gave up sole ownership of the company in order to grow," explained Eckerd. "I cut my employees in on the action, as well. Selling 200,000 shares at \$10 per share was easy."

After that, the Eckerd chain doubled every two years for the next sixteen years!

In the early years, Eckerd tried to visit every store around Christmas—and meet as many employees as possible.

"His idea of a Christmas vacation was to load all the kids in the car and go visit new stores," says daughter Nichols.

At first, Eckerd kept his name in the local phone book so customers could call him with a problem. "We called that phone the 'Nut Line'," remembers Nichols. "If we answered it, we had to follow-up and solve the problem so, we tended not answer our

home phone."

Eckerd was an innovator and a risk taker. He visited stores in California and brought some of their ideas home. He experimented with self-service, a new concept, which today is standard. He invented the Senior Discount. Eckerd stores became known for selling products at lower costs.

Even before the Civil Rights Act, Eckerd desegregated his lunch counters before phasing them out. He defied Florida's "Fair Trade" laws, which let suppliers and manufacturers set retail prices. He fought the law until it was changed.

He introduced film processing and photo printing in the stores and was the first to offer the "Second Print Free." Eckerd built a film processing company that became an industry leader.

Eckerd sold his personal shares of stock in his company in 1986 to the Merrill Lynch investment company. He resigned as the CEO and ownership passed to his employees and other investors. At that time there were approximately 1,500 stores. Ten years later, JC Penney bought the Eckerd Drug stores and operated 2,600 stores before selling them to CVS and the Jean Coutu Group which became Rite Aid. By 2007, Eckerd Drugs was gone.

At its peak, the Jack Eckerd Corp. was the nation's second largest drug store chain and Tampa Bay's largest locally owned business with sales of over \$5 billion a year.

In 1975, Fortune Magazine estimated Eckerd's fortune to be around \$150 million.

Eckerd was more than just a businessman, he was also a philanthropist and spent the last two decades of his life giving away much of his \$150 million.

One of Eckerd's biggest passions was helping children - he had seven after all. He visited a Texas wilderness camp for troubled children, which led him to create a Florida version. He formed Eckerd Kids with a boy's camp near Brooksville and a girls cam near Floral City. He eventually had wilderness camps with programs that helped over 50,000 troubled teenagers.

Eckerd was an avid, professional sailor. He owned the *Panacea*, 52-foot sailboat designed by Charlie Morgan. "We had that boat rigged for competition," says Courtney Ross of Ross Boat Services. "Jack bought property on Clearwater Pointe, near today's Clearwater Yacht Club, for no other reason than to have a place to moor it." He raced it from the St Petersburg Yacht Club to places like Sarasota, Key West, Cuba and the Bahamas.

"Jack was a really great guy," remembers Ross. "He was always a lot of fun."



Ruth & Jack

Eckerd became a trustee at the Florida Presbyterian College that was struggling under a tremendous debt. There was talk of its closing or merging into the University of South Florida. Eckerd had given the school several million dollars over the years, but in 1972 he donated \$10 million to the college—with no strings attached. In return, they changed the name to Eckerd College. In all he gave the small college to over \$20 million.

For a short time, Eckerd College asked him to fill in as interim President. "That was kind of funny, being that Eckerd College was a very liberal school and Dad was the opposite - a staunch conservative," explains Nichols. "He always said it was an eye-opening experience."

Eckerd later told Fortune Magazine, "That donation to the college was the best investment I ever made."

From the beginning, Jack and Ruth were involved in building a Clearwater Performing Arts Center. When Richard Baumgardner, owner of the Kapok Tree Restaurant, donated thirty-eight acres, Eckerd and other volunteers made it happen. As a result, on October 15, 1983, the main auditorium, Ruth Eckerd Hall, named in Ruth's honor, opened.

Over his career, he wrote three books:

- *Finding the Right Prescription*, published by Fleming H. Revell Co., 1987
- *Enough is Enough: Solving Florida's Prison Crisis* published by Justice Fellowship, 1990
- *Why America Doesn't Work* co-authored with Charles Colson, published by W Pub Group, 1992

The Eckerds lived many years in Belleair at 120 Willadel. Erwin Schemringer, owner of E&E Steakout remembers, "Jack and Ruth used to eat in my restaurant all the time. The first time she was in, I wanted to meet her and asked 'how do you like my new restaurant?' She said she liked it 'but it seems a bit expensive, don't you think?'"

As his kids moved out, he and Ruth bought a beachfront home on north Clearwater Beach in Carluvel. In 2004, at the age of 91, Eckerd died of pneumonia in Clearwater. Ruth died two years later at the age of 84.

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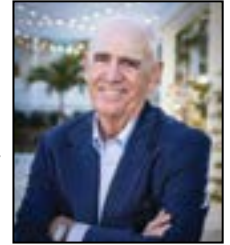
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**SAVING FOR RETIREMENT? PLANNING TO RETIRE? ENJOYING RETIREMENT?**

**The Rules Have Changed – Secure 2.0**

by Ray Ferrara, ProVise Management Group



In late December, Congress passed the \$1.65 trillion-dollar Omnibus Bill (4,155 pages) and within it SECURE 2.0 (350 pages) which made over ninety changes to retirement planning. Regardless of where you are in life, this bill affects how you save for and spend in retirement. Here are only three critical changes.

**Required Minimum Distributions (RMDs)**

SECURE 1.0 increased the RMD to age 72 and SECURE 2.0 changes it to age 73 in 2023 and to age 75 in 2033. This allows the retiree to delay taking money if they don't need it and thus, the money has more time to accumulate on a tax deferred basis. This delay could actually increase your taxes and Medicare premiums. It may make sense to take money out before you are forced to do so and perhaps even convert it to a Roth IRA.

**Catch-Up Contributions**

The catch-up amount in 2023 is \$7,500 and the regular amount is \$22,500 for a total of \$30,000. Beginning in 2025, those ages 60, 61, 62 and 63 may put in the greater of \$10,000 or 1.5 times the current catch-up contribution amount, whichever is greater. There is a "catch" to the "catch-up", however. If the participant makes over \$145,000, then the catch-up must go into a Roth 401k – non-deductible but tax-free growth. Unfortunately, the \$1,000 catch-up contribution for an Individual Retirement Account (IRA) has not changed since 2006. Beginning in 2024 it will be indexed for inflation.

**Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD)**

For those that have reached age 70 1/2, they have had the option to put up to \$100,000 into a Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD). By giving directly from the IRA to a qualified charity, the IRA owner does not declare this distribution as income, nor do they get a deduction. In 2024, the QCD amount will be increased for inflation. By using the IRA for charitable purposes rather than taking it as cash, it will keep one's income lower. This will result in keeping the Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) lower and may not cause the taxpayer to pay a higher premium for Medicare.

For a more complete report on SECURE 2.0 simply contact us at [info@provisemgmt.com](mailto:info@provisemgmt.com) and request a copy. If you want to discuss this, we always provide a complimentary meeting in our Clearwater office, or by Zoom.

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## INDIAN ROCKS BEACH SWIMMER PAT MARZULLI GOES THE DISTANCE

By Diane Daniel

If you see an orange buoy bobbing behind a swimmer touring the coves and canals off the Intracoastal Waterway, there's a good chance you're spotting Indian Rocks Beach resident Pat Marzulli, 74.

Growing up in Largo, Marzulli was always around water. He learned to swim at the Tides Bath Club on North Redington Beach and swam with friends in the Gulf or at the former Pier Pavilion Pool at Clearwater Beach. At Largo High School (class of '66), he swam the breaststroke on a team that always got pummeled by Clearwater.

It wasn't until he was in his mid-30s that Marzulli started swimming again, after being invited to join a master's team at the Clearwater YMCA. About five years later, he was asked to be on a relay team in the annual Swim Around Key West, a 12.5 mile in the Florida Keys. After that first openwater competition, the bug hit him hard.

"In general, swimming gives me a big dose of dopamine that I don't get from other exercise," said Marzulli, who swims freestyle to compete. "I enjoy pool swims, but with the open water, there's a freedom to it. Every day is different."

He often swims with friends in pools, the Gulf or from his 12th Avenue dock. Despite what some people think, the Intracoastal is perfectly safe to swim in, and no dirtier than the Gulf," he says.

After participating in the Key West relay, Marzulli went on to compete in dozens of swims. Many have been in Florida, including most of the Tampa Bay Frogman Swims across Tampa Bay, as well as swims around Lido Key and Fort DeSoto.

Along the way, he's racked up records and medals – a slew of them hang on a bust in his home office. (Marzulli is a commercial real estate broker specializing in industrial properties.) His top events have included the 28-mile Manhattan Island Marathon Swim in 2015, where he logged the second-fastest time for all swimmers older than 65, and, in 2018, two major swims in Arizona, the tougher being 17 miles on Lake Apache, where he remains the oldest person to have competed, at age 69.

Those helped prepare him for his pinnacle event – the Catalina Channel in California. For that he logged 21 miles in 15:29:11 and holds the record as the oldest swimmer to complete it, two months shy of his 70th birthday. "That was my most difficult and meaningful race," he said. "It was a tug of war between wind from one direction and current from the other."

Camaraderie is an important part of the sport for Marzulli, who met his wife, Martine, through a fellow swimmer in 2002. During the COVID pandemic, when pools were closed, a group of swimmers faithfully gathered at Marzulli's house to launch off his dock. He supplied refreshments and an invitation to use the heated outdoor shower.

"There is one thing long-distance swimmers have in common with the rest of us, he said. "The hardest part of the swim is getting in the water."

Diane Daniel, founder of [VacationDonations.org](http://VacationDonations.org), was inspired to take her first dip in the Intracoastal after talking to Marzulli.





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### KIDS TAG ART

Through Kids Tag Art Pinellas, Pinellas County 5th - grade students design their own unique vanity tags (front license plates) during art class. These metal tags can be purchased and displayed on the front of vehicles in Florida and many other states.



Kids Tag Art Pinellas is a community program made possible by partnerships between the Pinellas County Tax Collector's Office, Pinellas County Schools, and generous community sponsors. This year, there were a total of 2259 submissions and 156 Award of Excellence winners. Three Excellence winners were at Anona Elementary - Christina Steedman - Award of Excellence winner, Daniel Mihalinec - Award of Excellence winner & Sponsor Choice winner and Evelyn Womack - Award of Excellence winner.

100 percent of proceeds from tag sales and community donations go to participating schools to purchase art supplies and fund art education. Since its 2015 inception, Kids Tag Art Pinellas has raised more than \$250,000 for art education in Pinellas County elementary schools.

Tags are \$16. To purchase a specific child's tag, visit [kidstagartpinellas.org](http://kidstagartpinellas.org) and sort by school and child's name.

### RECLAIMED WATER RESTRICTIONS

Pinellas County's seasonal reclaimed water restrictions begin on Saturday, April 1, and run through Friday, June 30. Due to supply fluctuations between the north and south county systems, the watering schedules for reclaimed water users are different for customers in each service area. To encourage responsible use of reclaimed water, the following watering schedules will be enforced.

#### North County Reclaimed Water Schedule

Starting April 1, north county reclaimed water customers may irrigate only two days per week based on property address, according to this schedule:

- Addresses ending in an even number may water on Tuesday and/or Saturday.
- Addresses ending in an odd number may water on Wednesday and/or Sunday.
- Parcels with mixed or no address, such as common areas associated with a residential subdivision, may water on Wednesday and/or Sunday.
- Watering is prohibited between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. on all authorized days.

Because irrigation is prohibited on Mondays, Thursdays and Fridays, the north county reclaimed water system will be shut down on these days, as needed to allow the system to build supply. The system will also be shut down from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. on all days of operation for supply recovery.

Customers should monitor the reclaimed water restrictions website for up-to-date information on shutdowns and schedule changes at [pinellas.gov/watering-schedule-and-rules](http://pinellas.gov/watering-schedule-and-rules).

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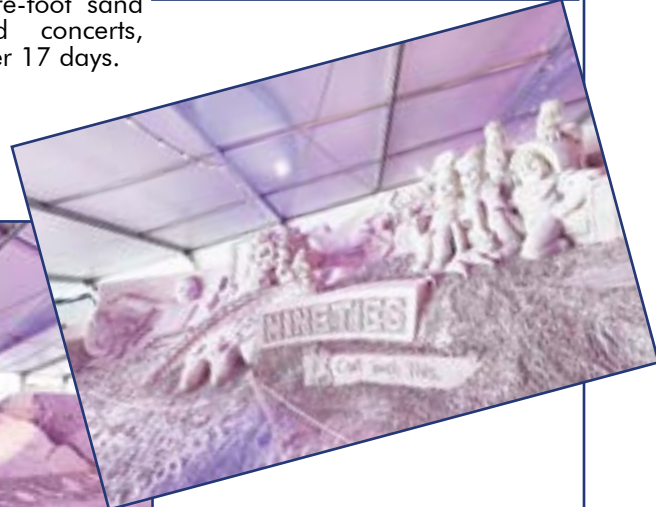
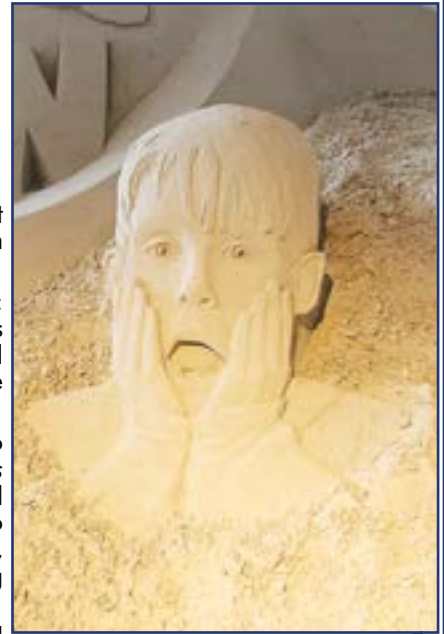
# SUGAR SAND FESTIVAL 2023

1000 tons of Clearwater sand were brought to life during the Sugar Sand Festival's ninth annual event.

The theme of this year's display was "Decades: A Blast from the Past!" Fourteen world-class artists collaborated to create architectural masterpieces that highlighted pop culture memories spanning five decades.

'50s highlights included Sinatra and Mr. Potato Head while the '60s featured *The Flintstones* and the Summer of Love. The '70s showcased the TV show "Happy Days" and the iconic Studio 54. The '80s display included *Indiana Jones*, *Beetlejuice* and Run DMC, with '90s featuring *The Simpsons*, *Mrs. Doubtfire* and Pearl Jam.

In addition to the 21,000 square-foot sand showcase, the event included concerts, performers, and entertainment over 17 days.



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## Bar & Restaurant News



**COCO'S OPENING IN INDIAN ROCKS** Clearwater Beach is home to two Coco Crush Bar and Grills, now a third location is opening, this time in Indian Rocks Beach. The owners have been working on this project for about three years. The Pandemic and subsequent supply chain problems greatly impacted their timeline. Finally, they are adding the finishing touches.

Co-owner Glenn Sutch hopes the new location will be open very soon. "It will be different than it was before, I can assure you."

Find them at 2405 Gulf Blvd, in Indian Rocks Beach and visit [CocosCrushBar.com](http://CocosCrushBar.com) for updates,.

**E&E AND GUPPY'S GIVES BACK** E&E Stakeout Grill, Guppy's on the Beach, and Mystic Fish partnered and gave a percentage of their sales for a week to help the victims of Hurricane Ian in Florida. The total raised and donated was \$25,000. In addition, diners were made aware of the promotion upon entering the restaurant and as they left, were encouraged to make additional donations directly to Volunteer Florida.

All the money collected was donated to Volunteer Florida's Hurricane Ian Fund. This fund was set up through the state, and all donated money stays in Florida to help our residents. You can learn more at [www.volunteerflorida.org](http://www.volunteerflorida.org).

"When we opened E&E over 35 years ago, we were delayed due to Hurricane Elena, so we understand how disruptive these storms can be." said Founder & Owner Eugen Fuhrmann. "I am proud when we can come together at times like this to help others."

Since 1985, 3 Best Chefs, based in Indian Rocks Beach, has owned and operated three complementary restaurant concepts: E&E Stakeout Grill, Guppy's on the Beach, and Mystic Fish — each with its own personality and flair. For more information, visit [www.3BestChefs.com](http://www.3BestChefs.com).



**INDIAN ROCKS CAFE EXPANDS** The popular beachside bistro took over the space formerly occupied by Surfside Produce to create the Indian Rocks Cafe Deli and Market at 1401 Gulf Blvd. The cafe continues to serve fresh breakfast favorites such as smoothies, breakfast burritos, and pastries with lunch offerings including soup and sandwiches. The deli and market carry Boar's Head cold cuts, fresh produce, and groceries. They are open seven days a week from 8am-6pm with cafe service available from 8am-2pm.



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# Bar & Restaurant News



### THE ORIGINAL CRABBY BILL'S CELEBRATES 40 YEARS

The Loder 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.



### CINCO DE MAYO AT VIP MEXICAN AMERICAN

The VIP IRB is throwing their third annual Cinco de Mayo party on Friday, May 5th from 11am-10pm, with live music from noon-9pm.

They will have their full menu available, plus food and drink specials including tequila, margaritas and cervezas. The back parking lot will be closed to accommodate a tent for live bands. Sam Hastings will play noon-2:30pm, The Higher Standards from 3pm-5:30pm and The Dub Collectors 6pm-9pm. The event will also feature a dunk tank, promo girls, and raffle prizes. VIP Mexican American Cuisine is located at 213 Gulf Blvd. For more information visit [VipLounge-Fla.com](http://VipLounge-Fla.com).

### SLYCE PIZZA BAR HIRING AT ALL LOCATIONS

Slyce is looking for team members to fill positions at their Indian Rocks Beach, Madeira Beach and St. Pete Beach locations, as well as the soon-to-open Wyne Bar. Server, bartender, back of the house and management positions are available. Applicants are encouraged to apply in person at any of the three locations.

### MEET THE NEW PRINCIPAL

Denise Ballard was promoted to principal of Anona Elementary School on March 1st. She has served as assistant principal at Anona since 2021 and took over the lead role at the school after previous principal Ann Welsh was promoted. Welsh became the assistant superintendent of Pinellas County Schools Area Two, comprised of twenty-eight schools and exceptional centers including Anona.

Born in Amarillo, Texas into a military family, Mrs. Ballard lived in several places as a child. Upon her father's retirement from the service in 1972, the family settled in Seminole, Florida where she was raised. She graduated from the University of Maryland with a business degree and married an Air Force Airman.

When her husband returned from active duty in 1994, they moved to South Carolina, where Mrs. Ballard had her first career in human resources and safety for a road construction company. After 9/11, her husband was returned to active duty and Mrs. Ballard went back to school for teaching. She graduated in 2003 from the University of South Carolina and began her teaching career. "It was a minor transition," said Ballard. "I simply went from training adults to training children."

When her husband retired, he was given the opportunity to continue working for the Air Force as a civilian and was given his choice of base assignment. The couple chose MacDill, and they returned to Florida in January 2004 with their two daughters. Mrs. Ballard earned her master's in education leadership from St. Leo University and became the assistant principal at Gulf Trace Elementary in Holiday. She transferred to Anona in November 2021.

For Mrs. Ballard, the most rewarding part of her profession is being able to watch a child "get it." "It's watching that light come on," she said. "You can see on their face that they've figured it out." The transition from teaching to a leadership role has provided additional rewards for Mrs. Ballard. "When I went into teaching, I was focused on my little group of kids," said Ballard. "When you go to leadership, you realize the impact that you truly can have."

As an educator, Mrs. Ballard recognizes the diverse needs of the students at her school, and "We meet them at the level they are at and help them grow from there," she said. "We don't just say 'We're going to teach, and good luck if you catch it.' Every teacher at this school is passionate about that piece. They can tell you about every student, where they are and what they're working on. That's what I love the most about Anona."



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## CELEBRATE NATIONAL BIKE WEEK 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 in 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.

Be alert – 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 – remember, a bicycle counts as a vehicle when on the road. 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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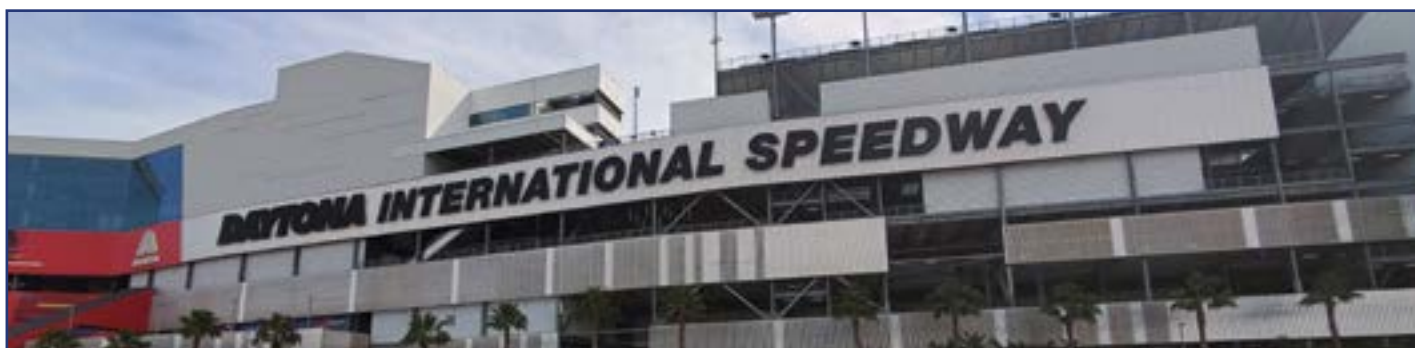
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## THINGS TO DO NEARBY: TOUR DAYTONA INTERNATIONAL SPEEDWAY

By Bob & Becky Griffin

You don't need to live in Florida, or even be interested in racing, to know about the Daytona International Speedway. But whether you follow NASCAR or not, a visit to the Speedway when there is no race is a fun and informative day trip.

The Speedway is only 160 miles from the Pinellas beaches - a little over three hours. When we went, we were dragging a camper, so it was closer to four hours. If you are camping, there are many nearby camping spots including the Speedway mid-field.

Daytona is the birthplace of NASCAR. The first races were held nearby on the public beach and were straight line speed races. In the mid-1930s, it evolved into a circular track and a different type of car - street cars. They raced down the beach, turned and circled back on A1A, then back on the beach for another lap.

Bill France, Sr. was involved in the early days of beach racing and raced in the first one in 1936. After that, he helped run the races. In 1947, he hosted a meeting of car owners, drivers, and mechanics at the Streamline Hotel on Daytona Beach, which led to the formation of NASCAR on February 21, 1948.

France knew NASCAR needed a permanent track that could hold large crowds. He leased 450 acres from the City of Daytona and in 1953 built a two and a half mile "super speedway," which he named the "Daytona International Speedway."

France designed the track to have "banked turns" so cars could go faster. The bank in front of the stands (and finish line) is 18 degrees. The three other banks on the course are 31 degrees. This allows cars to go up to 200 miles per hour.

The first Daytona 500 was held in 1959 and the winner was Lee Petty, Richard Petty's father (Richard has won the most Daytona 500 races - four). It took a few days to determine Lee Petty was the winner though. Race officials failed to hire enough photographers and the race was a photo finish. When

they realized they could not determine the winner, they asked fans if anyone had a photograph of the finish, and someone did.

You may have seen the Daytona International Speedway sign before. It is across the front of the Speedway and is said to be the second most photographed sign in the United States. The famous "Hollywood" sign near Los Angeles, claims the top spot.

If you are interested in seeing the Speedway but not a race, we advise you not go on race day. Race days have no tours, and are a whole other kind of event. Even a week or two before a race changes the access your tour may have because they are busy setting up.

The tour is two parts. The first is a narrated tram that includes a ride around the two and a half mile track. While a race car can do a lap in less than one-minute, the tram takes about twenty minutes.



out, sign the checkered line, walk around the track, and take pictures.

The special night lighting allows them to race at night. Each lights cost \$250 per hour to illuminate.

Your final tram stop is in the stands above the finish line where you can see the infield, concessions, and pit row. A 2016, \$400 million upgrade included replacing the seating with 101,000 comfortable "theater-like chairs." Fun fact - the seats are different random

colors. When seen on television it makes the stands look full, even when they aren't.

The tram ride is followed by a self guided "Hall of Fame of Racing" museum tour. It is a 20,000 square foot display of race car winners, photos, boats, motorcycles, equipment, and historical facts. The last car to win, is always on display.

Today, there are larger venues than Daytona, the Texas Motor Speedway seats 181,600, but the Daytona 500, held in February, is still the "Super Bowl of Racing" and the first race of the season. The race's television audience rivals that of the NFL's Super Bowl.



Hall of Fame of Racing museum

Daytona 500 tickets sell out every year and range from \$200 to over \$1800 depending on where you sit and other amenities. Unlike other events, the higher the seat, the more expensive it is. The third level, upper right corner is the most expensive seat in the house.

The 60-minute continuous tours begin at 9:30 am daily until 3pm. The tram ride lasts about an hour, you can spend as long as you wish in the museum. Tickets are \$25 for Adults, \$20 for kids aged 5 to 12, and free under 4. Register online to pick your time or at the door for the next available shuttle.

For more information, visit [DaytonaInternationalSpeedway.com](http://DaytonaInternationalSpeedway.com).





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# Business Briefs



**RADIANCE EXPANDS** 17 years ago, Stephanie Schlageter and Radiance Medspa rose from the ashes of a failed franchise organization. Through perseverance, hard work, and most of all love for her craft, Schlageter, established and grew a local business that has served its community through med spa services, altruistic charitable acts, and through the mentorship and support of other women. Now, on the precipice of another successful year, Schlageter and her team are excited to announce an expansion! Radiance Medspa will soon open a second location in Louisville, CO! Opening in Fall of 2023, the Radiance Medspa Colorado location will offer the same Botox, Filler, and laser treatments that you're familiar with from their Florida location, with a bit of Colorado flair! Stay tuned for more updates in their next exciting chapter.

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Old Florida Cigar and Bait celebrated 14 years in business on Indian Rocks Beach. Owner Tim Chase opened the unique shop in March of 2010. Along with live and frozen bait and a full line of fishing tackle, the store offers premium hand-rolled cigars for purchase on premises or for delivery by mail. Tim points to his co-workers as one of the shop's best assets. Will and Vinny have been fishing the waters around Indian Rocks for most of their lives and can answer any question area anglers might have. Stop by and see them at 1401 Gulf Blvd. The shop is open from 6am-7pm seven days a week, 365 days a year.



**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.

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**INTRODUCING THE DUNEDIN NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS MAGAZINE** We are excited to announce the addition of Dunedin to the Beach Neighborhood News Magazine family. The publication will be in the same format as the Indian Rocks Beach, Belleair Area, and Clearwater Beach editions.

Our family has published more than 350 issues over 15 years. For information on advertising in Dunedin or any of our markets, contact Lora at [Lora@MagriffProductions.com](mailto:Lora@MagriffProductions.com).

**THE OFFSHORE REPORT**

by Captain T.J. Shea



Seeing RED- that is what we hope to be doing for the next few months, along with a nice sprinkle of pink and maybe even some hues of black or silver.

May and June traditionally give loads of beautiful days on the Gulf of Mexico to run far and enjoy great top-water action. Red grouper will be legal to harvest both months and should be fired up by the perfect water

temperature. For me, the best and often overlooked bonus when fishing for red grouper is the sought-after bycatch. Lane, vermilion and mangrove snapper, triggerfish, porgy and margate all like the same limestone bottom. So, no matter what you're pulling in, good live bottom will make for an exciting day of fishing that should lead to a tasty fresh-catch dinner.

Red snapper season opens June 1st for the charter-for-hire sector while recreational anglers have to wait until June 17th. Fishing for red snapper is often very different than targeting the darker shade of red. This species of snapper takes over a spot like a swarm of bees. They swim freely in the water column, making it a challenge to get baits past them and to the bottom. Rather than weed through a thousand red snapper to catch the grouper resting below, we're happy to catch our legal snapper limit before heading

back into shallower waters.

Flatlines from the stern or side are a must. This time of year, you can count on them to sing a few times per trip as blackfin tuna and kingfish migrate through the area. Though you will have to run a little farther than in the winter or fall, this time of year is always great for bending rods and providing you with everything you need for the freshest sashimi around.



Our scuba divers will find warm and inviting water waiting for them. We will see bottom temperatures rise into the 80s and can expect to find "Clear-water" until just after the summer rains start sometime in June. For our spearfishing divers looking to put hogfish, red grouper and snapper on the dinner table, the most difficult part will be working around the massive amberjack and gag grouper that won't be legal to bring home until August and September. So, no matter how you choose to spend your time underwater, you don't want to miss out on these stellar conditions- get out there, dive as often as you can and enjoy all the Gulf of Mexico has to offer.

2 Shea Fishing and Diving Center is a full-service charter and dive shop. Visit online at [2SheaCharters.com](http://2SheaCharters.com) or come by the shop at 198 Seminole ST, Clearwater.

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## CYBERSECURITY: PROTECT YOUR CLOUD SERVICES

By Dena Perkins, Threat Angler

In a previous cybersecurity article, we discussed needing more than antivirus for cyber threat protection. But, that recommendation was targeted at protecting just your computer. In addition to your computer, we also suggest protecting your cloud services such as email, calendar, and file storage. The most common cyber threat vector is email and while there are many benefits of cloud services, moving our information to the cloud makes it more accessible to hackers.

The cloud refers to technology services located in data centers all over the world and accessible via a web browser or other web enabled application. This allows individuals to access the services on multiple devices from any location. Because of this, only protecting your physical computer is not enough.

Reputable service providers, such as Gmail, Dropbox, and Yahoo provide some degree of cybersecurity, however, it will not be enough if you are working with business or sensitive personal data. In those cases, enterprise-grade services, such as Google Workspace or Microsoft 365, provide enhanced built-in protection.

As the Federal Communications Commission states, "Theft of digital information has become the most commonly reported fraud, surpassing physical theft." This rise in theft of digital information has made it necessary for individuals to implement protective measures.

There are many companies and services, including Threat Angler, that provide cyber threat monitoring within Google or Microsoft business accounts. Protecting your computer is important, just as it is important to protect all of your cloud services. This additional layer of monitoring and protection ensures your data and information are secure.

It is impossible to stay ahead of every cyber threat as they are ever changing and evolving. However, having the right protection in place and ongoing monitoring of your technology usage will give you peace of mind as well as enable you to react quickly to protect your personal and your business information.

Threat Angler is available and willing to answer questions or provide direction on how to manage and monitor your cloud services, or discuss any other cybersecurity needs you may have. Reach out to us today at [www.threatangler.com/contact](http://www.threatangler.com/contact).





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# Community News

## ROTARY CLUB OF INDIAN ROCKS BEACH

Submitted by Claire English

It was a busy start to our 25th year as a Rotary club. We had a successful Rotary Runs the Beach 5K/one mile event with more than three hundred participants. Our annual pancake breakfast brought the community together for the best pancake breakfast in IRB while raising funds for vocational service education. Thanks to all that participated, we look forward to having you join us next year for our annual events.

In April, the Rotary club of Indian Rocks Beach assisted those in need by coordinating Easter meals and providing them to the Pinellas County Sheriff's Community Policing Deputies who identify those in need and deliver to them.



The Rotary Club of Indian Rocks Beach Flag for Service event honors those who are serving or have served our nation and communities. From Memorial Day 2023 until Flag Day, hundreds of U.S. Flags will be displayed at Chic-A-Si Park, Indian Rocks Beach, to show our appreciation for those who have sacrificed and dedicated themselves to help others. Please become a part of this year's event by honoring your family or friends. Sponsor a flag and create a custom banner for those you wish to honor for only \$35.00 plus shipping. Each banner will display the name, branch, rank, place of service and service time of your particular hero. After our Flag Day celebration, you will be able to collect your banner as well as one of the display flags. There is no limit on the number of banners you can sponsor, but the deadline for ordering is May 10. Visit the club website at indianrocksrotary.org and click on the 2023 Flags for Service tab for more details of the project and to access the 'order form'. You must create a separate order for each person you wish to honor. The portions of the proceeds from this event will support the Project Hero's organization and to fund the Richard Rick Walker Scholarship Fund. If you have questions, please contact Paul J. Burns at 727-595-4540 or send an email to RotaryClubofIRB@gmail.com.

Interested in learning about Rotary or getting involved with the Rotary Club of Indian Rocks Beach? Join us at our breakfast meeting Wednesdays at 7:15am at Crabby Bills in Indian Rocks Beach. Check out our website at indianrocksrotary.org or contact Club President David Kline at Kline22@tampabay.rr.com or call 727-418-1673.

# Community News

## BEACH ART CENTER

Submitted by Patricia Thomas

The Beach Art Center's "Creative Kids Summer Camp" Program registration is open now for 2023! Join us for another summer of fun and creativity with 14 camps to choose from in June and July. Our camps are appropriate for 1st through 6th graders.

Don't wait to register - some camps are already full! See our website for details at [BeachArtCenter.org/kids-camp](http://BeachArtCenter.org/kids-camp)

The month of May will be very active at the Beach Art Center as we continue with our weekly classes and are offering weekend sessions in drawing, paint pouring, pet portraits – even how to "Paint like Bob Ross"!

June will see most of our weekly classes go on hiatus as the youngsters take over the Beach Art Center for Creative Kids Camp. We will be offering some fun classes on weekends however! Check out our full calendar at [BeachArtCenter.org](http://BeachArtCenter.org).

The Beach Art Center is a 501c3 not for profit organization. Our annual memberships help to cover the expenses of the art center. However, being a member is not required to participate in our events, we welcome the entire community. If you have any questions about the Beach Art Center or our classes check out our website [beachartcenter.org](http://beachartcenter.org) or stop in and visit us. We are open Monday – Friday from 9-4, located across from Kolb Park at 1515 Bay Palm Blvd.



## CLEARWATER JAZZ HOLIDAY

Submitted by Steve Weinberger

In addition to innovative music appreciation and instructional programs, online education resources, performance opportunities, and learning experiences, special funding is also a component of CJH Education & Outreach. The CJH Foundation provides scholarships to students with aspiring music, music education, and event production careers; camp scholarships and support to youth jazz programs.

The CJH Memorial Scholarship Fund provides special funding to students in honor of individuals who have passed that were special to the Clearwater Jazz Holiday community of support. Each year CJH provides these scholarships to graduating High School students who demonstrate a special background and interest in music or music education. Among the scholarships awarded Monday night during a Ruth Eckerd Hall Youth Jazz Program Recital, was the Larry Gerwig Memorial Scholarship, a 4-Year \$10,000 scholarship, awarded to Brendan Nelson, a senior at Gibbs High School.

Four years ago, we surprised Brendan, then an incredibly talented middle school trombone player, with a trombone of his own in front of thousands at Clearwater Jazz Holiday. It was the first instrument he had owned.

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# Community News

## GREENTOWN KIDS

Submitted by Allie DeVore

GreenTown Kids hosted our Annual Earth Day Great American Cleanup on Earth Day last month. Thanks to the one hundred volunteers of all ages who came out to pick up trash, catch a sunset and enjoy Slyce pizza! Together we picked up about one hundred pounds of trash, keeping our beach and ocean clean and healthy! Thanks to our community sponsors: Plumlee, Zen Massage & Yoga, Palm Legal, Slyce, Country Day School, Midori Eco Salon & Spa, RAD Bike & Surf Shop, Threat Angler Cybersecurity, Groupers on the Gulf, and Church of the Isles; and our project partners, Keep Pinellas Beautiful, and the City of Indian Rocks Beach.

Mark your calendars for our upcoming community events:

- May 6th - Garden Party & Kona Ice truck 1-2pm, IRB Nature Preserve & Garden
- July 4th-9th - Red White & Blue Beach Cleanup, DIY - all day, any IRB access

Out & about in IRB? Visit the Keegan Clair Docks to see our Mini Reef Project coming to life. Also, stop by the IRB Community Garden in the Nature Preserve to see what's growing! We planted beautiful new native plants around the garden for pollinators, and we welcome our newest community gardeners - growing tons of veggies, herbs, fruit, and flowers.



If you would like your own garden box email us at [GreentownKids@gmail.com](mailto:GreentownKids@gmail.com). GreenTown Kids is a 501c3 nonprofit serving Indian Rocks Beach and the surrounding schools. Visit [GreentownKids.org](http://GreentownKids.org) to get monthly newsletters, become a member, and donate.

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# INDIAN ROCKS BEACH COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION INFORMATION

**A2K / ACTION 2000**

Daryl Frahn (727) 512-7292  
www.IRBAction2000.com

**BEACH ART CENTER**

1515 Palm BL  
Andrea Harms (727) 596-4331  
Andrea@BeachArtCenter.org  
www.BeachArtCenter.org

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www.CalvaryIRB.org

**BEACH WELCOME CENTER**

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Corner of Walsingham and Gulf Blvd  
BeachWelcomeCenter.com  
contact@BeachWelcomeCenter.com

**FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY**

Jean Scott (727) 517-1895  
www.PinellasCounty.org

**GREEN TOWN KIDS**

Local Environmental Youth Group  
Allie DeVore (727) 480-3907  
www.GreenTownKids.org  
GreentownKids@gmail.com

**HOMEOWNER'S ASSOCIATION**

Marybeth Dunn, Pres. (727) 272-5251  
www.IRBHOME.com  
IRBHomeOwners@gmail.com

**HISTORICAL SOCIETY & MUSEUM**

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Carol McGlaughlin, (727) 595-9741  
www.IRBMuseum.com

**PUBLIC LIBRARY**

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**ROTARY CLUB OF INDIAN ROCKS**

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# FIRST RESPONDERS RECOGNIZED

FF Wasilewski, Senator Hooper, FF Bueller, Madeira Beach Chief Belk, PSFRD Chief Davidson, LT Rasich, FF Webber

Earlier this year, Lieutenant EMT Steve Raisch and Firefighter Paramedic John Webber from Pinellas Suncoast Fire Rescue District (PSFRD), Lieutenant Paramedic Tom McLave and Firefighter Paramedics Dominic Bueller and Mike Wasilewski of Madeira Beach Fire Rescue were recognized as the Firefighter Team of the Year by the John Morroni Legacy Foundation.

They responded jointly to a call for a medical emergency in the Town of Redington Shores. During a board meeting, former Commissioner Jeff Neal collapsed. Chief Rick Swann and Major Glen Smith, who were present at the meeting, promptly began CPR and applied an automated external defibrillator.

The firefighters from PSFRD and Madeira Beach arrived within minutes and began advanced cardiac life support. After stabilizing Commissioner Neal, they transported him to Largo Medical Center where he made a full recovery.



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# Community News

## ACTION 2000

Submitted by Daryl Frahn

A2K - Making a Difference! A2K volunteers have been busy keeping our signature projects and parks looking beautiful. We had a great turnout of supporters for our March Service Saturday at 12th Avenue Park. And, on April 22nd, we once again took on the County Park at 17th/ Gulf - one of A2K's largest ongoing maintenance projects. Check out the photos at Facebook.com/irbaction2000.

A2K is excited to announce longtime member Shawn Stover to the role of president. Shawn is no stranger to leadership roles. As an engineer and senior project manager, he has extensive experience in leadership, collaboration, building relationships and making things happen! Joining the executive committee is Paul Zagami and Diane Agar serving as vice presidents while Debbie Stover will be our new treasurer. Nan Jensen will continue in her role as secretary. We are thrilled to welcome this team to lead A2K into the next chapter.



President Scott Stover, Treasurer Debbie Stover, Secretary Nan Jensen, Vice President Diane Agar, Vice President Paul Zagami

The A2K Preservation Committee is finalizing the nominees for the 2023 Preservation Awards. Presented annually, the awards honor local business and residential properties that demonstrate the spirit of maintaining and preserving properties reminiscent of the small-town atmosphere of Indian Rocks Beach. The awards are in collaboration with A2K and the Plein Aire Cottage Artists.

Planning for our signature charity event, Oktoberfest on the Beach, is already in the works. Save the date – October 14, 2023! Interested in being a sponsor, vendor, or volunteer at this fun event? Check out the details at [www.irbaction2000.com/oktoberfest](http://www.irbaction2000.com/oktoberfest).

IRB Action 2000 is a nonprofit community organization dedicated to the preservation and beautification of our unique small town. For more information about A2K and Oktoberfest, please visit our website [irbaction2000.com](http://irbaction2000.com), Facebook.com/action2000IRB or e-mail us at [info@irbaction2000.com](mailto:info@irbaction2000.com).

Want to be a part of it? We welcome you to join us at our monthly meetings on the second Monday of the month, at 6:30 pm at IRB City Hall Auditorium.



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# Community News



### HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION

Submitted by Marybeth Dunn

We donated \$500 to Seminole Middle School PTSA \$500 to Seminole Middle Color Guard and \$1000 to Seminole High School Marching Band Boosters. Thanks to the patrons who come to our events, our sponsors and volunteers we are able to raise funds to support our community.

Over 200 children enjoyed the Easter Egg Hunt sponsored by IRB Home, Century 21 Beggins, and the City of IRB. There were games, face painting, and of course a visit by the Bunny (played by Daman Yokely of Chicago Jaqx). Thanks to our volunteers for making this a huge success.

### BLUFFS BUSINESS ASSOCIATION

The Bluffs Business Association is hosting the BBA Block Party in the Bluffs that will feature bands, beer, food and BBA member businesses in a fun street party in front of City Hall in Belleair Bluffs Saturday, May 6 from 2-6pm. Tickets are \$5 in advance or \$10 the day of the event. Tickets are only available online at [www.BBAstrong.com](http://www.BBAstrong.com). Featured bands are Guilty Pleasure from 2-4pm and the Surfin' Raccoons from 4-6pm. Food vendors include Sekushi at The Plaza and the Belleair Market. Net proceeds will be donated to 50 Legs in 50 Days, Inc.

The Association organizes an after-hours mixer at a different member business the 2nd Thursday of the month from 5:30 to 6:30pm. 3 Daughters Brewing on Clearwater Beach host on Thursday, May 11. Larry Bell of Powered by Belltech in Largo will host On June 8. All businesses are invited to attend and enjoy making new business connections in a fun, casual atmosphere. Bring a door prize and give a quick commercial about your business. For membership information visit [BBAstrong.com](http://BBAstrong.com) or call Alanna Karaosmani of Valley Bank at 727-686-5807.

### 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 months at Belleair Country Club. There is always a guest speaker or other entertainment. Please contact Mary at 727-709-9906 with any questions.

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## 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 their invaders.



Rain keep and outdoor classroom

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](mailto:emily@flbgfoundation.org).

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# Community News

## TAMPA BAY WATCH

Our new Oyster Shell Recycling Program allows us to utilize discarded shells from restaurants as material in living shoreline projects, keeping shells out of local landfills. We are seeking the help of a few tenacious volunteers willing to collect shell donations from our 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 send and email to [rarndt@tampabaywatch.org](mailto: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 7:00am sharp with an award ceremony at The Island Grille in Tierra Verde on from 1:00 - 3:00pm.

Gold and Silver Teams receive a professional guide and Bronze Teams may provide their own vessel. Go to [tampabaywatch.org](http://tampabaywatch.org) to register for Tarpon Rodeo.

## PET PAL ANIMAL SHELTERS

The Annual Puppy Love Benefit is Pet Pal's largest fundraiser of the year. It is vital to the day-to-day operation of the facility, providing much needed funds for the care and recuperation of shelter animals. On Saturday, May 13 they will hold their 21st Annual Puppy Love at Kapok Special Events at 923 McMullen Booth Rd in Clearwater. Come together for an evening of silent and live auctions, a 50/50 raffle and the ever so PUP-ular Puppy Pimping!



## ART TOURS CLEARWATER

Journey inside Downtown Clearwater's murals with Augmented Reality. NEW self-guided augmented reality (AR) walking tour that takes you to four vibrant murals along a 0.7-mile route through downtown Clearwater. When you reach a mural, open the ARTours Clearwater app and point your device's camera at the artwork. Then watch as animations, graphics, videos, and audio make the mural come to life. Each mural contains several interactive visual experiences. Download the free ARTours Clearwater App: [downtownclearwater.com/artours](http://downtownclearwater.com/artours).



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# Community News

## INDIAN ROCKS BEACH SENIOR SOFTBALL

Congratulations to manager Curtis Mull and the Gold Team for winning the Indian Rocks Beach Senior Softball League 2023 Winter Season Championship.

Indian Rocks Beach Senior Softball is a fun, friendly and competitive league for men 55+ and women 45+ years old. The summer season begins early May, registration is available now at [IRBSSL.com](http://IRBSSL.com).

## FLORIDA BOTANICAL GARDENS

### Spring Wreath Workshop

Spend an afternoon creating a unique, one-of-a-kind wreath to place in your home just in time for the summer holidays. The event will be held Saturday, May 6, 2023, from 1-2:30 pm at the Florida Botanical Gardens located at 12211 Walsingham Road.

Registration is \$30 per person and includes all materials and instructions. Workshop consists of one (1) 18" faux grapevine wreath, and a wide variety of materials for decorating, in assorted color schemes. For more information or to register online visit [flbgfoundation.org/wreathworkshop](http://flbgfoundation.org/wreathworkshop).

### Third Saturdays at Pinewood

Celebrate at Pinewood (Florida Botanical Gardens, Creative Pinellas, Heritage Village) every 3rd Saturday of the month. Visit our website at [flbgfoundation.org/thirdsaturdays](http://flbgfoundation.org/thirdsaturdays) for more details on each location's events & activities.

## 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 from May 1st-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](http://ClearwaterYachtClub.org) or call 447-6000.



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