

NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

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Magazine

WALT DISNEY AND HIS FLORIDA VISION

By Bob Griffin, Local Historian

To millions of people worldwide, Florida is synonymous with Disney World. The first Florida Disney theme park - Walt Disney World, near Orlando - opened October 1st, 1971.

Walt Disney World was the vision of one man, Walter "Walt" Elias Disney. He is considered one of the most influential people in Florida's history. An animator, voice actor, film producer, and entrepreneur, he was born in Chicago in 1901 and moved to California in the early 1920s. He became involved in the film industry specializing in cartoons and with his older brother Roy, established the Disney Brothers Studios.

In 1928, Walt created and provided the voice of his animated character, Mickey Mouse who he planned to name "Mortimer." His wife thought the name was too pompous and suggested a cuter name like Mickey, and it stuck.

Disney was a ground-breaker in the film industry; he helped introduce full color films using Technicolor®, full length cartoons, synchronized sound, and advancements in movie cameras.

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Also in this Issue:



Raising Elk

Long time Indian Rocks Beach residents are living on the top of a mountain in North Carolina raising elk, growing Christmas trees, and operating a vineyard.

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All Dogs Go To Heaven

A local businesswoman turns her grief into an idea for a memorial to all lost pets.

- page 16



Hidden Gem in Indian Rocks

A bride's gift to her bridesmaids leads Indian Rocks resident to a new business venture.

- page 9

A Different Breed of Tourists

Along with turmoil, Hurricane Idalia brought one bright (pink) spot to Pinellas County.

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CREDITS



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

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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,

Lora & Pete Magnani 813-239-6862
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SEE YOU AGAIN IN JANUARY!



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CALENDAR OF HOLIDAYS & EVENTS

As always, this is subject to change.

NOVEMBER

Property Tax Bills Mailed 1
Indian Rocks Garage Sale 4-5
Taste Of IRB 4
Greentown Kids Coastal Cleanup 4
Art Harvest Show 5
Daylight Savings Time Ends 5
IRB Community Cleanup 6-7
Election Day 7
The Annika LPGA Championship 7-12
2023 Evening Mixer Guilty Sea 8
Bluff's Business Assn Monthly Mixer 9
City Hall Offices Closed 10
Beach Waves Grill Beach Bash 11
Veterans Day 11
Veterans Boat Parade 11
Peace Memorial Concert 12
Christmas Under The Oaks 12
City Commission Meeting 14
IRBHome Mingle VIP Mexican 16
Pickle Ball Tournament Belleair Rec 17
Suncoast Jazz Festival 17-19
Festival Of Trees 17-19
Public Schools Closed 20-24
Tampa Bay Turkey Trot 23
Thanksgiving 23
IRBHome Joy Drive Begins 24
Holiday Lights in the Gardens Begins 24
Black Friday 24
Hurricane Season Ends 30

DECEMBER

IRB Christmas Tree Lighting 1
Death by Chocolate Largo 1
Largo Christmas Tree Lighting 2
Honeymoon Island Bluegrass Festival 2
IRB Street Parade 3
Advent Begins 3
Very Merry Xmas Party Largo 5
IRBHome Joy Drive Ends 6
Hanukkah Begins 7
Pearl Harbor Remembrance 7
IRBHome Holiday Tour of Homes 9
St. Petersburg SantaCon 9
Pinellas Park Holiday Parade 9
Rotary Big Game Drawing at Slyce 10
Photos with Santa Largo 10
City Commission Meeting 12
Hanukkah Ends 15
IRBHome Wreaths Across America 16
IRB Lighted Boat Parade 16
Holiday Pops Ruth Eckerd Hall 17
Winter Solstice 21
Public Schools Winter Break Begins 22
Christmas Day 25
City Hall Closed 25-26
Kwanzaa Begins 26
Boxing Day 26
New Year's Eve 31
Holiday Lights in the Gardens Ends 31



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Happy Holidays

from **GoodCall Housecalls**

Peggy Cordle, MS, APRN-C Nurse Practitioner
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Did You Know



YARD SALES Yes, it is that time of year again - time for fall yard sales. Indian Rocks Beach, November 4-5
Belleair Bluffs, November 4
McGough Nature Park Community Sale, November 4, 9am - 1pm. Free admission to shop. Table spaces are fully reserved.
Belleair Beach, November 11.

DUNE RESTORATION The City of Indian Rocks Beach is assisting Pinellas County on an Emergency Beach Dune Restoration Project along two zones in Indian Rocks Beach. The two zones are 23rd Avenue to 28th Avenue and Whitehurst Avenue to Central Avenue. Work will begin the week of October 23. Access to the beach for construction activities will be the 1st Ave Beach Access and the 19th Ave Beach Access in Indian Rocks Beach. When the project begins, the areas under construction will be closed to the public. Extensive traffic delays along Gulf Boulevard can be expected. The project is expected to take approximately sixty days. When complete, the dunes will be five to eight feet high. Only property owners who have signed a temporary Pinellas County easement will receive sand.

CALL BEFORE YOU DIG In the state of Florida, an underground utility line is damaged 66 times each day. That's 24,000 times per year that digging damages buried power, gas, Internet or other utility lines across the state. This costs billions of dollars and results in service interruptions, fines, potential injuries or even worse.

Fencing and landscaping combined cause the most damage to underground utility lines. The majority of damage occurs directly from people not calling 811 before their digging projects.

Sunshine 811 is the statewide not-for-profit organization that helps ensure underground public utilities are appropriately identified and marked prior to digging. 811 can be accessed directly on your phone or by visiting Sunshine811.com and clicking on "Create a Ticket."

ENCHANT RETURNS Opening November 24 and running through December 31 at Tropicana Field, Enchant is an immersive experience weaving magic into its every corner, perfect for joyful seasonal celebrations. Tickets prices go up November 1st. Buy them at EnchantChristmas.com

HOW OLD IS YOUR SMOKE ALARM? The Fire Department wants to make sure your smoke alarm is current and functional. It should be replaced every 10 years, and smoke alarm batteries should be changed each time you change your clocks for Daylight Savings Times, which is coming up next month. To find out how old a smoke alarm is, look at the manufacturer's date on the back of the alarm. Smoke alarms provide early warning should a fire break out in your home or business.



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SUGAR SAND FESTIVAL THEME ANNOUNCED

The Pier 60 Sugar Sand Festival returns to bright and beautiful Clearwater Beach March 29th to April 14th. This year, the festival celebrates its 10-year anniversary and its biggest year yet with the theme, "Sands of Time." This year's theme conveys a sense of nostalgia, celebration and appreciation for the festival's past ten years, while looking forward to an even more exciting and inspiring future for the museum and the art of sand sculpting.



General admission to the sculpture exhibit will be \$14 per person and free for children 3 years old and younger. Discounted tickets for military personnel, police officers, firefighters, teachers and healthcare workers can be purchased for \$10 each on "Frontline Fridays," which are March 29th, April 5th, and April 12th. These discounted tickets will be available at the gate only with proper identification. All other tickets can be purchased online at SugarSandFestival.com, beginning in December.

New this year is "Timeless Tuesdays." Visitors aged 60 and older can enjoy a discounted ticket price of \$12 each on Tuesdays: April 2nd and April 9th. For more information visit SugarSandFestival.com.

COUNTY INCREASES MORTGAGE ASSISTANCE Buying a home is a dream that's become out of reach for many hardworking Pinellas residents, but a newly increased program for people with limited incomes is already helping fulfill that dream with up to \$75,000 for down payments and closing costs.

Pinellas County's Down Payment Assistance Program recently increased the assistance available to between \$50,000 and \$75,000 (depending on income). Those with incomes of \$73,080 or less for an individual may qualify for the expanded help, which comes in the form of a zero-interest, deferred loan.

The County assistance is available for homes in unincorporated Pinellas and most cities, except for Largo, Clearwater and St. Petersburg, which have their own programs.

Mortgage professionals can apply on behalf of homebuyers at: Pinellas.gov/DownPayment.

The increased loan assistance of up to \$75,000 is made possible through the State Housing Initiatives Partnership (SHIP) and will be available for a limited time.

CHRISTMAS UNDER THE OAKS This year's Christmas Under the Oaks holiday market & craft show is Sunday November 12th from 9-4pm. It will be held at the St. Petersburg College, Clearwater Campus at 2465 Drew St, Clearwater.

This will be their largest event yet with over 180 Exhibitors and eight food trucks. Admission and parking are free.

This event is hosted by GFWC North Pinellas Woman's Club with the net proceeds going back into our community in grants and scholarships.

OUR NEXT ISSUE IS JANUARY 1 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.

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WALT DISNEY AND HIS WORLD, CONTINUED

Walt Disney made many classic animated movies, including *Snow White* (1937), *Pinocchio* (1940), *Fantasia* (1940), *Dumbo* (1941), *Bambi* (1942), *Cinderella* (1950), *Sleeping Beauty* (1959), and *Mary Poppins* (1964). Walt won a record breaking 22 Academy Awards (and had 59 nominations), two Golden Globes and even an Emmy.

In the mid-1950s, Disney expanded into the television industry with *The Magical World of Disney* and *The Mickey Mouse Club*. At about the same time, he opened his very successful *Disneyland* on 160 acres built next to the Disney Studios in Burbank, California. The park's unveiling was a special televised event on ABC, July 17, 1955.

Disney was very hands on, designing the theme park and directly supervising the project. During the construction, Disney moved into a one-bedroom apartment on *Disneyland's* Main Street. When he was on site, Disney lit a lamp in the window for staff to know he was there. His apartment still exists, largely untouched, and the lamp is permanently lit in his honor.

Disney quickly realized the *Disneyland* property was too small and could never be expanded. He also realized the park's visitors came primarily from California. People east of the Mississippi were not traveling to *Disneyland*. He wanted a second park and Disney considered locations in St. Louis, Secaucus, Niagara Falls, Washington D.C., and three Florida locations: Ocala, Palm Beach County, and Orlando.

From the beginning, he liked Florida, best. His parents were married there in 1888 and he had vacationed there many times. He was also related to Hamilton Disston, who had helped develop much of Florida including the land where Disney World sits today.

Palm Beach was quickly ruled out because land was limited by the Atlantic Ocean and the likelihood of a hurricane. But Ocala and Orlando were definite contenders.

In 1963 in a rented plane, Walt Disney flew over the two possible Florida cities. He especially liked the road system near Orlando with I-4 and the Florida Turnpike close to his proposed site and the large airport. He knew the area had mild winters and the attraction could operate year-round.

Ocala had lots of open, cheap land and Interstate I-75, nearby. But in Disney's

mind, Orlando had it all and "Project Future" as it was first called was born. The company quietly began to acquire some 27,443 acres (*Disneyland* was only 160). The project was top-secret. Disney's name was kept out of all discussions to avoid a land rush; even their real estate agents didn't know who the real buyer was. Most of the land was vacant, and much of it was swamp; some was bought for as little as \$100 an acre.

With the Disney company's permission, Governor Haydon Burns confirmed the story on October 25, 1965. The Governor's announcement referred to the development as "the greatest attraction in the history of Florida," and it seems he did predict the future.

For Walt Disney, the project was a "labor of love" that would create a whole new world of entertainment. Now called the "Florida Project," he envisioned not so much a theme park, rather, "a new Utopian concept." He committed \$100 million "to get the show on the road."

In his concept, *EPCOT* was the centerpiece of *Walt Disney World*, not the *Magic Kingdom*. "It will be a community of tomorrow, that will never be completed," Walt Disney proudly claimed.

His *EPCOT* design called for a wheel shaped city, three miles in diameter on five thousand acres. In the center would be a convention center and 30-story hotel, surrounded by offices, shops, restaurants, theaters, high-rise apartments, green space - and modern family homes. There would be no need for cars - there would be the "People Mover," an electric rail system. A high-speed monorail would connect *EPCOT* to other parts of *Walt Disney World* and a new industrial park. The commercial district, its urban core, built on 50 acres, would be protected from the hot sun and rains by a massive dome. Disney believed by 1980, 20,000 people would live in *EPCOT* and it would be the "most visited place on earth."

Disney's theme park design included hotels and five times more parking than the California park. He envisioned a full-scale airport on the property.

Unfortunately, just 13 months after the Disney Company announced the project, Walt Disney died of smoking-related lung cancer on December 15, 1966. The scheduled groundbreaking was still a year away. Roy, Walt's older brother and Vice President of The Disney Company, stepped in to oversee the first phase of the massive project.

Construction began in 1967. The company built the entire infrastructure, including drainage canals and the roads to the Magic Kingdom, the theme park, two golf courses, as well as two hotels: The Contemporary Resort Hotel and the Polynesian Village Resort.

The Grand Opening was held on October 1, 1971, four years after the ground-breaking. Roy officially named the park "Walt Disney World" so everyone would remember his younger brother. Roy died three months later.

When it opened, an adult ticket was \$3.50. Teenagers were \$2.50 and children 3-12 were admitted for \$1. Children under 3 were free.

EPCOT the town of the future did not end up as Walt pictured it. Much of what he called "Progress City" was abandoned by the board of Directors soon after Walt's death. They did not want to be "running a city."

Today's *EPCOT* opened in 1982 as a second attraction. Their third Florida park was Disney's *MGM Studios*, opening in 1989. *Animal Kingdom* opened in 1998.

The cost of a single adult ticket today is \$109. Children under 3 are still admitted free. The park offers 2, 3, and 4-day ticket packages if you want to attend more than one park during your visit.

Walt Disney World is the most visited attraction in Florida. In 2022, approximately 17 million people visited the park - approximately 46,000 people per day! On peak days, attendance can exceed 150,000 people.

The company continues to expand and includes twelve Disney Parks, located at six different resorts around the world. In addition to parks and resorts, they operate multiple film and animation studios, theater and music production groups, publishing companies television networks - including ABC and ESPN, streaming services, games and interactive experiences, and. This year, the Disney Company is celebrating "100 Years of Wonder."

"Ten decades of creativity, innovation, and determination created *The Walt Disney Company* you know today—the most enduring and beloved name in entertainment," said Disney CEO Robert Iger. "It's an awesome responsibility to lead Disney as we begin our second century of telling stories and creating magic that will endure another 100 years."

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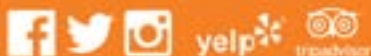
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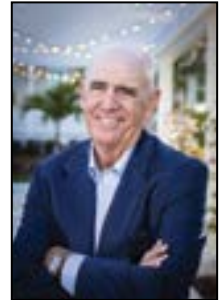
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TO DO IT WELL, YOU NEED THREE THINGS

by Ray Ferrara, ProVise Management Group

I hate cutting the lawn. I do not practice medicine. I would really like to learn a second language. In order to do something well, you need three things: TIME, INCLINATION, and KNOWLEDGE or "TIK".



My father gave me the knowledge to cut the lawn, but I have neither the time, nor the inclination to do it. When it comes to practicing medicine, I lack knowledge. I have the inclination to learn a second language, but I do not have the time. I always hire a professional.

Bet you feel the same way about many things where you lack the time, inclination and/or knowledge. When it comes to money about 20% of the population is a do-it-yourselfer. According to a Harris Poll, only about 33% of US households work with a financial advisor. That leaves 47% without. In which group are you?

Why do many avoid hiring a professional for financial planning? For some, it is a fear that they do not have enough money and perhaps are even embarrassed by how "little" they have. Whatever amount you have saved for your financial goals is all you have and that amount is just as important to you as it is to those that have "a lot."

Financial planning is much more than just investing. It is about reducing taxes, estate planning, budgeting, managing debt, asset protection, charitable giving, etc. Financial planning is about understanding your values and your values help define the choices you make.

Another reason people avoid hiring a professional financial planner is "cost," i.e., paying a fee. Is it a cost or an investment? That depends on the value of the advice. When we write a financial plan, we charge a fee. If the plan adds value, it is an investment. If you do not feel it provided value, simply return the plan and we refund the fee. Therefore, there is no "cost."

When it comes to investing money, most CFP® professionals charge an on-going fee of 1% annually, or less. According to the 2021 Fidelity Investor Insight Study, a financial advisor can add 1.5-4% to portfolio returns over the long-term, depending on the time period and how the returns are calculated. Is the fee a cost or an investment?

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The information herein is general and educational in nature and should not be considered legal or tax advice. Tax laws and regulations are complex and are subject to change. Investment Advisory Services may be offered through ProVise Management Group, LLC.

ABOUT TOWN: CHELSEA BOND'S JEWELRY IS A HIDDEN GEM IN IRB

By Diane Daniel, Local Author

From her home in Indian Rocks Beach, Chelsea Bond designs gorgeous, glittery gemstone jewelry that is sold around the world.

Growing up in Pennsylvania, Bond spent summers at the beach, but not the Jersey Shore, like most of her friends. Instead, her parents pooled their money every year for a trip to the Algarve, the southern coast of Portugal. Bond fell in love with the ocean and travel.

Fresh out of college, Bond was working at a digital ad agency when she and her husband, Eric, had a destination wedding in Mexico. Always creative with beads, she made full jewelry sets for her four bridesmaids. When the wedding photos were shared, everyone wanted to know where they could buy the jewelry. A side gig making custom wedding jewelry was born.

In 2014, she and Eric moved to the area from Dallas for his work. They looked at several spots, but only IRB offered what they wanted – a small-town feel near the water. Around the same time, Bond decided to do only wholesale sales and to find a more unique market. Focusing on her love of travel, she thought about hotels, which led her to target spas.

Bond designs bracelets, necklaces, earrings and more with semi-precious metals and gemstones, crystals and precious metals. She chooses the raw materials for their energetic properties. "The gemstone energy really connects with spas," said Bond, whose newly renovated house in the Harbor Drive area has the feel of a luxury spa. "It was a perfect fit."

Her current wholesale roster includes about 30 spas, resorts and boutiques in resort areas around the world. Her local retail accounts are at Opal Sands and Sandpearl resorts in

Clearwater. She also sells online at chelseabondjewelry.com.

Bond's favorite gemstone is druzey quartz, where quartz crystals that have crystallized on the surface of a quartz-based mineral sparkle like the sea under the sun. Natural healers use druzey quartz as a crystal for anxiety and stress, as it's said to invoke balance, harmony, inner peace and a strong spirit. Bond designs freeform and is self-taught, though she might turn to online demonstrations to master certain techniques. "I'm a very visual learner," she said. "I do everything by intuition." Her assistant, Leah Mello, follows Bond's step-by-step instructions to assemble the pieces at her studio in Seminole.

Bond also uses her platform to spread the word about EFT, or Emotional Freedom Technique, a method of tapping acupuncture points to reduce stress and improve performance. She's been a proponent of the practice for more than a decade.

As much as Bond loves traveling (she and her husband now have a 4-year-old son, Jasper), she's thrilled to call IRB home. She even manages a Facebook page (Indian Rocks Beach News) that promotes local news and activities.

"I'm in a happy bubble here," Bond said. "We say that friends don't let friends cross the bridge."

Diane Daniel, founder of www.vacationdonations.org, is drawn to sparkly gems. Photo by Visual Muse Studios.



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SUNCOAST JAZZ FESTIVAL RETURNS TO CLEARWATER'S SAND KEY

Announcing Two Time Grammy Award-Winning Ranky Tanky To Appear With New Orleans Favorite Kermit Ruffins And The Barbecue Swingers As Co-Headliners

The 33rd Annual Suncoast Jazz Festival will return to Clearwater's Sand Key November 17-19. Jazz fans will once again gather on Florida's West Coast the weekend before Thanksgiving and enjoy live performances from over 80 musicians. Held inside two resort settings on Sand Key at the Sheraton Sand Key Resort and Marriott Suites, the festival features performers from across the nation and around the world from New Orleans, San Francisco and New York to Italy, Brazil, Australia, and Rio.

Suncoast Jazz Festival Director Joan Dragon is excited to announce that two-time Grammy award-winning Ranky Tanky will appear for the first time and will be a co-headliner along with beloved New Orleans jazz trumpeter and singer Kermit Ruffins and his band, the Barbecue Swingers. Grammy-nominated guitar wizard Diego Figueiredo will be back by popular demand.

Ranky Tanky is based in Charleston, South Carolina and specializes in jazz-influenced arrangements of traditional Gullah music (meaning "get funky") which is a culture that originated among descendants of enslaved West Africans in the Lowcountry areas.

Back for the second year will be Kermit Ruffins, the charismatic jazz trumpeter, singer, composer and actor from New Orleans. He performs with his group the Barbeque Swingers and will appear both Friday and Saturday nights.

Locals and out-of-towners alike are invited to enjoy three days on beautiful Sand Key, overlooking the Gulf of Mexico for some of the best, live performances today including Big

Easy-Flavored Jazz, American Songbook, Timeless Gullah Jazz, Modern Acoustic Jazz, Swing, Blues, Zydeco and a touch of Rockabilly and Gospel.

"I've been a member of the Board of our non-profit organization for 20 years and very excited about our lineup this year, guaranteed to generate interest from a variety of ages" Dragon said. "Selecting Ranky Tanky this year was a bold move and I'm sure our fans will welcome them to Florida's West Coast along with our other musical choices for 2023." The Suncoast Jazz Festival operates under the name Suncoast Classic Jazz Inc., a 501 (c) (3) non-profit corporation.

Local jazz legends are again making appearances, including John Lamb. The beloved double bassist was a member of the Duke Ellington Orchestra. The line-up includes local musicians such as St. Petersburg's beloved Nate Najjar and Brazilian-born Daniela Soledade, La Lucha, John O'Leary, Alejandro Arenas, Mark Feinman, Ona Kirei, Jean Bolduc, Jeremy Carter.

A variety of admission tickets are available with six options ranging from: \$40 (after 6 pm) up to \$225 for three days of non-stop music. SPONSORSHIPS ARE ALSO AVAILABLE. For tickets and information, visit suncoastjazzfestival.com, email jazzclassic@aol.com, or phone 727-248-9441. Students with ID are admitted free Saturday and Sunday.

The Suncoast Jazz Festival is dedicated to preserving and promoting jazz and offers an indoor, intimate setting inside venues with nearby lodging overlooking the Gulf. The "Jolley Trolley" offers a free shuttle between hotels and there is free parking at Sand Key Park.



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GUILTY SEA SPORTS PUB

FAR FROM HOME FLAMINGOS

By Lora Magnani, Publisher



When thinking about things that abound in Florida, people usually think of sandy beaches, palm trees, and flamingos. They would be right on two of the three of these, however flamingos is not one of them. After Hurricane Idalia however, residents of Pinellas County beaches started to see some unfamiliar birds walking around - the flamingos had arrived.

The American, or Caribbean, Flamingo is native to the northern coasts of South America, Mexico, and the Caribbean.

This is one of the largest flamingo species, growing to an average height of five feet and weighing between four and eight pounds. These birds have a lifespan of forty to sixty years and are monogamous partners. Their habitats are shallow estuaries with salt or brackish water and even alkaline lakes. The male and female build a muddy, volcano-like nest together where she lays one egg. They then take turns watching over the egg until it hatches 28 days later. For a week or two after hatching, the parents take turns feeding the chick until it is capable of walking and swimming. At this point it joins a creche, or group of young flamingos who are still fed by their parents but are also watched over by unrelated adults.

Flamingos are extremely social birds, sometimes flocking in numbers over the thousands called a "flamboyanse." Baby flamingos are born with a straight bill and soft, white downy feathers that take several years to molt off, revealing their iconic pink feathers. Flamingos get their vibrant coloring from the pigment of their diet of algae, shrimp, mollusks, small seeds, and other small crustaceans found in the sand. The young flamingo's bill slowly curves downward as it ages and becomes the perfect tool for scooping up food. After kicking up mud with their feet, the birds put their heads in the water upside down with the curved bill facing backwards and begin to sweep their heads from side to side. With the bill slightly opened and the tongue moving rapidly they filter the food from the water.

The flamingo species had once flourished in Florida but by the turn of the twentieth century they had all but vanished. The birds were hunted for their valuable feathers that were all the rage in fashion of that era. It wasn't until 1925 that people actively started breeding the birds in captive colonies. One such colony was the Hialeah Park racetrack just outside of Miami in the 1930s, where it still stands today. Outside of Hialeah Park most flamingos in Florida reside in the Everglades, Biscayne Bay, and the Florida Keys region of south Florida. They have been observed north of the Everglades in the Naples and Sanibel Island areas as well as Wakulla County in the panhandle of Florida at the St. Mark's Wildlife Refuge where migratory birds are known to flock for winter.

Hurricanes leave many terrible things in their wakes, as was the case with Hurricane Idalia at the end of August. She did, however, bring the west coast beaches something new to watch and observe. Flamingos have now been observed at Fort DeSoto State Park, St. Pete Beach, Treasure Island, and as far north as Honeymoon Island State Park in Dunedin. It is believed these flamingos were flying from the Yucatan Peninsula of Mexico heading for Cuba when winds from Idalia sent them off course, causing what is known as a "fallout." It is unknown if they will stay. Flamingos are considered a native species by Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission and are protected under the Federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act.

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Bar & Restaurant News

HUNGRY HOWIES GIVES BACK

For the 14th year, Hungry Howie's raised money for the National Breast Cancer Foundation (NBCF) through its annual Love, Hope & Pizza Campaign. During the month of October, all pizzas, delivered or carried out, were in pink pizza boxes and with every pizza sold, Hungry Howie's donated to NBCF. During the past 14 years, Hungry Howie's has raised over \$4 million dollars for the cause, which has provided free breast cancer screenings and funded research. This year, Hungry Howie's is celebrating 50 years of flavor!



CINCO DE NOVEMBER

You do not have to wait until May to celebrate Cinco de Mayo. Join VIP Mexican-American Cuisine IRB for its Halfway to Cinco party on November 5th. The restaurant will be open from 9:30am-10pm, serving brunch until 11:30am. The halfway party will start at 2pm, featuring live music, food and drink specials, promo girls, free swag, and raffle giveaways. The back parking lot along 1st Street will be closed to accommodate more seating.

CAROUSEL AND COCKTAILS

Feel like you are having the spins while having a sip? It's ok, the bar is actually moving. There is a new, but quite old concept coming to the two-story, New Orleans-inspired upscale food hall in Dunedin. The French Quarter vibe this building emits would not be complete without a carousel bar. Circle 1852 Carousel Bar, like the one found in the Hotel Monteleone in New Orleans that was built in 1949 and is still spinning today, will offer craft cocktails and libations while slowly rotating. The Dunedin Mix will be a mixed space establishment with food vendors, pop-up boutique stores, event space, and a live music venue. The owners hope to open before the new year. For more information, visit DunedinMix.com or find them on Facebook.





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THEY'RE BACK

Stone crabs are finally back in season. From October 15th-May 1st, the delicious crustacean claws are available in several restaurants around Indian Rocks Beach. Find them at Beach Waves Grill, Coco's Crush Bar and Grill, The Original Crabby Bill's Seafood, Guilty Sea Sports Pub, JD's Restaurant and Lounge, Keegan's Seafood Grille, PJ's Seafood, Salt Rock Grill, and Seaweed.

YAPPY HOUR?

Come to the Original Crabby Bill's every third Thursday for a paw-ty on the patio! From 6-8pm, you and your doggo can meet other pups and chat with the volunteers of FLUFF Animal Rescue about their life saving mission for these fluffy, fun-loving pooches, or just stop in for a drink and a bite to eat. For every Rum Runner, Royal Bloody Mary, or Crab Trap drink sold, \$1 is donated to FLUFF Animal Rescue. Follow @crabbybillsseafood and @fluffanimalrescue on Facebook for more details.

Bar & Restaurant News



NOVEMBER SEAWEED CELEBRATES FIVE YEARS

Opened in the spot of the former Michel's Pharmacy, the restaurant has undergone a few name and menu changes, but has always been under the watchful eye of Baystar owner Frank Chivas. Originally opened in 2006 as Key West Grill it became Marlin Darlin Grill in 2008. In 2018, after a remodel and face lift the restaurant reopened as Seaweed. It is known for their steaks, seafood and sushi. Help them celebrate their 17 years in Belleair Bluffs and 5 years as Seaweed.

CLEAR SKY ON PARK OPENS Open for breakfast, lunch, and dinner, they have specials every day of the week. Happy hour is Monday - Friday 2 - 6pm which includes half off select draught beer, house wine, and most liquor. It is located at 13079 Park Blvd, Seminole.

BEACH BASH 2023 Beach Waves Grill at 2300 Gulf Blvd is celebrating their third year in business with their third Annual Beach Bash on November 11th from 11am-9pm. Come celebrate with them and enjoy live music all day, fresh seafood, and drink specials. Stone crab season will be in full swing as well. DJ D-Bo will be on stage playing music from 11am-2pm, Saltwater Crush takes over from 2:30-5:30pm, and Tequila Boys will be playing from 6-9pm.

MAGGIE MAES ROUNDS UP During August, the restaurant asked their customers if they would mind rounding UP their bill for school children. The goal was to help local schools provide needed items for children who couldn't afford them. They collected \$702.85, which went to Mildred Helms Elementary School PTA for distribution. Stop in and try their new menu with exciting new items.

HURRICANE EDDIES ADDS FOOD Hurricane Eddies in Indian Rocks Beach opened over a year ago, but due to supply chain issues their kitchen equipment was a no show. But now, Eddies has a complete menu seven days a week. Find them at 1407 Gulf Blvd.

BANDINGO AT SLYCE The original music bingo is now happening every Tuesday at Slyce. This unique game show combines bands, trivia, karaoke, and interactive entertainment. The game is free to play and prizes including free drinks, appetizers, and pizza are won throughout both rounds of the game. Join the fun from 7-9pm every Tuesday.

RESTAURANT NEWS WANTED If your restaurant has news or an upcoming event we can include in this News Magazine, please e-mail Pete@MagriffProductions.com or call (813)239-6862.



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INDIAN ROCKS RESIDENTS RAISING ELK IN THE HIGH COUNTRY

By Bob and Becky Griffin

Burt and Donna Valery, long time Indian Rocks Beach residents, bought property in North Carolina in 2015. Previously, Bert was a City Commissioner, founded the Senior Softball League, was very active in Action 2000, and was instrumental in creating the Pinellas County Trail, all while operating his successful Vallery Insurance Agency on Gulf Blvd. Donna was also very active in Action 2000 and served as the President of the Indian Rocks Historical Society, and the city's Executive Committee, a group representing all the city organizations.

Now, they live on top of a mountain raising elk, growing Christmas trees, tending to a vineyard, and making cider from almost 100-year-old apple trees.

"Bert cannot just sit still, even at 83," says Donna.

Vast herds of elk once roamed the southern Appalachian Mountains. Due to excessive hunting, they disappeared. Bert and Donna bought sixty acres in Newland, NC that they named "Sweet Water Ranch" and are raising elk with hopes to help repopulate the mountains.

The Valerys started their small herd at the end of 2020 when they purchased a male and shortly after, two female elk. Last summer both females gave birth to male calves, known as "spike elks" until they have true antlers. This summer, two more calves were born.

"From my research, there were once thousands in this part of North Carolina," Bert explains. "I want to see if I can help start a rebirth here. I got interested in raising elk when visiting Jackson Hole, Wyoming, and I saw a real elk herd," says Bert. "In the winter, they feed them, and 10,000 to 15,000 elk show up. It has grown into a popular tourist attraction."

The few other North Carolina elk farms raise the animals to either be eaten or sold to hunting resorts where hunters shoot and mount their heads and large

antlers on their wall. The Sweet Water Ranch herd is different; these elk will never be hunted or eaten.

"We named our bull 'Braveheart' because of this area's Scottish heritage," explains Donna. "The mothers are 'Meadow' and 'Dancer.' Their sons are 'Prancer and Ziggy.' The babies don't have names yet. We don't know their sex — it will be months before we do."

"Even though they were born last summer, we did not know the yearlings were males until their nubs started to appear this spring," Donna says. "In fact, the mothers kept them hidden from us until they were a month or two old."

"The males lose their antlers every spring," adds Donna. "By mid-summer they have grown back larger. Until just before they fall off, the antlers are covered with a fine "velvet;" just like our skin, it bleeds if cut. A pair of antlers can weigh forty pounds. The males necks are very thick and muscular just from holding their heavy head."

"Our females weigh 500 to 700 pounds and stand about five feet tall (to their shoulders)," explains Bert. "Males are much bigger. Braveheart weighs 800 to 1,000 pounds and is about six feet tall, but when you add his neck and head, he is closer to nine feet."

The herd has access to a creek, a meadow with a few old apple trees (an elk favorite) and a large, wooded area for shade. They live in a natural environment, eating grasses, plants, leaves and tree bark - what they would find in the wild.

The state had to inspect their area and the state-required eight-foot-tall fence, before any elk could use it. Since they now have multiple males that need to be separated, a second area was built and is awaiting inspection. The new area has a large pond so the elk can cool off in the summer.

Daily, elk eat about three pounds of food for every one hundred pounds

of their bodyweight. They prefer to eat from their surroundings, but store bought feed maintains them during the winter. Bert estimates his herd averages a ton of feed a month – at \$700 a ton. The feed is always available in a steel feeder that holds three tons; eliminating the need to feed them daily. The feeder alone was \$6000 and a second one is on order for the new area.

As you can see, all this costs money! And the elk don't make any. Retire? Never! To help support the ranch, the Valerys have turned to other ventures. Two years ago, they began planting Christmas trees.

"I planted 1,000 trees, three years in a row," says Bert. "Trees can be harvested in five years."

A one-year-old Christmas tree seedling sells for eighty-five cents. A two-year-old tree costs \$1.50. Once they mature, they can sell upwards to \$100. Bert hopes to sell the first crop in 2026.

"Buying the two-year-old trees takes a full year off the time it takes before they can be sold," adds Bert. "They also have a better survival rate."

Donna has her own project. She planted a small vineyard, with over 1,500 young grapevines. This year, she plans to make wine as gifts for friends and for their own personal use. As the vineyard grows, she hopes to sell her grapes to a local winery. She spends ten or more hours a week tending the vineyard, trimming, and tying vines. She also bottles cider made from apples in an old orchard on the property.

"The Christmas trees and wine sales are a future source of income," says Bert, "so we can continue to raise the herd."

The Valerys are still regularly in Indian Rocks. When in town they live in an apartment on the same property as their Insurance Agency, which Burt still runs.

You can reach the Valerys at BertValery1@HotMail.com



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SOMEWHERE OVER THE RAINBOW BRIDGE

By Lora Magnani, Publisher

Those who have four-legged children know the love we bestow on them as part of the family, but also know the heartache on the day we must say goodbye. Whether their passing is foreseen or completely unexpected, the grief is equally real and can be unbearable. One thing that fur-parents can hold onto is that their pet has crossed over to where there is no pain, and they can play all day again. This is the legend of the Rainbow Bridge.

The lore is based on the Bifrost Bridge in Norse Mythology. Bifrost connects the world of men, Midgard, to the realm of the gods, Asgard. According to National Geographic magazine the adaptation of the mythical rainbow bridge leading pets into paradise has been used in several literary works with the first version written by Edna Clyne-Rekhy of Scotland in 1959.

The story maintains that the pet is happy to cross over the shimmering bridge to Heaven, but still misses the family they left behind. It is not until their family can join them again that they can cross the Rainbow Bridge to Heaven united, to play and be together in love and happiness, never again to be separated.

There is a Rainbow Bridge hidden away in the River's Edge Dog Garden in Lake Lure just outside of Asheville, North Carolina. It is a place where people can grieve and remember their beloved fur babies. The old bridge has been painted the colors of the rainbow with paw prints that fade as they cross-over the bridge. It is adorned with collars, tags, favorite toys, and other mementos of the pets that are no longer here.

It was in North Carolina where Maria Loder and her husband Matt, respectively the COO and CEO of the Original Crabby Bills Family Brands, came upon this heart-moving piece of art. "It was in 2020, we had just lost two dogs in a matter of five months, and between COVID and our businesses, it was tough couple of months," said Maria. "I had just received their ashes and put them away, along with three others I still had." She said when she saw the garden and bridge with all the keepsakes and messages to people's past companions, it brought her to tears. "I had so much unresolved grief," Maria said. When she returned to Florida she began to brainstorm about where she could build a similar memorial. "I thought about a park, but just sat on it to see if I could find something better," she recalls. "And I did!"

The Loder's have supported the FLUFF Animal Rescue Inc. non-profit for several years. FLUFF, short for From Lonely and Unloved to Forever Family is a female-owned and operated organization that has been rehabilitating dogs and cats and helping to place them in loving, and forever homes since 2016.

Maria approached FLUFF CEO Kimmy Chandler with her idea of building a bridge here in Pinellas County and Kimmy loved it. Currently located at 9400 Seminole Blvd in Seminole, the non-profit has big moves coming soon. There is a new facility under contract, the FLUFF Animal Rescue Inc. Rehabilitation and Education center, which will be located at 7400 62nd Terrace N in Pinellas Park. "The building will serve as an adoption center and veterinarian office that will provide spay, neuter, and vaccines at no cost to pet owners," states Maria. "It is a huge undertaking. There will be a doggie play area, a cat jungle, and now a Rainbow Bridge, to provide some peace to those who have lost their beloved family members." Maria's family will help with the design of the pond and Zen garden, and local artist Adria Bernstein will enhance the area with paintings, signs, and other artistic touches.

The Rainbow Bridge will be fully funded by Crabby for a Cause, an initiative of the Original Crabby Bill's Family Brands that has donated more than \$200,000 in the last five years to charitable organizations including FLUFF, the Indian Rocks Beach Food Pantry, and the Clearwater Marine Aquarium.

The bridge has meaning for Maria beyond the beloved pets she has lost. "I lost my father in January of this year," she said. "He was the self-appointed rescuer of pups that people had discarded along the roadside, or simply did not want. As children we would sometimes wake up to a pup in the bathroom or outside in the yard. I am doing this in part for my Dad who cried at every loss of a pet in our family. He continues to inspire me to this day."

FLUFF relies on community support to accomplish its mission. For information on donating to fundraising efforts, or to become a volunteer or foster, go to their website at FluffAnimalRescue.org or follow them on Facebook. To see what other events are going on at the Original Crabby Bill's, follow them on Facebook or visit online at CrabbyBills.com. Check out Adria Bernstein's art at WittyWocks.com.



The Rainbow Bridge at Lake Lure



Maria and Matt Loder Sr. with their dogs Gemma and Gus

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Business Briefs



100 YEARS OF YELLOW CAB Pinellas County's Yellow Cab celebrates its 100th anniversary this year. In 1923 a story ran in the St Petersburg Independent announcing that Yellow Cab would be providing service to St. Petersburg area residents and guests. As the County, and the many municipalities within it, expanded throughout the past century, Yellow Cab continued to be dedicated to providing transportation service.

Today, Nick Cambas (whose grandfather brought their family to the Tampa Bay Area in the late 1970s to acquire Yellow Cab Co.) continues to operate the business with many dedicated team members – some have been with the Company for decades.

As a team, their mission is to serve residents and guests with safe, courteous, transportation—with nothing less than the caring quality we'd want our own family members to receive. They are committed to providing dependable, innovative and efficient transportation solutions to the community, corporate partners, and government agencies we are privileged to serve.

BELLEAIR FURNITURE BOUTIQUE RELOCATING

After three years at 596 Indian Rocks Rd N in Belleair Bluffs, Coastal Aire Designs closed its doors in October. According to a post on its social media, the store is moving land downsizing its retail space, but will continue its mission to craft exceptional spaces through color, furniture selections, and blinds for its clients. The new location has not been announced yet.

SECOND ANNIVERSARY FOR PET GROOMER

In 2010, after serving in the US Navy, Sharon Walls began grooming pets. After owning a pet salon in Kentucky for seven years, she moved south and opened Pet Styles by Sharon in Indian Shores on November 15th, 2021.



Sharon's business is cage-free, and she grooms each pet one on one to ensure a personal and timely experience. The salon is located at 19455 Gulf Blvd Suite 7 next to Smuggler's Cove Mini Golf. Find her on Facebook at Pet Styles by Sharon or call (727) 385-0964.

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ST. PETE-CLEARWATER AIRPORT HAS RECORD MONTH

With 143,196 passengers, domestic passengers at St. Pete-Clearwater International Airport (PIE) were up 9% over September 2022. Year-to-date numbers continue to best 2022 with a 1.4% increase to date. Last year, PIE served 2,445,919 passengers, beating its previous best year by more than 6%.

DESIGN AND BUILD YOUR DREAM HOME

By Tom Smith, Classic Florida Dream Homes



After graduating college and serving in the US Navy Seabees, I started a construction company in 1971, enjoying a 50-year career constructing thousands of homes in west central Florida. I sold my construction company and retired in 2017. I couldn't stand the boredom, so I decided to start a new single family home company, Classic Florida Dream Homes, LLC, specializing in quality custom homes. I partnered with Dave Rinaldo, also an experienced contractor, and together we decided to construct new custom homes along the Pinellas beaches and dedicate our energies to each customer's housing investment.



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too often, families that are considering building a home decide not to go forward because of the hassle in finding their homesite, hiring an architect & engineers, wrestling with complicated permitting issues, getting professional help when choosing home specifications & color selections, and of course the actual home construction. Our Design/Build system manages all those issues to keep the new home buying experience enjoyable. We coordinate all the steps and function as the air traffic controller to keep all consultants on the same page for the satisfaction of each customer.

Aside from this great convenience, what else does the Classic Florida Dream Homes Design/Build System offer each customer? The lowest new home pricing along the Pinellas beaches! Our overhead is extremely low, and we pass that savings on to each customer. We construct homes along the Pinellas beaches, whether on the Gulf, the intracoastal or interior lots in the beach communities.

For qualified prospects by appointment, we have a furnished custom home to display our quality construction features, including elevator, custom cabinetry, flooring, tilework, and appliances. A new Florida waterfront home has historically been the best investment a family could make. If you have a favorite Realtor, feel free to have them contact us to help you with the experience. We work closely with Realtors. Feel free to call for an appointment and visit this home. Look us up at ClassicFloridaDreamHomes.com, or you can text or call us at (352) 424-0424.



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Community News

INDIAN ROCKS BEACH HISTORICAL MUSEUM

Submitted by Nan Jensen

The Museum-Part of the IRB Holiday Tour of Homes
Get into the holiday spirit on December 9th during the IRB Holiday Tour of Homes. The Indian Rocks Beach Historical Museum is one of the stops on the tour. Browse the museum located at 203 4th Avenue, decorated for the holidays. Enjoy some refreshments and shop the collection of handcrafted items offered by the artisans displaying the beautiful art pieces they have created. The IRB Beach Art Center and IRBHome are organizing the event sponsored by Plumlee Gulf Beach Realty. Visit irbhome.com/holidayhometour for more details and event registration.

Something New at the Museum The Indian Rocks Beach Historical Museum will be offering a storying telling event every 4th Thursday of the month, beginning in January. Storytelling is the interactive art of using words and actions to reveal the elements and images of a story while encouraging the listener's imagination. You will learn the track of a good story and then have an opportunity to share true or not-so-true stories with the audience. Specific details will follow in the next issue of the Neighborhood News.

On the Lookout for Volunteers The museum is always looking for volunteers to serve as hosts during open hours from 10am-2pm, Wednesdays through Saturdays. Training will be provided. Contact Carol McGlaughlin at (727) 420-8662 if you are interested in becoming a volunteer.

FLORIDA BOTANICAL GARDENS

Submitted by Allie Fisher

Our holiday events are in full swing here at the Florida Botanical Gardens. Our largest annual winter event, Holiday Lights in the Gardens, will run from Friday, November 24th-Sunday, December 31st from 5:30-9:30pm nightly. The Gardens will sparkle with one million twinkling LED lights in a multitude of colors to wow guests of all ages. In addition to the sights and sounds, there will be a variety of volunteer performances nightly. Stop by our new Majeed Discovery Garden (MDG) for free kid's crafts led by our Children's Garden Educator on Monday and Friday evenings throughout the month of December. In addition, our new Welcome Center and Botanical Bounty Gift Shop will be open nightly.



Our annual Gift & Plant Sale will take place on Saturday, December 9th from 10am-9pm and Sunday, December 10th from 8am-3pm. Stop by Saturday's night market to shop a variety of vendors while enjoying our twinkling holiday lights.

Lastly, don't forget to participate in our instructor-led Holiday Wreath Workshops on Saturday, November 18th, and Saturday, December 2nd from 4-5:30pm. Design a one-of-a-kind wreath to place in your home just in time for the winter holidays. For more information on our holiday events, visit FLBGFoundation.org/events.



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UPCOMING HOLIDAY EVENTS

BUSCH GARDENS CHRISTMAS TOWN

November 11th-January 7th. The price is included with park admission. Holiday dining and shopping, festive shows and entertainment, and Rudolph's Winter Wonderland.

HOLIDAY LIGHTS IN LARGO CENTRAL PARK

Largo Central Park

November 23rd - December 31st from 6-11pm

Enjoy viewing 2 million LED lights around the park, ride the stunning carousel, and enjoy the views from the seven-story Ferris wheel overlooking the park and area.

Call (727) 587-6720 for more information. Free to view, \$6 per ride or 4 for \$20, and food is for sale.

HOLIDAY LIGHTS IN THE GARDEN

Florida Botanical Gardens

November 24th - December 31st from 5:30-9:30pm

Lighted figures, laser lights, 1 million twinkling LED lights and fun for all ages. The opening of the new Majeed Discovery Garden will take this event to the next level.

More information at www.FLBGFoundation.com.

ENCHANT ST. PETERSBURG

Tropicana Field

November 24th - December 3rd (times vary)

Walk-through Light Maze, Ice skating, and much more.

Visit www.EnchantChristmas.com for more information.

IRB CHRISTMAS TREE LIGHTING

12th Avenue Park & Gulf Blvd

December 1st Lights on at 7pm.

Hot chocolate and holiday snacks, with a surprise visit by Santa and Mrs. Claus.

LARGO HOLIDAY TREE LIGHTING & STROLL

Largo Central Park

December 2nd from 6-9pm

\$10 parking, free admission

6pm Tree lighting, 6:30-8pm photos with Santa

HOLIDAY BOAT PARADES

Dunedin December 2nd

Clearwater Yacht Club December 9th

Madeira Beach December 9th

Indian Shores & Redington Beach December 10th

Indian Rocks Beach December 16th

STREET CHRISTMAS PARADES

- Safety Harbor December 2nd from 3-4:30pm at 750 Main Street downtown Safety Harbor.
- Indian Rocks Beach December 3rd begins at 1pm, weaving throughout each "finger" ending at Kolb Park at 1507 Bay Palm Blvd.
- Dunedin Old Fashioned Christmas and Holiday Parade December 9th beginning at 4pm at the Living Room on Main, 487 Main St
- Pinellas Park December 9th beginning at 6pm. The 50th annual event will be held at Pond Park, 4100 76th Ave N.

MERRY BEACH MARKET HOLIDAY FESTIVAL

R.O.C. Park, Madeira Beach Recreational Complex. 200 Rex Place Madeira Beach December 9th from 2-8pm

Over 100 local vendors for holiday shopping, live entertainers and performers throughout the day with food & beverage stands located throughout the festival.

Visit timbchamber.org/merry-beach-market for more information.

Community News

BEACH ART CENTER

Submitted by Patricia Thomas, Volunteer

The Beach Art Center has lots going on this holiday season! Several events are listed below, as well as our many Workshops, Classes, Art on the Rocks and Kids programs. Find up to date details at BeachArtCenter.org and on our Facebook page.

Holiday Arts and Crafts Fair November 4th & 5th from 9am-3pm. This is our second annual fair at the Beach Art Center.

This year's event will feature 30+ local artists who will sell their artwork, handmade crafts, books, and gift items.

We'll have our holiday tree up and filled with ornaments for sale, festive music playing, and holiday cookies and refreshments available by donation. To add to the festivities, our Gift Shop and Gallery will be open as well with plenty of locally crafted cards, ornaments, and gifts for the Holidays.

Yes, this is the same weekend as the Indian Rocks Beach Garage Sale and the Taste of IRB. More reasons to be out and about in Indian Rocks Beach!

IRB Holiday Tour of Homes Sponsored by Plumlee Gulf Beach Realty, this year's Holiday Tour of Homes promises to be an unforgettable experience filled with joy, inspiration, and the heartwarming glow of holiday cheer. IRBHome and the Beach Art Center host this event on December 9th from 1-6pm. Choose from the self-guided tour or treat yourself to our exclusive VIP experience. A link to ticket sales can be found on our website.

Holiday Gallery Show & Sale You might just find that perfect gift for that special someone at our Holiday Gallery Show! Both of our galleries will be full to the brim with beautiful art created by local artists.

We will be replacing sold items with fresh work as the show progresses so stop back frequently and see what's new. The sale runs from November 20th through December 22nd with a reception on Friday, December 1st between 6-8pm. Free & open to all.

Art Classes & Events Our Weekly Art Classes are in full swing and new classes are being added all the time! Painting, pottery, music, drawing, and charcoal. There is something for all experience levels, we hope you will join in! Special Workshops are a fantastic opportunity to try something new. Here is a quick list of what's coming up: Resin Art Serving Boards, November 8th and December 6th, Gel Plate Printing, November 10th, Fearless Yupo Abstract, November 18th, Watercolor Art Journal, November 25th, Paint Like Bob Ross, December 10th. These often fill up early, so register on our website now.

Kids now have their own programs at the Beach Art Center. Check out the website or call us for details. Options include Fall Weaving Decorations-Nov 11, Holiday Turkey Bowl, Nov 11-Snow People Dec 2, Snowman (Pottery) Luminary-Dec 10. Sounds like fun doesn't it! Full details, cost and registration information available at BeachArtCenter.org

Save The Date: Beach Art Center Annual Fundraising Gala will be Saturday, March 20, 2024. This is always a great community event – be sure to block this date on your calendar.

	NATURAL GAS COSTS	ELECTRIC COSTS
Water Heating	\$130.00	\$418.89
Cooking	\$45.00	\$137.53
Heating/Pantries	\$169.00	\$664.30
Cooling/Dehumid	\$65.00	\$224.77
Space Heating	\$162.50	\$638.75

Community News



CITY OF INDIAN ROCKS BEACH

The City of Indian Rocks Beach recently installed another piece of inclusive playground equipment in Kolb Park. The installation was part of the 2022-23 City of Indian Rocks Beach Budget. The City has allocated more adaptive playground equipment in the 2023-24 budget. An inclusive playground is intentionally designed so that children of all ages and abilities can play, be challenged, and have fun together.

IRB City Manager Gregg Mims stated, "Parks are about bringing our community together and ensuring that all children have a place to play and feel safe. This installation represents the City of Indian Rocks Beach's continued commitment to provide accessible play for all."

CLEARWATER YACHT CLUB

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

Their Winter membership opportunity runs November 1st through March 31st. It has no initiation fee and monthly dues are \$250. Winter Club Members can use the pool, tiki bar, dining room and other amenities at the newly remodeled club. Members can also enjoy day dockage on the club's brand new docks. Best of all, you can meet new people. For more information, send an e-mail to Office@ClearwaterYachtClub.org, call the Yacht Club's office at 447-6000, or visit ClearwaterYachtClub.org,

BELLEAIR WOMEN'S REPUBLICAN CLUB

Submitted by Sandra Sockwell

Belleair Women's Republican Club (BWRC) will meet on December 1, 2023. Happy voices of holiday greetings and Christmas music will fill the air when BWRC gathers this year to enjoy fellowship with each other and a great meal, as we usher in the happiest time of the year.

Timely payment for the luncheon at Belleair Country Club, One Country Club Lane, Belleair, Florida, will serve as your reservation. See details at our website, bwrc.us, under Events & Reservations. Walk-ups cannot be accommodated.

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INDIAN ROCKS BEACH COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION INFORMATION

A2K / ACTION 2000

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www.IRBAAction2000.com

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GREEN TOWN KIDS

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

IRB HOME

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

HISTORICAL SOCIETY & MUSEUM

205 4th AV (727) 593-3861
Carol McGlaughlin, (727) 595-9741
www.IRBMuseum.com

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www.IRBLittleLeague.org

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Community News



ROTARY CLUB OF INDIAN ROCKS BEACH

Submitted by David Kline

ARE YOU READY FOR SOME FOOTBALL? It is that time of year when football excites the masses. The Rotary Club of Indian Rocks Beach presents our 21st annual Big Game Raffle event. The Grand Prize Drawing Day is fast approaching. Do you have your tickets yet?

Once again, this year, one lucky winner will be on their way to Las Vegas to attend football's biggest event, the 58th renewal of football's world championship. The Grand Prize winner will be awarded two tickets to Big Game 58, four nights lodging in a beautiful vacation bungalow, and \$1000 cash. Cash prizes will also be awarded to 2nd through 5th place winners.

Tickets are \$5 each or \$20 for 5 tickets. Tickets can be purchased by calling David Kline at (727) 418-1673 or Pat Marzulli at (727) 804-7688. We make deliveries and we accept Zelle and Venmo transactions.

The drawing for the winning tickets will take place on December 10th at 5:30 pm. Once again, our friends at Slyce Pizza Bar will be hosting the festivities in the patio area. Come join us for the fun and excitement of drawing the winning tickets!

The Big Game Raffle, along with our other fundraisers, support the good works of the Rotary Club of Indian Rocks Beach and Rotary International. When you invest in Rotary, you help to change lives!

THE BELLEAIR GARDEN CLUB

Belleair Garden Club meetings are held October through May on the first Wednesday of the month at 1pm.

Their 2024 "Junk & Jewels Sale" fundraiser will be Saturday, February 3, 8am to 1pm (coinciding with the Belleair Community-wide sale) The Saturday drive-up donation days are: October 7, November 4th and December 2nd from 10am to Noon at the Belleair Garden Club, 903 Ponce de Leon Boulevard, Belleair.

Accepted donations include home accessories, holiday décor, collectibles, toys, games, books, sporting goods, jewelry and artwork. Handbags, shoes, wallets, hats, belts, scarves, ties and other wardrobe accessories will be accepted. (No electronics.)

The Belleair Garden Club, a non-profit organization in its 72nd year, raises funds to support local historic preservation programs and education scholarships for post high school students in horticulture and botanical studies.

For information contact belleairgardenclub1@gmail.com and visit www.belleairgardenclub.com.

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Check our website to find out where to donate locally

vacationdonations.org

Community News

GREENTOWN KIDS

Submitted by Allie DeVore

GreenTown Kids and the community gardeners worked to get the IRB Community Garden ready for fall last month. We redid the garden boxes, weeded, and planted our fall crops. Stop by the garden in the IRB Nature Preserve to see what's growing. Please email us if you'd like your own community garden box.

We also replanted the Earthboxes donated to Anona Elementary School and Anona Child Development Center with the help of the 1st grade and preschool classes who will be growing fruits and veggies to taste.

Our annual IRB International Coastal Cleanup will take place Saturday, November 4th from 8-11am with an after party and specials at Slyce, IRB! Meet at the 18th Ave beach access for sign-in and supplies and help us pick up trash as we "Give Thanks for a Clean Beach" this season.



In December, we'll hold our annual Holiday Harvest & Donation Drive in the garden, collecting gently used kid's clothes, toys, and books for kids in need.

GreenTown Kids is a volunteer-run 501(c)(3) environmental nonprofit serving Indian Rocks Beach and the surrounding schools. We offer school volunteer hours at beach cleanups and in the garden. Email: greentownkids@gmail.com. Follow us on Facebook and Instagram @GreenTown Kids. Donate via Zelle at GreenTownKids@gmail.com.

IRB HOME

Submitted by Marybeth Dunn

Holiday Tour of Homes IRBHome is bringing back the popular event on Saturday, December 9th from 1-6pm.

Join us on a captivating journey through a curated collection of beautifully adorned homes, each transformed into a festive wonderland. Our Holiday Tour of Homes promises to be an unforgettable experience filled with joy, inspiration, and the heartwarming glow of holiday cheer. Choose from the self-guided tour or treat yourself to our exclusive VIP experience. Details and ticket information are available at IRBhome.com/holidayhometour.

Holiday Joy Drive The annual event will be held November 24th through December 6th. Help us bring joy to families in need this holiday season. Stay tuned for an Amazon wish list of needed items that will be published at IRBHome.com. Drop off items anytime at 1511 Gulf Blvd. The Holiday Donation Event will be at Century 21 Beggins on December 6th at 6pm. Volunteers will shop & organize December 7th-14th and Parent/Volunteer pick-ups will take place December 15th.

Wreaths Across America On December 16th, IRBHome will be helping Bay Pines National Cemetery remember and honor our veterans by laying remembrance wreaths on the graves of our country's fallen heroes.

Please help us honor and remember as many fallen heroes as possible by sponsoring remembrance wreaths, volunteering on Wreaths Day, or inviting your family and friends to attend with you. For more information and a link to donate, visit IRBHome.com/irbhohappenings.



Happy Holidays! 

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In Case You Missed It
COMMUNITY EVENTS FROM
THE LAST FEW MONTHS



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AT KOLB PARK**



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AT CRABBY BILL'S**



**SLYCE SEPTEMBER
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Community News



PINELLAS SUNCOAST FIRE AND RESCUE DISTRICT

Submitted by Chief Jeffrey Davidson

Our September 11th Remembrance Walk was a success, as well as our Sunset Vigil with bagpipes. Residents and firefighters walked 3.43 miles in tribute to the 343 New York City firefighters lost on 9/11.

Additionally, we were recently awarded the FEMA SAFER Grant (Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response), which allows us to hire 4 additional firefighters that are 100% funded by the grant for 3 years. This allows us to increase our fire response to have Squad 26 be a permanent Engine 26 in Indian Shores with three firefighters/paramedics. Our staffing deployment will increase, and with additional changes we have made in the department, we will be able to attain a Class 1 rating for ISO (Insurance Services Organization) at our next review in 2025. This ultimately leads to a decrease in insurance rates for businesses and residents, and is a very rare rating, as only 1% of all fire departments nationwide can achieve this rating. The primary areas for evaluation of the fire department are Water Supply, Communications, and the Fire Department itself, to include equipment, staffing, training, geographic distribution of fire companies, operational considerations and community risk reduction.

BEACH COMMUNITY FOOD PANTRY

The Beach Community Food Pantry (BCFP) has been providing food for anyone who needs it since 2008, and they rely on donations to successfully provide assistance to the community. Supplies are running low, and the BCFP is requesting donations of canned goods, paper products, fresh fruit and vegetables, as well as monetary donations. Donate online at OnRealm.org/CalvaryIRB/-/form/give/bcfp.

The BCFP also needs dedicated volunteers in several areas. You can volunteer to help sort and shelve food, process inventory and assist individuals with their food selection on Wednesday mornings from 9:30am-12:15pm and Thursday evenings from 4:30pm-7:15 pm.

Strong volunteers are needed to unload food deliveries Mondays at 1:30 pm and Thursdays at 10am and to bag the USDA food deliveries every second Thursday of the month.

Drivers are needed to pick up donations from community partners in Tampa and Clearwater using the BCFP van.

For more information on the BCFP and how you can help visit BCFoodPantry.org.

TASTE of IRB
Chic-A-SI Park 3-9PM FOOD DRINKS

THE BEACHES PREMIER FOODIE FEST EVENT

Presented by IRB Home & The City of Indian Rocks Beach

NOV 4th, 2023

3PM till 9PM

Chic-A-SI Park
4th Ave N & 2nd St
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Community News



ACTION 2000

Submitted by Daryl Frahn

What an amazing Oktoberfest 2023! The festival, hosted by IRB Action 2000 and the City of IRB, celebrates our special community and the German tradition with a full menu of beer, bratwursts, pretzels and streusel, accompanied by live bands, traditional German dancers, children's activities and vendors. And the games! As always, the stein carry and keg toss competitions were fun and fierce!

We are so thankful to everyone that came out for this year's festival and to all that made the day possible. We especially want to thank our event sponsors-Crabby Bill's, Attorney Patrick L. Smith, TBNWeekly/The Bee and The Seaside Realty Store. Thank you to all our sponsors who made the day such a success.

An event like this can't happen without volunteers. We want to thank our dedicated A2K members who were there from the start with event planning months in advance until the end of the event when every scrap was picked up. And, once again this year, we want to send a big shout out to all those in the community who pitched in. We have so much community support behind us, and we are committed to giving back to our little slice of paradise with our beautification and preservation efforts.

We are now planning for holiday fun! Look for us at the Tree Lighting Celebration and Holiday Street Parade. Next up is our 25th Anniversary, stay tuned for our celebration details!

Volunteerism and community pride are at the heart of what we do, and we invite you to be a part of A2K. Join us at our monthly meetings at City on the second Monday of the month at 6:30pm.

A2K is a non-profit community organization that has been serving Indian Rocks Beach for more than 20 years! We work to preserve the unique small-town character of IRB while continually beautifying our public places for all to enjoy. Visit our website at IRBAction2000.com and find us on Facebook @irbaction2000.

BLUFFS BUSINESS ASSOCIATION

Submitted by Bonnie Trembulak

The Bluffs Business Association will hold a ribbon cutting at and mixer at Clean EatZ, 2927 West Bay Drive, Belleair Bluffs on Thursday, November 9th. All are invited to attend and welcome the innovative cafe to the Bluffs. Sample food, enjoy refreshments and make new business connections. Visit BBAstrong.com for more information.



Community News

CLOTHES TO KIDS - CTK

School is back and CTK is serving a record-breaking number of children (up to 50 kids a day), and have major shortages of elementary school clothing for both boys and girls sized (XS-XXL). Donations can be dropped off between 9 am and 4:30 pm Monday-Friday at Clothes To Kids' three convenient store locations:

Clearwater: 1059 N Hercules Ave, Clearwater, FL 33765
 Tampa: 5011 W Hillsborough Ave, Tampa, FL 33634
 St. Petersburg: 2168 34th St S, St. Petersburg, FL 33711

Please donate new or quality used clothing to Clothes To Kids today! Clean those closets and ask your friends, neighbors, corporation, or your places of worship to help. We are asking the community to please donate elementary boy and girl clothing to help us clothe the children in both Hillsborough and Pinellas County. Their goal is for every child to go to school with new or quality used clothing so that he or she has the confidence and self-esteem needed to achieve academic success. Your donation matters – clothes matter!

Clothes To Kids, is a nonprofit organization, that last school year distributed 15,766 full school wardrobes.

ISLAND ESTATES YACHT CLUB

After the IEYC took a break during the summer heat, they are excited to announce the calendar of events for the remainder of 2023!

- November 5th is the IEYC Annual Meeting and Awards Banquet at the Dunedin Golf Club. This formal event includes the election of the 2024 Officers and Board as well as awards.
- December 1st is the annual Change of Watch (COW) at the Belleair Country Club. The COW is where the outgoing Officers and Board members are relieved and the new Club Officers and Board members are sworn in for the new year.
- January 1st is their annual New Year's Day Brunch at the Belleair Country Club. This annual event allows everyone to reconnect after the holidays and to mingle with guests.

The Island Estates Yacht Club (IEYC) was officially started in 1975, as an incorporated not-for-profit club whose mission is to foster fellowship among its members. The IEYC founded the Island Estates Memorial Boat Parade. With help from the community, the City of Clearwater and the Clearwater Yacht Club, the parade has grown to be one of the largest in the southeast.

In the past half-century years some of us are older and some are no longer boaters, but we all cherish the friendships the yacht club has fostered, and so the tradition lives on.

If you would like to learn more about the IEYC, please e-mail IslandEstatesYC@gmail.com.

MILIATRY ORDER OF WORLD WARS

The Clearwater Chapter of the Military Order of World Wars meets the first Tuesday of each month at the Dunedin Golf Club, 1050 Palm Blvd, Dunedin. Social hour is at 11:30am followed by lunch and a short program. Active duty, retired or former Military Officers and their spouses are invited to attend. The MOWW Clearwater Chapter invites those interested to RSVP for lunch by emailing Col. Brian K. Smith at SmithBK@comcast.net.



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