

NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

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Magazine

DONALD ROEBLING AND HIS ALLIGATOR

By Pete Magnani, Publisher

85 years ago, World War II began with the German invasion of Poland. The United States was drawn into the war in December 1941 after the attack on Pearl Harbor. By 1942, U.S. Marines were given an advantage in battle thanks to a Clearwater resident. Inventor and engineer Donald Roebling had a vision for a civilian rescue vehicle that evolved into a military powerhouse, the "Roebling Alligator."

John Roebling emigrated from Prussia in 1831. A civil engineer, he was a pioneer of the wire-cable suspension bridge, designing and overseeing construction of several aqueducts and bridges across the Northeast. His High Bridge, spanning the Kentucky River Palisades, was the first cantilever bridge constructed in the United States.

In 1867, he began designing what is now the Brooklyn Bridge, spanning the East River in New York City. Two years later, while scouting the location, his toes were crushed by a ferry, resulting in an amputation. John refused medical care and attempted to cure his injury with "water therapy," which is continuous pouring of water over the wound. The treatment was unsuccessful, and he died of tetanus on July 22nd, 1869. John's son Washington took over the project but suffered decompression sickness ("the bends") while directing efforts to extinguish a fire in one of the underwater bridge caissons. His wife Emily, who had taught herself bridge construction, took over management of the project. The bridge was completed in 1883. The John A. Roebling and Sons Company also manufactured the cables for the Golden Gate Bridge fifty years later.



Donald Roebling and Navy Admiral Davidson in 1945. Roebling had just been awarded a medal of merit and citation signed by President Truman awarded. (Courtesy Special Collections, University of South Florida.)

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Also in this Issue:



Capable Canines

More than just loyal and loving companions, dogs and their heightened senses serve many important purposes.

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What Happened 100 Years Ago?

From the Olympics, to the Thanksgiving Day Parade, to NHL Hockey, 1924 was the stage for notable national events.

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New Year's Resolutions

Hypnotherapist Mercedes Locke discusses embracing your best self in the new year.

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This newsletter is published by Magriff Productions, LLC. and is mailed to residences, business and vacation rentals in the Dunedin core. We are not associated with the City of Dunedin.

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DUNEDIN NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS MAGAZINE

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

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

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

Thank you for reading,

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



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CALENDAR OF HOLIDAYS & EVENTS

As always, this is subject to change.



JANUARY

New Year's Day 1
Holiday Lights in the Gardens Ends 4
Dunedin Art Festival 4-5
Public School Begins 6
Epiphany 6
Creative Pinellas Fundraiser 7
City Commisxson Meeting 9
Peace Memorial Concert Series 12
St. Pete Boat Show 16-19
Shen Yun at Mahaffey Theater 16-19
Florida's Arbor Day 17
Gasparilla Children's Parade 18
Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day 20

Public Schools Closed 20
Inauguration Day 20
NCAA Championship Game 20
City Commission Meeting 23
Gasparilla Pirate Fest 25
Pinellas Park TacoFest 28
Chinese New Year Begins 29

FEBRUARY

Pro Bowl 2
City Commission Meeting 6
Honu Anniversary Luau 7-8
Sant' Yago Knight Parade 8
Tampa Bay Sun Home Opener 8
Super Bowl 9
Florida State Fair 6-16
Public School Hurricane Makeup Day 17
Valentine's Day 14
Free Wedding Botanical Gardens 14
Fine Art Center Glala 15
City Commission Meeting 20
MLB Spring Training Begins 21
Blue Jays Spring Home Opener 22
Safety Harbor Art & Seafood 22-23
Phillies Spring Home Opener 23
Florida Strawberry Festival Begins 27
St. Pete Grand Prix Begins 28



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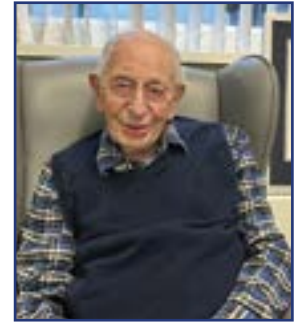
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Did You Know

LONGEVITY The world's oldest man passed away in November at the ripe old age of 112. John Alfred Tinniswood was born on August 26th, 1912, in northwest England near Liverpool. In an interview with Guinness World Records, Tinniswood attributed his longevity to "pure luck." "You either live long, or you live short," said Tinniswood. "You can't do much about it." He mentioned that moderation was the key to a healthy life, Tinniswood never smoked, rarely drank, and followed no special diet beside having fish and chips every Friday.



WATER SHORTAGE Florida TaxWatch, a nonpartisan research institute, recently analyzed Florida's water supply and found that nearly \$2 billion in critical water projects were needed to avoid a significant shortage, predicted to begin in 2025. The group blames Florida's rapid economic and population growth for shortage, estimating the state will have 26.4 million residents by 2040.

PLAY BALL The Rays will be in a new home for their 2025 season after Tropicana Field was damaged during Hurricane Milton. A damage report given to the St. Petersburg City Council estimates the cost of repairs at \$55.7 million, including replacement of the roof that tore off during the storm. In December, the city council voted to spend \$1.4 million to repair the roof. Major League Baseball requires the repairs begin within ninety days.

The Rays will play the 2025 season at Steinbrenner Field in Tampa, the Spring Training home of the New York Yankees.

NEW RULES Several new laws went into effect on January 1st, with concerns from voter registration to medical treatment. Senate Bill 362 increases the maximum medical reimbursements for physicians and surgical procedures and increases the maximum fees for expert witnesses from \$200 to \$300 per hour under the "Workers Compensation Law." The law requires employers to provide injured employees all medically necessary remedial treatment, care and attendance for the entire recovery process.

Other new laws address threatening first responders, updated building regulations, social media accounts for children, and additional protections against financial exploitation for seniors.

HAZARDOUS WASTE Pinellas County Solid Waste's Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) Program diverts household hazardous waste from the municipal solid waste stream for proper recycling and disposal. The HHW Program currently collects chemicals at HHW North, a permanent collection facility open select Saturdays from 9am-2pm. The facility is located at 29582 U.S. 19 N. in Clearwater. Accepted materials include automotive oil and coolant, household chemicals, paint, batteries, and pool chemicals

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

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TURTLES RELEASED In December, Clearwater Marine Aquarium (CMA) released two sea turtles, Odessa and Philly, back into the waters off Fred Howard Park after successful rehabilitation at CMA.

Odessa, a juvenile Kemp's Ridley sea turtle, was found swimming in a ditch about two miles inland on November 11th in Crystal River. Philly, a juvenile green sea turtle, was found swimming in a ditch on November 30th in Dixie County. These turtles were possibly displaced due to the hurricanes and subsequent flooding.

During their short rehabilitation stay at CMA, all diagnostics showed Odessa and Philly were otherwise healthy. CMA is excited to share that they were returned to the Gulf of Mexico with the assistance of the Fred Howard Park rangers.

Multiple sea turtles as well as manatees have been found inland after the severe storm surge of Hurricane Helene.

The public can call Clearwater Marine Aquarium at (727) 441- 1790 ext. 1 if displaced wildlife is sighted.

HEALTH INSURANCE OPEN ENROLLMENT For those that buy insurance on HealthCare.gov, open enrollment began in November and ends January 16th for plans beginning in February. Now is the time for individuals and families not insured through their employers to enroll or change plans for 2025.

Before enrolling, decide your medical needs and how much you can afford to pay in premiums and deductibles. Monthly premiums have increased an average of six percent, but most people will qualify for enhanced federal premium subsidies. To register, call 800-318-2596 or visit HealthCare.gov.

MOVE OVER FLORIDA Passed in 2016, Florida State Statute 316.081 requires drivers on multi-lane roadways to move out of the leftmost lane when being overtaken by another vehicle travelling at a higher rate of speed. The law pertains even if the overtaking vehicle is speeding.

A bill vetoed by Governor DeSantis earlier this year would have made it illegal to be in the leftmost lane except when passing or preparing to exit the roadway.

Roebling Alligator, Continued

Donald Roebling was born in New York City on November 25th, 1908, to John A. Roebling II and Margaret McIlvane Roebling. He was raised in Bernardsville, New Jersey and became an electrical engineer. Roebling married Florence Spotswood Parker in 1929 and moved to Clearwater in hopes that Florida's climate would be therapeutic for his ailments.

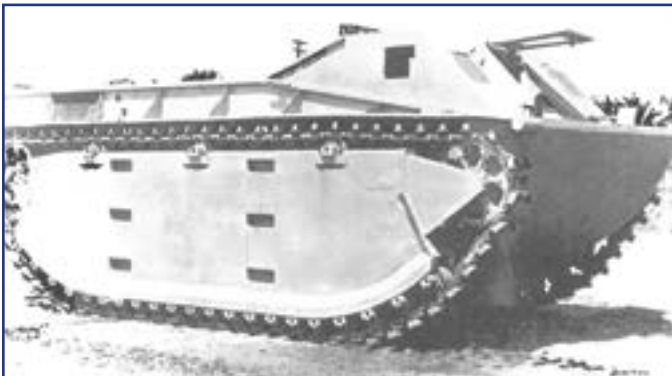
Roebling began construction on an elaborate estate on the Intracoastal Waterway one half mile south of today's Memorial Causeway. The four-story Tudor Revival mansion featured nine bedrooms and fourteen baths and over 15,000 square feet of living space. Completed in 1930 at a cost of \$100,000 (approximately \$1.9 million today), the residence has an elevator to an underground tunnel. The passageway provides access to an Olympic-size swimming pool, greenhouse, tennis courts, boathouse, and a large machine shop. It was in this shop that the Roebling Alligator came to life.

The Great Miami Hurricane of 1926 resulted in the deaths of 372 people. Roebling believed that a rescue vehicle that could operate both on land and in water would have spared many of those lives. Another 1800 lives were lost to hurricanes in 1928 and 1932, and Roebling, an inventor by nature, began designing an amphibious rescue craft.

The prototype Alligator rolled out of the Spottis Woode machine shop in 1936, powered by a 92-horsepower Chrysler engine. The 14,350-pound vehicle was 24 feet long and 9 feet 10 inches wide. When asked about the specificity of the width, Roebling advised it was not due to engineering, but simply because the shop door opening was ten feet wide. The vehicle ran on two tracks with flared cleats that functioned as paddles to propel the Alligator in water. It ran 25 miles per hour on land, but only 2.5 miles per hour in water.

By its next iteration in 1937, the aluminum-hulled Alligator was four feet shorter and only weighed 6,000 pounds. Its lighter weight, redesigned track, and 95-horsepower Ford V-8 enabled the vehicle to cruise at 5.5 miles per hour offshore. Following a Life Magazine article featuring the amphibious vehicle, the United States military took notice. Despite initially resisting the idea of his humanitarian invention being used in battle, Roebling was eventually convinced of the vehicle's potential to save the lives of American servicemen. He was awarded a \$200,000 contract to produce an Alligator to military specifications.

The first military model was completed in 1940. It could drop into the water from a height of six feet without capsizing and would still float even if the interior was fully flooded.



An early Amtrac built at FMC in Dunedin.



Roebling, (rear row, second from right) and his Alligator.

The 95-horsepower Mercury engine enabled the Alligator to cruise at ten miles per hour. The only downside was the lightweight aluminum construction. At the request of the Marine Corps, Roebling got to work on an all-steel version of the vehicle. The military designation for the Alligator was Landing Vehicle Tracked, or LVT.

Roebling contracted the Food Manufacturing Company (FMC) in Dunedin to produce the LVTs. The first two steel vehicles rolled off the production line in July 1941. The Marines approved the prototypes and FMC was awarded a \$4 million contract to manufacture 200 additional LVTs. The company decided to move its commercial fruit washer manufacturing to Lakeland so the Dunedin plant could focus on military vehicles. While the new Polk County facility was under construction, it became obvious the United States would be drawn into the war. Subsequently, the Lakeland FMC plant never manufactured any fruit washers and became the main assembly line for LVTs. Later, FMC expanded production to additional plants in Riverside and San Jose, California.

The LVT was an innovation for the military, and its operators need training. The United States Marine Corps Amphibian Tractor Detachment originally formed in Quantico, Virginia and moved to Dunedin in early 1941. The detachment was initially housed at the Dunedin Hotel until completion of a specialized barracks at US Alternate 19 and Curlew Creek. The location was ideal for training soldiers to operate the LVT on land and in water.

The 16,000 LVT-1 measured 22 feet long, 10 feet 8 inches wide and was 8 feet tall. It could carry eighteen fully equipped soldiers or 4,500 pounds of cargo. Lacking protective armor, LVTs were first used by the 1st Marine Division at Guadalcanal in 1942, ferrying supplies from ship to shore. Roebling redesigned the vehicle, adding armor, improved suspension, and more powerful engines. Later, fire support versions were produced, featuring gun turrets and 78mm Howitzer cannons. These were dubbed "Amtanks."

Over time, LVTs saw combat worldwide, including Europe, the Philippines, Africa, and the Suez Canal. 8,500 Alligators were produced by the end of World War II. The Marine Corps still uses a variant of the LVT, now known as Amphibious Assault Vehicles (AAVs).

After the war ended, Roebling became a renowned philanthropist in Clearwater. He financed the Roebling Wing of Morton Plant Hospital, a hall and gym for Peace Memorial Church, and a building for the Boy Scouts. He passed away on August 29th, 1959 in Boston, Massachusetts following complications from gall bladder surgery. His home, Spottis Woode still stands, a landmark when cruising the Intracoastal Waterway.

Photos on this page courtesy of the Dunedin History Museum.

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Bar & Restaurant News

REALLY THIN PANCAKES Crepesology opened in November at 1503 Main Street in Granada Shopping Plaza. The word "crêpe" comes from the Latin word *crispa*, which means "curly". Crepes are a French dish of thin, unleavened pancakes that can be sweet or savory and be eaten for breakfast or lunch. Made from a batter of flour, eggs, milk, butter, salt, and sometimes sugar that is poured onto a hot skillet or griddle and cooked until set and golden brown. Crepes have many different fillings and toppings and can be rolled or folded or even flambeed.

Crepesology states that they only use the best ingredients, such as organic eggs, mushrooms and milk, sugar, kosher pickles, and only wild caught smoked salmon, never farm-raised. They offer gluten-free crepes as well. They are open 7 days from 10am-4pm. Follow them on Facebook and Instagram @crepes.ology.

NEW RESTAURANT Last summer, Our Place announced they would be closing for a remodel and rebranding. Trattoria D'Anna opened in October. It is an upscale Italian restaurant for the "discriminating palate." They offer traditional Italian dishes with new eclectic flavors and ingredients that fuse the old world with the new.

Chef Ronaldo "Ronnie" Campanaro is proud to bring these dishes to your table. Trattoria D'Anna is open Monday-Saturday from 4:30-10pm. For more information and reservations call (727) 239-0450 or visit TrattoriaDAnna.com.

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY Celebrate the Honu's ninth anniversary on February 7th and 8th. Friday is the pre-party with live music from the Hot Rod Hornets from 7-10pm and drink and food specials. Saturday will feature Tiki vendors from 2-6pm and music from Big Tiki and the Mai Tais from 3-6pm. There will be drink and food specials and a Luau beginning at 6pm. The Luau is a ticketed event, seats are limited. It will include Hula girls, fire dancers, ukelele music, and a welcome drink. Tickets go on sale January 22nd and can be purchased in-house at 516 Grant Street or by calling (727) 333-7777. Follow them on Facebook for upcoming events and specials.

STILL OPEN The FDOT Skinner Boulevard Improvement project began last fall and is predicted to be finished in 2026. Construction and detours are annoying for most, but some restaurants and businesses are feeling this on a deeper level than others. Eli's BBQ, Happy's Bayou Bites, and Jardin De Pollos are three family-run small businesses located between Highland Avenue and Broadway that have been affected by the closure of Skinner boulevard. They are open, but are more challenging for patrons to get to. Please remember these restaurants when you and your family are eating out or ordering to go.

Eli's BBQ is open Fridays and Saturdays only from 11am-6pm and is cash only. Happy's Bayou Bites is open Thursday- Sunday from 11am-6pm, call (727) 240-1102 for more information and take-out orders. Jardin De Pollos is open Thursday-Sunday from noon-9pm, call (727) 643-6345 for take-out or order online at JardinDePollos.com.

RESTAURANT NEWS WANTED If your restaurant has news or an upcoming event we can include in this News Magazine, please e-mail Lora@MagriffProductions.com or call (813) 361-7376.



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NEW YEAR - NEW YOU




EMBRACING THE NEW YEAR AS YOUR BRAVEST SELF

By Mercedes Locke, Certified Clinical Hypnotherapist

A lot has been going on! Locally, we experienced life-altering weather events, not once, but twice. These already trying times were set against a backdrop of political drama and uncertainty, not to mention the holidays and all those associated pressures. It's no wonder many of us are feeling a bit tired as we say goodbye to 2024.

Now, 'tis the season of the New Year, Bring on 2025! We become resolute in our goals and dream of a better version of ourselves. This tradition of creating New Year's Resolutions can also create unnecessary strife. If you are anything like me, or most people, we first approach resolutions with lots of excitement and stamina, but in only a few weeks "better person" we were so determined to be slips farther away. Then we beat ourselves up for not hitting the mark. Isn't it self-destructive to prove you will let yourself down and quit on your goals? The answer is a resounding yes!

This year I am determined to try something new. I am working on a list to help me see who I'd really like to be and what is holding me back from living a life I truly love. At the top of this list, I wrote: "If I were my bravest self in 2025, I would..." and then I let whatever inspiration came to me to flow. The simple act of allowing that energy to flow from my mind, down through my arm and onto paper was incredibly therapeutic. Soon, I had numerous endings to my sentence. Yes, the usual suspects arrived, thoughts about eating better and quitting mild vices. But, some amazing "impossible dream" stuff came out, too. Stuff that got me excited about my short-term future and motivated me in a new way to take those scary first baby steps that always come with change.

It felt liberating to focus on stepping through the fear, not getting stuck in it. I felt like I was calling out a bully who had tortured me my whole life, and realized it was my scared inner self that was the real culprit. I stepped into a feeling of power looking over my list and enjoyed the giddy rush of inspiration I felt to be my bravest self this year.

I am now more determined than ever to be that brave participant of the life I wish to live in 2025. Creating this list helped me to acknowledge those fears I've allowed to hold me back in the past. And now, look out 2025! I am ready, willing and bravely embracing you! If you would like to discuss what is holding you back from living the life you love, book a free consultation today at mercedeslockehypnotherapy.com and discover how hypnotherapy can guide you to breaking through those fears and embracing your best year yet!



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THE SANDWICH GENERATION: JUGGLING RESPONSIBILITIES AND NAVIGATING CHALLENGES

By Alison Ross Tompkins, Broker Associate for Coldwell Banker

The "sandwich generation" describes a group of middle-aged individuals who are caring for their aging parents while also supporting their own children—sometimes even adult children. This unique position leaves them metaphorically "sandwiched" between the needs of two generations, often with little room for themselves. While caregiving can be a deeply rewarding experience, it frequently leads to feelings of guilt, stress, exhaustion, and even resentment as individuals balance personal life, careers, and caregiving duties.

Understanding the pressures faced by this group is essential for offering them the right support and resources to help navigate their responsibilities without sacrificing their own health and well-being.

Many caregivers put on a brave face and keep moving forward, but it's important to recognize that they are often stretched thin. They're trying to balance demanding careers and family obligations while managing the physical and emotional toll of caregiving. These individuals rarely have time for themselves and may even feel guilty for considering options like retirement communities for their parents.

For some, the challenges become especially apparent during the holidays, when occasional visits reveal that Mom or Dad has aged dramatically, is no longer eating well, or is living in an unhealthy environment. Whether you provide daily care or only see your loved ones periodically, it's crucial to know there are options to help your parents thrive.

There are many local resources, support groups, and professional services designed to support caregivers and their loved ones. In addition, there are exceptional retirement communities that can provide care and companionship for aging parents while offering peace of mind to their families.

Some great options to consider include: Stratford Court at Palm Harbor, Elevate Senior Living at Clearwater, Mease Life in Dunedin, Regency Oaks Senior Living in Clearwater, Elison Senior Living of Pinecrest, and The Palms of Largo.

As someone who has worked with hundreds of families, I've seen how the right senior living community can transform lives. These communities not only alleviate the logistical challenges of caregiving but also create opportunities for families to reconnect and enjoy meaningful time together—without the constant worry of daily care tasks.

If you're part of the sandwich generation, acknowledge your limitations and prioritize what's truly important: the quality of the time you spend with your loved ones. Considering a retirement community isn't a failure—it's an act of love that ensures your parents can receive the care and support they need while you regain balance in your life.

Caring for loved ones is one of the greatest acts of compassion and devotion, but it doesn't have to mean sacrificing your own well-being. The right choices can be life-changing—for both you and your family. If you're feeling overwhelmed, know that help is available. Together, we can explore solutions that provide comfort, care, and a renewed sense of connection for everyone involved.

Alison, Broker Associate for Coldwell Banker, has been in sales and Real Estate for 30 years. You can reach her on her cell at (727) 729-9942 or at the Belleair/Dunedin offices at (727) 581-9411.

Business Briefs

NEW HYPNOTHERAPIST Mercedes Locke Hypnotherapy is excited to announce the opening of its (virtual) doors in December. Having been a health and wellness coach since 2020, Mercedes embarked on a transformative and personal journey using hypnotherapy. Once she found this powerful modality, she felt compelled to share it with others. Earning her Certified, Clinical and Transpersonal Hypnotherapy certifications in 2024, she is now looking forward to building her private practice.

Mercedes offers online appointments, so her clients can experience the profound effects of hypnotherapy from the comfort of their own homes or sacred space. She currently resides in Dunedin, with her 13-year-old son and partner, Dan. They can often be found travelling and exploring historic locations. She is passionate about guiding others to living the life they love, as well as contributing as a writer to local publications about health, wellness and change. To learn more about how hypnotherapy can transform your life, visit MercedesLockeHypnotherapy.com and book a free phone consultation today.

GRAND OPENING In December, Trader Joe’s opened in Palm Harbor. Customers braved the cold standing in lines that wrapped around the building to get a first glance at the new store. This is the California-based grocers fifth location in the Tampa Bay area and the second in Pinellas County.

Trader Joe’s does not carry many branded items. Instead, they offer unique and interesting products, along with everyday basics under the Trader Joe’s label. Through the company’s long-standing Neighborhood Shares Program, the new store will donate 100% of unsold, but in good condition, products to various non-profit, community-based organizations. The store is located at 33591 US HWY 19 N in the Highland Lakes Plaza. .

CHAMBER ART CONTEST Each year, the Chamber of Commerce hosts a cover art contest for the upcoming directory inviting local student artists from Dunedin schools to showcase their talent. This year, they received 38 submissions from creative young minds around town. After careful consideration and voting by the Dunedin Chamber Board, Foundation Board, and committee, they were thrilled to honor the 2024 Contest Winner, Mila Holcomb, with an award and a \$500 scholarship.

Mila is an 8th grader at Dunedin Highland Middle School. Her winning cover is the Chamber building alongside the iconic “Defending Freedom” sign capturing the heart and spirit of the Chamber and the city of Dunedin. All submissions will be featured at the Dunedin Fine Arts Center in March and April, along with Mila’s winning piece. Be sure to visit and experience this stunning collection in person.

NEW CONDOMINIUMS Construction is about to begin on the northeast side of the Sand Key bridge at 551 Gulf Blvd. The 3.2-acre lot, home of the Fisherman’s Wharf from 1963-1990, has sat vacant for years. The Viceroy Residence, two nine-story waterfront condominium towers with 86 luxury units, is set to open in late 2027. These are the first condominiums to be built on the beach in over a decade.

he property will include a secluded beach, valet, a private restaurant, a spa with a steam room, exterior hot and cold plunge pools and a resort-style pool with cabanas. There will be two- and three-bedroom units ranging between 2,000 and 3,500 square feet. Larger units ranging from three to five bedrooms will also be available with terraces. Sales have begun and start at \$2.5 million. Construction is expected to begin later this year.

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Community News

COAST GUARD AUXILIARY FLOTILLA DUNEDIN

Submitted by Gordon Thomas

Boat America Course

January 11th and 12th Saturday and Sunday 9 AM to 1PM
Must attend both of these days.

February 8th and 9th Saturday and Sunday 9 AM to 1PM
Must attend both of these days.

March 15th and 16th Saturday and Sunday 9 AM to 1PM
Must attend both of these days.

Basic Navigation Courses

January 25th 9am-noon Saturday only

February 22nd 9am-noon Saturday only

March 29th 9am-noon Saturday only

All courses are given at the Dunedin Marina, 51 Main Street, second floor on the north side.

Email PublicEducation1110@gmail.com or call (727) 736-1191 for further details.

MILITARY 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.

DUNEDIN NEWCOMERS CLUB

Submitted by Rosemary O'Hara

The Dunedin Newcomers Club is a face-to-face social network established 64 years ago that welcomes people who are new to the area, newly retired, or who now have the time to explore the region, attend monthly luncheons and participate in our many fun activities. Our purpose is to introduce residents to what's special about Dunedin and northern Pinellas. Don't be fooled by the name. Some of us have lived here for more than 30 years.

We meet once a month for lunch, with a guest speaker or fun program. Some recent topics include how the Tampa Bay Times is responding to the challenges facing metro newspapers, Dunedin's Sister City relationship with Stirling, Scotland, and the shorebirds of Florida's West Coast. We also organize field trips that offer interesting peeks behind the scenes, we host a book club, Mexican Train get-togethers and a theater group. Though we are almost exclusively female, we're open to all. For more information, contact Rosemary O'Hara at RosemaryOhara14@gmail.com.

WE WANT TO PRINT YOUR NEWS

Does your organization have news you would like to see printed here? Community News is always free! We would like to promote your upcoming events, anniversaries, and other important information. Send your information to Pete@MagriffProductions.com.

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THE MANY TYPES OF WORKING DOGS

By Pete Magnani, Publisher

Dogs are loyal, playful, and make great family pets, but they also serve higher purposes. Their intelligence and senses make them valuable in several ways. Dog's noses are their primary asset. Their sense of smell is about 100,000 times stronger than humans. People have about 400 olfactory receptors, dogs have up to 300 million.

Service dogs have many roles, including assisting blind or visually impaired people. They can help their handler navigate obstacles, elevation, and hazards. They are trained to "intelligently disobey" commands that would put their handler in danger, such as stepping onto a busy road or crossing the street against traffic. These dogs are selected after a rigorous screening, only after evaluation of their temperament, intelligence, and physical attributes.

Other service dogs perform tasks like mobility assistance, medical assistance for seizures and other conditions, and hearing for those with auditory impairment. Breeds commonly trained to perform these tasks include golden and Labrador retrievers, standard poodles, and German shepherds.

Therapy dogs are trained and certified animals used as part of a patient's therapeutic treatment plan. They provide emotional support while visiting nursing homes, hospitals, and schools. These dogs must be well-trained, socialized, and even-tempered. Any breed can become a therapy dog, with the most common being retrievers, standard poodles, and border collies.

Dogs are also a valuable resource to law enforcement and the military, where they are trained to find fleeing criminals and detect illicit drugs, explosives, and cadavers. Military

dogs are also used as scouts and sentries. Some are trained to parachute out of airplanes strapped to their handler. These animals must be well-trained, obedient, and non-fearful. The most common breeds used by law enforcement and the military are German shepherds, Belgian Malinois, and Dutch shepherds.



Search-and-rescue dogs use their advanced senses of smell and hearing in many different fields, including specialized searches for disasters like hurricanes and building collapses, avalanche rescue, and cadaver location. Cadaver dogs are also used to locate ancient burial sites for archeological research. Dogs in Croatia have located such sites dating back 3000 years. Retrievers, border collies, German shepherds, and Leonbergers are commonly used for search-and-rescue.

Herding dogs are used to control pasturing animals like sheep, goats, and cattle. These dogs come from herding breeds that have passed the necessary instincts down through genetics. They include Border collies, Icelandic sheepdogs, Black mouth curs, and king shepherds.

Guard dogs have a natural instinct to protect. They must be highly-trained, strong, intelligent and non-fearful. They can patrol perimeters, provide personal protection, and charge and pin down threats. Akitas, bull mastiffs, Doberman pinschers, and German shepherds are the most commonly used as guard dogs.

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A CENTURY BY THE NUMBERS

By Lora Magnani, Publisher

People always lament how much the world has changed. But has it really? We decided to compare the year we just finished (2024) with its counterpart 1924. Are there really that many differences?

In 1924, Americans were amidst the "Roaring Twenties" and right in the middle of Prohibition. Presidents Jimmy Carter (39th) and George H.W. Bush (41st) were born, and Calvin Coolidge was the 30th sitting President United States, which at the time had only 48 states. Coolidge signed into law the Immigration Act of 1924, also known as the Johnson-Reed Immigration Act. It was the most stringent U.S. immigration policy up to that time in the nation's history.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) was established, and J. Edgar Hoover would take the helm as the first acting director. His tenure would last 48 years. Congress passed the Indian Citizenship Act which conferred citizenship on all Native Americans born within the territorial limits of the country. Wyoming was the first state to elect a female governor, Nellie Tayloe Ross, and the Statue of Liberty was declared a national monument.



1924 was a big year for the Olympics as well. France hosted both the Summer and Winter games. The Winter games were held at the foot of Mount Blanc in Chamonix and Haute-Savoie between January 25th and February 5th. The games were originally recognized as the "International Winter Sports Week," but following the success of the event it would go on to be called the "First Winter Olympics" by the International Olympic Committee. The Summer Olympics were held in Paris, this was the second time the city hosted the games,

making them the first to host twice. They would then host for a third time a century later in 2024. These were the first games to have an Olympic Village and introduced the Closing Ceremony ritual.

In pop culture, Walt Disney's studio released its first animated short film, *Alice's Day at Sea*, on March 1, 1924. Macy's staged its first Thanksgiving Day parade in New York City, where employees marched down 34th Street dressed in costumes. There were bands and floats, and even live animals borrowed from Central Park Zoo. International Business Machines (IBM) was also founded in New York that year.

In sports, Canada's National Hockey League expanded to the United States, including the Boston Bruins. The Bruins beat fellow expansion team Montreal Maroons 2-1 in the first NHL game played in the United States. Soldier Field, the home of the Chicago Bears, opened, and the 50th annual Kentucky Derby was won by John Monee riding Black Gold with a time of 2:05.2.

Here are a few Now and Then comparisons:

The life expectancy in 1924 was 54.1 years and is now 79.9 years.

The one-dollar bill is equivalent to eighteen dollars now.

Unemployment was at 5 percent, as of October 2024 Florida's rate was at 3.3 percent, according to FloridaJobs.org.

The Dow Jones closed at 120.51. The average as of December 16th 2024 was 43,824.18.

The average household income in the 1920s was \$3,269.40 (in today's money that would be \$49,341.14) versus \$96,992 presently in Florida.

In the 1920's Do-It-Yourself home buildings were popular. One example was the Florence Cozy five room cottage sold at \$1,195. Sears Roebuck Gladstone sold another which featured three bedrooms, living room, dining room, kitchen and bath for \$2,025. Today's average 3BR/2BA is \$359,000 in Pinellas County.

The average rent for an apartment in New York City was \$60 per month. Now, a studio apartment in the Big Apple runs around \$3,827 per month.

Gas was typically around 21 cents per gallon. Florida's average price per gallon was \$3.12 as of December 15th 2024, according to AAA.

An automobile ranged from the new Ford Runabout at \$265 to the luxury Buick Marquette for \$965. Today a Ford Taurus has a starting price of \$27,800 and the Rolls-Royce La Rose Noire Droptail carries a price tag of \$30 million.

Dinner and a Movie - A diner meal would usually run 70 cents (\$18.73 in today prices) and an average meal would cost a patron \$20-\$30 in 2024. A movie ticket sold for 15 cents (equivalent to \$2.26 today). The going rate for a movie ticket in Florida is \$12, reaching as high as \$28 in New York.

A wedding is something families save for years before the big day. Today the average family pays around \$30,000. In 1924, a wedding would run them around \$400 (\$6,036 in today's money).

A new radio, which was highly sought after, could cost over \$200 (approximately \$3000 in today's money) but would drop to \$35 (\$528.21) by the end of the decade. A washing machine was \$81.50 (\$1,229), while a basic machine can start at \$450 and run as high as \$3,000 today. An electric vacuum cleaner complete with a motor-driven brush was \$28.95. Typically, a handheld vacuum starts at \$100 today

Let's talk about groceries. A gallon of milk was 54 cents, a dozen eggs were 13 cents, fresh baked bread was 9 cents, and shoppers paid 25-30 cents for a pound of coffee. Today milk is \$4.04, eggs are around \$3.65, a loaf of sliced white bread is \$2.54, and a 12-ounce bag of Starbucks medium roast sells for \$8.79.

Florida's population was 1,160,000 in 1924, a 5.7% increase from the year before. This was due to the large number of Americans who had the time and money to travel to Florida and invest in real estate after World War I. The most populated city in Florida in 1920s was Jacksonville with 91,588 residents. St. Petersburg came in 6th with 14,237. Today Jacksonville is still ranked the highest with 949,611 and St. Petersburg has moved up to 5th with 258,308.

Times, they are a changing!



Community News

HALE SENIOR CENTER UPCOMING EVENTS

Submitted by Caitlin Beavers

Senior Planet Technology - Lectures & Workshops

Through lectures and workshops, you can learn about the latest and most popular tech topics, the general purpose of various devices or concepts, as well as tips and tricks of how to effectively use specific features of a website or apps through guided, hands-on experiences. Walk-ins welcome & no registration required. Free to attend.

Lectures 10 - 11:15am

Tues, January 7th: Intro to Social Media

Tues, February 4th: Intro to A.I. (Artificial Intelligence)

Workshops 2 - 3:30 pm

Free to attend. Limited space. Must register by the Monday before class to reserve your spot.

Thurs, January 23rd: Finding Information Online

Thurs, January 30th: Getting Started with DuoLingo

Thurs, February 20th: Listening to Podcasts

Master Learners

Come and learn from curious-minded, active, and retired adults will share their knowledge through lectures, films, music, books, camaraderie, or more. Walk-ins welcome & no registration required. Free to attend.

Weds, January 22nd 1-2:30 pm

Judge Salvatore Martoche will present The Life of William Donovan, head of the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), precursor to the CIA.

Fri, February 21st 1-2:30 pm

A representative from Water4Mercy will present this special program that provided water and food in Africa.

Lifelong Learning Seminars

Join us for an opportunity to learn from local professional experts in various fields and gain useful information that can benefit you. Topics include health and wellness, independent living, legal help, insurance, safety, technology, and consumer protection. These informative sessions are designed to provide you with valuable insight and knowledge to help you make informed decisions and improve your quality of life. Free to attend. No registration required & walk-ins welcome.

Tues, January 14th 10:00 am Elder Law

Tues, January 21st 10:00 am Planting Seeds for Season Vegetables

Tues, January 28th 10:00 am Scam Prevention

Tues, February 11th 10:00 am Auto Buying & Repair

Tues, February 18th 10:00 am Global Technology

Senior Expo

This expo features over 50 local businesses and organizations providing valuable resources and information for older adults including retirement living, healthcare, medical equipment, beauty, nutrition, exercise and wellness, legal and financial services, recreational activities, home care, and more! Presented by Dunedin Parks & Recreation. Free to attend & lunch will be provided.

Friday, January 24th, 9 am-12 pm

\$90/vendor, \$25/non-profit organization

MORTON PLANT MEASE COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

Submitted by Lauretta Fernandez

Carelift Van Transportation Service -Need a Lift?

CareLift Van Transportation Service, a member of Morton Plant Mease Hospital is available to people who live in the local area from Largo to Palm Harbor. We provide free transportation to BayCare hospital campuses for those ambulatory members of our community that don't have the option of using their own vehicle. The service is available Monday through Friday and helps to improve the lives of the most vulnerable people in our community.

To register for Carelift, please call (727) 734-6107. We are in the office Monday – Friday from 8am-3:30pm.

CareLift is also looking for volunteers in Dunedin and the surrounding area. We provide over 1,000 free rides every month, but we can't do it without our volunteers. If you enjoy meeting new people, we would love to have you join our dynamic volunteer team. A few hours of your time can make a positive difference in your life and the lives of others.

Opportunities available at Carelift include Dispatcher, Driver and Driver's Aide. In addition, we have volunteer opportunities in Dunedin Hospital and at The Tree House, our thrift store, located on Virginia Street.

To volunteer please contact the Volunteer Coordinators:

Lauretta Fernandez at Lauretta.Fernandez@Baycare.org
(727) 734-6046

Jamie Lombardi Jamie.Lombardi@Baycare.org
(727) 734-6046

Phone Care

Phone Care is a free telephone reassurance program sponsored by Morton Plant Mease Volunteer Resources. Seven days a week, volunteers receive and place phone calls to community members who live alone to check on their well-being. If a participant fails to call in and we are unable to reach them, we will call their emergency contact. If we are not successful reaching an emergency contact, we will request a welfare check from the local Sheriff.

If you are interested in this program, please call (727) 734-6107 to enroll.

SEASIDE SEABIRD SANCTUARY

Seaside Seabird Sanctuary would like to thank all the incredible volunteers who have helped with clean-up, and repairs to rebuild the sanctuary. There is still a lot of work to be done, but great progress is being made. Donations are requested to support the ongoing reconstruction, visit SeasideSeabirdSanctuary.org for more information.

TARPON SPRINGS SHEPHERD CENTER (TSSC)

TSSC is a faith-based organization whose mission is to provide compassion, basic support, and assistance to those in our community who need it most. Their food pantry is open Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday from 10am-1:30pm. Outreach services are available the same days from 10am-3pm. Their Thrift Store is open Monday-Friday from 9am-5:45pm and Saturday 10am-4:45pm. The center is located at 304 S. Pinellas Avenue in Tarpon Springs.

TSSC needs donations and volunteers. Call (727) 939-1400 ext. 417 or 419 or visit TSCenter.org for more information.

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