

NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS Magazine

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A War That Would Not End: Florida and the Seminole Wars

By Bob Griffin, Local Historian

The Seminole Wars were three major military conflicts between the United States and the Seminole people, spanning roughly from 1817 to 1858. Throughout the first half of the 19th century, the Seminole Nation and the federal government clashed repeatedly as U.S. expansion pressed deeper into Florida.

The First Seminole War in 1817 lasted barely two and a half months. When General Andrew Jackson declared victory, few realized that the conflict had only just begun.

After Florida became a state and James K. Polk assumed the presidency, a fragile peace followed. Seminoles lived largely within reservation boundaries and traded with settlers at authorized posts. To reduce tensions, Polk established a 20-mile buffer zone around the reservation where white homestead claims were prohibited.

Second Seminole War (1836–1854)

Pressure for complete Indian removal continued. Congress passed the Indian Removal Act of 1830, which sought to resolve what officials called the "Indian problem" by relocating tribes to Indian Territory in present-day Oklahoma. Though labeled "voluntary," an estimated 60,000 Southeastern Native Americans were displaced. Approximately 15,000 died along the way, a tragedy remembered as the Trail of Tears. In Central Florida, Seminoles were taken to Tampa or Fort Myers, placed on ships, and transported to New Orleans. Forced removals continued through 1850.



Osceola, Seminole warrior

- Continued on Page 6

Also in this Issue:



New Residents at the Aquarium

Clearwater Marine Aquarium welcomes harbor seals Ocean, Scallop, and Pharoah.

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Pet of the Issue

Meet Morgan, this month's pet of the issue. This Maltese-Havapoo keeps everyone smiling.

- page 13



From Swing Sets to Selfie Sticks

From the Greatest Generation to Gen Alpha, every generation has changed the world.

- page 16

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PUBLISHERS

Lora and Pete Magnani

ART DIRECTION

Pete Magnani

SALES

Lora Magnani
(813) 361-7376

CONTACT INFO

P.O. Box 2628

Dunedin, FL 34697

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BELLEAIR AREA NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

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

Do you need another copy of this magazine? You may pick up additional copies at all City Halls, Panera Bread, UPS Store and the Belleair Market. Call (813) 239-6862 if you need more than a few.

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

Thank you for reading,
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SEE YOU AGAIN IN JUNE

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3637 Fourth St. N., Ste 101 St. Pete

DiCeglie.Nick.web@flsenate.gov

Rep. Kimberly Berfield 351-8820

Republican, District 58

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CALENDAR OF HOLIDAYS & EVENTS

As always, this is subject to change.

APRIL

- April Fools' Day 1
- Passover Begins 1
- Good Friday 3
- Public Schools Closed 3
- St. Pete Renaissance Fair 4-26
- Easter Sunday 5
- Dyngus Day at Crabby Bill's** 6
- PGA Masters 9-12
- Dunedin Highland Games** 11
- Sugar Sand Festival Ends 12
- Palm Sunday 13
- Taxes Due 15
- Foreigner at the Sound 18
- Patriot's Day 20
- Earth Day 22
- Administrative Assistant Day 22
- Arbor Day 24
- Bucs Beach Bash St. Pete Beach 25
- Public Schools Closed 27
- Taste of IRB** 26

MAY

- May Day 1
- Stone Crab Season Ends 1
- Largo Mayor's Golf Tournament 2
- Cinco de Mayo 5
- Teacher Appreciation Day 5
- Letter Carrier's Food Drive 9
- Mother's Day 10
- Belleair Sip & Slide Summer Kickoff 15
- Armed Forces Day 16
- Sharkapalooza Coachman Park 16
- St. Pete Italian Fest 16
- Jason Mraz at Ruth Eckerd Hall 16
- Safe Boating Week 17-23
- Largo Disc Golf Tournament 17
- Water Safety Day Long Center 18
- Dunedin Rotary Triathlon 19
- Tampa Bay Barbecue Festival St. Pete 22
- Memorial Day 25
- Public Schools Closed 25
- Palm Pavilion 100th Anniversary** 31

More details for items highlighted in red can be found in the Bar/Restaurant News, Business Briefs, or Community News Sections or in an ad in this issue.

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VETERANS' TRIP 159 women veterans flew from Lakeland to Washington, D.C. last month for their inaugural Flight of Honor. Along with sightseeing, the vets visited the Military Women's Memorial at the Arlington National Cemetery.

The Memorial is a tribute to America's Servicewomen and features an education center, interactive exhibits, and a collection of military women's stories.

PROPERTY RETURNED Last month, Florida Chief Financial Officer Blaise Ingoglia announced that \$88 million in unclaimed property was returned to Floridians in February. Unclaimed property includes dormant bank accounts, unclaimed insurance proceeds, stocks, dividends, uncashed checks, deposits, credit balances and refunds. It can also include watches, jewelry, coins, stamps and more. \$23.8 million was returned in unclaimed property last month, the CFO said.

According to the Florida Division of Unclaimed Property, one in five Floridians has unclaimed funds from a forgotten financial account.

To search for unclaimed property, visit FLTreasureHunt.Gov. You can search for an account owned by a person or business.

PLANNING FOR COLLEGE Florida Prepaid covers tuition and fees for 30 credit hours at 12 universities and the 28 public Florida colleges. The plan starts at \$29 per month and can also be used nationwide at public, private, trade and technical schools. For more information, visit MyFloridaPrepaid.com.

NEW DOLPHINS AT CLEARWATER AQUARIUM Clearwater Marine Aquarium welcomed two bottlenose dolphins and several other animals last month from the Miami Seaquarium to their new home at CMA.

The two female bottlenose dolphins are Star, 26, born 1999; and Squirt, 15, born in 2010. After a period of quarantine and acclimation they will join three resident bottlenose dolphins and six rough-toothed dolphin residents in the Ruth & J.O. Stone Dolphin Complex.

OUR NEXT ISSUE IS IN JUNE If you need another copy of this magazine, pick one up at all City Halls, Panera Bread, The UPS Store, and Belleair Market. If you need more than a few, call (813) 361-7376.

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and More...



SPECIALTY PLATES Over two million Florida drivers have a specialty license plate, celebrating everything from their alma mater to their favorite sports team or commemorating their military service.

The big picture, according to the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles, here are the top five most popular specialty plates in Florida as of October 1st:

- Endless Summer (142,999)
- Helping Sea Turtles Survive (112,996)
- University of Florida (93,347)
- Miami Heat (88,805)

Tampa Bay's mostpopular plates:

- The Tampa Bay Buccaneers-themed plate is number one across our eight counties, with nearly 40,000 registered.
- Endless Summer (34,905)
- Helping Sea Turtles Survive (26,055)
- University of Florida (20,639)

BEACH RENOURISHMENT COMPLETION The Pinellas County beach renourishment project was completed in February. The \$126 million project began last September to repair the erosion left by the massive flooding and storm surge bought by the 2024 hurricanes.

The project brought sand from John's Pass, Pass-a-Grille, Blind Pass, and Egmont Shoal. It was mixed with seawater, then pumped onto the beach from Sand Key to Treasure Island. The process is generally done every five years and was scheduled for 2024, but a dispute with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers over easements caused a delay.

HURRICANE RECOVERY Pinellas County is reaching out to people who may have been impacted by Hurricanes Idalia, Helene, and/or Milton, and previously applied for disaster assistance.

If you still have unmet recovery needs like home repairs or financial losses from the storm, Pinellas County's People First Hurricane Recovery Programs may be able to help — even if you already applied for FEMA assistance, SBA assistance, or received insurance proceeds.

The U.S. Government approved Pinellas County for \$813 million in recovery grant funds and we're using most of this grant to provide direct assistance to eligible homeowners, renters and landlords of small rental properties. You may qualify for grants funds to rebuild your home above flood code, recoup repair costs, be reimbursed for storm-related expenses, and buy a new home.

You can apply for Pinellas County's People First Hurricane Recovery Programs online or in-person. Learn more about income eligibility and see how much you could qualify for by visiting Recover.Pinellas.gov or by calling (727) 606-3307, Monday - Friday, 8am-5pm.

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The Seminole Wars, Continued

In 1846, Captain John Sprague was appointed to oversee Indian affairs. Seminole leaders distrusted him—understandably, given the long history of chiefs being seized under flags of truce. Sprague estimated that only 360 Seminoles remained: 120 warriors and 240 women and children.

A Seminole trading post opened on Payne's Creek near the Peace River. Against Florida law, free whiskey was initially distributed to encourage trade. When the new manager, George Payne, ended the practice, tensions escalated, as this was the Seminoles' only reliable source of whiskey.

Violence followed. Attacks occurred near Fort Pierce, a government employee was killed at James Russell's home, and finally Payne's Creek was attacked after Payne again refused whiskey. Payne and his assistant, Dempsey Whidden, were murdered, and the trading post was looted and burned.

Chief Billy Bowlegs surrendered several warriors responsible for recent attacks, expecting peace. Instead, General David Twiggs announced that all Seminoles would be removed from Florida.

Two companies of U.S. troops sent from Fort Brooke (Tampa) to reinforce Fort King (Ocala) never arrived. They were ambushed by a small Seminole force, and the 108 soldiers were killed.

Federal forces were unprepared for renewed war. Twiggs increased troop levels, relying heavily on mounted volunteers, as conflicts spread as far south as Miami and the Florida Keys.

By 1841, only about 300 Seminole warriors remained. Some had surrendered to avoid starvation; others were captured when they approached forts to negotiate. The war became deeply unpopular with the American public, press, and government. It devolved into a costly war of attrition and quietly faded away without formal resolution.

In 1850, the government offered another \$50,000 to encourage relocation. Seventy-four more Seminoles were shipped west, but resistance continued. Chiefs were taken to Washington, signed agreements under pressure, and repudiated them upon returning. Leadership changed frequently, and resentment deepened.

In 1854, Secretary of War Jefferson Davis imposed a hardline policy, including trade embargoes and opening Seminole lands to white settlement. Another conflict became inevitable.

The Third Seminole War (1855–1858)

By late 1855, more than 700 U.S. troops were stationed in Florida. Seminole leaders met near Taylor Creek, where some favored resistance while others urged caution.

On December 20, 1855, Billy Bowlegs led an attack on Lt. George Hartsuff's surveying party near Fort Myers. Four soldiers were killed, Hartsuff was wounded, and supplies were destroyed, formally igniting the Third Seminole War.

Militias formed statewide as federal forces surged. Raids spread across southern Florida, including near Fort Dallas and Key Biscayne. Retaliatory attacks followed, sometimes involving mutilation of bodies.

Brigadier General William Harney returned to Florida, establishing a line of forts and introducing flatboats for Everglades patrols. His campaign achieved little, and by early 1857 he was reassigned.

Colonel Gustavus Loomis replaced him and created the "Everglades Navy" using shallow-draft, metal "alligator boats." The boats, thirty feet long, were pointed at both ends and only drew two to three feet of water. They could carry up to sixteen men into the swamps, capturing primarily women and children and destroying villages and crops. Abner Doubleday, the Union major general credited with firing the first shot in defense of Fort Sumter, served in this unit.

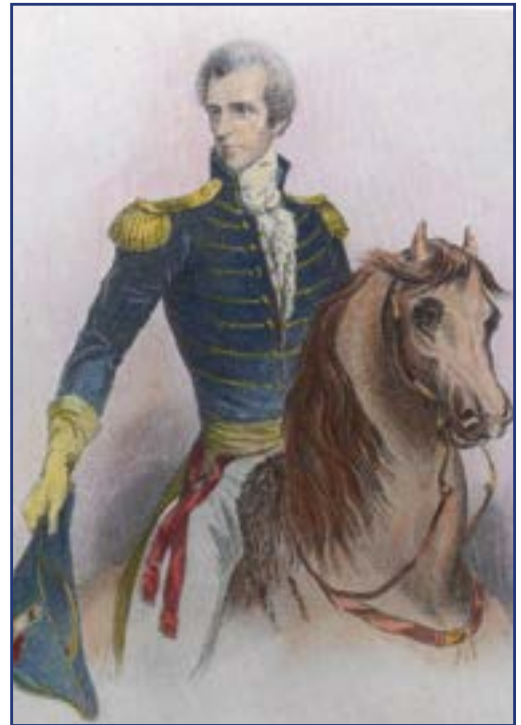
Beginning January 1, 1858, U.S. troops swept through the Big Cypress region, burning settlements and destroying remaining food supplies.

Negotiations resumed with Billy Bowlegs, who was offered a separate reservation in Indian Territory. Payments were standardized at \$500 per warrior and \$100 per woman.

In May 1858, 163 Seminoles departed from Punta Rassa near Fort Myers for New Orleans. On May 8, Loomis declared the Third Seminole War officially over.

Officials believed roughly 100 Seminoles remained in Florida, though this was likely an undercount. Groups led by Sam Jones and Chipco remained hidden in the Everglades and near Lake Okeechobee.

During the Civil War, Seminoles remained neutral. Florida's 1868 Constitution granted them legislative representation, though no seats were filled. Later constitutions removed those



Andrew Jackson , President (1829-1837)

provisions and imposed voter restrictions that remained in place until 1968.

A small number of Seminoles continued living in isolation near Lake Okeechobee and the Everglades through the early 20th century. By the mid-20th century, Seminoles consolidated on reservations. Federal recognition followed in 1957 for the Seminole Tribe of Florida and in 1962 for the Miccosukee Tribe.

By the 1940s, Seminoles began consolidating on reservations. In 1957, the Seminole Tribe of Florida gained federal recognition. The Miccosukee Tribe received recognition in 1962 were granted the Miccosukee Indian Reservation along the northern border of Everglades National Park, about 45 miles west of Miami.

In the 1970s, Seminoles began pioneered high stakes bingo, later expanding into full casino operations. In 2007, they purchased Hard Rock International, adding the Las Vegas Hard Rock Hotel & Casino in 2020.

The Miccosukee Tribe, maintaining a more traditional lifestyle, became known for cultural tourism, alligator wrestling, crafts, and eco-tours.

Today, both tribes preserve their cultural traditions while operating successful modern enterprises across Florida.

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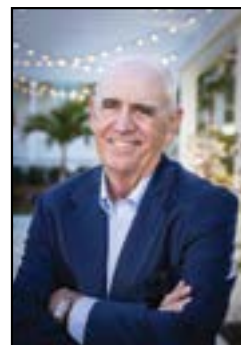


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FIVE WAYS OF KEEPING YOUR WEALTH

by Ray Ferrara, ProVise Management Group



We spend much of our working years trying to accumulate wealth to help us reach our financial goal of retirement. We take various degrees of risk to achieve this goal because it adds potential value to our life. But if we have enough that taking risk no longer adds value, then why continue taking the same level of risk? We can't avoid risk altogether, but we can manage it.

Taxes are a risk and they can destroy the best laid plans. You want to diversify sources of income by using taxable (stocks, bonds, and cash), tax free (municipal bonds, Roth IRA) and deferred (retirement plans and annuities). Given the negative financial position of the Federal government and many states, very few expect tax rates to go down.

Always make sure that you have ample liquidity. If you have everything in the market and you are forced to sell securities when they are down, it is a double whammy. Keep enough cash or cash equivalents to weather an economic storm. Think the Great Recession. Don't continue to tie up your money up in long term investments like private equity or non-income producing real estate.

While debt can be a good thing when using it to buy things that are likely to go up in value over time, it can be another destroyer of wealth. Pay off those credit cards every month. While in many cases it doesn't make sense to pay off a mortgage, it may make you feel more comfortable doing so. So do it. The best financial decision isn't necessarily always the right decision.

Simplify, simplify, simplify. Get rid of the things you no longer use along with the adult toys. You may love your silverware that you haven't used in decades, but the kids don't want them, so sell it. That goes for other collectibles like art, coins, stamps, etc.

Family can also be a great risk. We all want to help family members, especially our lineage, but if they come to expect help from mom and dad, it can quickly drain resources that either will delay retirement or keep mom and dad from enjoying the lifestyle to which they have become accustomed. Don't let them inherit the money early, they will get it soon enough.

If you would like to talk about keeping your wealth, take advantage of our complimentary consultation.

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Bar & Restaurant News



ICONIC E&E STAKEOUT GRILL SOLD Eugen’s Restaurant of Belleair Bluffs owned by Eugen Fuhrmann and Chef Erwin Scheuringer opened in 1985. In 1995 it was remolded and opened as E&E Stakeout Grill. It is still owned by Eugen and Chef Erwin – thus the name, E &E. However, like all great things do, this too has come to end. Eugen and Chef Erwin have sold E&E to Canadian restaurateur, Peter Armanious of PBJ Food Group. Peter is no newbie to the hospitality world with eight restaurants under his belt.

Have no fear though, Chef Erwin says he will still be nearby. He plans on retaining ownership of The Plaza and being part of their sister restaurant, Guppy’s, located at 1701 Gulf Blvd on Indian Rocks Beach. “I plan on helping with the transition,” says Chef Erwin. “The name, the menu, and the staff will remain the same as well.”

The closing date is April 19th. E&E Stakeout Grill is located at 100 Indian Rocks Road in The Plaza in Belleair Bluffs. For more information about specials and upcoming events visit their Facebook page or call (727) 585-6399.

DYNGUS DAY AT CRABBY BILL’S The annual post-Lenten Polish celebration will be held at the Original Crabby Bill’s on Monday, April 6th starting at 11:30am. They will serve traditional Polish fare including pierogies, kielbasa and potato pancakes. Jasiu’s Polka All Stars will be on stage performing polka music and a splash zone will be set up with water guns and balloons for the necessary water fight ritual. Drink specials will include a “Fuzzy Dupa” vodka cocktail. There is no cover charge for the event which will run throughout the day. Call (727) 281-2193 for more information.

NEW LOCATION Fusion Cigar Lounge, previously located in the Pelican Plaza on North Clearwater Beach, closed its doors after the hurricanes of 2024. After a lot of hard work, they reopened in February in a new location at 696 S. Gulfview Blvd. The new location has a bigger lounge, humidor, bar, and outside patio.

They open at noon every day, closing at midnight Sunday-Thursday, and 2am on Friday and Saturday. For more information follow them on Facebook and Instagram or call (727) 330-7649.

EXTRA PICKLES The Lucky Dill Deli, located at 33180 US HWY 19 in Palm Harbor, is coming to South Clearwater Beach. The deli plans to open this second location west of the Gondolier Italian Restaurant and Pizza plaza. The 30-year-old New York City-style deli specializes in skyscraper sandwiches with pastrami, corned beef, brisket, and classics like matzo ball soup and fish-n-chips. They are not only a deli, but also a bakery. Try a cannoli at their cannoli bar, a cookie from their huge selection, or a slice of homemade New York style cheesecake. The opening date is not known for the new location but follow them on Facebook for updates.

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Bar & Restaurant News



NEW SPECIALS AT THE HIDEAWAY Belleair Hideaway, located next to the Belleair Market, at 560 Indian Rocks Road in Belleair Bluffs, is giving locals more reasons to stop by during the week with two new recurring events: Cigar Sundays and Wine Down Wednesdays. Owners Chris Scott and Julie Champion have created a relaxed neighborhood atmosphere, the Hideaway continues to bring the community together with casual gatherings centered around great drinks and good company.

Wine Down Wednesdays invite guests to unwind midweek with a special happy hour from 4 to 7 PM, featuring \$3 off all Tapas menu items. It's the perfect opportunity to meet friends after work, enjoy a glass of wine, and take advantage of the full menu at a discount. On Cigar Sundays, guests can sit back, enjoy a cigar, and relax in a laid-back setting designed for conversation and connection. Enjoy a Beer and Gourmet Flatbread for only \$26. For more information on weekly events and specials, follow Belleair Hideaway on social media or stop in and experience Belleair Bluffs' brand-new Speakeasy!

Wine 101 at Belleair Hideaway is the last Monday of every month from 5-6:30pm, featuring wine, hors d'oeuvres and discussion about wines from all over the world. Reservations are \$50 (including tax and gratuity), and seats are limited to 20 each month, so reserve your spot early. Call Belleair Hideaway at (727) 223-4568 for more information.

COMING SOON Tavern in the Bluffs, the newest sister restaurant to Backwaters on Sand Key and North Redington, recently put out a teaser post that they are "Coming in Hot." Their new sign is up, the drywall is up, the cement floors are poured, and the furniture is rolling in. The new location will be located at 2890 West Bay Drive (previously occupied by Cody's Roadhouse). Follow them on Facebook for more information on their soon to be opening.

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY Congratulations to Frank Chivas and the Baystar Restaurant Group on the ten-year anniversary of the opening of Marina Cantina Tequila Bar and Grill and Salt Cracker Fish Camp. Baystar Restaurant Group is the parent company of 10 restaurants in the Tampa Bay Area and aims to provide both a delicious experience and excellent value. Baystar restaurants have a warm tropical feel, and feature menus dominated by fresh seafood, much of which is provided by Chivas's own fleet of dayboats. This source of fresh local seafood combined with creative chefs has established a strong reputation for Baystar's restaurants as excellent dining destinations. For more information about either restaurant visit MarinaCantina.com or SaltCrackerFishCamp.com. Both restaurants are located at 25 Causeway Blvd.

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MORGAN: A LITTLE DOG, A BIG NEW BEGINNING

By Yamile Haibi, Blue Merle Pet Photography

Think your pet should be featured next? Enter at contest.blumerlephoto.com.

Morgan is a three-year-old Maltese–Havapoo mix and, according to his proud parents, the cutest 10-pound “mutt” you’ll ever meet. But Morgan is more than adorable—he’s been part of a journey that brought unexpected new beginnings.

After losing a beloved dog years earlier, Morgan’s mom decided to wait until retirement before welcoming another pet into her life. Long work hours and travel schedules simply didn’t allow the time a dog deserved. But three years into retirement, something changed.

While browsing online one day, she saw a tiny puppy in Atlanta—and couldn’t stop thinking about him. Her husband suggested finding a puppy locally in Florida, but the little furball in Atlanta had already captured her heart. So off she went on a road trip with a girlfriend and returned home with a 2.7-pound bundle of love.

They named him Morgan, inspired by their favorite drink, Captain Morgan. Like many people who haven’t had a puppy in years, they quickly rediscovered how exhausting those early months can be. Morgan was tiny and full of curiosity, so his parents watched him closely—making sure he didn’t nibble something dangerous in the yard, tumble from the seawall, or squeeze through the fence. Soon, though, Morgan settled into his dockside life, sitting beside Dad while he fished and making friends with neighborhood dogs. Then, in September 2024, everything changed. Morgan’s family evacuated their Redington Beach home ahead of Hurricane Helene, expecting to return within a day or two. Instead, storm surge brought four to five feet of water into their home, and they lost nearly everything.

What followed, however, became an unexpected blessing. They decided it was time to move to Belleair Bluffs, where kindness greeted them almost immediately. Just three days after arriving, a neighbor knocked on their door with homemade cookies and a warm welcome. Within weeks they were meeting neighbors throughout the street and discovering a close-knit, pet-loving community. Morgan quickly made himself at home. He now enjoys daily walks with his girlfriend Luna, a terrier two doors down, and visits with Maggie, a gentle Labrador neighbor.

At home, Morgan keeps everyone smiling. He races through the backyard like a true greyhound, enjoys long walks, loves snuggling on the couch, and happily chases squirrels whenever he gets the chance. He also loves traveling to Birmingham to visit Darla’s mom and her three dogs, where a large backyard means even more fun and games. For Morgan’s family, this little dog has brought laughter, comfort, and a reminder that sometimes life’s biggest changes lead exactly where we’re meant to be.









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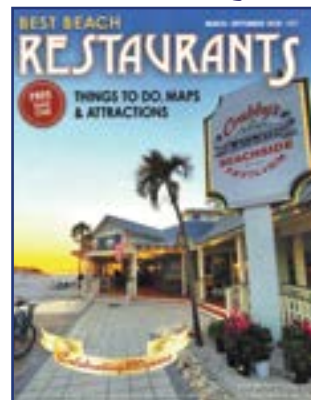
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Business Briefs

BEST BEACH RESTAURANTS MAGAZINE

This free magazine highlights many of the best restaurants on the Pinellas Beaches. The March-September issue is out now. It is available at every hotel, motel and accommodation on the beaches - but you can pick one up in a few locations: the IRB CVS, The IRB Welcome Center, Panera on West Bay Drive, Shorty's in the Shoppes of Sand Key, and area restaurants. This is the 57th issue. Pick one up - It is Free!



RADIANCE NOW 20 In April, Radiance Medspa, located at 2894 West Bay Drive, will celebrate its 20th year. The Med Spa specializes in non-surgical cosmetic services for the face and body and is the #1 provider of BOTOX and Juvederm in Tampa Bay and among the top 1% in the United States. Radiance is woman founded and woman led by owner Stephanie Schlageter. “20 years of excellence when most medspas don’t survive their first five. Our longevity isn’t just a number—it represents thousands of successful treatments and satisfied clients who trust us with their most personal aesthetic goals” says Schlageter. To view treatments, services, read about their team and book appointments visit RadianceMedSpa.com or call (727) 518-7100. They are open Monday-Thursday and open at 9am.

FULL SERVICE Smart Building Construction LLC is a licensed Florida general contractor serving the Tampa Bay area. The company specializes in residential remodels, additions, custom homes, and light commercial projects. From permitting through completion, Smart Building Construction provides hands-on project management, code-compliant construction, and quality craftsmanship tailored to Florida’s unique building requirements.

Sister companies Smart Heating & Cooling LLC and Smart Home Electric LLC provide full-service HVAC and electrical solutions throughout the Tampa Bay area. Together, the companies deliver air conditioning installation and replacement, maintenance programs, indoor air quality systems, electrical panel upgrades, EV charger installations, generator systems, and lighting solutions. Focused on safety, energy efficiency, and long-term performance, the team supports both residential and light commercial clients with reliable service and code-compliant installations tailored to Florida’s climate and infrastructure needs. Visit SmartBuild-Florida.com, SmartHomeElectricalServices.com, or SmartHeatandCool.com for more information.

MOVING EAST The last tenant in the shopping center next to BayCare Ballpark, the spring training home of the Philadelphia Phillies, is moving east. Floor & Décor is moving to the past Rooms-To-Go Outlet Center and a portion of Best Buy at 21411 US Highway 19. This move, most likely happening in the fall, will set the stage for a mixed-use development that is still years away.

Business Briefs



CHIPS FOR CHARITY Irena Nolasco, the owner of Stefane’s South barber shop in Belleair Bluffs and Olde Time barber shop in Largo, recently helped raise funds for the local charity, Raising Relief Foundation, by hosting a “Poker Night” at the Belleair Bluffs Community Center. “It was an epic night!” says Nolasco.

It was a full house with all 66 seats occupied by players. The tournament brought in over \$10,000 with all proceeds benefiting Raising Relief. Belleair Bluffs’ Mayor Chris Arbutine and Silver Queen owner donated a grand prize gold coin worth \$3500. Belleair resident Rob Pierson outlasted the other 63 players to claim the top prize following several hours of play. “It was a very memorable night that will be repeated annually,” Nolasco stated.

The Raising Relief Foundation is continually working on various projects to address the critical needs of the community. Their current initiatives focus on community development, emergency relief, education, and health and well-being. For more information on Raising Relief, visit their website at RaisingReliefFoundation.org.

MORE PARKING IS COMING In the heart of Downtown Clearwater, at the corner of Pierce Street and Osceola Avenue, the new Osceola Parking Garage will do more than solve parking demand. The 397-space public garage also introduces 12,000 square feet of prime ground-floor retail. The project is designed to support restaurants, specialty shops, and retail services that thrive on foot traffic.

Groundbreaking took place in December, with completion anticipated in January 2027. The city is currently accepting inquiries about the retail space at MyClearwater.com.

NEW APARTMENTS AND RETAIL Adjacent to the Osceola Parking Garage will be one of downtown Clearwater’s most transformative residential projects: The Bluffs development. Planned as a 28-story, 400-unit luxury apartment tower on the former City Hall site, The Bluffs project will introduce 620,000 square feet of development bordering the southeastern edge of Coachman Park. The project includes 10,000 square feet of retail, 440 parking spaces, and a strong commitment to environmental sustainability. Construction is expected to begin soon, with completion targeted for May 2028. Together with nearby hospitality and retail projects, The Bluffs development will significantly expand downtown’s residential base and support year-round economic activity.

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A TALE OF MANY GENERATIONS: FROM SWING SETS TO SELFIE STICKS

By Bob Griffin, Contributor

My parents were born in 1921 and 1922 — smack in the middle of the Greatest Generation — and honestly, their résumé is exhausting just to read: the Great Depression, the Stock Market Crash of 1929, World War II. Casual stuff. I'm a Baby Boomer, born in 1953, and I've had my own highlight reel of chaos: Vietnam, JFK, Nixon's dramatic exit, the Challenger explosion, and COVID-19. Our kids? Split between Gen X and Millennials — they've inherited 50 years of "events," bless their hearts. Turns out, no generation gets off easy.

Let's take a little journey through time — buckle up, because we're covering roughly 120 years of humanity awkwardly figuring itself out.

First up: **The Greatest Generation** (1901–

1927). These folks survived the Great Depression, fought in World War II, and came home to build the modern world — all without a single motivational podcast. They valued hard work, sacrifice, and keeping their emotions deeply, deeply buried. Their idea of self-care was "walking it off." They were, objectively, tougher than all of us and they absolutely knew it.

Hot on their heels came **The Silent Generation** (1928–1945) — and no, they weren't called "silent" because they were shy. They just kind of got sandwiched between two massive historical events and decided to keep their heads down and work. They were the original "don't make a fuss" crowd. Reliable, disciplined, and deeply confused by the generations that came after them.

Then the war ended, and apparently people celebrated enthusiastically, because suddenly we had **The Baby Boomers** (1946–1964). The largest generation in history, Boomers grew up during an era of unprecedented prosperity. They protested Vietnam, invented rock and roll culture, and then — plot twist — grew up and became the establishment they once raged against. They also really, really love talking about how cheap houses were in 1978.

Next came **Generation X** (1965–1980), the generation history almost forgot. Raised by latchkey, MTV, and general neglect, Gen Xers became the original cynics. They watched disco die, saw the Cold War end, and somehow survived without helicopter parents or participation trophies. They're fine, by the way. They don't need your validation. They never did.

Then came the **Millennials** (1981–1996), and oh boy did the internet change things. Millennials grew up during the rise of the web, graduated into a financial crisis, and got absolutely roasted for eating avocado toast instead of buying homes — as if brunch choices were the reason housing prices exploded. They invented the "hustle culture" they secretly hate, and they're currently managing the world while also managing crippling student debt. They're doing great! (They're not doing great.)



Generation Z Kids

Hot on their heels: **Generation Z** (1997–2012). Gen Z never knew a world without smartphones and had their formative years upended by a global pandemic. They're hyper-aware, digitally native, socially conscious, and have absolutely no patience for corporate nonsense. They communicate largely in memes and are terrifyingly good at calling out hypocrisy. Boomers find them exhausting. Gen Z finds Boomers exhausting. It's very mutual.

Finally, the newest kids on the block: **Generation Alpha** (2013–present). These tiny

humans are growing up with AI, iPads in kindergarten, and parents who document their entire lives on Instagram. We genuinely don't know yet what they'll be like as adults, but statistically at least one of them will invent something that makes all previous generations feel very, very old.

So what's the big takeaway? Every generation thinks the ones before them were too rigid and the ones after them are too soft. Every generation faces challenges unique to their time. And every generation, without fail, eventually turns to the next one and says, "You have no idea how easy you have it."

To which the next generation rolls their eyes — and then goes and changes the world anyway.



Generation X Kids



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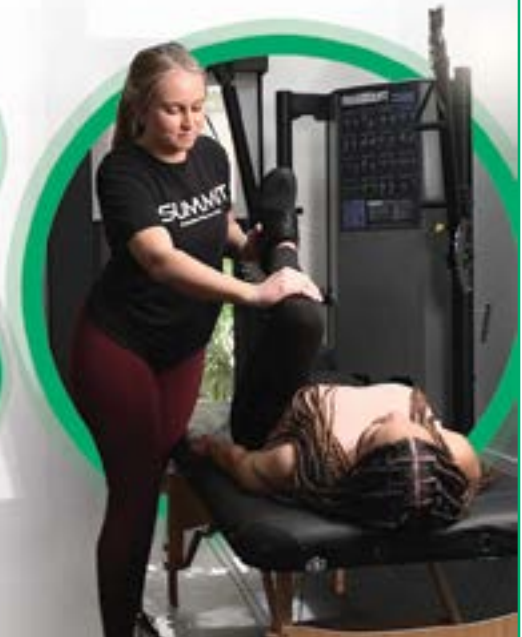
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DON'T LET SCAMMERS SCARE YOU DURING TAX SEASON

**From the Desk of Sheriff
Bob Gualtieri**



Some of the most common and successful scams involve pouncing on you in a situation where you're already tense and nervous. Scammers may manufacture a crisis, using AI to impersonate a family member in distress. But the easiest thing for them to do is to try to take advantage of you in a situation where you're already on edge. And who isn't just a little bit afraid of the Internal Revenue Service (IRS)? Even if you're entirely on the up-and-up, you probably always have it in the back of your mind that an honest mistake, omission, or an unexpected audit will reveal a costly mistake.

The Federal Trade Commission has seen an increase in scam calls claiming that people owe taxes. The scam often happens in two parts. The first call claims to be from a branch of the IRS saying you owe back taxes plus some heavy interest and penalties. The scammer then offers to connect you with someone else who can help with tax debt relief. Those people will demand money, either for the fictitious debt, or for their services to help you evade the debt.

First of all, the IRS will always initiate any communication by mail. If you get a phone call, email, or text from the IRS it is a scam. (There may be some situations where you're already in contact with the IRS about a known issue when a representative will call you, but you will always get first notification of a tax problem by mail.) But even a letter could be a scam. If you get a call, email, or text claiming to be from the IRS, ignore it and delete it. If you get a letter from them and have any doubt that it is real, call their main help line at 800-829-1040 or visit www.irs.gov to find out if the contents of the letter are legitimate.

Remember, the IRS will never ask you to pay for anything with cryptocurrency or gift cards. If they threaten to "cancel your social security number" or arrest you, you know it's a scam. While people can be arrested for tax fraud, you would get plenty of notification to clear up any errors first. Scammers hope you'll be scared enough to do whatever they say without stopping to think.

Then there are actual tax relief companies which may not be scams per se, but which are often misleading, taking your money without giving you any help you couldn't get on your own simply by calling the IRS. The companies promise to negotiate with the IRS on your behalf and say they can reduce or eliminate your debt or even stop the current collection. But only the IRS can negotiate with you about what you owe. The tax relief companies make promises they can't keep, all with one goal – getting you to pay a hefty fee for their services. You pay them, and instead of being debt free, you end up owing even more.

If you know you're in trouble with the IRS – if you currently owe money or know you can't pay upcoming taxes – the best thing to do is contact them directly. You may be able to set up a payment plan, or in some cases an offer in compromise where they agree to accept less than what you owe. Taxes can be scary, but don't let your anxiety make you fall victim to a scammer or an unscrupulous business.

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WHAT MAKES YOUR FIRE DISTRICT SPECIAL

By Chief Ken Grimes, PSFRD

Because we are part of something bigger.

Here is my opinion up front. The Pinellas Suncoast Fire Resuce District is strong because it does not operate alone. We are part of one of the most integrated Fire and EMS systems in the country. That is not a slogan. It is how we respond every single day.

One system. Many departments. One mission.

Fire departments and EMS agencies across Pinellas County operate as one coordinated system. It is the seventh largest Fire and EMS system in the United States. When a call comes in anywhere in the county, the closest appropriate units respond based on real time vehicle location. Not boundaries. Not logos on the door. Just who can get there fastest.

For routine calls, a single department may handle the incident. For a serious emergency like a structure fire, the system automatically scales up.

A typical structure fire response includes three engines, two ladder trucks, a rescue unit, a squad, ambulances, an ambulance supervisor, a rehabilitation unit, and two district chiefs for command and safety.

For a small department, staffing for that worst case scenario alone would be financially impossible. In Pinellas County, it happens seamlessly because everyone operates under the same procedures, training standards, and command structure.

Recently in our District, units worked side by side from Largo Fire Rescue, Madeira Beach Fire Department, Seminole Fire Rescue, and Sunstar Paramedics. No friction. No confusion. Just professionals doing their jobs together.

Is this efficient? Absolutely.

This model gives residents the strength of a large metropolitan fire department with the accountability and responsiveness of a local district. If every agency had to independently staff for major emergencies, costs would skyrocket. Instead, we share resources and capacity. That is smart government.

EMS. One authority. One plan.

Emergency medical services are structured just as deliberately. Pinellas County operates a single EMS Authority that pays fire agencies for first response, contracts with an ambulance provider for transport, and funds the system through an ad valorem tax while billing for ambulance transport. The result is an approximately 150-million-dollar system that is both effective and resilient.

During a recent hurricane evacuation, a nursing home needed to relocate 250 patients. The system flexed, deployed roughly 50 ambulances, and completed the evacuation within hours without disrupting countywide response. That is what scale and coordination look like. Average response times across most of the county remain under seven minutes.

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RIGHT SIZING WITH DIGNITY: HOW ROD & EDITH FOUND THEIR NEXT CHAPTER

By Alison Ross Tompkins, Broker
Associate for Coldwell Banker



When Rod and Edith reached out to me, they weren't just looking to sell a home—they were looking for guidance through one of life's most sensitive transitions. They were preparing to right size into an Independent Living community where they could feel supported, connected, and safe. Like so many older adults, they were balancing practical considerations with the emotional weight of leaving a meaningful place behind. For Rod, that was especially true.

One of his greatest joys was sitting on the lanai, watching golfers play through Hole #2 at East Bay Golf Course. It wasn't just a view—it was part of his daily rhythm. He loved studying the swings, following the players' strategies, and enjoying the peaceful movement of the course. Leaving that familiar routine made this move bittersweet. He and Edith were ready for their next chapter, but he was genuinely sad to let go of the connection to the game he loved. That's why trust mattered so deeply throughout their process.

Older clients often share similar worries: feeling overwhelmed, rushed, or unsure who to rely on. They want someone who understands the emotional layers behind a move and who can coordinate the details they no longer want to manage alone. With Rod and Edith, my first priority was learning exactly what kind of support would help them feel steady and respected through each step.

Did they need packers? Painters? Stagers? Help evaluating senior living communities? Every client's needs are unique, and my role is always to tailor the plan to the person—not the other way around. Together, we created a simple, step by step approach that honored their pace and kept them focused on the positive aspects of their new environment, even as they said goodbye to a home they loved.

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

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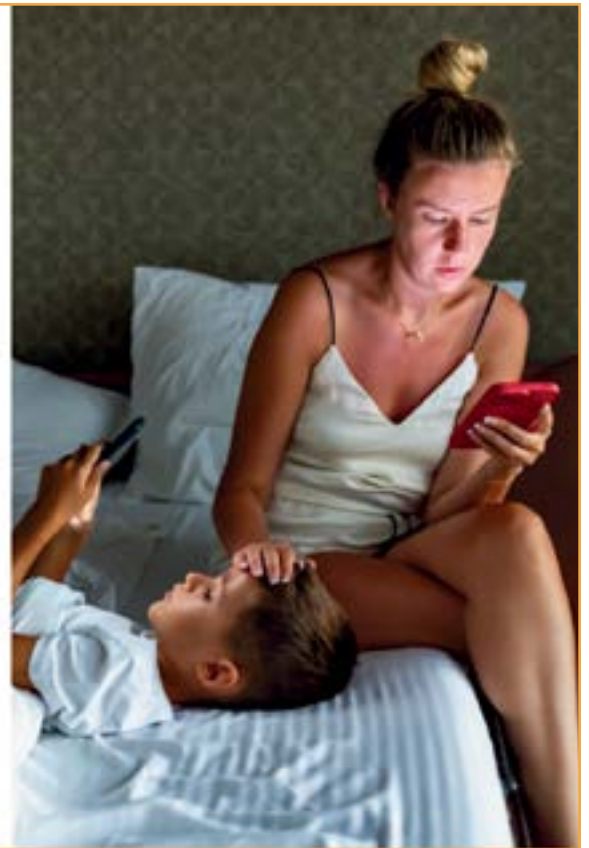


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WHEN A PARENT NEEDS MEDICAID IN AN ASSISTED LIVING FACILITY AND THEIR INCOME ISN'T ENOUGH TO PAY THE BILL

By Theodore Schofner, Esq.

What happens if your parent is in a Florida Assisted Living Facility, on Medicaid (HCBS), and you suddenly realize that Medicaid won't cover the entire bill, what do you do? Many persons are confused by one key point that needs to be fully explained before going any further: being on Medicaid means a very different thing in a skilled nursing facility versus an assisted living facility. When a resident is on Medicaid in a skilled nursing facility, your total income goes to the facility (minus a small personal needs allowance) and Florida Medicaid pays the balance (for most people) in a semi-private room. In short, your payment is covered in full by your income regardless of whether that income is high or low. That is not true for a resident in Assisted Living.

An Assisted Living Facility monthly bill (often called "Rent") is comprised of two components: 1) Room and Board (the cost of your housing in the facility) and 2) Level of Care (the medical and care component of the services you receive). Together these two components comprise the cost of the ALF monthly rent which can range from \$2500 to \$9000 per month depending on the quality of the facility and the care your loved one requires.

The big problem is this: Medicaid only pays the Level of Care component in the Assisted Living Facility. It never covers room and board. That means that the Medicaid recipient's personal income from all sources when added to what Medicaid pays may mean a monthly shortage or deficit that has to be made up somehow to pay the monthly rent to the facility. What to do?

- 1) Start thinking about Medicaid Planning ahead of time: by this I mean, consulting with a competent Elder Law attorney who can competently and thoroughly explain the complex rules of Medicaid with you before you experience an elder care crisis.
- 2) Contributions from Family: Understand that there may be a deficit when it comes time to pay your loved one's Assisted Living Facility bill and begin discussions early among family members about how this shortage is going to be paid and by whom.
- 3) Try Negotiating with the Facility: It isn't easy but try negotiating with the facility. Some facilities may shave off a little bit of the monthly rent if they believe that they will have a resident in their census for many years to come.
- 4) Find a Less Expensive Facility: One of the most difficult decisions on the list, but it might be time to look at less expensive facilities that might not have all the bells and whistles you think that your loved one really needs. Reality check!
- 5) Move to a Skilled Nursing Facility: When all other options fail, consider moving your loved one to a Skilled Nursing Facility. As mentioned earlier, this is the one setting where Medicaid covers all of the cost. Start early and seek professional help.

You can reach Theodore Schofner, Esq. at the Schofner Law Firm, 2117 Indian Rocks Road S. in Largo, (727) 588-0290.

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NEW ADDITIONS AT THE AQUARIUM

In February, Clearwater Marine Aquarium welcomed three harbor seals — Scallop, Pharaoh and Ocean—marking both a brand-new species and a newly-renovated seal habitat for CMA. The arrival of harbor seals expands CMA's animal care family and reinforces its mission to inspire human connection to marine life through meaningful, conservation-based stories.



The new harbor seal habitat is part of CMA's broader plan to incorporate pinnipeds - marine mammals that have front and rear flippers - including harbor seals and California sea lions, into its overall animal care. The exhibit supports CMA's mission while broadening educational messaging beyond Florida to address marine conservation challenges not just in Florida, but around the world.

"It's important to understand that rescue can take many forms and isn't always limited to direct intervention in the ocean," said Joe Handy, CEO of Clearwater Marine Aquarium. "Some of the most meaningful rescue work happens through rehabilitation and long-term care, that helps prevent harm before it occurs. Our mission of rescue, rehabilitation, release, and research remains steady, and each part plays a vital role in protecting marine life."

The harbor seals were welcomed from The Miami Seaquarium. The three seals are considered non-releasable to the wild, as they were born under managed care and do not possess the life skills necessary to survive in their natural environment. The move was approved by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

In summer 2026, CMA plans to welcome additional pinnipeds — sea lions — who will move into a new sea lion habitat currently in development and scheduled to open this summer. The refurbished habitat is being funded by a \$6 million grant from the Tourism Development Council, approved by the Pinellas County Board of County Commissioners.

Harbor seals (*Phoca vitulina*) are found across coastal waters of Alaska, New England, the Mid-Atlantic, Southeast and West Coast of the United States, as well as the northern coasts of Europe and Asia.

They typically live 20–30 years in the wild and can live up to 50 years under human care. Adults can reach up to 300 pounds and measure five to six feet long. Each seal has a unique pattern of spots—much like a fingerprint—and is easily identified by their rounded heads, V-shaped nostrils, large eyes, lack of external ear flaps, and distinctive claws used for grooming, gripping, and efficient movement on land and in water.

Pinnipeds face threats including pollution, toxins, habitat loss, vessel strikes, harassment, and prey loss due to overfishing. While harbor seals are currently listed as a Species of Least Concern overall, some populations are endangered in certain regions, making education and conservation awareness critical.

With the addition of harbor seals, Clearwater Marine Aquarium continues to evolve as a trusted source for marine conservation, inspiring guests to care about the health of oceans. For more information, visit CMAquarium.org.



PALM PAVILION UNDER NEW OWNERSHIP

As the oldest beach pavilion in Florida approaches its 100-year milestone, one thing remains clear: the Pavilion has always been about more than just a building. It has been a place for gathering, community, and unforgettable views of Clearwater Beach.



That legacy continues as

Beachside Hospitality Group officially ushers in the next chapter with Crabby's Beachside Pavilion.

After nearly 65 years under the stewardship of the Hamilton family, Beachside Hospitality Group proudly takes the reins with deep respect for what came before. This transition is not about replacing history. It is about preserving it and honoring the Pavilion's role as a cornerstone of Clearwater Beach while ensuring it thrives for the next generation of guests.

"We understand the responsibility that comes with taking over a place like this," said Beachside Hospitality Group CEO Greg Powers. "You don't reach 100 years by accident. This building, these views, and the memories made here are special, and our goal is to protect that while thoughtfully evolving the experience."

Beachside Hospitality Group brings decades of experience operating beloved waterfront restaurants across Florida, including multiple Crabby's locations on Clearwater Beach. Their focus remains rooted in hospitality by keeping familiar faces on staff, maintaining live music, and preserving the relaxed, beachside atmosphere locals and visitors alike cherish.

Chief Operating Officer Eddie Wright emphasized continuity as a top priority. "The Pavilion has always been a place where people feel welcome. That does not change. Our commitment is to the team, the guests, and the traditions that made this spot iconic."

One thing is certain as Crabby's Beachside Pavilion looks ahead to the Pavilion's centennial celebration on May 31st. The heart of the Pavilion remains firmly intact, with the same views, the same energy, and a renewed commitment to serving Clearwater Beach for the next 100 years.

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Alexis Honigbaum, MD, FAAD is a board-certified dermatologist specializing in medical and surgical dermatology. Originally from Massachusetts, she obtained her undergraduate degree from University of Miami and medical degree from Eastern Virginia Medical School. She then completed her Dermatology Residency at the University of South Florida, which eventually brought her back to the Tampa Bay Area and private practice.

She has been published in peer-reviewed journals, presented at national meetings, and was recognized in Newsweek's "America's Best Medical Dermatologists" in 2022. She is excited to join Dr. Nayyar and the team at Dermaclinique, where she looks forward to providing compassionate, high-quality dermatologic care to the community.

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CREATING THE LANDSCAPE DESIGN

By Randy Lee, Landscape Designer

A well-designed landscape plan serves many functions. It ties the many different elements of the garden together. An initial visit starts the process which includes the following four topics.

First, the site analysis includes assessing the entire property and establishing the client's vision. Included here are soil analysis, the scope of the project, water management and the overall terrain.

Second, the needs and preferences of the client are discussed. How will the yard be used? Who will be using the yard? Are there children or pets?

Third, to create functional spaces such as patios, pools, driveways and other outdoor living areas and how they relate to the garden.

Lastly, more personalization of the garden is explored. Color, texture, proportion and plants are discussed. Details of the hardscape are chosen. Then, these four ideas are combined into a drawing and can be designed as a 2D design or a 3D design. A 2D design is an overhead site plan with all the details – we do these in color.

A 3D design is more involved with proportion, elevations and a more realistic representation of the property. It can include an evening scene with lighting and a flyover which includes the entire property. Irrigation, lighting and drainage can be built into these designs as well. 2D and 3D design can run from \$1,500 - \$4,000, depending on size and detail. When the design is completed

and agreed upon, the installation phase can begin. This can be one week or many months, depending on size of the job and whether its new construction or an existing renovation.

Spring is the perfect time to design and install the landscape of your dreams with Landscapes by Randy Lee, inc. Please visit our new office at 3210 Dr. MLK Jr. St. N. in St. Petersburg and meet our new designer and landscape architect and see samples of our award-winning projects.



Spring Checklist

- Check irrigation system – it's the dry season
- Lots of freeze damage – assess and prune accordingly
- Fertilize trees, lawns and shrubs after the cold winter
- This is a great time to plant flowers, herbs and vegetables
- Create that landscape design or renovation for your yard this Spring

Landscapes By Randy Lee, Inc. is a full service landscape design company here to help you with all of your landscape needs. Call us direct at 727-421-2715 or visit us Online at www.landscapesbyrl.com.

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FLORIDA BOTANICAL GARDENS

Submitted by Mia McCormick

The Florida Botanical Gardens Foundation is featuring two fun hands-on workshops this spring! Bonsai for Beginners will give you all the essential information needed to care for a bonsai. Participants will receive their own tropical species bonsai, soil, wire and all the necessary tools to care for the plant. An expert from Thunderstruck Bonsai will guide the workshop. April 10th 4pm \$25 per person. Register at flbgfoundation.org/events.

Orchids 101 with Michael Pollin from Art Stone Orchids will bring you up to speed on caring for one of the most rewarding plants to grow. In this informational workshop, participants will learn how to care for orchids, report them and which fertilizer works best. Orchids will be available for purchase. May 2nd at 10am \$5 per person. Register at flbgfoundation.org/events

Master Gardener Speaker Series at the Florida Botanical Gardens

Garden gurus will enjoy our two engaging Master Gardener speakers as they dive into two interesting subjects. Learn to start your own edible garden at home in our Vegetable Gardening at Home class on April 17th at 3pm.

Brighten up your yard with Florida native plants. This class will help you choose plants with lasting color that will thrive in your yard with little maintenance. Join us for Bringing Color To Your Yard with Native Plants on May 15th at 10am.

Both classes are free, but registration is required at FLBGFoundation.org/events.

LARGO PUBLIC LIBRARY

Nan Colton will return to the Largo Public Library, 120 Central Park Drive on Thursday, April 30, 2026, at 6pm. Nan will portray Miep Gies, co-author of the book, "Anne Frank Remembered: The Story of the Woman Who Helped to Hide the Frank Family." You won't want to miss this performance sponsored by the Friends of the Largo Library.

Nan Colton is an accomplished playwright, director, storyteller, actress and arts educator who has performed and lectured professionally on stages throughout South Africa, Great Britain, and the United States.

Tickets will go on sale beginning March 20th for \$20.00 each. They will be available at the Largo Public Library's circulation desk, cash or check only (please make checks payable to Greater Largo Library Foundation). The deadline for purchase is April 27th.

Tickets are also available online at www.gllf.org. Proceeds from the event benefit Largo Public Library programming. Please contact the Foundation office at (727) 586-7398 for additional information.

WELCOME NEWCOMERS CLUB

This club is open to the women of Pinellas County; all are welcome to come and socialize. Luncheons are held the first Tuesday of each month at Belleair Country Club. There is always a guest speaker or other entertainment with cards following for those interested. Please contact Mary at (727) 240-5372 with any questions.

Community News

BELLEAIR GARDEN CLUB

Submitted by Carol Mears

April 1st: General Meeting and Program: Growing Herbs for Flavor and Health, Presented by Debbie Ingram, MGV, at the Belleair Garden Club, (903 Ponce de Leon Blvd.)

Discover the beauty, fragrance, and powerful benefits of herbs that have been cherished for centuries in cooking, healing, and everyday wellness.

Learn which herbs thrive in our Florida gardens, how to grow them successfully, and how to use them to enhance flavor, support health, and elevate your home table. The agenda includes an interactive Q&A session, herb-themed luncheon, fresh herb mocktails, and take-home inspiration.

Join us for an afternoon that delights the senses and celebrates the timeless charm of herbs.

General Meeting starts at 12:30pm, Program begins at 1pm.

April 4th: Town of Belleair Arbor Day and Spring Fest 10am-noon. The Belleair Garden Club is delighted to offer support to the Town of Belleair with their booth at the Annual Arbor Day and Spring Fest event, where member volunteers help children learn to pot a flower in their own pot. This event is held annually at Dimmitt Community Center athletic fields. (918 Osceola Rd.) This fun-filled event will include egg hunts, tree giveaways, touch-a-truck, games, crafts, bounce houses, food, and more! Contact Belleair Recreation Department for details: (727) 518-3728

April 15th: Field Trip : An Exclusive Nursery Tour at Belleair Palms, Inc.

Join us for a special behind-the-scenes visit with President Bob Deegan at his 5-acre palm nursery in Seminole. Bob describes the morning as "a fun walk in the park" — and that's exactly what it will be! We'll explore exotic palms and tropical specimens while learning about germinating seeds, air layering techniques, gardenias and grafting, the benefits of moringa, and expert plant care insights.

Golf carts will be available to ensure everyone can comfortably enjoy the experience! Please wear comfortable walking shoes and bring sun protection, as this is an outdoor nursery environment. Light refreshments will be served. To keep the experience engaging and interactive, attendance will be limited. Kindly RSVP by April 10th to belleairgardenclub2@gmail.com to secure your spot. Belleair Palms Nursery is located at 9850 Starkey Road, Seminole.

May 2nd: Something exciting is blooming in Belleair this spring! The Belleair Garden Club and Candles for Caterpillars are partnering to host the May Day Market on May 2nd. Set in the beautiful surroundings of the Belleair Garden Club and nearby Hunter Park, the event will bring neighbors together for a lively spring gathering. The May Day Market is an artisan market and native plant experience designed to celebrate the connection between Florida gardens and the pollinators that keep them alive. Guests can explore a curated selection of local artisans, native plants, and nature inspired offerings while learning more about how pollinators support healthy ecosystems in our community. More details about vendors, activities, and event times will be announced soon. Sponsorship opportunities are available. Email Stephanie Wheeler for details at StephanieWheeler00@gmail.com.





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DUNEDIN HIGHLAND GAMES

Submitted by Eric MacNeill

The 58th Dunedin Highland Games & Festival are set for April. The festivities begin on Friday, April 10th in Downtown Dunedin. 4:30-8pm. We'll have Live music at John R. Lawrence Pioneer Park starting at 5pm, a parade of pipe bands and Clans through downtown stepping off at 6:30pm, with more live music to follow until 8pm. Beer, wine, and food vendors will be onsite, as well as packet pick-up for the Kilted 5k Trail ace that takes place Saturday morning. The park is at 420 Main Street.

On Saturday, April 11th, the Games take place at Highlander Park, 903 Michigan Blvd. Gates open at 8am with the event wrapping up by 6:30pm. All parking is off-site, with complimentary shuttle service. We have a variety of Celtic Merchandise and food vendors this year and lots of activities for all ages all day long.

Enjoy Piping & Drumming Competitions, Pipe Bands, opening ceremonies, and a parade of Clans at noon. Scottish Clans will be at Societies Village, along with Highland Dancing Championships, live Celtic Music throughout the day, and historical reenactment displays, Whiskey tasting master classes, Scottish Heavy Athletics competitions, Scottish Country Dancing demonstrations, 5k Kilted Trail race, and more.

More information and tickets can be found at DunedinHighlandGames.com

General admission tickets and VIP tickets are now available. VIP tickets will sell out in Advance of the event. General Admission pre-sale tickets are \$20 and will be available for \$25 at the gate.

This event is organized by the Dunedin Scottish Arts Foundation and provides a fantastic cultural event for the Dunedin Community, while also serving as a major fundraiser for the arts education programs in Dunedin; Directly supporting the Dunedin High School band, Dunedin Middle School band, City of Dunedin Pipe Band, and others.



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Community News

CLEARWATER YACHT CLUB

Submitted by Lianne Villancourt

Clearwater Yacht Club is proud to announce the success of the 51st Annual Holiday Lighted Boat Parade in December. This beloved nautical tradition once again lit up Clearwater Beach, celebrating the holiday season while bringing the community together for a meaningful cause.

With the generous support of our sponsors and participants, this year's parade raised significant funds benefiting youth sailing and boating scholarships through the Clearwater Community Sailing Center for the local Boys & Girls Clubs. Clearwater Yacht Club extends heartfelt thanks to everyone who contributed to making this year's event such a success.

The parade launched just north of the Mandalay Channel Bridge, following a slightly different route past Coachman Park, and concluded at the judging area in front of Clearwater Yacht Club. This year featured beautifully decorated vessels, each bringing holiday cheer to spectators along the waterfront.

Distinguished judges from the City of Clearwater, including Mayor Rector plus City Manager Poirrier and Clearwater Yacht Club's Past Commodore Rich Libonate, evaluated entries from the Clearwater Yacht Club Marina.

Clearwater Yacht Club thanks all participants, sponsors, volunteers, and spectators for helping make the 51st Annual Holiday Lighted Boat Parade a memorable evening filled with holiday spirit, community pride, and charitable impact. We look forward to welcoming everyone back next year for another unforgettable celebration on the water. Mark your calendars for the 52nd Annual Holiday Lighted Boat Parade on December 12th, 2026!

The Clearwater Yacht Club is one of the oldest yacht clubs in the United States. Established in 1911, the Club is located on beautiful Clearwater Beach and is a gathering place for avid boaters enjoying a reputation for boating fellowship and warm hospitality. Visit ClearwaterYachtClub.org for membership information.

VACATION DONATIONS

Submitted by Diane Daniel

Condos/apartment complexes with vacation rentals and shops with tourists, we'd love to put one of our donation bins on your property during high visitation season. We do all the work!! Our newest bin is now up at Indian Rocks Café. Visitors, if you have leftover food you can't take home with you, please consider donating it to locals in need. To donate directly to these pantries, visit VacationDonations.org/food for details.

When possible, Vacation Donations will pick up food at your rental. We accept unopened food and beverages, both perishables (fresh) and nonperishables, such as canned and boxed goods. You can also donate open containers of food if they have casings, such as eggs, individually wrapped cheese singles, etc. Donations will go to Beach Community Food Pantry in IRB, and occasionally Lifeline Ministries at St. Jerome Catholic Church and Christ the King Lutheran Ministries in Largo. For pickup, bin signup or volunteering, email VacationDonations@gmail.com or call or text Diane at (727) 201-2333.



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Pictured here are Rose Mary Holmes (Left), Mary Byrd (owner) and Helen Tilston...the Plain Air Cottage Arts.

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