

The Story of Boca Ciega Bay: From Ancient Shores to Our Modern Backyard

By Pete Magnani, Publisher

Boca Ciega Bay—the scenic, shallow estuary framing the local Intracoastal Waterway—is bordered by St. Petersburg, Gulfport, Seminole, and South Pasadena to the east, and the barrier islands of Madeira Beach, Treasure Island, and St. Pete Beach to the west. Its Spanish name translates to “blind mouth,” a nod to the bay’s confusing inlets, shallow waters, and shifting shorelines. For centuries, this vital body of water sustained Florida’s earliest indigenous peoples and, later, European settlers. Eventually, it fueled the mid-century development boom that altered the local landscape, ultimately sparking the modern conservation efforts that protect the bay today.

Early Peoples and the Tocobaga

Long before modern homes lined the waterfront, these shores supported thriving Indigenous communities who depended entirely on the bay’s rich resources. Archaeological evidence connects the eastern shoreline with the late Weeden Island and Safety Harbor cultures, spanning from roughly 800 A.D. to 1700 A.D. The Tocobaga people are most famously tied to this area, leaving behind remnants of their civilization in the historic Jungle Prada area of present-day St. Petersburg.

The Tocobaga Chiefdom was a powerful society centered around Tampa Bay, with its main political hub located near Safety Harbor. Their villages stretched from northern Tampa Bay down to Sarasota, usually nestled along productive coastal waters. They reshaped the local geography by building massive mounds: platform mounds made of shell and clay served as elevated foundations for homes; middens of discarded shells and bones doubled as elevated lookout points; and sacred sand mounds served as resting places for their ancestors.



Map of Boca Ciega Bay, circa 1919
State Archives of Florida/
Pinellas County
Board of Trade (Fla.)

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CLEARWATER BEACH NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

Inside, you will find articles and local information about the nearby area. We call it Neighborhood News because it is about your neighborhood—Clearwater Beach. It is mailed to the entire 33767 zip code including Island Estates and Sand Key—about 6,000 households, six times a year.

You can pick up additional copies at the Pier 60 Welcome Center, Rec Center, Beach Library, Shorty's Gourmet Deli, Sand Key Realty or the Island Estates UPS.

We hope you enjoy our magazine and we want your input. Did you like this issue? What suggestions do you have for future articles? Call or email us with your comments, or take our online survey at BeachNewsletters.com.

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

Thank you for reading, Lora and Pete Magnani (813) 361-7376 Lora@MagriffProductions.com

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CALENDAR OF HOLIDAYS & EVENTS

As always, this is subject to change.

AUGUST

Back to School Sales Tax Holiday Month

Coast Guard Appreciation Month

NFL Preseason Begins 6

City Council Meeting 6

Purple Heart Day 7

Deep Purple Ruth Eckerd Hall 8

Market Marie at Coachman Park 8

Trim Notices Mailed 10

Public School Begins 11

Buccaneers First Preseason Game 14

Beach Cleanup at Crabby's Pavilion 14

61st St. Pete Spearfishing Open 14

Tarpon Springs HippieFest 15

Primary Elections 18

Asian Food and Music at the Sound 21

WearableArtFashionShowDunedin 22

NCAA Football Kickoff 29

Jimmy Buffett Day 30

SEPTEMBER

97X Next Big Thing at the Sound 4

First USF Home Game 5

Labor Day 7

Patriot Day 11

Beach Cleanup Crabby's Pavilion 15

MORFLOW Music Fest at the Sound 12

Rosh Hashanah 11-13

Buccaneers Season Opener 13

Grandparents Day 13

Modest Mouse at the Sound 16

Pasco Scallop Season Ends 18

NHL Preseason Begins 19

Buccaneers Home Opener 20

Yom Kippur 20-21

International Day of Peace 21

Clearwater Offshore Nationals 25-27

First Day of Fall 22

MLB Playoffs Begin 29

OCTOBER

Lightning Season Opener 1

Lightning Home Opener 3

Clearwater Fall Family Festival 3-5

Dunedin Arts and Crafts Fest 10-11

Columbus Day 12

Stone Crab Season Begins 15

Clearwater Jazz Holiday 15-18

Dunedin Fall Fest 15-18

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FOR RENT



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PENDING



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SOLD



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\$409,000

SOLD



15 Palm Terrace #502
Belleair
\$1,425,000

SOLD



868 Bayway #210
Clearwater Beach
\$500,000

SOLD



11050 5th St E
Treasure Island
\$2,400,000

SOLD



736 Island Way #1104
Clearwater Beach
\$759,900

SOLD



1600 Gulf Blvd #1018
Clearwater Beach
\$1,175,000

SOLD



223 Island Way #5E
Clearwater Beach
\$649,900

SOLD



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Did You Know

FINAL TOWER AT GROUND ZERO

The rebuilding of New York City's World Trade Center reached its final milestone with the groundbreaking of 5 World Trade Center, the last tower to be constructed on the 16 acre site. More than two decades after the September 11th, terrorist attacks, the project marks the completion of one of the nation's most significant redevelopment efforts.

The 900-foot tower will feature approximately 1,200 residential apartments, along with office space, retail, and community amenities. About one-third of the apartments will be permanently affordable housing, helping address Lower Manhattan's growing housing needs.



The groundbreaking represents far more than the start of construction. It symbolizes resilience, remembrance, and renewal while completing the transformation of the World Trade Center into a thriving neighborhood. Surrounded by One World Trade Center, the National September 11th Memorial & Museum, and other landmark buildings, the final tower stands as a tribute to those lost on September 11th and a testament to New York City's enduring strength and commitment to the future.

SPECIAL NEEDS EVACUATION PROGRAM With hurricane season underway, Pinellas County Emergency Management is encouraging residents with qualifying needs to register now for the Special Needs Evacuation Program.

During emergency evacuations, the program provides transportation and shelters for residents of all ages with medical, functional, or special transportation needs including requiring assistance with routine care and medications, being dependent on oxygen or electricity for medical equipment, requiring assistance with walking or getting out of bed, or requiring transportation assistance to an emergency shelter during evacuations.

Key program features include generator-powered shelters to ensure uninterrupted power for medical devices and life-safety equipment, onsite health professionals available throughout the evacuation to assist with medical needs, transportation assistance for registered participants without other evacuation options, personal outreach from Emergency Management staff to verify needs and confirm enrollment, shelter access for immediate family members and caretakers, and pet care provided by Pinellas County Animal Services for registrants without alternative arrangements, until they return home.

County staff recently contacted all program registrants to confirm their information is up to date and they are still eligible for the program. Existing registrants who have not confirmed their information with program staff this year are asked to call Pinellas County Emergency Management at (727) 464-3800 as soon as possible to ensure they remain on the registration list.

For more information or to register for the Special Needs Evacuation Program, visit Pinellas.gov/SpecialNeeds or call (727) 464-3800.

OUR NEXT ISSUE IS OCTOBER If you need another copy of this magazine, pick up one up at the library, rec center, or the UPS Store on Island Estates. Call (813) 361-7376 if you need more than a few.

Read this issue and others at BeachNewsletters.com. Follow us on Facebook for local news.

and More...

NO FLAMINGO, FOR NOW

Several new state laws took effect in July, but the northern mockingbird survived unscathed. A proposal to make the American flamingo Florida's official state bird stalled in the Florida Senate, failing to receive final approval before the legislative session ended. Supporters argued that the flamingo better represents Florida's unique wildlife, tourism, and coastal heritage than the current state bird. The northern mockingbird has held the title since 1927 and will continue to do so for now. While the legislation fell short this year, advocates say they intend to bring the proposal back in a future legislative session, keeping alive the effort to make the colorful flamingo an official symbol of the Sunshine State.



PROPERTY TAX ESTIMATES A new Florida law will require more accurate property tax estimates on online residential real estate listings beginning February 1st, helping prospective homebuyers better understand their potential property taxes before purchasing a home. The new law addresses one of the most common sources of confusion for homebuyers by ending the longstanding practice of using a seller's current property taxes as an estimate of what the new owner will owe. Following a change in ownership, a property's assessed value generally resets to market value, often resulting in property taxes that are significantly higher than the seller's.

Online residential real estate listing platforms that choose to display estimated property taxes must use a standardized methodology based on the property's listing price and information published by the Florida Department of Revenue. Listing platforms that do not provide an estimate may no longer display the seller's current property taxes and instead must direct consumers to the county property appraiser's tax estimator or website. For more information visit PCPAO.gov, call (727) 464-3207, or email Mike@pcpao.gov.

PRIMARY ELECTIONS Polls are open from 7am-7pm on Election Day. Be sure to allow enough time to arrive before the polls close.

Your polling place for a county election may be different than your polling place for a municipal election. Use the Find Your Precinct feature at VotePinellas.gov to confirm your polling place.

If you have moved, be sure the Elections Office has your new address to avoid delays at the polls. You are required by law to vote in your home precinct. Call (727) 464-VOTE (8683) to make an address change within the state or use the Address Change Form at VotePinellas.gov to make a change online. You are encouraged to update your information prior to Election Day to help you avoid delays at the polls.

Be sure to bring the proper ID when voting at an early voting site or your polling place on Election Day to avoid delays. Without valid and current ID, you may vote a provisional ballot, which will be presented to the Canvassing Board to determine eligibility. Get Election Ready by viewing your precinct-specific sample ballot at VotePinellas.com.

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Boca Ciega Bay, Continued

The Tocobaga occupied Jungle Prada from approximately 1000 to 1700 A.D. Surviving shell middens show just how deeply these early residents relied on what we now call Boca Ciega Bay. Fish, oysters, clams, and sea turtles formed the basis of daily life. Unfortunately, much of this ancient mound landscape was damaged or leveled by twentieth-century housing development, making the surviving, protected portions of Jungle Prada incredibly precious to our local history.

Today, the Jungle Prada archaeological site spans both public parkland and private property, showcasing these surviving ancient mounds alongside an educational museum. Added to the National Register of Historic Places in 2003, Jungle Prada is also famous as the setting for the 1528 landing of the Spanish Narváez expedition.

Spanish Exploration and the Narváez Expedition

Pánfilo de Narváez sailed from Spain in 1527 to explore La Florida, a vast territory named in 1513 by Juan Ponce de León. The expedition navigated into Boca Ciega Bay in April 1528, where the crew spotted indigenous buildings perched high atop platform mounds. Narváez made landfall near Jungle Prada, officially claiming the entire region for King Charles V.

While the expedition sought to secure vast colonial wealth and new territory for Spain, it ended in disaster. After landing, Narváez split his forces, marching inland with 300 men while ordering his ships to wait. The plan failed catastrophically; the ships lost track of the land party, and only four members of the expedition ultimately survived to tell the tale. Tragically, these and other explorers also introduced European diseases and violence, causing the Tocobaga to vanish from historical records within two centuries. Despite the grim outcome, this fateful landing permanently links Boca Ciega Bay to one of the earliest European encounters on the Gulf Coast.

Settlement, Fishing, and Waterfront Life

Throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Boca Ciega Bay remained the heart of daily life in western Pinellas County. The bay's shallow seagrass beds, oyster bars, and tangled mangroves offered both abundant food and natural shelter, allowing small, tight-knit waterfront communities to take root.

By the late 1800s, rustic fishing camps and pioneer homesteads dotted the shoreline near modern-day Gulfport, St. Petersburg, Madeira Beach, and Treasure Island. In Gulfport, the waterfront evolved into a popular community gathering place. The town built its first public fishing pier in 1907, and the iconic Gulfport Casino (originally

built in 1906) marked the community's transition from a quiet fishing village into a vibrant social destination. Steamships, ferries, and small skiffs ferried goods and passengers across the water, where early winter residents fell in love with the mild climate, world-class fishing, and serene coastal views.

When the railroad reached St. Petersburg in the late 1880s,

local growth accelerated. The rail lines connected the lower Pinellas peninsula directly to national markets and wealthy winter tourists, sparking a boom in grand hotels, cozy boarding houses, and waterfront recreation. Commercial fishermen continued to harvest the bay to feed their families and tourists, and the shoreline adapted to the influx of new residents and vacationers.

The arrival of the automobile marked the bay's next great transformation. Roads, bridges, and causeways provided easy, direct routes to our barrier islands, slowly replacing the old reliance on boats and ferries. The original Welch Causeway opened to Madeira Beach in July 1926, followed by the Treasure Island Causeway in 1939. These new thoroughfares carried steady traffic across Boca Ciega Bay, transforming isolated islands into the bustling, beloved beach communities we know today.

By mid-century, neighborhoods around the bay actively promoted our region as a paradise for boating, fishing, and retirement living. Yet even as neighborhoods expanded, commercial fishing remained a cornerstone of the bay's identity, bridging early maritime history with modern coastal growth and setting the stage for future conservation battles.

Dredging, Filling, and Development

The most dramatic visual transformations occurred during the post-WWII boom. Rapid population growth and an insatiable demand for waterfront real estate led to massive dredge-and-fill operations. To create competitive waterfront property, developers reshaped the shallow bay bottom into residential finger canals and man-made subdivisions. Scientific studies estimate that roughly 3,500 acres of Boca Ciega Bay were filled in after 1950, shrinking the bay's total surface area by 20 percent and devastating vital seagrass beds, shellfish habitats, and marine nurseries.

These massive engineering projects forever altered natural tidal flows, water circulation, and the coastline itself. The bay quickly became a stark, cautionary example of the delicate conflict between rapid coastal development and environmental preservation in Florida.



Pasadena Estates across Boca Ciega Bay, early 1900s. Archives Heritage Village

Protection and Restoration

Mounting public alarm over this environmental degradation during the mid-twentieth century sparked an organized movement to protect Boca Ciega Bay's remaining natural resources. Decades of dredging, neighborhood expansion, and navigation projects had severely altered the shoreline and submerged habitats. Residents, scientists, and environmental advocates united to raise the alarm about dropping water quality, disappearing mangrove wetlands, and the steep decline of local fish and wildlife populations.

In response to this grassroots pressure, the state designated Boca Ciega Bay as an official aquatic preserve in 1969, making it one of Florida's very first protected estuarine systems. This designation successfully halted large-scale dredge-and-fill projects, preserving the bay's ecological future. This success inspired the creation of the neighboring Pinellas County Aquatic Preserve in 1972, extending vital protections to surrounding coastal waters and preventing further habitat loss along our coast.

Over the last few decades, local conservation efforts have focused heavily on restoring these precious marine habitats. Today, our mangrove forests, seagrass meadows, oyster bars, and salt marshes are recognized as essential infrastructure that cleans our water, stabilizes our shorelines, and protects our properties. Current initiatives include seagrass monitoring, constructing artificial oyster reefs, and neighborhood education programs that teach homeowners how to practice good stewardship in their own backyards.

Our local waterfront parks play a starring role in connecting residents with this shared history. Beautiful spaces like Boca Ciega Millennium Park, Clam Bayou Nature Preserve, and Jungle Prada de Narváez Park give neighbors a place to experience untouched coastal habitats while learning about our past. Together, these parks remind us of the enduring bond between people and Boca Ciega Bay—from the ancient Tocobaga to the modern homeowners working to protect our county's most precious coastal ecosystem.

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WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN INVESTING AND GAMBLING?

by Ray Ferrara, ProVise Management Group

Betting is not new. From early online poker to today's real-time sports wagering—where you can bet on the next pitch, pass, or shot—gambling has become faster and more accessible than ever. Predictive markets have expanded wagering into politics and other real-world events, gaining attention during the 2024 election cycle. As access has increased, so has a concerning trend: many people, especially younger individuals, are beginning to view gambling as a legitimate form of investing. So, what separates the two?



The difference comes down to purpose, process, and probability—how and why money is put at risk.

Purpose: Investing is intended to build wealth over time. It involves allocating money to assets such as stocks, bonds, or real estate that are expected to grow or generate income. Gambling, by contrast, is primarily about winning money quickly based on chance. There is typically no underlying asset nor long-term value being created.

Process: Investing requires research, discipline, and strategy. Decisions are based on economic conditions, company performance, and long-term market trends. Risk can be managed through diversification, asset allocation, and time. While returns are not guaranteed, they are grounded in analysis and historical patterns. Gambling, on the other hand, depends largely on random outcomes—cards, dice, spins, or short-term events. There is little to no ability to manage risk in a meaningful way, and the odds are often structured against the participant. As the saying goes, “the house always wins.”

Probability: Over long periods, investing very often carries a positive expected outcome as markets historically rise and productive assets generate returns. Gambling generally has a negative expected value, meaning the average participant is likely to lose money over time.

Time Horizon: Investing is a long-term endeavor measured in years or decades. It represents ownership in assets that can appreciate and produce income. Gambling is short-term, with immediate results and no lasting economic value.

In summary, investing uses risk to build long-term wealth, while gambling uses risk to pursue short-term excitement. Confusing the two can lead to costly financial decisions—and unfortunately, it's becoming increasingly common.

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TUNNEL TO TOWERS HONORS FALLEN HEROES BY PAYING OFF MORTGAGES FOR THEIR FAMILIES

By Pete Magnani, Publisher

Firefighter Stephen Gerard Siller, the youngest of seven children born to Mae and George Siller, understood better than most that life is precious. After losing his father at age eight and his mother just 18 months later, Stephen was raised by his older siblings. Though he struggled for a time, the love of his family and the values his parents instilled helped shape him into an extraordinary husband, father, and firefighter. In just 34 years, he left a legacy that continues to inspire millions.

On September 11th, 2001, Siller had just finished his shift with Brooklyn's Squad 1 and was headed to play golf with his brothers when he heard over his scanner that a plane had struck the North Tower of the World Trade Center. He immediately called his wife, Sally, asking her to tell his brothers he would catch up with them later, then returned to his firehouse to retrieve his gear.

Driving toward Lower Manhattan, Siller reached the entrance to the Brooklyn Battery Tunnel only to find it closed for security reasons. Refusing to let the barrier stop him, he strapped approximately 60 pounds of firefighting equipment to his back and ran through the tunnel on foot to the Twin Towers. There, while helping others escape, he made the ultimate sacrifice.

His courage became the inspiration for the Tunnel to Towers Foundation, which is dedicated to ensuring that the events of September 11—and the sacrifices made that day and every day by first responders and military service members—are never forgotten.

Among the organization's signature initiatives is its Fallen First Responder Home Program. The program pays off the mortgages of first responders who lose their lives in the line of duty or from 9/11-related illnesses, leaving behind young children. By eliminating a family's mortgage, the foundation provides financial stability and peace of mind during one of life's most devastating moments.

This Independence Day, the Tunnel to Towers Foundation continued that mission by delivering mortgage-free homes to the families of 30 fallen first responders across 19 states, ensuring they will always have a place to call home. Two local families were among those.

Among those honored was the family of Firefighter Jimmy Dale Riley Jr. of Plant City Fire Rescue.

Riley died on February 24th, 2021, following a long and courageous battle with occupational glioblastoma, an aggressive form of brain cancer linked to the hazards firefighters often face. He was 40 years old and had devoted 17 years to serving the Plant City community. Before becoming a firefighter, Riley served his country as a military police officer in the U.S. Marine Corps.

Born in Bartow and raised in Lakeland, Riley excelled both academically and athletically at McKeel Academy, where he played baseball and displayed the competitive spirit that would define his career. Drawn to a life of service, he joined Plant City Fire Rescue in 2004 and served with distinction as a firefighter, EMT, paramedic, instructor, and driver engineer. His professionalism and dedication earned him numerous honors, including being named Firefighter of the Year twice. Beyond his own accomplishments, Riley was a respected mentor who helped train and inspire countless future first responders, leaving a lasting impact on his department and community.



Firefighter Jimmy Riley

Following his death, he was posthumously promoted to sergeant and awarded both the Medal of Honor from the American Police Hall of Fame and the Medal of Valor from the Fraternal Order of Police.

Through its Fallen First Responder Home Program, the Tunnel to Towers Foundation paid off the mortgages on the Riley and Diaz family homes, easing a significant financial burden while honoring two men who dedicated their lives to protecting others.

Today, the Tunnel to Towers Foundation has grown into one of the nation's leading nonprofit organizations supporting America's heroes. In addition to providing mortgage-free homes for the families of fallen first responders, the foundation builds specially adapted smart homes for catastrophically injured veterans and first responders, helps homeless veterans regain stable housing through its Homeless Veteran Program, and assists Gold Star families who have lost loved ones serving in the U.S. Armed Forces. The foundation also preserves the memory of those lost on September 11th through educational programs and annual events that honor their sacrifice while inspiring future generations.

To support the foundation's mission individuals can make a one-time or monthly donation, sponsor fundraising events, participate in community walks and runs, or organize local fundraising campaigns. Volunteers are also needed throughout the year to assist with fundraising events, community outreach, and programs supporting veterans, military families, and first responders. Businesses, schools, civic organizations, and faith-based groups can also partner with the foundation through volunteer service projects and charitable giving initiatives.

More than two decades after Stephen Siller ran through the Brooklyn Battery Tunnel toward danger, his selfless act continues to inspire a mission that transforms tragedy into hope. Every mortgage paid, every smart home built, and every veteran helped reflects the legacy of a firefighter who refused to stop when others could not go forward. To learn more about the Tunnel to Towers Foundation, volunteer opportunities, or ways to donate, visit T2T.org. Every contribution helps ensure that America's heroes—and the families they leave behind—are never forgotten.



Sergeant Elio Diaz

The foundation also honored the family of Sergeant Elio Diaz of the Charlotte County Sheriff's Office. Diaz was fatally shot during a traffic stop in Charlotte Harbor after spending more than an hour speaking with a driver who lived in his vehicle. Attempting to help the man resolve an insurance issue and avoid having his car towed, Diaz demonstrated the compassion that characterized his career.

Without warning, the driver pulled out a rifle and opened fire before fleeing the scene. Diaz was transported to the hospital, where he later succumbed to his injuries. He was 40 years old and had served the Charlotte County Sheriff's Office for 11 years.

Bar & Restaurant News

EXCITING EVENTS AT CLEAR SKY ON CLEVELAND Summer is in full swing, and Clear Sky on Cleveland is bringing even more reasons to visit Downtown Clearwater with two unforgettable evenings of food, wine, and entertainment.

On Tuesday, August 4th, guests are invited to experience a Five-Course Tour of Italy Wine Dinner, where each chef-crafted course is thoughtfully paired with exceptional Italian wines. It's an evening designed to transport guests through the flavors and traditions of Italy, one course at a time.

On Tuesday, August 11th, the spotlight shifts from the dining room to the stage as Clear Sky on Cleveland welcomes comedians Sheena Reagan and Bobby Goldsmith for a night of laughs, great food, and handcrafted cocktails. Whether you're planning a date night or an evening out with friends, it's the perfect way to enjoy Downtown Clearwater's entertainment scene.

From exclusive dining experiences to live entertainment, Clear Sky on Cleveland continues to bring the community together through unique and memorable events. Tickets for both evenings are available at ClearSkyRestaurants.com under the Events page.

NEW ICE CREAM ON THE BEACH Recently, the owners of long-time Clearwater staple Gondolier Italian Restaurant & Pizza opened Kera Pizza & Tavern at 311 Gulf Blvd on Indian Rocks Beach, but that's not all. A few steps away, in the same plaza as Kera, owner Dimitri Sioutis has opened Beverly's Ice Cream Shop. Beverly's, named after Sioutis' mother, originally opened in 2020 on Clearwater Beach under the Hyatt Regency but they were unable to rebuild after hurricane Helene in 2024.

They offer 32 flavors that can be on waffle cones, waffle bowls, cake cones, cups, chocolate dipped cones, and assorted sundaes. Patrons can also enjoy ice cream on top of made-to-order waffles, banana splits, milkshakes, assorted coffees, espresso, cappuccino, lattes, ice coffees and much more. Their ice cream comes from Chocolate Shoppe which is one of the leaders in high-quality ice cream manufacturing; they are based in Madison, Wisconsin.

They have one more location in Morristown, Tennessee and one soon to come on St Pete Beach. They are open 11am-10pm (Sunday - Thursday) 11am-11pm (Friday and Saturday). For more information follow them on Facebook or visit BeverlysIceCream.com.

EXPANDING TO HILLSBOROUGH Tom George, owner of Eddie's Bar & Grill and Hurricane Eddie's, is bringing over 40 years of Pinellas County tradition to Hillsborough. The fourth Eddie's Bar & Grill will be in Westchase at 12217 West Linebaugh Avenue, previously occupied by Surf Shack.

Eddie's Bar & Grills are family-friendly sports bars with wall-to-wall TVs, a large menu filled with lots of fan favorites like their award-winning wings, a full bar, and an array of arcade games to keep guests of all ages entertained.

They have not announced an opening date for the new location, so follow them on Facebook to stay up to date on their progress.



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Bar & Restaurant News



SUNDAYS ARE BETTER WITH BBQ Looking for the perfect way to end the weekend? Belleair Hideaway, located at 560 Indian Rocks Road North, invites guests to gather every Sunday for a relaxed afternoon of great food, good company, and Southern-inspired hospitality at BBQ Sundays.

Featuring slow-smoked favorites, chef-inspired specials, and a welcoming atmosphere, BBQ Sundays have become a local tradition for families, friends, and food lovers throughout the Belleair area. Whether you're craving tender pulled pork, smoked brisket, classic sides, or signature sauces, there's something for everyone to enjoy.

More than just a meal, BBQ Sundays offer an opportunity to connect with the community, unwind from the week, and experience the unique charm that makes Belleair Hideaway a favorite local destination. Bring your friends, bring your appetite, and make Belleair Hideaway part of your Sunday tradition.

For weekly menus, specials, and event updates, follow Belleair Hideaway on Facebook.

CLOSED FOR GOOD It was with heavy hearts that Capogna's Dugout, the Italian restaurant and sports hangout at 1653 Gulf-to-Bay Boulevard, closed for good on June 26th. Capogna's was opened in March 1973 by Art Capogna and his family.

This was not the first time Capogna's had closed. After Hurricanes Helena and Milton took out the power, the restaurant was stuck with thousands of dollars of spoiled food and unusable equipment. In the spring of 2025, with the help of former Monty's Pizzeria owner Sean Stoffel and the Capogna siblings, they were able to reopen. It is unknown what will replace the neighborhood staple.

NEW RESTAURANT IN CLEARWATER The owners of Michelin-starred Rocca, a Tampa based Italian restaurant, are opening a restaurant in the newly - restored Telephone Building on Cleveland Street in downtown Clearwater.

Tastes Pretty Good (TPG) Hospitality Group is opening a "New American" restaurant known as Rippers. It will be TPG's first Pinellas County location. Rippers will serve American classics centered around a signature "ripper-style" hot dogs, which are deep fried until their casings split open, along with burgers, chicken wings, sandwiches, fries and milkshakes.

The new restaurant is part of the growing revitalization in downtown Clearwater led by the Cleveland Street Alliance. The Telephone Building, built in 1914, is the first historic landmark completed in the Cleveland Street restoration. The restaurant will be on the ground floor of the historic building at 534 Cleveland Street.

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WHY SPORTS SUPERSTITIONS NEVER GO OUT OF STYLE

By Pete Magnani, Publisher

From wearing lucky socks during a winning streak to refusing to step on the foul line, superstitions have long been part of sports. Even in an era dominated by sports science, analytics, nutrition, and advanced training methods, athletes at every level—from Little League to the professional ranks—continue to rely on routines they believe help them perform at their best.

Some rituals are simple. A baseball player may always put on the left cleat before the right. A golfer might use the same ball marker throughout a tournament. Basketball players often follow identical warm-up routines before every game, while hockey players are famous for refusing to shave during the Stanley Cup Playoffs, believing the legendary “playoff beard” brings good fortune.

Other superstitions have become legendary. Tampa Bay Ray and Baseball Hall of Famer Wade Boggs famously ate chicken before every game, took batting practice at precisely 5:17pm, and drew the Hebrew word Chai—meaning “life”—in the batter’s box before every at-bat. Tennis legend Rafael Nadal is known for carefully arranging his water bottles and following the exact same routine before every serve. Michael Jordan wore his University of North Carolina practice shorts beneath his Chicago Bulls uniform throughout much of his NBA career because they gave him confidence.

While these habits may seem unusual, many athletes admit they don’t believe their rituals possess magical powers. Instead, the routines provide familiarity, consistency, and confidence.

Sports psychologists have long recognized that pre-performance routines reduce anxiety by giving athletes a greater

sense of control in situations filled with uncertainty. A hitter cannot control the next pitch, a quarterback cannot predict every defensive adjustment, and a golfer cannot stop an unexpected gust of wind. What athletes can control is their preparation.

By focusing on familiar routines, athletes shift their attention away from distractions and toward the task at hand. Research has shown that athletes who feel prepared and emotionally settled often make better decisions and perform more consistently under pressure. In many cases, the routine itself isn’t what matters—it’s the focused mindset it creates.

Fans have their own superstitions. Many refuse to change seats while their team is winning. Others wear the same jersey every game day or won’t mention a no-hitter in progress for fear of “jinxing” it. During championship runs, families may gather in the same room or repeat the same traditions each game, convinced they’re helping the team. Whether they truly believe in luck or not, these rituals become part of the shared experience of being a fan.

Sports superstitions also vary across cultures. In Japan, baseball players and fans often carry *omamori* good-luck charms from Shinto shrines or Buddhist temples. Throughout Latin America, many athletes wear religious medals or make the sign of the cross before competition. Across Europe, soccer players often enter the field in a specific order or touch the club crest before kickoff. These traditions are often passed from one generation to the next. Modern sports science continues to reinforce the value of consistent pre-performance routines—stretching, visualization, controlled breathing, or listening to music—while making a clear distinction between preparation and superstition. The routine itself isn’t magic; the mental focus it creates can be.

Even so, sports will probably never outgrow superstition. Games are filled with uncertainty, split-second decisions, and unpredictable outcomes. Rituals provide comfort, confidence, and familiarity in situations where so much lies beyond anyone’s control.

Championships are won through talent, preparation, perseverance, and teamwork—but there will always be room in every locker room, dugout, and living room for a lucky pair of socks, a favorite pregame meal, or the comforting belief that today’s familiar



Brent Burns, San Jose Sharks
(Photo by Amy Irvin / The Hockey Writers)

Famous Sports Rituals

Michael Jordan (Chicago Bulls)

Michael Jordan was known for his famous game-day superstition of wearing his University of North Carolina shorts underneath his Chicago Bulls uniform during games. He began the tradition as a reminder of his college career and continued wearing them throughout his NBA success, including his six championship seasons. Jordan believed the routine brought him confidence and helped him stay connected to the mindset that made him a champion.

Tom Brady (Tampa Bay Buccaneers)

Brady emphasized preparation over luck. His disciplined game-day routine of hydration, nutrition, stretching, and visualization helped him maintain focus throughout his career.

Tim Tebow (University of Florida)

Known for his pregame prayer and quiet reflection, Tebow’s visible displays of faith became one of the defining images of his football career.

Patrick Roy (NHL Legend)

Four-time Stanley Cup champion Patrick Roy was famous for his game-day rituals and superstitions as a goaltender. Before games, Roy was known for talking to his goalposts before and during games, convinced they were helping him stop pucks. He also followed a strict pregame preparation routine, including visualizing saves and mentally preparing for the challenges ahead. His unique habits became one of hockey’s most memorable examples of how rituals can build confidence and concentration.



Enes Kanter, New York Knicks
(Photo by Elsa/Getty Images)

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MAYOR'S UPDATE

By Mayor Bruce Rector

Clearwater is ending another successful peak tourism season and moving into my personal favorite time of year in Florida. With the children returning to school our beach traffic begins to slow a bit, the temperatures start to cool some, and many traditional festivals, events, and gatherings for local residents take place.

Thanks to the outstanding efforts and collaborative efforts of our Clearwater Police Department, we have one of the safest beaches in the country. We will not tolerate unruly and unlawful behavior on our world-renowned beach or anywhere in our city. We appreciate the strong messaging by all regional and state law enforcement that there will be serious consequences for anyone who visits the beach and violates the law.

We also continue to work together as a community to make our entire city and Clearwater Beach better than ever. The Beach Marina renovation project is nearing completion. A study on South Beach traffic flow continues. The Ferris wheel at Pier 60 Park, a pilot project that recently received new attention, has generated a lot of conversation and will be reviewed soon. Please share your thoughts about these projects with us, as your personal experience and perspective on each is important to improving the beach experience for both residents and visitors.

Although the news about Downtown Clearwater has largely been focused on a street vacation, The Ballard Hotel, the 400 unit The Bluffs apartments, a new City Hall and a city parking garage on Osceola Avenue have all continued construction. With the redevelopment of the Pinellas County Government properties now also moving forward, our downtown waterfront is well on its way to becoming one of the most dynamic in the country.

Sports are always a big draw to the beach each fall. The Xinsurance Clearwater Offshore National boat races return to Clearwater Beach September 26th-28th. We also look forward to Tampa Bay Buccaneer home games against the Cleveland Browns, Minnesota Vikings, and Pittsburgh Steelers.

There is a robust schedule of music concerts and festivals in Clearwater over the next couple of months. Upcoming shows at Ruth Eckerd Hall will include Starship featuring Mickey Thomas & John Waite, Buddy Guy, The Mavericks, W.A.S.P., Deep Purple, Kansas, Squeeze, Adam Ant, DEVO, Blues Traveler and Gin Blossoms, the 97X Next Big Thing Legends with Yellowcard, Mersiv - MorFlow Fest, John Fogerty with Steve Winwood, and Rise Against will perform at The BayCare Sound.

Clearwater's best days are ahead of it mostly because of the great people who call it home. Reach out to me at bruce.rector@myclearwater.com anytime with any questions, suggestions, comments or idea on how we can work together to make the best place on earth to live, work and play even better.




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Business Briefs



ADD SOUL TO YOUR NEXT EVENT

Are you looking to add a special musical touch to your upcoming event? Craig Bohlman is a saxophonist, father of two, and passionate performer who is dedicated to bringing joy to others through his music. After a successful career in high-tech, he followed his lifelong dream of becoming a soloist and now brings his unique sound to events in Clearwater. Whether performing for friends, family, or new audiences, Craig's mission is to create unforgettable moments through music.

Discover the perfect soundtrack for your special event with Craig's soulful saxophone performances. Whether it's a wedding, corporate event, or beach ceremony, Craig brings an unforgettable touch to any occasion. To listen to Craig's music, view performance videos, and contact him for booking, visit CraigBohlmanSax.com.

NEW HEALTH AND WELLNESS STUDIO The Tox Technique, a lymphatic body sculpting studio designed to sculpt and restore, is one of the new businesses opening this August in the Horizon West Bay building. It is a transformative approach to wellness, blending body contouring modalities with proprietary methods to de-bloat and redefine. Their proprietary body sculpting method incorporates different techniques that can increase metabolic rate, rid the body of excess toxins, and assist with water retention. They also offer "Sculpting Facials," which remove muscle tension and naturally sculpt the face while ridding the body of excess toxins and bloat. These facials include the use of a "Gua Sha" stone and Tox sculpting wand to assist in toning the muscles of the face.

The Tox Technique is a nationwide franchise with the nearest location in Tampa. Women and men are welcome; they also have pregnancy options available. This location is coming soon, contact the studio directly for booking inquiries by calling (601)843-8699 or drop by at 454 West Bay Drive. They will be offering VIP packages to the first 50 guests at their Grand Opening. For more information email them at Clearwater@TheToxTechnique.com.

CENTURY CLUB This is the 100th Issue of the Clearwater Beach Neighborhood News Magazine. Started by Bob and Becky Griffin as the Neighborhood Newsletter in December of 2009, the magazine is now mailed to thousands of homes on Clearwater Beach, Sand Key, and Island Estates.

Bob and Becky are enjoying retirement as snowbirds, with homes in Clearwater and North Carolina. Lora (Bob's daughter) and husband Pete Magnani are proud to continue the tradition.



Business Briefs



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED Volunteer registration is now open for The ANNIKA driven by Gainbridge at Pelican 2026. Organizers are seeking more than 700 volunteers to fill a variety of roles during the tournament week from November 11th-15th. The \$65 volunteer package includes a custom-made official tournament - branded golf shirt, a hat or visor, two weekly grounds passes, a volunteer credential allowing grounds access and complimentary parking all week, and meals provided on scheduled days. For more information, visit TheAnnika.com/volunteer.

PROVISE CELEBRATES 40 YEARS ProVise Management Group, LLC, a financial planning and investment management firm with offices in Clearwater and Tampa, is celebrating its 40th anniversary. ProVise is a SEC registered Investment Advisor serving over 1200 clients in over 30 states and managing about \$2 billion at a fiduciary standard of care.

Ray Ferrara, Founder and Executive Chair said, "We are humbled by the confidence our clients have placed in us and proud of the excellent advice and service our team members provide each day." ProVise Management Group, LLC is located at 611 Druid Rd E, Suite 105 in Clearwater. Reach them at (727) 441-9022 or Info@ProVise.com.

CELEBRATING AND EXPANDING Congratulations to Indian Rocks Beach residents and owners of IRB Creamery Jade and Will Pendley on five years in business. In May of 2021, the couple took over the neighborhood staple Pinky's Ice Cream & Candy Shop. After working for Pinky's for over 10 years, Jade made the transition from employee to boss, adding her husband as her wingman.

If that wasn't enough to celebrate, Jade and Will have taken on a new venture. Old Florida Cigar & Bait Company, just a few doors down, was put up for sale by owner and operator Tim Chase back in November. Chase ran the business for 15 years before retiring. The store provides anglers and cigar connoisseurs with an assortment of fishing gear, bait, and Tampa's famous hand-rolled cigars. It is open seven days a week from 6am-sunset.

Both shops are located in the Sunrise Plaza at 1401 Gulf Blvd. For more information, call (727) 333-5496 or follow them on Facebook.

BUSINESS NEWS WANTED If you have news for this Magazine, e-mail Pete@MagriffProductions.com or call (813) 239-6862.

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WAY DOWN UPON THE SUWANNEE RIVER

By Bob & Becky Griffin, Local Writers

Recently, we took a trip to Kentucky and spent a few days in Bardstown, a historic town 40 miles south of Louisville. The Stephen Foster Museum and My Old Kentucky Home mansion are both there. Today, this 1,300-acre state park preserves the soaring brick mansion of Judge John Rowan. Though his cousin, Stephen Foster, never actually lived there, he visited frequently, and the estate's sweeping beauty inspired him to pen "My Old Kentucky Home" — now that state's official anthem, sung every May at the start of the Kentucky Derby. In a striking historical irony, Foster also wrote "Old Folks at Home," Florida's official state song, having never once set foot in the Sunshine State.

Stephen Foster did not have an easy life. The inkwell on his desk in Pittsburgh was always full, but his pockets were usually empty. It was 1851, and the twenty-five-year-old composer was pacing his room, humming a melody that felt as warm as a southern breeze. He was writing a song about a longing for home, a nostalgic pining for a simpler place.

He had the lyrics mostly finished, but he was missing a name—a two-syllable southern river to anchor the chorus. He had originally scrawled "Yazoo," but it sounded too harsh. He asked his brother, Morrison, for a suggestion. Morrison flipped through an atlas and pointed to a tiny, twisting ribbon of water in Florida. "How about the Suwannee?" Morrison asked. Stephen smiled, shortening it to fit the meter. "Way down upon de Swanee River."

Thus, "Old Folks at Home" was born. Yet, for all the deep, humid longing Stephen breathed into those lines, he had never once set foot in Florida. He had never felt the thick southern heat of the state, nor had he ever seen the Spanish moss draping over the real Suwannee River. To Stephen, Florida was not a geographic reality; it was a beautiful, imagined paradise—a canvas for his own growing sense of displacement.

That displacement soon echoed in his personal life. In 1850, Stephen married Jane Denny MacDowell. Though they had a daughter, Marion, their marriage was a tempest of financial strain and emotional distance. Stephen was a genius of melody but a tragedy of business. In an era before copyright laws protected songwriters, he sold his masterpieces for flat, meager fees, watched publishers make fortunes off his heartaches, and slowly watched his own world crumble.



Statue outside Stephen Foster Museum, Bardstown KY



Vintage Curteich postcard featuring a scenic view of the Suwannee River near White Springs, Florida

By 1860, desperate to spark his career, Stephen moved to New York City. But the city was cold, and the specter of the Civil War dampened the nation's appetite for his sentimental ballads. Depressed, estranged from Jane and his daughter, and battling a worsening dependence on alcohol, Stephen retreated into the shadows of Manhattan's cheap lodging houses.

On a freezing January morning in 1864, the music finally stopped. Confined to a cheap room at the New England Hotel, burning with a severe fever, a weakened Stephen stood up to wash his face. Dizzy, he fainted, collapsing heavily against the ceramic washbasin. The basin shattered under his weight, its sharp shards cutting a deep, terrible gash into his neck.

He was found bleeding and barely conscious by a chambermaid. Though his friend George Cooper rushed him to Bellevue Hospital, Stephen was too weak from the fever and the catastrophic blood loss to fight. On January 13, 1864, America's first great troubadour died peacefully at the tragic age of thirty-seven. When they searched his meager pockets, they found only thirty-eight cents in coins. Alongside the change was a scrap of paper carrying a penciled line, perhaps a lyric for a song he never got to write: "Dear friends and gentle hearts."

The Pennsylvania Railroad attached a special car to a train to carry his body back home to Pittsburgh. He was laid to rest in Pittsburgh's Allegheny Cemetery, buried to the gentle, weeping strains of "Old Folks at Home" played by a brass band. He died penniless and far from home, but his music drifted south, finding the very river he had only ever visited in his dreams. Stephen Foster is credited with 286 total works written over a career that lasted less than 20 years.

As the years went on, his songs basically turned into folklore. "My Old Kentucky Home" evolved from a mournful ballad into a soaring anthem of state pride, while "Old Folks at Home" became synonymous with the romanticized, sunny vistas of a Florida he only ever visited in his mind. In death, Stephen Foster achieved the ultimate artistic irony: he became the foundational voice of American song, forever wandering the beautiful, imagined landscapes of the home he always longed for.

To visit the Rowan Mansion and Stephen Foster Museum, find My Old Kentucky Home State Park at 501 E. Stephen Foster Avenue, Bardstown, Kentucky (VisitMyOldKyHome.com).

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SAHARAN DUST RETURNS TO FLORIDA, BRINGING HAZY SKIES, SUMMER HEAT, AND STUNNING SUNSETS

By Lora Magnani, Publisher

If Florida’s skies have looked unusually hazy lately, the cause isn’t smoke or pollution—it is dust from one of the world’s largest deserts. A massive plume of Saharan dust, stretching nearly 5,000 miles across the Atlantic Ocean, has once again reached Florida and much of the Gulf Coast, creating milky skies while influencing temperatures, air quality, and even hurricane activity.

Known as the Saharan Air Layer, this annual phenomenon occurs when strong winds lift fine dust from the Sahara Desert in North Africa and carry it westward across the Atlantic. The dust typically reaches Florida between June and August, with some plumes being much larger than others.

One of the most noticeable effects is hotter weather. The Saharan Air Layer contains extremely dry air that suppresses the formation of Florida’s familiar afternoon thunderstorms. Without those cooling rain showers, temperatures and heat index values can soar above 100 degrees. During these periods, health experts recommend staying hydrated, limiting strenuous outdoor activities during the hottest part of the day, and checking on older adults and others who are especially vulnerable to heat-related illness.

While the dust contributes to hazy skies, it also creates some of Florida’s most spectacular sunrises and sunsets. Tiny dust particles scatter sunlight, intensifying brilliant shades of orange, red, pink, and purple at dawn and dusk. Beachgoers and photographers often welcome these colorful displays, particularly along the Gulf Coast.

The dust can also affect air quality. Although concentrations are generally low for healthy individuals, the fine particles may irritate the eyes, nose, and throat or worsen symptoms for people with asthma, allergies, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), and other respiratory conditions. Those in sensitive groups should consider limiting extended outdoor activity on especially hazy days.

There is also an upside during hurricane season. The Saharan Air Layer carries exceptionally dry air into the tropical Atlantic while increasing wind shear, making it more difficult for tropical disturbances to develop into organized storms. Although the dust doesn’t eliminate hurricane threats, it can temporarily suppress tropical development.

Additional dust plumes are expected throughout the summer before gradually diminishing in early fall. For Floridians, the annual arrival of Saharan dust is a reminder that weather systems can travel thousands of miles, bringing hazy skies, intense heat, breathtaking sunsets, and even a temporary lull in Atlantic hurricane activity.





JULIE MARCUS, SUPERVISOR OF ELECTIONS, PINELLAS COUNTY

AUGUST 18, 2026 PRIMARY ELECTION

3 WAYS TO VOTE



Vote By Mail

- All mail ballot requests expired in 2024!
- Deadline to request a mail ballot is August 6 by 5 p.m.
- Request a mail ballot at VotePinellas.gov or call 727-464-VOTE (8683).
- Mail back your ballot or take it to any one of our mail ballot return locations. (Return location days and times vary - check locations at VotePinellas.gov.)



Vote Early

- Vote early at any one of our 3 Early Voting locations: August 8–16.
 - Monday–Friday, 8 a.m.–6 p.m.
 - Saturday–Sunday, 8 a.m.–5 p.m.
- Bring your photo and signature ID to avoid delays.



Vote on Election Day

- Voters are required to vote in the precinct where they live.
- Polls are open 7 a.m.–7 p.m. Bring your photo and signature ID to avoid delays.
- Visit VotePinellas.gov or call 727-464-VOTE (8683) to find your Election Day precinct and polling place information and a list of acceptable forms of ID.

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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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Community News

SAND KEY CIVIC ASSOCIATION (SKCA)

Submitted by Al and Kim Kozak

The SKCA will be having a Speaker Forum on August 25th to discuss Amendment 3 "Save Our Homes from Excessive Property Taxes". If this amendment is approved by voters in November, the first \$250,000 of a homestead property's assessed value would be exempt from ad valorem taxation and direct the Florida Legislature to develop a plan to eliminate property taxes on homestead properties. This proposal has the potential to significantly impact homeowners, local governments, and communities throughout Florida.

Join us to hear perspectives from both sides of this issue and hear explanations of the potential implications of Amendment 3, and discussions of what it could mean for Florida's cities and residents. There will be two speakers, Sam Wagoner, Legislative Advocate with the Florida League of Cities, and Representative Berny Jacques (District 59) from the Florida House of Representatives.

The forum will be held on August 25th from 5:15-7pm at the Belleair Beach Community Center, 444 Causeway Blvd, Belleair Beach. A reception with light appetizers and a cash bar from Hogg Daddy's sponsored by USI Insurance begins at 5:15pm and the speaker presentation begins at 6pm. This event is free to attend, but registration is required. Email SandKeyEvents@gmail.com. to register.

The SKCA will be hosting a dinner at Island Way Grill, 20 Island Way, Clearwater Beach, on Monday, September 21st from 4:30-7:30pm. Enjoy complimentary hors d'oeuvres, dinner buffet and dessert. Cash Bar. This event is free for our Executive Members and \$10 per person for Non-Executive Members. If you would like to attend, please email SandKeyEvents@gmail.com and you will be sent an invite to RSVP and pay.

COUNTY COMMISSIONER BRIAN SCOTT

Submitted by Coleen Chaney

Floridians have made one thing abundantly clear: affordability is pushing many families to their breaking point. Rising housing costs, insurance premiums, and everyday expenses have made it harder for people to get ahead. We hear you loud and clear.

This November, voters will decide whether to approve a constitutional amendment that provides significant property tax relief while also limiting how local governments raise and spend property tax revenue. This proposal has the potential to provide meaningful tax relief for homeowners, but it will also require local governments to adapt to reduced revenues. Both of those things can be true at the same time.

If the voters approve this amendment, Pinellas County Government will honor their decision. We will adapt, continue to provide the core functions of government, and remain focused on delivering essential services efficiently and responsibly.

At the end of the day, this decision belongs to the people. Whatever the outcome, we will respect the will of our voters and continue working every day to earn their trust.

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. Email SmithBK@comcast.net to RSVP for lunch.

Community News



ISLAND ESTATES WOMEN'S CLUB

Submitted by Cheryl Genovese

The IEWC welcomed and commemorated the awardees of their 2026 annual scholarships on April 28th at the Bon Appetit restaurant in Dunedin. Recipients include Marlan Huerta-Paz, Yasmin Franco-Cruz, Citlaly Buexjuah-Silis, Amira Marshall and Morgan Maske.

"This year's recipients reflect the spirit and tradition of the Club," stated Scholarship Chair, Marilee Ferguson. "This is a group of strong young women who value education and community. We recognize ourselves in their determination."

IEWC annual scholarships are awarded based on scholastic achievement, community service and financial need. For more information on IEWC and the scholarship program, visit IslandEstatesWomensClub.com.

CLOTHES TO KIDS

Submitted by Carolyn Stroud

The countdown to the first day of school is on, and Clothes To Kids is hard at work preparing our shoppers for a confident start to the school year. As children across Greater Tampa Bay shop for their free school wardrobes, we need your help keeping our racks stocked. Donations of new or gently used clothing ensure every child can head back to the classroom feeling ready to learn. Our most-needed items include:

- Tops for little boys and little girls (youth sizes S-XL)
- Shorts and pants for little boys and little girls (youth sizes 4-14)
- Little boys' and young men's boxer briefs (new only, sizes S-XXL)
- Jackets (all sizes)

Our annual Shoetober shoe collection kicks off October 1st. Throughout the month, our community comes together to collect new and gently used shoes for local school-age children. Start setting aside those shoes now and help us put confident feet in the classroom this fall.

For information on shopping, donating, and volunteering, visit ClothestoKids.org.

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.



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