

Hobe Sound

COMPLIMENTARY

CURRENTS



CCraig Kingston of Taste Restaurant in Hobe Sound served authentic cuisine at the Caribbean Night fundraiser for Caring Fields Animal Sanctuary on April 7.

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Hap Harrington breathes life into an ambitious plan to save many lives of seniors.

Pg 18



County Commission falls short of expectations Pg 16

For better, or worse?



The revitalization of Martin County's seven historic districts, addressed during neighborhood workshops, may be taking a new direction, but will they be better off in the long run, or worse? Pg 6

News



The U.S. Bureau of Land Management may be closer than ever to eliminating public access to Cato's Bridge Beach. Pg 5

Dr. Edie Widder addresses Chamber.



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Lifestyle



Interior designer H. Allen Holmes, a native Floridian, features the work of another native, Gary Borse, in his Hobe Sound gallery. Pg 20

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Commissioner Scott plans District 3 town hall meetings

District 3 Commissioner Anne Scott, former Jupiter Island Town Commissioner newly elected to the Martin County Commission, is inviting the

public—including Chamber of Commerce members—to attend a town hall meeting to discuss issues of public interest.

These meetings will provide residents and business owners the opportunity to have an open dis-

cussion with Commissioner Scott, according to a county newsletter.

Three meetings have been scheduled:

– **Monday, April 29, 6 pm**

Indiantown Civic Center. 15675 SW Osceola St in Indiantown.

– **Monday, May 6, 6 pm**

County Line Civic Center. 18530 SE County Line Road in Tequesta.

– **Monday, May 20, 6 pm**

Hobe Sound Civic Center. 8980 Olympus Street in Hobe Sound.

"I look forward to meeting you at one of our District 3 Town Meetings," said Commissioner Scott. "Thank you for the opportunity to serve as your Commissioner."

No reservations are required. ■

Utility announces rate reduction

Ike Crumpler

Special to Hobe Sound Currents

South Martin Regional Utility recently made a move surely to be welcomed by the residents and business owners in south Martin County. The utility announced in March an across-the-board, 12.4% percent water-use rate reduction.

Reasons for the cost savings that permitted the reduction were cited in SMRU correspondence to customers, crediting "careful strategic planning and fiscally conservative decision-making."

SMRU, the sole source of municipal drinking water for the Hobe Sound area, has earned industry awards for water quality, operations, facilities and environmental practices, as well as building a reputation as one of Hobe Sound's most respected local businesses.

"They're the utility here," said Angela Hoffman, executive director of the Hobe Sound Chamber of Commerce. "If you want water, you're paying your bill to SMRU, and yet they've always been great to the Chamber and the local community."

The water company, a long-standing Chamber member, always provides free bottled water to volunteers at Chamber events, as well as making their property available as a staging ground

for the Christmas parade and opening their doors for the "Inside Hobe Sound" tour.

"They're involved in a big way in 90 percent of Chamber activities," Hoffman added, acting more like a start-up than an established business. "That's how you can tell that supporting local business is one of their intrinsic principles."

SMRU has its roots in the Hobe Sound Water Company (established in the 1920s), serving neighborhoods in Gomez, Banner Lake, Zeus Park and parts of Jupiter Island. Hydratech, formed in 1976, served the northern Hobe Sound communities. Both were purchased and merged into South Martin Regional Utility in 1998.

Over the past three years, employees of SMRU have received many state awards for their dedication, knowledge and service, and the utility took honors as Medium Wastewater System of the Year in 2010 from the Florida Rural Water Association and received the Plant Operations Excellence Award in 2012 from the regional Department of Environmental Protection for its new Nanofiltration system.

"Having access to water is vital to life itself, so you can say we do take our jobs pretty seriously," said Shannon Dunne, executive director of SMRU. "We're continually pursuing ways to protect our water supply, preserve the environment that provides it, and ensure our customers' expectations are met and, hopefully, exceeded."

Many times, that includes serving customers unable to pay. The utility funds a emergency relief program administered by the Salvation Army that helps customers enduring difficult circumstances—the elderly, disabled or those suffering extreme financial hardship—get some assistance to pay their water bills.

"We see a lot of need in Hobe Sound and we've seen an increase," said Sylvia Cerda, social services case worker with Salvation Army in Stuart. "Definitely the economy has had a big impact. That's one of the essential things that people are in need of—water, to be able to cook and take baths. So people who've needed the relief program are very grateful. SMRU is a great company, because they'll do whatever they can to meet the needs of Hobe Sound customers."

One goal of SMRU leadership—including Jupiter Island town commissioners, Executive Director Dunne, Engineer Stuart Trent, Jupiter Island Town Manager Gene Rauth and Deputy Town Manager Michael Ventura—has been to explore and invest in multiple ways to access alternative water supplies.

In 2001, SMRU constructed the South Water Plant's reverse osmosis water treatment facility, which draws from the deep Floridan aquifer for blending with the shallow aquifer water, to supply up to 6.2 million gallons of water per day.

Another recent upgrade in service, the award-winning nanofiltration plant, draws more than one million gallons a day from the shallow aquifer and thoroughly treats it—at levels that exceed quality standards of the Florida

continued on page 4



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continued from PAGE 3

Department of Environmental Protection and the federal Environmental Protection Agency—to ensure consistently high-quality water throughout the service area. ■

All the old rules regarding eligibility

to serve on the Neighborhood Advisory Committee, including requirements that persons live or work within the Neighborhood Planning Areas to qualify for appointment, have been suspended. Maybe permanently.

“What I want everyone to understand is that anyone living in Martin County can apply,” said Kevin Freeman, the county’s director of community development, at a recent workshop in Palm City organized to explain the CRA’s new direction. “The Community Redevelopment Agency (now comprising the county commissioners instead of a separate appointed, volunteer board) wants to see who in the community is most interested in serving. Whether or not they live within the planning area boundaries is something that the commissioners may or may not consider when it comes time to make their appointments, so the message here is, if you’re interested in community revitalization, then apply.”

The deadline for applications—or reapplication if a former NAC member—has been pushed to Friday, April 12, to allow sufficient time for citizens to submit the form, which is downloadable at www.martincountycra.com, or pick one up in the lobby of the Martin County Administrative Center.

After the form is completed and signed, it may be faxed to 772-419-6942, emailed to Donna Gordon at dgon@martin.fl.us, or dropped off at the Administrative Center on Monterey Road in Stuart by Friday. ■

The proposed changes to Chapters 1, 2 and 4

of Martin County’s Comprehensive Growth Management Plan, being authored by former county commissioner Maggy Hurchalla in collaboration with the Martin County Growth Management staff, got a green light from the Local Planning Agency at its March 21 meeting. The rewritten plan will proceed to a public hearing April 18 before the Board of County Commissioners.

Among those who raised objections to the plan changes at the LPA meeting were Morris Crady, a planner with Lucido & Associates in Stuart, who urged the planning agency to slow the process. “We’re doing this at warp speed,” Crady said, which could result in “unintended consequences” due to the lack of careful consideration of the proposed changes.

He urged the formation of a citizen advisory committee, appointed by the commission, to review the proposed changes prior to adoption.

Hurchalla disagreed with Crady’s

How does a long-established, well-recognized

55+ retirement community lose its power to enforce the minimum age requirement of its residents? When a judge studies the original documents that created a mandatory association of property owners and determines they were faulty.

In a ruling March 27 in favor of Marva Evans of the Ridgeway community, Circuit Judge Lawrence M. Mirman said that the association had been incorporated in 1978 by three lot owners, not the developers.

“It (the Ridgeway Property Owners Association) lacks the power to require all lot owners to be members,” he wrote in the summary judgment, “to fine non-members, to levy assessment on nonmembers, or to lien or foreclose on any lot owner.”

The judge also ruled that the acceptance letters signed by new property owners when they purchased a lot in the Ridgeway development recognizing and agreeing to abide by the 55+ requirement were invalid, thus paving the way for Evans’ daughter, who is younger than 55, to live in the community, which was the basis

observations recounting the number of public workshops and public meetings held in December, February and March, as well as the input she’d received on the comp plan’s website, which she felt indicated that the public had indeed taken advantage of the opportunities available to them to comment.

At one of the public meetings in Commission chambers prior to the LPA hearing, another land planner, Ken Natoli with Cuzzo Design Group, complained that the county and the comp plan had “no vision,” and therefore would wind up looking like U.S. 1. “Is that really what we want,” he added.

Hurchalla invited Natoli to tell her how to incorporate a long-range, planning vision for more livable communities and she would be glad to include it, she said. “But every time I hear those words,” she added, “it’s usually a developer just wanting higher density.”

The major changes to the comp plan being proposed include the requirement for a “super majority” of at least four votes, instead of three, of the five commissioners to approve any plans requesting more than the four-story height limit, allowing more than 15 units per acre in any land use, expanding the urban services district, impacting the St. Lucie estuary, adversely affecting residents’ water supply or flood protections, changing wetlands protection requirements or waiving the requirement that growth pay for itself.

The plan also revised its goals. All other parts of the plan must be in alignment with those goals, which places conservation of natural resources and natural communities as the highest priority, as well as “prudent fiscal management.” Also, should any provisions of the plan conflict, then the more restrictive would be applied.

Among those at the LPA hearing with strong objections to passing the comp plan changes were Ed and Julie



of Evans’ lawsuit against the association.

Following an emergency meeting of the board members and many Ridgeway residents the first week of April, the board agreed that they would not file an appeal, and that they will “start from scratch” to create a new association, perhaps with membership “tiers” that will regulate use of their clubhouse and small swimming pool.

“Ridgeway still is a great community,” says George Kleine, a Ridgeway resident and editor of *The Ridgeway Reporter*. “It’s the people who live here who make it so special. All we need to do is to reach out to our neighbors and get to know them, and to share our love of Ridgeway.”

Some residents also plan to demonstrate their intention to stay in Ridgeway by creating yard signs that proclaim “This lot is NOT for sale.” ■

Prest of Rio, both long-time community activists, who reminded commissioners that the revitalization plans developed by the Rio NAC in conjunction with the Community Development Department includes a 20-acre parcel along the waterfront, which now has been cleared of derelict buildings. New waterfront shops and restaurants had been planned to replace the buildings that had stood on the property, but if the comp plan changes are approved with no exceptions, she said, the 75’ setbacks would “gut” their plan and make redevelopment of that parcel impossible.

The next public hearing for Chapters 1, 2 and 4 will be before the county commission Tuesday, April 18. To read the revisions in their entirety, go to: www.martincompplan.com, a website created by Hurchalla as both public outreach and to receive public comment. ■

The Witham Field airport tower is heading for closure.

The latest date announced is June 15, giving Martin County a little more time to decide its course: to go “towerless,” to charge landing fees of pilots using the airport, or to find another method of funding—but ad valorem taxes are not an option, according to the Board of County Commissioners.

The closure is the result of the federal sequester, an agreement reached last year between the President and Congress to cut the federal deficit. The Witham Field airport is among about 140 small airports whose towers manned by the Federal Aviation Authority are set to close. Commissioners demonstrated no inclination to join a lawsuit that has been filed by other airports at a cost of an estimated \$100,000,

or to join a lawsuit as an intervenor, with legal fees of approximately \$10,000.

“I have no desire to tussle with the government,” said Commissioner Ed Fielding. Commissioner Doug Smith, short of joining a lawsuit, said he felt that the commission “should at least hold our Congressional delegation accountable....make them explain this action.”

Some local pilots, including Doc Buchanan of Stuart, a retired commercial pilot who owns his own small plane, told the commissioners during public comments that Witham Field does not need a tower, which according to his calculations, averages one take-off or landing only once every 26 minutes, especially since all pilots are trained how to land without a tower and how to fly on instrumentation when visibility is poor. Other pilots disagreed.

George Stokus, airport manager, said that other considerations are the flight patterns and choice of runways, which a local tower can control, since noise mitigation over residential areas is a Martin County priority. He said that not having a tower will impact noise levels, as well as safety.

Stokus intends to organize a public workshop for local input April 11, and he will contact FAA to confirm that it will leave its equipment, if Martin County indicates that it will continue tower operations with its own funding.

“I certainly don’t want to buy radar equipment,” said Commission Chair Sarah Heard.

Following the public workshop, Stokus will return to the commission with a report and his recommendations. ■

Sheriff William Snyder may have

a difficult time getting residents to focus on the area’s pillowcase burglaries at the town hall meetings he recently scheduled in April. Instead, the identity of an apparent sexual predator is taking priority, although the sheriff will continue to host the neighborhood meetings about the burglaries each week this month.

Residents are clamoring for a composite sketch of the suspect who allegedly lured on Sunday a 10-year-old girl into the woods behind Manatee Creek Park of the Port Salerno area, where she’d been playing with her two younger siblings, ages 3 and 5. After the girl followed the man, who told her he needed help finding his lost dog, she was sexually assaulted.

The suspect is described as a white man in his 20s, about 5 feet, 9 inches tall weighing about 150 pounds, with sandy blond hair styled in a buzz cut, wearing a blue- and white-striped shirt and a brace or cast on one hand. Detectives have been working with the girl and an adult who may have seen a man leaving the woods to complete a sketch.

Sheriff Snyder will update the public regarding the assault case, as well as discuss the county’s rash of pillowcase burglaries, at public workshops from 6-8 p.m. on April 11 at the Cummings Library in Palm City; on April 16 at the Hoke Library in Jensen Beach; and on April 30 at the Pine School on Federal Highway in Hobe Sound. ■



A popular boating stop to snorkel on the Intracoastal Waterway at Jupiter Sound, Cato's Bridge Beach.

Cato's Bridge Beach: Going, going, gone?

Snorkelers, kayakers and boaters in the Intracoastal Waterway at Jupiter Sound will be notified when the rocks start getting laid offshore that their idyllic, natural spot is gone forever. The U.S. Bureau of Land Management apparently has won its battle to ban all public access to the shoreline known locally as Cato's Bridge Beach.

Snorkeling in the clear turquoise waters, which for generations has attracted locals and visitors to the spot, will be permitted, but there's nowhere to anchor a boat or beach a kayak.

After more than two years of public protest, the BLM, which recently acquired the former Coast Guard property near the Jupiter Inlet lighthouse—now part of the federally designated Jupiter Inlet Lighthouse Outstanding Natural Area (JILONA)—and after filing a third permit application in November 2012 has been apparently successful in outlasting public complaints. All indicators are that the permit will be granted, according to sources close to the project.

BLM's field office manager for the southeastern states, Bruce Dawson, adopted what many considered to be "less than honorable" tactics, including making public promises about the recreational component of the permit that he later ignored, barring public comment at some meetings, naming unauthorized persons to the JILONA working group (charged with oversight of the property) who were more sympathetic to his personal agenda than the original named members, and, most recently, taking actions independent of the JILONA working group without their knowledge or input.

Dawson filed BLM's latest application after having withdrawn the agency's application on two other occasions since June 2012. Most unsettling to many Martin County residents was Dawson's abrupt withdrawal of the permit application after the Florida Department of Environmental Protection had reached a compromise design with the Palm Beach County Department of Environmental Resources Management (ERM), which had prepared and submitted the permit on BLM's behalf.

The design would allow access to the beach behind the rock breakwater and would have included an additional low wall to be constructed on state submerged land that would add stabilization and, because of an 8" cap on the wall, could be used as a resting bench for paddlers.

The compromise design was in response to the volume of public protest at the time that threatened to label the permit as one of Heightened Public Concern, requiring it to go before Florida's governor and his cabinet officials to determine its outcome. The compromise was reached June 26.

On July 18, Dawson withdrew the permit, prior to presenting it to the members of the JILONA working group for their consideration or input. He objected then to both public access to the shore and to the low wall, which he said would draw more people to use the site.

Dawson said that the compromise violated the tenets of the National Landscape Conservation System, of which JILONA is a part, to "protect, conserve and restore" the cultural and natural resources of the country's exceptional natural landscapes.

The low wall would have been constructed below the mean high-waterline, which is the boundary of Florida's submerged lands, but because of the meandering coastline, some of the wall would have been constructed on federal property, giving Dawson authority to reject it.

A biologist in the Mississippi office of BLM, Faye Winters, said that 645 feet of coastline nearest the bridge will remain open and the rock breakwater will be placed on 2,500 cubic yards of landfill from a future ICW maintenance project to elevate the now-submerged shoreline, blocking all public access, and which will be planted with mangroves.

BLM also will construct a 3-tiered, vinyl sheet pile system for 705 feet of the high banks, where erosion is most evident, as well as adding 560 feet of a submerged steel sheet pile in 13' feet of water to support the back-fill and isolate it from the Intracoastal Waterway. ■

—Barbara Clowdus

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About Time
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For better, or worse?

The revitalization of Martin County's seven historic districts are definitely taking a new direction under the new Board of County Commissioners, but residents are asking: Will the results be better?

No qualifications for appointment to the all-volunteer Neighborhood Advisory Committees for each of Martin County's seven historic areas were determined in advance of the county calling for applications, and reapplications to the NACs.

Those who had already been appointed—some serving more than a decade, others not even meeting once with their committee—were notified by email in February that the NACs, as they currently existed, had been

disbanded and would be reorganized.

Kevin Freeman, director of Martin County's Community Development Department, conducted workshops throughout March in each of the seven historic areas to explain that the NACs had done nothing wrong.

"The Board of County Commissioners is re-evaluating, re-setting the whole NAC/CRA structure," Freeman told the Indiantown gathering. "Right now, nothing has been determined, even the number of members on the committees, is not set in stone. I can

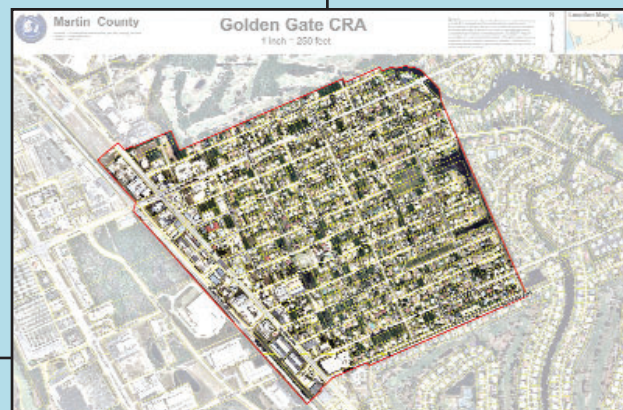
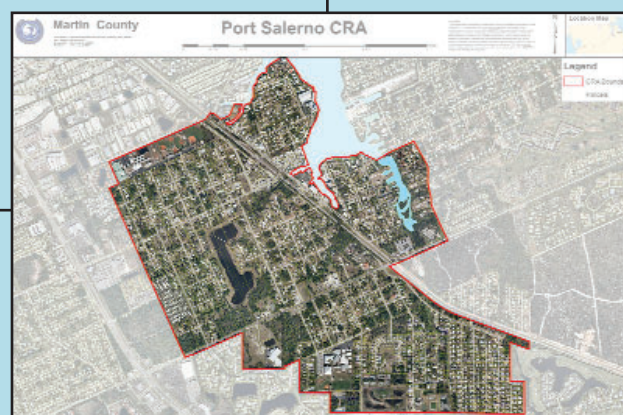
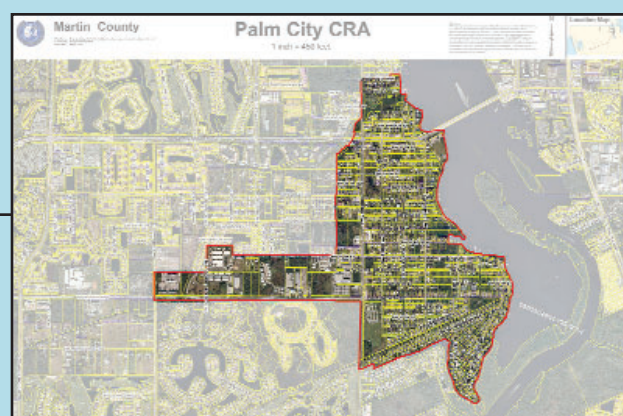
only tell you that if you are interested in your community, then apply."

The shake-up, ordered by the county commissioners, began in November 2012, following the election of commissioners John Haddox, District 5 that includes Palm City and Indiantown, and Anne Scott, District 3 that includes Hobe Sound and Indiantown, when the commission disbanded the separate, all-volunteer, previously appointed Community Redevelopment Agency and appointed themselves to serve in a dual role, as

both county commission and CRA, a return to its historic structure.

The action was taken during its first meeting as a new board.

The previous commission had changed the CRA about three years ago to an independent agency accountable to the commission, its members appointed and with its own budget, but when the independent CRA was abolished, Commission Chair Sarah Heard said that the local Neighborhood Advisory Committees would not be affected.



Residents dominate NAC membership

Senior managers of businesses who were not residents, or did not own businesses or property within the Neighborhood Planning Areas were targeted by County Commission Chair Sarah Heard as largely responsible for what she said was the NACs' emphasis on projects that benefit businesses, rather than those preferred by residents.

A check of county records, however, revealed that only three of the 53 members of the Neighborhood Advisory Committees were senior managers of businesses, rather than residents, business or property owners.

The overwhelming majority, 42 members, were residents living within the Neighborhood Planning Area boundaries. Of those residents, nine owned additional property (not their residences) within the boundaries, four owned businesses, and five residents also owned a business and additional property within the CRA.

Five were not residents within the planning areas, but owned their own businesses within the boundary limits, two of whom were members of the Port Salerno NAC, one in Hobe Sound and one was in Jensen Beach.

One member of the Golden Gate NAC owned property, but was not a resident and did not own a business there.

The three senior managers served on the NACs for Palm City, Jensen Beach or Golden Gate, and the revitalization projects in all three neighborhoods have been recent targets of criticism. ■

—Barbara Clowdus

Neighborhood Planning Areas targeted for Community Revitalization

Less than two months later, all NAC meetings also were suspended without explanation, and the former members were told that they must reapply for membership on their respective planning committees—even if they had just been appointed, as had Bruce Dawson, a business owner within the Hobe Sound planning area, and Angela Hoffman, executive director of the Hobe Sound Chamber of Commerce and a resident within the neighborhood planning area. Hoffman reapplied; Dawson said that he will not.

The commission had already passed an ordinance earlier in the year limiting NAC membership to only five members, a fewer number than any of the current committees. Rio, Palm City and Indiantown NACs all had nine members; Port Salerno had eight; Jensen Beach and Hobe Sound had seven, and Golden Gate had six.

The number of volunteers serving on each committee turned out to be less an issue than who should be appointed. In some of the workshops, particularly Hobe Sound, Palm City and Jensen Beach, criticism surfaced that the projects had been too heavily influenced by business interests.

"I know you don't want to hear this, but the word on the street," said Commissioner John Haddox to the Palm City workshop of about 30 residents, "is that the projects are not what residents want—they are what the Mapp Road businesses want."

The same perception was echoed at the Hobe Sound meeting by resident Sally Schwartz, even though six of the seven Hobe Sound NAC members were residents within the CRA boundaries as the plans for the Bridge Road revitalization project were developed.

Previously applicants needed to be either residents of or own a business or property within or contiguous to the Neighborhood Planning Areas in order to be considered for appointment. Now, no such rules exist.

Freeman told the Hobe Sound gathering of about 35 residents, which was also attended by Commissioner Anne Scott for about an hour, that the commissioners will be evaluating the applications they receive, including the number that come in very each area, and that they have instructed



Kevin Freeman, director of Martin County's Community Development Department, traveled to all seven of Martin County's historic districts in March to conduct NAC workshops, as he is here in Hobe Sound at the Hobe Sound Community Center.

Freeman to report also the feedback from each community.

It appears, Freeman added, that the NACs are favoring five members with two alternates, with perhaps an equal division between residents and business owners. Commissioners seem also to be looking for a wider representation of interests within each community, not limiting membership to only those within the CRA.

Kathy Spurgeon, a community activist and resident of Hobe Sound, objected to the idea.

"If we're going to be taking on projects that increase the value of our properties," she said, "so then we pay higher taxes, which is what we want because then there's more money coming back to us to improve our community even more, then the stakeholders, the ones paying those higher taxes, should be the only ones on the committee."

Residents have asked for monthly meetings with staff, rather than quarterly, and that the commissioners consider meeting as the CRA in the evenings on a set day each month in order to facilitate public participation. Most of the NACs complained about poor communication, and that many of them are unaware of when NAC meetings are held.

Many of the NAC members expressed surprise and disappointment at the proposed changes. One Port Salerno resident said, "If it's not broke, leave it alone."

Following the close of the Hobe

Sound workshop, Gretchen Reich, a Hobe Sound resident who had been a member of the NAC for more than 10 years, participating in the NOW Visioning process and all the local charettes, said, "I'm totally confused. I really thought this was working better than it ever had." ■

—Barbara Clowdus

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A member of the board of the directors of the Treasured Lands Foundation, Jeff Wittman, with Barbara Birdsey, center, of the Pegasus Foundation, and Rikki Klaus, of Upstairs Communications.



More than 30 auction items enticed diners away from their tables to contemplate their bids.



Karen and Craig Kingston, owners of Taste, hosted Caribbean Night for the fourth consecutive year.

A special night for a special place

The endearing faces of dogs, cats and kittens, as well as magnificent Florida landscapes on an array of auction items at Caribbean Night at Taste restaurant served as subtle reminders that the fundraiser was to benefit the Caring Fields Animal Sanctuary in Palm City.

As if anyone could forget with Barbara Birdsey in the room, founder of The Pegasus Foundation, an international non-profit organization committed to animal protection, environmental preservation and public education in the U.S., the Caribbean and Kenya. Pegasus owns and manages Caring Fields.

"Caring Fields is such an incredible place," said Kathleen Radway of Elite Salon & Gallery in Hobe Sound, who again helped to organize the fundraiser for the fourth, consecutive year. "It's such a special place for animals, unlike probably anywhere else you could find. I always feel privileged to help."

Radway reiterated what many gathered in the popular Hobe Sound restaurant were saying. Caring Fields is unique.

Housed on the 23-acre farm are four non-profit organizations united with the single goal of protecting both domestic

and wild creatures and their habitats, including the Hobe Sound Animal Protection League, the Equine Rescue and Adoption Foundation, the Charles and Barbara Birdsey Education Center and the Treasured Lands Foundation.

The site of a large barn and several cat "condominiums," Caring Fields provides a safe place for the rescue, rehabilitation and re-homing of equines and cats—even if they are feral cats and old horses with no chance of adoption—so they can live out their lives in peace and safety. Currently about 150 cats live at Caring Fields, and dozens of horses have gone through the facility, but Caring Fields does not end its efforts with animal rescue alone.

The Charles and Barbara Birdsey Education Center, dedicated to promoting a more compassionate world through education, has developed educational programs for children, as well as a speakers bureau for adult groups, and Treasured Lands, Martin County's premiere land trust, stages environmental and educational programs on the premises as it works with landowners to preserve conservation lands.

Local artists and artisans contributed

their artwork, as well as local businesses and residents who contributed a variety of items valued at thousands of dollars to the silent auction, which brought some lively, last-minute bidding.

"Each year this gets bigger and better," said Suzanne Briley, who contributed two of her paintings to the auction. "Isn't it just like Hobe Sound to open its hearts and wallets like this for such a good cause? And having good food like this helps bring people in, too." ■



Hobe Sound's reggae king, DJ Lenkey Paul, kept the Caribbean flavor true....until he switched to a little Frank Sinatra.



The buffet line was long as diners sampled a little baked ham, some jerk chicken, Caribbean pork and/or coconut shrimp, along with fried plantains and fresh green beans. Scrumptious!

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Small business gets renewed focus

Small business owners saw firsthand, and for many it was the first time, the resources available to help them grow their business in Martin County at the March "after-hours social" of the Hobe Sound Chamber of Commerce.

Featuring a Martin County Business Development Board presentation at the IRSC's Chastain campus in the Wolf Technology Center, the venue permitted use of three gigantic overhead monitors so the audience could follow along as BDB speakers explored the YesMartinFL.com website, dedicated to economic development.

"We want to reach out to our small businesses," said BDB Executive Director Tim Dougher, "to let them know

the resources we have available to help them start or expand their business."

The website, with special portals to Stuart, iTown, and Palm City, has a special tool that lists available buildings and lots particularly suited for business relocation or expansions, as well as providing resource guides when a business is seeking financial assistance or workforce development.

"We consider small business to be the lifeblood of our community," Dougher said, "and we want you to know that the Business Development Board staff can serve as an advocate for you when dealing with other county departments, when you've encountered challenges to growth, but maybe most important of all, we can serve as your own strategic

business partner. All you have to do is just contact us."

Dougher, a native Floridian, began his career in marketing at the Palm Beach County Convention and Visitors Bureau followed by more than six years as vice president of business recruitment, retention and expansion at the Business Development Board of Palm Beach County. He also was the business development division manager for Orlando.

Dougher also announced that he and his staff would be conducting a "Business Walk" through Hobe Sound, going door to door on Bridge Road and Dixie Highway as part of an outreach effort. To contact the Business Development Board, go to BDBMC.org, YesMartinFL.com, or call 772.221.1380. ■



Photo: Barbara Clowdus

Tim Dougher, executive director of the Martin County Business Development Board, answers questions from Angela Hoffman, executive director of the Hobe Sound Chamber of Commerce at the Chamber's After Hours event in March.

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Scientist sounds the alarm

Many Hobe Sound Chamber of Commerce members left their March breakfast meeting at the Hobe Sound Bible College slightly shell-shocked. Guest speaker Dr. Edith Widder, lead scientist and chief executive officer of the Ocean Research and Conservation Alliance in Ft. Pierce, had just painted a graphic picture with photos and maps of the dire condition of the 156-mile Indian River Lagoon, revealing that the northern portion of the lagoon that lies in Indian River County had lost 32,000 acres of seagrass beds.

"That's like losing a rain forest," she said, "and the seagrass died all the way to the rhizomes, the roots, and we're not even sure exactly why."

Long recognized for its biological diversity, the Indian River also contributes \$3.7 billion a year to the state's economy, Widder said. "So there's more than one reason to be concerned about the potential loss of this lagoon."

In spite of the gloomy picture the



ORCA's Dr. Edith Widder from Ft. Pierce

world-renowned scientist painted in her PowerPoint presentation, she also told the group of local business men and women that the key to changing the river's decline lies in the next generation, "the optimists."

Toward that end, she is working with high school teens to sample and test the lagoon's sediment, which retains toxins. Widder and her team have developed equip-

ment and methods that utilize her research in bioluminescence to detect pollution and its sources by creating a toxicity map, similar to weather maps, and Kilroys, which provide the necessary data, such as water depth, direction and flow speed, to pinpoint the source of pollution.

The only element lacking are the funds to complete the toxicity map of the Indian River Lagoon, essential to saving it. And a large dose of optimism.

For more information about Widder's research and her work, or make a donation, go to www.teamorca.org. ■

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Eatery opens in Seabbranch

No business has been more welcome than has The Hunter's Grill in the Seabbranch Shopping Center at the intersection of Seabbranch Blvd. and Federal Highway in north Hobe Sound.

"Every shopping center needs to have an anchor, something to draw people in, and a restaurant does just that," says Tony Sementelli, owner of the Seabbranch ShipCenter, who also chose the Seabbranch location just a few months ago to open the second of his pack-and-ship centers.

He thinks the new restaurant will boost everyone's business in the shopping plaza, "because the restaurant's parking lot is always full, which is a good sign."

Another cheerleader for the new restaurant is Dan Hulen, president of the Hobe Sound Chamber of Commerce. "The food, I think, is just exceptional. I just love their truffle fries," he says. "You can tell all the food is really fresh, and the prices are reasonable, I think."

This is not the first restaurant opened by Vijay Mehra. "I once had eight restaurants," he says, with a grin and a shake of his head, "but that was 30 years ago. When you're young, you have lots of energy for those things."

When he retired to Florida, he became bored.

"I just like this business," he says. "I like having a restaurant, pleasing my customers, and always thinking of new additions to the menu."

Mehra says the restaurant's current menu is determined by what is easily obtainable and freshest, and it will change four times a year, just as the seasons change, providing variety and new surprises. The servings are generous. The shrimp dishes are luscious. The steaks and chops are tender. The fried grouper is the crispiest ever, and diners may choose from a sophisticated wine list.



Vijay Mehra, proprietor of the elegant new Hobe Sound restaurant, The Hunter's Grill. Vijay Mehra, proprietor of the elegant new Hobe Sound restaurant, The Hunter's Grill.

"Soon, we'll also have our liquor license," Mehra says, "so you'll also have the opportunity to have your favorite mixed drink with dinner, as well."

Diners also may choose to dine inside or outside, and Mehra recently completed renovation of an adjoining space in order to offer banquet facilities, too, which will be equipped with all the equipment required for PowerPoint presentations.

"It's the perfect place for large groups, including the Chamber of Commerce," he tells Hulen, punctuated by a grin.

The deep greens and reds of its elegant décor with fox hunting paintings on the walls, crisp white tablecloths and fresh flowers would, indeed, make an elegant background for a meeting of two minds or a gathering of dozens.

Reservations are not required, but are suggested for weekend evenings. The hours are Monday-Friday 11a.m. to 9 p.m., and 3-9 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays. ■



The Hunter's Grill, a new restaurant in the Seabbranch Square shopping plaza on Federal Highway in Hobe Sound.



Tony DeLorenzo, owner of Tri-County Mobile Home Supplies, keeps the store open five days a week now.

A booming “Hi there. How’re ya doin’?”

greet all customers at Tri-County Mobile Home Supplies as they walk through the door of the shop in the Palm Square Shopping Plaza on US 1 in south Stuart. When they leave, regardless of the reason that brought them to the specialty store, owner Tony DeLorenzo shouts after them, “Have a blessed day.” And he means it.

A charter member of the Hobe Sound/Port Salerno Rotary Club, DeLorenzo has long lived his life in service to others, and he makes no bones that he puts God first, his family second, and his work third, but running the store, as it turns out, is more than just work, too.

“My partner and I first opened the store here in this same location in December 2004,” DeLorenzo says, in the strip mall south of Wal-Mart, near numerous mobile home communities, but during the economic bust of 2007, it became evident that the store would not support two families.

“We decided that I would leave this business and go do something else, which I did,” DeLorenzo adds. Then cancer struck his partner’s family, and increasingly his partner was unable to take care of the store.

“He called me one day and asked if I wanted to take it over,” he says. “I didn’t want to see the store close, so I said sure. In January 2013, I took it over.”

Now the store is open five days a week, from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday through Thursday, and on Fridays, he opens and closes an hour later, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., to accommodate his early-morning Rotary meeting. It’s closed on weekends, a time he reserves for family and for worship. He recognizes, though, that since his store is the only mobile home parts supply in the county, that having regular hours and being open every weekday is important.

“People depend on us,” he says. “Nothing is standard size in a mobile home, so in order to replace or repair anything, you’ve got to come to a store like this—you can’t get your supplies by running down to the big box store. We stock a lot of parts here, but if there’s something you need we don’t have, we can get it here quick.”

He also has developed relationships with tradesmen such as plumbers, roofers, and carpenters about whom he feels confident in referring to his own customers.

“We know the people you can trust to do a job right,” he says, “and I think that’s just as important as selling somebody the parts they need. It’s just part of the service.”

Tri-County Mobile Home Supplies is at 4436 South Federal Highway in south Stuart. Call 772.463.7646, or 772.263.0529. You also can reach DeLorenzo by email: tricountymhs44@gmail.com. ■

More than 60 Hobe Sound businesses

were visited over three days’ time in March by the Martin County Business Development Board staff as part of its “Business Walk” campaign, which is planned additionally for five other business districts in the county: Indiantown, Jensen Beach, Stuart, Palm City and Port Salerno.

“We’re just trying to get a little face time,” says BDB Executive Director Tim Dougher, “so that we can continually feed these small businesses information that will help them either stay in the county, or will help them if they want to expand.”

The BDB contract with the county, which has come under fire recently by the Martin County Commission for its apparent lack of performance standards, defines its “core mission” as seeking new businesses and providing them resources to locate here that have 50% or more of their retail sales outside of Martin County. The purpose is to build a broader tax base, provide additional jobs for local residents, and to bring additional revenue into Martin County.

“We have not focused on the smaller retail businesses and restaurants,” Dougher says, “because they’re a little bit out of the realm of our services, but we do have the resources to assist them if they wish. As a matter of fact, we’ve been doing this for years...if a restaurant or business has called, we’d help them, but we’ve just never reported it.”

Now, they intend to do just that—without abandoning their core mission—as they spend the next few weeks gathering pertinent information regarding the county’s small businesses, which have been asked by BDB staff to complete a 10-question survey and return it to the BDB.

“We’re also looking into doing more community outreach,” he says, “perhaps at more festivals and other public events, such as boat shows.” ■

Krumbcakes Bakery & Café

in the Winn-Dixie Shopping Plaza on Bridge Road suffered a devastating fire in March, but the Catrini family who owns the popular eatery says they will reopen...probably in about a month.

Half a dozen Martin County Fire Rescue units responded to a phone call from the business next door, Mr. Mailbox Pack

and Ship, that she could smell smoke, and since the business was closed, the units had to break into the bakery. The ceiling sprinklers had activated by the time the units arrived putting out the flames, flooding the bakery’s equipment and floor, but creating heavy smoke that filled the building.

A Martin County ladder truck was put into service for firefighters to check the ceiling—which attracted dozens of on-lookers to the plaza—and the smoke was removed, allowing the family to check the damage. Their life-time collection of cookbooks had caught fire, which had started in an electrical outlet, then traveled down an electrical cord to paperwork, files, menus and cookbooks. The cause of the fire is still being investigated. ■

When you walk into the Burger Shack



Ray Tutelo is the “surfin’ chef” at The Burger Shack in Hobe Sound.

in Hobe Sound, the only thing missing is Beach Boys music playing in the background. With its upbeat, happy ambiance, the new décor matches owner Ray Tutelo’s love of surfing. One of the tables even is a repurposed surfboard. But that’s all window dressing. The real test lies in taste, and their burgers and fries do not disappoint.

Everything is freshly made, which is revealed in an abundance of flavor. They also offer old-fashioned, real ice cream shakes—almost a meal by itself—and fountain sodas that include birch beer.

The “Shack Sauce” which turns an ordinary burger into a Shack Burger, has a touch of heat and a rich, smoky flavor.

Chef Tutelo also will grill a 100% beef hot dog, served on a toasted potato bun for \$2.95, or serve up a steaming bowl of homemade chili for \$3.25, and for your sweet cravings, you can get ice cream cones, floats and sundaes, too.

Open seven days a week, the hours are from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday through Saturday, and 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Sunday. Call for take-out orders: 772-546-4093. ■

Hobe Sound Chamber President



Dan Hulen was named to Vantiv’s 2012 President’s Cup, awarded for outstanding sales performance. This is the third consecutive year Hulen has taken the company’s top honor.

Formerly known as Fifth Third Processing Solutions, Vantiv offers a suite of payment processing and technology solutions to merchants and financial institutions of all sizes in the U.S., enabling them to address their payment processing needs through a single provider.

“I can say that my affiliation with the Hobe Sound Chamber of Commerce has lead significantly to my business success,” Hulen said at a recent Chamber gathering. “This is just an incredible group of people, representing an enormous array of business interests, who work really hard to help you network and make the contacts you need to grow your own business, whatever that may be.” ■

Cottage Caché, a home décor and

specialty children’s boutique on Dixie Highway in Hobe Sound, is moving to Tequesta. “My new store will just carry the children’s line,” says owner Diane Naylor, “so be sure to stop by sometime in May and stock up on hostess gifts and décor for your home at some really great prices before we move.”

Naylor says that a woman who owns a tea room in Jupiter has expressed some interest in the Cottage Cache location, next to the Courtyard Grill, so watch for the May issue of Currents for more information. ■

Interior design firm, H. Allen Holmes, Inc., of Hobe Sound, and

Bespoke Consultants won first place in the regional Sub Zero-Wolf 2012 Kitchen Design Competition on March 21 in Ft. Lauderdale. There were 127 entries and the top three regional winners travel next to Madison, Wisc., in May to compete for international recognition. ■

Wednesday, April 10 iTown Business Expo

The 3rd Annual iTown Business Expo, hosted by the Indiantown Chamber of Commerce, will be at the Shaw Recreation Hall at the Indiantown Golf and Country Club from 4-7 p.m. Admission is free, and refreshments will be served. Guest speaker is Dr. Christopher Rao, board certified in family medicine from Well-Med in south Stuart. For more info, contact the iTown Chamber office at 772-597-2184.

Wednesday, April 10 Young Artists Exhibit Opens



The work of young artists from Crystal Lakes Elementary and Anderson Middle schools will be featured at the Children's Services Council, 101 S.E. Central Parkway in Stuart through July; however, the opening reception for artists will be April 10 from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m., which is free and open to the public. Enjoy refreshments and listen to classical guitar by Taafkab Etalia and Joette Giorgis. For more information: 772-288-5758, ext. 102.

Saturday, April 13 Earth Fest @ The Children's Museum

Celebrate the Earth with a family festival consisting of pony rides, bounce houses, petting zoo, arts & crafts and so much more at the Children's Museum of the Treasure Coast at Indian Riverside Park in Jensen Beach from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Admission is \$3 per person, and no charge for children under one. For more info, call 772-225-7575.

Saturday, April 13 International Wine Tasting

Helping People Succeed's annual Taste of Success International Wine Tasting will take on a new look this year, thanks to Renato's Italian Ristorante and Ian's Tropical Grill. The fundraising event will be Saturday, April 13, from 6 to 9 p.m. at Harbour Bay Plaza in Sewall's Point. Admission is \$60 per person in advance and \$75 at the door. VIP tickets are \$125 in advance and \$150 at the door. The evening will include live entertainment, a silent auction, an Art for Autism exhibit and sale. Guests will also have an opportunity to win an exquisite piece of jewelry donated by Jewelry Design Studio. Tickets are available online. For additional information, contact Jennifer Ahern at 772-320-0781 or email jahern@hpsfl.org.



Weekend, April 12-14 Peter Pan (P)



www.showtix4u.com or call 561-339-4687. or visit www.theborlandcenter.org for more information.

Tuesday, April 16 Teen Blackout Poetry

Teens celebrate the art of "Creative Destruction and Blackout Poetry" at 6 p.m. on Tuesday, April 16, at the Hobe Sound Public Library on Federal Highway. Using books and paint, Blackout Poetry involves creating unique poems, sentences or phrases by blacking out the words that are not needed. The event is part of National Library Week and is free and open to teens. No registration required. To learn more about National Library Week events or the Martin County Library System, pick up a Library Connection at any Martin County library, visit www.library.martin.fl.us or call 772-221-1403.

April 18 Deadline for Pegasus nominations



For the first time in Florida, the international Pegasus Foundation, with an office in Hobe Sound, is asking the public for nominations of individuals on the Treasure Coast who quietly dedicate time to benefit animals. Committed to wildlife advocacy and animal welfare, The Pegasus Foundation is directing the public to its Facebook page (Facebook/ThePegasusFoundation.com) to make nominations by April 18. Categories include "Helping Abused Animals," "Aiding Abandoned Cats," "Journalist for Animals," "Friend of Wildlife," "Artist for Animals" and "Senior Caregiver."

On April 25, the winners will be recognized at The Pegasus Foundation awards ceremony, at 6 p.m. at the Flagler Center in downtown Stuart. Contact Susan Hargreaves at 561-236-8843 or kind2all@bell-south.net with questions.

Weekend, April 19-21 Stuart Sailfish Regatta



The Stuart Sailfish Regatta on the Stuart Causeway at the intersection of East Ocean Blvd. and Sewalls Point Road, right next to the Marriott on Hutchinson Island in Stuart, offers spectators an up-close look at the adrenaline-pumping sport of powerboat racing. Like NASCAR on water, the Regatta showcases tricked-out super boats crafted with the latest technological expertise and helmed by drivers who must make split-second decisions as they navigate a challenging course winding throughout the Indian River Lagoon. Spectators enjoy live music, kids' activities, vendors and more throughout the three-day event, which also celebrates antique and classic watercraft. In addition, the high-performance racing vessels will be on display in the dry pit area all weekend long. Tickets range from \$10 to \$50. For more information visit www.sailfishregatta.org.

Saturday, April 20

Relay for Life

The American Cancer Society Relay for Life in Hobe Sound reports that already 17 teams with 160 participants have signed up for the walk that will begin at noon Saturday, April 20, in front of the Hobe Sound Chamber of Commerce building at 11954 SE Dixie Highway. It's not too late to take part in the battle for life against this disease. If you are interested in sponsorship or team development for the Relay for Life in Hobe Sound, call Charlene Oakowsky at 772-932-7056.

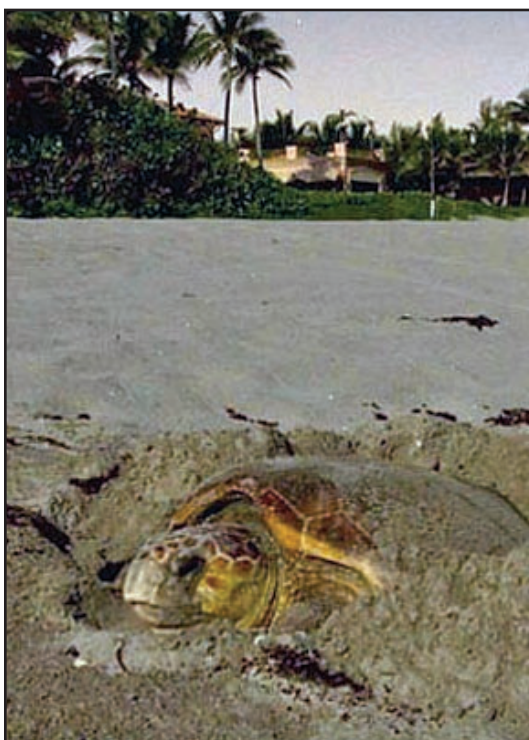
Saturday, April 20

Fish Earth Day



Celebrate the Earth at the Hobe Sound Nature Center with the "Hook Kids on Fishing Clinic," co-sponsored by Anglers for Conservation, from 9-11 a.m. This program is open

to all kids ages 5-14 (with a parent) and reservations are REQUIRED. Students will learn fishing basics from local experts on casting, knot tying, fishing safety, and marine conservation techniques. The mini-lessons will be followed by participants heading down to the Indian River to put their new-found skills to the test. After lunch (bring your own), at 1 p.m., participants can explore the sea grass community with hand nets and seine in the Indian River Lagoon. Participants will catch small marine animals such as shrimp, crabs, and fish, and learn about creatures that depend on the lagoon for their survival. Reservations for this popular get-wet activity also are REQUIRED. It is fun for adults, as well as kids age 4 and up.



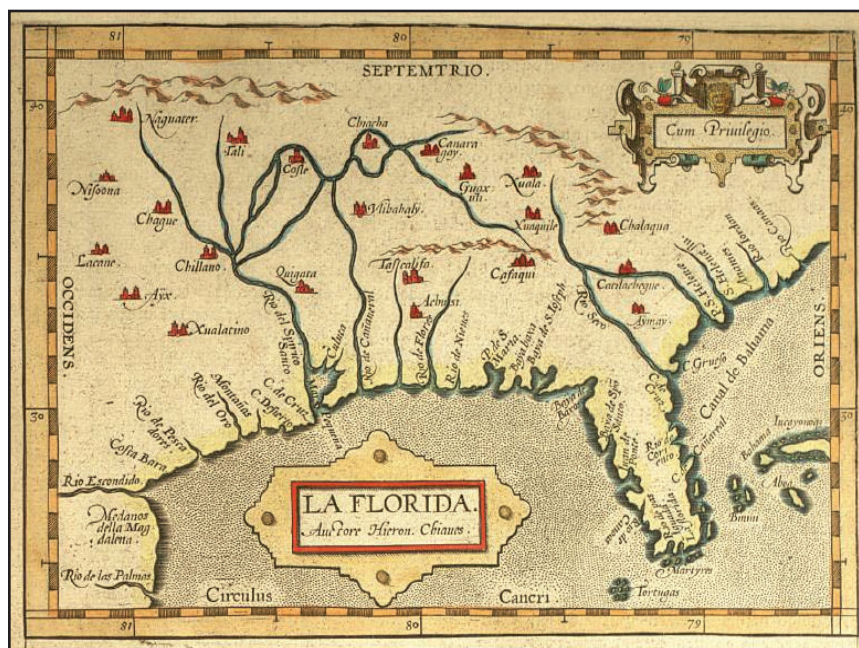
Weekend, April 27-28

Downtown Stuart Craft Fair

The 16th Annual Downtown Stuart Craft Fair will be set up along Osceola Street in Stuart's historic downtown area from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. both days. This event brings together some of the best crafters in the nation with paintings, wooden sculptures, ceramics, one-of-a-kind jewelry, handmade baskets and much, much more. An expansive Green Market complements the weekend with plants, orchids, tangy BBQ sauces, and homemade soaps. Free admission.

Tuesday, April 23

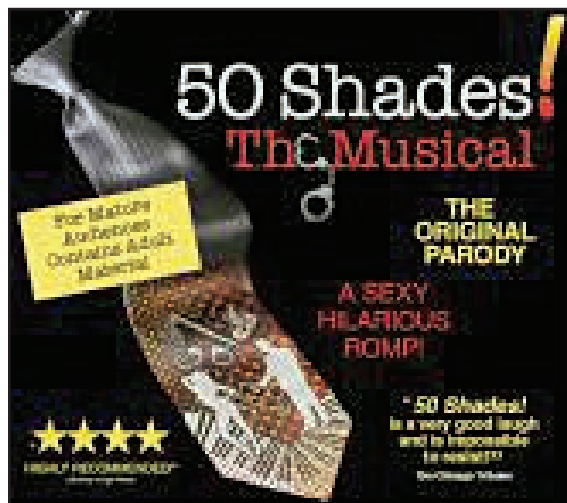
Stories of Florida's 500 Years



The public is invited to celebrate 500 years of Florida history and the anniversary of Ponce de Leon's expedition to Florida with a special presentation by the members of the Hobe Sound Toastmasters Club on Tuesday, April 23, from 7-9 p.m. at the Schmul Dining Hall of the Hobe Sound Bible College on Gomez Ave. Guest speaker will be Kathy Spurgeon of Hobe Sound. Refreshments will be served, and attendees are encouraged to wear a costume depicting any era of Florida history. (Word is out that a Fountain of Youth also will be sighted.) No charge for admission, but reservations are requested and may be made by emailing jotten@hobe-sound.org, or calling 772.546.4724.

Wed-Thurs, April 24-25

50 Shades! The Musical!



Grey. Through their interpretation of the novel, the audience is led on an uproarious roller coaster ride of this unlikely bestseller. The show is full of dance numbers, and original songs delivered by an outrageous cast with a live, on-stage band. This production contains adult language and adult content. For tickets, go to www.lyrictheatre.com.

The hilarious parody of the Fifty Shades of Grey best-selling novel has played to sold-out audiences in Chicago and New York, and will be at The Lyric in Stuart on Wednesday, April 24, for performances at 4 p.m. and at 7 p.m., and on Thursday, April 25, at 7 p.m. 50 Shades! The Musical opens with a ladies book club deciding to read Fifty Shades of

Saturday, May 18

Murder at the Apollo

The Apollo School Foundation brings Las Vegas' number-one dinner show, Marriage can be Murder, to Hobe Sound for a one-time LIVE performance of "Murder at the Apollo" at St. Christopher Parish Hall on Saturday, May 18, at 7:30 pm. "You will not want to miss this," says ApolloSchool Foundation President Kathy Spurgeon. "Our hometown is hosting Las Vegas!" Marriage can be Murder, the longest running dinner show on the Las Vegas strip, is a multi-award winning show, the Las Vegas Review Journal's 2013 pick for BEST DINNER SHOW. The two-hour comedy/murder mystery performance will include interactive audience participation, unsuspecting guests, a live Facebook party, and a three-course catered meal paired with Kendall Jackson wines. A raffle with exciting prizes, including a trip to Las Vegas, will be held. Tickets include the meal, show, dessert and wine and pricing begins at \$100. A \$250 Vegas-VIP ticket will get you backstage with the cast, a special autographed souvenir, and entry into the raffle. Feeling like you want to impress your friends or have a claim to fame that you've been a star in a Vegas show? For a tax-deductible donation of \$1,000 or more, and sworn secrecy, you could be written into the cast! Group pricing, special occasion packages, sponsorships, and round-table purchase prices are available. Doors will open at 7pm with the show starting at 7:30, but arrive early. The mystery starts upon your arrival. For more information and to reserve a limited ticket, contact Suellen Millroy at 772-485-6070 or e-mail: apolloschoolfoundation@aol.com

EDITORIAL: Disappointed at commission direction

Perhaps because we associate environmental protection with nobility, we expected the direction of the new Martin County commission to follow an honorable path. They often have not. We're disappointed, and here's why:

After the intense criticism of the previous commission for not following the Comprehensive Growth Management Plan to the letter, we were surprised when this commission chose conveniently not to do so. It was all too easy for them to justify ignoring it, because to follow the Comp Plan, in this case, would have benefited the developer, St. Lucie Partners. Ah, so THAT's the criterion? It should not be so.

We also were surprised...and disappointed...that a project, which had been in the making and in the public eye for a decade, funded by grants already awarded, suddenly was removed from the county's Capital Improvements Plan with no notice and no public hearing.

Whether or not we agree that the Jensen Beach Mooring Field was/is a worthwhile project is not the point. The course of action the commission chose counters the claim that this commission will treat *any* issue only in an honorable, above-

board manner. Obviously, it depends on the issue.

We also were disappointed by the commission chair, Sarah Heard, when she added her own agenda item at the last minute, then attempted to present what she considered "evidence" that the Floridian Golf Club had entered its development contract with the county fraudulently, then fully expecting to be able to vote on the issue without recusing herself.

The county legal staff successfully extricated her, but her zealousness lacked common sense, fair play and due process.

The exhaustive hearing that resulted as to whether or not the C-24 canal, dug decades ago, could still be considered a naturally occurring creek as it ran by the spoil island being developed by the Floridian also exhausted time better spent in ecological education, particularly of lawn maintenance crews and homeowners.

Promoting best practices for lawn-care would have a far greater impact on the health of the St. Lucie estuary than preventing the Floridian Club from building two additional houses on their island.

We also feel that it's unnecessary and counter-productive to treat every devel-

oper, every builder -- even citizens who disagree with you -- as enemies. We had expected more statesmanship, which fosters communication and cooperation, by disagreeing with dignity and respect.

From the dedicated citizens who served diligently as the Community Redevelopment Agency to members of their own county staff, disdain and vitriol has dripped too often from commissioners' comments, particularly from Commissioner Heard. It just is unnecessary and embarrassing.

We also were disappointed at the most recent decision not to follow through with the purchase -- below appraised value through CRA funds collected only from Rio residents -- of the Rio Village Mobile Home Park, at the entrance to the historic community's much-anticipated Town Center.

We were forewarned by Commissioner John Haddox at the Palm City NAC workshop that the county would ultimately nix that plan to purchase what had been once a derelict piece of property, because he said--speaking just generally--that the county will not *ever* purchase property--that it should fund only infrastructure, sewer and roads.

His tenure thus far had been marked by a willingness to listen to residents--so

refreshing to see. This time, however, he turned a deaf ear to the citizens of Rio.

Most citizens seem to be getting a deaf ear recently, particularly with the dismantling of the Neighborhood Advisory Committees, membership in which went disproportionately to residents, not business owners or senior managers, as Commissioner Heard repeatedly charges.

She has demonstrated that if you repeat a falsehood often and loudly enough, others will begin to see it as fact. She even has convinced herself, we think.

This kind of leadership, shrouded in hypocrisy, has been embarrassingly put on display prominently on the front pages of *The Stuart News* with her front-and-center presence at two highly publicized ribbon-cuttings: last month with Gov. Rick Scott to celebrate the expansion of TurboCombustor Technology, and last year, for the highly successful Sailfish Splash Water Park--both of which she fought against, both of which she called colossal wastes of money.

Maybe she does not know that citizens can see right through that hypocrisy shrug draped over her smartly tailored clothes.

Perhaps someone should tell her.

GUEST OPINION

Individual needs of each NAC should be considered

The following is a letter to the Martin County Board of County Commissioners regarding the formation of the Neighborhood Advisory Committees from Tom Fucigna, a Hobe Sound community activist, resident and a former chair of the Hobe Sound NAC.

Dear Commissioners,

I participated actively and productively in the Hobe Sound Community Redevelopment planning process as a member of the public, and as a member and then Chair of the Hobe Sound Neighborhood Advisory Committee for ten years. I served on the NAC under two or three successive members of the County Commission, who then acted as the Board of the Community Redevelopment Agency, and worked with a revolving door of County staff members.

I attended your February 26, 2013 County Commission meeting, at which you discussed potential changes to the eligibility standards for serving on an NAC, and I am writing today to share some of my opinions on that topic.

Martin County's Community Redevelopment Agency is different than most others, because the program encompasses seven different unincorporated planning areas, whereas most CRAs are formed to address one area within a local municipality. Thus, comparisons to how other CRAs structure their NACs are not necessarily relevant. Please consider the needs of each of the Martin County Community Redevelopment planning areas in discussing this topic. The NACs provide local community input to the CRA Board.

A public speaker at the Feb 26 meet-

ing stated they thought that some NAC members should not be allowed to serve because they had conflicts of interest as the owners of property or businesses within the planning area, and they stood to profit from serving.

From my viewpoint, anybody who owns property or a business in the planning area is a stakeholder, and anyone who acts to implement a portion of the plan by improving or redeveloping a property is a contributor. Main Street coalitions or Neighborhood Associations that succeed do so because they are comprised of stakeholders and contributors. Encouraging active participation by stakeholders and contributors makes sense. I am a property owner in the Hobe Sound planning area, and I have reaped the rewards of service on the Hobe Sound NAC from improvements and continuing long range planning that will benefit my family's and neighbor's enjoyment of our community. Many of the NAC members who serve are motivated by those same non-monetary goals.

A commenter at the Feb 26 meeting said that the NACs were created to formulate the Community Redevelopment Plans, but now those plans are complete. Please realize that was a misleading statement. The Community Redevelopment Agency formed Neighborhood Advisory Committees to formulate and aid in implementation of the Community Redevelopment Plans. Aiding in implementation is a continuing process that includes soliciting input from area residents and businesses and coordination with public and private entities to

achieve goals identified in the Plans.

A commenter at the Feb 26 meeting suggested that the NACs should include people who don't live or work inside a particular NAC's planning area, because the commenter felt they had no say in what was decided by the NAC. I completely disagree with the suggestion. First, all NAC meetings are open to the public, and public participation is encouraged. Anybody can speak on any relevant topic at any NAC meeting. Second, the NACs are only advisory committees to the CRA Board, and anybody who disagrees with an NAC's advice is free to voice their opinion to the CRA Board. Attempting to expand NAC eligibility to include people who don't live or work inside a particular NAC's planning area would be cumbersome at least, because a line would need to be drawn somewhere, and more importantly, doing so would be counter to the intent of the NAC's localized representation.

The topic of whether Martin County residency should be a requirement of NAC eligibility was raised. I agree - that should be a requirement.

The maximum number of people that could comprise an NAC was discussed. Different NACs have different member limits now, with a maximum of nine, and some NACs have a hard time achieving a full committee count. The NAC members are intended to be Vision Keepers of the Plan, and to serve as a conduit to help build consensus within the community, so broad, rather than limited, participation should be a goal.

If an NAC is allowed to have nine

members, but only seven volunteer to serve, there is no harm done, because a quorum will still consist of one-half. Please let the NACs solicit as many members as they like.

I understand the current NAC members, many of whom have served diligently as volunteers for years, have been told that they will need to re-apply if they wish to continue serving their communities. NAC members volunteer to serve for a set number of years.

Arbitrarily commuting their term so that the current Commission can decide whether they like them or not, in the midst of considering different standards for eligibility to serve is, in my opinion, an insult to the NAC members. The current NAC members should be allowed to serve, and thanked for their service, until the end of their current terms, with future applications or re-applications reviewed under then-current standards.

Last but not least, as an additional note, if you really want to prevent confusing the public even more about this valuable process, please stop referring to the Community Redevelopment planning areas as CRAs, and stop referring to the NAC as the Board. The CRA is the Community Redevelopment Agency. The members of the CRA are the Board of Directors. The NACs are Committees, and the Community Redevelopment planning areas are Planning Areas.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide input,

Tom Fucigna Jr.
Hobe Sound

For those who don't believe it's true

Yep, *Hobe Sound Currents* is back in production. Yes, it's here to stay a while longer. And, yes, I thought seriously about just rolling up the carpet, packing up the camper, and taking off to tour parts unknown.

An unforeseen, unpredictable vortex of unexpected events influenced me to consider quitting: My landlord wanted to replace the floor that was slowly beginning to cave in throughout the Murphy house I was renting, and I'd need to get completely out of the way to do it, she said. I had to move.

Moving a house and an office both are daunting, but I planned to move into my deceased brother's trailer, uh, mobile home that's not mobile anymore, which I knew would cause abject trauma to all my systems and senses.

He had been a hoarder, not like those exploited on TV reality shows--he did not keep organic material that could decompose in the corners of his bedroom--he kept only those things/items/junk that he thought at some time, somehow, somewhere might be useful--like the teeth his dentist pulled when he got his new dentures and the old commode seat when got a new one.

He also had kept all his clothes, even from high school, leaving little space in his bedroom, or his office, or the

living room, or the kitchen, or even the bathroom to move around. I needed a month to clean his property, and that was just the inside. I'd need another month for the outside. Then I'd pack my junk....precious valuables only....and move. Meeting newspaper production deadlines would be impossible, and frankly, I didn't want to try.

Stopping the newspaper altogether seemed suddenly, deliciously tempting to do.

Then Providence stepped in. Word began to spread, and readers started emailing me, calling and even stopping me in stores and on the street. You cannot stop, they told me, but another most important audience, new advertisers, also started calling. Hmm, perhaps this is not the time to quit after all.

One other factor, though, weighed heavily on my conscience to continue. A promise I'd made my brother the week before he died January 2012.

He wanted me to tell the story of his illness, of the unwillingness of the medical establishment as it now exists to treat him because he was one of the uninsured, to tell people how he had suffered after he was unable to obtain medication to alleviate the pain from his four broken vertebrae in his spine and half a dozen broken ribs due to the



Barbara Clowdus
Unfiltered

multiple myeloma, cancer of the bone marrow, that essentially was dissolving his bones.

He had been ill a long time, several months, perhaps even more than a year before the pain drove him to see his doctor, demanding that he be given an MRI that he was paying for in cash. The MRI showed that two vertebrae already were broken.

The progression from that point to his death is impossible for me to relate, because it would require that I go back to that time and to those places. Just know that we were given hope by an oncologist that a bone marrow transplant would rebuild his bones, if the cancer was stopped with chemotherapy by a promising new drug.

"But you must have Medicaid first, before I can treat you," he was told.

Can was the wrong word. Will treat you would have been accurate.

My brother did not qualify for Medicaid: He had a boat. He was a

commercial fisherman. He had been living on his savings for a year, unable to climb into his boat anymore....that and the catch his fellow fisherman shared with him.

Selling his boat was a psychological hurdle that he finally toppled after he accepted the notion he probably would never fish for a living again.

But even after the boat was gone, and he qualified for Medicaid, he could not get consistent treatment. When the calcium built up in his brain to the point he ceased functioning, I would take him to the emergency room, and he would be admitted. After a few days, he'd be sent home, but without pain medications.

Your regular doctor will prescribe those, we were told, but no, his regular doctor refused. The crackdown on pill mills struck fear in his doctor's heart.

So I would sit in the oncologist's lobby demanding a prescription for my brother before I'd leave, desperation making me formidable.

Without insurance, he did have check-ups and the simple tests that would have revealed the terror within. So he, like thousands of others every day in this country, got his health care from the emergency room of a hospital.

But by that time, when someone is that ill, it's too late. But we don't know it.

Aiding and abetting adultery?



Gordon Barlow

*Outside,
Looking In*

The New Hebrides (now the independent nation of Vanuatu, where we lived 1972-75) was an Anglo-French condominium in the Pacific Ocean -- and a Franco-Britannique one called Nouvelles Hebrides, to the French. It had a bizarre constitutional set-up -- the result of a strange episode in its history as a European protectorate.

By the late 1800s, most of the islands in the Pacific had fallen under the control of the European empires of the day, plus the USA. The native peoples of Polynesia, Melanesia and Micronesia had no weapons to match those of the Western powers, who simply divvied up the territories among themselves.

France claimed New Caledonia, Britain claimed Fiji. Germany wanted the New Hebrides, but neither Britain nor France wanted a German presence in the region; they also didn't want the Islands themselves. The logical thing to do would have been to split the entire archipelago down the middle; but logic has never featured strongly in Anglo-French intercourse over the centuries. What they did was agree to run the Islands jointly, as a condominium. Everybody called it a pandemonium.

The expatriate clerks in the British and French imperial headquarters composed two legal Codes, one for each set in its own language. Expats of other nationalities were obliged to choose which Code they would be bound by. Additionally, there was a Condominium Code, applicable to all residents -- British, French, all other foreigners, and all natives.

A fourth collection of rules comprised a Native Code that applied to all natives and all native-white affairs. This was published (as was the Condominium code) in both English and French, by a printer in Montreal. The translations did not always correspond exactly, but that's life. Or c'est la vie, of course.

Finally, there was a fifth set of laws that the natives had to cope with, and that was their own Custom Law, analogous to England's Common Law. It was unwritten, and little known among expats. It didn't vary much from village to village -- although, with seventy Melanesian and four Polynesian languages spoken in the archipelago (none of them written), there existed some scope for disagreement.

When I had nothing better to do at the office, I waded my way through the Islands' constitutional laws, Custom Law excluded. I was intrigued by one odd law in the Native Code that prescribed six months in prison for the crime of "aiding and abetting adultery". The mind boggled. Surely there wasn't a travelling cheer-squad that attended each adulterous mating,

that the European powers were trying to abolish, like suttee in India? One of the British District Agents explained it to me, amused by my indignation.

Marriage was taken very seriously by the Melanesians, newly converted to Christianity. But, in any religion, boys will be boys, and the more attractive of the young bachelors did not always resist the temptation to seduce married women, when the opportunity arose.

An unfaithful wife would be beaten by her husband; Custom Law allowed that. Her partner in infidelity might be killed by the husband; Custom Law allowed that, too. But the Native Code forbade murder, and it took precedence over Custom Law. Hmmm. How could the murders be stopped?

The chiefs came in a delegation to the European administrators. If the white rulers really wanted to be helpful and stop the killings, would they please amend their Native Code and outlaw adultery? Perhaps it could carry a penalty of six months in jail, to allow tempers to cool. Well, what a good idea! We'll do it right away! However... by legal definition, the lawyers said, "adultery" could only be committed by a married person. Outlawing adultery would catch an erring wife, but not her unmarried paramour.

"Aiding and abetting adultery" was not the most elegant of terms, but it did the trick.

Gordon Barlow, former manager and director of the Cayman Islands Chamber of Commerce, now retired, lives in Georgetown, Guyana.

Hobe Sound CURRENTS

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772.245.6564

One man's drive to stop falls, save lives, cut costs

The statistics are sobering, if not downright scary. A simple fall among those over 65 is the leading cause of injury-related deaths, hospitalizations, and admissions to extended-care facilities in the U.S., according to the Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta, and one in three seniors over 65 will fall during this year.

Florida is not an exception. Considering that 18% of Florida's population is 65 or older, the numbers become especially significant.

"The most amazing part of these statistics," says Hap Harrington, an over-65 resident of the Ridgeway community of Hobe Sound, "is that...first of all, remember these are real people, not just numbers....is that most of these falls, if not all of them, are preventable."

He pauses, then looks you straight in the eye as he says it again: "Pre-VENT-able."

If all falls among seniors in Florida were prevented, according to the Florida Department of Health, then the number of injury deaths among seniors would decrease by more than 40%, injury hospital admissions would decrease by nearly 75%, and injury emergency department visits would decrease by more than 50%.

Harrington's near-evangelical zeal for spreading the word about abating the costs in terms of human suffering, as well as to the bottom lines of institutions and government agencies struggling financially to provide emergency and health-care services, is the seed that has grown into a non-profit organization, Floridians Fighting Falls, with an office staffed by volunteers in Hobe Sound.

Harrington does not intend to stop with just a statewide organization, though. He's already registered the name, Americans Fighting Falls, for the moment that the Florida fall-prevention program extends beyond state boundaries, an inevitable progression, he says, because few states have bona fide fall-prevention and awareness programs currently in place.

"I've spent a lot of time researching on the internet," he says, "and what I found is that most states, just like Florida, have no organized fall prevention organizations dedicated exclusively to fall prevention education and awareness."

Many government agencies, organizations and hospitals have fall-prevention components of other established pro-



Hap Harrington, co-founder of Floridians Fighting Falls, at his desk in the FFF Hobe Sound office.

grams, Harrington explains, or they have created coalitions among several disparate organizations in an attempt to educate the public regarding fall prevention, but not usually a program with the single focus of preventing falls.

"And you know what that means," he adds, "Preventing falls kind of slips through the cracks." He waits for the intended pun to register with his listener, accompanied by a broad grin, then he adds: "But that's the very reason why we have so many falls and so many injuries. People just don't realize it's serious...I call it the 'major disease, that isn't'....and it's time now we take it seriously. We're talking about quality of life here. We're talking about preventing death."

If the cost in human suffering stirs no response, Harrington says, then the impact to a taxpayer's wallet should register when those trips by fire-rescue teams to homes, then to hospitals, then to nursing homes could be cut significantly simply by instituting some easy steps, including vision checks, simple exercises, assessing medications, and having a home safety inspection conducted by those same fire rescue personnel who respond to calls in the middle of the night.

"I was absolutely stunned when I learned that two-thirds of the calls by our local fire department at Ridgeway Terrace and U.S. Route One, which covers all the

way to the turnpike," he says with emphasis, "are the result of falls by residents in the Ridgeway and Cambridge communities. Two-thirds!" That fact became Harrington's call to action two years ago.

Long an activist in the Ridgeway and Hobe Sound communities, Harrington is known to push his agenda, whatever that may be, because he grows impatient with talk alone. Already the Floridians Fighting Falls organization is well on its way to becoming a 501(c)3 organization, has established an office on Bridge Road in Hobe Sound, has a state-certified "Tai Chi for Better Balance" instructor, Audrey Burzinski, and has conducted numerous educational outreach activities, most of which have been sponsored by Well-Med, a medical organization committed to preventative care.

Terri Watling, of Well-Med, is co-founder of Floridians Fighting Falls, and she became committed to fall prevention as she, too, learned the statistics, the facts about fall prevention, and recognized that FFF's mission aligns perfectly with Well-Med's mission of preventative care.

"We have modeled our program after the Satellite Beach fall-prevention program instituted there by Fire Chief Don Hughes," Watling said, "who is nationally recognized for the success of his work, and because of that affiliation, we've been able to build connections to other fire departments, as well as with other organizations."

FFF now has partnerships in each of the four distinct components of fall prevention—with Indian River, St. Lucie and Martin County Fire Rescue Departments to address home fall hazards and safety, the Area Agency on Aging to sponsor "Tai

Chi for Better Balance" training, EyeCare America to arrange vision checks, and Well-Med for medication assessments.

Harrington also has assembled an impressive board of directors, chaired by physician Dr. James Harrell.

"That's the beauty of me," he says with his characteristic smile and long, emphatic pause. "I know how to bring the right people together...to 'use' their strengths to build the whole."

This retired national brand-candy salesman also knows how to set goals and achieve them. A New Englander, he ran for Congress twice after he settled in Michigan, then at age 50, decided to quit candy sales and take his wife to the Florida Keys, where they established a sailboat and snorkeling tour business.

"After four years, I lost everything," he says, "but I would not trade those four years for anything in the world." Harrington, who adopted the nickname "Hap" simply because he felt the name projected a more positive tone than William or Bill, went back to selling candy for school fundraisers in Miami-Dade County.

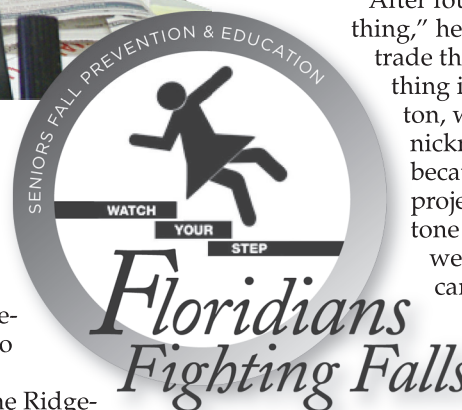
After nine years, he and his wife bought property in the new development of Ridgeway, but when his wife died suddenly, Harrington moved to Ridgeway alone. Within a year, he had met his current wife, Barbara, whom he still calls "my bride" after 17 years of marriage.

"She doesn't really understand all this," Harrington says, as he sweeps his arm through the air in the FFF office, on the second floor of a Bridge Road building, "and why, at 86, I want to come to work every day. Each morning, I look up into the sky and thank God for giving me one more day to do this."

Harrington and his volunteers have made significant strides in the past two years, but there's still much to be done before FFF can affect the number of falls locally, statewide, then nationally. Time is not on Harrington's side. The octogenarian, legally blind and slightly diabetic, also carries a malignant, inoperable tumor around with him that he knows one day will snuff his light, maybe abruptly.

"I know that this organization is on firm ground right now and in capable hands," he says, "so I'm superfluous really, but I know my health is failing....the wheels are beginning to fall off this bus...which is why I push so hard. If I could just see a five percent reduction in falls, I'd die a happy man." ■

—Barbara Clowdus



Audrey Burzinski, a certified instructor, conducts a Tai Chi for Better Balance at the St. Lucie County Health Fair.

For presentations, more information, to volunteer, or to make a donation, send an email or call: **772.932.7264**

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Audrey@FightingFalls.com



The Community Chest tour group visited classrooms at the Dunbar Center in Hobe Sound.

Tables turn on Community Chest

The Hobe Sound Community Chest, which usually works quietly in the background raising and disbursing funds in support of nonprofit service agencies of the Treasure Coast that work to improve the lives of needy people in the Hobe Sound community, took the spotlight itself during March.

The Chest conducted a tour for the public of some of the more than 40 agencies to which they make significant contributions, particularly the Boys & Girls Club, the House of Hope, Banner Lake Civic Center, the Dunbar Center, The Banner Lake Club, Habitat for Humanity, and the Hobe Sound Early Learning Center.

They also announced that it had received a multi-million dollar pledge from Marshall Field V and his wife, Jamee. Field, a descendant of the legendary Marshall Field family of Chicago, who lives on Jupiter Island, consists of an initial cash donation of \$100,000 and a multi-million dollar be-

quest upon their deaths, which will establish an endowment fund.

The funds will advance HSCC's mission of supporting critical health and human service programs throughout the Treasure Coast that directly benefit those in need in Hobe Sound, according to a press release.

"The Hobe Sound Community Chest wants to ensure that critical social services are available in our community for many decades to come," said HSCC President Peter S. Pauley, "and generous gifts like this one from the Marshall Field family help us to establish the framework to accomplish that goal and move us closer to realizing our full potential."

One of about a dozen tour participants, Audrey Burzinski of Hobe Sound, said that although she had known the Community Chest was active in Hobe Sound, she had gained "a new appreciation of the breadth and depth of their commitment to Hobe Sound families" from taking part in the tour. ■



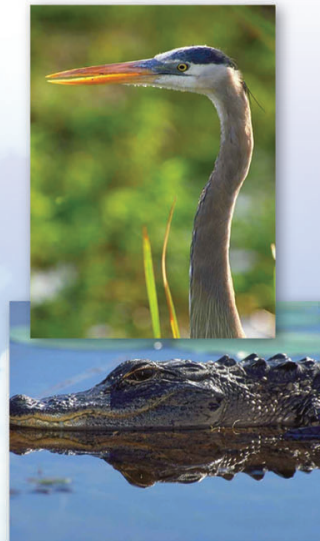
Sonya Snyder, from Habitat for Humanity, gave an overview to tour participants of Habitat's mission as they gathered in front of a Habitat home in the Banner Lake community of Hobe Sound.

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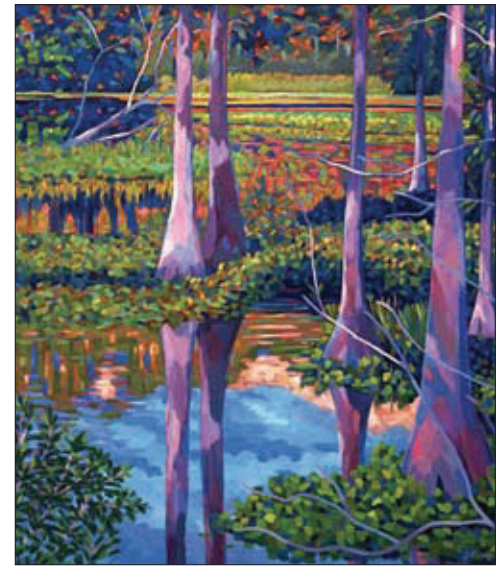
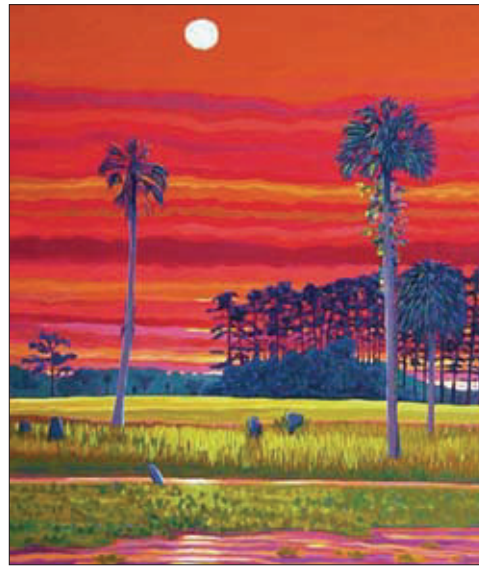
While some groups just throw parties...

Farmers have rolled up their sleeves and are getting the job done.

*Facts don't lie...
...Everglades
restoration is
working*



Landscapes extending beyond the horizon



Interior designer H. Allen Holmes of Hobe Sound cherishes diversity, reflected obviously and abundantly in his Design Gallery adjacent to his Bridge Road office. Visitors to this gallery may be both enthralled and challenged with its wide array of semi-figurative and surrealistic pieces by artists Dan Poole, Brian Rutenberg, Mark Davis, Leonard Edmondson, Ynez Johnston, and a dozen others, placed randomly throughout these juxtaposed rooms and demanding a deliberate perusal.

Suddenly, though, while scanning the walls of the studio at a slow pace, I was overpowered by a sense of déjà vu, as if seeing something very familiar and, yet, unknown at the same time: Six stunning paintings by Gary Borse, recently named "Florida Artist of the Year" by Tosca, drew me into the mysterious Florida landscapes that seem to extend beyond the frame.

Why so many works by Gary Borse?

"I am a fifth generation Floridian," says Mr. Holmes. "I am in love with Florida history and her scenery. Gary Borse paints it with his mind's eye. With his paintings, he summons to love and protect her."

He replies with emotion as he guides you through his studio, pointing also to historical maps he has amassed, along with numerous art objects. Our conversation is utterly engaging and revealing on our way to another Borse painting, all of which depict Florida in her galvanizing beauty.

By using close values of reds, greens and blues, Borse allows the viewer to discover a landscape inside the landscape by removing a physical shroud



Florida artist Gary Borse, left, brings another of his popular paintings to the H. Allen Holmes Design Gallery on Bridge Road in Hobe Sound. On the right is interior designer Allen Holmes.

and stepping into its spiritual realm. In "Open Heart Sunset," for instance, Borse portrays not just the sunset, per say, but its blazing aura and its very quintessence.

Predominance of red in Borse's art is symbolic. In Eastern Christian tradition, a red color symbolizes divine manifestation, which is why it's so intensely employed in icons considered to be windows to heaven. In some Indo-European languages, red is a synonym of beautiful. As an archetype, the red personifies fire, sun and vital creative energy – all the virtues of the sunshine in Florida.

"I am fascinated by the Florida landscape and strive to paint it in a different way than any other artist," Mr. Borse says. "While I stay on the edge of the fence, I can still create images that are representational, but have the essence of mystery and excitement that reality does not permit some imaginations to perceive. In essence I try and create an image that can be seen by the soul." Like icons, Borse's paintings send a finely tuned spiritual message.

If the king of the fauve painters, Henri Matisse, discovered alternative color values, Gary Borse goes much further. He reveals their inner and sacred meanings. We observe not just gradation of tones, but spiraling levels of visual metaphysics.

In "Quick Reflection," the blues strewn on the red fiery sky are mirrored in the water along with the solemn palm trees in amazing musical symmetry. In this painting, spatial and temporal elements merge in one integral style, allowing cross-sensory perception. We not only visualize the scenery, but also hear its swinging mood-music. The same structural principle has been applied even more emphatically in "Styx," "Mystic River," and his other pieces.

Some paintings have been identified in musical terms to emphasize a rhythmic interaction of colors and lines. Their visual lyricism reverberates in a multi-hued melody. In "Rhapsody in Blue," "Sunrise Symphony," "Moonlight Sonata," and "Intermezzo," Borse immerses us into a fluid polyphony of colorful images, which is not surprising at all. He is also a talented musi-



Maya
Ellenson

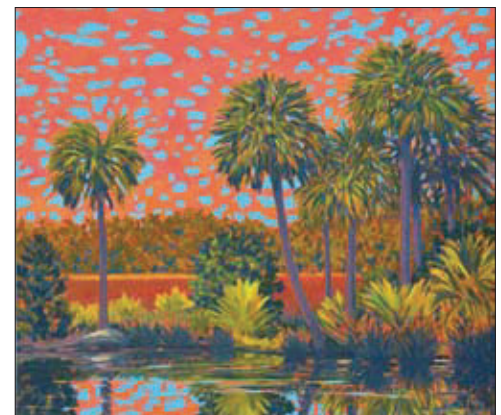
*Art
Kaleidoscope*

cian, having performed jazz, rock and blues as bassist and vocalist throughout his life. As in jazz, improvised tunes of his landscapes fuse to create harmony, where all voices of nature come together.

The Chicago-born artist lives in Fairfield, Fla., raising cattle and riding horses when not at the easel. As a conservationist, he has participated in major "Paintout" events throughout the state. "There is underlying warmth and mystery in the landscape of Florida," he says. "If we don't clean up the litter and debris from dumping, as well as stopping it altogether, and we allow the bulldozer to ravage the state for development, draining our water supply, we will watch this all disappear in our lifetime."

America's conservation movement has been largely inspired by Thoreau's "Walden," as well as the Hudson River and The White Mountain art schools, which translated Thoreau's veneration of nature into spectacular images.

While their vertical mountain landscapes looked way too sublime and classic to become intimate, Gary Borse's universe horizon is just a line. As one of his works says, "See you on the other side." ■



Happy 'oldsters' enrich Hobe Sound



**Suzanne
Briley**

Hopscotch

When I first moved to Hobe Sound years ago, it was a quieter community filled with many elderly people working on Jupiter Island. They had lived here most of their lives, more or less stress free. Most of them had family also living in Hobe Sound.

Vee Chambers was in her 90s; Jesse Arnold, house painter, in his 90s; and others, including Mary Wetherington (working today) who is in her 90s. It seemed to me as if they were never in a hurry, took life easy, and enjoyed living here. I thought perhaps that living close to the sea, good fresh air and being surrounded by the green space of Johnathon Dickinson State Park, the open land west of us and the green space on Jupiter island were contributing factors.

Today the "trend" continues, and I shall name a few unique elderly Hobe Sound "oldsters" who add value and inspiration to our community. (Some of them are special characters, too!)

Ron Peck, age 85, walks between 12 and 14 miles each day starting at 5 a.m. Leaving his house near the north fire station, he spends the first part of his lively stroll placing newspapers on the door steps of 12 handicapped people, making it easier for

them not to have to walk so far to collect them. Then as he picks up speed, he continues walking, finishing at about 10 or 11 a.m.

Ron has always lived a life of service to others, perhaps a secret of a happy old age?

Long ago he was in the restaurant management business in New York and has worked in nursing homes as a dietician in food management. He is a eucharistic minister at St. Christopher's church, and continues to enjoy his life on a day-to-day basis as he meets others on his daily walks. Keep an eye out for Ron, whizzing by, wearing his small hat and fast-stepping on his daily routes. He will inspire you!

Another inspiration is Lenny Michaud, 89, well known for his devotion to the care of homeless cats, caring and feeding them daily. and for his tireless work at his church. He came to the USA from Canada in 1960 with his family of six children. Knowing Lenny is to be inspired!

Dorothy Elderidge, 103, has no idea why she has lived so long. Many long years ago she broke five bones, has never exercised and takes no medications. Her mind is bright and clear, her spirit is calm, and she is a joy to be around. Dorothy lives at Pine Grove Manor. She has four children, 64 grandchildren, 25 great grandchildren, nine great great grandchildren and two "in the oven."

Her husband, past commander of a power squadron, died many years ago. After his passing Dorothy continued to be a major fund raiser for the power squadron, giving it her time and efforts. She moved to Florida from New Jersey before WWII and has lived in Lake Worth and Palm Beach Gardens as well.



Jimmy Schrewsbury, a favorite Hobe Sound "oldster," works daily at Winn-Dixie.

familiar sight around Hobe Sound! You will see him at Winn Dixie on Bridge Road, where he has worked as a bag boy for 23 years, earning minimum wage as he happily carries customers' grocery bags to their cars. Jimmy always has a smile, is full of good cheer. He is in his 80s, yet he works five days a week, is on his feet all day, but you would never guess his age. He says he "gets a lot of exercise and likes his job because of all the good-looking women and nice people he encounters."

Jimmy has always looked on the good side of life in spite of his time spent in Korea and a bit of arthritis now in his knee. He always drinks ONE beer a day, he says, and has never been sick. He has an amazing amount of energy for his age!

Pauline MacArthur, well known in Hobe Sound as the driving force behind the Harry and the Natives restaurant at

She loves nature, and says that her happiness comes from a deep love for wild woods, animals and the beauty surrounding Hobe Sound. In her honor, for her 103rd birthday, 103 butterflies were released at Pine Grove Manor.

Jimmy Schrewsbury is truly "one of a kind" and a fa-

the corner of Bridge Road and U.S. 1, may be seen there six days a week. The restaurant is Pauline's family's business, and over the years it has been a joy for Pauline, no doubt adding to her long life and giving inspiration to the many people who have met her through the years.

She walks to church on Sundays, and until age 96, Pauline volunteered as an entertainer at the Manors in Hobe Sound, playing the piano and singing for the elderly. At age 98, she might sing a song for you when you stop into Harry's.

Lexi is 84 years old in DOG YEARS. One may see her around Hobe Sound, running alongside Bill Britton, her owner, on his recumbent 3-wheeler bicycle. Together they travel a mile or more each day. Lexi is an Australian Shepherd living with Bill and Bobbi, his main squeeze's sweetheart. His two other dogs, Ranger (a border collie age 70) and Bella (another Aussie age 15) take turns bicycling a mile each around the neighborhood, smartly trotting at a clipping pace. Ranger is the fastest, and Bella keeps a nice pace. Lexi likes to stop and sniff. Bobbi was pleased to have Lexi, giving her the name because she doesn't own a Lexus. Owning the dog is lots more fun!

Many years ago, Bill worked as an engineer for Aerospace, located in Denver. He came to Hobe Sound in 1992, after retirement, because of the spirit in our community, relating to the local area. He shares his zest for life with others as he waves and stops to talk with residents along the way with dogs and bicycle. Bill is a happy, healthy oldster at 76. Lexi, Ranger and Bella agree!

Hats off to Hobe Sound Oldsters! ■

Boys & Girls Club creates garden for kids

David Vaina

Special to Hobe Sound Currents

Positive Sprouts, a program for children ages eight to 12 years old at the Boys and Girls Club's Cole-Clark branch in Hobe Sound, was created in the summer of 2012 to teach young people the importance of eating nutrient-rich fruits and vegetables and living healthy lifestyles by building and maintaining a community garden on site. To date, 50 Hobe Sound children have participated in the program.

The program's curriculum is built around age-appropriate activities that focus on nutrition education and science exploration in the Club's organic garden. Every Thursday, BGCMC's Hobe Sound staff instructs children on how to plan, build, plant, maintain, and sustain the garden—which includes plenty of vegetables and herbs.

Children also spend time learning about the local garden system, for instance participating in "Creepy Crawlly" sessions where they learn about the beneficial and harmful bugs and insects in the garden. In addition to getting their hands dirty every week, the children keep journals that

record the growth of the different plants in the garden.

As eating healthy is a major component of the program, participants also document in their journals what they eat at school and at home—and then discuss these entries in a group setting so that children can evaluate and refine their eating habits. To reinforce eating healthy, the Positive Sprouts coordinator also holds regular cooking classes in the Club's kitchen.

Once a month, participants from Positive Sprouts travel to the nearby Hobe Sound campus of the Pine School. There, they tour the extensive organic garden, listening to the school's garden coordinator (known as the Plant Wizard by the children). They also take cooking classes with the Pine School's Culinary Club, receiving instruction from the school's chef on how to incorporate vegetables and herbs from one's own home garden. The Plant Wizard also comes to the Hobe Sound Club to teach the children about healthy plants and soil composition.

"At the Pine School, we use our organic gardens as educational tools to teach young people about gardening, eating locally grown foods, and cultivating a healthy lifestyle, so it's a perfect partnership with Positive Sprouts," says Shawna Gallagher Vega, the Pine School's director

of communication and public relations. "We look forward to more visits in the spring, when we can use the crops we've grown to cook healthy dishes."

Over time, BGCMC hopes to make an impact on what's emerged as a major public health issue in the United States: obesity. Local data underscores that the national obesity epidemic is also a problem here at home. At Hobe Sound Elementary School, 30% of third graders were

found to be obese or overweight according to 2011-2012 data compiled by the Martin County Health Department.

"Positive Sprouts is in perfect alignment with our Club's overall philosophy," says Alex Soares, Branch Director at the Cole-Clark branch in Hobe Sound. "Our purpose has been—and always will be—to nurture Club Members into becoming young people who fully embrace positive lifestyle choices." ■

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Rotary tackles overgrown school track

The Pinewood Elementary School track team may be slightly swifter this season thanks to the Hobe Sound/Port Salerno Rotary Club.

"At least now they don't have to slow down for holes or for the grass growing in the track," says Tony Sementelli, who along with fellow Rotarian Tony DeLorenzo, organized the club's project to restore the school's track to its nearly new status.

Several Rotarians, joined by the school's track coach, parents and some students, as well as two commercial landscaping firms donated their time, effort, and equipment recently to clear overgrown brush and grass, and to repair the holes in the asphalt, in time for track season.

The work was long and hard, beginning at 7 a.m. and ending in late afternoon under a blazing sun, but the results, all agreed, were worth it.

"This is just awesome," said Bill Craft, Pinewood track coach. "You know, with the cutbacks in funding, the county just does not have the means to maintain this track, but it's really beautiful now. The kids are going to be so surprised when they see it."

The idea for the project came from the school principal, Larry Green, former SeaWind Elementary School principal, who had contacted Sementelli regarding the Rotary Club's teacher recognition program.

"He appreciated the Rotary Club's effort to recognize our outstanding teachers," Sementelli says, "and he wanted Pinewood to take part. While we were talking, I asked him if he needed anything else done. He said, 'Let me talk to the staff and our teachers, and I'll let you know.' When he got back to me, he said the overwhelming request was to fix the track. And so that's what we decided to do."

DeLorenzo sought the additional services of two lawn maintenance firms, Outdoor Property Management and Precious Savannah Outdoor Maintenance.

nance of Stuart, who trimmed and chipped the heavy overgrowth of exotics, particularly Brazilian pepper trees.

"We would never have been able to accomplish what we did today without these guys," DeLorenzo added. "They've been great."

In addition to DeLorenzo and Sementelli, other Rotarians wielding shovels, weed-eaters and pushing wheelbarrows included Hap Mills, Bill Whippen, John Young, Roger Smeds, Brent Miller and Michael Dale.

The club tackles at least one local service project each calendar quarter, as well as contributing to a host of national and international projects. Its meetings are open to the public, and new members are being sought. The meetings are at 7:15 a.m. each Friday at the Miles Grant Country Club. ■



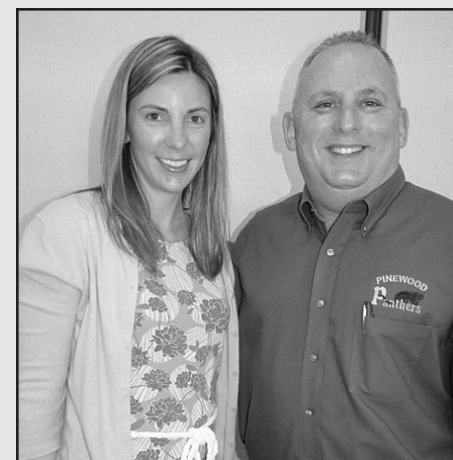
Port Salerno Elementary School Vice Principal Allysa Eberst with teacher Tammy Sexton.



SeaWind Elementary School Principal Birgit Ager with teacher Lauren Epsenhardt.



Coach Dan Warner with Hobe Sound Elementary School Principal Joan Gibbons.



Pinewood Elementary School Teacher Ashley Glatthorn with Principal Larry Green.

Rotary recognizes 'Teachers of the Quarter'

Recognizing the county's finest teachers has been a priority of the Hobe Sound/Port Salerno Rotary Club since its inception nearly two

decades ago. "Not once have we missed a quarter for teacher recognition," said Bill Whippen, one of the club founders. "It's important, and it's important to us." ■



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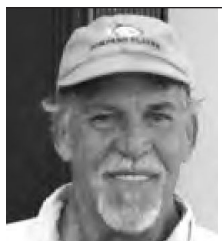
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Everyone is catching big pompano



**Rich
Vidulich**
*Pompano
Reporter*

The action is unstoppable. The Spring Run has sprung—the best March/April bite Hobe Sound has seen in years. Both the Public Beach and the Northern Federal Preserve are delivering fish daily. Right after the sharks migrated through the area, the poms slipped in behind them. The fishing is so good that everyone is catching pompano, mackerel and blues.

For those of you awaiting a bait run, it's just around the corner. Last week a militia of pelicans were skydiving into huge masses of menhaden. This was going on at the Stuart Beaches in late March. My friend, Meir, a new under-study, easily caught five big pompano and numerous whiting. His son put out a juvenile whiting and baited up a 31-inch surf snook.

The cross-over bite of game fish and the northern drive of the migratories are about to collide. It doesn't matter where you go. April will be a fantastic surf fishing month.

All the obstacles of winter fishing are over. No need for long casting rods, live sand fleas, clams and special colored rigs. Just throw some blanched fleas on a chartreuse attractor and cast 50 to 150 feet out, and boom—the rod is bending. They're filling up for the long cruise home somewhere between North Carolina and New Jersey. The water is extraordinarily cold, and the poms have been holding local for most of March, so April looks like a monster month.

Some things to remember for certain fishing conditions to increase your catch. First and foremost, when the ocean is crystal clear, fish early and one hour before dark. If our ocean is green-white dusty, fish all day on any tide.

Parking has become a premium, however. Always respect your neighbors. Give the next angler at least 50 feet of space before spiking in. The fish run north or south depending on the current, so you'll need to understand some geography to land them.

I've seen some jealous rages on the beach recently, which is totally unnecessary. Sure, we all want to catch fish, and in a pure world we would like to observe a happy fishing society. Another thing, if there are bathers in the water go well past them instead of running them off to fish. A little extra walking never hurt anybody.

Observe the guarded beach areas and be careful casting your bait out. Many locals are walking their dogs, and there have been occurrences in which

their pets have gotten hooked. If this happens to you, quickly cut the line, and make sure you bring your pup to a veterinarian ASAP. Some of these hooks are not stainless.

Sometimes, the tourists are curious, and at times call out the word "flounder," and we retort with "pompano." The tourists may be standing too close while we are reeling in a fish. Just be polite and ask them to stand back. We love and need our visitors, so show a smiley Floridian face. We are the lucky ones who get to see and explore the beach every day, unlike our northern friends. Every year we pray for a great bite like this one. Just remember, there are plenty more schools of fish on the way. Dania and Anglin's Pier are nailing them daily. Really good pompano bites in the Upper Keys are a by-catch of the cero mackerel.

Marine biologists are suggesting a lot of west Florida poms may come up the East coast this year due to the lengthy red tide this winter. Pompano are funny about where they go, and nobody knows why.

Check out my friend's "supersized" pompano. Makes the photo of my catch look sick. If you guessed its weight at 5.4 pounds, you're right.

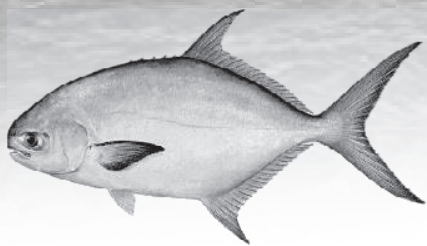
Tight lines. ■

A world-record pompano or just tricky photography? Jeff Daugherty of Jupiter caught this huge pomp on a blanched sandflea last week. Guess the weight correctly, and you'll win two Doc Goofy Jigs. (Weight is revealed at the end of the column.)

(BELOW)
Two, nice 3-pound poms caught in the Jupiter surf by the Pompano Reporter.



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STORIES OF FLORIDA

This year Florida reached a significant milestone, the 500th anniversary of Juan Ponce de León's arrival on Florida's east coast. What makes this anniversary so unique is that Ponce de León's convoy of explorers was the first group of Europeans to document such a landing and give a name to Florida—*La Florida*.

PRESENTATIONS

Guest Speaker: Kathy Spurgeon, Hobe Sound Historian

Hobe Sound Toastmasters: Florida Stories

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Early morning at the Manatee Pocket in Port Salerno overlooking the newest addition to the Community Redevelopment Area's Manatee Pocketwalk—the recently completed addition, constructed at private expense, adjacent to the Manatee Grill Restaurant on A1A in Port Salerno.