



FREE

Martin County CURRENTS

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Fenced-out rally draws ire of protestors

Who ever thought protestors would chant, "Open the locks"?

Cover photo: Rich Vidulich

A Sept. 17 deadline looms for public input for Martin County

residents to protest the "sand sharing" project being considered by the Army Corps of Engineers. The project will renourish beaches in Miami-Dade County with sand off the Treasure Coast and is slated to begin in 2014. The deadline for public comment is Sept. 17.

"People need to make their voices heard," said Joette Lorin Rice, who attended the Corps' "scoping" meeting at Indian River State College in Stuart on August 16, "even if it is only a one-sentence email to the Corps telling them that they oppose the Sand Grab proposal and that they need to conduct an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)."



Joette Lorin Rice at the Army Corps of Engineers scoping meeting in August.

Rice, married to a retired Corps of Engineers commander, brought detailed, comprehensive comments to the public workshop, which the Corps hosted to explain their methods and purpose of identifying sand stockpiles off the Treasure Coast and to gather public input.

An Environmental Impact Statement, which Rice called for, is a much more thorough study of the effects of the proposed dredging offshore. "Such an EIS must include an analysis of alternatives to taking sand away from Martin and St. Lucie counties," she said in an email, "which is important to our environmental and economic interests, and which may be needed for beach projects at home at some point in the future."

The Corps is looking for sources to "farm" sand because Broward and Miami-Dade counties have depleted all their offshore sources. Since Congress has dictated that international sources of sand can be used only if domestic sources are not economically or environmentally viable, they cannot look to the Bahamas as a potential source.

Purchasing sand from inland mining operations can be prohibitively expensive. Broward County has turned to purchasing ground glass as a sand substitute, according to an article in The New York Times, but only in small quantities due to its expense.

"As I see it, the problem here is the law," said Martin County Commissioner John Haddox, who spoke at the hearing.

"What we need to do is to change the law."

Corps officials estimate that St. Lucie and Martin counties have more than 250 million cubic yards of sand offshore, and when the counties' own renourishment needs over the next 50 years are deducted from the total, according to Corps engineers, the sand stockpile still will yield "an excess" of 100 million cubic yards of sand offshore.

Replenishing the beaches on southern counties, according to a Corps report, addresses the need to protect the shorelines. Wide beaches, preferably with dunes and vegetation, protect buildings and roads by serving as buffers to waves churned up by large storms, but the federal government also is concerned about the impact on the state's tourism should south Florida lose their beaches.

The Corps recognizes that the sand resources will be "lost forever," yet no determination has yet been made to determine the environmental impact on the Treasure Coast's own shoreline stability, particularly regarding to its own hurricane protection, or on the loss of habitat for fishery organisms.

To comment, send an email to Terri.Jordan-Sellers@usace.army.mil. ■

Starting to see orange everywhere you go in Martin County?

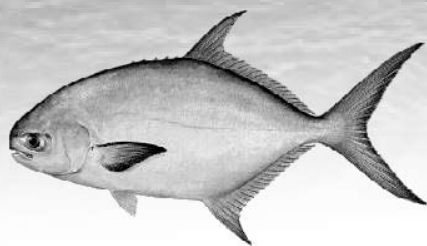
That's just a reminder to help stock our food banks during September, Hunger Action Month. With orange being the symbolic color of hunger, television reporters and news anchors, along with elected officials and other public figures will be wearing orange and some public buildings will be illuminated with orange lights.

Several businesses and organizations are mobilizing throughout the month to collect food for House of Hope, and drop-off points can be found throughout Martin County, including government offices and agencies, as well as banks, chambers of commerce, churches and libraries.

"The face of hunger can be found in our neighbors who are working one or more jobs," says Treasure Coast Food Bank CEO Judy Cruz. "They are downsizing their homes and reducing living expenses. They are maxing out their credit cards to pay for critical needs and cashing in their retirement plans. When your neighbors are no longer able to make it paycheck to paycheck, eating becomes a luxury rather than a basic human need."

For more information about Treasure Coast Food Bank visit stophunger.org. For drop-off points for the House of Hope, go to www.HOH.org. ■

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Aedes aegypti, a common mosquito on the Treasure Coast, transmits the dengue virus from infected persons to the healthy population.

The dengue virus outbreak in Rio and Jensen Beach recently has caught the attention of the Centers for Disease

Control in Atlanta and Florida health officials, which have expressed an interest to county officials in determining if it's related to a 2009 outbreak in Key West.

According to the CDC, Martin County was not the first to have the mosquito-borne dengue virus confirmed among its residents. Key West was the first in 2009, and in both instances, the victims had not traveled in the Caribbean or to other mosquito-invested countries, which is usually the case.

By analyzing blood samples of infected persons, the CDC determined that the Key West strain of dengue had its own identifying markers, which may give a clue to the origin of the virus here.

More than a dozen cases have been confirmed in Martin County over the past month, according to Martin County health officials, but there may have been more since some victims may not have sought medical attention when they became ill. The illness can only be transmitted by an infected mosquito.

The numbers in Martin County are significant, because prior to 2009, the cases in the U.S. of dengue (pronounced DEN-gee), were of travelers returning from abroad, but Florida's warm climate and abundance of both *Aedes aegypti* and *Aedes albopictus* mosquitoes—the only mosquitoes that carry the virus—and the frequent introductions of dengue infections in the U.S. may portend that a permanent residency of the dengue virus is close at hand, if not already here.

The disease is painful and debilitating, but is rarely fatal, according to the Florida Department of Health. Symptoms include a sudden fever, severe

headache and aches and pains. A more severe form of the virus, dengue hemorrhagic fever, can be fatal, though it's unlikely without a previous case of dengue.

There's no treatment for dengue, though some pharmaceutical companies have expressed an interest in developing a vaccine, according to the New York Times, though previous efforts have failed. The best way to prevent the disease is to use insect repellent, stay inside when mosquitoes are biting, wear protective clothing and, maybe most important, remove mosquito breeding grounds—standing rainwater—from around your home and yard.

These mosquitoes do not breed in salt water, not in ponds and not in ditches, according to Bob Washam, of the county health department. Washam and members of his team, including Mosquito Control personnel, have been going house to house in Rio and Jensen Beach to search for potential sources, since these mosquitoes breed only in standing rainwater.

The CDC recommends the use of repellents with concentrations of up to 30 percent DEET. Other US Environmental Protection Agency-approved repellents contain Picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus, or IR3535. Apply insect repellent to exposed skin, or onto clothing, but not under clothing. (According to the CDC, mosquito repellents containing oil of lemon eucalyptus should not be used on children under the age of three years.)

No cases of dengue have been reported in Palm Beach County, according to the Palm Beach County Health Department. ■

One of the most controversial changes to the Martin County

Comprehensive Growth Management Plan was to increase the shoreline protection zone for even hardened shore-

lines to 75 feet, the same as for natural shorelines.

But at the eleventh hour, some exceptions were added to the new rule.

"I want to thank Commissioner (John) Haddox, who helped us get together on this," said land and environmental attorney Robert Raynes of Stuart,

as he addressed the commissioners during the adoption hearing in August.

"Without these exceptions, the property values of individual property owners in this county would have plummeted."

Raynes also said that the 75-foot zone applied to already hardened shorelines would have seriously damaged several redevelopment efforts currently underway in the county's Community Redevelopment Areas.

Under the new Comp Plan rules, the shoreline protection zone of 75 feet applies to all waterway properties, except those of one-acre lots or less (on record as of April 1, 1982). For those smaller, established lots, the shoreline protection zone will be reduced to 25 feet and will not require additional "construction setbacks," or a preserve area management plan (PAMP), unless already established by a development order. Replacement of existing structures within the 75-foot zone will be allowed, including the replacement of a seawall, deck or swimming pool.

For non-residential lots of record (April 1, 1982) that are more than one acre in size with already hardened shorelines the 75-foot shoreline protection zone can be reduced to 50 feet from the mean high water line, and development within the shoreline protection zone may be allowed to provide "reasonable access" to the water, such as bridges, docks, elevated walkways and boat entry facilities. Access also will be allowed when a plan for the proposed development demonstrates the need for access and alteration of the shoreline protection zone is minimized. Water access shall be perpendicular to the shoreline and its width will be determined by the zoning on the property.

Existing facilities within the shoreline protection zone may be maintained, rebuilt or reconstructed within the existing foot print, and removal of exotic vegetation or planting of appropriate native vegetation will be allowed.

Other Comp Plan amendments approved by the board include making the public's right to speak during public comment now a clearly stated, guaranteed requirement.

A four-out-of-five vote, or super-majority, will be required for amendments that would change the four-story building height limit; allow more than 15 units per acre in any land use; expand the urban boundary or allow urbanization of areas outside the urban boundary; increase effects to the St. Lucie Estuary; adversely affect the water supply of existing home, business and natural systems users; decrease flood protections; change the wetland protection requirements, which were redefined; or change the requirement that growth should pay for itself.

Another section assures the county's support for moving Lake Okeechobee water south into the Everglades, and it prohibits any changes to the Comp Plan

or other growth planning documents that would negatively affect the Central Everglades Planning Project unless it violates a constitutional right.

Whenever any provisions of the Comp Plan conflict, the more restrictive requirement wins by default.

The requirements for future land use will now be based on future population projections determined by the University of Florida's Bureau of Business and Economic Research, and the county's population analysis to estimate the county's capacity for residential development will be completed every five years instead of every two years.

"Protecting the environment is certainly a legitimate interest; however, these amendments go way, way beyond that," said attorney David Smolker, who represents Lake Point. "The purpose of a comprehensive plan is not to create a regulatory straitjacket."

Many of the objections to the changes to the Comp Plan were directed to the process, as much as the changes themselves, particularly directed to former county commissioner Maggy Hurchalla's nearly exclusive role as author.

"I think, unfortunately, we are going to be challenged on this," said Commissioner Doug Smith, the lone dissenter in the approval vote. "I think it's going to cost our taxpayers a significant amount of money."

The Comp Plan amendments have been transmitted to the state and are currently being reviewed by the Department of Economic Opportunity to ensure compliance with state statutes. ■



Jensen Beach High School's Emily Wilkison, seated with

head softball coach Craig Diamond of Northwood University, signs on the dotted line to join the team's roster this fall. "I would have never been noticed if it wasn't for you guys, my team, backing me up," Emily said. "Your talents helped me shine as bright as I did." She also thanked her parents for inspiring her and being great role models and her coaches, Mike Cusimano, and Kelvin Vargas, for "getting me the scholarship I have always dreamed of." ■

The raised voices of Martin County residents demanding that politicians pay attention to the plight of the

St. Lucie River and the Indian River Lagoon was effective on the local level, said U.S. Rep. Patrick Murphy. Now residents must take those voices and their signs and their indignation to the steps of the Capitol building, he told a standing-room-only crowd at the August 29th Rivers Coalition meeting.

"Help me sell this case to my colleagues in D.C.," Murphy said. "Let them know that we've got to spend money on these projects."

The projects that are critical to saving the St. Lucie include CEPP: The Central Everglades Plan to move more water south to the Everglades, which is part of the upcoming Water Resources Development Act, and if not approved by Congress during its next session likely will not be addressed again for another seven years.

—Many other portions of the Central Everglades Restoration Plan approved by Congress in 2000 remain unfunded, including the projects and reservoirs around Lake Okeechobee that would hold and clean water that now is being dumped directly into the St. Lucie and Caloosahatchee rivers.

—Funding for the Army's Corps of Engineers to repair the remaining sections of the aging Hoover Dike around Lake Okeechobee.

—The state quit purchasing the land required to fully implement the Central



U.S. Rep. Patrick Murphy calls for Martin County citizens to demonstrate, not just on the banks of the St. Lucie River, but on the steps of the U.S. Capitol in Washington, D.C.

Everglades Restoration Plan, therefore, many environmentalists are calling for the federal government to acquire the agricultural land south of Lake Okeechobee, which the South Florida Water Management District has optioned from U.S. Sugar.

Murphy invited Mark Perry, executive director of the Florida Oceanographic Society, to attend a presentation to lawmakers, and Perry agreed, but Murphy remarked that he wants Washington also to see the "kind of passion" he saw among

the public speakers, particularly the children, at Florida Sen. Joe Negron's Select Committee on the St. Lucie River and Lake Okeechobee Basin on August 22.

"There's no question (the lagoon) is the most important issue in my office right now," he said. "This is the United States of America, and our water has declined to the point that it's toxic. We're not a Third World country. This cannot be tolerated."

Murphy said he also would ask Jo-Ellen Darcy, the assistant secretary of the Army overseeing the Army Corps of Engineers, to "revisit Plan 6," a proposal to move Lake Okeechobee water south to the Everglades, the goal of the Rivers Coalition.

No date has been set for the gathering, but Murphy's office expects it to be in October. ■



Indian Street wears the crack-sealed dress becoming more common on Martin County roads.

Two issues get tossed around a lot at Martin County Commission

meetings recently: How to finance the repaving, repairing and replacement of county roads, which would require \$30 million without considering bridge replacements, and how to fund dredging the St. Lucie Inlet every three to four years at a cost of \$10-\$12 million.

Commission discussions return each meeting to the need for an addition to the sales tax, but no consensus among commissioners has been reached as to whether it should be half a cent, a full penny, and for how long. At the August 20 meeting, the two-hour discussion among commissioners began with a proposal for levying an additional one cent sales tax for 10 years, and ended with no decision, except to agree that they need to all agree, but thus far, they cannot agree as to what and how much to propose to voters.

In the meantime, the millage rate for property taxes was increased by 3.23 percent to accommodate the current budget, but will not include monies for road repairs or for dredging the St. Lucie Inlet.

Technically still a federal responsibility, the inlet will be dredged this year through funding arranged by Rep. Patrick Murphy as part of the state's relief from Hurricane Sandy. The Army Corps of Engineers has awarded the contract to begin removing 200,000 cubic yards of sand from the inlet, beginning in November; however, according to state statute, sales tax revenue cannot be used for maintenance projects, such as dredging.

Roads are beginning to deteriorate, but some grants have been secured for repaving Pratt Whitney and Dixie Highway, said Terry Rausch, an engineer with the department, who added that Dixie Highway is the number-one road for pothole repairs in the county.

The engineering department had to make some emergency repairs for col-

lapsed culverts under roads in Palm City and in Heritage Ridge in Hobe Sound, and those funds have come the county's reserve for emergencies, according to Taryn Kryzda, county administrator.

A sales tax referendum likely will be on the ballot for either the August primary or November general election in 2014, but will not generate additional revenue to the county until January 2015, when it would become effective. ■

A collaborative of six Treasure Coast counties, including

Martin, Palm Beach, St. Lucie, Indian River, Brevard and Volusia, has been formed by Martin County Commissioner Ed Fielding to address the waterways crisis.

The regional group will be instrumental in increasing citizen awareness of toxins and pollutants in the lagoon, will seek the sources of problems, and then map out regional solutions in order to restore the health of the lagoon, according to Fielding. The group's first workshop in St. Lucie County on Sept. 14.

Fielding has invited marine experts Grant Gilmore, founder of Estuarine, Coastal and Ocean Science Inc., and Leesa Souto, executive director of the Marine Resources Council, to discuss the causes and effects of the environmental crisis.

The workshop will be broadcast at a later date on MCTV, Channel 20, in Martin County.

Commissioners expected to attend the meeting include: Palm Beach County Commissioner Hal Valeche, Indian River County Commissioner Peter O'Bryan, Brevard County Commissioner Chuck Nelson, Volusia County Commissioner Joshua Wagner, St. Lucie County Commissioner Chris Dzadovsky and Commissioner Fielding. ■

The Hobe Sound/Port Salerno Rotary Club committed additional

volunteer hours to the Volunteers In Medicine Clinic in Stuart in September. The club adopted the medical clinic shortly after it opened, concentrating on painting, repairs, and adding amenities such as a picnic table for staff, as one of the club's community service projects.

The VIM clinic handles more than 14,500 patient visits a year, provides over \$1.5 million worth of pharmaceuticals and delivers \$9.6 million worth of medical care — at no cost to patients, according to executive director Mary Fields.

The efforts made by volunteers and the work by the clinic's medical partners who supply free care, diagnostics and medications, result in an average cost of only \$53 per patient visit. ■

CORRECTION

A poem by Stuart Mayor Eula Clark was printed in the August edition of Martin County

Currents with the incorrect title. We apologize to Mayor Clark for our mistake. Here it is again with the correct title: "Cry of the St. Lucie River."

Cry of the St. Lucie River

Stuart on the St. Lucie,
A place of such charm and awesome beauty,
A River Runs Through It, That's what they say,
A quaint, yet stimulating place to spend your day,
Save our river! Oh, please save our river!
Save our river from pollution and extinction
We owe it to our children, Do it with conviction!
Clean up the river! Oh, please clean up the river!
Everyone, Scouts, Teachers, Parents, Tourists and Entrepreneurs,
Let us make sure we have the ears of the Army Corps,
"Every mickle makes a muckle"*, So buckle down tight,
We are fighting for the river with all our might!
Save our river! Oh, please save our river!
Clean up the river! Oh, PLEASE CLEAN UP THE RIVER!

—by Eula R. Clarke, Esq.
July 25, 2013

* From A Jamaican Proverb of Scottish origin which means that each small thing we do compounds to make a big difference.



Martin County students Olivia Ranieri and Lisa-Nicole Roberts, who took part in last year's International Coastal Cleanup, encourage volunteers to sign up for the 2013 cleanup Sept. 21 from 8 a.m. to noon. Photo: Submitted

Keep Martin Beautiful calls for residents to take action and to join

hundreds of thousands of people around the world for Trash Free Seas during the International Coastal Cleanup on Saturday, Sept. 21, from 8 a.m. to noon.

Annually, approximately 300,000 volunteers from more than 90 nations throughout the world come together on a single day to participate in the waterway cleanup. Spearheaded globally by the Ocean Conservancy, the effort is coordinated locally by Keep Martin Beautiful, based in Palm City.

"The volunteers who donate their

time to participate in this cleanup each year are a special group of people," said Rob Ranieri, executive director. "They are the unsung heroes of Martin County and the real stewards of our beaches and waterways. We are always so inspired by citizens from all walks of life who come together during this once-a-year cleanup event and join forces to improve the condition of our beaches and waterways."

The cleanup efforts are a vital part of motivating people to do something tangible in their community, but more important, perhaps, the cleanup educates people to become aware of the problems associated with litter, and challenges citizens to change the behaviors that cause the pollution in the first place, according to Ranieri. Last year, Keep Martin Beautiful's local efforts resulted in nearly 2,100 volunteers removing more than 29,000 pounds of litter and marine debris.

Keep Martin Beautiful is a non-profit community organization founded in 1994 as an affiliate of Keep America Beautiful. Its mission is to preserve and enhance the quality of life in Martin County through litter prevention, promotion of recycling, improvement of solid waste management practices, and beautification and community revitalization activities.

"Every piece of trash that is picked up during the cleanup should be a challenge for change," said Nicholas Mallos, marine debris specialist of Ocean Conservancy's Trash Free Seas program. "The trash that tops our top-10 list every year – things like cigarette butts, bags and bottle caps – include disposable

plastics meant for one-time usage. These items simply do not belong in our natural environment."

Volunteers are encouraged to sign up in advance to clean the beach of their choice in Martin County. Immediately following the cleanup event, Keep Martin Beautiful, in partnership with the City of Stuart, will gather for a volunteer celebration at Flagler Park in downtown Stuart to thank volunteers, sponsors and community supporters. The event will feature food, drinks and family friendly activities.

For more information about the 2013 International Coastal Cleanup, or to register your family, business, civic or school group contact Keep Martin Beautiful at (772) 781-1222 or info@keepmartinbeautiful.org. ■

Martin County residents should receive some benefit

from the All Aboard Florida passenger rail project, particularly since the trains do not stop in Stuart on their quick trips between Miami and Orlando, says County Commissioner Ed Fielding in his letter to Gov. Rick Scott asking for state support.

"A 288 fiber-optic broadband cable from Orlando to Miami has been proposed as an offsetting public benefit for our inconvenienced citizens," Fielding says, "mitigating the adverse

impacts by gaining economic development potential."

The technological benefits of high capacity broadband include the potential for a relatively rural area such as Martin County to compete in global markets, particularly international trade.

Laying another cable in the FEC right-of-way would cost an additional \$10 million for the full 237 miles of track, according to Fielding's estimate, but then it would be "a linking backbone" among several counties that have already invested in individual county and school system networks.

"Now we are separate islands," Fielding adds. "with this cable we could become a united region and add the research anchors: hospitals, colleges/universities and non-profit biomedical institutions."

The train would run from Miami to Orlando with intermediate stops in Fort Lauderdale and West Palm Beach. The Orlando station would be at the Orlando International Airport.

Originally announced in March 2012, All Aboard Florida is expected to launch by the end of 2015. Sixteen daily trains would leave from each of the two terminus stations, at Orlando International Airport and downtown Miami, between early morning and the evening, thus adding 32 daily train trips to Martin County intersections. Trains would take about three hours to complete each one-way trip.

At some point in the future, the city of Stuart may be added as a stop. ■

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Fellow firefighters pay tribute to Martin County's Jerry Rothgeb

The hundreds who came to the Grace Place church to pay tribute August 31 to the life of Martin County firefighter, Jerry Rothgeb of Hobe Sound, got to know sides of his personality that perhaps they'd never seen previously.

Or what they'd suspected all along—that he was a man's man, a natural mechanic and talented body-worker with a big heart, who loved fast cars, fast boats and lots of laughter—was confirmed. They also saw—through videos, slide shows and eulogies—that above all else, he was a talented firefighter, a hero who could dismantle a mangled car faster than his contemporaries to save those inside.

He also had a penchant for perfectly groomed hair, some in the audience carrying combs in his honor, and for playing practical jokes on his friends. Judging by the standing-room-only crowd, he did not lose many friends as a result of his pranks.

He also had discovered the racing world of ChumpCar World Series endurance races and was ranked in the top three racers in the southeast region. His daughter, Deanna Rothgeb, clutched her father's racing helmet during the service, holding it also in her lap during the video in which she talked about a life that had shaped his daughters



Jerry Rothgeb

Dozens of firefighters and emergency personnel came from county departments throughout the state to pay tribute to the life and 24-year career of Martin County firefighter and EMT Jerry Rothgeb, of Station #22 in Tropical Farms.

to be strong and independent, ending with: "I'll see 'ya later, Daddy."

The fire trucks of Fire Station 22 in Tropical Farms, where Rothgeb had been most recently stationed in his 24-year career as a firefighter and EMT with Martin County Fire Rescue, led a long procession of cars and trucks to the church on Salerno Road prior to the service, the lead fire truck festooned in a black drape, all driving under an American flag archway to enter the parking lot. The sun shone brightly until the service concluded. Then a light rain fell from the sky.

Jerry Rothgeb is survived by his mother, Jeanne Eppley; three daughters, Brenna, Deanna and Jeanna; sister Jymme Lanning; and four brothers, Lee, Steve, Jim Jr. and Mike. ■

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Pitchford's still faces some hurdles to approval

It appears that as soon as the Pitchford's Landing development project in Jensen Beach is about to make a slam dunk in meeting county requirements, the county moves the basket.

The county code regarding open space and the designation of a wetland on their property changed between the time that Bill and Nancy Reily, who live in Jensen Beach, first received approval for their Planned Unit Development (PUD) Master Site plan for Pitchford's Landing in 2007 and August 6, 2013, when land planner Don Cuozzo of the Cuozzo Design Group scheduled a Final Site Plan presentation at the August 6 Board of County Commissioners meeting.

It is the last step before building permits can be issued.

Cuozzo told the commissioners August 6 that he'd "just received information" from the county Growth Management Department staff that would require developer changes to the site plan in order to come into full compliance with the Comprehensive Growth Management Plan. He asked for a continuance, which the county must by law grant up to two times.

The Final Site Plan, a more detailed version of the original Master Site Plan, must not be different than the original in concept or design and must comply with the county's Comp Plan before it can be assured of approval, according to county staff, and even then, the county commission has the authority to reject the project.

The words and actions of county commissioners Ed Fielding and Chair Sarah Heard expressed throughout both the August 6 and the August 20 commission meeting, when the Reilys again attempted to present their Final Site plan, seem to indicate, however, that the project will be denied, regardless of whether or not it comes into compliance.

"So what? They're still substantial changes," Commission Chair Sarah Heard barked at Joe Banfi, principal planner with the county's Growth Management Department, after he confirmed that the applicant



The Pitchford's by the Sea RV Park is the site of the proposed front-porch development of Key West-style homes along Indian River Drive in Jensen Beach. Photo: Barbara Clowdus

had indeed met the open space requirements, now a part of the county code. She called for the developer to "start over" with a new application and new public hearings.

The open space regulations require that pervious sidewalks can no longer be included in the required 50 percent open area of a project, which resulted in the need for new drawings of both the Master Site Plan and the Final Site Plan.

Ken Natoli, of the Cuozzo Design Group, explained during the August 20 commission meeting that instead of removing the sidewalk on one side of the project, as the county had suggested, the developers decided to make some buildings smaller and to remove some parking spaces in the area with the condominiums, also to increase the size of the individual single family lots by expanding the buffer around the property line from 20' to 30', which is permitted if native plants are planted in the buffer area.

"We felt that sidewalks are important to the design of this project, which is a front-porch neighborhood," Natoli added. "They (the Reilys) should be commended for not taking out sidewalks."

Commissioner Heard told Natoli: "There's no proof that there's adequate public space, except you submitting another drawing..." although Joe Banfi of the Growth Management Department had



An artist's rendering of the Key West-style architecture planned for Pitchford's Landing in Jensen Beach.



Plans for the boardwalk, pier and public park that activists want removed from the Pitchford's Landing project to preserve the natural shoreline.

again confirmed that the applicant had met the open space requirements.

The proposed community, which includes 44 single-family homes, 39 units in two-story condominiums, two swimming pools, on 17.7 acres, plus an existing 3,000 sq. ft.

restaurant, on Indian River Drive is now occupied by a 150-unit RV park. The FEC railroad transects the property.

The project has been delayed since 2007 by lawsuits, countersuits, and the collapse of the economy, all of which precipitated a bankruptcy filing. A lender's deadline for financing pressured the land designers to complete the changes to the site plans quickly, they admitted to commissioners.

That pressure then befell the Growth Management Department, which was unable to complete its full review prior to the August 20 commission meeting. Howard Heims of the Littman, Sherlock Heims law firm, complained to commissioners that he favored a continuance, because his private firm had not had time to review the changes. "We often find problems that were not pointed out..." he said.

But an additional issue that still must be resolved is what developers had proposed originally as a public benefit: a waterfront park, boardwalk and pier on the east side of Indian River Drive that would be built by the Reilys and donated to the county, or a \$100,000 cash payment should the developers be unable to obtain permits for the boardwalk and pier.

After the developers opted to make the \$100,000 payment instead, which was agreeable to the county, the pier and boardwalk were not included in the Final Site Plan. Then, however, the two plans were no longer identical, thus not in compliance, so the developer had to return the boardwalk design to the Final Site Plan.

Attorney Virginia Sherlock, of the Littman, Sherlock and Heims law firm, who has opposed the project, objected to the boardwalk to be constructed on a natural shoreline in correspondence to the Growth Management Dept., which attorney Terry McCarthy, representing the interests of the Pitchford's Landing project, referred to at a workshop meeting Sept. 5 among county staff and the developers.

The final staff report noted areas on the plan still lacking compliance, thus it did not recommend approval. The workshop was held at the request of developers.

"Martin County has a history of doing what residents want," McCarthy said, as he proposed to county staff eliminating the boardwalk and pier and paying \$100,000 to the county. "We'll do what the residents want. We're in agreement to either do what's on the site plan right now, or we're in agreement to do what the residents have asked for; we'll do either one."

It still may not be enough. Commission Chair Sarah Heard and Commissioner Ed Fielding attempted to force a vote on the project during previous commission meetings, which was interrupted by county attorney Michael Durham, who reminded them of the applicants' due process rights.

The Pitchford's Landing development comes before the commissioners again on Sept. 24. ■

—Barbara Clowdus

Residents weigh in on Pitchford's Landing



CHARLES OLSON, Jensen Beach, and Dini (short for Houdini)

"I'm kind of in between about it," he said. "The economic benefit for Jensen would be good, but I have some environmental concerns. I've seen some developments along the waterfront flourish, then others become a pile of sticks after a hurricane and never get rebuilt. That's what would concern me."



CAROLE BOTTEGAL, Jensen Beach

"What's good for the community, I am for," she said. "Look at Mulligan's (Restaurant) and what it's done for Jensen Beach. There had been another restaurant at that corner before Mulligan's, but when it closed and Mulligan's came in, it upgraded the whole downtown, and that's what I want. I'm for anything that upgrades Jensen Beach."



JAIME MECKINS, Jensen Beach

"I love Jensen Beach. I grew up here," she said. "I know there's a small group of people who oppose the project, but I do not oppose it. I support growth for Jensen Beach. I want growth in Jensen."



ROBERT DELUCA, Jensen Beach

"Absolutely I support it," he said. "I would far prefer to have houses there, especially in place of what's there now."

The public comment at the August 20 commission meeting by residents who regularly attend commission meetings objected to the Pitchford's project for a variety of reasons, including a potential of increased traffic, detrimental to the environment, and the urbanization of a small neighborhood.

Ron Rose, executive director of the Jensen Beach Chamber of Commerce, told the county commission that residents and

business owners "overwhelmingly" favor the Pitchford's Landing project because it creates a permanent, residential area rather than a seasonal transient area.

"...which means jobs," Rose added, "and not just for construction. It will create and save jobs because of the combined personal incomes of residents that will be in the millions..." Rose reminded commissioners that increased sales and property tax revenue from permanent residents also

would be a benefit to the county.

Jensen Beach resident Andy DeAngelis also spoke at the commission meeting: "Ron stole all my words," he said, "but I feel the same way."

Martin County Commission Chair Sarah Heard often has said that Jensen Beach residents do not support the Pitchford's Landing project, yet an informal survey of residents in downtown Jensen Beach conducted by this newspa-

per in August seems to say otherwise.

Of 21 people interviewed over a period of two days, all who knew about the project favored it; one resident declined to participate because she was related to the Pitchford family, and another was too busy to talk. Four residents had never heard of Pitchford's Landing, and the remainder were supportive; however, only four would permit their names to be used and their photos taken for the newspaper.

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New project planned at Seabbranch in Hobe Sound

And land planner Morris Crady thought it would be simple.

When Crady appeared before the Martin County Commission in August representing a 34-acre planned community in Hobe Sound, that's what he told the commissioners.

"This is really simple," he said. "The Medium Density future land use designation has existed on the property since the original adoption of the Comprehensive Plan in 1982. The zoning just needs to be changed in order to comply with the Comp Plan."

Medium Density zoning allows up to 8 units per acre, but the 1967 Farm District zoning currently on the property designates one unit for every two acres. Crady argues that the Comp Plan compels the change in zoning to Medium Density in order to be consistent with the Future Land Use Map designation for the property.

"This is a medium density project I think," he told commissioners, "and we're not even asking for 8 units per acre, we're asking for 6."

The property, on the east side of US-1 directly across from The Oaks development in Hobe Sound and south of the Seabbranch Blvd. Intersection, lies closest to Heritage Ridge's golf course and the Charleston on the Green condominiums, a two-story, multi-family condominium project with a density of 9.3 units per acre. (It was already under development in 1982 when the property was granted a medium density RM-8 future land use designation.)

Crady and the applicant, Harold Schein, had appeared before the Local Planning Agency in May to request the zoning change after the Martin County Growth Management Department approved the zoning request to change from A-1—one unit per two acres—to the medium density designation of RM-8, which is a maximum of 8 units per acre.

The hearing was tabled at the request of the applicant after surrounding property owners objected to the project to give Schein time to meet with them and to study their concerns. A new public hearing date has not been set with the Local Planning Agency, which will review the application prior to recommending either approval or denial to the county commission.

The proposed site plan calls for a total of 198 condominium units, of which 124 will be in three-story buildings. "These are actually two-story condominiums on top of parking," he said, "and they'll not exceed 35' in height."

The height of the buildings has been identified by the Growth Management



The Seabbranch condominium development on Federal Highway in Hobe Sound lies near the Heritage Ridge development and across the highway from The Oaks. A 50' buffer of native plants is planned along the highway.

Department as an issue, as well as the proximity of the condominiums to other residential development.

Crady contends that the buildings do not exceed code limits, that the Seabbranch development meets or exceeds all required property setbacks and is less dense than its nearest neighbor, Heritage Ridge.

"The rear setback for the 3-story multi-family condominium is 30 feet, and 45 feet is provided," Crady said, in a response to the development review. "The side setback for the 3-story multi-family condominium is 20 feet, and 38 feet is provided."

The Comp Plan does not require a landscape buffer, but the planner intends a "heavily landscaped" area between the Seabbranch development and the Charleston on the Green condominiums, according to the plans, as well as establishing a 50-ft wide, native landscape buffer along US-1 to complement the 50'-wide native landscape buffer across the highway at The Oaks.

The nearest home in Heritage Ridge is approximately 400 feet from the nearest unit within Seabbranch, and 1,000 feet on the north end to the nearest home in Mariner Sands, according to the site plan.

"But there's also approximately five acres of preserve areas on the north end of the site," Crady said, "which will completely block the Seabbranch development from view in Mariner Sands."

Crady told commissioners that he considered Seabbranch "an urban project." The plans call for a centralized recreation clubhouse and pool on a proposed lake with a street system designed for connectivity, as well as six-foot-wide sidewalks throughout.

A developer-built bus stop and shelter has been proposed at the entrance to US-1, which will be the only access road, except an emergency access road elsewhere on the property that must be approved by the Florida Department of Transportation.

"This is a beautiful project," Crady said in an interview, "and it meets or exceeds all the requirements of our Comp Plan—that is, if the commissioners approve the zoning change that's required by the Comp Plan—and on top of everything else, it's in-fill development within our urban services boundary."

That's what many in the county electorate called for just a little more than a year ago, but others question their motives: whether the objective was to keep new growth within the established urban services district, or whether their intent was no growth at all. As result, the new Seabbranch project in Hobe Sound has been dubbed, "the no-growth litmus test."

The application remains under review by the Growth Management Department. ■

—Barbara Clowdus

A walking path is proposed around the lake in the south end of the project, which meanders around the preserve areas in the north end of the project, according to the plans.

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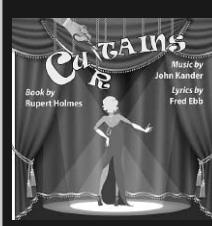
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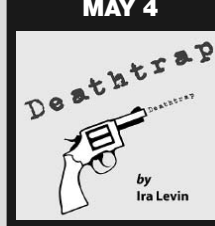
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Editorial: Dichotomies swirl murkier than our waters

Gov. Rick Scott finally consented in August to walk the banks of the St. Lucie—at least about 20 yards or so. He saw the polluted water pouring from Lake Okeechobee into the St. Lucie River, already suffering from an abundance of polluted run-off from our own local basin.

He saw the dead river, though the stench was less noxious now, but surely he also saw the people out of work, their businesses dying too, because more rain had fallen in the previous six months than had in the previous 70 years. 70 YEARS! And still tip-toeing through hurricane season.

So why did Gov. Scott not declare a state of emergency?

Yes, the Governor pledged \$130 million in August that he didn't have in July to treat stormwater runoff and raise more of the Tamiami Trail. Yes, the South Florida Water Management District has more funds coming now to enroll more ranchers to store more water on their properties and to buy fuel for firing up the district's "super water pumps" to move more water south (no thanks to Gov. Scott, by the way).

But it's not enough. The rain stopped, for now, but the discharges will not, and 99 percent of the oysters in the St. Lucie are dead. Their loss adds to the crisis we face, and not because we lust for oysters Rockefeller, but because with their deaths, we lose our best, most effective sewage treatment plant.

One oyster cleans up to 50 gallons of water a day—even the nitrogen that leaches from septic tanks and feeds algae blooms—making turbid, toxic water clear again. Fifty gallons a day. One oyster.

We need Federal Emergency Management Agency dollars NOW to rebuild and repair the damage to the estuary and to assist our struggling marine industries, which have taken a direct blow to their guts. Just as we would do after any other natural disaster.

We need emergency funds to get oysters into the river. If those oysters die because there's not enough salinity, we get more, but with less water coming from lake discharges, maybe they won't die.

But instead of a declaration of an emergency, we got a promise to "evaluate" the meaning of an emergency declaration from Florida Sen. Joe Negron, who within days of his Senate Select Committee meeting on the St. Lucie and Lake Okeechobee Basin on August 22 set it as one of his four "action items." Not at the top of his list, so no surprise it has not been "acted" upon.

An emergency declaration was **Priority No. 3** in line behind water storage as Negron's priorities after he skillfully and impressively conducted his committee meeting comprising six hours of testimony by experts and two hours of public comment at the Kane Center in Stuart. He appeared to listen closely during the entire marathon, even when he must have needed to go to the bathroom. Masterful, it was.

"Water storage is job No. 1," Negron said, but the priority itself was not Number One.

Although he did not name them, Negron was talking about the South Florida Water Management District—whose superb presentation by interim director Ernie Barnett



Senator Joe Negron at his Senate Select Committee hearing August 22 at the Kane Center in Stuart.

offered the quickest, most effective solutions in the short term, and presented clearly the challenges those water managers face—but we knew that the SFWMD already had been working ahead of the game in the first place.

Without their boots on the ground, the estuary's plight might have been worse... or is that possible? We also wondered how their funding could ever have been cut, particularly since we demand miracles of them.

Priority No. 4 was "investigating" how the problem of septic tanks can be addressed, if done in a manner "consistent with the rights of private property owners." Hmm, Martin County is not usually the place that private property rights are held so sacred, but we concede:

Septic tanks line Martin County waterways and drainage canals. Hundreds, even thousands of them, and we cannot assume the septic tanks buried on Jupiter Island, or on Rocky Point for that matter, are in any better shape than the ones at Ocean Breeze or the Sunny Isles Trailer Park.

Before we start throwing hard-to-come-by money at any septic tank, though, we need first to pinpoint exactly what is polluting our waters and exactly where the source is in order to maximize the effectiveness of our efforts.

Yes, we can do that...well, Dr. Edie Widder of ORCA can do that. Her Indian River Lagoon mapping project, which can go as far up the St. Lucie River as funds will carry her, can pinpoint exact sources. That information will tell us where to start first to get rid of the worst offenders in order to make the greatest impact with the dollars we have.

We can set priorities—IF we have facts.

Where to get the funding? Why not start with the sugar industry, which spends thousands on advertising in pollution-affected counties (including in this newspaper), coupled with half of what they donate to political campaigns (which also gets spent on media advertising) to present to ORCA and Dr. Widder's project.

Think of it. A public relations coup by one of the most despised industries today... on this coast, not the west coast...if they fund Dr. Widder's Indian River Lagoon/St.

Lucie River pollution mapping project. Or do they dare?

We believe people who point fingers at agriculture will be surprised, so we hope they consider the opportunity to be just that—a serious opportunity.

So those are Negron's number two, three and four priorities. What's his **Number One Priority**? To "review, re-evaluate, and re-group" the Army Corps of Engineers 2008 risk assessment for managing water levels in Lake Okeechobee. That reveals more about Negron's personal agenda than anything else, because when it comes down to it, people do not gamble when lives are at stake. And Negron's dichotomic thinking here?

Negron outright dismissed Florida Oceanographic Society Executive Director Mark Perry's and other scientists' and engineers' assertions that the Plan 6 flow-way deleted from the Central Everglades Restoration Plan by the Army Corps of Engineers in 2000 was both feasible AND vital to protecting the St. Lucie River and Indian River Lagoon estuaries.

The reason, Negron said? Those "brilliant engineers and scientists" of the Corps had studied Plan 6 and found it "unworkable." So that's that.

Yet when Negron drilled Col. Alan Dodd about how outdated the Corps' data are in determining how soon to release water from the lake's lock, and how much it will or will not hold before the water breaches the dike, those "brilliant" engineers suddenly no longer are credible.

Col. Dodd told Negron that insufficient progress had been made in rehabilitating the dike to undertake a several-months-long—and expensive—re-evaluation of risk assessment. Number One Priority? What a waste of time, money and effort.

Negron's very public push for more than a year to elbow the Corps out of the way puts him at odds with not only the Corps, but with Mark Perry, who disagrees.

"If we kick the Corps out," Perry said at a Rivers Coalition meeting last summer, "we lose the money they bring to the state. We don't want to do that."

But Negron's personal agenda, kicking out the Corps...err, hmm, those "brilliant engineers"... , does make a great sound bite that Negron, apparently oblivious to the dichotomy, is loathe to abandon.

But Martin County should be use to dichotomies from its politicians by now. Commissioner Sarah Heard keeps us steeped in them.

Remember the Bridgewater Ventures project in southern Martin County and the praise Heard and Commissioner Ed Fielding heaped onto listeners' ears regarding the virtues of septic tanks, like a pile of you-know-what in a cow pasture? Neither one wrinkled a nose, in spite of the stink of the "facts" they presented to support their points of view at the time.

And why do both Fielding and Heard praise small businesses and the entrepreneurial spirit of their owners—so vital to Martin County's economic development and tax base—every time they take a jab at the Business Development Board? In any other context, we hear: "I'm not interested in what business owners want," Fielding says at an

NAC Golden Gate workshop. "I want to know what the residents want."

It's the same refrain whenever the Pitchford's Landing project in Jensen Beach is before Heard and Fielding, too, particularly after Jensen Beach Chamber's executive director, Ron Rose, speaks.

"Of course, Chamber businesses want Pitchford's," Heard says dismissively. Yes, that's true. We admit it. The dichotomy is this: Why do small business interests suddenly lose relevance as soon as there's a project on the table that Commissioner Heard does not want?

We betcha it will be the same with the Seabran development, too, even though that's a project fully within the primary urban services district and meets all county rules and regulations...and will be good for small businesses...particularly those at Seabran Square in Hobe Sound.

What's next? Now that the ordinances for the Community Redevelopment Areas are weakened ("Shall be funded" has now been replaced with "may be funded" and only IF funds are available, emphasis added.) residents had better watch those budget allocations.

Although CRA projects are designed to increase property values, which they have, thus increase the tax base, which they did, and increase the draw of people into those neighborhoods to spend money and generate sales tax, which they are doing, residents' priorities are likely to be shoved aside for the priorities of commissioners who "don't care what businesses want."

That's not a dichotomy. That's just simply misguided.

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Frank Brogan, Florida's loss



Nancy Smith
Guest Columnist

Frank Brogan has some ear for opportunity. When it knocks, he knows just when to open the door and let it in. Trust me. He's got a knack for it.

Brogan was always going places. It's just that when he was younger and climbed the career ladder in an eye-blink, we all sneered and said, ain't he the ambitious one. Now he quits the vaunted Florida chancellor's job, and I'm hearing it called a cagey, cushy move to double-dip in two states.

Yet, I can think of few public-trough feeders who accomplished as much on every rung of the ladder, or who the state of Florida will miss more than it will Frank Brogan. This man is the real deal.

I was there in the background in 1978, on his first day of teaching at Port Salerno Elementary, the school our two youngest children attended at the time. Frank Brogan, 25, stuck out like a cravat on a rack full of clip-ons. He was immaculate and tanned, he had a big, bright smile for everybody, and — never mind that he was the new face on the faculty — he somehow found a way to resolve everybody's problem in the corridor that morning. He was a tower.

Sure enough, it took him just a single decade to ascend from that little neighborhood school to elected schools superintendent. All thanks to his old friend opportunity. It kept knocking, Brogan kept answering. Along the way his feats in the various schools he served were legend — from talking a middle school student into handing over his loaded gun, to working with his wife Mary, an educator herself, on organizing charity events for the children of Martin County's hidden poor. By anybody's standards, Frank Brogan was a rising star in the Martin County of the 1980s.

Nevertheless, to my eternal embarrassment ... during the 1988 campaign for superintendent of schools, The Stuart News, Brogan's local paper — where I had just been promoted to managing editor — didn't endorse him. We went for Lloyd Brumfield, the safe, older guy with superintendent experience in Dade County. Our editorial board, as I recall, distrusted Brogan's youthful enthusiasm — not the first or last time we made a clunker of a call, but we regretted it almost immediately after the election. Brogan had an impressive gift for bringing people together within the school system, even the ones who didn't like each other very much.

He was all about education reform even back then. He streamlined the school system for efficiency and cost-effectiveness, saved millions spent on ad-

ministrative expenses. He gained national accreditation for the system, implemented all kinds of new programs, upgraded student achievement, cut dropouts and lowered class size.

He never held the editorial board rejection against the newspaper. That isn't his style. He might have laughed at us, in fact, he probably did. But I've never known him to carry a grudge. He has no petty streak that I know of. He moves on, deals with important things, thinks on a larger scale than most men.

Brogan has the survival instincts of a cat. He knows who butters his bread. Loyalty may be common in state government, but it doesn't often come with his kind of creativity and energy. It's all a knack, a subconscious one I'm sure — same one that helps him hear the knock on the door or know when it's time to look around the next corner. He could live with his bags packed and nobody would notice. And the reason they wouldn't notice is because he never stops getting good things done.

When Brogan was running for commissioner of education, he was opposing incumbent Democrat Doug Jamerson, whom Lawton Chiles had appointed to replace Betty Castor (Castor had left to become a university president). That made the Martin County Republican the early underdog. But by election time, Florida newspapers had largely embraced him. The Fort Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel, for example, gushed: "One of the best candidates running for any office Sept. 8 is Frank T. Brogan. Republicans should rush to choose him as their party's nominee for commissioner of education. Brogan has all the right stuff."

And he did. As education commissioner he reduced Department of Education bureaucracy, supported local control of schools, worked to reward teachers based on performance, improved school safety, fostered student individual responsibility and produced a plan to offer parents all kinds of educational choices. Those are only the things I remember.

No wonder he and Gov. Jeb Bush, focused as they were on education, made such a good team when Bush chose him in 1998 as his lieutenant governor. Bush's legacy as an American education reformer might not be as assured today if Brogan hadn't been there to share and implement his ideas. The only time I saw Brogan distracted as Bush's No. 2 was at the death of his wife Mary, who succumbed to breast cancer. "She was my childhood sweetheart," he told me after the funeral, "the love of my life. We planned out everything together."

In 2003, as the Bush-Brogan team was re-elected to a second term, Brogan answered the knock at his alma mater,



Then-Florida Commissioner of Education Frank Brogan, far left, with President George W. Bush at Emma T. Booker Elementary School in Sarasota on 9/11/2001 — a day that is one of the most poignant, unforgettable moments in modern American history.



Frank Brogan

Florida Atlantic. Just before he left office in 2002, though, he fell in love and married law student Courtney Strickland; she was 26, he 49. Both events — the job change and the marriage — were enough to quiet the buzz that Brogan would run for governor in 2006. "Sorry to disappoint

you," he said with his customary smile and a wink. "I know you liked that rumor."

In Boca Raton, university folks still mourn Brogan's departure. Brogan, FAU's president from 2003-2009, bolstered academic standards and helped raise \$120 million in private and matching funds for his school. He understood the importance of the university's athletic programs to inspire alumni, to raise money for generations to come. He was a big supporter of FAU's new on-campus stadium. In fact, he was its chief conceptual architect — not just the stadium, but the university's Innovation Village.

What brought an increase in students and prestige at the school was probably exactly what alum John Harrow (Class of 2000) told me: "Brogan's blend of political savvy, brains, awesome public speaking skills, the way he could schmooze the wealthy and powerful and still keep professors on his side while dealing with tough economic times ... and don't forget he kept FAU moving forward by creating partnerships with research institutions."

Brogan's life in education was so much about making a difference. I wasn't surprised when he answered the knock to become chancellor of the Florida University System in 2009. No point in enumerating his accomplishments here. The Pennsylvania System of Higher Education's board of governors chose him to be its university sys-

tem chancellor largely because he improved relations with the state Legislature, helping to restore \$300 million in previous funding cuts and to receive \$400 million in new operating and capital funds.

They like that he knows how to deal with a governor who has his own ideas about higher education. The governor of Pennsylvania does, too.

As for Brogan only pursuing the double-dip ... I don't think so. His five-year contract as chancellor ends next year anyway. Brogan said right out that the job winding down is part of the reason he was looking for a new job. After 35 years of working in education and state government, he said, he was due to leave as part of an early retirement incentive with Florida's public pension system.

I'm glad to see the tributes pouring out for Brogan already. I particularly like what University of North Florida President John Delaney said. He praised Brogan for ending years of acrimony between the Legislature and university system Board of Governors.

"Pennsylvania is getting a good person, a great chancellor and a remarkable leader," Delaney said in a statement. "He knows the realities of daily life on campus and can translate that knowledge into good public policy."

So, don't tell me how much he was paid, or how much pension he'll draw. In 35 years he gave Florida a whole lot more than he got back. Sure, we can find another university chancellor, but we will never replace Frank Brogan. ■

Nancy Smith, executive editor of Tallahassee-based Sunshine State News, was reporter, city editor, managing editor and associate editor of The Stuart News/Port St. Lucie News for 28 years. She left The News in January 2005. Reach Nancy Smith at nsmith@sunshinestatenews.com or at 228-282-2423.



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October celebrates time to look back as county goes forward



Historic buildings hold stories in their walls about the hopes and intentions, even the values and purpose, of those in previous generations who built them. They tell us what that community was like, creating a very real bridge to the people who came before us, helping us to understand, not only them, but ourselves.

Perhaps most important, their presence can create pride and cohesiveness in a community that too easily can lose its unique identity, but historic preservation is more than just buildings. Its purpose also is to preserve historical landscapes and cultures, which will be celebrated as well during Martin County's Historic Preservation Month that begins in October.

"We are very fortunate to live in a community where we have local elected officials who understand the importance of historic preservation," said Joette Lorion Rice, chair of the Martin County Historic Preservation Board. "With their support, Historic Preservation Month just gets better and bigger. This year we've got 30 events on our calendar to celebrate, and even more groups than ever participating."

Just six years ago, when the board was formed, the observance was a week long and had only eight events.

"This year, Historic Preservation Month coincides with the kickoff of the centennial celebration for Stuart," she added, "which is why it's even more exciting."

The official kick-off of both Historic Preservation Month and Stuart's Centennial will be on Sept. 30 at 5 p.m. at the Stuart Heritage Museum on Flagler Avenue, a renovated, historic feed store. Sev-



Historic preservation makes progress at the Apollo School in Hobe Sound as Marc Collette of Concrete Transformations puts finishing touches on the renovated school's new retaining wall to give it a more aged look.

eral guest speakers will address the crowd, including Martin County Commissioner Doug Smith, Stuart Mayor Eula Clarke and Sewall's Point Commissioner Jacqui Thurlow-Lippisch, among others.

Highlights of the month include the ever-popular Bahamian Connection Festival and parade that kicks off on Saturday, Oct. 5, at 10 a.m. at the New Monrovia Park in Port Salerno, the site of the recently dedicated, newly restored one-room schoolhouse that is the only surviving one-room schoolhouse on the Treasure Coast.

On Thursday, Oct. 10, Port Salerno resident and activist John Hennessee will give a free lecture at the Fish House Art Center and Gallery on the "Fishing Her-

itage of Port Salerno," beginning at 7 p.m.

Martin County residents also are invited to see the progress being made in renovating one of the county's oldest buildings, the Apollo School built in 1924 in Hobe Sound, the only surviving two-room schoolhouse in the county. It will be open for free tours staffed by volunteers on Saturday, Oct. 12, from 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

Before you head to the Apollo, though, take an archaeological tour of Mount Elizabeth (at Indian Riverside Park) on Saturday, Oct. 12, beginning at 10 a.m., sponsored by the Southeast Florida Archaeological Society. Meet at the pavilion adjacent to the Tuckahoe Mansion.

East Stuart kicks off its Centennial Celebration with a parade and fun day

at the East Stuart Civic Center with activities on Saturday, Oct. 12, from 9 a.m. until 6 p.m.

Mark Perry has been invited to give a free lecture Wednesday, Oct. 16, at 12:30 p.m. on the "History of the Struggle to Preserve Our Rivers and Estuaries in Martin County," sponsored by the Jensen Beach Garden Club at the Vincent Bocchino Center in Frances Langford Park in Jensen Beach.

"It's a really exciting month with so many choices," said Lorion Rice, "but the most important thing to remember, I think, is that what we do in historic preservation is really for our children and our grandchildren." ■

—Barbara Clowdu



The curious, angled walls of the partially restored Golden Gate building on Dixie Highway confirms the unique place historic building hold in our lives. Photo: Barbara Clowdu



Named to the National Historic Register in 2002, the Apollo School will be the site of two open houses, one on Oct. 12 and the other on Nov. 17.

Among the Martin County landmarks that will be part of the Historical Preservation celebration are two recently renovated schools, the last surviving one-room schoolhouse on the Treasure Coast, the New Monrovia school in Port Salerno, and the county's only remaining two-

Two Martin schoolhouses tell stories of place, people

room school, the Apollo School in Hobe Sound.

Built around 1930, the 25-by-30-foot wood-frame structure in the Monrovia community of Port Salerno was one of the first schools built in Martin County to educate black children, the Salerno Colored School. Former students remember it as "Mrs. Williams' School" for Costella Hannibal Williams, who taught from 1929 until around 1960 and for whom a new civic center was named.

In Hobe Sound, the Olympia School, now the Apollo School, whose last students attended in 1963, was purchased for \$125,000 by a group of former students of the school. Like the New Monrovia schoolhouse, that building also had suffered damage from hurricanes, most extensively in 1933 when its win-

dows were blown out. Its new windows did not include the arches, which were covered over by plywood.

"We didn't even know the windows were arched," said Kathy Spurgeon, president of the Apollo School Foundation, which has been working since the property was purchased to renovate the building. "Then we found an old photo of the building that showed not only its arched windows, but that it originally had a cupola, too."

The building now is air-conditioned—a nod to the modern world—the dry wall has been completed, as well as rest rooms. Parking lots are under construction, and the original wood floors of Dade County pine now cover the concrete foundation, which was poured in 2008.

Two open houses are planned: One



The oldest remaining one-room schoolhouse on the Treasure Coast, the former "Salerno Colored School" in Port Salerno will be at the site of the Bahamian Connection Festival on Oct.

on Oct. 12 as part of the Historic Preservation Month celebration, and the other will be during a fundraiser Nov. 16, "Artist in the Window," at which the school's previous windows will be auctioned. Each window will be transformed into original paintings by noted local artists. ■

Martin County Historic Preservation Month 2013 Schedule of Events

9/30 MONDAY

5pm-6pm Kick Off for Martin County Historic Preservation Month 2013

A gathering to celebrate Historic Preservation Month 2013, and the Centennial Celebration of the City of Stuart and East Stuart, at the historic Stuart Feed Store (1901) with words by Commissioner Doug Smith (Martin County), Mayor Eula Clarke (City of Stuart), Commissioner Jacqui Thurlow-Lippisch (Sewall's Point) and others.

10/1 TUESDAY

9am – Martin County Commission Proclaims October Historic Preservation Month

Commission Chambers, 2401 SE Monterey Road, Stuart. Information: 772-221-1396 or www.martin.fl.us.

10/1 TUESDAY

Celebrating Viva Florida 500 (1513-2013) – A Collaborative Juried Art Exhibition through 10/26

Co-sponsored by the Arts Council of Martin County and the Elliott Museum in their galleries:

10am-4pm daily, Court House Cultural Center, 80 E Ocean Blvd, Stuart - FREE admission;

10am-5pm daily, Elliott Museum, 825 NE Ocean Blvd, Hutchinson Island, - \$12 for non-members.

Contact: 772-225-1961, ext. 121 or see <http://www.vivaflorida.org/About-Viva-Florida/>

10/2 WEDNESDAY

10am and 11am – Tour of the Mansion at Tuckahoe built in 1938 – FREE

Indian Riverside Park, Tuckahoe Drive, Jensen Beach. 772-530-1529

10/5 SATURDAY

10am-6pm – 15th Annual Bahamian Connection Festival - Parade at 10am - FREE

New Monrovia Park, 4455 SE Murray Street, Port Salerno.

10/5 SATURDAY

2:30pm – American Roots Music Concert Series Featuring “Zydeco” - FREE

Robert Morgade Library, 5851 SE Community Drive, Stuart. Contact: 772-463-3245

10/5 SATURDAY

Environmental Studies Center Open House

The building's 75th Anniversary and the Environmental Studies Center's 40th anniversary

2900 NE Indian River Drive, Jensen Beach. 772-219-1187

10/7 MONDAY

9am – Congressman Patrick Murphy Visits the Historic Golden Gate Building, which was built in 1925 - FREE

Sponsored by the Friends of the His-

toric Golden Gate Community, Inc., 3225 SE Dixie Hwy, Stuart

10/8 TUESDAY

7pm – “Stuart on the St. Lucie – 100 Years” Lecture and Power Point by Sandra Thurlow – FREE

Sponsored by Stuart Heritage at the historic Lyric Theatre built in 1926, 59 SW Flagler Ave, Stuart. 772-220-4600.

10/8 TUESDAY

7pm – Historical Reflections of East Stuart with Dr. Willie Jay Thompson and Sam McHardy

East Stuart Civic Center, 724 East 10th Street, Stuart. 772-634-6231

10/9 WEDNESDAY

10am and 11am – Tour of the Mansion at Tuckahoe built in 1938 – FREE

Indian Riverside Park, Tuckahoe Drive, Jensen Beach. 772-530-1529

10/10 THURSDAY

7pm – “Fishing Heritage of Port Salerno” Lecture by John Hennessee – FREE

Fish House Art Center and Gallery, 4745 SE DeSoto Ave, Port Salerno. 772-631-0443

10/11 FRIDAY

Indiantown Speaks: Warfield Elementary Celebrates Its 85th Anniversary - FREE

Elisabeth Lahti Library, 15200 SW Adams Avenue in Indiantown. 772-597-4200

10/11 FRIDAY

1:30pm – Journey Stories Film Festival – Movie Will Depict Theme “Our Expanded World” - FREE

Blake Library, 2351 SE Monterey Road, Stuart. 772-288-3245

10/12 SATURDAY

10am-2pm – Apollo School (built in 1924) Open House – FREE

Visit the only surviving two-room schoolhouse in Martin County, 9141 SE Apollo Street, Hobe Sound. 772-546-5272

10/12 SATURDAY

10am – Archaeological Tour of Mount Elizabeth with Will Ghioto, president of Southeast Florida Archaeological Society – FREE

Tour of this prehistoric archaeological site is sponsored by the Southeast Florida Archaeological Society. Meet at pavilion adjacent to the Mansion at Tuckahoe in Indian Riverside Park. 772-221-1396

The crown jewel of historic preservation in Martin County: the Tuckahoe Mansion at Indian Riverside Park in Jensen Beach. Photo: SCE, Inc. / Photographer Randy Smith

10/12 SATURDAY

9am-6pm – East Stuart Centennial Kick-off with a Parade and Fun Day – FREE

East Stuart Civic Center, 724 East 10 and Georgia Ave and proceeds of sales go to 10th Street Recreation Center, Stuart. Parade begins at 11am at Martin Luther King Blvd and Georgia Ave and proceeds to the 10th Street Recreation Center.

10/16 WEDNESDAY

12:30pm – “History of the Struggle to Preserve Our Rivers and Estuaries in Martin County” Lecture by Mark Perry, Florida Oceanographic Society - FREE

Sponsored by the Jensen Beach Garden Club at the Vincent Bocchino Center in Frances Langford Park,

2369 NE Dixie Highway, Jensen Beach. (A memorial for past-President Helen DeBritten, a force behind the historic Stuart Welcome Arch, will follow.) Public is welcome. 772-692-2706

10/16 WEDNESDAY

10am and 11am – Tour of the Mansion at Tuckahoe (circa 1938) – FREE

Indian Riverside Park, Tuckahoe Drive, Jensen Beach. 772-530-1529

10/19 SATURDAY

11am – “The Captain Sewall House (circa 1889)” Lecture by Sandra Thurlow - FREE

The Captain Sewall House in Indian Riverside Park, Tuckahoe Drive, Jensen Beach. The historic house will be open to the public after the lecture until 4pm. 772-221-1396

10/19 SATURDAY

Opening of the “Journey Stories” Smithsonian Exhibit – FREE

Museum-quality Smithsonian exhibit of how our ancestors came to America will be on display at the

Elisabeth Lahti Library, 15200 SW Adams Avenue in Indiantown, Oct.19-Nov. 30.

Hours are: 10 am-5:30pm on Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday and 12-8pm on Wednesday. 772-597-4200

10/19 SATURDAY

East Stuart Centennial Ball (Details to be announced.)

10/23 WEDNESDAY

10am and 11am – Tour of the Mansion at Tuckahoe built in 1938 – FREE

Indian Riverside Park, Tuckahoe Drive, Jensen Beach. 772-530-1529

10/24 THURSDAY

6:30-8:30pm – Martin County Historic Preservation Awards Dinner (doors open at 6pm).

Celebrate Historic Preservation Month 2013 and Preservationists of the Year Alice & Greg Luckhardt Sponsored by the Martin County Historic Preservation Board (Details to be announced.)

10/26 SATURDAY

11am – Presentation of Historic Plaque at the New Monrovia One-Room Schoolhouse – FREE

A plaque commemorating the historic “Salerno Colored School Circa 1930,” a one-room schoolhouse that was built during the era of segregation, will be dedicated with words by Commissioner Sarah Heard and some former students at 4455 SE Murray Street in New Monrovia Park. 772-221-1396

10/30 WEDNESDAY

10am and 11amvTour of the Mansion at Tuckahoe built in 1938 - FREE

Indian Riverside Park, Tuckahoe Drive, Jensen Beach. 772-530-1529

The calendar of events will not be finalized until mid-September, after the Currents' print deadline, so before heading to an event, be sure to check that the time has not changed.



New tackle shop owner plans events, eyes future

A surprisingly bright spot in Port Salerno these days is a tackle shop on A1A, the Stuart Angler, owned by former Alaskan guide and now Port Salerno charter boat captain, Giles Murphy.

"He is one of the premier fly-fishing specialists I've had the honor to meet," says Rich Vidulich, himself a commercial fisherman and *Martin County Currents* columnist, who recently stopped by the shop, formerly the Southern Angler, to check it out personally.

"Giles brings 20 years of experience to this area catching snook, tarpon, redfish and trout on both inshore and offshore tackle," Vidulich adds, "and his charters have built a phenomenal following."

An Orvis dealer for fly rods, reels, apparel and accessories, as well as for professional grade Hardy and Greys fly rods, Murphy supplies the fishing community ample stock, but he also is committed to sharing his skills and fishing wisdom with the next generation of fishermen and women.

Twice a month, on Friday nights from 6 to 9 p.m. at his store, he teaches kids from 8 years old and up the art of fly fishing. He calls it "Fly-Day Night For Kids."

"He teaches them fly tying and fly rod casting," Vidulich says, "then he treats them to pizza and fishing videos."

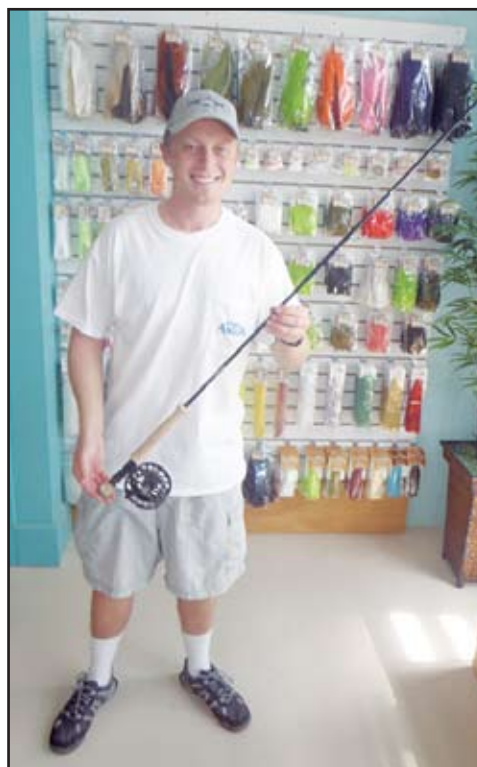
Murphy often shows videos of his charters to store customers, as much to relive the experience all over again as it



Something to be proud about: Capt. Giles Murphy in front of his store, the Store Angler, where a Grand Opening Barbeque is planned for Saturday, Sept. 14.

is to show fishermen what's possible beyond the polluted St. Lucie Inlet.

"I wasn't there five minutes and he was showing me some explosive footage of his morning charter," Vidulich adds. "He said the tide was perfect for an



Commercial fisherman Giles Murphy inside his freshly stocked fishing tackle shop, the Stuart Angler.

early morning bite. The results were 10 snook caught and 10 released!"

Even while watching fishing video and talking to a reporter, Murphy was able to pay personal attention to everyone who walked into his "fly rod

heaven," exuding plenty of enthusiasm and showing a genuine interest in meeting every customer's needs.

"Giles finds being part of our fishing community important," says Vidulich, "so he really listens to his customers. The shop is complete with live shrimp and bait fish. Frozen baits are available for all your offshore needs, and during the migratory season he will be supplying the right bait and tackle for pompano, bluefish and mackerel."

The store also carries spin rods (Crowder and Star rods), a large assortment of lures and conventional tackle for offshore, but it's no secret that the demand for fishing tackle is down with the current condition of the river and the Indian River Lagoon. Thus far, however, Murphy considers the rate of new customers he sees coming into the store as "fair," a hopeful sign.

"Capt. Giles stands with us during this river crisis," Vidulich says. "He is resilient and is an important addition to our fishing community. The store's grand opening is coming up on Saturday, Sept. 14, and will include a barbeque starting at 10 a.m. There will be local fishing guides attending to support the Stuart Angler, and I know Rich, the 'Pompano Reporter', will definitely be there!"

The Stuart Angler, 4965 SE Dixie Hwy. in Port Salerno, is open seven days a week, from 6 a.m. to 7 p.m. The phone number is: 772.288.1219. ■

The Firefly Group brings home more awards

The Firefly Group did it again. The Florida Public Relations Association recognized the Palm City-based public relations, marketing and strategic planning firm for "excellence" in their public relations programs.

The group brought home four awards from the statewide association's 2013 Golden Image Awards ceremony in St. Petersburg in August.

The awards included a Golden Image Award and a Judges Award for the Firefly Group's production of the 2013 Florida Ranches Calendar illustrating

Florida's extraordinary ranch lands, paying tribute to their environmental stewardship and cultural importance. Golden Image Awards are given to public relations programs that demonstrate the very best examples of innovation, planning and design as well as meeting the highest standard of production, execution and evaluation of results and budget.

"We are proud to produce the Ranch Calendar each year as an educational tool to generate awareness about the role that ranch lands play in preserving Florida's environment and contributing to its econ-

omy," said Stacy Ranieri, president and Chief Illuminator of The Firefly Group.

Firefly also earned a Judges Award and an Award of Distinction for its pro-bono production of the 2012 SafeSpace "Walk A Mile in Her Shoes" video to increase awareness about domestic violence on the Treasure Coast.

"We produced the Safespace video in a way that blended the serious and troubling statistics about domestic violence with lighthearted images of men from all walks wearing red shoes while performing various activities," said Rob Ranieri, chief operating officer of The Firefly

Group and co-chair of the Martin County 'Walk A Mile in Her Shoes' event. "Participation in the 2012 walk more than doubled and funds raised were tripled compared to the prior year."

The 2013 Florida Ranches Calendar and the 2012 SafeSpace "Walk A Mile in Her Shoes" video were also recognized earlier this year with Gold Addy awards from the Treasure Coast Advertising Federation, Palm Awards from the Public Relations Society of America - Palm Beach Chapter and Image Awards from the Florida Public Relations Association Treasure Coast Chapter. ■

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Nancy McCarthy, Rob Ranieri and Melissa Zolla of The Firefly Group in Palm City display the Golden Image Awards recently presented to the local public relations firm by the Florida Public Relations Association in August. Photo: The Firefly Group



John Hennessee of Port Salerno, right, welcomes his newest tenants to the Fish House Art Center, Dave Subers and Karen McLean of The Grove Dock Bar, a coffee, beer and wine bar. The grand opening party is Sept. 21.

Recently, the normally lively night scene on the Manatee Pocket in Port Salerno could be found primarily at the Manatee Island Grill restaurant

and the Coconut Bar on A1A after the Finz Waterfront Grill, then the Reef restaurant, closed a few months ago.

But the dead zone on the Manatee Pocketwalk has come to life.

The Grove Dock Bar just opened in the heart of the Fish House Art Center right on the Manatee Pocket. An open air bar with views of the marina and the waterfront that patrons can lose themselves in, even without the array of craft beers, wine and blender drinks offered by proprietor Dave Subers, should entice lots of visitors.

"I dreamed of opening a place like this," said Subers, originally from Philadelphia, then living in Port St. Lucie for 10 years before moving to Stuart a year ago. When he and his partners, Karen McLean and Jerry Earley, discovered the Fish House Art Center location, they were convinced "we could do it better than anyone else."

They will have their chance to find out.

One of the ways they're doing it differently is to open at 7 a.m. weekdays as a coffee bar, serving Cubano, cappuccino, latte, any coffee concoction his customers want. With no kitchen, there's no breakfast served, but Subers is betting

on the vast majority of people who consider a good cup of coffee before work as the best possible breakfast.

On weekends, they'll open later, at 9 a.m., but remain open all day to serve Art Center guests wanting a cup of coffee or glass of wine. They will remain open through the evening and night, not closing "until the party ends," he says.

"And don't forget watching football on the biggest screen in Martin County," reminded John Hennessee, owner of the Fish House Art Center and Subers' landlord.

"That's right, every Thursday night will be big-screen football," Subers added, warning that he's a Philadelphia fan all the way to the core.

The Grove Dock Bar is surrounded by boutiques and the artists' workshops of the art center, creating opportunities for eclectic browsing, as well. It also has a large open area suitable for private parties, a perfect venue for about 50 guests.

The official address is 4745 SE DeSoto Avenue in Stuart, but those who don't need GPS to find their way, The Grove Dock Bar is at the end of the long hall in the Fish House Art Center in Port Salerno.

An "official" grand opening is planned for Saturday, Sept. 21, which will include live entertainment and a "downright great party," Subers adds. "Be sure to bring your friends."

For more information, call (772) 210-3100, or dave@thegrovedockbar.com, or go their Facebook page: www.facebook.com/thegrovedockbar. ■



Seacoast National Bank announced the appointment of Jeff Lee

as vice president, Digital Project Manager. With 14 years of digital marketing experience, Lee spent eight years with American Express, as international marketing director leading strategy development, implementation and execution of online cross-sell activities, and for the last two years, he was digital marketing director for BGT Partners, a global interactive agency that helps companies strengthen brand and business relationships through



Jeff Lee

digital marketing and technology.

"I am very excited that Jeff has joined our team," said Kathleen M. Cavicchioli, executive vice president, Operations and Technology, for Seacoast National Bank. "He

will be instrumental as we embark on the implementation of several new digital solutions for our customers."

Lee is based in the Seacoast National Bank Operations Center in Stuart and lives with his family in Palm City. ■

Keynote speaker Dr. Edwin Massey, president of Indian

River State College, is a highlight of the premiere business event of the year, the Business Development Board of Martin County's Annual Business Appreciation Luncheon on Friday, Sept. 20, 11:30 a.m. at Mariner Sands Country Club in Hobe Sound.

Emcee of the event will be Bob Brunjes, president and publisher of Scripps Treasure Coast Newspapers.



Dr. Edwin Massey



Bob Brunjes

"We have had a great response thus far with reservations and sponsorships for our Annual Business Appreciation Luncheon," said Tim Dougher, executive director of the Business Development Board. "With our dynamic keynote speaker and emcee, seats are filling up fast."

Florida Community Bank and United Way of Martin County's CHARACTER COUNTS! program, in cooperation with the BDB, will recognize three local businesses as finalists whose leadership promotes and inspires in its professional culture, business

climate, and business relationships a commitment to good character and workplace ethics; however, only one of the three will be named the winner.

Tickets are \$75 each for the luncheon and the award presentations at Mariner Sands Country Club on 6490 Mariner Sands Drive off Federal Highway in Hobe Sound.

To purchase tickets, or to query regarding possible sponsorship opportunities, contact Jennifer@bdbmc.org, call 772.221.1380 or email info@bdbc.org. ■

and the Juno Beach pier where dogs are welcome, as two of Florida's least-known beaches.

"Not many Floridians even know about Blowing Rocks, and the inhabitants probably like it that way," the list said of the preserve at the southern tip of Jupiter Island.

The list, compiled by the website 10Best.com, compared Blowing Rocks to a northern California beach with its jagged limestone rocks. It urged beachgoers to visit it at high tide "for the aquatic spectacle."

The list praised Jupiter's beaches for their "sugary sand" and their willingness to make a portion of the beach dog-friendly.

Obviously, no one mentioned Hobe Sound Beach to them. ■

Noted international business publication Inc. Magazine

ranked STS Aviation Group of Jensen Beach as one of the fastest growing private companies in the U.S. The local company was ranked 1,938th on the magazine's annual Inc. 500 | 5000 list.

The STS Aviation Group was also named on the sixth annual list with a three-year sales growth of 163%. The list represents the most comprehensive look at the most important segment of the economy, America's independent entrepreneurs. Fuhu tops this year's list.

STS Aviation Group joins LivingSocial, Edible Arrangements, CDW and Lifelock, among other prominent brands featured on this year's list.

"We are once again so proud to be included in this group of innovative entrepreneurs doing amazing things to establish significant growth for their companies," said Philip Anson, Jr., CEO of STS Aviation Group, in the press release. "We at STS plan on continuing to focus on growth and maintaining our tradition of being named on this list for many years to come."

The STS Aviation Group is a diversified company that specializes in support services for the aerospace industry through its four divisions: STS AeroStaff Services, STS Engineering Solutions, STS Line Maintenance, and STS Component Solutions. Founded in 1985, the company provides aircraft technician staffing services, engineering and DER support service, aircraft component and supply chain management, and line maintenance services for on the ground aircraft.

Complete results of the Inc. 5000, including company profiles and an interactive database that can be sorted by industry, region, and other criteria, can be found at www.inc.com/5000.

"Not all the companies in the Inc. 500 | 5000 are in glamorous industries," said Inc. Editor Eric Schurenberg, "but in their fields they are as famous as household name companies simply by virtue of being great at what they do. They are the hidden champions of job growth and innovation, the real muscle of the American economy." ■



USA Today named Blowing Rocks Preserve in Hobe Sound

and the beaches of Jupiter, including the one-mile stretch between Carlin Park

Palm City's Adopt-A-Class deserves support

By **Jamie Chapogas**

Special to Martin County Currents

The Palm City Chamber's Adopt-A-Class Program has existed in Martin County for 22 years. There are two simple explanations for the program's longevity and success: Martin County residents embraced the concept of "it takes a village to raise a child." Nowhere, and I mean nowhere, in this state will you find a stronger sense of community where deep relationships are built and remain everlasting. Second is the tireless effort the Palm City Chamber has exerted in defining its program, uniting the business and residential communities, and providing the perfect solution to enhance the quality of education.

Thirteen years after arriving in Martin County, I spent time reflecting on this chapter of my life. The most memorable times for me in the community stem from my involvement with the Palm City Chamber of Commerce, where I started as an Ambassador in 2001. Later, I chaired the Ambassador Committee, then served on the board for seven years, ultimately serving as Chamber president in 2008. I also served on the Chamber's Education Committee, chairing the Adopt-A-Class program for five amazing years, which fulfilled me as much as I hope the teachers and students felt.

Due to my career as a financial advisor, the fiscal responsibility of attaching my name to a program that handled so much money was an initial concern; therefore, my first order of business was to ensure adequate checks and balances were in place, as well as transparency of funds raised and dispersed. To this day, every donor may rest assured that 100% of their donation goes immediately into the designated classroom, the funds must be used in the current school year, and all purchases by teachers are monitored by school principals.

I listened to feedback from parents and business owners. The subject of pricing often arose, so I met with school administrators at the time and asked about the \$200 fee that was the cost of adopting a classroom. Their answer was interesting. Back when the program began in 1991, the principals at that time had agreed that \$200 was "a meaningful amount" that a teacher would need to significantly enhance the students' education in a single school year.

Ten years later, the price had not increased. Knowing that we had closed all the gaps, I was confident the program was ready to grow to an unprecedented



Jamie Chapogas

level. Understanding parent finances, rather than reduce the price of adoption—which would truly undermine the mission of enrichment—we encouraged parents and co-workers to pool their funds to adopt a class. In a classroom of 20, parents would only need to chip in \$10 each.

Small offices jumped at the challenge to adopt a local teacher and visit the classroom they adopted. With this marketing tactic, we had the most significant increase in classroom adoptions in Martin County history. Everyone in the community felt as though they played an important role in the education of all of our children. Now, 22 years later, the price remains the same.

In that time, inflation has occurred at a painful rate and all of us, including teachers, feel the pinch. If anything, I would raise the adoption fee if I could, and I would not even consider reducing it knowing the reduced budget challenges our educators are faced with.

A long time ago, I owned a successful eatery in Miami for over 11 years. One year, a crafty employee decided to copy our menu, slash prices dramatically, open up a restaurant a few streets away and try to take all our business. Compe-

tition is a good thing in business. It made us sharper. We adhered to our high standards, held our heads high, and eventually the bugger was out of business. You see, he did not know how important a strong system, values, ethics and loyalty are for long-term success in business. When it comes to Adopt-A-Class, it is not a business so there is no place for competition. There are no winners when a charity is undercut, only losers. In this case, the losers would be our children and the teachers who are already strained financially. It would be a disservice to this fine community to reduce the quality of its award-winning education. I know, because I was there to accept the award that was bestowed upon the Palm City Chamber of Commerce in Daytona by Florida's Commissioner of Education in 2006. This is an award that was the result of our village raising its children right, and I am so proud to have been a part of it.

If you haven't done so already, please contact the Palm City Chamber of Commerce today and adopt one of our terrific teachers and his or her class. ■

Jamie Chapogas is a financial advisor, a long-standing member of the Palm City Chamber of Commerce, and formerly chair of the Palm City Chamber Adopt-A-Class Program.

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Chamber readies for 2013 Pineapple Festival

Jensen Beach is a jammin' place year around, but it's especially so the second weekend each November when the streets fill for the Annual Pineapple Festival, a major fund-raiser for the Jensen Beach Chamber of Commerce.

It's easy to forget that Jensen Beach is a small, seaside community when the streets fill with revelers from throughout the state to salute the community's rich pineapple heritage and features events for the entire family that include world class concerts, arts, crafts, street performers, local bands and midway rides.

A main component of the Festival is the Bahamian Market. A delegation from Eleuthera, Bahamas, creates an authentic Bahamian Market in downtown Jensen Beach featuring island music, crafts and the heart-pounding sounds of Junkanoo.

"In 1990 Jensen Beach and Gregory Town in Eleuthera became sister cities," explains Ron Rose, executive director of the Jensen Beach Chamber, "and now each year, they bring their wares and their music from Eleuthera to enrich our festival. It wouldn't be the same without them."

The Chamber will keep the Jammin' Jensen reputation intact this year with headliner acts and new talent that crosses the spectrum of both age and genre. Anyone who "likes" the Jensen Beach Chamber's Pineapple Festival Facebook page has been getting the run down all along. Two major headliner acts will perform on Saturday night, Nov. 9: the Marshall Tucker Band at 6 p.m. and the Little River Band at 9 p.m.

The Little River Band is in its third decade as international musical icons.



The 2012 Pineapple Festival in Jensen Beach with its midway and giant ferris wheel as the backdrop.

They have had 10 Top Ten US hits from their 14 albums with sales exceeding 20 million, the first Australian act to achieve such success in America. A signature element of the band is its vocal harmonies, which Glenn Frey of The Eagles proclaims as "The best harmony band in the world."

The Marshall Tucker Band is still led today by founding member and lead singer Doug Gray. The band also includes highly respected drummer B.B. Borden, a former member of Mother's Finest and The Outlaws; Marcus Henderson of Macon, Georgia, on flute, saxophone and keyboards in addition to lead and background vocals, Pat Elwood on bass guitar, and Rick Willis on lead guitar and vocals, both of Spartanburg SC, disciples of the Caldwell Brothers. Acclaimed lead guitarist and vocalist Chris Hicks recently rejoined the band after a two-year absence, just in time to come to Jensen Beach.

A new young talent, Joel Crouse, of Show Dog – Universal Music fame, will be on stage Friday night. He wrote his first song at the age of 14, started a band when he was 15, graduated from high

school at 16 and was signed to his record deal not long after his 19th birthday. He has opened shows for Toby Keith, Darius Rucker, Rodney Atkins, Sara Evans and Goo Goo Dolls.

Country music star Jerrod Nieman will perform at 9 p.m. on Friday. A serious music student, Nieman majored in performance art technology at South Plains College in Texas, where he pondered the nearly universal question "Just what exactly constitutes country?" His answer came in his album, *Free The Music*. "This album is my interpretation of how I feel about country right now," Jerrod says, and Jensen Beach awaits.

Other acts are scheduled to appear Sunday, Nov. 10, including Kidz Bop, music for kids aged 5-12 featuring today's hits "sung by kids for kids." Also returning on Sunday, the imaginative world of the Bugaroos, a special kids musical show that begins at 2pm on the Seacoast National Bank Stage.

Also on Saturday and Sunday starting at 3pm, Home Depot will present a Kids Workshop near the Bahamian Market.

November just cannot get here fast enough!



The Little River Band



The Marshall Tucker Band



Kidz Bop

To stay tuned into the latest Pineapple Festival news, sign into the Jensen Beach Chamber of Commerce web page, or go to the Pineapple Festival Facebook page; www.facebook.com/pineapplefestival. ■

JENSEN BEACH CHAMBER CALENDAR

Business After Hours

Tuesday, Sept. 10, from 5:30-7pm
Tony Roma's
3730 NE Indian River Drive
Jensen Beach
\$5 RSVP, \$10 at door, Non Members \$20

Council of Chambers

of Martin County Luncheon
Friday, September 13, from 11:30am-1pm
Mariner Sands Country Club
6500 SE Mariner Sands Dr., Stuart
RSVP www.hobesound.org or call
772-546-4724
Members: \$25; must reserve in advance

Jensen Beach Chamber Business Luncheon

Thursday, Sept. 19, from 11:45am-1pm
Dolphin Bar & Shrimp House,
1401 NE Indian River Drive, Jensen Beach
Speaker: Superintendent, Laurie Gaylord
Also: Lisa Rhodes, Education Foundation
\$20 for Members

JENSEN BEACH CHAMBER'S NEWEST MEMBERS



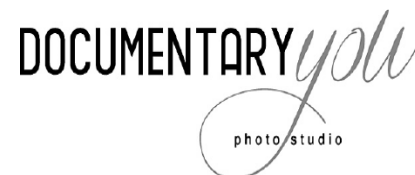
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www.Buckle.com
Dawn Winston,
Store Manager



Documentary You
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Jensen Beach

www.documentaryyou.com
Steve Daubs, Owner

An educational Halloween? Yes, when at Dupuis

Kim Kanter, of the Dupuis Management Area on Kanner Highway, brought a touch of Halloween to the August meeting of the Indiantown Chamber of Commerce. Instead of asking for treats, per se, she was asking for sponsors and volunteers for the educational, family-friendly event Oct. 19 at one of the county's most prized public conservation areas a few miles west of Stuart.

"Please consider joining a select group of community leaders and businesses that sponsor DuPuis' Haunted Halloween," she said. "You already know what a wonderful event it is, and sponsorship provides promotion of your business or organization that reaches residents in Martin, Oke-

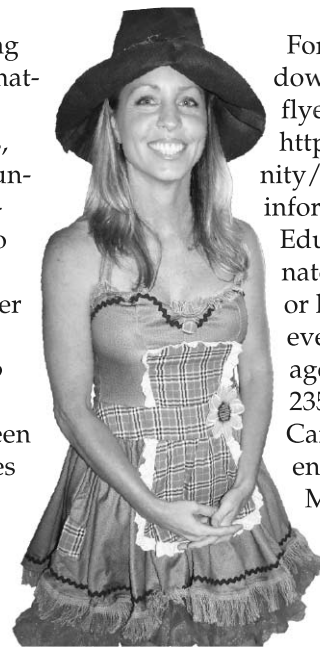
chobee and Palm Beach counties."

The Florida Center for Environmental Studies coordinates the annual Haunted Halloween Night with the Indiantown Education Coalition, making it an educational experience by featuring Florida's native and nocturnal critters and as a fundraiser in support of the Environmental Education and Collegiate Scholarships Program for Indiantown students.

The free activities, which begin at 5 p.m. prior to sunset, and do not conclude until 9 p.m., include hay rides for the whole family, a Haunted House for ages 10 and older, a Discovery Center and Crafts station for little ones, fun games, and a Trick or Treat Trail for those wearing costumes. The hayrides

continue after dark, offering glimpses of the nocturnal natural world.

In addition to sponsors, Kanter also is seeking volunteers, even if just to download a promotional flyer to post at work. She also is looking for adults and older students to be a Haunted House character or to help build props; to be a costumed "friendly" Halloween character; to help little ones with crafts or with games; to serve as parking attendants; or to hand out candy on the Trick-or-treat Trail.



For more information, or to download sponsorship forms or flyers, go to <https://fauf.fau.edu/netcommunity/dupuishalloween>. For more information, contact Kim Kanter, Education and Training Coordinator, at 561.924.5310, ext. 3339, or kkanter@sfwmd.gov. The event will be at the DuPuis Management Area Visitors' Center, 23500 SW Kanner Highway, Canal Point. The visitors' center entrance is on State Road 76 in Martin County, two miles east of Port Mayaca. ■

Kim Kanter spreads some early Halloween happiness.

Chamber members introduced to Midtown Imaging

A triple team of experts representing the Good Samaritan Medical Center's Midtown Imaging facilities in Jupiter, Belinda Mathews, Jill Kamla and Barb O'Brien, introduced the Indiantown Chamber members to its comprehensive services during the Chamber's August meeting.

When Mathews, physician relations manager, said she was being interviewed for her job at Midtown Imaging, she was "really touched" by the sense of care



Midtown Imaging speakers included, from left, Barb O'Brien, director of imaging services; Belinda Mathews, physician relations manager, and Jill Kamla, manager Comprehensive Breast Center.

and of family she witnessed of her interviewers.

"I want you to think of Midtown Imaging as part of your extended family," she said, "because it can be just that. You can get the attention to your health care needs all in one place by people who really care."

In recognition of October as Breast Care Month, the trio were encouraging women to get screened, and Midtown Imaging is

committed to ensuring that the process is as easy and efficient as possible, Mathews said. Their unique scheduling allows for quick screens, "merely a blip in your day, then you go on about your business."

Their services include traditional screening mammograms, breast ultrasound, ultrasound core biopsy, stereotactic biopsy, Breast MRI biopsy, as well as breast MRI, which sometimes is used in combination with ultrasound or traditional mammography.

For more information or to make an appointment, call 561.697.3001. ■

Education Foundation rolls out Martin bus

Lisa Rhodes, executive director of the Education Foundation of Martin County, is making the rounds of public appearances to acquaint businesses and residents with the non-profit's latest campaign, "Get on the Bus, Martin County."

At the Indiantown Chamber of Commerce meeting in August, Rhodes described the program as an "educational Craigslist," with three on-line modules that make it easy for residents and businesses to connect directly to classrooms.

The modules include Fund-A-Project, a place where teachers create a virtual wish list for projects they wish to pursue with their students, but are unfunded, enabling anyone to meet a classroom need by making a direct donation online.

The Community Opportunities module permits businesses, organizations, and schools to post student intern-



Lisa Rhodes, executive director of the Education Foundation of Martin County.

ships, volunteer opportunities, scholarships, and teacher externships. Teachers can also post non-monetary requests. "It's a place where community members can come together," Rhodes added, "to provide each other with opportunities to get involved."

The third module, modeling the highly successful Palm City Chamber's Adopt-

a-Classroom project, is the foundation's own Adopt-a-Classroom.

"Our Adopt-a-Classroom program allows parents, grandparents, and businesses to adopt specific classrooms online," Rhodes said. "Select the classroom of your choice and provide teachers with much needed classroom support."

For more information, go to the Education Foundation website, www.educationfoundationmc.org, or call 772.600.8062. ■

iTown

MOVING INDIANTOWN TOWARD THE FUTURE

INDIANTOWN
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

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Cement is being poured and leveled for the new 20,000 sq.ft. Boys & Girls Club at the heart of Carter Park at Indiantown.

iTown’s Carter Park begins to take shape

A jewel in the crown worn by the former Community Redevelopment Agency finally begins to shine brightly in Indiantown.

The first four Habitat for Humanity homes have been completed with 300 hours of “sweat-equity” by each of the Sanchez, Mondragon, Jackson and Juan families, who will live in them. The houses, the first of 40 in the new Carter Park development, were dedicated in an official ceremony at the site on August 28.

Across the street from the houses, construction of a 20,000 sq. foot Boys & Girls Club is well underway, signaling hope for completion of one of the most innovative public/private projects ever undertaken in Martin County, according to officials.

The genesis of Carter Park were several acres of blighted property in the Booker Park neighborhood owned by the county and by Habitat for Humanity. In a creative swap of land between the two entities, the county-owned land would become the 12-acre site for Habitat for Humanity to build 40 new homes in return for the land the county needed from Habitat for infrastructure development and stormwater treatment. Through the donations of funds, materials and volunteer labor, Habitat built the first four homes and sold them to these families.

In addition to the construction of Habitat homes, the Carter Park development included construction of a stormwater treatment area for a 256-acre watershed, paid for with \$600,000 in state grants and matched by the county, a first for Indiantown, according to Kevin Freeman, director of the Martin County Community Development Department, which coordinated the project. The front porches of the homes will face the one-acre lake and park at the center of the development.

The Boys & Girls Club of Indiantown currently occupies 5,500 square feet at



The first of 40 Habitat for Humanity houses in the new Carter Park development have been completed.

the New Hope Community Center, 14555 SW 174th Court, and the new building, funded entirely by donations to the project, puts it at the heart of the new community.

The construction of sidewalks and road extensions also will make the area more accessible to two other neighborhoods as well, thus acting as a catalyst to wider community revitalization, according to Community Development Department Planner Edward Erfurt.

“This partnership will provide Indiantown with a brand new neighborhood, a public open space, and a Boys & Girls Club within walking distance of the surrounding communities,” said Erfurt. “It’s an amazing partnership and a national exemplar.” ■

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Chamber fetes 25-year volunteer, Lillian Johnson

When applause broke out suddenly at the Miles Grant Country Club lobby the evening of August 28, the executive director of the Hobe Sound Chamber of Commerce, Angela Hoffman, said: "She's here, and wouldn't you know it, Lillian would be early."

Lillian Johnson, who is celebrating her 25th year as a Hobe Sound Chamber volunteer, was about to be the center of attention for the next hour, as just about the entire Business After Hours program hosted by the chamber would honor and celebrate Johnson's dedication and service—as well as her dogged determination to get the job done and her schoolmarm attention to detail.

"Lillian set the standard high," said Hoffman, not only for the volunteers, but also for the executive directors—all seven of them—many of whom were among the throng of more than 150 people attending whose lives and careers had been touched by this petite, pretty woman.

Johnson became a chamber volunteer 25 years ago, shortly after she and her

late husband moved from Long Island, N.Y. Since her husband played golf three days a week, she chose to fill those hours by volunteering, managing the front desk two days a week, training new volunteers, contributing to multiple committees, chairing the annual Christmas parade, and making the sale of 50/50 raffle tickets at Chamber events an art form.

Former Chamber President Wayne Klick called her the "Gold Digger of Hobe Sound" for raising so much money for chamber coffers, and eventually even non-chamber members began calling her "Ms. 50/50" when she greeted them at the door with rolls of tickets and a basket in hand.

"No one can say 'No' to Lillian," confirmed Mike Ennis, who shares responsibility for the Hobe Sound Chamber Christmas Parade each year with John-



Lillian Johnson has volunteered for the Hobe Sound Chamber of Commerce for the past 25 years.

son, who has chaired the committee for nearly 20 years. "We aim for 65 units, and when I tell Lillian there's no more room for even one more, she says, 'But they're such nice people.' No one tells Lillian 'No.'" Last year's parade had 76 units.

Jennifer Ferrari, the former executive director who most recently preceded Hoffman, said that Lillian had "taken her by her hand" when she first

started her job, listened to her, wiped her tears, and encouraged her whenever necessary "...and she's still holding my hand."

Ferrari also attested to Johnson's doggedness that gets things accomplished when others have given up.

"She scares the bejesus out of grown men," Ferrari said. "...You need a street light? Call Lillian."

Former Chamber President Dr.

Richard Smith, a Hobe Sound veterinarian and one of the Chamber's first officers, recounted a dream he had once had, where he saw himself attending his own wake.

"And there was Lillian, running a 50/50," he laughed, "and that's a true story."

Videos prepared by photographer Leo Arbeznik played in the background. A giant banner with her photo hung on the wall above a lawn-sized cake, and Rich Otten of Dancensound provided the music and special effects. Johnson was presented flowers, small gifts and a certificate to commemorate her service.

"I'm speechless," said Johnson, who had been recovering from an illness, "and as you know, I'm not at a loss for words too often, but I am overwhelmed." She said she depended on the friendships she had made through the Chamber "so anything the Chamber asks of me, they'll have."

Hoffman replied, "All we ask of you, Lillian, is another 25 years." ■

—Barbara Clowdu

'Celeb' chefs to host progressive dinner Oct. 5

Nine private homes will prepare dinner for their guests as part of the Hobe Sound Chamber of Commerce's newest fundraiser, Dine Around Hobe Sound Progressive Dinner Party, on Saturday, Oct. 5.

"Our ticket sales have just been phenomenal," says Angela Hoffman, executive director. "As a matter of fact, they've been so good that we really need to have two more 'celebrity' chefs, so if you're interested in cooking, call me!"

The event committee, chaired by Jennifer Ahern, has arranged for 'celebrity' chamber chefs to cook and serve meals in their homes, but the event includes other tasty surprises as well. Dine Around Hobe Sound, presented by Gary and Carmen Uber, begins at 6 p.m. at Taste Casual Dining on A1A with cock-

tails, hors d'oeuvres and a silent auction.

Then guests will separate and progress to one of the nine homes where the local celebrity chefs host a themed dinner party, including traditional dishes from around the world. Guests can choose to attend one of the following locations.

– Shane & Jennifer Ahern - Chef Ahern will prepare a cuisine similar to a meal at an Emeril's Restaurant with his signature BBQ shrimp and other New Orleans delicacies.

– Trent Steele & Wayne Lewis - Chef Lewis will take guests on an Arabian Nights adventure, featuring elegant Middle Eastern cuisine.

– Jason & Angela Hoffman with Wayne Klick - Chef Klick, an accomplished Italian chef, promises that guests will leave full and happy after an Italian, Frank Sinatra-themed dinner.

– Rich & Jan Otten with Jef Otten and George Kleine - Chefs Otten & Kleine request that you pack your bags for a trip to New England in the fall as they prepare traditional New England comfort foods.

– Buddy & Jennifer Ferrari - Chef Ferrari will take guests to Chicago!

– Blake & Robin Capps - Join the



Looks like Wayne Klick, left, may be adding an extra ingredient in the pot stirred by Jennifer Ahern, assisted by cookbook holder extraordinaire Angela Hoffman, aided by the real chef, Jason Hoffman, all getting ready for the Hobe Sound Chamber of Commerce Progressive Dinner on Oct. 5. Tickets are only \$50 for a full, three-course meal.

Capps family for authentic Indian cuisine prepared by popular Jupiter Island chef Paulette Winn.

– Dan & Jeanne Mackin - Chef Jeanne Mackin will prepare a gourmet Hungarian cuisine for guests.

– Dan & Amy Hulen - Enjoy the President's Bistro at the Hulen house.

– Nadia & Joseph Utto with Cindy Cooper - A taste of Germany with Chef Joseph Utto in an artful atmosphere.

After dinner, guests will then progress to Scooters for dessert and a night cap, followed by an official after party.

Tickets are \$50 per person and will include drinks, all 3 courses and should be purchased at the Chamber Office.

Other sponsors for Dine Around Hobe Sound Progressive Dinner Party are Fenton Services / Handy Man Matters, Metz Construction Company, Lesser, Lesser

Landy & Smith PLLC, Word of Mouth Computers & Electronics, Eye Marketing LLC, Tactical Advantage Solutions LLC, and Hobe Sound Veterinary Clinic.

Even if you don't want to cook, you can support the Hobe Sound Chamber's Progressive Dinner Party with sponsorships ranging from \$150-\$750. Contact Angela Hoffman at 772.546.4724 to sponsor, to purchase tickets or to volunteer as a celebrity chef. ■

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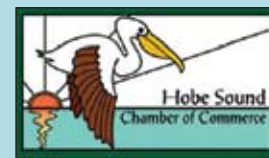
HOBE SOUND CHAMBER CALENDAR

COFFEE TALK

Tuesday, Sept. 10, 8 am
Chamber Office
Social Media Seminar presented by
Xperience Marketing Solutions
A light breakfast will be served.
Free event limited to the first 12.
772-546-4724

COUNCIL OF CHAMBERS LUNCHEON

Friday, Sept. 13, 11:30 a.m.
Mariner Sands Country Club
6500 Mariner Sands Drive, Stuart
Sponsored by:
Treasure Coast Irrigation/Rood
Landscape and Bridge, Boat & RV
Cost: \$25 per member



BUSINESS AFTER HOURS

Wednesday, Sept. 25, 5:30 pm
Copley's RV Center, Inc.
9795 SE Federal Highway, Hobe Sound
\$7 Members/\$10 Non-Members

Once-proud Mahan building becomes unsightly

Smack in the middle of Hobe Sound's historic downtown, the former Mahan building at the corner of Dixie and Apollo Street is falling into disrepair.

"What makes it inexcusable," says one resident, "is that it's owned by a Jupiter Island family who supposedly stores cars in there, so don't tell me there's any good reason in the world that they would allow it to get into this shape."

According to a local realtor, the building is owned by Tucker Johnson of the Johnson & Johnson family, but the Mahan name stems from the time between 1931 and 1953 that the building was owned by former Hobe Sound postmaster Paul Mahan.

When he bought the building, it had three stores downstairs and four apartments upstairs, according to an article written by Leo Arbezniak of Hobe Sound

for the Pelican newsletter. At the time, there were only two two-story buildings in Hobe Sound. The Mahan building and Diamond's Garage, at the corner of A1A and Bridge Road, which lost its second story during the 1933 hurricane, according to Arbezniak.

The Mahan building is not looking so historic these days. Just worn out, with moldy trim, broken windows with glass on the sidewalk, which some have said they're going to report to the county's code enforcement office, and flaking paint. Another person said he would call Commissioner Anne Scott, District 3, which includes Hobe Sound, "as soon as she's back in town."

In the meantime, *Currents* was asked to print these pictures to bring attention to the situation, and perhaps spur some action on part of the caretaker to repair the windows, remove the rusty air con-



ditioner, and give the building a fresh coat of paint.

"With the broken glass, it's really become a safety issue for our children," said one of the residents, who lives nearby, but wishes to remain anonymous. "Hobe Sound deserves better than this." ■



Broken glass and an unkempt appearance of the historic Mahan building in downtown Hobe Sound have some residents concerned.

Tree dedication at Banner Lake Park for fallen soldier

The crowd was smaller, more intimate than it had been July 8 when Hobe Sound gathered previously to honor its fallen soldier, Army Staff Sgt. Justin Johnson, 25. Although less pomp and circumstance imbued the ceremony, it was no less moving and significant to the friends, family, neighbors and even strangers who gathered at the Banner Lake Park August 17 to dedicate an oak tree, a bench and a memorial

stone in the soldier's name.

Johnson's mother, Sonia Randolph, thanked those who contributed, many of whom are Hobe Sound businesses and Chamber of Commerce members, as well as those who took time to attend the ceremony, her voice strong until she described how much her only child had loved the Banner Lake community.

"He grew up here," she said, her voice breaking. "He played in this park, on this playground. He attended the Peaceful Valley Church right across the street here. This was his home."

Pastor James Allen, of the Peaceful Valley CME Church, who conducted the ceremony, called the tree planted at Banner Lake Park a "fitting memorial" to Johnson, particularly since it will grow large and strong in the place where Justin also grew to manhood, and it will provide solace to his family and shelter for his four-year-old son.

Johnson was laid to rest July 8 at the South Florida National Cemetery in Lake Worth, far removed from Bagram, Afghanistan, where he and three other service members were killed June 18 during a mortar attack on their air base. In his third tour of duty, which had included Iraq, he was

awarded a Bronze Star and Purple Heart posthumously.

A college trust fund has been established at Seacoast National Bank for Johnson's son, Justin Johnson, Jr., affectionately called June Bug. Stop in at any Seacoast National Bank Branch, or call 772.485.1279 for more information. ■



The U.S. flag flew at half-mast at the Banner Lake Park during the community's dedication August 22 of an oak tree and bench in the name of Army Sgt. Justin Johnson, who died in Afghanistan while serving his country.

Like Great-Grandma, like new baby

We goofed. When we ran the photo in *Currents*' June issue of a smiling Jan McDonald from AMAC Insurance in Hobe Sound because she had just become a first-time great-grandmother, several readers asked to see a photo of the baby, too. We did not have one, but that was easily remedied.

To all those dissatisfied readers out there who wanted to see the baby, here is Brooklyn Marie Tragos, the GREAT-granddaughter of Jan McDonald, born May 16, weighing 7 lbs. 9 oz, in Tallahassee, now living in Clearwater. We do believe there's a strong family resemblance, don't you think? ■



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Conservation: a uniquely American paradigm



**Maya
Ellenson**

*Art
Kaleidoscope*

A recent rally gathered thousands of environmentally conscious Floridians at Stuart and Jensen beaches to protest the ongoing pollution of our waters. As *Martin County Currents* Editor Barbara Clowdus emphasized in her feature article, "Thousands Gather Peacefully to Protest Plight of Estuary," in the August 2013 issue: "Perhaps it was a collective need to do *something* to save the St. Lucie River and the Indian River Lagoon, which scientists say are perilously close to ecological collapse."

The key word in this remark is "collective," as it's mainly the collective consciousness that shapes national identity. Moreover, the protest was not only an immediate response to the impending ecological disaster, it also reflects a uniquely American archetype of man's interaction with the environment.

Even a brief glimpse into history reveals that environmentalism as the mode of thinking that pulses vibrantly through American art, letters, business and politics epitomizes the very matrix of American wholeness. By the time



John Gast's iconic painting, *American Progress* (1872), expressed allegorically America's westward expansion as part of Manifest Destiny.

President Theodore Roosevelt articulated his vision of the national park concept as the essential feature of democracy that serves people as a whole, he already had predecessors who had fueled his insightfulness.

Henry Thoreau is rightfully considered to be the first environmentally tuned luminary who sparked with his *Walden* the genuine culture of reverence for Mother Nature. What makes his philosophy so precious and unique is the immediacy of experience combined with deep intellectualism. Thoreau's writings open our mind's eye and enable us to tap into the spiritual splendor of the American landscape. The idyllic and uncorrupted scenery—not the history, which a young country could not yet boast—became a real metaphor for self-identification.

"Groves were God's first temples," pronounced an illustrious romantic poet, William Cullen Bryant. The Hudson River and White Mountain Art movements, which included artists Thomas Cole, Frederic Church, Albert Bierstadt, Benjamin Champney, and others, manifested a spiritual dimension of American scenery with their awe-inspiring landscapes, thus instigating the Conservation Movement of such immense magnitude that our unparalleled national park system and land protection legislation emerged. Various national parks across the globe have been modeled after the innovative American park system, prompting modern-day environmentalism worldwide.

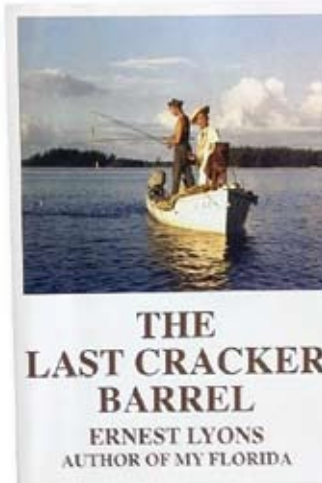
In a way, the Conservation Movement was one of the most humanitarian aspects of the multi-faceted concept of Manifest Destiny. Yellow Stone National Park was founded in 1872, at the time when America was dynamically expanding westward. According to historians, our national parks are largely in debt to the railroad tycoons who vigorously advocated for promotion of the park systems. For instance, in 1871, North Pacific Railway financier Jay Cooke declared, perhaps presagingly: "Let Congress pass

foresight—the model we could use now for a real paradigm shift. As the contemporary conservationist Terry Tempest Williams stated, "Our National Parks are an idea based on generosity, not just for our species but all species." John Gast allegorically depicted the notion of Manifest Destiny in his painting, "American Progress" (1872) where a beautiful Columbia, America's female personification, connects people and the vast land via technological advancements.

That said, we have our own visionaries right here in South Florida. A brilliant conservation writer and former editor of *The Stuart News*, the late Ernest Lyons, recalled in his timeless book, *The Last Cracker Barrel*, how things used to be in Martin County not too long ago. According to his narrative, there were times when local hunters could kneel and drink the sweetest and purest water of "the river of alligators" right from the upstream. The St. Lucie River, or "River of

Light" as he called it lovingly, was full of fish and life. But it took just "an ordinary lifetime" to turn "our good sweet water into a cup of poison and a laughing little river into a reeking abomination."

The good news is that we also have our own "ordinary lifetime" to undo the damage. We could tune into those luminous and global visions that belong to the past only in terms of grammar to redeem our future. After all, as Mr. Lyons wisely noted, "The toughest nut of all, the most difficult of miracles to achieve, is changing the human mind." That's all it takes. ■



The late Ernest Lyons, long-time editor of *The Stuart News*, foretold in his columns and books what we face today as we attempt to save the St. Lucie River.

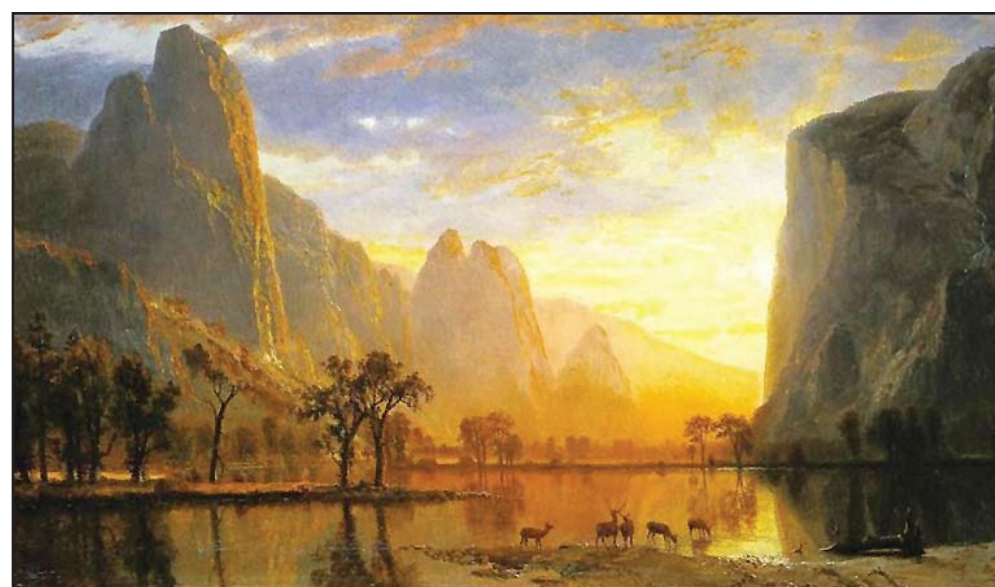
a bill reserving the Great Geyser Basin as a Public Park forever." In 1872, it happened, as Congress stated that the national park was established for the benefit and enjoyment of the people.

In stark contrast to the present dualistic paradigm today that often favors big business while disregarding the environment, such as the big sugar industry that seems to be blocking efforts to allow water to flow south from Lake Okeechobee, thus ending the damaging Lake O discharges into the St.

Lucie River. The technology of that remote era served as a great medium for connecting man with nature, keeping all the pieces of that complex equilibrium balanced.

In many ways, Manifest Destiny exhibited a deeply holistic and all-inclusive

Russian-American Maya Ellenson, who holds M.A. and PhD degrees in Russian language and literature from Moscow State University, has lived in Martin County for eight years. A free-lance writer, she has a particular interest in world culture and art.



Albert Bierstadt, like many other of The Hudson River School painters, sparked the national "Parks Movement" with galvanizing images of the American scenery, such as *Valley of the Yosemite* (1864).

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Alzheimer's Association: Lest we forget ...



**Suzanne
Briley**

Hopscotch

Everybody seems to know someone or has a family member these days who has been diagnosed with dementia or Alzheimer's disease. My own mother, my husband, a friend and my brother-in-law all are suffering with it, unfortunately. Some of you might have the same situation.

Alzheimer's is not just a loss of memory, but it also kills. It is a devastating disease, not only to the person but to the caretaker as well.

Some UNSETTLING facts to ponder:

In the United States, 83,494 people died of Alzheimer's in 2010. Its increasing numbers are helping to bankrupt America. It is a leading cause of death with an increase of 68% over the past decade, while deaths from other major diseases decreased.

This disease is the only one in the top 10 cause of deaths in the U.S. without a way to prevent, cure or even slow its progression. Dementia is the second largest contributor to death among older Americans, second only to heart failure.

One in three seniors die with Alzheimer's or another dementia. More than five million people suffer with it. Unless something is done, Alzheimer's will cost the U.S. economy an estimated \$1 to \$2 TRILLION in the near future.

BUT in Hobe Sound we are fortunate to have help and support from the Southeast Florida Chapter of Alzheimer's Association, which has been located in the Seacoast National Bank building since 2008, thanks to the generosity of the bank.

With a limited budget, no government funding, and dependent entirely on donations, they have accomplished a great deal. Sixteen employees are spread

over seven counties of southeast Florida with Donna True, program service coordinator, at the Hobe Sound office. She holds a master's degree with 11 years experience in the field, and I have found her to be a wealth of knowledge, support and unfailing help.

If you call 772.546.1619 for Donna and she is not available, her assistant, Christa, will be certain you have the answers you need. You also can reach Donna via email: HYPERLINKmailto:dtrue@alz.org, and that's in addition to the Alzheimer's Association's 24 HOUR HELPLINE 1.800.272.3900, which is staffed by master's level clinicians.

The association also offers individual and family counseling, on-line message boards, chats and educational resources at its website, [HYPERLINKhttp://www.alz.org](http://www.alz.org), where you also will find lists of support groups, and information about a Medic Alert Safe Return program.

Upcoming events include: the Treasure Coast Alzheimer's Symposium at the Kane Center, hosted by the Council on Aging, Martin County, on Friday, Sept. 27. It's free for caregivers and professionals, but preregistration is required by calling Barbara Grasch at 1.800.272.3900.

Join the Treasure Coast WALK TO END ALZHEIMERS! Is Saturday, Oct. 19, at the Port St. Lucie Civic Center. You may sign up online at www.alz.org/walk or call 1.800.272.3900.

Register for a series in October on all aspects of Alzheimer's, particularly issues about safety, current research studies, coping with a diagnosis and much more, which will be held at the Kane Center on Salerno Road in Stuart. Call Donna True at 1.800.272.3900, ext. 501, to



Donna True, LCSW
Program Services Coordinator

register for the informative and free early-stage education series.

Donna told me that not long ago a translator was found on the west coast to assist an Alzheimer's patient who spoke only Italian. The Association can help in any language!

Helping anyone who suffers from this devastating disease is a daunting affair. The "memory

care" facilities often try to help, and some do a good job. Some fall short, however, because of a lack of qualified and experienced help. Patients can be angry, confused, apt to wander off and forget where they are. We've also discovered that in south Florida particularly, the facilities can be big money makers, rather than putting the patient's needs first.

Therefore, when choosing a facility for a loved one, look for a "homey" environment with friendly faces and plenty of help, activities and positive energy from the staff. Check out a facility with a good track record and a good rating. Dementia is a lonely path, sad and bewildering.

One place that I know of has a large bird cage with birds in the hallway, which delights the residents. In the corner there is a baby bed, dolls, a wonderful old piano (with someone playing it!) and another resident cuddles her cat. It is not a "fancy place," but it has a very loving environment.

I have seen the director at a Hobe Sound facility on her knees smiling into a vacant face, bringing him a smile as well. Later, she danced with him to some lively music. The same facility has made a beautiful place outside for a resident to smoke his pipe, giving him much pleasure.

Look also among the staff for kindness. Your loved one will need it, and many times you will need it as well.

I am including here a recent observation written by my grandson, a medical student:

I am a rotating medical student. Medical students have a special position in today's healthcare society in that we are able to spend lots of time to get to know our patients. Today I spent time speaking with a remarkable elderly couple married for 48 years; a man with Alzheimer's and his wife.

In his eyes was the shine of a hard-working and good man, a person who makes everyone smile when he talks, with an energy worth the world. In her eyes were the times they had shared. She radiated pride. With one glance at how she looked at him, I knew at some point, they had become completely invested in each other.

Two lost dreamers roaming the planet who became found. As a couple they must have been a breath of fresh air; people who come to a party and light up the entire room.

Now, he gradually disappears before her eyes, withdrawing from her reach. She stands by him as he forgets her and all they shared. In the end, he will die and leave her behind. I've never seen a person in such pain. Every bone in her body was part of him, and she cherished what they had.

They say the worst things in life bring out the best in us. There was nothing more that he will give her, but she puts every last spark of energy into taking care of him and being by his side to the end. It wasn't a need or a desire, but a calm and content selflessness. True unadulterated love. While moving and very sad, it reflected positively upon humanity and just how great we can be to each other.

The elderly are pillars of experience and wisdom and should be cared about more in our culture.

I couldn't agree with him more. ■

Suzanne Briley, who lives in Hobe Sound, is an artist, author, entrepreneur, environmentalist and world traveler. She may be contacted at hopsotch@hscurrents.com.

Barn Theatre's season tickets on sale now

The Treasure Coast's highly regarded community theater, the Barn Theatre, opens its 43rd season with "The Children's Hour," running from Sept. 27 through Oct. 13. Set in an all-girls boarding school, this powerful drama by Lillian Hellman reveals the high cost of false accusations and spite.

"Pin Curls," which runs from Nov. 8-24, is a poignant comedy by local playwright Gale Baker. The story takes place between 1944 and 1950, and features a

small town beautician who lays down her shears and joins the army during World War II.

"Squabbles" will be performed from Jan. 24, 2014, through Feb. 9. This non-stop comedy by Marshall Karp finds cantankerous senior Abe Dreyfus unexpectedly sharing his son's and daughter's-in-law home with the daughter's-in-law equally irascible mother.

The Barn's musical will be "Curtains" by Rupert Holmes. Running from March 7-23, this Tony-award-winning

musical comedy is set in Boston in 1959 and features the fallout after the murder of a star during her opening night curtain call.

"Deathtrap," by Ira Levin, runs from April 18 through May 4. This plot-twist-filled play within a play holds the record for the longest running comedy/thriller on Broadway.

"Six Dance Lessons in Six Weeks" closes the season with a May 30 through June 15 run. This touching comedy features music, dance and the

formidable Lily Harrison as she learns six dances over six weeks from an acerbic dance instructor.

Season ticket holders receive preferred seating for all six shows for only \$100. Modified season tickets (four shows) are also available for \$72. Individual tickets went on sale on Sept. 3.

Season tickets can be purchased by calling the Barn Theatre at 772-287-4884 or at the box office at 2400 SE Ocean Boulevard in Stuart weekdays from noon to 4 p.m. ■



Saturday, Sept. 21 Mango's Birthday Bash at Hobe Sound

Join the Hobe Sound Nature Center staff in celebrating everyone's favorite skunk, Mango, for his ninth birthday, which will include presentations, crafts, games, and of course cake on Saturday, Sept. 21, at 10 a.m. Mango, an eastern spotted skunk, is especially long lived. In the wild, an eastern spotted skunk would only survive to two to three years, and in captivity, usually not longer than age 6 or 7. Hmm, must the cake! It's a free event, but reservations are required, by calling 772.546.2067.

Saturday, Sept. 21 Treasure Coast's Got Talent!

An immensely popular event in Martin County, the 3rd Annual Treasure Coast's Got Talent Show finale will be Saturday, Sept. 21, at 7 p.m. at the StarStruck Performing Arts Center in Stuart. We've been delightfully surprised at the talent among those who call the Treasure Coast their home, and you will be, too. Come cheer on our local stars at the StarStruck, 2101 South Kanner Highway, in Stuart. Ticket prices range from \$19.99 to \$34.99.

Saturday, Sept. 21 iROCK the WALK

Both Rep. Patrick Murphy and Sheriff William Snyder have reportedly committed to leading the iROCK the WALK 4 Mental Health Awareness, a 5k plus 1 mile (4.1 mi) to benefit Tykes & Teens on Saturday, Sept. 21, beginning at 8 a.m. from Veteran's Memorial Park on E. Ocean and ending at the same location. Registration fees are \$35 for adults, \$10 for students; children 5 and under are free. This inaugural event was created by two Warfield Elementary teachers who wanted to bring the issue of mental health to the forefront. Registration is available at Active.com, Fleet Feet, and Tykes & Teens. Contact Paula at 772.220.3439 for more info.



ing at the same location. Registration fees are \$35 for adults, \$10

for students; children 5 and under are free. This inaugural event was created by two Warfield Elementary teachers who wanted to bring the issue of mental health to the forefront. Registration is available at Active.com, Fleet Feet, and Tykes & Teens. Contact Paula at 772.220.3439 for more info.

Saturday, Sept. 21 Tour Possum Long Stormwater Treatment Area

With the heightened awareness of the need to create more stormwater treatment areas, a tour of a highly successful STA may be in order at the new Lakeside Ranch Stormwater Treatment Area at Audubon's Possum Long Park in Stuart. These escorted tours are led by the Audubon of Martin County in conjunction with the South Florida Water Management District. See a wide variety of wading and song birds, eagles & hawks and even burrowing owls. On one of the first visits, 62 bird species were observed. Reservations are required. Event contact: 772.288.2637, or go to www.audubonmartincounty.org. The tours will continue through the winter and spring months.

Monday, Sept. 23 New Ideas for Repurposing!

The Martin County Master Gardeners will host a free presentation, Recycling in Martin County, on Monday, Sept. 23, at 6 p.m. at the Blake Library, 23f1 SE Monterey Road in Stuart. The featured speaker, Martin County Solid Waste Division's Wendy Parker, will guide the audience through the workings of Martin County Recycling, but maybe the best part will be learning how to easily recycle and cleverly reuse materials that would otherwise end up in the landfill. For more information, call the UF/IFAS Martin County Cooperative Extension Office in Stuart at 772.288.5654.



Sept. 27-28 Michael Shields Memorial Inshore Open

A most unusual fishing tournament, the Michael Shields Memorial Inshore Open, caters to all members of the community, regardless of age or skill level, and is designed to benefit The Boys and Girls Clubs of Martin County and get the whole community excited about fishing! The Captain's Reception will be at River Palm Cottages and Fish Camp at 7 p.m., on Friday, Sept. 27, after which the tournament will begin. Teams of four anglers, or less, will target snook, tarpon, redfish and trout. Anglers and their families are invited to attend the awards ceremony and family BBQ at River Palm Cottages and Fish Camp, beginning at 3 p.m. on Saturday, Sept. 28. For tickets and sponsorship info, call Juliet at 772.545.1255 or send her an email jciaravino@bgcmartin.org.

Saturday, Sept. 28 National Estuaries Day Festival

The Smithsonian Marine Station and Ecosystems Exhibit will host its third annual National Estuaries Day Festival at Museum Point Park, 420 Seaway Drive, Ft. Pierce, with live entertainment, vendors, hands-on activities for children, touch tanks, "Meet the Smithsonian Scientist" stations, and demonstrations to showcase the significant role the Indian River Lagoon plays in our everyday lives. There is no admission charge. Exhibitors will be on hand to provide information on opportunities to become more engaged with cultural, recreational and educational activities on the Indian River Lagoon from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Hands Across the Lagoon

Saturday, Sept. 28 Protestors sought for Hands Across the Lagoon

Join Mark Perry and the Florida Oceanographic Society, along with four other Indian River Lagoon counties, as the community links hands across the Stuart Causeway to show support for Florida's treasured and troubled estuaries on National Estuaries Day. It will take approximately 880 people to span the entire bridge and hold hands for 15 minutes, so they need community support to make it happen! Come early to the south side of the causeway to be in place by 9:45 a.m. for photographers. For info, go to the Florida Oceanographic Facebook page.

Saturday, Sept. 28 Dancing with the Martin Stars

Dancing with the Martin Stars will provide a night of dance competition and a whirlwind of fun at The Lyric Theatre in downtown Stuart on Saturday, Sept. 28, at 7:30 p.m. Local novice dancers will put their best foot forward—under the tutelage of professional dancers—to shine on the dance floor while raising



money for the Martin County Healthy Start Coalition. Ticket prices range \$45 to \$125, on sale at The Lyric box office, or visit: www.lyrictheatre.com.

Saturday, Sept. 28 National Public Lands Day at JD Park

Make a difference by helping Jonathan Dickinson State Park remove non-native invasive plants, a serious threat to Florida's natural areas, taking over natural habitat and depriving wildlife of natural food sources and shelter. As part of National Public Lands Day, join AmeriCorps members and park staff beginning at 8 a.m. for hand-pulling, shoveling, or clipping plants, as well as hauling loads for disposal. Appropriate for ages 6 and up. Registration is requested by contacting the Kimbell Education Center at 561.745.5551. Sponsored by the Friends of Jonathan Dickinson State Park. Free park admission for volunteers.



Sunday, Sept. 29 Ais on the Lagoon

The Ais on the Lagoon Community Paddle event, celebrating National Estuaries Month, will be Sunday, Sept. 29, from 8 a.m. to 11 a.m., departing from the the U.S. Sailing Center in Jensen Beach at 8 a.m. in your own kayak, canoe or paddleboard to the shoreline of the Florida Oceanographic Society's Coastal Center, approximately 2.5 miles. A breakfast of shellfish and sofkee will be served at the Exploration Station pavilion, followed by a presentation by the Historical Society of Martin County at the Ais Encampment, one-quarter mile from the shoreline on one of Florida Oceanographic trails. Particular emphasis will be given to the Ais tribe and its dependence on the Indian River Lagoon. Paddlers return to the launch site by 11 a.m. for a round-trip time of three hours. For more information, contact Ellie Van Os at evanos@floridaocean.org.



Thursday, Oct. 3 First Thursdays, Gallery Nights

The largest cooperative art partnership in Martin County history featuring local art galleries, First Thursday, Gallery Nights is free to the public and spans gallery properties from Stuart to Jensen Beach. All locations will feature original art, some will provide refreshments, some will offer hands-on art experiences, and others will offer live music. Each gallery will be greeting guests from 5 to 8 pm. First Thursday will continue each month October through April. For more info, call: 772.287.6676.

Oct. 5 and Nov. 9 Journey through Roots Music

As part of the Smithsonian Journey series, distinctly American musical styles will be presented by the Fort Pierce Jazz & Blues Society on Saturdays, Oct. 5 and Nov. 9, starting at 2:30 p.m. They are free to the public. On Oct. 5 – Bluegrass at Robert Morgade Library, 5851 SE Community Dr, Stuart, and on Nov. 9 – Blues at Elisabeth Lahti Library, 15200 SW Adams Ave, Indiantown.

October 19 Smithsonian Institution's Journey Stories Exhibition

The highly regarded traveling exhibition, Journey Stories, from the Smithsonian Institution makes its way to Martin County this fall. Events preceding the main exhibition will be held throughout the next few months at various locations, so when you see the Journey Stories logo, you'll know it's a high-quality offering. The Smithsonian's main exhibit, Museum on Main Street: Journey Stories, opens Oct. 19 and depicts historical accounts of how we and our ancestors came to America, traces developments in modes of travel and transportation, and explores how these factors have played a significant role in shaping Americans' identity, particularly the sense of freedom. The exhibit will be on display at the Elisabeth Lahti Library through Nov. 30. Immigrants will share their accounts of coming to America in search of promise in a new country. Africans and Native Americans describe the harrowing journeys of their forced migrations. Others reveal their choice as simply fun and frolic on the open road.

The Elisabeth Lahti Library, at 15200 SW Adams Avenue, Indiantown, is open Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday from 10 am – 5:30 pm and Wednesday from noon – 8 pm. Call 772.597.4200.



Saturday, Oct. 12 42nd Annual Leif Erikson Festival & Regatta at Jensen Beach

The Sons of Norway will invade Jensen Beach Causeway on Oct. 12 for its 43rd Annual Leif Erikson Festival & Regatta. Gulfstream Lodge #3-514, the Treasure Coast's local arm of the Sons of Norway, will honor the 1,013th anniversary of Leif Erikson's discovery of North America. Sons of Norway Lodges from Florida will join in the festivities that begin at 10 a.m. and wrap up about 2 p.m. Booths offering Scandinavian food (lapskaus), refreshments, rosemaling by Monika Hoerl, Scandinavian jewelry, a cake wheel and a mini-flea market will be available. Topping off the day's activities is the Viking Boat Regatta at 12:30 p.m. A family festival open to the public with no admission charge, but bring folding chairs to watch the boat races! For more info, contact: Charlie Nilsen 772.233.5333).

Weekend, Oct. 12-13 Downtown Stuart Craft Festival

This juried festival features the work of 100 of the finest crafters in the country. An eclectic mix of original affordable crafts including a wide variety of gift items with prices set to suit all budgets will be on display along Osceola Street in downtown Stuart. Partial proceeds from this very popular festival benefit the Stuart Main Street Programs. These highly anticipated art events are popular because of the vast array of quality handmade items and art on display as well as the number of leading national artists and crafters showcased at each festival. Admission is free, but don't leave your cash at home. You'll find great gifts here for the holiday season. Contact: 772.286.2848, or visit: www.artfestival.com.

Saturday, Oct. 19 Fire Fest

This popular event at Jonathan Dickinson State Park's Kimbell Education Center, 16450 SE Federal Hwy, in Hobe Sound, offers fun for everyone! The idea is to provide an opportunity to learn about the importance of prescribed fire in Florida, safety awareness, and preserving Florida's unique natural areas, but the education comes through live fire demonstrations, hands-on activities, a spooky trail, hayrides, a swamp buggy and horse buggy tours, games, bounce houses, and music. Park admission is free for the day, but expect some additional charges for select activities including the hayrides, swamp buggy, the bounce house and "game alley," all fundraisers for local Cub Scouts and Boy Scouts. For more info, call 561.745.5551, or visit: www.floridastateparks.org.

Saturday, Oct. 26 Palm City Fall Festival

Celebrate Fall and the beautiful Palm City community when the Palm City Chamber of Commerce hosts the fifth annual Palm City Fall Fest on Saturday, Oct. 26, beginning at 5 p.m. at the Lance Corporal Justin Wilson Memorial Park on Mapp Road. More than 100 arts and crafts vendors, community and business booths, specialties from local restaurants, and premium wine and beer will be available as you tour the classic car show entries—including tuners, hot rods, motorcycles and trucks—and listen to live music. The popular Children's Area will again feature the annual Palm City pumpkin decorating contest (Hmm, anyone think they can carve a caricature of Mike DiTerlizzi?), sack races, bounce houses, arts, crafts and more. It will be held rain or shine! For more info, call: 772.286.8121, or go to www.palmcitychamber.com.

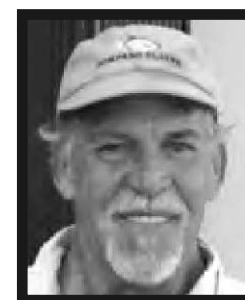
Friday, Oct. 25 Saturday, Oct. 26 3rd Annual Indiantown Rodeo



Woo, whoo, it's BACK! The real-deal, real-cowboy competition of local cowhands and professional riders from throughout the U.S. will be at Timer Powers Park, 20652 SW Citrus Blvd, in Indiantown beginning at 5 p.m. on Friday, Oct. 25. The show starts at 7:30 p.m., then will continue on Saturday, Oct. 26. A professional Rodeo Cowboys Association and Women's Pro Rodeo Association sanctioned event, adult tickets are \$15; children 12 and under are \$8. For more information, call the Indiantown Chamber of Commerce at 772.597.2184, or visit: www.indiantownchamber.com.

The 'Fenced Out' rally ignored by Gov. Scott

Residents were prepared, wearing hazmat suits and gas masks. Even the creature from the black lagoon appeared. Signs were adorned with the usual "muck off," photos of fields of blue-green algae, deceased fish, and endless data to help save the river. Big Sugar was declared the river's number-one terminator. The locals came well prepared—and with great expectations—that they would convince our Governor to save the day!



Rich Vidulich

Pompano Reporter

Then the political militia arrived, preceded by security forces who scattered protestors like ants to allow the "official" procession through the gates adjacent to the St. Lucie Lock and Dam, where more than 300 people had gathered, some waiting for hours. Rally voices esca-

lated trying to penetrate the heavily tinted glass windows with their voices.

It was the "Big Day." Surely our Governor would greet us and assure us that he's very aware of the problem and that he HEARS us. As we, the people, as well as many members of the local media, moved aside, the iron gates were opened, the state officials blew by, and the gates were shut tight.

Whoa, the Governor had entered our domain, got out of his vehicle, and without even giving us an acknowledging glance backward, treated us as though 300 chanting Americans did not exist—or matter. His "preferred" audience engulfed him as he began his "lock walk" tour behind the closed anti-invasion

gates that kept out the "undesirables." Gov. Scott, undaunted by the noise and the signs, was now looking at our river. Someone in the crowd yelled, "If you fall into your river, don't expect us to save ya."

As disappointing as the day ended after spending nearly five hours in the broiling sun, it still turned out to be a good day. I met some extraordinary people at the rally. Two of the most studied and well-versed activists I've ever met, Harvey and Joan Nelson, who have lived near the St. Lucie River for years. Joan's photography, which she showed me later at her home, painted vividly the woes of our river. For some years, she told me, they visited the lock regularly to see an environmental sweetheart, a Great Blue Heron.

This majestic remnant of historic Florida, a truly magnificent bird, had been residing recently among the vilest of habitats. One of their most recent visits, though, brought them to their knees. Mr. Heron had his beak pecking the bloody sores that had appeared among his beautiful plumage. The photos she supplied spoke volumes about what so

few actually witness—the very real effects of polluted water on our wildlife.

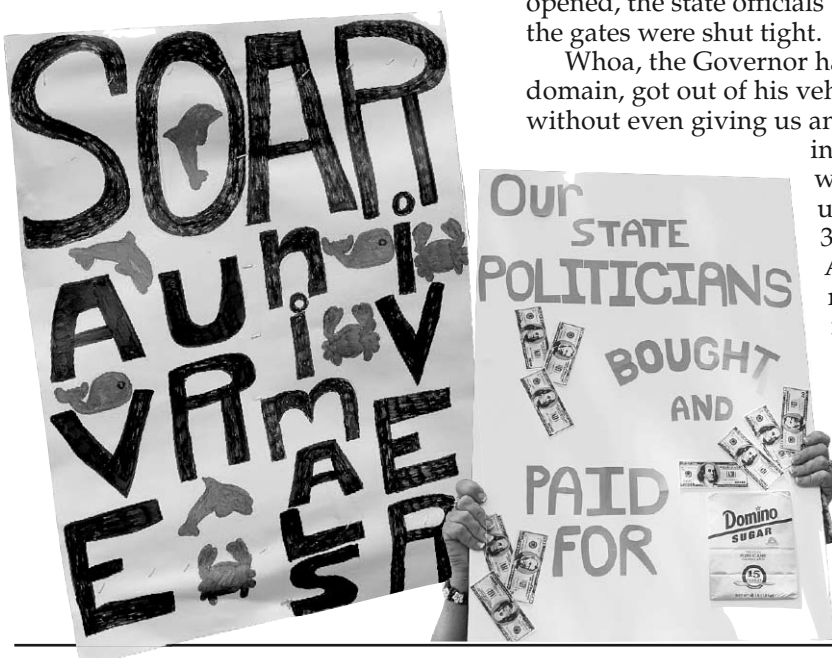
The Nelsons' experiences prior to the "Big Day" are also noteworthy. There are lock gauges forged to the side of the spillway with the numerals 1 to 10. The higher the number, the greater the volume of water being discharged. On the night before the rally, the setting was 7 and the roar was profoundly audible, according to the Nelsons.

A mist of fecal stench blanketed the entire site, as dirty foam roiled into large mounds on top of the St. Lucie. The next day, we arrived two hours early to find the public access gate locked, but everyone noted that the discharge was markedly slower than the previous day. Harvey told me the foam had dissipated too and the air was breathable.

I called over a member of the Army Corps of Engineers, charged with managing the lock, and asked him what the crowd wanted to know: "What happened to the flow?"

He replied, not to worry, it's there, and that the flow was cut back a mere five percent.

Then the crowd began to chant:



Gov. Scott commits millions to water projects

Apparently, the huge, nearly spontaneous rallies in Martin County, which now are spreading to even the west coast of Florida, are beginning to have an effect. The people's voices are being heard.

Even Gov. Rick Scott has been hearing more than Treasure Coast residents may have once thought. On August 20, the Governor announced prior, to his personal inspection of the St. Lucie Lock and Dam where the Lake Okeechobee releases discharge into the St. Lucie River, that he was committing \$40 million to finish the C-44 storm water treatment project, which will

treat the water from basin run-off.

Eight days later, as he toured the other Lake Okeechobee discharge-battered coast at Ft. Myers, the Governor announced an additional \$90 million commitment for the bridging of a 2.6 mile segment of the Tamiami Trail, an unfunded, federal project in South Florida critical to Everglades restoration.

The Tamiami Trail project would de-



After speaking briefly inside the Army Corps of Engineers office at the St. Lucie Lock to local officials and a few media, Florida Governor Rick Scott takes a quick tour of the lock accompanied by Sen. Joe Negron, Army Corps of Engineers officials, and staff members.

construct a section of the two-lane road that traverses the state between Miami and Ft. Myers, and replace it with a

bridge so that water north of the road could flow into the Everglades. Currently, the road serves as a dam, block-



Around 300 protestors, primarily Martin County citizens were dispersed in order for the governor and his security personnel to drive through the gate without acknowledging the crowd.



A Florida resident who resides in Martin County near the St. Lucie River, this Great Blue Heron stops on a piling to clean its bloody sores that are appearing now through its plumage.



Out of work commercial fishermen join the recent protest of Lake O discharges at the St. Lucie Lock and Dam.



Big Sugar remains a big target for protestors.



Stuart Mayor Eula Clark joins protestors after attending Gov. Rick Scott's briefing on August 22.



The discharge gauge went from a 7 the day before the Governor's visit to a 2, which dramatically reduced the rate of flow of polluted water into the St. Lucie during the Governor's tour.

"Open the Flow," because they had wanted the Governor to experience first hand the well-publicized landscape we all had experienced. Now it was gone!

Another protestor, David Mathis, commented, "It's like the Army Corps of Engineers 'fashioned' a surreal lock makeover." Later, we saw that the lock setting had been changed from seven to two feet.

David Mathis said this flow interruption is just a decoy by the Army Corps of Engineers, and unfortunately, the west coast of Florida would bear the brunt of the diversion, according to others in the crowd. Sure enough, several days later the Sanibel Island mayor was on TV with aerial shots of huge volumes of red-brown water appearing on their white sand Gulf beaches.

Another attendee, Jim Lerner, has worked hard all his life in order to own two moderate residences, one in New Jersey and the other one on the Treasure Coast. He travels here to catch his favorite fish, pompano, and then goes back to Jersey to catch stripers. It's been a sweet life, he says, but at 70, Jim is perplexed on whether he should ride out this Florida fiasco, or just sell his Florida home and spend the money to protect his Jersey home from another possible hurricane.

I don't blame any Floridian for feeling this way, but I know we are "Not Really Riding This Out" like we've done in previous years. Our voices are being heard, even if we do not always feel that's the case. To all of those who attended and participated in any of the rallies, and will again during the many

more rallies to come, you are SAVING FLORIDA, not just the river. I applaud your exhaustive efforts. Let's not run out of gas on this one. It's time to put the pedal to the metal and win this one for Florida!

POMPAÑO MIGRATION

Are you ready for an update on where the pompano migration is headed? From June 15 through August 15, the beaches of North and South Carolina experienced a prolific pump bite. Their ocean temps were 69 to 71 degrees, which was prime! In late August, the rain stopped and the temps rose rapidly sending our prized fish north!

Currently touring Virginia, all the pumps that will travel farther south will be directly a result of weather patterns. As usual, the only quick solution will be the same as last year: a hurricane traversing the East Atlantic coast—a tough answer.

Our seasoned surf veterans will be hoping for an old-fashioned Arctic front to spark an early start to the Florida region's pompano run. Keep in mind, two years running, we caught pompano the first and second weeks of November!

That migratory equation always includes X plus Y, and this year we might have to add Z to represent our sediment-laden seashore. If we can influence the government to feel and understand our needs, we could salvage what could be a fair pompano season after all. ■

ing the natural flow of water. Recently the first project to raise two miles of the roadway was completed.

The federal project is an often overlooked, but vital step, in the plan to move more water south from Lake Okeechobee, thus keeping the high-nutrient water from Lake O discharges from entering the Caloosahatchee and St. Lucie estuaries, according to scientists.

A hurdle yet to overcome, however, is the possibility that some environmental groups will challenge the state's actions on the grounds that the rate of phosphorous in the water exceeds the limits established by the federal Clean Water Act, although only slightly higher than federal standards.

"This \$90 million investment will be a huge step forward in our efforts to restore water quality throughout South Florida," said Scott in a prepared statement. "Every drop of water that we can send South and keep out of the Caloosa-

hatchee and St. Lucie Estuaries is a win for Florida families."

The total cost of creating 2.6 miles of bridge is estimated to be \$180 million. The Governor said that Florida will match federal Dept. of Interior funds for the project, up to \$30 million a year over three years from the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) work plan.

(President Barack Obama has proposed \$30 million in his budget for the Tamiami Trail bridge project this year, which Congress must approve.)

In the August 20 letter to the Army Corps of Engineers in which Gov. Scott announced his \$40 million commitment to complete the C-44 storm water treatment area, Scott called for the federal government to fulfill a cost-match obligation of \$1.6 billion in South Florida.

He also called for Florida to be provided flexibility to pursue critical projects by providing block grants for the design and construction of the projects.

"But it's very difficult for them (Army Corps of Engineers) to get anything done if we have a federal government that doesn't put the money up," Gov. Scott said. "They need to make sure we get our fair share back of things they've already committed to us to get this issue resolved."

Only \$400 million of the \$7.8 billion legislated when the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP) was passed in 2000 has been spent thus far. Florida has spent \$2 billion over that same time period, spending six times more than the federal government, according to the Everglades Coalition.

Martin County has spent \$50 million since 2000 for 25 storm water projects. In addition, county residents also have raised \$75 million to purchase conservation lands through a half-cent sales tax in order to begin implementation of the Indian River Lagoon South Plan, which includes construction of above-ground

reservoirs, their connecting canals, control structures, levees and pumps to capture water from the C-23, C-24, C-25, and C-44 canals for increased storage, plus additional storm water treatment areas for each reservoir.

The plan also calls for upland/wetland restoration, muck removal, and redirecting water from the C-44 basin to the North Fork of the St. Lucie.

In her remarks to the Senate Select Committee on the Indian River Lagoon and Okeechobee Basin at Kane Center on August 22, Martin County Commissioner Chair Sarah Heard called the completion of the Indian River Lagoon South project "the most critical action" to be undertaken by the state and federal governments.

"We support CEPP (Central Everglades Planning Project)," Heard added, "However, if we don't complete the IRL South first, CEPP will not produce significant benefits for our estuaries." ■

—Staff reports



South Fork High Seniors gather at Hobe Sound Beach

Not every senior at South Fork High School is pictured, but around 200 of them got out of bed early August 19 to gather for what has become an annual tradition: the Senior Sunrise photo at Hobe Sound Beach on the first day of their last year in high school. Photographer Peter Gorman, whose children were born and raised in Hobe Sound, attending school at Hobe Sound Elementary and graduating from South Fork, donates his time to ensure the tradition continues. "The kids are a joy to see," he says, "with their faces full of excitement to be seniors."