



Stephen D. McCulloch, Florida Atlantic University

Septic tanks threaten waterways

Dr. Brian Lapointe of FAU reports blockbuster study that begs removal of all septic tanks along waterways. Pg 6

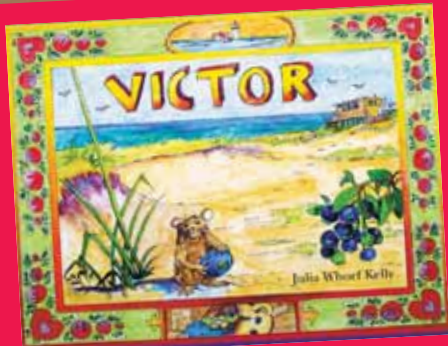
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Martin County
CURRENTS

Volume 5 Issue 5 • November 2015

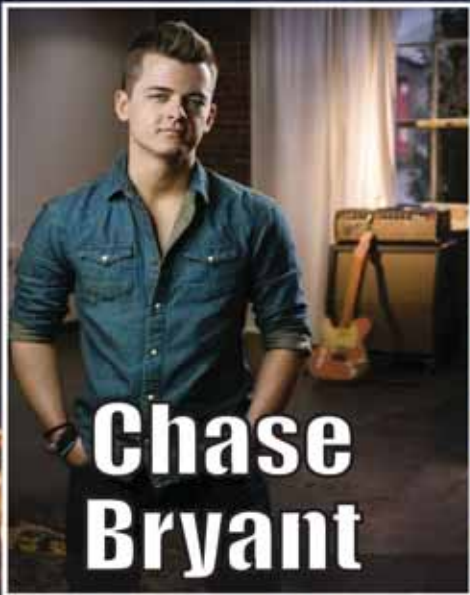
Community Development office dismantled

The CRA program breathing life into our historic areas may also be coming to an end. pg 11



Victor unveiled
A new children's book by artist Julia Kelly introduced to Martin readers. pg 20

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Martin County CURRENTS

Features

5

Higher court to
look at public
records verdict.

6

Septic tank study
reveals scary facts.

11

County's CRA staff
abandons ship.

10

Residents bid
farewell to
Kev Freeman.

18

Tour of Hobe Sound
murals on tap

Columnists

Voices 9
Nancy B. Smith
Guest Columnist

**One Florida
Foundation** 12 - 13
Nyla Pipes & Capt. Don Voss

Art Kaleidoscope 19
Maya Ellenson

Pompano Reporter 21
Rich Vidulich

Calendar 22-23
Editorial 8

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Free hail inspections offered to Hobe Sound and Palm City

By Lynne Hammar

Public Education Director, Alron Construction
Special to *Martin County Currents*

An unusual spring storm produced damaging hailstorms in Hobe Sound and Palm City in April.

The storm lasted only moments, but the hailstones (ranging from pea-sized to larger than golf balls) combined with high winds to cause dented automobiles and torn pool screens.

Our neighbors in Hobe Sound and Palm City ventured out anxiously, as soon as the storm had passed, to inspect their property. But, as so many homeowners do, they overlooked one of their largest and most critical investments – *their roofing*.

"It's important to identify damage and submit insurance claims within a specific time frame," says Ronnie Elliott of Alron Construction, specialists in inspecting and repairing hail-damaged roofs.

Alron offers free, professional inspections and works directly with insur-

ance adjusters to help settle claims.

Many homeowners try to check for damage on their own, often by propping a ladder against the eaves and looking for obvious dings or

tears," says Alvin Cortez of Alron Construction.

"But hail damage can be difficult to identify, even for construction professionals and some insurance adjusters," he notes. "It's not uncommon for a roof to appear undamaged, but begin leaking years later, when it's too late to file a claim."

"The hail damage we've observed to some of these roofs means folks are losing 5 to 10 years off the service life of their roofing systems," notes Cortez.

No-obligation inspections typically last 30 minutes, during which the inspector walks each slope of the roof, exam-



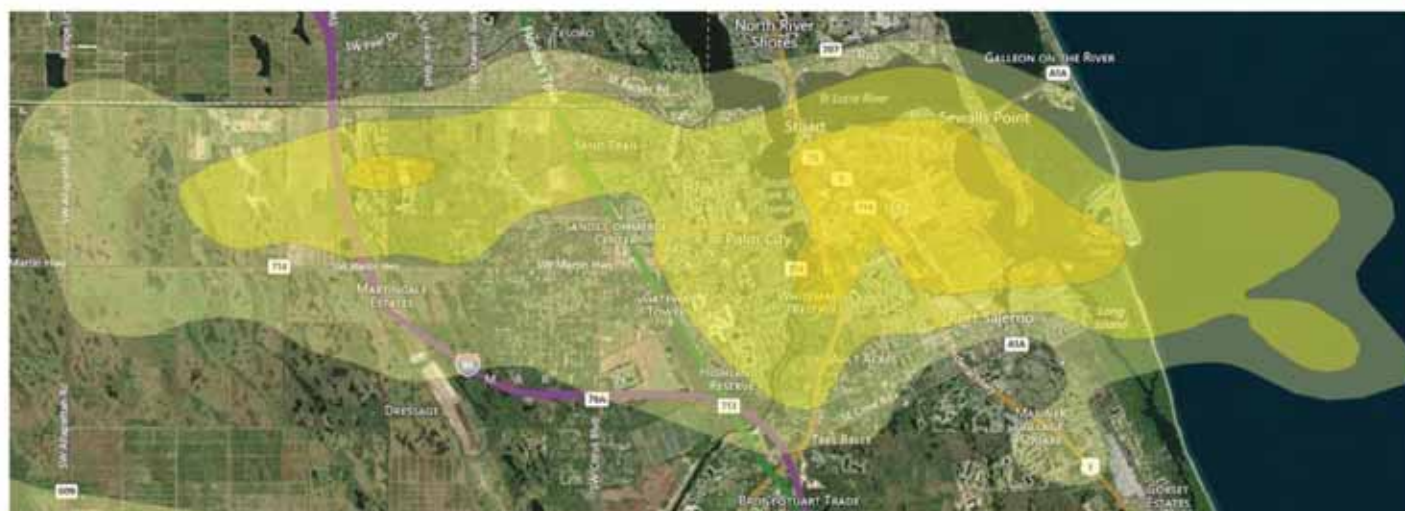
A vernier caliper shows a golfball-sized hailstone that fell in the area this spring

ines the roof, the vents, pool screens, window trims, window screens, fascia metals, and more.

Inspection results are then shared with the homeowner, including high-resolution digital photos and recommendations.

"If your roof has been damaged by hail, Alron works directly with your insurance company," says Elliott. "Often the homeowner is eligible for a new roof and gutters, all for only the cost of the deductible or copay."

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This map shows the "hail swath" of a recent storm impacting thousands of homes and businesses in Hobe Sound and Palm City

Sarah Heard's missing emails case not yet settled

Martin County Commissioner Sarah Heard's missing public records in the Lake Point lawsuit against Martin County, the South Florida Water Management District and Maggy Hurchalla just will not go away.

Lake Point filed an appeal in September with Florida's Fourth District Court to review Circuit Court Judge Shields McManus's ruling Sept. 3 that the county had not violated any public records laws, although McManus called the missing emails "curious."

Attorney Ethan Loeb contends that the lower court did not consider two of Lake Point's complaints against Commissioners Sarah Heard and Ed Fielding, particularly that Heard's loss of public records from her personal computer violates Florida's public records laws that require public records be "preserved and protected."

The public records trial—a "mini" trial in the Lake Point lawsuit that concluded August 30 in Martin County Circuit Court—stopped Lake Point from making any more public records requests regarding emails about Lake Point housed on commissioners' personal computers. Lake Point also can no longer seek copies of Commissioner Sarah Heard's personal notes she used during the Feb. 5, 2013, county commission meeting, which were determined during court proceedings to no longer exist.

County commissioners had called for the 1,005-acre rock mine in Indiantown to be shut down for alleged code violations of its housing development order, which the county had agreed to revoke if state authorities granted Lake Point its rock mining permits. The state permits were granted, however, the county did not revoke the housing development order, according to court records, until the county offered Lake Point the revocation order as part of a settlement of another lawsuit challenging amendments to the county's Comprehensive Growth Management Plan.

After the county revoked the housing development order, Lake Point withdrew from that lawsuit, which now is before the Governor and his Cabinet for final review.

Although conceding in his Sept. 3 ruling that some records "no longer existed or had been destroyed" regarding correspondence among commissioners and Maggy Hurchalla about Lake Point, McManus determined that all remaining records had been provided in a "reason-



Sarah Heard

able manner" prior to the filing of Lake Point's public records lawsuit Feb. 14, 2014.

He ruled also that the discovery process (in the contract dispute between Lake Point and Martin County) had already revealed that many of the records Lake Point sought to obtain no longer existed, including the emails that had disappeared from Heard's personal computer.

As a result, McManus declared that Lake Point's allegations of public records violations were "moot," thus denying Lake Point's request for a writ of mandamus to force the county's compliance with state public records laws and to levy sanctions to cover their costs over the past two years attempting to retrieve them.

The judge also denied Martin County's request for sanctions against Lake Point.

MISSING EMAILS?

Court testimony revealed that Heard had informed Lake Point attorney Ethan Loeb early in 2013 that her personal computer had been "hacked," and all her emails and personal contacts had disappeared.

"I got up one morning, and they were all gone," she testified.

Loeb asked her if public records were on that computer. She answered, "Yes." He followed by asking if she had contacted Yahoo immediately to attempt to retrieve them. She answered, "No."

Heard said that she conducted an online search of the Yahoo! website, which told her that deleted emails were not kept by Yahoo! longer than 48 hours, so she took her computer to Tiger Direct to have the hard drive examined to see if any of her emails could be retrieved. The receipt for that examination was entered into evidence.

McManus ruled also that no emails had been "altered or manipulated" by either Heard or Commissioner Ed Fielding, another of Lake Point's allegations, and that Fielding's nine-month delay in providing an email from Maggy Hurchalla housed on his personal computer was "inadvertent."

Signed "Deep Rockpit," Hurchalla had instructed Fielding in the email he identified in court as being from Hurchalla not to accept \$44,000 in environ-

mental fees paid by Lake Point to the county as part of the interlocal agreement between the county and the South Florida Water Management District. The checks were returned to Lake Point. She also provided instructions as to how to proceed in voiding agreements with Lake Point.

Fielding, who admitted to being "not very technically savvy," had not used search terms, but had manually searched the folders on his personal computer, thus overlooking the Hurchalla email, according to testimony. He also had not listed his personal email address as one with which he conducts county business, because he does not engage in "back-and-forth, substantive conversation" regarding county business on his personal computer.

Fielding's lack of expertise prompted the court to order a forensic examination in 2014 of his home computer's hard drive, which resulted in finding three other relevant emails, none of which were substantial in nature, according to court testimony.

"There were many circumstances which would cause a reasonable person to

suspect there were records not yet disclosed," McManus wrote in his order. "The destruction of Commissioner Heard's notes was not verified. The destruction of Commissioner Heard's emails was very curious and remains unexplained."

The public records Lake Point had been seeking are "material evidence," according to Loeb's testimony, in Lake Point's suit against Maggy Hurchalla and Martin County for tortious interference and breach of contract in the suit filed Feb. 5, 2013.

The issue erupted in 2012 after a *Palm Beach Post* article described a presentation by American Water to the Palm Beach County Commission regarding the possibility that the Lake Point project could supply cleansed water from the C-44 canal north of its property to reservoirs near the L-8 canal at the south of Lake Point's property, which Martin County claims is a violation of their agreements.

According to court records, the case is set for trial in September 2016. ■

—Barbara Clowdus

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Septic tanks fouling rivers, groundwater, reefs

Human waste from septic tanks that contaminates Martin County waterways also was found 53 feet underground in test wells, threatening the drinking supply in many neighborhoods, scientific tests show, in addition to compromising the health of the county's marine life and reefs.

Dr. Brian Lapointe, renowned researcher at the Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute in Ft. Pierce, told the county commission Nov. 3 that his studies confirm the source of bacteria in the St. Lucie as human, which was evident in several spots along the St. Lucie River.

His study, commissioned by the county and paid for in part by the Department of Environmental Protection, revealed that septic tank effluent is releasing bacteria, viruses, pharmaceuticals and the nitrogen that feeds algae blooms during lake discharges and aids the absorption of mercury by Indian River Lagoon dolphins, which have the world's highest concentrations of mercury, Lapointe said.

The Harbor Branch study also confirmed the results of research by the county's staff that Golden Gate and American Ditch in Old Palm City, presented at the same commission meeting, showing that the heavy concentrations of bacteria in those two areas are from septic tank effluent and are among the worst of the sites studied.

Those two septic tank "hot spots" in

Golden Gate and Old Palm City were agreed upon by the commission for septic-to-sewer conversion, as well as to complete the sewer conversion started prior to the recession in North River Shores.

"What is concerning to me is that we have not done any significant study of the (Indian River Lagoon)," said County Commissioner Doug Smith. "We have some of the oldest septic tanks in the region on Indian River Drive, and I have no doubt that we're contributing significantly to the issues in the lagoon."

Commissioner John Haddox also pointed to earlier scientific studies on the Loxahatchee River that confirm the presence of septic tank effluent there. In spite of that evidence, the commission banned sewer line extensions into the county's rural areas. "I fought that (ban)," he said, "because septic tanks are not only damaging the river but our reefs, too."

Smith called for a 10-, 20- or 30-year plan—"whatever it takes"—to remove septic tanks along both the St. Lucie River and the Indian River Lagoon, but pushback against creating a long-term plan for sewer conversion in a wider area came during public comment, even prior to Lapointe's report.

"What's appropriate is for the commission to address the hot spots," said Indian Riverkeeper Marty Baum, who said that he had received his information from former commissioner Maggy Hurchalla. "We don't need a 10-year plan."

Commissioner Sarah Heard also rejected the need for long-term plans for wider septic tank conversions and challenged Lapointe's results, because he did not include any "dry season" samples.

"If you'll recall, we didn't have a dry season this year," Lapointe responded, adding that "undoubtedly" the water is being contaminated by more sources than just septic tanks.

"The purpose of the study is not to determine what is primary," Lapointe said. "You have two issues here: Lake Okeechobee discharges and septic tanks."

Heard had insisted prior to Lapointe's study that the source of bacteria in the St. Lucie River was more likely coming from horses, cattle or chickens, prompting her to reject funding in 2013 for Lapointe's study, stating, "The problem is agriculture, not septic tanks."

She supported, however, the commission's decision Nov. 3 for the Martin County Utilities Department to formalize a plan for mandatory septic-to-sewer conversion in those two hot spots, to proceed with the stalled sewer conversion in North River Shores, and to require those residents with access to sewer-line extensions to connect, except in the Hobe Sound area, which is served by a utility owned by the Town of Jupiter Island.

The cost will be approximately \$18,000 per unit, but will be partially offset by grants and, in most cases, will be eased by spreading the cost over the next 10 to 15

years. It also will not happen overnight, said Utilities Director John Polley.

"Even if you passed an ordinance today," he said, "it would be 2019 before we'd be ready for homeowners to hook up." The exception are residents of North River Shores, which already has engineering plans in place, rights-of-way secured, and a state Department of Environmental Protection grant of \$8.5 million.

Commissioner John Haddox insisted that the county include a "grace" period for those who had just installed a new septic system and that special conditions be made for those who cannot afford \$18,000 cost to hook up.

"I'm just not going to allow someone to potentially lose their home over a sewer hook-up," Haddox said.

No date has been set for Polley, who said he will return to the county commission with a policy statement, as well as a detailed plan, for septic-to-sewer conversions that must be approved by a majority vote prior to implementation. In the meantime, the county approved the transfer of \$775,000 from general fund reserves to the utilities department in order to begin the \$30 million "hot spots" project.

Smith called for commissioners and residents to pressure legislators for Amendment 1 funding for septic-to-sewer conversion. "I think that a failure not to move forward on this," Smith added, "is a failure to the lagoon." ■

--Barbara Clowdus

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Commissioners considering more taxes, fees

Martin County Commissioners will begin hearing proposals at their Nov. 10 meeting to increase revenues, on top of the already approved ad valorem tax increase of 2.3 percent for the 2016 budget, in order to tackle the maintenance backlog of nearly \$258 million.

Commissioners Doug Smith and John Haddox voted against adoption of an ad valorem tax increase, urging their fellow commissioners, Ed Fielding, Sarah Heard, and Anne Scott, to stimulate the economy in order to further increase revenues that are already rising from rising property values.

"It's a philosophical difference among members of the board as to how we increase revenues," Haddox said, during a recent commission meeting.

The philosophical divide among commissioners often erupts during commission meetings, and the public can anticipate that differences will again emerge as commissioners discuss "revenue enhancement" strategies at beaches; adopting an FPL franchise fee in unincorporated areas to add up to 6 percent to electric utility bills, all of which will go to the general fund; a renewed attempt to pass a sales tax referendum; creating and a "stormwater fee" added to tax bills in order to meet the stormwater treatment standards mandated by the state.

Commissioner Sarah Heard called for again "revisiting" the idea of increasing the county's impact fees.

"No matter what you choose to call it, these are still taxes," said Commissioner Doug Smith. "I don't mind considering any of these, but we also need to consider an economic development strategy that will improve property values and create jobs....This county has no economic development plan."

Smith said it was "unfair" to place the burden of taxes on the shoulders of residents alone. ■

Election season in Martin in full swing

Two Martin County Commission incumbents and another commission challenger—bringing the total to three challengers—filed with the county Elections Office to enter the 2016 County Commission race. All are Republicans, so those seats likely will be decided in the August primary election; however, the election filing deadline is June 2016.



Doug Smith

He has distinguished himself by supporting Martin County businesses and the Community Rede-

velopment Areas. He also has been an unwavering voice over the past decade in calling for the removal of septic tanks from the banks of the St. Lucie River and Indian River Lagoon.

Another incumbent commissioner, John Haddox, District 5, which includes western Martin County, Palm City, and part of Indiantown, has served three years of his first, four-year term. Also an outspoken supporter of Martin County small business and the Community Redevelopment Areas, Haddox has distinguished him-



John Haddox

self by his opposition of All Aboard Florida high-speed passenger rail through the Treasure Coast and his active participation on the Coastal Oceans Task Force.

Smith is being challenged by both Henry Copeland of Jensen Beach and Jacqui Thurlow-Lippisch of Sewall's Point. The most recent challenger in the commission race is Darlene Fuggetta of Hobe Sound, state Republican Committeewoman, who has filed for the District 3 seat now held by Anne Scott, of Jupiter Island, who has not yet filed.

All constitutional officers have filed for re-election including Carolyn Timman for Clerk of Courts (no challengers as yet); Vicki Davis for Elections Supervisor (no challengers); Ruth Pietruszewski, Tax Collector, who is being challenged by Caroline Barca of Stuart and Joe Sesta of Palm City; Laurel Kelly for Property Appraiser (no challengers); and challenging Sheriff William Snyder are Dennis Root of Port Salerno, no party affiliation, and Robert Leon Pryor Jr. of Jensen Beach, a registered Independent. ■

City and County plan again to talk ... maybe

Four, instead of three, may be the magic number for Martin County officials, who have postponed their meeting to discuss "important issues" with the City of Stuart commissioners and officials for the fourth time. The date now set is Dec. 3 at the Blake Library for the follow-up meeting to one held in July, facilitated by a paid mediator, Dr. Bob Lee.

"This is just unbelievable," said Stuart Commissioner Tom Campenni, about the fourth postponement, adding that he was tempted to tell the commissioners that this is the county's "last chance."

The commissioners from both the city and the county chose priorities for discussion at the July meeting, including fostering better communication between municipal and county entities; a merger of fire rescue departments, and the city's annexation policies, procedures and plans.

Although the county commissioners have asked for a report regarding the City of Stuart's planned expansion of its Community Redevelopment Area, the Stuart CRA may also become one of the topics discussed. Dr. Lee agreed to again mediate this meeting, which will be open to the public. ■

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Editorial: Commission makes sense, or does it?

More and more frequently, we hear ordinary citizens say, "This makes no sense." They shake their heads in disbelief at our county commission majority's decisions that sometimes befuddle even their supporters.

Follow along for a bit, and you'll see what we mean.

When Commissioner Sarah Heard two years ago voted not to fund a DNA study of the pollutants in the St. Lucie River by Dr. Brian Lapointe of Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute to determine if the source of the bacteria was human, dog, chicken, or cattle, we were somewhat surprised at her dissent ... but our most environmentally concerned citizens trusted her.

Heard told us then that she already knew the source, she said: "It's agriculture. Not septic tanks."

Well, that study came back this month with overwhelming, resounding proof that NO, it's NOT agriculture, it's septic tanks. Human waste is poisoning our groundwater, our surface waters, the wildlife that lives in it, and is damaging not only the St. Lucie estuary, but the Indian River Lagoon and our reefs.

Our septic tanks threaten even our dolphins that consider this place their permanent home. They do not leave it, even when they eat what kills them.

Does Heard accept the study results?

No. Instead, she attempted to poke holes in Lapointe's study to prove that his science is flawed, that it is indeed agriculture that damages the estuary more than septic tanks, and the Lake Okeechobee discharges are more damaging than our own water basin runoff. Yet, two other studies, one of which was conducted by our county staff, echoed Lapointe's study results.

Yes, Lake Okeechobee discharges are an issue, but septic tanks are a more immediate issue. Now we know irrefutably that septic tanks near waterways are a menace to life of any and all kinds.

In the fresh light of this study, did our county commission opt for a comprehensive, phased plan to remove all the septic tanks along the shores of our treasured waterways, the St. Lucie River, the Indian River Lagoon and the Loxahatchee River? Unfortunately, regrettably, unconscionably NO. They did not.

They had already targeted the septic tanks in our agricultural areas, some of which will not drain into the river for 50 years, and had already killed at least one sewer line extension along the Indian River Lagoon to stop development, and now they've added only two "hot spots," in Golden Gate and All American Ditch in Old Palm City for sewer lines, removing a total of 2,100 septic units from the nearly 20,000 we know about. What about the rest?

Commissioner Doug Smith made a strong case, yet again, to at least put a plan in place, even if it's a 20- or 30-year plan, for what Lapointe said causes at least four times the pollution of lake discharges--maybe up to seven times more. Having a plan attracts more grant funds—and we're going to need every dime we can get. Smith was ignored. Why?

Because sewer systems foster development. They will make this place a more desirable place to live, and will eliminate the need for septic drain fields, allowing property owners more options to use their property.

It's a sick way to control development. Literally. Sick.

Allowing our septic tank effluent to feed the toxic algae that kills our sea grasses; letting the effluent-borne bacteria and viruses and pharmaceuticals infect our groundwater, our rivers and the lagoon; and allowing our dolphins to suffer and our reefs to die because that's a better alternative than allowing any growth, which also would help fund a sewer system, too?

This truly archaic policy makes no sense. Our growth is strictly controlled by our Comprehensive Growth Management Plan—as it should be. Controlled growth. We've won awards for that plan, yet this fight over sewer systems has been ongoing for more than two decades.

When Maggy Hurchalla was an

elected county commissioner, she led the fight to keep septic tanks even for new development in order to thwart growth. She won the fight then, and she's still fighting. No need for a countywide plan, she still says. Just get those hot spots....well, just get some of the hot spots. Ignore the ones on the Loxahatchee, she insists, a refrain parroted by Sarah Heard, Ed Fielding, and Anne Scott, her faithful commissioners, and even Marty Baum, our Indian Riverkeeper.

What's difficult to follow is that in one breath, Fielding is leading the charge against septic tanks to justify gutting the Community Redevelopment projects, yet he, Anne Scott and Sarah Heard laud the effectiveness of septic tanks along the Loxahatchee in order to justify their ban on sewer lines into the secondary urban services district. Then they blast septic tanks again when farmers want to build a packing house. A dichotomy? Definitely. Their priority is NOT water quality. Their priority is stopping all growth of any kind anywhere.

They are willing to destroy our CRAs, pollute our rivers and make our dolphins sick, if necessary, to ensure that Martin County is set aside as an enclave for only the mega-wealthy. They are succeeding.

The incongruity of their decisions does make some sense, in that context, even if we don't like it. ■

Letters to Editor

Bravo!

(for the back page of Volume 5, Issue 4, September 2015 issue of *Currents*)

We should not only remember those who died, but those who continue to be strong in the light of losing loved ones ... and those who continue to serve in the military, our young men and women who continue the fight. (Remembering what happened on) 9/11 should be in our in our heart and soul EVERY DAY!

*Rick and Jo Ann Rescigno
Hobe Sound*

To the editor:

In recognizing Kevin Freeman, who has been Martin County's director of the Community Development Department for the past six years, I would like to recognize an additional attribute. His work in Rio and in all the Community Redevelopment Areas was fantastic, but we would be remiss not to acknowledge Kevin's unique ability to

recognize talent in the people he brought to the department. He created an incredibly talented team of people who shared his values and incomparable work ethic. I venture to say, it was a team we may never replicate again. It's a big void to fill.

I also want to remind our county commissioners that a little over 15 years ago, a board of commissioners entered into a contract with seven communities. This is a 30-year contract, and we are now half way through that contract.

We have heard criticisms that there are areas within our CRAs that are not blighted. We've worked for 15 years to end blight in these areas. Obviously, we've made improvements, but there's much more to be done. Allow us to complete this contract.

Eventually, the TIF (Tax Increment Finance) funding will be restored to the county's general fund along with increased tax revenue. The original contract recognized that this would be a long-term commitment because it needed a way to fund the projects. TIF is the way to fund it.

Yes, there's a vocal minority that wants to move that funding today (out

of the CRA projects), and I can understand that. We all want a lot of things today, but that doesn't always happen. There is a contract out there, a contract that a commission before you approved for 30 years.

Give us the opportunity to do the job that the county signed up to do. The communities have held up their end of

the bargain. The communities have gotten very involved. As the chairman of the Rio Neighborhood Advisory Committee, I would ask the Board of County Commissioners to honor this contract in their consideration of the future of our CRAs.

*Rick Zurich
Rio*

Share Your Voice

We welcome our readers' opinions on any matter of local interest. Remember, that *Martin County Currents* focuses on people, places and events within Martin County. If you have something on your mind about life in Martin County, please share your voice with our readers.

Submit your letter via email only to editor@MartinCountyCurrents.com. Please limit the words to no more than 400 words, and include your mailing address and phone number for verification. (These will not be printed.) Your letter will be edited for grammar, spelling, and appropriateness, so if your less-than-perfect letter-writing skills are holding you back, have no fear. We will not permit your lack of technical skill be a barrier to expressing your opinion!

From time to time, we also print Guest Columns and Guest Editorials on various topics, which typically run from 600-800 words in length. If you have a topic that you'd like to write about for *Currents* readers, please send your idea to the editor for feedback prior to submitting a column. Again, the email address is editor@MartinCountyCurrents.com.

Any celebration of Peter Jefferson's life is a celebration of Stuart



Nancy Smith
Guest Columnist

In 1968, Stuart had never seen anything quite like Joan and Peter Jefferson. When these big-city folks bounded into town in 1968 with so much character and mischief and fun in them, they scattered charm like birdseed in an aviary. They were irresistible. It was like that for the next 28 years.

Part of the Jeffersons' beauty was that each was half of the other's whole: Peter, the accomplished Miami architect -- imposing, imaginative, witty, a kind of force of nature ... Joan, razor-sharp, his complement and inspiration.

When Peter Augustus Jefferson died of cancer Sept. 9 at home in Palm City, less than three weeks after his 87th birthday, when tearful friends were offering Joan condolences, she told them not to mourn, but to celebrate Peter's incredible life, just as she would. "I was married to my best friend for 50 years," she told us. "We had a wonderful life. How could I ever want more than I've had?"

My husband Mick and I feel privileged to have known Joan and Peter for so many of Stuart's great years.

Nobody belonged in Stuart quite like the Jeffersons.

For perhaps the most important period of the city's life, the Jeffersons were magic. They made dreams come true Stuart never knew it had, never thought possible.

I won't try to rewrite Peter's story here. The Stuart News had a fine tribute to him on the front page, two days after his death. Instead, I hope you don't mind if I just reflect for a moment on what I think Peter meant to Stuart.

There are so many new people, residents who moved to Martin in the last five or 10 years, who have no idea how far the city itself has come, that the jewel of a downtown they know today was two blocks of shabby, dying businesses

eclipsed by Martin Square and Treasure Coast Square malls.

Being in the Jeffersons' presence was like walking into a wind tunnel -- at some point you knew something they would say or do would take your breath away. I doubt they had any idea how effortlessly they could transfer positive energy and a sheer joy of living.

The Jeffersons built their first Martin County home in Palm City's Four Rivers, but then moved to Atlanta Avenue in Stuart, to a sprawling old home with a separate studio -- something Peter could renovate.

"Everywhere they lived they threw such amazing parties," remembered Dagny Jochem, among the

Jeffersons' oldest friends in Stuart. "People didn't think they'd seen the Stuart Boat Parade unless they saw it from the Jeffersons' porch. Every year they lived on Atlanta Avenue the couple flung the doors open and had a Christmas Boat Parade Party people still talk about."

In the early 1990s, the Jeffersons looked at that down-at-the-heels Stuart business precinct with little left but thrift stores and bail bonds-



Architect Peter Jefferson, who spearheaded the revitalization of downtown Stuart



The renovated post office and revitalization of downtown Stuart are legacies of architect Peter Jefferson.

men -- and where others saw the dying downtown I was talking about, they saw economic opportunity and a chance to reinvent a city center. With business partners Dr.

David and Ann MacMillan, they literally risked everything, bought the historic old Post Office Arcade due for



Joan and Peter Jefferson the day after Peter's 87th birthday in August

partial demolition. They renovated it to serve as their home and a storefront architect's office for Peter.

It was a dramatic show of faith in downtown's potential, and it proved to be the kiss of life. It lit a fire, created a spirit of rebirth in the city.

In the five years the Jeffersons lived in the Arcade, between the lure and energy of Peter's vision and Joan's service as Stuart mayor, downtown went from a 60-percent vacancy rate to a 100-percent occupancy rate, creating 100 new jobs.

Nobody made a greater mark on the city of Stuart than Peter Jefferson. His architectural touches and

murals in the 1980s and early 1990s are in the jail, in the courthouse gazebo, in the Cultural Arts Center, in the Stuart Feed Store, the Porter House, the Stuart Lodge, in the little central patch where Lady Abundance sits -- and far more.

In a 1995 interview, celebrated Miami urban planner Andres Duany told The Stuart News, "Cities with dying downtowns all over America would kill to have a Joan and Peter Jefferson to inspire them."

"Peter was a Renaissance man in the truest sense of the word," Ann MacMillan says. "He was as comfortable standing in front of a group of contentious planners and politicians as he was in a Santa Claus suit. I had the pleasure of knowing, working and playing with Peter for 30 years, so I can tell you truly he was a one-of-a-kind, very special soul."

It was the Jeffersons' spirit of re-

making a static, descending business precinct, turning it into a workable, livable downtown -- a destination to bring visitors -- that fueled many of the ideas and plans that shaped the Community Redevelopment Agencies around Martin County.

If Peter Jefferson were alive today, I believe he would be fighting tooth and nail against the County Commission's push to kill Martin's CRAs.

In the resurrection of Stuart, the Jeffersons created the first CRA long before CRAs were a happening thing in Florida. You bet Peter would be fighting for imagination, creativity and civic pride.

Joan Jefferson said Peter planned out his Sept. 26 celebration of life "party" at the Flagler Center himself less than two days before he died. "He had all kinds of ideas for it," she said. "I think it was his way of making sure I would stay busy."

Besides Joan, to whom he was married for 48 years, Peter is survived by his children, Mark Jefferson (and wife Lisa), Dale and Dean Alexander, Angelique Koger; grandchildren, Marisa and Peter Jefferson, Brandon and Max Koger; nieces Judy Vance and Joyce Jones, and his loving cat, Torsi.

The family is asking that contributions as a memorial be made to the Friends of Florida Museum of

History, 500 SW Bronough Street, Tallahassee, Fla. 32399-0250 -- where Peter volunteered and shone as a docent, or guide. ■

Nancy Smith is executive Editor of Sunshine State News in Tallahassee. She worked at The Stuart News/Port St. Lucie News from 1977 to 2005, a reporter, city editor, managing editor and associate editor.

Grateful community bids county staff farewell

Kevin Freeman, director of the Community Development Department overseeing the revitalization of seven Community Redevelopment Areas in Martin County, probably knew something would be different about this meeting when more than 10 times the number who usually attend showed up Oct. 27 at 4:30 in the afternoon to hear his quarterly status report.

And, indeed, there was.

Dozens came to say, "Thank you, Kev. You will be sorely missed." The audience included the chairs of all seven Neighborhood Advisory Committees, two former county commissioners, and dozens of residents from throughout the county for Freeman's final presentation to the Martin County Community Redevelopment Agency/Board of County Commissioners.

The NAC chairs and the Friends of the Golden Gate Building presented Freeman with two plaques to add to his luggage to remind him of the impact he had on the people of Martin County as he leaves the county—and the country—at the end of November. He represents the last remaining of the four-member Community Development Department staff, who all have left the department for other positions.

He accepted a job as a community redevelopment consultant in London, England, which, for the first time ever, will

be borrowing the idea from the U.S. for using Tax Increment Financing (TIF) funds as a means to finance revitalization of blighted areas within that large metropolis.

The new direction in London towards countering disinvestment within older communities comes as some county commissioners here, who are in the majority, seek to end TIF funding for our historic areas, charging that financing community revitalization with a portion of the taxes that result from increasing property values is wasteful, non-transparent and even a "socialistic" practice that must end.

Two former county commissioners, Elmira Gainey, who was a member of the commission when the CRA was originally established in the late '90s, and Ed Ciampi, who was a member of the commission that created the county's first independent Community Redevelopment Agency in 2010—abolished by the current commission majority in 2012—disagree. Both lauded Freeman for "making a real difference" in the CRA program and in Martin County's quality of life, a refrain repeated often not only from the audi-



Saadia Tsafarides, left, on behalf of the Friends of the Historic Golden Gate Building and Angela Hoffman, chair of the Hobe Sound Neighborhood Advisory Committee, present tokens of appreciation to Community Development Director Kevin Freeman for his work with the county's seven Community Redevelopment Areas. Freeman leaves the county for a new position in London on Nov. 20.

ence and the NAC chairs, but from two sitting commissioners, Doug Smith and John Haddox.

The same sentiment bubbled to the surface during a recent unveiling of bus benches and bike racks in the Rio CRA, when Freeman was again recognized and greeted by dozens of residents, who thanked him for the difference he had made personally within the Rio community.

"Before you came," said Julie Preast,

of the Rio Civic Club, "the county just pushed paper around. Really, that's all it amounted to, Kevin, but after you came, projects started coming out of the ground. You brought life to our vision, not only in Rio, but in all the CRAs. We are so grateful to you, and we will miss you so much."

Freeman, a British native who was awarded U.S. citizenship just months ago, responded that he was leaving a little bit of himself in each of the CRAs, which include Rio, Jensen Beach, Golden Gate, Hobe Sound, Port Salerno, Indiantown and Old Palm City, and taking parts of them with him. He also reflected on the 300+

plus turnout by the community for a CRA workshop on July 6, which exceeded the capacity of the Blake Library auditorium.

"When I looked around and saw how many people were there," he reflected, "I thought to myself: 'You did this.' I felt immense satisfaction that my work had made a difference to the community. What better legacy could there be than that?" ■

—Barbara Clowdus

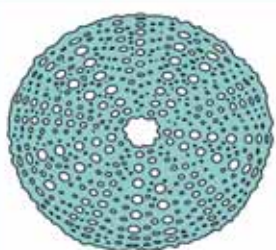


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Community activists fight to retain CRA plans

The spider webs spread across empty desks in the county's Community Development Department for Halloween spoke more about a deserted government office than they ever did about a spooky holiday. The last four department employees have recently accepted other positions either outside the department or the county—one even going overseas—as frantically and as determined as sailors jumping from a sinking ship.

"That's really what it is," says Port Salerno community activist John Hennessee, a former chair of the Port Salerno Neighborhood Advisory Committee. "The handwriting has been on the wall for this department ever since the 2012 election, and it's because of its middle name. 'Development.' Even when it's RE-development or infill development, development of any kind is a dirty word in this county."

The Community Development Department oversaw the revitalization of seven historic areas in the county, which had been identified in the mid-1990s as lacking public investment. They all were deteriorating, and the county took steps to invest some public dollars to prevent slums from developing in Golden Gate, Port Salerno, Jensen Beach, Hobe Sound, Rio, Indiantown and Old Palm City and to encourage private investment.

"After the (Treasure Coast) Mall was built, Jensen Beach was in bad shape," says Frank Wacha Jr. "Businesses closed down, but it wasn't just that. We had so much traffic going through Jensen from St. Lucie County from people trying to get to the mall that DOT (state Department of Transportation) was going to four-lane us...The CRA (Community Redevelopment Agency) that we formed, the first one in the county, stopped that by coming up with a plan to handle the traffic without a four-lane highway. If that had gone through, it would have destroyed Jensen Beach."

Residents who lived in these communities 20 years ago often talk about "the plan" for their communities, and how much they've changed under the CRA program, which uses relatively small amounts of tax dollars—about \$220,000 apiece annually—to address the infrastructure and safety issues in older communities in anticipation of attracting private investment. Ultimately, at the end of the 30 years, the revitalized areas begin to offer a return on that investment, not only in tax revenue and impact fees, but in improved quality of life for those living there.

In Hobe Sound, just the completed plans for their project, that includes off-street parking, a reconfigured intersection, wide sidewalks, and dropped utility lines resulted in a dozen new retail shops opening where the storefronts had been previously boarded up for years.

"Our historic downtown is coming to life again," says Angela Hoffman, chair of the Hobe Sound Neighborhood Advisory Committee. "It's an exciting

thing to see, and we don't want that to die now."

All the chairs of the Neighborhood Advisory Committees, civic volunteers at the heart of each defined Community Redevelopment Area, shares the same sentiment. They have been frustrated at the change in direction and the dismantling of the Community Development Department, which served as the liaison between each community and the Community Redevelopment Agency that oversaw the projects within each CRA.

The program has come under intense criticism for the past several years by a faction of the county seeking no growth and zero development activities, according to supporters.

"The purpose of the CRAs is two-fold," Wacha says. "One is economic stimulus and the other is quality of life."

The CRAs are based on the principles of complete streets and strong towns, on the principles of walkability and livability, and with the premise that pedestrians who feel safe will congregate bringing an economic boost to the businesses located in those areas.

Sometimes, all it takes is minor redesign of parking spaces, and other times, as the Mapp Road project in Old Palm City, it requires an innovative plan that attacks more than just parking, like the sheet-flow flooding from west of Mapp Road to the residential areas. The



Most CRA projects also address water quality, as did Carter Park's Boys & Girls Club project in Indiantown, as well as enhancing the quality of life of its residents.

commission majority voted to kill that project, as well.

"We were hopeful that the project would have attracted some grants," said Chuck Smith, chair of the Old Palm City Neighborhood Advisory Committee, "but even if it didn't, the new plan would have attracted businesses to those 10 empty lots, solved some of our stormwater and flooding issues, given us bike lanes and parking, and eventually that would have brought more tax revenue to the county. Killing that project, which was completely funded, makes no sense."

Both the Mapp Road and the Hobe Sound projects were rejected by the county commission majority of Anne

Scott, Ed Fielding and Sarah Heard, and those three have been sharply critical of the Community Redevelopment Program overall for the past three years, saying the funds—which comprise one half of one percent of the county's budget—would have better use elsewhere.

Their criticisms primarily focus on the CRA zoning for the commercial areas that allow a mix of business and residential uses and smaller lot sizes. They directed the Growth Management Department to overhaul the rules for Community Redevelopment Areas and to shrink their boundaries.

And that's when the county staff started finding jobs elsewhere. ■



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Keys to success: stay involved and be patient

Two years ago on Oct. 3, 2013, Treasure Coast residents attended a hearing before the U.S. Congress regarding our water and Lake Okeechobee discharges. On that day, I had an opportunity to speak before the press with the Capitol building behind me, and I spoke out about the Army Corps of Engineers having too much control over the discharges and how badly that impacts our St. Lucie River.

Today, given that opportunity again, I would likely say something else.

For example, I would probably speak about the need for dedicated, long-term funding of water projects. Does that mean my message was wrong in 2013? No, I do not believe so. At that time, the Army Corps was tough. We had been told, in no uncertain terms, that dumping that water was their decision, on their terms, and the only option; however, with the amount of public input, making more visits to our area to see first-hand how bad it really was, and having more conversations with South Florida Water Management District officials, the Army Corps has worked hard to find ways to avoid dumping Lake Okeechobee waters.



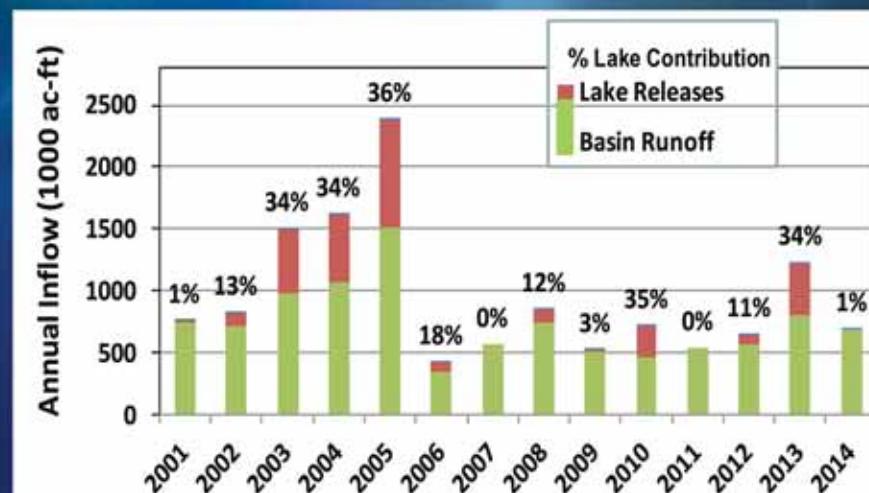
Nyla Pipes

One Florida Foundation

They have fine-tuned their operations, sent more water south when possible, and have communicated more with coastal residents at those times when they have no choice but to open the locks. Things have changed, and if we keep working with them, I feel they will keep working with us.

What I learned from this is that if you are going to work on our water issues, you must be flexible. You must seek truth and facts, but you also must accept that facts change as our system changes. Virtually every bit of water in the state has been manipulated and engineered for drainage. It is important to know the history and natural flows, but it is critical to face the reality of our system as it stands today. Local basin runoff to the St. Lucie River is a prime example: The river gets a lot more water than it did historically, as the C-

Annual Inflow into St. Lucie Estuary 2001-2014



The graph, derived from statistics provided by the South Florida Water Management District, demonstrates the necessity of addressing water basin inflows to the St. Lucie River estuary, as well as Lake Okeechobee discharges.

23, C-24, and C-25 canals were all plumbed to drain there, whereas a lot of that water used to flow directly to the Indian River Lagoon.

We can complain that it isn't our "local basin" and that that water is "supposed to go elsewhere," or we can face today's reality, and get to work on fixing it. Luckily, there are some local projects that will address that issue, such as McCarty Ranch, 3,100 acres of largely unspoiled, natural Florida land purchased by Port St. Lucie in 2012 with plans to use the land as a water storage and treatment facility.

It is important to get behind both storage- and water-quality improvement projects at the local level, because our own basin, as it stands today, is causing a lot of damage to the river. Add in the Lake Okeechobee discharges, and we have serious issues. We must correct both problems, but we have the most control over the local initiatives.

It is also important to know where we are going, and accept that some answers to our problems are still

being studied and some questions may not yet be answered. Aquifer Recovery and Storage (ASR) wells are a great example. Originally in water restoration plans, we were to rely on more than 300 of these wells for storage around Lake Okeechobee and throughout the system. They were to add that much-needed storage during the wet season, and the water could be brought back up to use during the dry season.

The initial pilot studies, however,

which have been recently reviewed by the National Academy of Science, reveal that these wells will work some places, but not in others. The recommendation now is to install fewer wells. Although initially there also were indications of arsenic contamination in some wells, their studies are showing now that this seems to be less of an issue with subsequent withdrawals. Surprisingly, they are also seeing a substantial reduction in phosphorus when they bring the water back up, so there may be a cleansing factor that nobody expected! Obviously, there is more work to do on this technology before we jump in and place over 100 wells around the lake, but overall, the consensus is this may be a piece to solving the puzzle.

We just have to be patient.

I have heard people in the community say no progress has happened since 2013. When I first started advocating for clean water, I was cautioned that this is a marathon, not a sprint. I didn't understand then, but I do now. I know it's difficult to see some of the strides being made if you aren't at all the meetings, but on this second anniversary of our historic bus trip to Washington D.C., I encourage you to keep looking for those increments in improvement, stay engaged, and keep a positive outlook. There is good work being done. ■

Nyla Pipes is a founder of One Florida Foundation, which addresses water issues throughout the state.



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Pope Francis: 'Ahora ve por ahí y hacer un alboroto'

Now, go out there and make a ruckus!

Since late 2013, One Florida Foundation has worked to find all the options to stop the discharges from Lake Okeechobee. Where can 1.6 million acre-feet of water, which must be cleaned to mandatory levels, be detained to prevent discharges?

We met with hundreds of stakeholders, elected officials and agencies throughout the state. The results of those meetings were compiled and released as The STOZE Report that addresses the haunting questions: "What happens to the water until the estimated completion in 2038 of State and Federal projects? Where does the water go until then?"

These state and federal projects account for only 28% of the 2013 water releases. Where does the rest of that water go? STOZE reported how those questions can be answered.

The One Florida Foundation's STOZE Report, a compilation of talking points that include: S—storage in all forms in every direction; T—dredging Lake O's navigational T-channel; O—Reduce water from the upper Everglades to the Lake to reduce the load in Lake Okeechobee; Z—Restore all the zig-zagged oxbows of the Kissimmee River; and E—Consider other and all flowways to move CLEAN water south to the Everglades.

The Stuart News Opinion Editor Eve Samples described in one of her columns that there are two "competing" environmental philosophies: One Florida Foundation's and a group she called, "The Old Guard." They believe, according to Samples, any position other than sending the water south was a problem. The STOZE Report, as well as the University of Florida Water Institute's Negron Report, share nearly identical conclusions: that water needs to be stored north, east and west of the Lake, wherever possible, as well as to the south.

After the deadline on options to purchase U.S. Sugar land south of the Lake expired, several sections of both reports are now outlined as projects. Some have started, some are operating, and the result is that there have been few rainy season discharges since 2014.

Other changes in public discourse? Recently, Mark Perry, executive director of the Florida Oceanographic Society and a member of the Rivers Coalition board, stood before the 16 County Collaborative and stated that one million acre-feet of water storage were needed NORTH of Lake Okeechobee, a tenet of the STOZE report.

Martin County was moving to pass amendments to Chapter 10 of their Comp Plan without proper knowledge and scientific study, as stated by One Florida spokeswoman Nyla Pipes, when she addressed the Martin County Local Planning Agency and County Commission about septic tank leakage. She requested that the Commission delay any final consideration until Dr. Brian Lapointe's report was presented to them in the very near future. They did not wait,



**Capt.
Don Voss**

*One Florida
Foundation*



A model of the change in the historic water flows from Lake Okeechobee shows the difference caused by drainage canals, which has caused dramatic changes to the Everglades ecosystem.

and although the amendment withstood a court challenge, it is now under review by the state's Department of Economic Opportunity.

The now-public scientific study by Dr. Lapointe and his team of researchers at Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute, put closure to the issue. The research demonstrated septic system's contribution to our lagoon's pollution. There are 300,000 active septic systems along our lagoon and connecting rivers. This report stated that 48 inches of soil is required between the bottom of a septic system and the level of the ground water; the average depth in Florida's septic system is reported at 6 inches between the system and groundwater.

There are many contributors to the pollution problem, however. Pollution enters the system 100 miles north and collects pollution from there all the way to Lake Okeechobee, where it combines with canals and rivers all around the Lake. It is very dirty, but needs to be at 10 parts per billion phosphorus before it enters Tribal lands.

Are there identifiable polluters? Who pays? Who determines how much? All questions that need to be answered. In the meantime, what happens to the water and the aquatic life?

The Everglades Foundation recently offered a \$10 million prize to any firm or individual who could reduce phosphorus to under 40 parts per billion in the Kissimmee as it enters the Lake. (Dr. G. Melodie Naja, the Everglades Foundation chief scientist, said Lake O water has phosphorus levels ranging from 250 to 350 parts per billion.)

To better understand the scope of the issues, Nyla Pipes and I recently toured the entire Everglades system from 500 feet in the air. We saw first hand the vast amounts of land and water that cover these 20,000 square miles from Lake Toho to Alligator Alley and from I-95 to I-75. Except for the bombing range area



Capt. Don Voss in disguise for the Indian River Lagoon Science Festival in Ft. Pierce naturally attracts youngsters to the One Florida Foundation booth.

of the Kissimmee, we covered it all.

Loaded down with charts to identify private property, state and federal lands, we covered the Miccosukee lands, the Big Cypress Swamp and Everglades National Park. We looked over the pumping stations and the construction of culverts and reservoirs around Lake Okeechobee, and all the canals. We were provided with the latest science and water quality numbers. We saw the controversial U.S. Sugar parcel, its proximity to the Lake, the communities of the Everglades Agricultural Area, the East Expansion Areas and all the Stormwater Treatment Areas.

Noted environmentalist Nat Reed once told Rivers Coalition members that a reservoir large enough to store and clean the 1.6 million acre-feet of water flushed to tide in 2013 would need to be twice the size of Lake Okeechobee. From the air, it was clear that the Lake is truly a large body of water, and that such a venture would cover the entire Everglades.

There had always been parts of the now-expired concepts that were not accurate or plausible. The

STOZE and the Water Institute reports address all variables and outline projects that can reduce the main goal here...Stopping the discharges. "Now, go out there and make a ruckus!"

Capt. Don Voss, nationally recognized for his environmental initiatives to improve the water quality of the Indian River Lagoon, will be a regular contributor to Martin County Currents. All advertising on these pages will benefit One Florida Foundation, dedicated to addressing water issues throughout the state.



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Jam-packed itineraries keep One Florida on the go

One Florida Foundation members traveled over the state the past few months, sitting in on workshops to taking flight in a helicopter over the entire Everglades system.

Foundation members gave input at a recent workshop to discuss the Integrated Delivery Schedule to develop an overall strategy and sequence for planning, design, and construction of Everglades Restoration projects based on ecosystem needs, benefits, costs, and available funding. The workshop ended with a planning document for the next phase of Everglades restoration.

"It has now been reviewed by South Florida Water Management District, the Water Resources Advisory Committee, and is to go before the South Florida Ecosystems Task Force on Nov. 19," said Nyla Pipes, of One Florida. "This is one area in which clean-water advocates are making progress."

The series of public workshops for the Integrated Delivery Schedule (IDS), sponsored by the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Working Group, is being implemented via a combination of federal, state, tribal, and local projects to restore the ecosystem.

Public discussions related to the IDS include construction timelines, interde-



Youngsters learning to become stewards of the natural environment during a One Florida clean-up of Moore's Creek in Ft. Pierce.

pendencies and benefits related to multiple projects, including the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP), Kissimmee River Restoration,



An aerial view of the progress in repairs of the Herbert Hoover Dike around Lake Okeechobee. After repairs are completed, a dam study will be completed that could lead to a re-evaluation of the Lake Okeechobee Regulation Schedule that determines timing and amount of the fresh water discharges from the lake.

and the Everglades and South Florida Critical Projects.

For more information, go to www.evergladesrestoration.gov.

One Florida members also participated in the 30th Annual International Coastal Cleanup day in September alongside the members Sword Outreach Ministries and the Fort Pierce Police Department. "We once again held a cleanup of Moore's Creek in Fort Pierce," Pipes said, in support of Florida Foundation's emphasis on involving youngsters in activities that instill a sense of stewardship toward the environment and our water resources.

Capt. Don Voss's "muck monster" also showed up at the the Indian River Lagoon Science Festival, where he demonstrated the historic flow of water from the headwaters of the Everglades to Florida Bay and compared it to today's altered flow with canals and the Herbert Hoover Dike in place.

"We also took part in the Michael Shields Memorial Inshore Open to benefit Project Lift," Pipes said. "While there, we handed out shark teeth to the kids, and talked about clean water and One Florida's statewide approach to solving water problems."

The Foundation also co-hosted another Lionfish Safari in conjunction with



A man known for spending much of his time underwater as a diver is about to step into a new world of aerial views of the immense Everglades ecosystem.

the Fort Pierce Police Department to raise funds to purchase an additional canine unit as they helped rid coastal waters of invasive lionfish.

The highlight of their activities the past few months, however, came with their day-long helicopter tour of the entire Everglades system.

"That helicopter tour allowed us to see firsthand the vast amounts of land and water that cover these 20,000 square miles," Pipes said, "and it brought an even greater appreciation of the task that lies before us." ■

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Sea-glass jewelry again available at About Time

When About Time recently moved to Bridge Road from Edwyn Street in Hobe Sound, owner Gabe Ellenson said he thought his current customers would appreciate the convenience of dropping off their broken watches, clocks and jewelry for repair on a main artery through town.

That, indeed, has been the case, but a whole new clientele also has discovered his shop.

"This is something I didn't expect at all," he says, with a chuckle, "but I'm very happy about it."

When customers stopped to replace a watch battery, or to replace a wristband—everything from soft silicon to exotic python—or to have Ellenson repair a priceless watch, they spot his one-of-kind, handcrafted sea-glass pendants and other unique jewelry designs.

The designs were featured in a poster hanging on the wall. The unexpected demand for the pendants resulted in a resurgence of ideas that Ellenson had tucked away two years ago.

He had stopped making them, because each takes about four days to complete. The designs are hand-cut



The sea-glass pendants are created so that the cut-silver design on one side casts its shadow on the other side.



from sheets of solid sterling silver, and are worn with the designs against the body, with the silver design casting a faint shadow through the sea glass.

"The turtle is really popular," says, "and the frog, too. Well, actually, so are the mermaid and the palm tree." As are the fairy and the sun and the cat....and, now, the Mother Earth figure.

"The only design I never want to



Gabe Ellenson, proprietor of the About Time shop on Bridge Road in Hobe Sound.

make again is the lion," he says. "When I sketched it out first on paper, it didn't seem all that difficult, but making it was an entirely different story. It took hours and hours."

Until October, he had no pendants in stock. In previous years, he had made all of the pendants as special orders, sketching a custom design before he cut the silver. He would tell his customers to allow at least a week, but as Christmas approached, his shop filled with last-minute, frustrated customers. He swore he'd never make another sea-glass pendant.

But that was then, and this is now. With the renewed interest by new

customers, Ellenson responded with a dozen new pendants and notebook of other jewelry designs—all in time for holiday shopping.

"This way, they don't have to wait," he says, with a grin. "They can pick out what they want when they walk in the door."

Except that he's having a difficult time building his inventory. Of the 24 or so completed, he has only 10 left in stock. Santa better hurry if he plans to drop any sea-glass pendants in this year's stockings! ■

mARTies awards recognize outstanding art achievement



One of the most elegant and highly anticipated events each fall, organized and hosted by the Arts Council of Martin County since 2003, honors area artists at the mARTies. The awards recognize outstanding artistic, voluntary and philanthropic achievement in Martin County. "It takes a mix of artists, philanthropists, volunteers and leaders weaving together," says Executive Director Nancy Turrell, "giving the community a more vibrant, rich and colorful texture." The funds raised during the event support the on-going efforts of the Arts Council to promote and support Martin County's vibrant arts community. The 2015 mARTies Award recipients include: Connor Hadel, Sanders Award; Ryan Cox, Student Performing Arts; Al Hager, Performing Artist; Tom Servinsky, Arts Leadership; Shelby Baillie, Student Visual Artist; John Stiles, Excellence in Arts Education; Jane Miller, Lifetime Achievement Award; Dan Mackin, Visual Artist; Ethel Christin, Volunteer in the Arts. Award Winners Missing from photo -Wilmington Trust Company, Corporate Leadership; and the City of Stuart for the Water Birds Public Art Project, Special Recognition.

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Become an advocate to keep legislators informed

BY KATE POKORNY

Doris Sanders watched her husband fade in front of her. A situation she says only those who have cared for someone with Alzheimer's disease can truly comprehend.

"I have seen the devastation from the beginning to the end," she said. "I truly believe it is the worst disease there is."

Sanders met her husband, Joe, in college. On August 26, 1955, six months after they were introduced, they were married. It was a commitment Doris took to heart.

Joe was a Southern Baptist Pastor at a church in Hawaii for 20 years before the couple took an early retirement in Stuart. In 2000, shortly after they moved to Florida, Joe started to forget daily plans the couple made.



Doris and Joe Sanders pose for their 50th wedding anniversary portrait. Joe died from Alzheimer's in 2011 at the age of 81. The couple was married for 56 years.

So they went to the doctor.

Joe was put into trials immediately and two years later was diagnosed with Alzheimer's. As the disease progressed, Joe forgot who Doris was. He didn't listen to her, and he didn't like her.

It was during the final stages, before Joe died at 81 in 2011, that Doris reached



Alzheimer's Advocates gather each year in Washington DC to help keep legislators informed about the progress in Alzheimer's care and research.

out to support groups at the Alzheimer's Association. With help from her daughter and from the support group, Doris made it through the toughest time in her life.

"They saved my life, not from dying, but from not living," Doris said, referring to the resources provided by the Alzheimer's Association.

After Joe passed, Doris became involved with the Alzheimer's Association as an advocate and currently serves as an ambassador to U.S. Congressman Patrick Murphy. She keeps the congressman informed on all matters dealing with Alzheimer's through emails and office visits.

In 2014, Doris traveled to Washington D.C. for the Alzheimer's Association Advocacy Forum, which she said she plans to do again in the future. She finds it very rewarding to speak out in support of Alzheimer's research on the state and federal level.

"It is one of the most meaningful causes there is," Doris said.

"Alzheimer's patients need a voice."

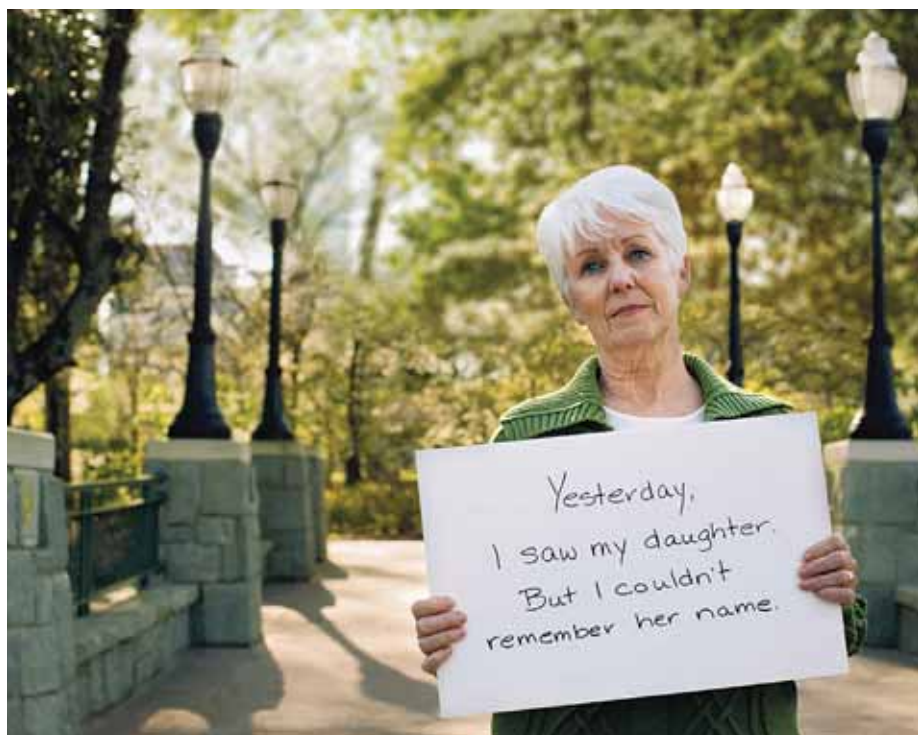
Being an advocate is something she recommends for anyone who has been touched by the disease and has any interest.

"Everyone has a story," Doris said. "Your story can help the cause."

The Alzheimer's Association depends on ambassadors like Doris to help keep elected officials informed and active on legislation influencing Alzheimer's disease.

"It is critical for this disease to be out in the public and at the top of elected officials' agenda," said Jennifer Braisted, the Advocacy and Public Policy Coordinator for the Alzheimer's Association. "Civic involvement is vital to finding the cure to this disease."

To become an advocate, contact Jennifer Braisted at jbraisted@alz.org or 561-967-0047 ext. 202. ■



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Alzheimer's Association Calendar

CAREGIVER EDUCATION ON VARIOUS TOPICS

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Walkers came in all sizes—some on two legs, some were on four, some old, some on wheels, some jogged and others took a lot of breaks....and a few enterprising ones found a shortcut to the end!



All walkers were determined to make a difference.



Volunteers made the event possible, keeping expenditures low while keeping walkers happy.

Alzheimer's walkers in Jensen exceed their goal

An unmistakable note of frustration surfaces in the voice of Port Salerno resident Ellen Asselin when she talks about losing her husband, Fred, a few years ago to Alzheimer's disease.

"This awful, awful disease affects so many people," she says, "yet there's so little awareness of the great need for funding to find a cure, and I know a cure is possible. It's out there. We just have to find it, but that, as you know, takes money ... a lot of money."

Asselin took part in the "Walk to End Alzheimer's" on Oct. 3, sponsored by the Southeast Florida Chapter of the Alzheimer's Association at Indian River-Side Park in Jensen Beach, one of five walks the chapter organized. She was one of a 1,000 participants who turned the park purple with their shirts and bracelets as they also crowded Indian River Drive with their cars when all the parking spaces filled up at the park early that Saturday morning.

The event, part of a worldwide movement, is more than just a walk. Informational booths were set up so attendees could learn about getting involved, from advocacy opportunities and clinical studies to support programs and services.

In Martin County, more than 2,100 families are known to be struggling with the demands of having a loved one suffering from a disease that claims their memories, their histories, their independence, and eventually their life over a span of anywhere from two



Flowers bloomed among the crowd as a symbol of hope for a world without Alzheimer's.

to 20 years. The average length of time from diagnosis to death is 10 years, according to local Alzheimer officials.

But the event was anything but somber. The morning gathering prior to the walk was filled with music, vendor booths, family-oriented activities, and laughter.

"Funds raised will provide care and support services to the 150,000 residents of South Florida living with Alzheimer's," said Ann May, CEO of the Alzheimer's Association Southeast Florida chapter, in a press release, "while also contributing to advancing critically



An incredible start by an incredible number of walkers led to an incredible day of fund-raising at Indian RiverSide Park for the Southeast Florida Chapter of the Alzheimer's Association.



Walkers started the morning's events by dancing to the music.



Some dogs were "official" Alzheimer Walkers, too.

needed research." The walk at Indian River-Side Park raised \$89,000 by teams of volunteers—family groups, business colleagues, church groups, neighborhoods, homeowners as-

sociations—many of whom create a team months in advance to gather donations a few dollars at a time. On the day of the walk this year, most volunteers came because either they, or someone they were

close to, had experienced the long heart-break and tribulations of caring for an Alzheimer's victim. "I can tell you this," said a volunteer from an assisted living facility in Stuart, "any medical professional or any nursing home or any assisted living facility should support this cause. They should be here, because I guarantee you that at least 80 percent of their clients or their patients have Alzheimer's."

Perhaps, one day, those percentages will drop. Until then, Ellen Asselin and thousands like her will continue their fight for a world without Alzheimer's, and they likely will ask you to join them. ■

--Barbara Clowdus

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Two new additions expand Hobe Sound's murals

Praise has been high for the two most recent additions to the growing list of murals in Hobe Sound, which will be featured in a unique, air-conditioned trolley tour of Hobe Sound on Nov. 13.

The murals likely will turn an almost-forgotten segment of Dixie Highway in Hobe Sound south of Bridge Road into a tourist attraction. A wall of the building that houses the offices of Jenkins Landscape Company at 12260 SE Dixie has been transformed by a mural of an idyllic scene of old Florida, punctuated by a red-blossoming poinciana tree, the hallmark of Highwayman Jimmy Stovall, the mural's lead artist.

Just about a quarter-mile farther north on Old Dixie is another mural reminiscent of the 1920s in Hobe Sound that features the former Hobe Sound train depot that once was located nearby. Somewhat playfully, the mural on the wall of the Hobe Sound Art Gallery is entitled "All Aboard...A Long Time Ago" and introduces a new artist, 21-year-old Ziggy Blaze, whose rendition of the late Pauline McArthur is unmistakable and warmly nostalgic.

The Highwaymen mural, sponsored by Harold and Susan Jenkins, is the only exterior, publicly accessible Highwaymen mural in the state. Stovall is the



The Highwayman mural on the side of the Jenkins Landscape building on SE Dixie Highway in Hobe Sound frequently stops traffic for a closer look.

last Highwayman taught by one of the founding Highwaymen, Alfred Hair, among the painters from the Ft. Pierce area who sold their Florida landscape paintings door-to-door and out of their vehicles along local roadways from the 1950s through the 1980s. The Highwaymen finally achieved recognition in the 1990s, when critics began to praise the uniqueness of their folk art.

Local professional artist Nadia Utto, who has been the Hobe Sound Murals project coordinator since 2009, facilitated



Hobe Sound artists Nadia Utto and Ziggy Blaze at the foot of the most recent addition to the Hobe Sound Murals Project, "All Aboard...A Long Time Ago" on the Hobe Sound Art Gallery building on Dixie Highway, south of Bridge Road.

both murals, and was assisted by artist Heather Stevens Weese. Hobe Sound Murals is part of Landmark Arts, Inc., a non-profit organization dedicated to "Creating Community Culture," which has now overseen the completion of 18 Hobe Sound murals of the two dozen or so sprinkled throughout the area with the help of local businesses, more than 40 regional artists and dozens of volunteers.

The Hobe Sound Chamber of Com-

merce will sponsor two artist-guided trolley tours of its outdoor gallery of muraled walls. The first is Nov. 13, from 10 a.m. to noon, and the next will not be until the spring. Seating is limited and reservations are required. The tour begins and ends at the Hobe Sound Chamber of Commerce office, 11954 SE Dixie Highway, and tickets are \$32. For more information, call 772-546-4724 or email info@hobesound.org. ■

Second Saturday Strolls on tap in Hobe Sound

Second Saturday Strolls through historic, downtown Hobe Sound will again kick off on Saturday, Nov. 14, from 6-9 p.m., with live street music, arts, crafts and green market vendors.

"Hobe Sound is experiencing a renaissance with new, locally owned businesses moving in," says Angela Hoffman, executive director of the Hobe Sound Chamber. "The new shops and galleries are a breath of fresh air bringing life, color and art back into Hobe Sound."

Originally introduced to Hobe Sound in 2005, the Hobe Sound Stroll is a popular destination for connoisseurs of locally crafted gifts, art and edibles. The Stroll will run the second Saturday

of the month, November 2015 through May 2016 from 6 to 9pm starting at Taste restaurant, 11750 SE Dixie Highway in Hobe Sound, except in December, when the Art Stroll will take place from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. during the Hobe Sound Christmas Parade.

"Hobe Sound's eclectic shops and galleries will remain open during the Stroll with special selections, sales and activities," Hoffman said. "I'll guarantee that you'll be surprised at what you can find here, so plan a night out with friends at the friendliest place to shop in the county!"

For more information call the Chamber at 772-546-4724. ■

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HOBE SOUND CALENDAR

Second Saturday Art Stroll

Nov. 14
Downtown Hobe Sound at Dixie Highway and Bridge Road
Second Saturday each month through

May, 6-9pm
(Except December, when the Stroll will take place at the Hobe Sound Christmas Parade, on Saturday, Dec. 5, 10am-3pm)

Hobe Sound Christmas Parade

Saturday, Dec. 5, 1pm
Dixie Highway and Bridge Road
Free Event

Hobe Sound Festival of the Arts

Saturday, February 6, 2016, 10am-5pm
Sunday, February 7, 2016, 10am-5pm
Downtown Hobe Sound
Free Event

Ziggy Blaze aboard the train of artistic synergy

Thriving communities are possible when its members value not only their own success stories, but allow others to thrive as well. One of our most accomplished artists and project manager of the Hobe Sound Murals Project, Nadia Utto, titled her latest mural #19 on the south side of the Hobe Sound Art Gallery, "All Aboard." It not only vividly portrays the old Hobe Sound railway station, honoring the past we all share as a community, but it has allowed a new success story to arise from its evocative tapestry.

Ziggy Blaze, a 21-year-old Jamaican-born artist, has already sold some of his paintings and commissioned pieces. He has exhibited in Miami at such competitive art shows as Raw, and even in New York City, where he goes occasionally to hone his artistry, but he gives Utto the credit for truly expanding his potential.

"I've been drawing all my life but there was no color . . . until Nadia saw my painting and urged me to start painting with brush and color," he said, with a broad smile and unbounded enthusiasm. "I felt so empowered and happy. It was a breakthrough on my artist's journey. I am deeply grateful for it."

Our conversation happened right after Ziggy finished painting a scene that included a depiction of the late Pauline MacArthur, a revered Hobe Sound resident, strolling along the train station's boardwalk with vibrant realism and expression. His skill in portraiture and figures is what first brought the young artist to Nadia Utto's attention.

"You can imagine how stunned I was when I first saw Ziggy's work," Utto says, "and learned that this young man had never in his life had a single art lesson. Such natural talent!"

Unabashedly a self-taught artist, Ziggy now learns the technicalities of painting through an art college's correspondence courses, but his talent mainly flows from his soul and vision, for, as he says, he was born with a pencil in his hand: "I truly believe that every human being is an artist, but not all of them survive as artists. The art is such a great medium to create beauty that will outlast everything."

Young, colorful and handsome, Ziggy is surprisingly deep and philosophical for his age, yet humble and ambitious at the same time. He thinks in colors, instilling his paintings with his inner visions and musings. Although realistic in form, his Hobe



Maya Ellenson
Art Kaleidoscope



Ziggy Blaze, whose natural talent caught the eye of Hobe Sound artist Nadia Utto.



Ziggy's Landscape

Sound landscapes are deeply poetic, conveying local colors with vivid and energetic brushstrokes. There's nothing timid or uncertain about Ziggy Blaze. Experimenting is his mode of being and creating. "I embrace

various pictorial styles," he says. "Today I am a figurative artist, but tomorrow I may try abstract . . . Art is so diverse in terms of the mood it articulates, techniques it employs and forms it creates. That's the whole beauty of it."

His "Lost child" series enfolds both the artist's soul-searching and amazing ability to detach himself from his personal reflections to visualize characters from different perspectives. Depth and introspection of his portraiture are stunning. Ziggy's lost child refers not only to a child, per se, but to the state of mind regardless of age.

His "pink" portrait alludes to a psychological subtlety that may both challenge and intrigue the painting's viewers. The child's face, rendered in pink, looks at us with feline green eyes. He holds a pencil, not knowing yet what he is going to draw, but at the same time, deep down, he is well aware of his quest. He knows that he owns the pencil, and he will shape his own reality the way he deems it. The child is both observing and observed.

At the hand of Ziggy Blaze, a child's inner dimension is much more complex than adults can imagine and certainly not pink, although they may see it that way. "Being lost is not necessarily a bad



The old Hobe Sound train depot comes to life again as a mural under the watchful eye of Capt. Robert Lumpp, right, owner of the Hobe Sound Art Gallery. Artists Ziggy Blaze and Nadia Utto, on scaffold, worked for days through record-breaking July heat to complete it.



A Lost Child



A Dog's Portrait by Ziggy Blaze

thing," he explains. "It's our ability to open up and look for some guidance or blueprints for finding the path where we

can we can fully express innate gifts."

Ideally, a model of synergy would embrace all realms of our existence, but it's still greatly uplifting when we see it in action as a template for promoting all-inclusiveness right now and right here, in Hobe Sound.

"I am so blessed to live in Hobe Sound," Ziggy adds, "where people are so very kind and supportive."

As our interview was about to end, I felt that the train of synergy that Nadia and Ziggy painted together was not just the idealistic concept, but something amazingly real. ■

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.

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Julia Kelly's *Victor*: a book about magical footprints

BY MAYA ELLENSEN

for Martin County Currents

At her recent book-signing event at the Morgade Library on Salerno Road, acclaimed watercolorist Julia Kelly demonstrated her skill as an exceptional performer, as well as artist. She did not just read words from *Victor* projected on the screen, but sank into her character with every gesture, voice and intonation imaginable. Children and adults likely will never forget *Victor*.

A public exhibition at the Elliott Museum of Stuart more than a year ago introduced us to Julia Kelly's rich artistic background, which placed her own paintings in their true historical context: A granddaughter of renowned watercolorist John Calderwood and a daughter of Nancy Whorf—recognized as one of the most insightful American impressionists of the past century—Julia Kelly paints amazing sceneries, transforming her mysterious colors into words. "I paint in word," she says, "and write in colors."

Her first book, *A Crow in Grandma's Kitchen*, is a genuine, synergistic narrative where humans and animals live together in the sweetest of all imaginable harmonies, speaking the silent language



Artist and author Julia Kelly with her latest book, *Victor*.

of compassion and unity. Kids love it.

The book that followed, titled simply, *Victor*, is a totally different story that intrigues, fascinates, and challenges children. Vividly illustrated, the book opens a new page for a young generation with content that is both simple and deep, designed to reveal a child's hidden artistic potential as he or she follows Victor's



"An Artist is Born," an illustration from the book, *Victor*, by artist Julia Kelly.

footprints on the sand to the ending that, as it turns out, has no end.

Prior to shape-shifting into her main character, Julia Kelly had spent some time on the dunes of Cape Cod, in a retreat of primitive shacks on sand dunes designed to recharge creativity, owned by the Peaked Hill Trust of Provincetown, Mass. The Dune shacks offer no distractions. They have no electricity, running water, insulation or indoor plumbing to allow artists of all ilk, including engineers, journalists, dancers, architects, actors, painters, scientists or musicians to empty their minds and recharge their creativity by contemplating nature's mysteries in silence.

Victor surfaced from the imprints laid by various animals inhabiting the Dunes, Kelly explained, and included in her book the images of those animal footmarks to educate a young reader about the Dune's inhabitants and the bounty of plants sustaining their lives.

The dramatic opening scene catches our attention as the little mouse, Victor, is about to leave his nest. Before letting him go, Momma Mouse gives Victor four important reminders: do not get eaten, find food, get a safe place to build a home, and, finally, to find a mate as "we are not meant to be alone," she coaches.

The story goes beyond the lessons of survival, however, for it offers a model of heartfelt and panoramic dialogue between animals and human beings. In this web of life, we all share creative blueprints that allow us to speak a universal language. Victor deepens our understanding of nature. Just as artists and poets go to the Dunes to be inspired by nature's stillness and wisdom, so does Victor, secretly observing those artists, learn how to leave his unique imprints behind.

Victor discovers that art is full of magic and miracles as he watches a woman paint a rose hip plant that seems to magically appear on paper with each new stroke of paint, remembering that his tongue tingled when his mother once gave him one. The painting also evokes memories of his mother and brother. He feels sad, but at the same time he remembers the tasty rose hip and is happy.

"How can looking at a picture make such strong memories, both happy and sad?" he wonders. That's the question that philosophers have asked for thousands of years and could never find a final answer, as ... there is none. Art is a mystery, full of hidden potential and life-transforming energy. When we tap into it, as Victor does, we unfold its inner alchemy.

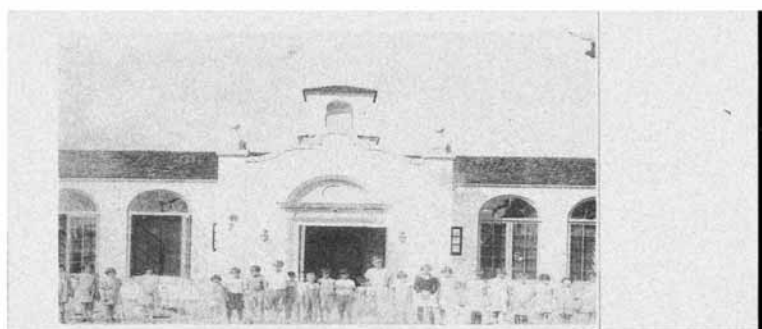
After our little hero almost loses his hope to find a mate, a she-mouse awakens him, holding a piece of paper with the impressions made by Victor with his blueberry-jam paint. The young lady mouse finds him by following those sweet, gooey footprints, but the story does not really end here. The door to the final chapter is left open for us to continue this fascinating journey.

Victor is not just a book, but a creative key handed to a reader by the author to construct a new narrative in the web of life, in which we are all co-creators.

To purchase a copy of *Victor* for \$20 plus shipping, go to the Julia Kelly website: juliakellyart.com, or simply call to order over the phone: 772.283.8519. Copies are available at the Morgade Library to be checked out by readers. The artist is also offering watercolor classes at the Elliott Museum on Hutchinson through November and December. ■



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50 lineal miles of dirty basin water still evident



**Rich
Vidulich**
*Pompano
Reporter*

The surf transitions in the fall from tranquil to rough! Mild nor'easters have already clashed with offshore tropical depressions, creating heavy seas from the north well into south Florida. We know that when it "rains mullet," as locals call the mullet spawning season, beach and jetty anglers go nuts. The snook are lean from the summer spawn and are swirling on the inside shore-break curls to devour these finger mullet, and tarpon are commanding practically every school of bait from Sebastian to Boynton Inlet! I know, because I, among many, are coming out of summer surf hibernation and are getting ready for our northern allies to arrive.

As the predators move on, we are enjoying a wicked good bluefish run! On the beach, the pier, and the inlet jetty, jack crevalles and bluefish are smacking x-wraps and bomber lures. Rapala's, Mirrolures, spoons and jigs are working as well. If you're heading to north or central Florida, you could probably stop at any beach through Jacksonville and catch blues. Melbourne north, you will start seeing Spanish mackerel and tons of glass minnows. The migratory process is definitely evolving from summer into winter!

Naturally, the devoted anglers who read this column are waiting to hear what I enjoy reporting about most—pompano! Resident pompano have made a few approaches to the Hobe Sound and Juno Beach areas. As the tropical storm Joaquin passed outside of the Bahamas, the ground seas picked up dramatically. The trough and the bars have a suspended turbidity that pompano don't swim in. No sir. No grit in their gills.

In coming weeks, though, the seas will subside and the ocean will clear. During the transition of brown to clear waters, there will be an intermediate aqua color phase. This is when it is still rough enough to suspend the dusty silt from our beaches and create a pretty seafoam green extending out to our second sand bar. Boom! This is pompano-inhabited water!

Anywhere on the coast of eastern Florida, this short-lived phenomena should be fished. Why is this so important? Pompano feel safe from major predators in waters that are clean yet hazy. Plus, they need some clarity to find shoreline sand fleas, mollusks and crabs to feed on.

Hundreds of juvenile, 6- to 9-inch silver nuggets were caught at the Lake Worth Pier in the last days of September. The sea conditions were rough, thanks to Joaquin, but it was aqua hazy. Juno, Jupiter and Hobe Sound were brown

and turbid. On the Juno Beach pier a few days later, I saw the blue water transitioning to brown approximately a half mile off the beach. Numerous birds were diving on that color change for I suspect were small Spanish mackerel and jacks.

We always discuss water temps falling, winter arriving, and tropical storms as the sparks that initiate the migration. With our sea temps at 85 degrees and Jacksonville at 81 degrees, the northern poms won't arrive till late November, the same as the past two seasons. The Carolina poms are in the Myrtle Beach area, and numerous silvers are in the San Simon's Island region. So until our waters reach the low 70's we won't see these guys, but no worries! Unless you've fished those regions and caught those cold water poms, it doesn't matter to Florida anglers.

We have a huge resident pompano population living all summer in the deep Atlantic waters up and down the eastern coast of Florida. These warm water fish only need a 4- to 6-degree drop and some serious nor'easters to move them to our beaches.

The "forecasters"—well, you know, the winter weather predictors who call themselves the forecasters—have apparently collaborated globally to budget this winter into a scientific monster—THE GODZILLA EL NINO! It appeared on our shores in the 1998 and 1972 winter cycles, and it's here now! Get this, in Japan they are researching a weather pattern that might upset the monster. Whoa, I love this crap ... I believe that it's an extreme high-pressure system, named without a lot of scrutiny, "The Bruce Lee Stream." Should the U.S. meteorological teams send in the hurricane Jedi to find "The Force"?

This huge "El Nino" occurred twice in the past 50 years and amounts to this: Most of Florida will experience 60 % more rain this winter! Therefore, it will be a cooler winter, because the substance hitting atop our fishing heads is chilly.

This Godzilla has been in place for months now, and is basically a subtropical jet stream that overheats our equator temps, thus creating atmospheres that



Under a bright autumn sky, pompano fisherman Rich Vidulich surveys surf conditions off Hobe Sound Beach, where evidence remains of earlier basin runoff in the streaks of dirty water among the waves.

spur tropical depressions. The fishing will definitely be affected this winter if this system sustains. Why? If the polar Arctic jet stream is not in play this December, January and February, we will have very few nor'easters. Easterly winds cool down the ocean and move masses of fish. El problema with the projected El Nino is the constant westerly wind pattern maintaining a warmer ocean and sending most fish offshore.

Despite the mojo, we still must get ready. There is too much hurricane season left to debate when the pompano will arrive. Be ready. Go out and practice. Spike in, bait up and cast. You might very well have rotten line, broken ceramic guides, a reel that needs lube and or repairs. Maybe you're ready to be more serious this year and entertain an upgrade in tackle to better reach that second bar on those wintery, windy and rough days.

Buying a great combo may very well last you a lifetime and put more pompano in your freezer! There are many wonderful tackle shops locally. All are stocked with good equipment, but without some solid assistance an angler may not achieve the results he desires. My ad has been in *Martin County Currents* for nearly three years, so many have re-

quested my experience and all have learned valuable lessons. Thank you for reading my column, and "tight lines" till we meet again.. ■

Rich Vidulich, a commercial pompano surf fisherman who traverses the beaches of Martin County and points north for his "golden nuggets," lives in Jupiter. Send comments or questions to Pompano@MartinCountyCurrents.com.

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Every Saturday Volunteer Work Day at Jonathan Dickinson

Do something important to the environment by volunteering to help the Jonathan Dickinson State Park staff remove non-native invasive plants in the park each Saturday from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the park, 16450 SE Federal Highway in Hobe Sound. Free entry for participants, but preregistration is required. For more information and to register, go to www.jdstatpark.com.



Until Nov. 22 'Laura' presented by the Barn Theatre

The critically acclaimed play, "Laura," will run from Nov. 6-22 at the Barn Theatre, presenting an intricate mystery about the murder investigation of a beautiful and successful New York City ad executive revolves around the growing obsession of a police detective with the murder victim, and jealous compulsions that lead to murder. Show times are Thursday-Saturday at 8 p.m. and Sunday at 2 p.m. Tickets are \$20 and are available at the box office at 2400 S.E. Ocean Boulevard from noon to 4 pm on weekdays, or call the box office directly at 772-287-4884. Tickets can be purchased online at www.barn-theatre.com.

Weekend, Nov. 13-15 Jensen Beach Pineapple Festival



In honor of being named the "Pineapple Capital of the World," Jensen Beach will host a three-day music festival Nov. 13-15, starting at 6 p.m. on Friday, in the streets of downtown Jensen Beach at 1960 NE Jensen Beach Blvd. Featuring an authentic Bahamian market, midway rides, crafts, and three stages with various performers. The authentic Bahamian market and "Junkanoo Parade" with dancers and musicians from the Bahama island of Eleuthera is a special part of the event that should not be missed. The headliners feature a unique mix of rock, reggae, and country, and include Chase Bryant, Big Smo, and The Brilanders. For more information, go to www.pineapplefestival.info.

Saturday, Nov. 14 Second Saturday Stroll in Hobe Sound

Beginning at Taste restaurant on A1A and Bridge Road in Hobe Sound from 6-9 p.m., the Second Saturday Stroll in Hobe Sound offers live music, art and goodies from vendors and shopkeepers along the sidewalks of those historic Dixie Highway shops in Hobe Sound. Sponsored by the Hobe Sound Chamber, the event is free and will give you a sneak peek at all the new merchandise in stock for the holidays! For more info, call 772.546.4762.

Week of Nov. 16-21 Festival of Trees & Lights

One of the most anticipated events to kick off the holiday season in Stuart is the Festival of Trees & Lights that will benefit Tykes & Teens during Nov. 16-21 at Flagler Place, 201 SW Flagler Avenue, in downtown Stuart. Organizers will create a Florida Winter Wonderland that will include a Ladies Afternoon Tea and Tiny Tot Holiday Fashion Show, an elegant VIP party and tree auction, free breakfast and photos with Santa, and much more. For a complete itinerary and ticket information, go to www.tykesandteens.org.

Tuesday, Nov. 17 Curators & Cocktails at the Elliott Museum

One of the most popular events at the Elliott, this special evening of Curators & Cocktails brings together vintage cars, signature cocktails, tasty hors d'oeuvres and Elliott Museum Associate Car Curator John Giltinan for an exceptional experience. Tickets are \$30 per person. Seating is limited, so call for reservations. For more information, call 772.225.1961 or go to www.ElliottMuseum.org.

Wednesday, Nov. 18 Afghanistan/Iraq War Veteran to Speak

Speaker Brian Mast, a veteran of the Afghanistan/Iraq wars, will address the GFWC Woman's Club of Stuart monthly business luncheon at 11 a.m.-1 p.m. on Wednesday, Nov. 18. The meeting is open to the public and will be held at the Woman's Club of Stuart Club House, 729 East Ocean Boulevard, Stuart. 772-341-5186 for information.

Thursday, Nov. 19 "A Treasure We Call Home" at the Elliott

Master storyteller Rick Crary, who knows every nook and cranny in Stuart, will be at the Elliott Museum on Nov. 19 as part of the Wilmington Trust Lecture Series. Join Crary at 7 p.m. for an in-depth discussion of his book, "A Treasure We Call Home," which includes entertaining stories of some of the unique people whose lives have been linked forever with the Treasure Coast. A book signing will follow the lecture. Tickets are \$14 per person and free to Museum members. Seating is limited; RSVP to 772-225-1961.

Friday, Nov. 20 Race and Health Forum

Third in a series at Ground Floor Farm exploring definitions of racism and how it is made manifest within our own community. Open to the public free of charge. A panel discussion that begins at 5:30 p.m., followed by a question-and-answer period. The forum will also enable small group discussions, where participants can share thoughts, personal experiences, and listen. Panelists include a nurse midwife with Martin Health Systems, a licensed mental health counselor with the Martin County Community Services Division, and Martin County Department of Health officials.

Weekend, Nov. 21-22 Stuart Seafood Festival

Live music, lots of fresh seafood, nautical wares, family rides and entertainment at Memorial Park on Ocean Blvd. in Stuart. Saturday hours are 10 a.m. to 10 p.m., and Sunday, the festival opens at 11 a.m. and closes at 7 p.m. Tickets are \$5 in advance; \$7 at the gate; free parking. For more info, go to www.stuartseafoodfest.com.



Saturday, Nov. 26 Stuart Antiques Show at the Fairgrounds

The Stuart Antiques Show has more than 100 dealers of antiques and collectibles selling their wares in all price ranges. One ticket for \$6 gets you admission for both days in an air-conditioned facility with free parking. For more info, go to www.floridaantiqueshow.com/Our-Shows.

Friday, Nov. 27 Really, REALLY Free Market

On Black Friday, Nov. 27, from 2-8 p.m., a Really Really Free Market will be at Ground Floor Farm on Martin Luther King Blvd. (across from the Martin County Elections Office) where everything is free. It is a pop-up marketplace of diverse goods and services where no money and no barter is needed, no entrance fee required, and no limit....just bring your own bags. Come and take what you want and ideally give something too! To

donate anything of value that you no longer want or need, drop them off on Monday, Nov. 23, or Tuesday, Nov. 24, from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m., including clothes, books, kitchen supplies, tools, etc. Also bring homemade food, crafts, artwork, seeds, starts and cuttings. To donate your services, just show up on Friday, Nov. 27, anytime between 2-8pm. Make a sign that describes the service you are offering. Bring any tools or materials you might need, including tables and chairs. Offer that service on the spot to anyone who asks for it. Services could range from haircuts to massage to musical serenades to yoga classes to financial planning. To volunteer to help with the event, email Jackie at jackie@groundfloorfarm.com. The Really Really Free Market will be held indoors. For ore information, go to www.groundfloorfarm.com/freemarket



Weekend, Nov. 28-29 Art in the Park Stuart Fine Art & Craft Show

The 21st Annual Fine Art and Quality Crafts show where talented artisans and craftsmen will showcase and sell their original and unique works of art and handmade creations will be Nov. 28-29. Situated lakeside along the meandering paths of the beautiful Memorial Park on Ocean Boulevard in downtown Stuart, the show will begin at 9 a.m. For more information, go to: huffspromo.com.

Friday, Nov. 27 Stuart Christmas Tree Lighting Festival

The Christmas on Main Street downtown tree lighting festival will be Friday, Nov. 27, from 4 to 7 p.m. at Haney Circle in downtown Stuart. Join Santa and Mrs. Claus for musical and dance performances, kids activities, a petting zoo, and of course, lighting the downtown tree! No admission charge. Ride the free Sailfish Shuttle from Osceola, Sailfish, or Kiwanis parks to Haney Circle. For more information: 772.286.2848. Brought to you by: Stuart Downtown Business Association (DBA) and Stuart Main Street in Partnership with City of Stuart and the Stuart Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA).

Saturday, Nov. 28

Beach to Bar 5K to benefit Cystic Fibrosis

This fun tradition in Stuart each November to support the work of the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation will be Saturday, Nov. 28, at 3 p.m. beginning at Stuart Beach for all ages and levels of fitness. Bringing a novel twist to a traditional run, Beach to Bar will offer a challenging route, entertainment, and a post-race celebration like no other at Carson's Tavern on Ocean Blvd. For more info, go to www.beach2bar5k.org

Friday, Dec. 4

Stuart Christmas Parade



If you like Christmas lights, be sure to attend the 2015 Stuart Christmas Parade, hosted by the Visiting Nurses Association, on Friday, Dec. 4, at 7pm in downtown Stuart. The parade route has reversed this year with floats lining up on Monterey Road, turning left at Ocean Blvd., and ending at Georgia Avenue. For

more information, go to www.stuartchristmasparade.com or go to www.stuartchristmasparade.com or email: parade@vnaflorida.org

Saturday, Dec. 5

A Day Full of Christmas Parade Cheer

Two Christmas parades, plus an Arts & Crafts Stroll, will fill the day in celebration of the holidays in Hobe Sound and Indiantown on Saturday, Dec. 5. Begin your day at 10 a.m. in the historic village of Hobe Sound along Old Dixie Highway south of Bridge Road, then find your seat for nearly two hours of parade magic north on Dixie and west on Bridge Road that begins at 1 p.m. Immediately following the Hobe Sound parade, make the



beautiful drive to Indiantown for a touch of country Christmas cheer for its 2015 Christmas parade that includes everything from decorated swamp buggies to dozens of golf-cars that make you smile. Follow the parade crowd to Post Family Park for a tree lighting and sweet carolling from young Hope Rural School students. For more info, go to www.hobesound.org and to www.indiantownchamber.com.

Weekend, Dec. 3-6

Singing Christmas Tree at Hobe Sound



Each Christmas season, those who attend the Singing Christmas Tree event at the Hobe Sound Bible College are astounded at the level of professionalism and talent displayed in a production that reminds us of the true meaning of Christmas. Doors open at 6 p.m. nightly, Thursday through Sunday, with the performance that begins at 7 p.m. No admission charge, but a freewill offering will be taken.

Saturday, Dec. 12

Cocoa & Cookies with the Authors

The Robert Morgade Library & Fletch Adventures will present a special event, Cocoa & Cookies with the Authors, at the Morgade Library on Salerno Road on Saturday, Dec. 12, from 1:30-3:30 p.m. A holiday wonderland full of fun will include: Storytime book readings, author booths, and Meet 'n' Greets with Professor Clark the Science Shark & LMC's Fletch Mascots. A cookie buffet will be sponsored by Importico's Bakery with coffee and cocoa by Starbucks Coffee on Cove Road, as well as holiday craft stations and Stuart Ceramics ornament station, a selfie-style photo booth station, holiday music and decorations. A silent auction will benefit the Friends of the Martin County Library.

Saturday, Dec. 12

Rio's World-Famous Indoor Flea Market

The best deal in the county is offered by the Rio Civic Club at its Indoor Flea Market and Bake Sale on Saturday, Dec. 12, between 8 am and 12 noon. Located in historic Rio at the Rio Civic Center, 1255 NE Dixie Highway, shoppers will find jewelry, antiques, collectibles, household items, baby clothes and much more. Breakfast and lunch, as well as homemade baked goods, will be available for purchase. For detailed information, or to reserve a table (\$12) to sell your own items, call 334-2039.

Now through January 2016

Watercolor Society's Traveling Exhibition at the Elliott

Now until January 31, 2016, the Florida Watercolor Society's Traveling Exhibition with approximately 35 pieces will be on display at the Elliott Museum, 825 N.E. Ocean Boulevard. Open daily from 10 a.m.-5 p.m., and Thursday evenings until 8 p.m. For info: 772-225-1961, www.elliottmuseum.org.

Thursday, Jan. 29

Annual Luncheon to benefit Alzheimer's

The 14th annual luncheon to benefit Alzheimer's Community Care's programs and day care center in Martin County will be Thursday, Jan. 29, at 11:30 a.m. at Mariner Sands Country Club in Hobe Sound. Featured speaker is Dr. David Watson, founder of the Alzheimer's Research and Treatment Center in Lake Worth. Tickets are \$90 per person. Contact Deanna Henning at 772-2236351 or www.alzcare.org.



"Dancing Greater Sandhill Crane"
Donor: Women Supporting the Arts



"American Legacy" Eagle
Donor: Philip Busch



"Wading the Mangroves" Roseate Spoonbill
Donor: Henry and Mary Ann Gans



"Skimming the Waves" Pelican
Donors: Tom and Polly Campenni



"The Osprey Pair"
Donor: Mary Ann Houghland

Sculptures take flight on Colorado Avenue to Kiwanis Park

City officials and leaders sought to commemorate the City of Stuart's centennial in 2014 with public art that would remind its citizens for the next 100 years of their connection to the river that runs through it. Still reeling from the aftermath of devastating discharges of water to the St. Lucie River in 2013, they mindfully chose five birds that rely on that river for sustenance, no less so than the people who inhabit its banks, to be sculpted in bronze by renowned artist Geoffrey C. Smith of Stuart and installed along Colorado Avenue to Kiwanis Park. "Never before have we had a public arts project quite like this," says City Manager Paul Nicoletti. "Five spectacularly stunning statues—paid for without any tax dollars—that capture the city's commitment to our natural resources, and which hopefully will stand for generations of residents and visitors to view and admire." The public is invited to an official unveiling at 1 p.m. Nov. 18 in Kiwanis Park in downtown Stuart.

