

Maggy Hurchalla



Sarah Heard



Anne Scott



**Newly discovered &  
old "hacked" emails  
at center of new  
public records trial.  
pg 5**

**FREE**

# Martin County **CURRENTS**

Volume 6 Issue 5  
October/November 2016

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'new' majority,  
if elected Nov. 8.  
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Doug Smith



Ed Ciampi



Harold Jenkins



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board  
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**How could it  
happen here?  
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## Changes made in wake of algae crisis paid off after storm

**Prior to Hurricane Matthew's arrival on the Treasure Coast in early October, Martin County Ecosystems Manager Deb Drum hinted at what could become a catastrophic environmental disaster for the St. Lucie River, even without a direct hit.**

"Everything depends on how much rain there is and where it falls," she said during her regular status update on river conditions to the Board of County Commissioners on Sept. 20. "It could get very bad."

Although the storm's slight jog to the east spared Martin County a catastrophe, the rainfall as the storm traveled north over the next 7 days required a major increase in the volume of discharges of Lake water to the C-44 Canal into the St. Lucie River, which had been slowly recovering from the toxic algae crisis in late June.

The Army Corps of Engineers had adopted "pulse discharges" to give the river two days of zero discharges each week in order to increase salinity in the river from ocean tides. The increased salinity gives oysters the brackish water they need to survive, and the added salt inhibits the reoccurrence of blue-green algae blooms along with the toxins they sometimes harbor.

Following Matthew, Drum explained to commissioners that more water was still being stored north of the lake; therefore, the lower inflows to Lake Okeechobee with higher outflows had reduced the lake's water levels to within

a few inches of the Army Corps' targets for this time of year.

"Even though we're still in hurricane season until the end of November," she added, "I believe that we will continue to see reduced discharges." Maybe even to zero.

Martin County and the St. Lucie benefited from the governor's emergency order in June that had directed the SFWMD to hold more water in the Kissimmee Chain of Lakes and to send more south. Their plan would hold 20 billion gallons of water a day north of the Lake, 20 times what the lake was discharging at the time; however, the Federal Wildlife Conservation Commission threatened to sue the state because that amount of water would destroy 10 nests of the federally protected Snail Kite. Still, the increased lake levels reduced the inflows to Lake Okeechobee.

Recently, the SFWMD announced that a portion of the Kissimmee River restoration project north of the lake also would be opened early to accommodate even more water. During the algae crisis, more water disbursement projects were opened; the SFWMD built berms to hold back water on the land targeted for the C-23 reservoir; and AgTEC, on I-95 at the St. Lucie County line, and FPL in Indiantown allowed their ditches and ponds to be flooded.

The steps taken then put Lake Okeechobee in a far better position to deal with too much stormwater when Matthew came knocking on our door. ■

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## Martin County CURRENTS

**PUBLISHER** -- Barbara Clowdus  
**WEBSITE** -- Sonic Fish, LLC

**PRINTER** -- Southeast Offset, Inc.  
**GRAPHIC DESIGN** -- Simone Fong

A monthly newspaper, Martin County Currents LLC is distributed free throughout the county. All opinions are those of its authors, and letters to the editor are encouraged. Contact information: Martin County Currents LLC, Stuart, FL 34997. [www.MartinCountyCurrents.com](http://www.MartinCountyCurrents.com). [editor@martincountycurrents.com](mailto:editor@martincountycurrents.com). 772.245.6564.

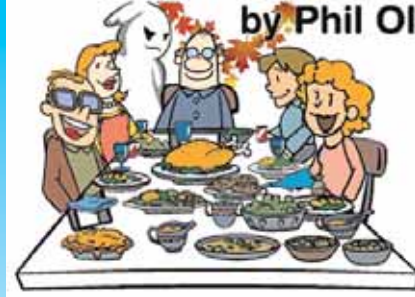
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All Aboard Florida changed its name to Brightline last year. The trains may go through Martin County in the spring on their way to the Miami station, which is nearing completion.

## Winning legal arguments boosts train opponents' confidence

**The \$2 million taken by Martin County commissioners from the county's emergency reserves more than a year ago to fund their legal challenges to All Aboard Florida is now budgeted to be returned to the reserves this year. The legal cases and expenses, though, will continue.**

"I believe that money was well spent," said Commissioner John Haddox, "otherwise, we would have 32 passenger trains and more freight speeding through Martin County right now; and maybe most importantly, we've made real progress in moving them west where they belong."

Haddox, who led the county's commitment to join Indian River County's legal challenge to stop the passenger rail train's progress has spent most of its time trying to prove in federal court that the \$3.1 billion railroad depends on financial support from the government, not exclusively private funding, thus taxpayers in Martin and Indian River counties have standing to argue their case against the US Department of Transportation for allegedly violating the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) as well as federal law by approving \$1.75 billion in tax-free bonds. Martin and Indian counties filed their latest challenges on Oct. 20, seeking to revoke the bond sale approvals.

Although the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia agreed that the counties' claims have merit, if AAF raises the capital for its Miami-to-Orlando railroad privately, their case would be undermined, if not dead; however, a recent report in Bloomberg News reveals that Fortress Investments, the hedge fund that owns FECI and AAF, may be seeking a buyer for its railroad.

Court records also indicate that \$405 million in an escrow account are no longer pegged for Phase II of the project.

Martin and Indian River are also legally challenging the environmental permits recently issued to All Aboard Florida by two water management districts. The railroad needs 17 permit approvals from various state and federal agencies to move through the Treasure Coast.

Indian River is challenging the St. Johns River Water Management District to meet what their county attorney calls "fundamental (environmental) requirements," over four acres of wetlands and 11 acres of surface water.

Martin County – this time with help from St. Lucie County – filed an administrative law appeal on Oct. 3 in the Florida Fourth District Court of Appeal against the South Florida Water Management District for issuing an environmental permit for a portion of its work in Palm Beach, Martin and St. Lucie counties.

SFWMMD issued a press release the same day as its AAF permit approval, to explain that it addressed only stormwater management systems within the railroad's right of way, which did not include roadways.

A growing segment of the business community has opposed the county's commitment to spending taxpayer funds in the AAF legal fight, however, a

report by Richard Creech of Creech Engineering in Stuart stirred additional excitement among Martin County commissioners when he revealed that a fifth alternative route would eliminate the need to cross two aging railroad bridges, including Stuart's, and had not been considered by AAF, which is yet one more flaw in AAF's environmental impact review that adds credence to the county's challenge.

The county's legal fight is being supported by CARE FL, a consortium of Martin and Palm Beach County Homeowner Associations and individuals opposed to AAF, which retained an attorney in Washington D.C. early in the fight. The group said in a news release last month that it may intervene and provide backup support to Martin County, retaining a Miami law firm to research the county's current permit challenge.

All Aboard Florida already is building the first phase of the railroad, from Miami to West Palm Beach, announcing recently that service will begin in 2017 – the original start date for full service from Miami to Orlando. ■

## Higher taxes on the way, in spite of commissioner assurances

**Taxpayers rejoiced in late July when some commissioners announced that the county had held the line on the**

**county's millage rate, although its expenditures would rise.**

Anne Scott announced "no increase in taxes" during a Hobe Sound Neighborhood Advisory Committee meeting on the last day of budget hearings July 24. She neglected to inform them, however, that she and fellow commissioners Sarah Heard and Ed Fielding had cut the Community Redevelopment Area funding by \$825,000, as well as eliminated the economic development fund, to avoid a millage rate increase on real property in 2017.

She also did not mention that the taxes property owners must pay will rise anyway due to rising property values, in addition to the rise in taxes for all taxing districts. The only exception is the South Florida Water Management District, which rolled back its millage rate in order to keep revenues the same as 2016 levels to offset the rise in property values.

The Taxpayers Association of Martin County openly criticized the county commission for its spending habits, pointing to an 86 percent increase in expenditures over the past 15 years. Stuart City Commissioner Tom Campenni also publicly criticized the county commission, accusing the county for keeping its ad valorem tax rate flat by raising the rates of the MSTU (Municipal Services Taxing Unit) districts for all the county's municipalities.

"Something is wrong when those of us who don't use county services pay a higher rate than those that do use those services," Campenni said. "I thought we were all residents of Martin County."

The municipalities, City of Stuart, Se-

*continued on PAGE 5*

## Commissioner rejects Taxpayer Association criticism of county spending

**In a letter to county commissioners in September, the president of the Martin County Taxpayers Association, Tom Kenny, a former county commissioner, called the county's current pattern of spending "unsustainable," noting an 86-percent increase in spending over the past 15 years, concurrent with only a 23-percent increase in population.**

Commissioner Anne Scott dismissed the MCTA's calculations in her comments during the Oct. 18 commission meeting, since they had not accounted for inflation, she said, and had made other errors. Calling the letter "unworthy of an organization representing taxpayers," she said that the group had not responded to her invitation to meet with her prior to budget hearings in July, and neither did they provide any suggestions, she said.

In other letters to the commission, however, the MCTA listed the following as "10 Steps to Better Local Government":

- Stop the bleeding of our tax dollars by funding unnecessary lawsuits. Settle all that can be settled as soon as possible.
- Restore the CRAs (Community

Redevelopment Areas) to what they were envisioned to be, reappoint the NAC and restore the TIF (Tax Increment Financing) funding. Support redevelopment of our historic towns and villages.

- Fully support and fund the conversion from septic tank to sewer wherever possible, with emphasis on riverfront properties.

- Support our marine, aircraft and tourist industries; approve the (U.S.) Customs Facility at Witham field.

- Continue the fight against the intrusion of AAF. Carefully monitor our efforts to use our tax dollars in this fight.

- Support our sunshine laws, open government and transparency. Revisit our disclosure rules and public notice procedures.

- Review our building permit procedures. Restore, and listen to our "Impact Fee Review" committee and invite TCBA (Treasure Coast Builders Association) to participate in improving procedures and reducing turnaround times.

- Restore our Comprehensive Plan to its previous excellence, eliminate duplication and contradictions. – Respect

the rights of private property owners.

- Restore public faith in our budget and fiscal policies. Review our capital needs "shortfall" to establish real priorities and eliminate "wish list" projects.

- Using professional negotiators, continue to work with our Firefighters and EMS to produce a fair and balanced contract.

- Review, report and communicate with the City of Stuart to improve response procedures and reduce costs. Move lifeguards out of the EMT classification.

Although these suggestions probably do not fit what Scott was seeking, many of them align with the rhetoric heard in local campaign speeches over the summer. Many may well be adopted by the business-friendly commission majority to take office Nov. 22.

"Martin County is a great place to live and raise a family," Kenny added, "however, it is becoming a community where only the wealthy can afford to live. Hopefully, our leaders will study ways to keep our expenses down, while continuing to protect our quality of life." ■



# Judge orders forensic search of hacked computer

Which weighs more on the scales of justice: an elected official's right to privacy or the public's right to hold an official accountable? That argument lasted for more than an hour in the Martin County courthouse Wednesday, Oct. 19, with Lake Point attorneys from Tampa on one side of the courtroom volleying with Martin County's outside attorneys, also from Tampa, on the other.

District Court Judge Shields McManus ultimately ruled that a forensic examination of Commissioners Sarah Heard's and Anne Scott's personal computers was warranted, and so ordered it done.

Attorney Ethan Loeb, for Lake Point, had asked the court for permission to conduct a limited, forensic search for Lake Point records and correspondence on the personal computers belonging to Martin County commissioners Anne Scott, Sarah Heard and John Haddox. A forensic search of Commissioner Ed Fielding's personal computer was ordered by the court and conducted in 2015.

Loeb also requested that Haddox's name be added to Lake Point's complaint "for clarity," since the first public records request said "all commissioners" but the public records complaint named only Sarah Heard, Anne Scott and Ed Fielding.

Lake Point's motion was denied. "Commissioner Haddox is not central to this case," Shields said.

Attorney Rick Porter argued for Martin County that people's entire lives, from medical to financial records to family notes are now housed on electronic devices, including those of the county



Maggy Hurchalla



Anne Scott



Sarah Heard

commissioners, and thus such a search would violate an individual's right to privacy.

The law also requires, Porter emphasized, that the search would need to be justifiable, and that all other, less obtrusive means to obtain the information had been exhausted. He told the court that a forensic examination of Scott's computer had already been conducted by an outside IT expert; therefore, Lake Point could depose Scott's computer expert instead of conducting its own forensic search, citing as well the additional burdens of cost and time.

He also suggested that a search of the web-based accounts was possible without needing to search the computers themselves. Lake Point had requested the court earlier to allow such a search of Heard's computer in 2013, but Heard denied the permission that Yahoo required, and Martin County objected to the search then, according to court records.

Loeb told the court that Lake Point would bear the cost of retaining an IT consultant for its own search.

In his arguments, Loeb reminded the court that five relevant emails found on a previously undisclosed email account between Scott and former Commissioner Maggy Hurchalla, discovered

during a public records search in February this year, had prompted McManus to overturn his previous ruling more than a year ago that had absolved the county of public records violations.

Lake Point appealed the ruling to the Fourth District of Appeal, but before the appellate court could hear the case, the county's IT department conducted another records search of Scott's private email accounts at Lake Point's request that included a previously undisclosed email account. The county's search uncovered five new emails relevant to Lake Point's original public records request of February 2013.

"But weren't they the same as the emails you already had in your possession?" McManus asked.

"No, Your Honor, these were different," Loeb responded, some of which showed "a back and forth conversation between Ms. Hurchalla and Commis-

sioner Scott," thus deflating the argument that the account was inactive, Loeb added.

To justify a search of Heard's computer, Loeb reminded McManus of the commissioner's assertion in court that her email account had been "hacked," thus all her emails, which she admitted during her 2015 court testimony contained public records, had been wiped cleaned from her computer, which the judge found to be "curious" in his 2015 ruling.

McManus said that "as the facts came forward, I was particularly troubled by hacking that resulted in the loss of public records ... which remains unexplained."

Loeb also produced three emails for the court allegedly from Heard, which she forwarded from her personal computer to County Administrator Taryn Kryzda on the same day within minutes of each other in December 2012, yet the original emails, which would have revealed the name of the sender, had

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## Higher taxes

*continued from PAGE 4*

wall's Point, Ocean Breeze and the Town of Jupiter Island, pay a share of the indirect costs to the county for administering fire, stormwater, road maintenance and parks and recreation, which is reflected in the MSTU millage rates.

City of Stuart residents will pay an additional \$200,000 in 2017, and all the municipalities combined will pay an additional \$500,000, according to Campenni, less than a one-percent increase over the previous year.

In correspondence between City Manager Paul Nicoletti and County Administrator Taryn Kryzda, the MSTU increases were explained. The county followed the same method as adopted 12 years ago and followed each year since. It is not the result of manipulating the county's budget. She also pledged to coordinate a meeting among all the municipalities' administrators prior to proposing the 2018 tentative budget to avoid future surprises.

The total millage rate, including those of the MSTUs for schools, fire, etc., adopted for 2017 is 9.3936. ■

## County's legal costs in Lake Point case escalate

Martin County's legal expenses in the Lake Point litigation skyrocketed in 2016 with \$1.28 million in additional costs, excluding staff time, according to county records. Of that, \$911,000 went to outside attorneys, which includes the cost of three private attorneys for individual commissioners and some of the legal costs of co-defendant Maggy Hurchalla, whom Lake Point alleges interfered with its contracts.

The county's 2016 expenses were offset by approximately \$354,000 in insurance proceeds.

Since Feb. 2, 2013, Martin County has spent a total of \$2.1 million, of which \$1.7 million went to outside attorneys, offset by \$552,000 in insurance, according to county records.

The case stems from Martin County's alleged attempt in 2013 to shut down the 1,008-acre Lake Point rock mining and water restoration project near Indiantown, which Lake Point claims breaches agreements approved in 2008 by a unanimous vote of

the county commission, as well as the county's refusal in 2013 to revoke its development order following Lake Point's mining permit approvals from the state Department of Environmental Protection and the South Florida Water Management District.

Lake Point also alleges that the South Florida Water Management District breached its agreement, which included the provision that Lake Point would turn over ownership of the Lake Point site to convert its excavated rock pits into stormwater treatment areas to clean water from the C-44 canal in return for allowing Lake Point to continue to mine rock or otherwise produce revenue from the site for 20 years.

The county claims that Lake Point, which had originally planned an equestrian development with 20-acre lots and a man-made lake, violated the terms of its development order by excavating beyond approved borders.

The county also objected to Lake Point's pursuit of a potential water supply project with American Water,

the largest public utility in the U.S., for transferring overflows from the C-44 canal, cleaning the water as it flowed through Lake Point's lined rock pits, to the L-8 canal at Lake Point's southern border for transfer to potential Palm Beach reservoirs and/or the Everglades, under control of the SFWMD.

Martin County contended that its contract was an interlocal agreement with the South Florida Water Management District to which Lake Point was not a party; however, District Court Judge Shields McManus in a 2016 hearing disagreed, saying that Lake Point's name was "littered" throughout the agreement.

"Lake Point is either a party or, at the very least, a third-party beneficiary," he said, thus entitled to pursue legal action against Martin County for an alleged breach.

In other hearings, McManus agreed with the South Florida Water Management District that its agreement with Lake Point did not include a water supply business, which will affect Lake

Point's damage claims, and he granted the SFWMD the opportunity to file a counterclaim against Lake Point for breach of contract. The new filing resulted in a postponement of the trial until after Jan. 1, 2017.

Lake Point also alleges that Hurchalla disseminated false information to county commissioners and others via private email correspondence and secret meetings to persuade them to cancel the county's contract. Hurchalla's personal attorney, Virginia Sherlock, contends that Lake Point's lawsuit is a SLAPP suit (Strategic Lawsuit Against Public Participation), and in four separate motions requested that Lake Point's case against her be dismissed. Four times, the court denied the request.

Sherlock now is requesting that the court sever Hurchalla's case from the breach of contract cases against Martin County and SFWMD, so as to hear Hurchalla's case earlier due to her failing health. A hearing to consider Sherlock's motion will be Nov. 11 before McManus. ■

# New commissioners to take control of county commission

**What's next for Martin County? If the presumed winners of the two remaining county commission seats survive challenges by write-in candidates on Nov. 8 – incumbent Doug Smith and newcomer Harold Jenkins, who defeated Anne Scott – the majority power on the Martin County Commission will shift.**

**T**hey will join Commissioner-Elect Ed Ciampi, who ousted incumbent John Haddox in the primary, on a dais that puts Commissioners Sarah Heard and Ed Fielding in the minority.

Will anything really be any different than in the previous four years? Judging by their campaign speeches and candidate forums, absolutely it will.

The top three issues identified by the majority of pre-election voters included the state of the river, the lack of jobs, and the threat of All Aboard Florida. As candidates, all three pledged repeatedly that the river and the health of the Indian River Lagoon were top priorities, but how will that translate to action?

We have history with Doug Smith, who took the lead during the toxic algae crisis, pushing the commission to declare an emergency – two times – the first in February after torrential, record-setting rain in January, and the second time, during the summer when blankets of algae snuffed out clean air and nearly all life in parts of the St. Lucie. He pushed for those declarations to go not only to the governor, but to the President.

He called this “our Deepwater Horizon,” and made the case that the county should spend emergency reserve funds on testing water, testing air, and investigating “every idea, every proposal” for removing the algae from the water, since state and federal agencies’ responses seemed meager and sluggish. It was a first for the commission.

Every effort he initiated was attributed by the media to Chair Anne Scott, although she was out of the country at the time.

Smith is used to his environmental work being ignored by local media, because he focuses on what Martin County can do right here, right now, and should be doing for the future, in spite of whatever the “popular solution” at the moment dictates. That often

makes him a target for criticism, rather than for accolades.

## **MORE SEWER LINES, STORMWATER?**

He nearly single-handedly maneuvered the state bureaucracy to allow Martin County to turn an old dump site near Hobe Sound – outside of his district –

He also long has preached the gospel, shared by Harbor Branch scientists, that Martin County will not achieve clean water, including in our water wells, without moving from septic systems to sewage treatment systems; therefore, over the next four years, residents may be able to expect that Smith will begin an initiative for a long-term – over 30 years or longer – plan for a countywide sewer system, beginning with the septic tanks that line the St. Lucie River and the Indian River Lagoon.

At least in theory, both Ciampi and Jenkins also expressed support of a countywide sewer system. They also both signed the Everglades Foundation’s “Now-or-Neverglades” petition to sup-

ported \$2 million over the past two years, to pay legal expenses, although he often was accused of supporting AAF’s plans; however, he also required that specific objectives be named and to keep the commission informed.

A hot topic for Palm City residents, which lies in Ciampi’s district, is the prospect that a Costco warehouse will be approved on industrial land between I-95 and the Turnpike, at the High Meadow and Martin Highway intersection. Ciampi, although he describes himself as “a card-carrying Costco member,” pledged to Palm City residents during his campaign that he’d never approve the development’s location there; however, the caveat is that if

Costco meets all the county’s rules, then he also will not cause the county to be subject to yet another unnecessary lawsuit, as has plagued the county over the past four years.

## **END TO LANDOWNER LAWSUITS?**

Speaking of lawsuits, it is likely that the new commission majority will seek early settlements with the landowners currently locked in legal challenges against the county, which over the past four years generally subjugated individual landowners’ property rights in favor of a no-growth objective. The new commission majority all have indicated that they will seek common sense, fair solutions to thorny issues.

They also favor moving the Martin County Fair away from its current Dixie Highway location to attract light manufacturing projects to that site – opposed by the previous majority. The new commissioners also had supported the EcoGen biomass facility. Although that project has located now in Okeechobee as a result of the county’s “hostile business environment,” the new commission majority may seek to reopen that conversation.

A major change coming to the county is the potential that both Indiantown, with about 6,000 residents, and Hobe Sound, with around 16,000 residents, will incorporate within the next year. Smith, Ciampi and Jenkins all support those efforts, although it will reduce the size of the county budget and dilute the power of the county commission – maybe the best change of all. ■

—Barbara Clowdus



**Edward Ciampi**



**Harold Jenkins**



**Doug Smith**

into a stormwater treatment area that cleanses and restores the water flow for Kitching Creek, which 15 years ago was nearly dry and impacts the water flow of the Loxahatchee River.

Today, due to Smith’s efforts, Martin County residents have yet another place to launch a canoe or kayak and connect with nature in a place that for decades was an unsightly brownfield. Residents can expect to see more stormwater treatment projects.

Smith also lobbied hard for the federal funds to begin construction of the C-44 reservoir, more than a decade behind its timeline. He also championed a grant-funded mooring field in Jensen Beach to prevent raw sewage from being dumped by anchored boaters into the lagoon, which was killed by the 2012 commission majority, as well as a fully funded sewer-line extension along Indian River Drive in Jensen Beach to remove 50-year-old septic tanks from the lagoon.

port the state’s purchase of land south of Lake Okeechobee for water storage.

## **CRAs, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AAF, COSTCO?**

The previous commission majority’s hard line on expanding businesses resulted in dismantling the independent CRA and cutting funding of the Community Redevelopment Areas. Smith, as well as Ciampi and Jenkins, has stated that the independent CRA will be re-established immediately as an economic driver within the urban services boundary, as will the U.S. Customs Facility at Witham Field, a grant-funded initiative also killed by the previous commission majority.

All three, Ciampi, Smith and Jenkins, have pledged to continue the fight against All Aboard Florida’s plans for 32 passenger trains, which would improve tracks that likely could accommodate more FEC freight cars. Smith approved every request for funding, which has



## More changes to come with new majority in office

Probably the greatest impact of the soon-to-be elected commission majority is not one that anyone – other than county staff, perhaps – will be able to detect. It will not fit on a list of projects, initiatives or objectives.

It just simply will be a shift of the unelected “shadow” government’s physical presence – from being intertwined in county government, to now being relegated to public comment periods at county commission meetings.

They also likely will need to make appointments now to see a department head, as most every other citizen does.

Previously, decisions over the past four years made by the Martin County Commission majority of 2012 often have been in line – nearly lockstep at times – with this unelected group of residents, who call themselves “community activists.”

Regular MCTV viewers were stunned at that first convened meeting of the 2012 county commission, when they heard comments now that had become demands.

Attorney-activists Virginia Sherlock and Donna Melzer, standing before the new 2012 commissioners criticized openly and harshly the performance of County Administrator Taryn Kryzda, who previously had drawn wide accolades for her work as a public servant.

The accusations, essentially, insisted that she had catered to the county’s business and development interests and had not been transparent in her dealings with them. The criticism continued for weeks, with other activist-associates taking turns in the harangue, joined by Commissioner Sarah Heard.

For viewers, it was confusing, uncomfortable, and embarrassing to watch.

Kryzda had spent more than 25 years working for Martin County, starting as a secretary and working her way up through the ranks until she was named assistant county administrator, then appointed county administrator by the members of the 2008 County Commission.

“Taryn is the one of the finest county administrators that I’ve ever worked with,” says Commissioner Doug Smith. “She makes the wheels of the county run so smoothly, that we’re not even aware

of it. It runs in the background, while we go about our everyday ‘stuff’ never having to think about it. She is an asset.”

Yet the criticism being launched continued unabated, relentlessly, until Kryzda rewrote her own contract with verbiage to match what she was hearing, and rearranged the usual priorities of the administrative position to align with those of the commission majority.

The lesson, at least for those watching including the county staff, was that a new day had dawned in county government. The administration door was open to nearly free rein by Sherlock and Melzer, according to county employees, some of whom designated a desk in their office for their visits.

Former Mayor of the Town of Jupiter Island Harry Charlston spoke knowledgeably when he called “Maggy, Ginny and Donna the most powerful group in the county.” Maggy is Maggy Hurchalla, another “community activist” who keeps herself behind the scenes much of the time now, but the three work largely in concert with each other.

A county commissioner for 20 years, Hurchalla had much unfinished business to attend to when she was suddenly ousted by a feisty black woman from Port Salerno, Elmira Gainey, and that she has done, including rewriting major portions of the county’s Comprehensive Growth Management Plan to ensure that businesses do not expand and that growth is largely capped. She accomplished it before the commissioners even took office in November 2012.

None of that will happen now, as long as Smith and Harold Jenkins prevail over the write-in candidates on Nov. 8; however, it also means that their underground email network will again get fired up, with opinions (stated as fact) that give no opportunity for rebuttal, ducking wider scrutiny and omitting verifiable references, with content written primarily by Sherlock or Hurchalla and circulated by Melzer, with the intent to stir residents’ inherent fears of massive, unrestrained development. So, Martin County, get ready. Here they come. ■

– Barbara Clowdus

## RE-ELECT Michael DiTerlizzi for SCHOOL BOARD DISTRICT 5



### Michael DiTerlizzi

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- ★ Decades of public/community service
- ★ Addressing issues that matter most to YOU, quality education
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- ★ Reduced district’s long term debt and improved financial accountability
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## RE-ELECT Michael DiTerlizzi for SCHOOL BOARD DISTRICT 5

Political advertisement paid for and approved by Michael DiTerlizzi, nonpartisan, for school board, District 5

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# Editorial: Outrage follows two commission losses

The aftermath of the District 1 and District 3 county commission outcomes in the primary has flagrantly, defiantly, unapologetically widened the philosophical divide among voters in Martin County.

Challenger Jacqui Thurlow-Lippisch lost to incumbent Doug Smith by 677 votes in District 1, and Harold Jenkins shellacked Anne Scott in District 3. Instead of critically examining the flaws within their own campaigns, they spent weeks blaming others for the outcome, particularly that Democrats and Independents were locked out of the Republican primary in both races.

Their subjective conclusion was based on what Jacqui and Anne wanted to believe, as well as their avid supporters – that the majority of voters really, truly, deeply expected Jacqui and Anne to win, not Doug and Harold. They even acted entitled to hold those seats.

Jacqui and Anne lambasted the state law that closes a party's primary race when a write-in candidate for that party qualifies. The law already has been challenged in the courts and upheld.

We disagree that the county commission race should be non-partisan, as is the City of Stuart's. Compare an election among 15,000 people, where constituents can chat with a candidate over a latte at Stuart Coffee Company or bump elbows at Publix to an election

among 140,000 county residents spread out over 753 square miles.

County residents may know candidates more by the party they represent than anything else. In Stuart, residents vote for the person they know, which is why non-partisan elections work for them.

Voters know, generally, that Democrats tend to champion social issues and expect government to take control, unfearful of taxation to support their objectives; the Republicans champion smaller government, less regulation and champion business. They abhor higher taxes.

The actions of the county commission majority over the past four years increased the size and power of county government, increased spending, taxes and fees, reduced citizen input, and relegated economic development to the lowest rung on its ladder of priorities. Does that sound like a Republican commission?

Republican voters bristled at the top-heavy government control, an ever-growing budget and staff – particularly in the legal department – and an ever-increasing load of regulations, to which large landowners were exempt due to legal challenges. The new rules affected primarily small businesses that wanted to expand. Even many Democrats felt the same way, rejecting Jacqui's and Anne's philosophies of governance. That's why they could not earn more Republican support.

Following the primary, Jacqui's unbridled outrage at "the manipulation of an 18-year-old" to close the primary sparked a movement among her supporters to launch a political campaign to get him elected Nov. 8. Not because he's a better candidate, which would be noble. It's only to retaliate for Jacqui's loss.

So ask yourself, who truly are the manipulators?

They both accused Jenkins and Smith of being influenced by "dark money" from "outsiders," and Thurlow-Lippisch spent days dissecting the Political Action Committees that donated to Smith's and Jenkins' campaigns. She and Anne, who both raised nearly double the campaign funds of their opponents, ignored the fact that they both live in two of the top-10 wealthiest communities in the state, the Town of Sewall's Point and the Town of Jupiter Island.

They both move in the social circles of very wealthy people, yet they never considered that the thousands and thousands of dollars from those two communities – and in Anne's case coming from more than 90 percent retired residents – could also be considered "special interests." You think not?

What's sad and almost embarrassing for them both is that in their bitter response to the election results, they sowed distrust, dislike and discord in

her wakes – losing respect among their constituents in the process.

Their pejorative pronouncements were based on absolutely no facts, no historical references, and no horrible deeds. Just supposition based on puffs of smoke and dark hearts.

In Anne Scott's farewell remarks at the Oct 25 county commission meeting, she called the newly elected officials a "rogue" commission that voters needed to watch closely. She also announced brightly: "Tonight, I'm going home to Chicago to watch the Cubs play in the World Series."

That one sentence revealed the major flaw in her campaign. Voters sensed that "home" is not Martin County, and a drive-thru commissioner inspires little trust.

Jacqui's accusations and smears and finger-pointing reminded us of a petulant child's temper tantrum. She apparently failed to learn much while enrolled at UF's Florida Natural Resources Leadership Institute, which hopes to graduate leaders equipped to engage oppositional stakeholder groups to work together in seeking environmental solutions.

We hope she takes a refresher course, because much remains to be done. Martin County needs her to be the leader we've grown to expect. Fostering the political divide accomplishes nothing. ■

## The killing and resuscitation of Indiantown



**Darlene Fugetta**

*Guest Editorial*

Many of us who live on the coast have ventured to iTown to attend the terrific Sunday brunch at the Seminole Inn on Warfield Boulevard. The more adventurous may have even toured the Barley Barber Swamp. (You should, if you haven't.) Or attended the annual Indiantown Rodeo, which gives me a chance to wear my cowboy hat!

But what do those of us who don't live there know about the real and vitally important ways this historic whistle stop affects us?

Admittedly, just driving through town, it's hard for visitors to see that iTown teems with possibilities. Coastal residents may think it's a haul to get "out there" since it's 20 miles west of Stuart, but to the rest of Florida, iTown is strategically located, accessed by a trans-coastal waterway, railways and highways. Although iTown boasts its own private airport (and marina), it also lies less than an hour's drive from Palm Beach International.

Even less apparent to a casual ob-

server is that iTown is high and dry, boasting the highest overall elevation in the county, thus less vulnerable to hurricanes. Its privately owned underground network of broadband means that every house in iTown could become its own call center. And the massive FPL plant is in their backyard.

Yet, there's nothing there, right? Not exactly. Every Eggsland egg is laid in iTown. All the cole slaw in the southeastern US made for Kentucky Fried is grown in iTown, which also grows fresh shrimp! The flour sold in Publix supermarkets and for Little Caesar's Pizza is milled in iTown, and most of the rock for our bridges, roads and stormwater projects comes from iTown.

Orange juice is processed there, although the Louis Dreyfuss processing plant may soon close as the result of the waning number of productive orange groves. The Cogeneration plant, which produced electricity by burning coal, has been sold and 100 jobs lost. Nearly 90 percent of iTown's work force must travel elsewhere to work.

The greatest ray of hope for iTown had been the once-proposed EcoGen biomass facility, which not only would have provided jobs, but a new crop (eucalyptus trees) for farmers trying to hang onto their land.

Therein lies the frustration of those iTown leaders who finally sought to move forward with incorporating their town of 6,000. They saw their busi-

nesses hampered by county impact fees not reflective of their own demographics, by a heavy-handed county commission who drove out EcoGen's 250 new jobs, and the impending death of the citrus industry.

Their population comprises far fewer retirees than on the coast. In fact, the age of 29 percent of the iTown population is under 20, and 59 percent are under 39, compared to 19 percent under 20 in coastal areas. In other words, a bunch of folks in iTown are looking for a future.

Though the much-celebrated opening of the first McDonald's and Dunkin' Donuts were welcome, it reminds us that the average per capita income is only \$11,560, compared to Martin County's \$35,158. Twenty-three percent of iTown's population lives below the poverty line – statistics iTown is unwilling to accept any longer, not for themselves and not for their children.

Inspired by the privately commissioned economic study of iTown by Boyette Strategic Advisers, publicly presented last March, iTown intends to expand opportunities by attracting call centers, warehousing, distribution plants, food packaging and production facilities. Even aerospace and aviation technology, along with expanding the existing marine industry, are realistic pursuits.

The path to prosperity for iTown has never been more clear.

What does incorporation mean for the rest of Martin County? Growth "out

there" will have few consequences for those on the coast; however, iTown's gain is the county's loss – initially – because iTown landowners now provide approximately one third of the county's property tax revenue.

Much of that will be diverted from the county's general fund and go directly to iTown. They will have their own government making their own decisions about how best to spend those funds in only their town.

The county "earned" this loss of revenue, in my opinion, by what has NOT been allowed to happen in iTown, which borders on immoral. Not allowing people to put more food on their tables and otherwise improve their lot due to a misplaced fear of "Browardization" by coastal residents is a serious injustice.

Rather than watch their town slowly wither, these brave residents have sought a new path with such vigor that more than 1,000 residents signed the petition to incorporate in just two days in July.

More steps will follow before it comes back to Indiantown for a final vote in November 2017. Some hurdles still lie ahead, but the will of the people is there. My cowboy hat is off to them. ■

*Former state Republican Committeewoman Darlene Fugetta serves as president of the Republican Club of Martin County and is a board member of the Martin County Taxpayer Association.*



# Will forgotten artifact now get second chance?



**Barbara  
Clowdus**

*Unfiltered*

**L**ocked inside a Martin County warehouse on Runke Street for the past five years lies a piece of flame-tarnished steel, a remnant of the 9/11 attack on the Twin Towers. The section of two I-beams, bolted together yet distorted into an unnatural bend, is slightly larger than nine square feet and weighs more than a thousand pounds.

Destined for a 9/11 memorial fountain to have been built in Hobe Sound in 2010, the artifact joined other steel remnants destined for similar memorials on its 2009 journey from a Port Authority of New York & New Jersey warehouse to St. Lucie and Martin counties.

Two other steel artifacts became part of memorials in Martin County, one at the Cummings Library in Palm City, the site of a remembrance ceremony this year on the 15th anniversary of the attack, and the other artifact is on the grounds of the Tropical Farms fire station.

The planned memorial fountain for Hobe Sound, however, was killed after 2012's "new" majority commission took office. Newly elected Commissioner Anne Scott found it repugnant to "memorialize a tragedy," besides, no

funds were available.

The previous county commission had written a letter of support of the project to the Port Authority in 2009 at the Hobe Sound Chamber's request, and the commission accepted ownership of the artifact on Dec. 7, 2010. The 9/11 artifact belongs to Martin County.

Artist Nadia Utto had unintentionally ruffled feathers trying to overcome the challenges of finding a proper site that included access to water for the fountain and volunteers willing to maintain it. Martin County firefighters stepped forward to accept responsibility, and the lawn in front of Station #32, bordering US 1 in Hobe Sound, was approved in September 2011.

Architect Scott Hughes of Hobe Sound, engineer Joe Capra of Captec Engineering, and landscape architect Bert Krebs of Innocenti & Webel Landscape Architects collaborated with Utto to revise the design for the proposed site. Like Utto, they all donated their time to the project.

Since the fire station was undergoing renovation, however, the work could not proceed, and the project was delayed. When Utto finally presented the adjusted design to the commission in 2013, after already going through the county's review process, she was told she had failed to follow "proper protocol." She had met individually with each commissioner, yet none had informed her of any protocol.

That denial ended her four-year-long

quest to create a memorial to commemorate so much more than the attack itself. Dozens of nationalities were represented among those killed that day, 72 according to the 9/11 Museum researchers, typical of the melting pot that is the United States.

"In our interconnectedness, many countries realized that an attack on the U.S. is essentially an attack on the peoples of the world," Utto said. "That's why I called it a World Memorial."

She wrote to 198 sovereign nations to ask for a native stone to include in a mosaic of a world map. At least count, 128 had sent her stones. "Can you imagine standing in one place," she said, "yet touching all these countries?"

She was not alone in believing that the 9/11 attack was felt globally. As of August 2016, when the Port Authority closed its doors permanently, they had distributed pieces of steel to eight other countries, including Canada and Germany. A total of 2,629 artifacts went to 1,585 fire and police departments, schools and museums in every state of the U.S.

Each recipient, including Martin County, pledged to use their artifact in memorials or exhibits honoring those killed on 9/11, and in conspicuous public venues. The observations of Harriet Senie, a professor of art history at the City University of New York and author of *Memorials to Shattered Myths: Vietnam to 9/11* tells you why:

"History is a vague concept, but if you have this tangible object that was a

part of this historical event," Senie writes, "it makes it very difficult to deny, and it also makes it possible to experience it in a very visceral way."

Visceral responses were evident when the artifact arrived in Hobe Sound on the 10th anniversary of 9/11 on the back of a flat-bed trailer. Every person who walked near the trailer, parked on the side of Bridge Road, felt compelled to lay their hands in silence on the steel that had grown hot under the Florida sun.

With the instant vaporization of hundreds of victims, one heart-broken father described the sacredness of the steel remnants as having been embedded with the DNA of his son and others. Perhaps that explains why we feel so compelled to make physical contact with this piece of metal.

Utto's stone mosaic world map would be the center of a triangle, the three points representing the three geographic sites of unparalleled heroism – first responders racing into the inferno of the Twin Towers in New York City, the Pentagon in Washington, D.C., and the Pennsylvania crash site of United Flight 93. The water of the fountain was to remind us of the primary tool of firemen and the tears that were shed, but also for its universal ability to heal.

It is unsettling to think that a piece of history sits in a darkened Martin County warehouse collecting dust. The stones likely scattered now. Perhaps the dawn of a new commission, however, will breathe life into a forgotten project. ■

# Because of us, now the world knows our plight



**Jacqui  
Thurlow-Lippsch**

*Guest  
Columnist*

**I**started the day looking for a quote of inspiration; this is what I found:

*"You can never cross the ocean until you have the courage to lose sight of the shore."*  
– Christopher Columbus

There have been some heavy setbacks lately, for me and for others. After a year of total dedication and tremendous help from others, I lost a close race for Martin County commissioner. A race mostly inspired by our river...

Sometimes it may seem that we have fallen overboard and are surrounded by sharks, but we are not. We are still at sea.

I believe because of our collective efforts since 2013 there is more wide-scale awareness for the St Lucie River/Indian

River Lagoon than in the combined previous 83 years. Progress is being made and will continue. There are always setbacks as a goal is achieved.

Just yesterday, I opened up "Florida Trend Magazine" and right there was the now famous aerial photograph of a beautiful North River Shores peninsula surrounded in fluorescent green algae. The title? Southeast "Bloom Blame - Florida researchers look for links between environmental factors and brain diseases."

Unbelievable.

As you know, our plight, the plight of the St Lucie River/Indian River Lagoon, has become a state issue. A national issue. The sad story of Lake Okeechobee and the St Lucie River is now mainstream, not just for certain well-read groups, but for everyone.

Why?

Because we organized, we protested, we taught our youth, we went into schools, we went into churches and synagogues, we spoke at our dinner tables, we created organizations, we exploded on so-



**Aerial photo of the City of Stuart and the St. Lucie River by A. Ruhnke, Stuart Nov. 12, 1956. (Courtesy of Sandra Thurlow)**

cial media, we inspired candidates to run for the river, we inspired incumbents who had not spoken for the river to speak.

We had the courage to lose sight of the shore, this dirty shore that we stand

on, and cross the ocean of the unknown. Along this journey, some have been persecuted, others are spreading the word.

This 1956 photo of the City of Stuart nestled in the arms of the St Lucie River was taken eight years before I was born. There were problems with the river then too, but only a few to speak for it, and hardly a way to spread the news.

Such a beautifully composed

photograph, isn't it? With the bridge leading to Stuart and the St Lucie Inlet on the horizon?

Let's have the courage to once again set sail... ■



# These few races prompt Currents' endorsements

**FLORIDA HOUSE DISTRICT 83** – Gayle Harrell, the incumbent Republican, is being challenged by newcomer Crystal Lucas, a Democrat, for the Florida House District 83 seat. *Currents* does not usually comment on candidates for offices that include areas that extend beyond Martin County's boundaries, but this year is an exception.

Harrell is running for a final two-year term in the Florida House that caps 16 years in state politics. She earned a reputation during that time of being able to reach across the aisle for bipartisan consensus to get bills



MaryLynn Magar



Gayle Harrell



William Snyder

passed, many of which have been in the medical and education arenas.

Her signature legislation, however, is the Legacy Florida bill she sponsored that established a dedicated source of funding, earmarking \$200 million annually from Amendment One funds, to target water projects that benefit the St. Lucie River estuary, with priority given to stopping the releases from Lake Okeechobee.

Lucas calls this a "pittance," since the fund annually provides around \$750 million for conservation initiatives including land purchases. Local river activists want the entire fund to be used to help purchase land south of Lake Okeechobee for additional water storage, an initiative Sen. Joe Negron hopes to achieve as Florida Senate President.

It seems egocentric to believe that Amendment One, which was passed by a vote from 75 percent of Florida voters, can be or ever will be spent entirely in one place for one project, considering that nearly every water body in the state, from springs to ponds to meandering rivers, has major issues that cry out to be addressed. Harrell surprised dozens of legislators with her ability to get Florida Legacy approved in such a competitive environment.

Her forward-thinking action could now well provide the funding mechanism that Sen. Joe Negron needs for his ambitious plan south of the Lake by bonding that \$200 million to create the billions needed for the project. This is not the time to lose Harrell's well-earned influence and long experience in the Legislature.

Lucas, on the other hand, who serves on Martin County's Local Planning Agency, is a vocal river activist, thus we do not see her sitting on the sidelines while Negron and Harrell navigate around the boulders in Tallahassee. As a freshman Democratic member of the House, however, Lucas will have little to no influence. As an unelected activist working with Harrell and Negron, she'll be putting the Legislature on notice that she'll be knocking on their door in two years – and Martin County gets two forces in the House, instead of just one.

*Currents* endorses Gayle Harrell for Florida House District 83.

## FLORIDA HOUSE, DISTRICT 82

MaryLynn Magar, a Republican incumbent, is again being challenged by Mary Higgins, a Democrat, for a two-year term in the Florida House representing District 82, which includes Martin County.

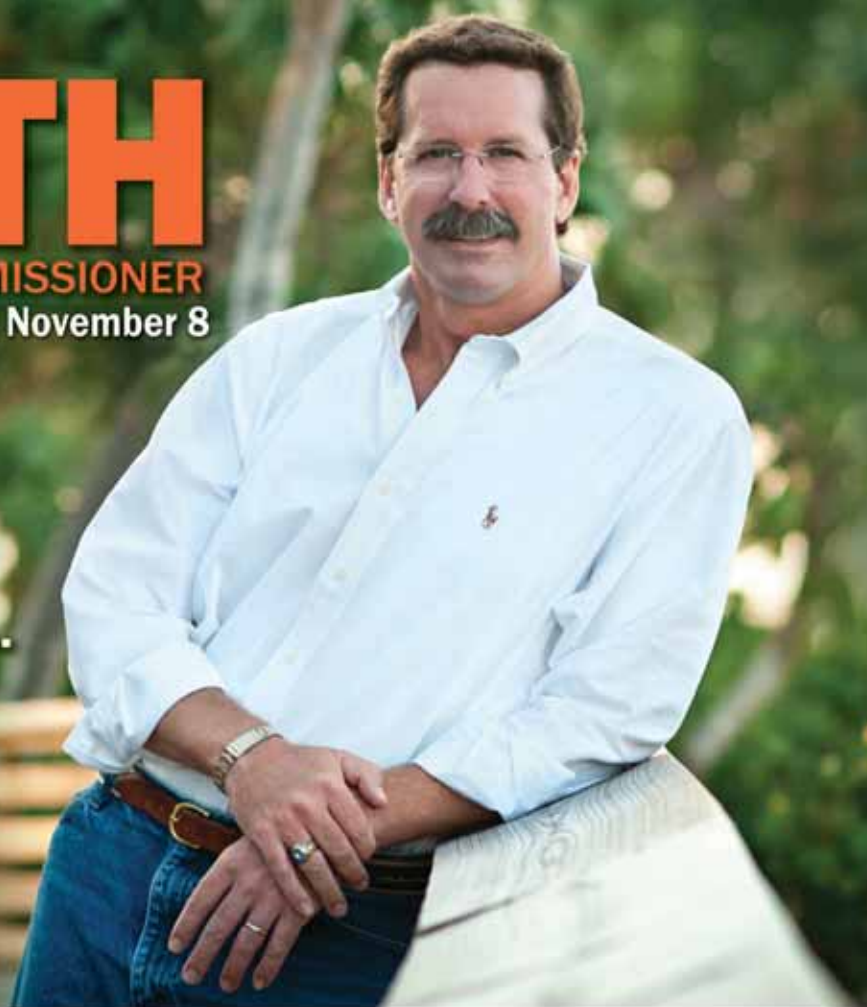
Magar, a two-term incumbent, and Higgins faced each other for the same seat in the 2014 general election. Although Higgins is a well-known river activist locally, Magar's performance in office has been superior, balancing support of business – eliminating the sales tax on equipment for manufacturing firms – to fighting for a state moratorium on fracking. Although the bill failed, it established

Thank you, Martin County, for your votes of confidence!

**RE-ELECT**  
**DOUG SMITH**  
MARTIN COUNTY COMMISSIONER  
Tuesday, November 8

From cutting taxes  
to controlling growth...

**He's making  
Martin County  
work for us!**



## Making Our Lives Better

**Doug Smith** has kept up the fight for "good growth" that keeps people employed, government under control and life here affordable for all. He has consistently *opposed* higher property taxes, was the lone Commission vote *against* a referendum to hike the sales tax, and voted *against* a beach parking fee.

## Protecting the Indian River Lagoon

**Doug Smith** has been a tireless advocate for more federal and state funding to protect our precious "lifeline." His efforts finally resulted in a fully funded C-44 project, growing support for comprehensive Everglades restoration, and a 16-county coalition that's prioritizing projects and raising awareness of our water-quality needs.

## Creating Jobs and Growing Our Economy... The Right Way

An active member of the County's five chambers of commerce, **Doug Smith** is a leading supporter of the CRA program and Business Development Board, a Jobs Tool Kit of incentives, a Small Business Bill of Rights, and dedicated funding for economic development. He also chairs our Tourist Development Council.



## Fighting All Aboard Florida

**Doug Smith** understands that local leaders must be constantly on guard against profiteers and projects that are wrong for Martin County. That's why he has voted to fund legal action against All Aboard, which poses a potential public safety problem and financial risk to our communities.

**DougSmithYes.com**

Political advertisement paid for and approved by Doug Smith, Republican, for Martin County Commission, District 1.



new regulations that preempted local government efforts to ban fracking, which has been a target of Higgins' criticisms, but it demonstrated Magar's environmental bent.

Magar also worked closely with Gayle Harrell on House Bill 989, the Florida Legacy bill, to set aside funds specifically aimed at stopping Lake Okeechobee discharges, and North River Shores can thank her efforts for helping to secure a grant for their septic-to-sewer conversion. She also successfully sponsored bills requiring safety procedures based on local tragedies – to clear residential structures after fumigation before occupancy and to incentivize boaters to install emergency locator devices on boats. Her personal grit also inspires her constituents to push themselves to greater achievement.

*Currents* endorses MaryLynn Magar for Florida House District 82.

#### MARTIN COUNTY SHERIFF

Martin County has two exceptional candidates vying for incumbent Sheriff William Snyder's seat, both with law enforcement backgrounds, Dennis Root and Bob Pryor, who was endorsed by former Martin County sheriff, Robert Crowder. Much criticism has been leveled at Snyder and the department since the campaign got underway, which should alert Snyder to areas that may need to be addressed; however, *Currents'* endorsement is based on observing performance in the field, responsiveness to the public, and Snyder's initiative to think non-traditionally to resolve on-going issues.

He wrestled the plague of "pillow-case burglaries" out of Martin County neighborhoods by engaging the public, organizing numerous town halls and gatherings to launch Neighborhood programs; he resolved issues at Jensen Beach Causeway and Stuart Beach, as well as throughout the county in other areas, by providing more "community policing" on bicycle to bring officers in closer contact with residents and visitors; and the genesis of his plan to get mentally ill inmates out of our jail and into proper care offers great promise for more humane handling of crises that should not be thrust on police officers, and should also lower the county's jail costs.

*Currents* endorses William Snyder for Martin County Sheriff.

#### MARTIN COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD

Incumbent Michael DiTerlizzi and challenger Larry Green both are vying for the District 5 school board seat. DiTerlizzi, with a long history of political and community service, was endorsed by the Stuart News for his efforts to bring the financially troubled school district out of the red into the black within his first term on the board. Green, a school district employee for nearly four decades, rose from a physical education teacher eventually to become an elementary school principal and touts his school's grades as his most significant achievement. The school district's reprimands

of his performance at SeaWind and at Pinewood and the state's investigation of other allegations at Pinewood, however, seem to indicate that Green had some difficulty performing to district expectations as an administrator.

*Currents* endorses Michael DiTerlizzi for Martin County School Board.

#### AMENDMENT 1

Much has been written regarding this solar initiative being taken by the state's four largest electric utilities. It's seldom a good idea to legislate through Constitutional amendments, because it limits flexibility or opportunities to "right" whatever may be "wrong." This is the case here. Martin County happens to enjoy the lowest electric rates in the state, and this amendment is an attempt to protect the electric company's interests

and continued investment in upgrading the electrical grid, important to businesses and manufacturing, as well as to residential consumers. As the law now stands, independent solar companies may lease solar panels to one or several homeowners, then sell the excess electricity generated, shrinking the electric company's market, while still demanding that the electric grid remain in place to supplement power to solar customers during peak demand – without raising rates or assessing additional fees on solar users. It's a complicated issue to fix fairly for all parties, but a constitutional amendment is not the way to address it. The amendment also would stifle the growth of solar panels in the state.

*Currents* recommends a NO vote for Amendment 1. Voters are on their own for all the rest of the candidates. ■

# THANK YOU MARTIN COUNTY

**"I appreciate the confidence you showed in me during the August primary to serve as your District 3 County Commissioner. Now I am asking for your vote again in the general election on Nov. 8. With my deep connections to our community and my lifelong love of Martin County, I will bring my commitment to protecting our quality of life, along with the outside perspective of a businessman, with me as I serve you as the next District 3 county commissioner."**

-- Harold Jenkins

#### HAROLD WILL

- restore the bedrock of democracy, the people's voice;
- make smart use of tax dollars, instead of just raising taxes;
- embrace a countywide customer-service mindset;
- respect county staff and residents, even when disagreeing

#### HAROLD JENKINS WILL RESTORE PUBLIC TRUST

#### HAROLD WILL

- work with state and federal partners to fund projects that move Lake O water south;
- continue the fight against AAF;
- protect rural areas from urban sprawl;
- fight for our Community Redevelopment Areas and small businesses





# School board candidates extend battle to social media

**Larry Green, a former Martin County school principal and now a district school board candidate, says that his record as an administrator has been smeared publicly in retaliation by those who do not like him, including his opponent for the District 5 seat on the Martin County School Board, Michael DiTerlizzi. Green says "it's all politically motivated," including this report by *Martin County Currents*.**

**D**iTerlizzi denies Green's assertions that he or any member of his campaign team was involved in distributing any documents from Green's file.

"Believe me, I have known – and liked – Larry Green for 30 years," DiTerlizzi said in a phone interview Oct. 20, "so when I read what was posted online, I was shocked. I couldn't believe it, because this was not the Larry Green I felt I had always known, so I went to the school board office to see for myself...and it's all there right in his personnel file."

DiTerlizzi says he's been a target of Green and his supporters ever since DiTerlizzi's adult daughter posted *The Stuart News* article about the ongoing investigation by the State Department of Education into allegations that Green failed to report promptly an instance of child sexual abuse.

"Larry called me and was angry and upset about 'using' my family to campaign against him," DiTerlizzi said. "When I finally understood what he was talking about, I told him that I had no idea my daughter had posted that article, and out of consideration, I would ask her to take it down."

His daughter complied, DiTerlizzi said, but after a few days, she re-posted the news article, citing her Constitutional right to do so. The Facebook battle between the two candidates escalated with charges made by Green that DiTerlizzi is the person behind the "personnel file smear campaign" and now is removing his political signs from roadsides, a charge DiTerlizzi denies, responding on social media with posts of photos of his own signs piled into a garbage dumpster.

*Martin County Currents* was prompted to investigate Green's record after a number of Facebook posts of documents allegedly taken from Green's personnel file – a public record because taxes support the school system – were copied and emailed to *Currents*. The sender was not DiTerlizzi.

The content of the Facebook documents, admittedly unsettling, seemed to contradict the affable elementary school principal most people know. *Currents'* intent was to debunk them..

Letters, emails, complaints, investigative reports, photos and official reprimands from Green's school district



**Larry Green's personnel file at the Martin County School District Office.**

personnel file all surfaced in private mailboxes, as well, which apparently led to the recent *Stuart News* article.

"People who have my political signs in their yards are the ones who are being targeted, and they're getting copies of these files in their mailboxes," Green says. "It's all political, and it started back in 2008, when I openly supported Wayne Gent for school superintendent ... and after Nancy Kline won that race, I walked on eggshells for a couple of years. Then in the third year of her rein, she got together with a bunch of disgruntled parents and some teachers trying to get me fired."

An investigation of parents' and teachers' complaints was conducted in 2011 by the school district attorney, Kim Sabol. Her investigative report, which Green says was one-sided and "re-written 15 times to please Nancy Kline" resulted in a formal, written reprimand by Assistant Superintendent Dr. Frank Rafone during Kline's tenure.

Sabol conceded that "many drafts" of the report were prepared; "however, I stand by my report," she said. "I wanted it to be accurate because my name was on it."

Green responded during a recent



**Martin County school board candidates Michael DiTerlizzi, left, and Larry Green in a heated run-off contest both say they refuse "to stoop to the other candidates' level" by posting further negative comments about the other on social media.**



**Larry Green, under fire over contents of personnel file**

phone interview to Sabol's comment by asking if the school district attorney had revealed also that she called the report one-sided, "and she apologized to me," he said. "Did she tell you that, too?"

When asked, Sabol responded that she had meticulously investigated all alleged incidents, eliminating any from her report that she could not substantiate, therefore the report was not one-sided, she said, and she did not apologize. "It did not happen," Sabol added.

## REPRIMANDS FROM SUPT. LAURIE GAYLORD

More recently, Green received two written reprimands from current School Superintendent Laurie Gaylord, the latest of which is being investigated by the state Department of Education for Green's alleged failure to timely report the suspected child sexual abuse of a Pinewood Elementary student.

State Education Commissioner Pam Stewart filed a formal complaint against Green on Aug. 18 alleging that he had not immediately reported suspected child abuse while principal of Pinewood.

The details of the charge, according

to Gaylord's reprimand letter in Green's file, reveal that a Pinewood teacher was told about comments from a student on a Friday last December that could have indicated an instance of sexual abuse in a fellow student's home, but the teacher was unsure whether or not to report the claim "because it was hearsay."

She sought advice from Green the following Monday morning, and he told her to wait until after the school day ended to report the incident to the state Department of Children & Families, which requires immediate reporting.

The school district's investigation found the report was not made in a timely manner due to "a lack of understanding of reporting requirements," thus Green was instructed to undergo additional training in child abuse reporting procedures.

In a letter to Green, Stewart wrote that the incident justified sanctions against Green's education certificate and recommended the state Education Practices Commission sanction Green. Penalties could include an additional written reprimand, fine, probation or the suspension or revocation of Green's teaching certificate, according to the letter. Green has denied the charge, saying he will appeal any sanctions that may be forthcoming.

In 2014, Gaylord also reprimanded Green for improperly supervising district school system employees who were clocking in and out for each other, one of whom was out of the country for a week, yet payroll records showed their pres-

**continued on PAGE 16**



## DISTRICT 5 SCHOOL BOARD CANDIDATE

# Larry Green

**QUESTION: How do you plan, specifically, to address the 3rd grade reading and math scores, which have declined with the advent of new standards, since the state requires that students be detained in 3rd grade when not performing at grade level?**

I retired in April of this year after 38 years serving the children of the Martin County School District. For all but three of those 38 years, I worked at Title 1 schools. In other words, I worked at schools where many of our students came to school with a deficit that we had to overcome. As an administrator of Title 1 schools for 18 of the last 21 years, I have become aware of what areas need to be focused on. This was very evident with the fact that in 2015, my school, Pinewood Elementary, was one of only two Title 1 elementary schools in Martin County to receive a letter grade of B, while this year, 2016, we were the ONLY Title 1 elementary school to receive a letter grade of B.

How was this accomplished? The federal government gives Title 1 schools funds to help "level the playing field." We used these funds to help support our teachers. We purchased personnel in the way of four coaches (two literacy coaches and two math coaches). These coaches provided modeling in our classrooms to our teachers. This modeling helps the teachers work on their instructional practices. This would be the model that I would be using at all Title 1 schools. A key investment we made was to hire a third grade Interventionist to work with any struggling third grade reader.

In order for this to be addressed at non-Title 1 schools, they are going to need the support from the school district. This may not be a popular opinion,

but it has always been my feeling that we are under-staffed at the district level, specifically in our curriculum departments. Currently, the district has Math, ELA (English, Language Arts) and Science Departments. Believe it or not, each department is comprised of one (1) person. Any curriculum that is developed for teachers must be developed by the teachers themselves. It is my belief that we must invest in our curriculum departments and not put the work on the teachers, who are already overloaded. This is a point that (school board member) Tina McSoley brought up at a recent board meeting and I, am totally in favor of. Teachers are crying for support in the way of curriculum. This may be the missing link in plummeting ELA and Math scores. It has become so time consuming for teachers to create their own ELA and Math materials, they are becoming frustrated and downtrodden.

In this school board race, in my opinion, I have the experience, education, time and desire to get this job accomplished. In addition, I've been attending school board meeting for the last 25 years on a regular basis, so I know the inner workings of the board.

As a teacher for 17 years, an Assistant Principal for 11 years and a Principal for 10 years, I have dealt with every aspect of our school system. I have worked with budgets, curriculum, facilities, scheduling, personnel, community involvement, federal and state legisla-



Nothing to me is more important than my family. From my left, my son, Joshua, 24, daughter, Danielle, 2, and my wife, Phyllis. Joshua is a graduate of Indian River State College with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Graphic Design. Danielle, a graduate of University of Central Florida, is starting her first year as a first-grade teacher at Crystal Lake Elementary School in Stuart. My wife begins her 30th year, teaching fifth grade at Palm City Elementary School for the last 21 years.

tion, ESE law, and everything that a board member would have to deal with. I WILL be an engaged board member, visiting schools on a regular basis to see the wonderful things going on in our public schools.

This job is not a stepping stone, hobby or a second job for me. It's been my entire adult life. I have been an educator my entire life, and I would like to remain in that role as your next school board member. ■



### LARRY GREEN

- Holds a bachelor's degree from Trenton State College and a master's degree from Florida Atlantic University.
- 38 years in Martin County School System as a teacher at Port Salerno Elementary, assistant principal at SeaWind Elementary, Crystal Lake Elementary and Port Salerno, principal at SeaWind and Pinewood Elementary schools.
- Martin County Association of School Administrators, Past President and Current Board Member

• Former board member, Martin County North Little League, Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Martin County, and Temple Beit Hayam

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## DISTRICT 5 SCHOOL BOARD CANDIDATE

# Mike DiTerlizzi

**QUESTION: How do you plan, specifically, to address the 3rd grade reading and math scores, which have declined with the advent of new standards, since the state requires that students be detained in 3rd grade when not performing at grade level?**

Earlier this year the School Board and the District were notified by the Department of Education that test scores for third grade reading and math had moderate declines due to changes in the Florida testing standards. Test scores throughout the State experienced similar or greater declines than Martin County. It was disappointing to me and the Board because we have successfully focused on improving the quality of our education system. Every time Florida modifies its tests, results like this temporarily occur.

Fortunately we have a plan to rectify this issue. Upon notification of the drop in scores the Superintendent and Board came together to develop an action plan for improvement. Quick response to developing problem areas is

what differentiates the Martin County School system from most others statewide, and what helps us maintain our high ranking within Florida.

We are concentrating efforts in the third grade reading and math classes with the addition of math and reading coaches to assist our teachers and students. Additional professional development for teachers has also begun, along with relocating higher performing teachers into the classrooms that had the declines. Coaches will provide enhanced learning for our students, aid our teachers with their lessons, and ultimately improve upon student test scores.

This strategy is commonly utilized when problem areas are identified in learning environments. In the past when test standards were modified and scores



Life is about God and family, being with the people that I love the most, my wife, children, and their spouses, enjoying our time together.

dropped, these tools were initiated to improve test scores.

My Board members and I are committed to providing a high quality learning experience for our students. Significant investments have been made to improve the ability of our teachers to teach. Educators are learning new and innovative ways to engage students with their learning. We also intend to increase the number of proficiently bilingual aides to overcome the language

barrier among so many students entering our elementary schools.

We have committed to "teaching the teachers" with dedicated staff and administrators to ensure that our teaching staff is doing the best that they can. We have raised starting teacher salaries with additional dollars to come so that we can recruit the best teachers available. I am committed to seeing this through so that our students can continually outperform their peers.

We are blessed to have a District that employs quality teachers, support staff and administrators. When problems arise, we do not waste time. We take action.

Thank you. I ask for your vote on or before Nov. 8th. ■

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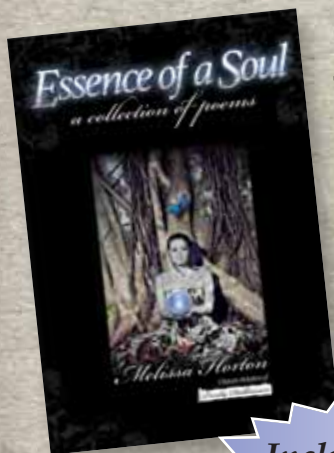
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- Former Member, Water Resources Advisory Committee, SFWM
- Board Member, Former President, Palm City Chamber
- Board Member/Director United Way of Martin County, Big Heart Brigade



# Hobe Hills' neighbors seek help to stop garage

**H**obe Sound has a new tourist attraction, according to Hobe Hills resident Dawn Rolland, but it's not likely ever to be featured on the county's "Discover Martin" website.

"You would not believe how many vehicles come around that corner and just step on the brakes," she said in September about the structure being built directly across the road from her home at 8798 SE Sharon Street. The lot lies adjacent to Jonathan Dickinson State Park in south Martin County, and until a few weeks ago, Rolland's view was of vast acres of palmetto.

"Now, drivers either stop, or slow down, and more and more are coming here to see it every day," she adds, "because they just cannot believe this is being built in our quiet residential neighborhood. You won't find another building like this anywhere in Hobe Hills. Not one."

The structure, a two-story, 2,100-sq ft, red-steel, detached garage, is 50-ft wide, 30-ft deep and 22-ft tall, wired to accommodate a 187-amp electrical load, according to its building permit. The list of proposed equipment also has Rolland and her neighbors concerned. It does not seem to match what she was told by county officials would be the purpose of the building – that is, for the owner, a car buff, to work on his cars and to house the family's RV.

The equipment list includes a CNC router and vacuum pump, a planer/shaper, three router tables, a table saw, a drill press, a band saw, a stroke sander, miter saw, an additional planer and a welder, among other tools. A projected equipment list includes a car lift. The owner, whose home is on the adjacent lot, is a carpenter and cabinet maker, Rolland says.

Rolland and another neighbor met with Growth Management Director Nicki van Vonno in February, followed by a meeting with Commissioner Anne Scott, who requested a legal analysis from the County Attorney's office. Van Vonno ordered a site visit by Growth Management staff, who found no issues with the wetlands or the required Preserve Area Management Plan, and Durham completed his analysis in May, and determined the building was in compliance with county codes.

The attorney reported that the owners of the property, William and Jamie LiCausi, had contacted the Growth Management Department in 2012 about obtaining a permit to build a detached garage at the site. They were informed that they could receive a building permit if the two lots were combined under a unity of title and the garage was in compliance with the wetland waiver on the property, according to county records. In 2015, the lots were combined.

The report also traced the history of the wetland waiver, which had been granted to the previous owner in 2005,



The purchase agreement for this metal building was issued to Bill LiCausi Carpentry, Inc., which neighbors point to as "proof" that a business will be operated from that location.

as allowed by the county's Comprehensive Growth Management Plan, to build a single-family home with a garage and pool. The wetlands on the property were filled, but the home was never built, and the property sold to LiCausi in 2012.

The county attorney's office conceded that the wetland waiver "may be inappropriate" for the construction of a garage, instead of a single-family home; however, the garage is allowed under zoning rules for the residential neighborhood, but would need to observe the required 50-ft wetland buffer.

According to the 2015 lot survey, the building was constructed about 35 feet from the wetlands and nearly 50-feet back from Sharon Street, explained County Attorney Michael Durham to the county commission at its Oct. 18 meeting. "It simply means that the garage could have been built, but it would have been 10 feet or so closer to the road. That would have been even worse for the neighborhood."

Not so fast, Rolland says.

"They measured the distance from the wetlands to the garage AFTER the wetlands had been filled in," she says. With the original wetlands in place, the building would have not been able to meet the setback requirements.

"Those wetlands should have been restored to their original size and location if no house was going to be built on that lot," she adds. "That garage does not qualify for a wetland waiver, the county has already admitted that, and we would not be in this situation, which obviously is going to bring big machinery noises, and dust, and probably traffic to our beautiful neighborhood. If those wetlands had been restored – like they should have been – after the county saw that a house was NOT going to be built, none of this would be happening now."

Rolland feels certain that the new building, whether or not it's going to be a commercial venture, will cause the decline of property values for all the homes on Sharon Street. Her neighbors agree, and five families filed a building permit appeal within days after the county lifted its hold and issued the building permit May 9.



The two-story industrial garage on Sharon Street in Hobe Hills, a residential neighborhood in Hobe Sound, dwarfs the two-story house next door.

They also studied Martin County ordinances, including even the stipulations imposed on "home occupations" that not only prohibit retail sales, increased traffic, fumes or noise in residential neighborhoods, but also any visual or audio interference with any neighbors' television or radio receivers.

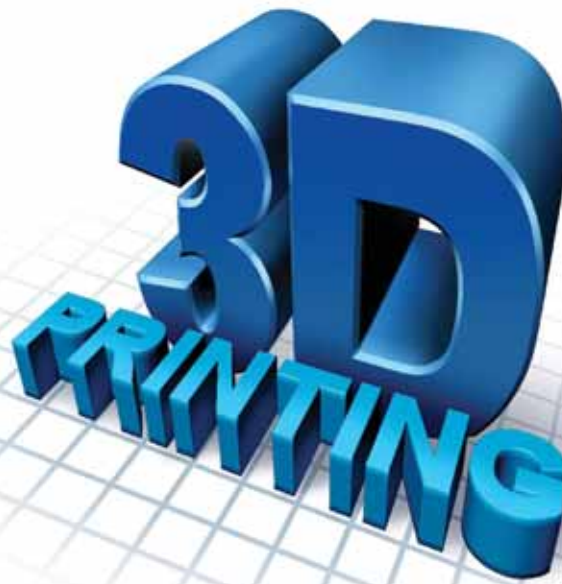
They continued their email campaign after being notified of their appeal "deficiencies" on May 20 and were given 10 days to cure them. In the meantime, a stop-work order was issued by the Building Department. The deadline for cure passed with no response by the Sharon Street neighbors; however, attorney Scott

Konopka notified the county on June 1 that he was representing the LiCausis.

The stop-work order was released July 8, according to Growth Management records, and the building is now nearly complete.

"Finding an attorney was not easy," Rolland says. "Even Virginia Sherlock was too busy with another case. We did contact Scott Konopka, but I guess he decided their (LiCausis') case was better than ours ... but then we said, why should we be forced to spend all our money on an attorney, just to make the county follow its own rules?"

So their elbow-locked determination to restore their neighborhood continues. ■



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**Larry Green***continued from PAGE 12*

ence at Pinewood Elementary each day.

A criminal investigation resulted in the arrest of two of the school's employees for grand theft, both of whom were dismissed from their school district jobs.

Included in the same reprimand letter were the results of another school district investigation that found Green also had not followed the superintendent's directives regarding staffing, which resulted in the school being unlocked at night for 26 of 41 consecutive days, Gaylord said in her reprimand.

The incident wasn't the only time Green was disciplined for failing to follow administrative directives, or for other infractions of district policies during his 38 years as a Martin County educator, in which he rose from a physical education teacher to assistant principal and to principal at SeaWind Elementary in 2006 and at Pinewood for the last five years.

**INVESTIGATION IN 2011  
LED TO REPRIMANDS**

The eight-page investigative report filed in 2011, which Green maintains was the Kline vendetta, included interviews by the school district attorney of 24 persons, including SeaWind parents, volunteers and teachers, as well as a spot-audit of Green emails, to investigate charges of improper conduct in the workplace, violating school district policies and procedures, and violating his teaching contract, according to Martin County school records.

Findings included Green's perceived favoritism toward young, attractive female staff members, revealed by his hiring practices, assignments and in rule enforcement. Witnesses reported to school officials – and Green conceded during the investigation – that he had said, “I am not going to hire some middle-aged woman who decides to make a mid-life career change and become a teacher.”

The report also found – and went unchallenged by Green – that he and his wife had used airlines “buddy” passes for trips, which had been the gift of parents of a student who wanted to attend SeaWind Elementary, although their home was outside the

school's attendance boundaries, and that Green had also allegedly accepted other highly valued gifts from the parents of other students.

The report also revealed that Green had accepted dozens of bicycles from the Treasure Coast Toyota dealership in Stuart intended for underprivileged children at SeaWind, and allegedly gave them instead to the children of his favorite teachers, which he did not dispute, according to Sabol's eight-page investigative report; however, Sabol also reported that parental testimony alone was insufficient to show a “preponderance of evidence” to justify an administrative hearing of all the allegations.

The school district required that all 12 teachers who wrote complaints be willing to testify at a hearing; however, only one of the 12 teachers interviewed said she would be willing to testify, according to school records. The rest feared possible retaliation by Green, Sabol added.

As a result, Sabol recommended, at the minimum, additional training for Green in leadership/effective management skills; sexual harassment, hostile work environment, and retribution; age discrimination and retaliation; ethics and professionalism.

Green completed training in effective leadership and management skills, age and sex discrimination, and ethics and professionalism, as ordered by Raffone. He also was reassigned to Pinewood Elementary for the 2011-12 school year, where he remained until retiring in May.

**GREEN DISPUTES SCHOOL DISTRICT'S  
OVERPAYMENT CALCULATIONS**

Green also has disagreed with the school district's assertion in May that he miscalculated his accrued sick pay for his retirement package, thus he needed to reimburse the district for \$1,361 overpaid to him when he retired. He had received a lump payment of more than \$340,000 in benefits earned over 23 years when he entered the DROP program, according to school records. The payroll manager also supplied Currents with the documentation she used to calculate Green's overpayment for sick pay.

After two meetings with Green to resolve the discrepancy, according to the district's payroll manager, the \$1,361 remains unpaid. Green declined

to comment for this article on his intentions to reimburse the district, although he demanded to know the source of the information.

When Green retired, he was earning a salary of approximately \$92,000 annually. His retirement pay is \$4,999 a month, which began in May 2016.

**SCHOOL GRADES ARE ONLY MEASURE**

“None of that is important. The thing to remember is that I started at SeaWind in 2006,” Green said in a recent telephone interview, “and when I left, that school was an A school, but it's not an A school now; and in the last five years, I took Pinewood from a D to a B status, and it's the only

Title 1 elementary school in the entire district with a B grade – and that's all that's important.”

Indeed, all the other Title 1 elementary schools (those with a high rate of children enrolled in the free or reduced-rate lunch program, indicating a high incidence of poverty), including Hobe Sound, SeaWind, Port Salerno, J.D. Parker and Warfield Elementary in Indiantown, all have C grades, with Pinewood the only exception with a B grade; however, Pinewood also held a B grade when Green took over as principal in 2011, then it dropped to a C for two years before being raised to a B last year, according to district records.

When asked about his decision to run for a seat on the school board with a record that could be targeted for criticism, he was unfazed.

“I am not withdrawing from this school board race,” Green said. “I am in it to win.”

**GREEN'S SUPPORTERS ADAMANTLY  
DEFEND THEIR CANDIDATE**

*Currents* distributed this report originally to its online subscribers, the majority of whom live within Martin County. The response was immediate and mixed from fellow teachers, parents and grandparents of students currently and previously enrolled at both SeaWind and Pinewood and former students.

Many responses disagreed with the report, and others were grateful their story had been told.

One former student responded with a heartfelt note describing her experience as Green's student, someone who had inspired her to pursue her education and become a teacher herself. When she graduated, Green was the one “with a lump in his throat” who handed her the diploma, and now she is back in Martin County teaching her first kindergarten class.

One grandmother called the *Currents* office without ever seeing or knowing the newspaper's story had been released. She was responding to Green's campaign signs being posted in her neighborhood, and begged for *Currents* to report the experiences of her disabled

*“I am not withdrawing  
from this school board  
race. I am in it to win.”*

— Larry Green

granddaughter at Pinewood Elementary, since she felt it would disqualify Green as a candidate.

Between sobs, she said, “Thank you, thank you,” after she learned the *Currents* story had already been published online.

On the other hand, during the first week after the story was distributed, nearly 500 subscribers canceled their online subscriptions to *Martin County Currents*. To compare, the previous record of cancellations following a *Currents* release was a high of 11 subscribers the same day in 2013.

“All I can say about that kind of response,” DiTerlizzi says, “is that these people felt the same way as I first did, that this just cannot be the Larry Green I know. They all need to go to the school board office and read his file, find out for themselves.”

After 38 years of teaching, Green acquired dozens of detractors among administrators, teachers, parents and school volunteers, but an army of supporters, who would not believe anything anyone else showed them anyway – in an official personnel file, or not. Maybe that's the way it should be. ■

--Barbara Clowdus

**Judge orders search***continued from PAGE 5*

never been produced by either Heard or Martin County to fulfill Lake Point's February 2013 public records request.

Loeb also produced two emails from Hurchalla to Haddox's personal email account shortly after his 2012 election that had not been provided by the county to Lake Point. Loeb told the court that he had showed the emails to Haddox at his August 26 deposition. Haddox responded that he did not remember seeing the emails, but obviously they had existed because Lake Point had them in their possession, Loeb told the court. Since no one else had access to his computer account, Haddox

added, that he must have been the one to have deleted them. The two emails apparently had not been found when he or the county's IT department searched Haddox's personal computer in September 2013, turning over to Lake Point all relevant documents in May 2014.

McManus asked Loeb, “So where did you get them?”

Loeb responded, “From Ms. Hurchalla.”

Hurchalla had supplied to Lake Point any email regarding Lake Point that she had not already deleted from her account prior to Lake Point's records request, according to previous court testimony, as part of Lake Point's separate suit against Martin County and the South Florida Water Management District. Lake Point alleges a

breach of contract by Martin County and SFWMD and against Hurchalla for tortious interference with those contracts. (That trial will be scheduled sometime early in 2017.)

Lake Point considers the emails to commissioners as possible evidence in its case against Hurchalla.

McManus deliberated the propriety of an elected official's use of a private computer to conduct public business, particularly when the Florida Constitution protects citizens' rights to inspect any public record and whether the privacy of public officials outweighs public accountability.

“That's what you give up when you're elected to office,” he concluded, “and you choose to conduct business

with the public on private computers.”

Loeb, who had been denied his request twice previously in other court proceedings for permission to conduct a forensic examination of Heard's hacked personal computer, requested permission again. This time the court granted his request, although Heard's private attorney raised the possibility that Heard may no longer have the computer in her possession.

“I am putting it in my order,” McManus responded. “I am asking her to provide it.”

Three days were set aside on the court calendar for the public records trial, Nov. 29 through Dec. 1, before McManus. The decision will come from the bench, not a jury. ■



# Independence getting closer for 2 new towns

**T**he new Town of Hobe Sound and the new Village of Indiantown both turned in their packets of documents to the State Legislature at the end of August – the next step in becoming Martin County's newest incorporated areas.

Both areas used the county's current urban services boundaries to determine their town boundary, and both will adopt the Martin County Comprehensive Growth Management Plan as it exists on the day of their incorporation, say organizers.

If approved by the state legislature during the upcoming regular legislative session, the vote for each likely will be in November 2017. A majority of Indiantown residents who live within the boundaries of the proposed Village of Indiantown will decide "yes" to incorporate, or "no", and the residents of Hobe Sound living within the town's boundaries will decide the same for their new town.

"We've been having a lot, just a lot, of town meetings," said Mike Ennis, one of the Hobe Sound organizers. "I think we're answering a lot of questions people had been wondering about, and the information is finally getting out there. I feel like we figured out how to do this right; we're hitting a comfortable stride."

## COMMISSIONER CHALLENGES TOWN'S EFFORT

That was prior to the most contentious public meeting yet.

Commissioner Anne Scott attended the group's most recent meeting, held in Banner Lake in August, and she challenged Ennis and other attendees as to what they believed would be the benefits of "adding another layer of bureaucracy" to their lives.

She also accused the five founders of taking the step toward incorporation primarily to have fewer restraints on growth and development, their real motivation being that she had not approved spending a million dollars on "under-grounding" power lines when she felt other needs were more pressing.

Ennis denied that was the case, particularly regarding lifting the restraints on development, although he conceded that killing the Community Development Project had contributed to their decision.

"We just felt that the commission was not listening," Ennis said. "We worked on that Bridge Road project for 15 years, and we had a plan. We had already addressed major portions like sewer, and, yes, we had decided that putting our power lines underground was safer, better for our businesses and for our residents who live here, because we depend on those businesses after storms, and it was just the next step in our long-term plan."

Neither the commissioner nor the organizers convinced the other side, and Hobe Sound has not been deterred in their objectives.

"We feel that the people who live here are the ones who should have the most say as to what happens here,"



Commissioner Anne Scott puts up her hand to interrupt Town of Hobe Sound's organizer Mike Ennis's answer to her question at an August informational meeting in the Banner Lake community of Hobe Sound.



Hobe Sound residents posted and reposted this photo on social media of Mike Banas, left, and Pat Martin, both of Hobe Sound, dressed in suits to hand-deliver the Town of Hobe Sound's incorporation papers to Tallahassee in August, ahead of their Sept. 1 deadline.

Ennis said, "and the only way to get that is through incorporation."

## INDIANTOWN FLIES THROUGH PROCESS

The Village of Indiantown's organizers were able to capitalize on Hobe Sound's efforts over the past 18 months, thus they moved quickly by sharing the same planner and the same attorney. They were able to catch up to Hobe Sound's progress quickly, and delivered their packet of materials to Tallahassee on the same day as Hobe Sound's arrived there, as well.

Because Indiantown is one-third the size of Hobe Sound, they also were able to collect 1,000 signatures on a petition within two days, says organizer Scott Watson.

"We also just used Stuart's city charter as the model we wanted," he said, "so really, we've been able to do this all at warp speed."

Both areas will divide themselves into five districts, and elect one council member from each district. In Indiantown, there's only around 1,000 people per district. Then the council members will appoint a mayor and vice mayor to serve a one-year term.

Since Indiantown is rural, its charter calls for a village that will be more self-sufficient than Hobe Sound, organizers explain, with a town manager, assistant

manager and attorney, in addition to the five elected officials, and a fully staffed Building Department. Some services, such as police and fire, will be contracted with the county.

## LOSING ECOGEN PROJECT WAS FINAL STRAW

Like Hobe Sound, the Indiantown community had considered incorporation in previous years, discovering more than a decade ago that there were no real financial advantages. That was then, however, and this is now.

The dashed hopes of Indiantown residents after the permit application for the EcoGen biomass facility was withdrawn in July spurred Indiantown leaders into pursuing incorporation for its 5,000 residents, which is facing the loss of hundreds of jobs due to the decline of the citrus industry and the purchase of the coal-fired Cogeneration plant.

EcoGen's facility would have burned wood to generate electricity, creating a sort of agricultural renaissance for the Indiantown area as well, since it also offered an alternative crop – non-invasive eucalyptus trees – for thousands of acres of farmland decimated by citrus canker and no longer supporting the citrus groves.

EcoGen moved its project to Okeechobee County, however, along with its estimated \$450,000 in annual tax revenue and its \$6.7 million in payroll. For

Indiantown residents, it was like "getting kicked in the stomach," said Brian Powers, who led another town hall meeting a month later to tell residents that after the EcoGen withdrawal, several leaders had met and decided to investigate the feasibility of incorporation to the cheers of most who had gathered.

## HOBE SOUND SEEKS LESS AMBITIOUS PLAN

Hobe Sound plans to adopt the "Government Lite" model, using the taxes that residents currently pay to the county and to contract the county services needed, such as fire, police, and libraries. No increase in taxes will be required, Ennis says.

Hobe Sound has held 10 public information meetings thus far, have completed the five-year feasibility study and are working on the town's charter. Hobe Sound leaders plan to have all required documents submitted to the Legislature, including the Town of Hobe Sound's charter, by Dec. 1.

Indiantown included their charter in the packet that already has gone to the legislature.

Hobe Sound remains committed to having only a limited staff and no departmental services.

"We will be all too happy to drive to Indiantown for our building permits," Ennis says. "As a matter of fact, we'll probably be Indiantown's best customer."

Both have websites have the boundary maps posted, the feasibility studies, Indiantown's proposed charter, and petitions for signatures, which they both continue to collect.

"Right now, we're in good shape, and the priority has shifted to raising some funds," Ennis said, with a grin. "We've got to pay for those lawyers, you know."

For more information on Hobe Sound's incorporation, or to make a donation, go to: [www.townofhobesound.com](http://www.townofhobesound.com). For more information on Indiantown incorporation, go to: [www.indiantown.org](http://www.indiantown.org). ■

—Barbara Clowdus

An advertisement for Steven Lofstedt Lawn Service. It features a black and white photograph of a riding lawnmower on a lawn. The text is bold and prominent. The headline reads "NO JOB TOO BIG OR TOO SMALL!". Below that is the name "STEVEN LOFSTEDT" and "Lawn Service". Further down, it says "RESIDENTIAL • COMMERCIAL LICENSED • INSURED". At the bottom, the phone number "772.781.1022" and the location "Stuart" are listed.



# Poet traverses gateway from personal to universal



**Maya  
Ellenson**  
*Art  
Kaleidoscope*

**A**gainst the tree of life, with all its exposed roots, sits a beautiful young woman. In her hands she holds a dark blue sphere, luminous like a pearl. A blue butterfly is perched above the lady's crown chakra as a symbol of metamorphosis. The picture unfolds as a gateway to the enchanted world of Melissa Horton's poetry, *Essence of a Soul*.

A multi-talented poet, Melissa Horton, who studied computer graphics and design in college, designed herself the layout of her book to emphasize its deep symbolism. Although she enjoyed studying graphic design, she told me her passion has always been poetry, which is full of shifting moods with rich overtones, dancing like the moonlight on water.

What makes Melissa Horton's poetical discourse exceptional is the both fragile and absorbing mode of intimacy she shares with her readers. The staggering lyricism of her narrative is spawned of subtle intonations, crushing on a reader like ocean waves, for Melissa Horton's poetry is deep like the ocean. Bottomless.



**Local poet Melissa Horton with her debut collection of poems, *Essence of a Soul*, which is available online at Amazon.com and BarnesandNoble.com.**

Its penetrating energy follows us everywhere . . . because it's all about us.

With each poem, Horton motivates us to connect with ourselves to keep our dreams alive. "One should keep dreaming," she says. "Poetry allows us to nurture our dreams and stay grounded in them."

Melissa's own vintage beauty evokes shadows of the past . . . just to discover that there are none. In a Stuart's Starbucks, where we met, she looked like a bewitching, old painting. As we talked, it seemed we moved to another dimension, in spite of all the gadgets flashing around us.

It was somewhat intriguing to learn

that Melissa Horton is a distant relative of Emily Dickinson, expecting to discover what a noted literary critic Harold Bloom defined as "the anxiety of influence," or the intra-poetic relationship of modern poets with their precursors; however, it came as a little surprise that Melissa Horton, in fact, has never read Emily Dickinson's poems: "I started writing before I even knew we were related, and never had read her poems. Later on, when I discovered that we were related through my grandmother's side (of my family), I found some similarity in how we convey our inner truth."

Authenticity, a purely American trait of creativity, termed by Waldo Emerson as "self-reliance," pervades both Melissa's personality and her poetics. She has been writing poetry for more than 20 years, since she was 12. *Essence of a Soul* binds her compositions as an uninterrupted, fluid melody of life. She articulates what needs to be told, leaving the reader enough space to navigate between the lines as, for instance, in her poem, "Nothing Ever Is":

Nothing ever is, what is meant to be.  
Nothing is ever shown, what was  
meant to be seen.

Nothing is ever said, what was  
meant to be told.

Nothing is ever new, once it's a day old.  
Unlike her ancestor, Emily Dickinson, who was well versed in American transcendentalism and British poetry, Melissa admitted she doesn't like to

read other poets. Stripped of all external reference points and all literary allusions, Melissa's poems allow us to feel almost the shamanistic power of words as they unveil a poet's soul.

"Criticism is the art of knowing the hidden roads that go from poem to poem," said Harold Bloom. In Melissa Horton's case, the hidden roads go from the author directly to her readers.

"For me, it's important to stay unique in my poetical style and the way I express my feelings," she says.

"Besides, I don't like to read and hope my writing can be appreciated by those who do like to read."

In her poem, titled "One of a Kind," she pronounces:

I am one of a kind. I hope it stays  
that way....

I'll dance the way I dance I'll walk  
the way I walk.

I'll speak the way I speak, if that's  
how I want to talk.

No one can control that of me or  
change that of who I and no one ever will.

If the complex and fluid subject matter of Horton's poems can be summarized, it would be the power and timeless beauty of poetically exposed vulnerability along with the purely feminine Madonna-kind of energy, pulsing in a modern, self-sufficient woman, a single mom, who is not ashamed to write how she feels about herself with a surprising talent. That's when the poet's personal heartbeat becomes so deeply collective that some call it déjà vu.

Against the tree of life, reminding me of a mysterious gateway, sits a beautiful young lady. In her hands she holds a sapphire blue sphere, representing the poet's soul. But it's not just Melissa Horton. It's also you. Explore the enchanting spectacle of your inner world.

*Essence of a Soul* may be purchased online at Amazon.com or at BarnesandNoble.com. ■

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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# An autumn alarm buzzes resident pomps awake



**Rich  
Vidulich**  
*Pompano  
Reporter*

**W**elcome back, anglers, to the latest weather cycle. Get ready! Fishing is going to be new and improved this season. On June 16, NOAA announced that the earth's Godzilla El Nino is dead (their exact words). No wake, no funeral, just ciao! NOAA meteorologist Mike Halpert even added, "Stick a fork in it, it's done!" There, now you've experienced the apex of meteorological jest.

Welcome, instead, the always Fonzi-like, cool La Nina. So happy! Well, a short-lived happiness, I admit, as this system born in June has riddled the tropics with tropical depressions and named hurricanes. Yikes, not so happy now!

In a nutshell, La Nina will cool the Pacific Ocean and weaken the cyclone-shredding wind shear over the Atlantic. Though a seemingly disastrous weather cycle for us, I'm not alone in rooting for its arrival!

Joining me in my celebratory reverie are the rippers and bunnies searching for new POW! La Nina will deposit mucha snow in the Northwest and Northeast regions of the US. Don't know what POW is? It's a recreational natural powder that drives Floridians to buy and rent snow skis. A ripper is an impressive skier, and a bunny is a snow fashion queen. Delusional reporting? Bear with me, I can go deep!

The Farmer's Almanac says a milder winter is in store for us, but shred this data and hit the beaches now! As these recent photos show, the pomps are here in really decent numbers.

Tropical depressions, ground seas, hot, humid nor'easters and bait migrations. When mullet rally the shoreline and the tarpon herd them like euro lambs, we're on! Ten-to-30 pound bulldog jack crevalles befriending the poons, and early-bird snook busting the menhaden and finger mullet into bait rain! All this is happening everywhere on the Treasure Coast, but nowhere better than both Hobe Sound beaches.

Not wanting to chase releasable game fish? Then throw your bombers and spoons at the bluefish! Glass minnows are showering the shoreline with



**Pompano Rich with Jon and Dan Reel from Delaware, fishing at Jensen Beach on Sept. 26.**



**Jake Harris with two-plus pound, silvery pompano during the September migration at Loggerhead Park in Juno Beach.**

the Spanish mackerel invasion. All this, and the sea temps are at 85 degrees!

I want to address the most-asked question by my northern angler friends who migrate south. "Will this be the year that the northern cold water pomps show up in South Florida?"

We go to Ron Roberts, currently fishing Montauk Point for stripers. His observations: "Richie, last year, you know Oct. 14, 2015, the water here was 81 degrees. Now, on Sept. 22, it's 70 degrees." Joe Moore of Avon, N.C., reports a 15-degree drop in temps in the last two weeks. By mid-October, Hurricane Mathew will have done what Hurricane Julie recently completed -- another shift of an entire mass of cold sea water transitioning farther south.

I don't envision our coastline being truly fishable till the end of October. Looking back to last year, though, the season won't be a what-I-didn't-get-for-Christmas-type winter, either.

In September, I had the pleasure to

fish with my dear friends from Delaware -- Dan Reel, his beautiful wife Beth, and their handsome son Jon. Dan and Jon are highly motivated and polished surf-and-inshore veterans, fishing the Virginia beaches through Hatteras, chasing huge drum and stripers.

I picked the perfect day for us in Jensen Beach, with a mid-sized aqua-accented swell breaking on a totally gnarly sand bar! With the endless lines of silver mullet stringing the shoreline break patrolled by tarpon, things were kinda fishy!

At around 3 p.m., mid-tide (a good solar major window) and a delightful 15 mph southeast breeze, we struck golden-silver nuggets. Simple 100-yard casts to the inside edge of the bar delivering blanched fleas and big white float attractors turned the trick! Fifteen pompano in two hours with six undersized-catches released.

Their first outing with me two years ago had been a bust with no results but catfish. This time was different. Perhaps not so incidentally, Dan Reel is recognized as a previous U.S. distance casting champion. He heaved an 8 oz. lead 712 ft. on a 14 ft. spinning rod a few years ago.

No one enjoys the purity of beach life like Dan's wife, Beth! Cheering on her family and taking endless joy in the experience boosted everyone's spirits. A really big thanks to the Reels for visiting Pompano Rich! ■

*Rich Vidulich, a commercial pompano surf fisherman who traverses the beaches of Mar-*



**Rich Vidulich shows off two nice pomps and a permit at Papa Kwan's Onshore and Onboard shop in Juno Beach. "Best coffee anywhere," Vidulich proclaims.**

*tin County and points north for his "golden nuggets," lives in Jupiter. Send comments or questions to Pompano@MartinCountyCurrents.com.*

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# Our water solutions depend on truth, not lies



**Capt.  
Don Voss**

*One Florida  
Foundation*

**V**ERUM DICERE – “To say what is true, what is objectively accurate or subjectively honest, or both.”

And it is with these words, I question whether the citizens of Florida – more specifically, citizens of the Treasure Coast and the 16 -county watershed – are receiving the actual truth when it comes to matters of stopping the discharges and getting cleaned water to the areas that need it the most.

The mark of a true advocate, much like Paul Watson of Sea Shepherd, is one who will not bend to others to remain or become popular, cannot be tempted or bought by others, or swayed by their pressures to comply. A true advocate, one who can be trusted, is the person that speaks truth in the face of adversity. One who speaks the truth in the face of opposition and cares little of consequences or popularity, but rather the passion that places them in the role of leadership.

A leader tells the truth of the situation, not the answer their employers de-

mand. The local water movement is run by people with goals one might have to question, by advocates who are paid individuals and speak to their paychecks and their audience, not to address the truth and reality of our situation and the future of our estuary.

The question here is this: Can the water that accumulated this season actually ALL be sent south and end these discharges, as these paid advocates insist? In the past, we have used the 2013 figures of 1.6 million acre-feet of discharged water as our planning number. Well, that is until the 2016’s “dry season” produced over 2.4 million acre-feet of discharges (so far). This markedly increased quantity demands an even more thorough look at places to put all of this water – to provide for future needs, to stop the discharges, to get water cleaned of pollution and moving to replenish aquifers, the Everglades and Florida Bay.

Is there an easier way to look at all of this to better help ALL people grasp the magnitude of the problem? Well, the easiest answer is to just stop spinning things to distort reality. People are tough and resilient and can certainly handle the truth in real time. As I have said many times, this process to correct 100 years of catastrophe is the most righteous cause on the planet, and it does not require lies, distortions, silly rhetoric or bullying to emphasize its vital and urgent need. The eco-bullying

group funded by oil and gas elements has much to lose if this problem is solved. In their case, CASH drives them, not our environment.

If we base our comments on speaking the truth, we cannot tell you that “Buy the Land” can stop the discharges, clean the water, or water the Everglades. Buy the Land’ers are myopic in their demand – We must have “THAT” land. Now, “THAT” land has flipped around to five different parcels over the last decade, “The Only Fix or Not.” And, amazingly, the Oil and Gas Group pulled off one of the great cons of this election season and, in doing so, they caused several good candidates to go down in flames.

First, they hardly have 120,000 local followers, little influence, or else more of the registered voters would have shown up to vote.

Second, one of the most important twists of this election was the write-in candidate, and had anyone properly educated the public, one commissioner’s seat might hold a different candidate. It was an epic fail to not educate the public.

Next, #GladesLivesMatter. It is irresponsible and criminal to threaten people with death threats based on blowing the levee and flooding them out because, “It would be an improvement in their lives.” Just who exactly made them God and decides who lives or who dies?

And last, their scientific information

and support remains tainted. Having the support of 207 scientists from a population of 20,000,000 represents a 0.001035% support when figuring only scientists in the state, 207 of 9,500,000 is only a slightly better 0.00217894%. And most of their scientists are not from Florida.

It is important to proceed honestly as we move forward following serious people offering goals that are attainable and will produce decreases in discharges. In actuality, projects started since 2013 are decreasing discharges now, accounting for a 16% reduction of the 2013 water volume.

Any plan going forward must include water storage/water farming/water retention all around the Lake and the entire watershed which begins near Orlando. Any plan must include cleaning water of pollutants to include: fertilizers, herbicides, pesticides, micro-beads, pharmaceuticals and faulty septic/sewer systems, from the source and as the water flows.

Honestly! ■

*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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# A tiny bird impedes efforts to send water south



**Nyla  
Pipes**

*One Florida  
Foundation*

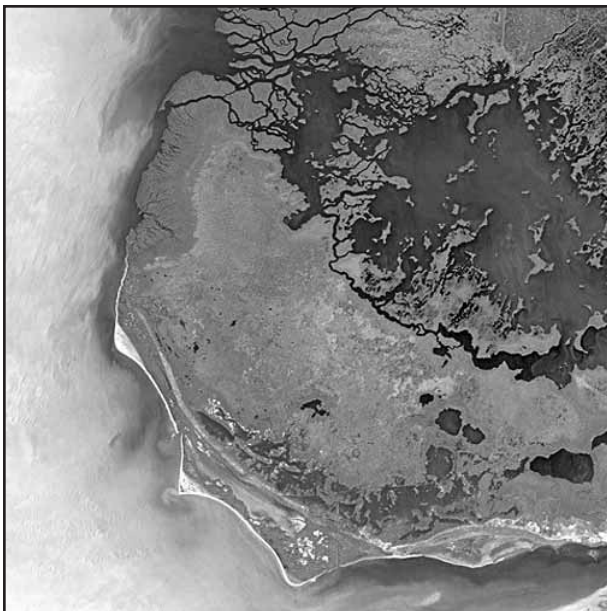
**F**rom a lack of infrastructure to man-made impediments, such as railroad tracks, roadways and major electrical transmission lines, many challenges to sending water south from Lake Okeechobee to Florida Bay exist, not the least of which is the Endangered Species Act that protects the Cape Sable Seaside Sparrow.

Thankfully, as a result of continued communication and a dedicated effort to look for flexibility within system operations, the Army Corps of Engineers and the US Fish and Wildlife Service seem to be working out some of the kinks to increasing the flow of water. As long as the Cape Sable Seaside Sparrow nests in the Everglades and their numbers are low, however, their habitat must always be considered when sending water south.

When man drained the Everglades, he didn't just create more dry land. He also inadvertently changed the vegetation from primarily freshwater vegetation to mangroves and other salt-tolerant plants by changing the hydroperiod, the length of time that fresh water sits on the land. Coupled with a rising sea level, as well as the effects of major hurricanes, the Cape Sable Seaside Sparrow moved farther into the Everglades away from the cape for which it was named. No sparrows can now be found at Cape Sable.

The Cape Sable Seaside Sparrow is a small bird that builds cup-shaped nests just six inches off the ground, leaving them vulnerable to predation by snakes and rats oblivious to their endangered status. The birds' preferred nesting habitat is a marl prairie of thin soils over limestone bedrock, which often includes muhly grass that grows with little water. The Cape Sable Seaside Sparrow tends to avoid areas of dense vegetation, sawgrass, cattails, spike-rush marsh, and woody vegetation, which is often seen in areas where water sits on the land for longer periods of time.

The breeding-age male sparrows stick close to their territories. Since sparrows do not live more than about four years, any change in their nesting can cause a serious decline in their numbers. Nesting season is typically considered March 1 through July 15, but may extend through August if conditions are



**The Cape Sable Seaside Sparrow can no longer be found at Cape Sable, pictured here in a satellite image of Florida Bay.**



**The marl prairies of the Everglades are drier than the vast sawgrass prairies and sloughs and some are a federally protected habitat for the Cape Sable Seaside Sparrow.**



**Native muhly grass, which blooms each fall, is the preferred nesting material of the Cape Sable Seaside Sparrow.**

favorable. Unfortunately, this coincides with our rainy season and the human need to move water south from Lake Okeechobee to Florida Bay.

The protection of the Cape Sable Seaside Sparrow, which has limited habitat left in Florida, has great impact on the way water can be managed throughout its designated nesting grounds. Completing the currently planned Everglades restoration projects is expected to benefit these sparrows, primarily by shifting water flows to the east; however, many projects have been delayed for years for lack of funding.

In the meantime, some experts argue that the Cape Sable Seaside Sparrow continues its decline in numbers whenever water is sent to the western side through Shark River Slough into the sparrows' "Subpopulation A" habitat in Water Conservation Area 3A, rather than to the east, where the water historically flowed.

As Everglades restoration progresses, decisions are being made based on the "Everglades Restoration Transition Plan" and the "Biological Opinion" that addresses wildlife habitat. Working together, the agencies have devised a new plan to move as much water out of



**The tiny, federally protected Cape Sable Seaside Sparrow builds nests just six inches or so above ground, leaving it vulnerable not only to predators but to high water levels that destroy its nests. Many environmentalists argue that the protection of one species of bird in the Everglades is causing the destruction of multiple endangered species of the east and west coastal estuaries by impeding the flow of water south to Florida Bay. Photos: Everglades National Park and USFWS.**

Water Conservation Area 3A, sending as much east as possible, so as to avoid sending water west through Shark River Slough and flooding sparrow nests during nesting season.

Considering that there are other sparrow subpopulations, however, the overall recommendation is that water managers must provide 90 consecutive dry-nesting days between March 1 and July 15, over at least 24,000 acres within and adjacent to the Cape Sable Seaside Sparrow's "A subpopulation," and across at least 40 percent of each of five other, smaller eastern subpopulations to allow for multiple broods during each nesting season.

Another consideration is water must be managed not only to protect the breeding sparrows, but also to protect the remaining marl prairie habitat. Generally, this means the land must be kept not too wet, as to encourage sawgrass growth, and not too dry, which promotes

the growth of woody vegetation, for a period of 90-120 days.

All of this must be managed even during the extremely wet years when it rains seemingly everywhere, and there is no other place to put the water because all of our storage areas are full.

Handling the endangered Cape Sable Seaside Sparrow while we complete Everglades Restoration projects, is not a simple riddle to solve. It's even more frustrating when you live on a coastal estuary full of other threatened and en-

dangered species where the conditions are not ideal as a result of the Lake Okeechobee discharges.

Nonetheless, the Federal agencies are obligated to consider the Cape Sable Seaside Sparrow's habitat and breeding periods while they try to send more water south. While I applaud their efforts, it's also just one more reason we must complete the projects on the Integrated Delivery Schedule more quickly so that we can send more water south and stop the discharges to our estuaries.

To view the Integrated Delivery Schedule go to:  
[http://www.saj.usace.army.mil/Portals/44/docs/Environmental/IDS/IDS\\_PLACEMAT\\_Revised\\_February2016\\_web.pdf](http://www.saj.usace.army.mil/Portals/44/docs/Environmental/IDS/IDS_PLACEMAT_Revised_February2016_web.pdf) ■

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





## Friday, Saturday, Sunday Nov. 4-6 Stuart Air Show

Friday night, Nov. 4, is the night-time flight show and fireworks from 5-10 p.m. For even more fun, plan to attend the Dirty Flight Suit Party that starts at 5 p.m. (Tickets sold separately.) Come early on Saturday, Nov. 5, or Sunday, Nov. 6, gates open at 9 a.m., for the Mini Cow Toss sponsored by Chick Fil A, the RC Helicopter Stunt Show and the WWII Battle Reenactment. The Stuart Air Show, presented this year by Sikorsky Aircraft, a Lockheed Martin Company, and Pratt & Whitney, a United Technologies Company, will honor the past and inspire the future. The three-day event draws 40,000 spectators annually and is the largest air show in southern Florida. Experience the airshow like a VIP in one of three upgrade areas including the Bomber Squadron sponsored by CenterState Bank and catered by Southern Pig and Cattle, the Heineken Beer Garden or spectator seating. Upgrades start at \$10, and tickets, starting at \$5 for children and veterans (military identification required). Purchase online at [www.StuartAirShow.com](http://www.StuartAirShow.com).

## Saturday, Nov. 12 All Hands on Deck at US Sailing Center

The annual fundraiser to benefit the US Sailing Center's High School Sailing Program in Jensen Beach, hosted by the sailing center and the parents of the program's students, will be Saturday, Nov. 12, from 6:30 p.m. to 10 p.m. on the sailing center's upper deck overlooking the Indian River Lagoon. The goal is to raise funds to continue the program for 70 students from 8th through 12th grades from five high schools: Martin County, South Fork, Jensen Beach, the Pine School and the Marine Oceanographic Academy/Westwood High. The students are trained to compete in Interscholastic Association sailing events to racing in national championships. The funds will help keep costs low for participants by providing boats, coaching, and scholarships for students. The party includes cocktails, hors d'oeuvres and a silent auction. Live music will be provided by The Pine School Steel Drum Band from 7 to 8pm, followed by a DJ for the rest of the evening. Tickets are \$40 per person. Reservations are required by calling 772.334.8085.

## Now-through Nov. 27

### Role of Technology in Ocean Exploration

The Elliott Museum is hosting an extraordinary exhibit that explores Sight, Sound and Dynamics in the Sea: The Role of Technology in Ocean Exploration on display now through Nov. 27, from 10 a.m.-5 p.m. A unique and inspiring exhibit developed by FAU Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute, the Elliott Museum, 825 N.E. Ocean Boulevard, Stuart. Regular museum admission prices. 772-225-1961.

## Wednesday, Nov. 9

### Photography Idea Lab opens in Hobe Sound

The grand opening of a new idea lab will be Wednesday, Nov. 9, at 5:30pm at the Hobe Sound Public Library, 10595 SE Federal Hwy, Hobe Sound. The idea lab focuses on photography and is designed for multigenerational engagement, and is the perfect place to create, experiment, showcase, and play with photography and other technologies. It will include a range of technology, from accessible consumer devices to professional-grade photography equipment. The idea lab will feature collaborative work spaces as well as space to display and highlight the community's artwork. No charge.

## Thursday, Nov. 10

### Cocktails & Curators at the Elliott

One of the most popular offerings at the Elliott Museum is the four-part Curators and Cocktails series, the first set for Thursday, Nov. 10, from 5:30-7:30 p.m. Associate car curator John Giltinan will discuss "Cars, Yachts, Brawling and Booze: The Dodge Dynasty." Cost is \$30 per person and includes the lecture, signature cocktail, wine, beer, sodas and hors d'oeuvres. Elliott Museum, 823 N.E. Ocean Avenue, Stuart. RSVP to Amie Smith at 772-226-1961 or [asmith@elliottmuseum.org](mailto:asmith@elliottmuseum.org).

## Thursday, Nov. 10

### Fall Stuart Stroll

An evening of shopping, refreshments and fun in Historic Downtown Stuart will be Thursday, Nov. 10, from 5 p.m.-9 p.m., sponsored by the Downtown Business Association and Stuart Main Street. During the Stuart Stroll, participants will enjoy drinks, refreshments, and free food samples as they stroll the dozens of participating shops, galleries and restaurants downtown. Five lucky shoppers will win a \$100 shopping spree in Historic Downtown Stuart. Tickets for the Stuart Stroll are \$15 in advance and \$20 the day of the event; only 400 tickets will be sold. Advance tickets can be purchased at Kilwin's Chocolates & Ice Cream, Stuart Coffee Company, Gumbo Limbo Coastal Chic, Rare Earth Gallery, Harbor Wear, The Clam Shell, April Daze, and the Seacoast Bank branch on Colorado Avenue in Stuart. Registration begins at the Post Office Arcade on Osceola Street. Free shuttles are available from the Osceola, Sailfish, and Kiwanis Park parking lots. For more information, visit [HistoricDowntownStuart.com](http://HistoricDowntownStuart.com), [StuartMainStreet.org](http://StuartMainStreet.org), find Stuart Main Street and Downtown Stuart on Facebook, or call 772-286-2848

## Friday, Nov. 11

### Blue Star Memorial Marker Dedication

Commemorating the Blue Star in the center of the white armed services flags that were first used during WWI to hang in windows or on front doors of homes denoting a member of the family was currently serving in the nation's armed forces. In 1945, the National Garden Club Inc. requested that a Blue Star Memorial Highway Program be implemented as an enduring tribute to the men and women who serve in the Armed Force. Endorsed by the Florida Federation of Garden Clubs, the Jensen Beach Garden Club will dedicate a Blue Star Memorial Marker on the Jensen/Stuart Historic Arch over NE Dixie Highway in Rio, adjacent to the Langord Park on Friday, Nov. 11, Veteran's Day. The ceremony will begin at 2 p.m. and Commissioner Doug Smith is the featured speaker.



## Friday, Nov. 11

### Veterans Day Parade

Martin County District 5 Commissioner John Haddox, LT, USN (Ret) will serve as Grand Marshall of the Veterans Day Parade that will include Martin County Fire Rescue Trucks this year. Sponsored by the Veterans Council of Martin County, the traditional Veterans Day event will begin with a parade lead by veterans and veteran service organizations that kicks off at High School Avenue at 10 a.m. followed by Veterans Memorial ceremony at 11 a.m. at Stuart's Memorial Park. This year's guest speaker is Bob Crowder, former Martin County Sheriff. [www.StuartParades.com](http://www.StuartParades.com) or contact Jim Riordan at 772-220-4127.



## Saturday, Nov. 12

### 'Down at the Schoolyard' at the Apollo

Join your Hobe Sound neighbors at the renovated Apollo School as they celebrate the arrival of cooler weather "Down at the Schoolyard" on Saturday, Nov. 12. The food is delicious, the music, courtesy of the popular Irish band, The Rowdy Micks, is delightful, and you'll get to experience an old-fashioned cakewalk in the school yard. Food is served from noon to 2 p.m., and the fun continues until 3 p.m. Tickets for adults are \$15 in advance and \$20 at the door; \$7 for children 10 and under in advance and \$10 at the door. For more information, go to [www.apolloschool.org](http://www.apolloschool.org)



## Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, Nov. 11-13

### Jensen Beach Pineapple Festival

The 2016 Jensen Beach Pineapple Festival lineup offers the most unique balance of



headline concerts in the event's 29-year history, says Ron Rose, executive director of the Jensen Beach Chamber. And the parking issues have been solved on top of that! The festival will kickoff, Friday, Nov. 11, at 6 p.m. With free admission to veterans (military ID required) with a concert by country music's hottest new star, Drake White and The Big Fire. In partnership with the Coast 101.3 18th Birthday Bash, the headline concert on Saturday night, Nov. 12, will be 90's world renowned pop rock group, Smash Mouth, and on Sunday, Nov. 13, Christian rock star Lincoln Brewster will be center stage.

New attractions this year include the Tricky Dog Show, a circus-style comedy dog act with a cast of talented canine clowns performing an action-packed show full of surprises. Rollo, the biggest kid in the world, will make his first festival appearance as will Bruce Sarafian, a world-record juggler. Also returning this year is the popular comedy magic show.

Adult festival general admission is \$15, student general admission is \$5. Kids under 42" tall will be admitted free when accompanied by a ticket-holding parent or guardian. Advance tickets are \$10 and can be purchased at any Seacoast Bank location through Nov. 10. VIP and preferred seating, as well as discounted three-day general admission packages, are on sale at [www.PineappleFestival.info](http://www.PineappleFestival.info). The midway will offer Family Day, Sunday, Nov. 13, for \$20, but does not include festival admission. For safety, kids under 42 inches tall may be required to ride some of the attractions with a paying adult.

Free shuttle bus service to and from the festival every 20 minutes all three days will be from the parking lot at the Treasure Coast Square Mall directly behind Sears, but ceases runs at 11:30 p.m. on Friday and Saturday and 8 p.m. on Sunday.

## Wednesday, Nov. 16 Stuart Martin Chamber Holiday Trade Show

The Stuart Martin County Chamber of Commerce 22nd Annual Business after Hours and Holiday Trade Show is Wednesday, Nov. 16, from 5:30-7:30 p.m. at The Kane Center on Salerno Road in Stuart. Do some gift shopping, learn about chamber member's businesses and find valuable services. Enjoy delicious food with friends at the Mini-Holiday Taste showcasing chef's from the local area. Tabletop spaces are available. For ticket information, email [lisat@stuartmartinchamber.org](mailto:lisat@stuartmartinchamber.org) or call (772)287-1088 x111.

## Saturday, Nov. 19

### World's Greatest Indoor Flea Market & Bake Sale

Yep, it's back for the new season! The ever-popular Indoor Flea Market & Bake Sale, sponsored by the Rio Civic Club, will be Saturday, Nov. 19, from 8 a.m. to 12 noon. Located in historic Rio at the Rio Civic Center, 1255 NE Dixie Highway, you 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, so just roll out of bed and come on down! For detailed information, or to reserve a table (\$12) to sell your own items, call 772-232-2182. Proceeds will support area student scholarships and community projects. Rio Civic Club is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

## Saturday, Nov. 19

### Women in Florida History

A much-neglected topic, the Importance of Women in Florida History, will be presented Saturday, Nov. 19, at 11 a.m. by IRSC Adjunct Professor Ronald Grenville Frazier at the House of Refuge, 301 S.E. MacArthur Boulevard. The lecture is free with museum entrance of \$8 per person for adults, \$7 for seniors and \$6 for children. 772-225-1875; or [HouseOfRefugeFL.org](http://HouseOfRefugeFL.org).



## Saturday, Dec. 3

### Hobe Sound Christmas Parade

Holiday cheer will fill downtown Hobe Sound on Saturday, Dec. 3, for the 31st annual Hobe Sound Chamber Christmas Parade. Local shops, businesses & restaurants will open for holiday activities and specials. The Holiday Arts & Crafts Stroll will be from 10 to 3 pm next to Taste Casual Dining. The Parade begins at 1 pm, opening with the Sheriff's helicopter fly-over. There will be over 70 entries; floats, cars, unique vehicles, famous characters and marchers. Bring your entire family to Bridge Road & Dixie Highway to enjoy this Hobe Sound tradition. Arrive early with chairs and blankets...in case it snows!

## Saturday, Dec. 3

### Martin County Christmas Boat Parade

As soon as the Christmas Parade in Hobe Sound ends, head north on Dixie Highway to Sandsprit Park at 3343 SE St. Lucie Blvd. for a holiday festival and to watch the Martin County Boat Parade, which begins at 7 p.m. The Marine Industries Association of the Treasure Coast's seasonal gift to the community consists of decorated boats, both small and large, and admission is free.



## Thursday – Sunday, Dec. 1-4

### Hobe Sound Singing Christmas Tree

Hobe Sound Ministries will present the 20th Annual Singing Christmas Tree from Thursday, Dec. 1, through Sunday, Dec. 4, at 7 pm each evening. Doors open at 6 pm. This spectacular event, attended last year by over 8,000 people, will feature 75 singers in a beautifully lighted Christmas tree of thousands of lights, a 25-piece orchestra, a children's choir and a drama cast of 50. Flying angels, kings and shepherds, holy family, will bring the annual message and lights of the season! Admission is free, but a freewill offering will be taken. Hobe Sound Ministries is at 11295 Gomez Ave in Hobe Sound at Hobe Sound Bible College/Church. Call 772-546-5696 with questions or visit their web site at [www.hobesoundstree.com](http://www.hobesoundstree.com).

**BRAT Club 2nd Annual Ranch RODEO**

**SATURDAY  
NOVEMBER 12TH**

Location: **AGRI-CIVIC CENTER** 4801 Hwy 710 OKEECHOBEE, FL.

TIME: **5:00-8:00 P.M.**

INTERMISSION: **CALF Scramble**

ADMISSION: **\$5.00** per person

VETERANS **FREE** Admission WITH I.D.

TICKETS can be purchased in advance at: Mid Florida Credit Union, Chamber of Commerce, Buxton and Bass Funeral Home or at the gate.

PRESENTING Sponsors: **WM** **KL** **STOCK** **SPONSOR**

**BRONC Riding** **CALF Branding** **YEARLING Tying** **COWHIDE Drag**

FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL Teresa Bishop 863-801-4996

FOR TEAM INQUIRIES CALL Tony Bishop 863-990-5194





## Two nights of glorious rodeo in iTown

Lifelong residents of Indiantown still call the rodeo arena at Timer Powers Park, the "Rodeo Bowl," harkening the early days of major, national rodeos that drew as many as 18,000 fans from 41 states to Indiantown. Although no official count has yet been announced, the overflow size of the crowds on Oct. 14 and 15 seem to indicate that the number will exceed last year's 10,000 visitors, perhaps in part due to the expansion of kids' activities and Martin County's \$2 million-plus investment in improvements, including an arena roof. Affiliated with the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association (PRCA) and the Women's Professional Rodeo Association (WPRA), the rodeo was produced by the 4L Rodeo Company, made possible by numerous sponsors, community volunteers, and under the expert direction of Indiantown resident Hillary McKeich. Already cited as one of the top-20 events in the Southeastern US, it appears the rodeo's glory days are here again! Photos submitted by fans.