

# The Coastal Star *Free*

May/June 2020 Serving Hypoluxo Island, South Palm Beach, Manalapan, Ocean Ridge, Briny Breezes, Gulf Stream and Coastal Delray Beach Volume 13 Issue 5

## Along the Coast



Morgan Didio, a student at Lynn University, walks with her friend Emma Fleurian, a student at FAU, along the beach at South Beach Park in Boca Raton the morning of May 18, the day Palm Beach County reopened the beaches. They were closed for weeks because of the deadly coronavirus pandemic. **Tim Stepien/The Coastal Star**

## Beaches open! A cautious step toward normal

**Pressure to unlock coast, boost jobs outweighs risk of surge in virus**

By Mary Hladky

As Palm Beach County officials took the first steps toward rolling back coronavirus closures in late April, they started with recreational facilities such as parks and golf courses.

They then asked Gov. Ron DeSantis in early May to lift special restrictions placed on the county so restaurants and retail stores could reopen with capacity restrictions. DeSantis agreed, and also ended the

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Care facilities ask for understanding, help, **Page 21**  
Eateries buoyed as capacity rules loosen, **Page 22**

closure of hair and nail salons and barber shops.

But beaches remained on the still-closed list, despite clamoring from the public to use the state's most treasured resource.

That finally changed May 15 when county commissioners voted 5-2 to ratify an earlier decision to reopen public and private beaches on May 18, with beach-goers required to practice social distancing.

"We need to set policy that is for the greater good and

not worry about outliers," said Commissioner Robert Weinroth.

So why didn't beaches open sooner? The county didn't need DeSantis' permission to reopen them. He had issued an executive order in March that extended beach closures but gave Palm Beach and Broward county administrators the authority to open them up.

County commissioners, however, faced a complex situation and were juggling competing demands.

**Backdrop of death remains**

Although some state data showed a decrease in hospital admissions and other positive signs that the rate of COVID-19 infections had stabilized or was in decline, the number of cases and deaths in the state and county continues to rise.

As of May 19, the state had 46,944 coronavirus cases, 502 more than the day before and 2,806 more than on May 15. Palm Beach County had 4,699 cases, up 41 from the day before and up 308 from May 15. The state's death toll was 2,052, and the county's was 284.

With DeSantis continuing to lift South Florida restrictions, some county commissioners

were hesitant to further relax rules and risk a surge of new cases, possibly stretching hospitals — still struggling to obtain enough personal protective equipment — to the breaking point.

Disturbing images of people massing on Jacksonville and Naples beaches when they opened gave commissioners another concern. But Dr. Scott Rivkees, Florida's surgeon general, has said he did not see an increased number of coronavirus cases resulting from Jacksonville's mid-April beach reopening.

Yet Dr. Alina Alonso, health

See **BEACH** on page 14

## Along the Coast

### Behind masks: Service club stitchers unite to shield workers

By Ron Hayes

Their mission began in March, when dozens of women took up battle positions at sewing machines along our coast.

Day after day, week after week, they cut patterns, stitched borders, folded pleats, attached ribbons and elastic bands.

They made masks.

Some were experienced seamstresses, some nervous amateurs learning as they worked.

All are members of local service clubs, doing their little bit each day in the war against the COVID-19 pandemic.

By early May, these women of the Briny Breezes Hobby Club, the Ocean Ridge Garden Club, the Casuarina Woman's

Club of Lantana, and the Boca Raton Garden Club had produced thousands of protective masks.

Today, some of those masks are worn by doctors and nurses at the VA Medical Center in Riviera Beach, the Lakeside Medical Center in Belle Glade, the Lynn



Nurses at Delray Medical Center model the masks provided by Briny Breezes seamstresses. **Photo provided**

See **MASKS** on page 18

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Go online for updates at [www.thecoastalstar.com](http://www.thecoastalstar.com)

**Memorial Day tribute**

Tour the South Florida National Cemetery **Page H1**

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Send letters, opinions and news tips to news@thecoastalstar.com

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## Editor's Note

### Gratitude in the time of COVID-19

It's been an odd couple of months, right?

There were no beach walks, pedicures or hanging with friends. The neighborhood kids studied at home, and new graduates tossed their tassels only via video streams. Easter and Passover rituals were shared using Zoom.

And yet, I'm grateful. Grateful to live in a place where people help their neighbors. Where clever, caring people find solutions to difficult problems during a deadly pandemic. Where health care workers and first responders go to work each day — even in the face of danger and anger. Where local governments work hard and wisely to keep our cities and towns operating and informed.

I'm grateful for all of the people who work as part of our *Coastal Star* operation. These are difficult times for newspapers. Our team has adapted to a changing environment with skill and grace. All are committed to bringing news and information to this community.

In the pages of this combined May/June edition you'll find many examples of why I'm grateful.

There are the readers who donated to help local businesses and nonprofits, there are those who offered their support for community journalism, and the condos, clubs and organizations that stepped up to pay tribute to

first responders and health care professionals and to celebrate the beauty and strength of our community.

Although businesses in our area are beginning to reopen, we expect the local economy to stay sluggish through the summer. So, our plan is to publish again the weekend of July 4 and again just before Labor Day. Altering our frequency enables us to continue publishing. We hope to be monthly again in the fall.

In the meantime, be sure to join our website ([www.thecoastalstar.com](http://www.thecoastalstar.com)). It's a members-only site to assure a safe online experience. You'll find our calendars (including summer camps) there again this month; and as news important to our local community happens, we'll do our best to post stories and email you the latest news updates.

In the midst of a deadly virus causing heartbreak and sickness and separating families when they need each other most, I'm grateful for my nearby friends and family. They have made us face masks, kept us stocked with produce from the Glades and mangos from their trees and are willing to help in any way they can. It's been good to have them near.



I am grateful.

— Mary Kate Leming, Editor

## Coastal Stars



Iain Paterson and John Brewer also volunteer at Trinity Lutheran Church in Delray Beach, passing out produce to people in need during the pandemic. **Tim Stepien/The Coastal Star**

### Delray men hatch plan to help restaurants survive pandemic

By Jane Smith

Two Delray Beach dads, concerned about how restaurants could survive a shutdown during the onslaught of COVID-19, came up with a plan to help the local eateries.

The men — John Brewer and Iain Paterson — founded the Socially Distanced Supper Club, an online effort to drive business to area restaurants hanging on for dear life.

The club debuted in mid-March after the state shut down all nonessential businesses and limited the size of groups as Florida attempted to mitigate the spread of the deadly coronavirus.

With more time on their hands, Brewer and Paterson began talking about ways to save the small restaurants they enjoyed in Delray Beach.

"The mom-and-pop restaurants are the last bastion of small business where the owners live locally," said Brewer, a 55-year-old commercial real estate broker whose first job was busing tables at the Driftwood restaurant (currently Riggins Crabhouse) his dad owned in Lantana. "It will be the end of an era if all Delray restaurants have corporate owners. ... Who wants that?" he said.

Brewer knows Paterson from Trinity Lutheran School. Brewer's son went there, and Paterson has three children enrolled at the school. Paterson had started a Dads Club. Brewer jokingly called it "an excuse to go over to the Saltwater Brewery to play shuffleboard table games and drink a few IPA," meaning India pale ale.

"Iain called me up and talked about my taking pictures of food and posting them on Instagram," said Brewer. "He suggested I do that on Facebook and help small restaurants."

Restaurants were relegated to takeout sales. Few would survive that business model. If they

could count on business from catering, Brewer said, more could ride out the pandemic.

The Socially Distanced Supper Club name came from the 6 feet of separation rule. By early May, the Delray club had more than 13,000 members and spawned at least 15 other chapters in five states.

The Supper Club, accessible on Facebook ([www.facebook.com/groups/664927070929564/](http://www.facebook.com/groups/664927070929564/)), directs diners to buy at a choice of two or three restaurants nightly, in a flash-mob style. That way the owners know how much staff they'll need and how much product to order, Brewer said.

Even though restaurants are now allowed to open with 50% occupancy, the club likely will continue until occupancy is closer to 80%, Brewer says. Few restaurants can make it on the reduced occupancy, he says, and some people won't feel comfortable going out to eat until there is a vaccine.

It's a simple but brilliant idea, making people think "I wish I had thought of it," Brewer said. "For once, I am ahead of the curve."

A Delray Beach native, Brewer has become the face of the club with daily videos on Facebook. He discusses the night's featured restaurants and reminds people to be patient when picking up their meals.

Brewer and Paterson volunteer their time. Diners must call in their orders to restaurants by a deadline and pay for meals via credit cards.

"We're helping Delray people find restaurants that they didn't know existed," said Paterson, 46, the southeast Florida sales director for Hufcor. Based in Wisconsin, the firm makes acoustic moveable walls sold internationally to hotels, music halls and universities.

The Delray Beach supper club chapter's success won national attention when NBC's Kerry

Sanders came to town to film a segment that appeared May 9 on the "Weekend Today" show.

Mayor Shelly Petrolia gave the story a shout-out during a commission meeting, saying, "It showed what makes Delray, Delray, by people thinking outside of the box."

"Besides, considering the stay-at-home restrictions, no one from Delray is going to drive up to Palm Beach Gardens to get a meal," said Paterson, who moved to the U.S. from the Bahamas when he was 11.

Two other volunteers created the forms needed to assist the small restaurants onto the catering platform.

In addition, Paterson and Brewer are involved with a new hot lunch program based at Trinity Lutheran School intended to help unemployed restaurant workers.

Jamie Wagner, the school's executive director, was moved by a video that showed restaurateur Rodney Mayo in tears. Mayo was talking about the worst day of his life, March 20, when he laid off 650 employees. Since then Mayo opened a daily feeding spot at his Howley's restaurant in West Palm Beach. In Delray Beach, Mayo's group owns the Subculture Coffee house, Dada restaurant and Honey nightclub.

Wagner also wanted to help. He had enough money to pay for two weeks' worth of meals, but the program continues with funding from sales of vehicle decals, baseball caps and T-shirts from the Socially Distanced Supper Club. Another volunteer coordinates the sales.

As of mid-May, more than 16,000 meals had been served.

The results of these efforts? "The community feels closer," Brewer said, "with people stepping up to volunteer. And the mom-and-pops will expose themselves to a new audience."★

The next edition of *The Coastal Star* will be distributed the weekend of July 4

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In April, as we saw the impact the coronavirus pandemic was about to have in our community, we did something we have never done before: We asked you to help us, by helping others.

In this edition you will find ads placed by our amazing readers who love their favorite local businesses and nonprofits so much they paid for ads to support them.

Other ads were placed by local organizations to honor first responders, hospital workers, and other local heroes.

And we feel honored by those of you who donated directly to *The Coastal Star* simply because you trust us as the primary source of essential news and information for our community.

*"All of us at The Coastal Star — the writers, editors, support and advertising teams — want to thank you for your support. We look forward to continuing to provide the highest quality unique local news coverage we know you look forward to and appreciate."*



Our community still has a way to go with its recovery.  
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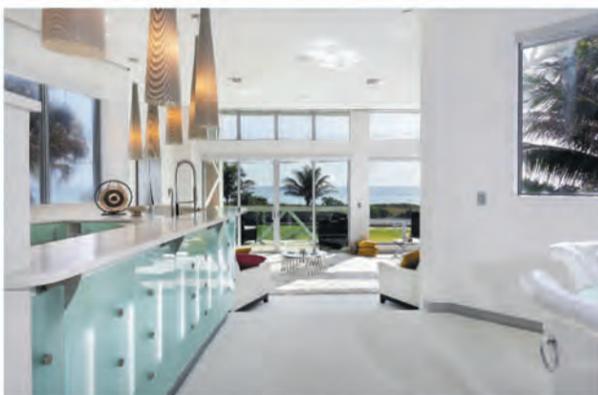
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## Letters to the Editor

### Swimmer laments halt to beach exercise regimen

Friday, May 1, was a beautiful morning. The ocean was radiantly supercharged from the rainstorm the preceding afternoon and crystal-clear smooth from a cool, offshore breeze. How well I know and love these weather metrics!

Under normal circumstances, I would have pursued my swimming regimen: 350 strokes freestyle out, float, pause, somersault in about 10 feet of water a half-dozen times, 350 strokes parallel to the shore and then back to sun dry on a beach towel. Then I return home from my secluded spot, 2-plus miles past the catamaran hangar site at the north end of Delray Beach.

And, yes, I go on foot, along the shoreline. I enjoy the solitude my regimen provides. I stand about as much chance of catching the novel coronavirus en route as a snowball has of being made in hell.

The Gulf Stream police know who I am: A worried member of a nearby roofing crew summoned them because he spotted me so far out to sea swimming with joyful abandon.

Hey, bungee boarders, surfers, sailboarders, kayakers, fellow distance swimmers, snorkelers, paddleboarders: We're "together, forever, as one!" to quote Chris Cuomo.

It ought to be readily apparent to the police, lifeguards and all others in

positions of authority that the folk engaging in these activities, while doing so, pose no threat to social distancing. These are not contact sports, people!

And since we arrive accessorized for our chosen activity, we are readily discernible from the throngs who want to sunbathe, wade, socialize and party hearty. (Mind you, I'm not condemning anyone for that, but now we are living the "new normal.")

Undeniably, tri-county South Floridians must heed concessions to their lifestyles. However, I was aghast to see people paddleboard and kayak in the Intracoastal Waterway, with the beach being a prohibited access to the ocean. The Intracoastal is neither a healthy nor safe place for those activities. I recently spotted the "beach closed" sign at the intersection of A1A and Woolbright — how draconian! The virus doesn't care ... people need to use good judgment and common sense to avoid it.

And finally, there is the sargassum seaweed cycle, which will soon head toward our local beaches. It's part of the natural world here and we have to allow for it, unpleasant though it may be. The ocean beckons and we must make smart choices with regard to the health benefits it offers us.

— James W. Stonehouse  
 Delray Beach

### Mayor asks Ocean Ridge residents to stay vigilant

While many of us could choose to live anywhere in the world, we chose to live in Ocean Ridge because it is a small, welcoming and tightknit community. We love the beach, we love interacting with our neighbors, we love our freedom and we love our police force and safety.

I ask that we embrace these strong core values as we continue to transition to our "new normal."

We have pulled together as a community. We have made meals and regularly check on our housebound and elderly neighbors. The Ocean Ridge Garden Club sewed and distributed over 350 masks

to the town staff and the community at large.

Town staff have been dedicated and worked countless hours of overtime. And we have done our best to keep everyone safe and informed with flyer distributions, signage throughout the town and over 25 update messages to residents in the area.

We are grateful that Ocean Ridge — and the surrounding barrier island communities — have remained relatively healthy. Our long term, solid relationships with our neighboring elected officials have proven to be an asset during these uncertain times.

We are cautiously optimistic as we reopen our tennis courts, golf courses, clubhouses and community pools on a limited basis. Our beaches are now open also. Forced isolation is waning.

Yet, the need for social distancing, wearing face coverings and being a good neighbor is as important as ever. I ask all residents to remain vigilant and patient.

Our goal is and always will be the safety of our residents and staff. Be safe and be well.

Kristine de Haseth  
 Mayor, Ocean Ridge

**LETTERS:** *The Coastal Star* welcomes letters to the editor about issues of interest in the community. These are subject to editing and must include your name, address and phone number. Preferred length is 200-500 words. Send email to [editor@thecoastalstar.com](mailto:editor@thecoastalstar.com).

## Delray Beach

# Reclaimed water project was mismanaged, city admits

By Jane Smith

The city's reclaimed water program, spawned in 2006 with the intent to stop the spewing of millions of gallons of wastewater into the ocean each year, was haunted from the beginning by mismanagement and lack of oversight, City Manager George Gretsas said on May 5.

"There was negligence and a lot of things that should not have happened," Gretsas told Delray Beach city commissioners at their virtual meeting. "The mismanagement is very clear. There was a decade of it ... lack of contractor oversight. No records were kept. It was a real problem for us as we're trying to fix it."

If Gretsas had to give the program a grade, he said it would be D-minus, and only that because it was well intentioned. Delray Beach shut down the system Feb. 4 to avoid a citywide boil-water order that the Florida Department of Health wanted amid an investigation into complaints that reclaimed water had mixed with drinking water.

The city is turning on the reclaimed water in phases with approval from the health department. Of the city's 1,236 reclaimed water customers, 72% have that service restored, Gretsas said May 19. Another 15% are awaiting some type of property owner action, according to Gretsas. An additional 13% are awaiting inspection.

Thirty barrier island homes were found to have the reclaimed lines installed closer than 3 feet to the drinking water lines, according to an April 29 city email to state health officials. A 3-foot distance between pipes is required by Florida Department of Environmental Protection rules. The city wants to restore the reclaimed water now and move those pipes later. Local DOH leaders were mulling whether to allow that as of mid-May.

Once the system is restored, all violations will be forwarded to the local health department legal team, Steve Garcia, a DOH environmental supervisor, wrote in a May 11 email.

The reclaimed water lines provide partly treated wastewater meant solely for lawn watering. The lines were installed as part of a settlement that Delray Beach reached with state and federal regulators to stop sending raw sewage into



Gretsas

**"The mismanagement is very clear. There was a decade of it. ... It was a real problem for us as we're trying to fix it."**

*George Gretsas, city manager, speaking to the City Commission*

the ocean.

The city must reuse 3.85 million gallons a day by 2025, according to the settlement. Its current level is 2.85 million gallons daily.

Most of the city's water customers on the barrier island have reclaimed water service for lawn irrigation. The golf courses, city parks and facilities and master-metered communities west of the interstate also use reclaimed water.

On April 22, the city found its first crossed connection under the current investigation, according to DOH emails. Crossed connections happen when the drinking water lines are mistakenly connected to the reclaimed water lines. The DOH insisted the city issue a boil-water order for the 30-unit condominium, Ocean Place at 120 S. Ocean Blvd.

"I remember my wife boiling pots of water," said Bob Victorin, an Ocean Place resident and Beach Property Owners' Association president.

The condominiums were approved to use potable water for the irrigation system for 90 days while the property manager locates and corrects plumbing issues, Missie Barletto, assistant Public Works director, wrote in a May 18 email. "Once the repair has been completed, the condominium property will be returned to reclaimed water for irrigation."

Debbie Lynott, who lives on Miramar Drive, said she noticed residents using old-fashioned sprinklers to water

their lawns in February. Her reclaimed water lines were not installed until early April. Her service was turned on April 30, according to the city.

"I'm used to being forgotten," she said. "My house is the only home on Miramar between Gleason Street and Venetian Drive."

Former Mayor Cary Glickstein wrote in a May 11 email to *The Coastal Star* that he was not told of any problems when he was in office from 2013 to 2018. "Further, neither I nor my commission colleagues were made aware of any system functionality problems during any public meetings."

Glickstein, who lives on Waterway Lane, as of May 11 was among those waiting for his reclaimed water to be restored.

Current Mayor Shelly Petrolia said, "I'm hoping this is a one- and only-time debacle. The system has to be revamped. We need to figure out who is responsible, including for the backflow devices — the homeowner or the city."

Even so, the city's delayed response caused frustration.

In mid-April, after the reclaimed water system was restored along Del Haven Drive, the city failed to open all valves. That forced Ken MacNamee to spend time checking his sprinkler system, checking the circuit breaker and finally opening the meter pit where he discovered the closed valve. He borrowed a plumbing tool from a neighbor to open the valve.

"This is just another gaffe

in this drawn-out debacle," MacNamee wrote in an April 20 email.

Residents on Del Haven and four streets north were the first on the barrier island to see their reclaimed water restored, on April 17. Their systems were activated in late 2018.

Gretsas, who started as city manager on Jan. 6, received a letter on Feb. 4 requiring the city to issue a boil-water order citywide.

The Florida DOH had received a complaint Jan. 2 about cross connections between drinking and reclaimed water. Christine Ferrigan, an inspector with the Utilities Department, provided notes to the investigation showing how the program was mismanaged from the start.

Gretsas, though, persuaded the DOH leaders to agree that the city would shut off its reclaimed water citywide to investigate. He wanted to avoid the boil-water order, which would have forced the hospital and restaurants to comply.

The city had to hire a contractor to create a database showing the locations of the drinking water and reclaimed water meters and the presence and types of backflow preventers on the drinking water systems.

City staff discovered that 237 reclaimed water customers citywide didn't have backflow preventers, Gretsas said March 2.

The devices are an extra layer of protection against the mixing of reclaimed and drinking water.

"We were not doing the types of things that need to be done in asset management," Gretsas said. "We just didn't know where the devices were."

That lack of information was evident in a spreadsheet the city sent to the DOH on March 6. It had many blank spaces, lacking dates when the reclaimed water

was first connected, when the backflow devices were installed and when they were reinspected.

In addition, Delray Beach went with backflow preventers that have a 5-year lifespan because they were cheaper, Gretsas said city staffers told him.

But that should change soon with new management, he said.

Hassan Hadjimiry will start June 2 as the city's water utilities director.

Gretsas said he did a national search and found the best candidate nearby. Hadjimiry retired May 5 from the county as its deputy director of water utilities.

Hadjimiry, who started with the county in 1982, was named as the Water Reuse Person of the Year in 2009. The Florida Water Environment Association has given the statewide award annually since 2004.

Once Hadjimiry starts work, city commissioners will have options put before them.

They can select the types of backflow preventers, an inspection and replacement program or, if they prefer, go to injecting the reclaimed water underground — which would be more costly, Gretsas said.

The commissioners also will hear about the costs of fixing the system. They include paying overtime for city staff, hiring contractors and consultants, adding new backflow devices, and providing water and a crew to irrigate lawns while the reclaimed water system was down. The amount spent since Feb. 4 was not available.

Delray Beach has hired a company run by Fred Bloetscher, a Florida Atlantic University associate dean in the engineering department, to investigate the reclaimed water program, Gretsas said.

To the city's reclaimed water customers, Gretsas said, "I'm sorry this happened and sorry it went on for a decade." ★

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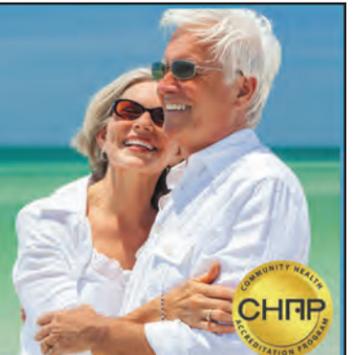


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**Ocean Ridge**

**Misdemeanor conviction to stay on Lucibella's record**

By Steve Plunkett

Businessman and magazine publisher Richard Lucibella has lost his courtroom quest to be cleared of all charges resulting from a backyard dustup with police in 2016 when he was the town's vice mayor.



Lucibella

The 4th District Court of Appeal affirmed without comment Lucibella's February 2019 conviction of misdemeanor battery on Ocean Ridge police Officer Richard Ermeri.

The appellate judges delivered comparatively swift justice, issuing a "per curiam affirmed" on April 16, just seven weeks after oral arguments. The court's website advises that a panel can take up to six months to reach a decision. Despite losing his appeal Lucibella, 66, hailed the overall case as a win. During his criminal trial he was found not guilty of two felonies: resisting arrest with violence and battery on a law enforcement officer.

"In the end, I'll settle for 99% vindication, for now," he said.

The charges stemmed from an Oct. 22, 2016, confrontation in Lucibella's backyard as police investigated reports of gunfire phoned in to 911. During a face-off Lucibella poked Ermeri with his finger through the officer's bulletproof vest, "a forceful poke," Ermeri, who has since been promoted to sergeant, testified at the original trial.

Leonard Feuer, Lucibella's appellate lawyer, told the judicial panel on Feb. 25 that Lucibella had a right to defend himself after Ermeri, Officer Nubia Plesnik and Sgt. William Hallahan showed up.

"I'm not seeing this show of force" by the police, Judge Alan Forst said. "Clearly they weren't invited in, but they didn't come in with guns blazing."

Senior Assistant Attorney General Melynda Melear, representing the state, told the judges that Lucibella "walked into" Ermeri's extended arms before he was arrested.

"It was the defendant who provoked the aggression in the first place," she said.

Feuer filed a motion on April 27, a Monday, asking the court to rehear the case, issue a written opinion and certify it as "an issue of great public importance." The judges denied the request the following Friday.

Lucibella criticized the decision.

"In order to issue an opinion, the 4th DCA needed to rule on the legality of these officers entering my property. They chose to kick that down the road by not issuing a written opinion," Lucibella said.

"Regardless, the (Circuit Court) jury found the officers to be acting outside their authority — that's why they ruled my actions as simple battery vs. the original charge of battery on a law enforcement officer."

Lucibella, who is chief executive of an "accountable care organization" for doctors and publishes a magazine for gun aficionados, is still the target of a civil lawsuit by Plesnik that accuses him of battery and negligence. His lawyers in that case have scheduled a deposition of Ermeri in June. ★

**Delray Beach**

**City pays de Jesus \$136,000 upon exit**

By Jane Smith

When Neal de Jesus abruptly left the Delray Beach fire chief position earlier this year, he received \$136,300.56. His contract called for 180 days' pay, or \$131,198.40.



De Jesus

"The 180 was not severance," City Attorney Lynn Gelin wrote in an April 15 email to the city manager. "Instead of keeping

him on paid leave during the 180 (which would have included payment for his benefits, his housing allowance, his use of the city vehicle, and his phone allowance), this was how the matter was settled."

If it had been severance, de Jesus would have received only 20 weeks of pay, or \$72,888, the maximum allowed under state law. City staff, including Gelin, declined to discuss the de Jesus payout, saying they do not discuss personnel matters.

De Jesus, though, did not

give 180 days' notice. He resigned and left his city job on the same day, March 10. His annual salary was \$189,508.80.

He left during an investigation of sexual harassment claims involving a woman employee. De Jesus had hired the woman while he was serving his second stint as interim city manager.

On Feb. 27, Gelin hired the labor law firm of Allen Norton & Blue to investigate the claim, based on allegations of suggestive texts that de Jesus had reportedly sent last fall. Suhaill Morales, of the firm's Coral Gables office, issued a report on March 26 stating she had interviewed several female city workers, including department heads, along with the woman employee. She tried to interview de Jesus, but the ex-fire chief declined unless his lawyer was present.

Morales found "insufficient evidence to conclude that (the woman employee) was subjected to unlawful harassment."

She recommended that all employees be issued copies of the city's harassment and reporting policy and acknowledge receiving them with signed receipts. Also, Morales advised the city to provide its managers with training on its harassment and complaint procedures.

Gelin declined to say whether she followed the suggestions, again saying the city does not comment on personnel matters. ★

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## Highland Beach

# Town wants to curtail transfer of offshore sand to neighboring cities

By Rich Pollack

In what might be shaping up as part of a continuing battle over beach-compatible sand offshore, Highland Beach is hoping to find ways to keep the valued but rapidly vanishing resource off its coast from going to neighboring cities.

It may be an uphill fight, however. The town has no legal claim to the sand used to replenish beaches, according to one attorney who specializes in coastal issues, and state regulators have already approved plans to dredge offshore for Boca Raton beach restoration projects for the next several years.

The question of whether Highland Beach has a way to stop another government from removing beach-compatible sand from a nearby "borrow area" surfaced after residents complained about offshore dredging done in March to restore Boca's public beach.

That North Boca Raton Beach Nourishment Project is complete, but additional projects in Boca that may result in dredging off the Highland Beach coast could begin in 2026.

The issue of how to preserve offshore sand first surfaced in Highland Beach during a commission meeting in May after Commissioner Peggy Gossett-Seidman began looking into the residents' complaints. She told fellow commissioners that a limited quantity of beach-compatible sand exists off Highland Beach — sand that is about the same size and color as that on the beach — and that much of it is likely to go to other communities for their restoration projects.

She also found that Boca has a permit good through 2028 from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection to remove sand off the town's coast for additional projects.

"We are aware the town of Highland Beach does not own the sand off our shores," she said. "Our concern is that if a catastrophic hurricane such as Michael or Andrew strikes Highland Beach, wipes out our beaches and puts residents' homes at risk, we could not rebuild our beach with our offshore beach-compatible sands because it would have already been removed."

What the town can do to prevent other communities from depleting sand off its shore, if anything, is still being explored. During their second May meeting, commissioners agreed to hear a presentation at their June 2 meeting from a coastal engineer and discussed possibly interviewing environmental attorneys should legal action be needed.

The commission is also considering asking for reports from the state Department of Environmental Protection to show that all permits are being complied with.



Sand for Boca Raton beach renourishments through 2028 will come from the shaded area, the same area used for a project finished in April.

**SOURCE: City of Boca Raton**

"The goal here has got to be to stop further removal of the sand," Commissioner John Shoemaker said.

While the dredging has stirred up concerns among some vocal residents who want to act quickly and firmly, Mayor Doug Hillman favors a more methodical approach.

"We need to hear from people who know more about this than we do," he said. "We haven't heard from somebody who knows what damage has been done to Highland Beach other than taking sand we might need someday. We still have a lot to

learn here."

Engineers and scientists studying coastal areas say the concern about the limited quantity of beach-compatible sand is legitimate.

Dr. Stephen Leatherman, a professor and director of the Laboratory for Coastal Research at Florida International University, says such sand is getting harder to find, especially off the South Florida coast.

And once the sand is taken from borrow areas, it is essentially gone.

"Borrow areas do not regain sand within the time span of hundreds of years except in rare situations," he said.

As a result, sand has to be trucked in from other areas, including from mines southwest of Lake Okeechobee. Bringing sand in by truck could be costly.

"Cost is related to distance," said Gordon Thomson, a South Florida-based coastal engineer with W.F. Baird Associates. "Therefore most municipalities will take it from as close as possible."

In the case of the North Boca Raton project, which began on March 10 and ended on April 7, sand was taken from a spot about 1,600 feet offshore designated by the state as Boca Raton Borrow Area V.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers project (Boca Raton was the non-federal sponsor) placed about 550,000 cubic yards of sand on Boca's beach, according to a city spokeswoman.

Borrow Area V held 1.35 million cubic yards of sand before the project, according to the permit for the work issued in February. Two more areas off the coast of Highland Beach that are listed on the permit application as borrow sites hold about 5.65 million cubic yards.

Boca Raton estimates that two additional projects scheduled for 2026 would likely

draw sand from the borrow areas and would result in about 1 million cubic yards being placed on its beaches.

An additional permit for the future projects would not be required unless the plans have significant changes, according to a spokesperson for the state Department of Environmental Protection.

One issue that concerns Gossett-Seidman and some residents is what they consider a mislabeling of the location of the borrow areas in the permit application. Although a map in the application labels the area west of the borrow area as Boca Raton, the area is in fact Highland Beach.

That is not an issue, the state DEP spokesperson said, because the agency uses "reference monuments" or coastal survey markers to map project boundaries, not municipal

boundaries.

Should the town challenge the existing permit for Boca, it would likely have a tough time.

"The town of Highland Beach has a lot of obstacles if it wants to challenge the permit now," said Ken Oertel, a Tallahassee lawyer who specializes in environmental and land use law.

Oertel said that challenges to a permit are accepted during a 20- or 30-day review period prior to approvals. After that time, it is very rare for challenges to be considered.

"Once that door closes, you're pretty much out of luck," he said.

Gossett-Seidman and other commissioners said they hope the issue can be resolved amicably through conversations with neighboring towns.

"A long-term cooperative program is what I'm currently proposing," she said. ★

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## Boca Raton

### Interim police chief gets full reins to department

By Mary Hladky

Michele Miuccio, who had served as Boca Raton's interim police chief since Dec. 1, has been promoted to police chief.



Miuccio

She assumed her new role on April 27. Miuccio has been with the department for more than 30 years, starting as an officer and rising through the ranks to deputy chief. Miuccio replaced Dan Alexander, who retired as chief on Nov. 30 after he was hired by the Palm Beach County School District to fill the newly created position of director of school police, serving as second-in-command to school district Police Chief Frank Kitzerow. Alexander led the city police department for 13 years.

"While serving as the interim police chief for the past five months, Michele's steadfast leadership has provided consistency in the department's mission and service," City Manager Leif Ahnell said in an announcement of her promotion. "I'm confident the police department will continue to thrive and grow under her direction as chief."

"I'm humbled by the opportunity to serve in this position and work alongside the dedicated men and women who keep Boca Raton safe and protect our residents," Miuccio said in the announcement. "Together, we can make one of the finest police agencies even better."

The city's police department has 216 officers and 107 civilian employees. Police officer starting salaries were increased to \$70,198 last year. ★

## Along the Coast

### Boynton, Delray name new fire chiefs

By Jane Smith

Boynton Beach and Delray Beach have promoted their interim fire chiefs to chief in their respective cities.

In Boynton Beach, Matthew S. Petty, 39, was promoted to fire chief on March 9 by the Boynton Beach city manager.

In Delray Beach, Louis "Keith" Tomey III, who had served as interim fire chief three times, was named the chief on March 31.

Petty, previously deputy chief, took over as interim chief on Nov. 29, after Glenn Joseph resigned to contemplate a career move.

In 2008, Petty joined Boynton Beach as a firefighter. Over the years, he rose through the ranks at the department.

"I'm very excited to lead the organization and better serve the community," Petty said.

His salary is \$150,000. Boynton Beach has contracts with the barrier island towns of Briny Breezes and Ocean Ridge to provide fire-rescue services.

Tomey, 56, is making \$165,239. He became the interim chief on March 10 after Neal de Jesus resigned while the city was investigating harassment claims against him.



Petty



Tomey

Tomey has spent more than 33 years in the fire service.

"It's an honor and a privilege to be appointed to lead this great department," Tomey said in a prepared statement. "Together, we have accomplished so much in the past few years. My goal is to keep moving forward and to keep improving."

Tomey, whose father was also a fire chief, started his career in Miramar in 1986, when he was hired as a firefighter/paramedic. He rose through the ranks at Miramar Fire Rescue and eventually served as fire chief from January 2014 to December 2016. Then, he was hired at Delray Beach Fire Rescue as assistant fire chief.

Tomey promoted Battalion Chief Greg Giaccone to the rank of assistant chief in charge of operations.

Delray Beach provides fire-rescue services to the towns of Gulf Stream and Highland Beach on the barrier island. ★

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Along the Coast

# Larcenies account for small towns' uptick in reported crimes

Increase mainly due to thefts from unlocked cars

By Rich Pollack

South Palm Beach County's small coastal communities saw crime increase in 2019, bucking both countywide and state trends, but their total number of crimes still remained low.

While Highland Beach, Gulf Stream, Ocean Ridge, Manalapan and South Palm Beach saw an uptick in major crimes, the area's larger cities all experienced declines.

Numbers released by the Florida Department of Law Enforcement for 2019 show that South Palm Beach, Manalapan and Ocean Ridge each had small increases in reported crimes, while Gulf Stream and Highland Beach saw larger increases.

In all, the five small communities had 117 reported crimes, up from 78 in 2018.

Larcenies, which can be anything from missing items to thefts from unlocked cars, were up significantly in Gulf Stream and in Highland Beach.

Gulf Stream recorded 12 larcenies in 2019 compared to two the year before, while

## South County numbers in 2019 vs. 2018

City/Town	Total crimes	Murder	Rape	Robbery	Aggravated assault	Burglary	Larceny	Vehicle theft
<b>Boca Raton</b>	(2019) 2,369	3	36	63	84	244	1,769	170
	(2018) 2,566	2	28	80	95	277	1,894	190
<b>Boynton Beach*</b>	(2019) 3,184	4	30	120	412	254	2,147	217
	(2018) 3,441	4	21	134	318	256	2,423	285
<b>Delray Beach</b>	(2019) 2,754	5	33	87	211	299	1,914	205
	(2018) 2,931	6	27	84	292	279	2,038	205
<b>Gulf Stream</b>	(2019) 17	0	0	0	2	2	12	1
	(2018) 3	0	0	0	0	1	2	0
<b>Highland Beach</b>	(2019) 44	0	2	0	2	6	28	6
	(2018) 27	1	0	0	2	1	19	4
<b>Lantana</b>	(2019) 639	0	8	23	47	48	470	43
	(2018) 703	0	12	25	54	29	534	49
<b>Manalapan</b>	(2019) 21	0	0	0	3	3	15	0
	(2018) 16	0	1	0	0	0	10	5
<b>Ocean Ridge*</b>	(2019) 32	0	0	0	1	6	20	5
	(2018) 30	0	0	0	3	6	13	8
<b>South Palm</b>	(2019) 3	0	0	0	0	0	3	0
	(2018) 2	0	0	0	0	1	1	0

\* Crimes occurring in Briny Breezes were incorporated into Boynton Beach and Ocean Ridge's overall crime reports. Source: Florida Department of Law Enforcement

Highland Beach had 28 larcenies compared to 19 the prior year.

Seven of the dozen Gulf Stream larcenies were thefts from unlocked cars and one was theft from an unlocked landscape trailer. The town reported one auto theft, which was the result of keys being left in an unlocked car.

Thirteen of Highland Beach's 28 larcenies were thefts from mostly unlocked vehicles, according to Police Chief Craig

Hartmann.

"The simple message we've always had is lock your car doors," Hartmann said.

That message has also been extended to lock all the doors in your home.

Highland Beach saw burglaries jump just from one in 2018 to six last year, with four of those occurring a few minutes apart. They were attributed to three females who entered the homes through unlocked back doors. The out-of-town suspects,

two juveniles and an adult, were arrested and charged in connection with the break-ins.

Locking doors, Hartmann says, not only helps reduce the loss of valuables but can also serve as a deterrent for future crimes. If thieves find that residents are locking doors, they are less likely to return to that community, he said.

Crime in South County's larger cities continued to fall for the second year in a row. Boca Raton recorded a 7.7% decline,

Boynton Beach a 7.5% drop and Delray Beach a 6% reduction.

In Lantana reported crimes dropped 9% following a 6.2% increase the previous year.

Any crime in Briny Breezes prior to Oct. 1 was included in the Boynton Beach numbers while those after Oct. 1 were reported by Ocean Ridge.

Countywide, major crimes declined about 8% while crime statewide dropped 6.3%, according to the FDLE's Uniform Crime Report. ★



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## Ocean Ridge

### Discussion is short-lived on merger with sheriff

By Dan Moffett

With rising personnel costs, multiple drainage issues and a massive septic-to-sewer conversion project looming, Ocean Ridge commissioners knew this would be a difficult budget cycle.

Then the new coronavirus struck, bringing with it potential revenue losses. Local gas and fuel tax, local sales tax, building permit proceeds, state revenue sharing, even earned interest from town savings — all figure to decline because of the impact of the virus. The impact on property values could also be a concern.

"This is going to be a very tight budget year," said newly minted Mayor Kristine de Haseth, telling commissioners during a May 4 workshop to



De Haseth

challenge all department heads and staff members to find ways to reduce expenses and make do with current resources." Martin Wiescholak, who joined the commission in March, pointed to the largest number on the town's budget as the place commissioners might want to start pruning dollars.

"The most intelligent way to look at budget cuts is by looking at the biggest expense in the budget, our Police Department," Wiescholak said. "I would like to get clear information as to how and why we need to have 20-plus police officers on staff."

About 52%, or \$4.2 million, of Ocean Ridge's total annual expenses go for police and fire-rescue services. A growing number of local municipalities that once ran their own police departments are turning to the Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office for law enforcement services as a way to hold down rising costs.

Last year, South Palm Beach closed its department and signed a 10-year merger deal with the Sheriff's Office. The town is hoping to realize about \$1 million in savings over the first five years of the contract.

It didn't take long for the merger prospect to come up at the Ocean Ridge workshop, but by consensus the commission decided not to explore it during this budget period.

Officer Jimmy Pilon,

the Ocean Ridge union representative, told commissioners during the discussion period that nearly 100% of the town's police force favors joining the sheriff.

"Pretty much, we'd rather merge than have layoffs," Pilon said. "Our town is very small. We can't compete with the county's benefits package."

Matt DeJoy, a spokesman for the Palm Beach County Police Benevolent Association, told commissioners that a merger would almost certainly cut the town's expenses.

"The numbers almost always come out to be a cost savings," DeJoy said.

Ocean Ridge took a serious look at a merger with the sheriff in 2012, but residents objected to losing their own department and the idea fizzled. This time it appears to be on hold.

Said Town Manager Tracey Stevens: "I don't expect further discussion regarding the sheriff's department taking over the town's law enforcement duties."

#### In other business:

- By a 3-2 margin, commissioners installed de Haseth as mayor during their meeting on April 6, with Wiescholak and Susan Hurlburt voting their support. Phil Besler and Steve Coz voted for Coz, who was installed as vice mayor after serving the last 18 months as mayor.

Wiescholak said he cast the deciding vote for de Haseth because he believes in a "rotating commission" and thinks that the town will need to work more with other communities and agencies going forward.

"Given the condition we are in and the situation we are in, Kristine would be the better choice simply because she has connections with the League of Cities and with her connections can bring more to the town over the next year," he said.

- Building and public works official Wayne Cameron resigned in April to take a similar job with the town of North Palm Beach. Stevens said she is interviewing replacement candidates and hopes to have the job filled by June.

She said the town intends to hire someone only as a building official — not also a public works director — to reduce the position's workload. ★

## South Palm Beach

### South Palm considering candidates to improve communication services

By Dan Moffett

The Town Council is moving closer to hiring a communications contractor to improve South Palm Beach's internet connections and emergency messaging with residents.

During their May 12 meeting, council members approved drafting a contract with The Merchant Strategy Inc., a West Palm Beach public relations firm headed by former state legislator Sharon Merchant.

Another West Palm Beach firm, My PR Guru, also remains a candidate for the contract. The two companies scored highest in council members' evaluations of services from several applicants.

"We have to decide what we need," said Mayor Bonnie Fischer. "We're not that close right now, and I think we'll need a workshop to make the decision."

Fischer said she wants the town's website to do a better job reaching out to residents and enlisting their involvement in government and recreational activities. Vice Mayor Robert Gottlieb believes a town Facebook page might be part of the solution.

"We're a unique small town," Fischer said. "We have to figure out how to reach people. A lot of our residents don't even have cellphones."

Improving communications took on a new urgency last Thanksgiving weekend when a water main broke outside the Mayfair condos, parts of the town lost service and utilities officials put out a boil-water advisory. Fischer said she had no way to quickly alert residents and had to post flyers in the lobbies of condo buildings.

The council is looking for a way to send out mass emails or text messages to as much of the town's population as possible.

#### In other news:

- Town Manager Robert Kellogg and Fischer distributed several thousand surgical face masks throughout the town last month.

Council members endorsed buying the masks to promote public safety in dealing with the coronavirus. ★

"When no one else thought about getting masks for the citizens of South Palm Beach," said resident Christine Mang, "Mayor Fischer was the one who stepped up."

As of mid-May, the town had one confirmed death from COVID-19. John Thomas "Tom" Craciun died April 1 in West Palm Beach, a couple of weeks after contracting the disease.



Craciun

Mr. Craciun, who was 77, owned a home in The Tuscan for about 12 years and was a familiar presence around the condo swimming pool. Originally from Warren, Ohio, he was an all-state swimming champion in high school who competed at Ohio State and Youngstown State universities. He set a world record in the 40-yard freestyle just before that distance was discontinued.

Mr. Craciun worked 30 years as a supervisor in a General Motors plant before relocating to Florida. He loved buying and selling vintage high-performance cars. He is survived by his ex-wife, Nanci, longtime ex-girlfriend Wendy, son Jon Paul, grandsons Maxwell and Levi, daughter Nancy Jean and granddaughters Hunter and Addison.



Flagello

- Former South Palm Beach resident Lucille Flagello died on April 4, in Mahwah, N.J., after a short illness. She was 79.

Born and raised in Brooklyn, New York, Mrs. Flagello was active in South Palm community events and a frequent participant in council meetings. Her son Joseph Flagello Jr., a chiropractor, served as the town's vice mayor until dying suddenly of heart failure at the age of 51 in 2017. Both were members of the Palmsea condo association.

"She was a wonderful person with a wonderful personality," Fischer said. "Look at the son she produced." The council appointed Mrs. Flagello to serve out the remainder of her son's term after his death. ★

## Briny Breezes

### Town asks state to slow boaters near marina

By Dan Moffett

Briny Breezes is hoping there's strength in numbers of neighbors when it comes to slowing down boaters in the Intracoastal Waterway.

The Town Council voted unanimously on April 23 to adopt a resolution that calls on the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission to create an "idle speed, no-wake" zone adjacent to the Briny marina.

The resolution is modeled after one passed by Delray Beach in February. And council members are hoping to persuade Boynton Beach, Ocean Ridge and Gulf Stream to adopt similar measures.

Mayor Gene Adams said a low-speed zone has become increasingly necessary because of rising water levels, flooding and the damage inconsiderate boaters leave behind them.

"It really tears up our sea wall as well as our marina area," Adams said. "So, otherwise Briny is going to have to spend more money to repair things than we would normally."

The proposed zone would extend about a half-mile south from Woolbright Road, past the marina to Briny's southern border.

Getting FWC officials to make the change won't be easy, said Town Attorney Keith Davis, who drafted the resolution.

"It's not going to be a walk in the park," he said. "It's a process. There's always push-back from the recreational boating community."

Davis said that years ago, he persuaded the FWC to create a low-speed zone for a

municipality in northern Palm Beach County. It took about a year of persistence. Davis said it might be easier to get the FWC to approve a slow-speed zone, rather than a full no-wake zone. "That's less of an ask," he said.

But the strongest parts of Briny's case to the state are the marina and the need to ensure safe operations for the boat traffic it draws.

"The one thing we have in our advantage is that we have adjacent marina facilities," Davis said. "That may be a plus."

Adams agreed: "The marina is our best bet as a leveraging tool."

Several previous petition drives calling for a no-wake zone in Briny fizzled without gaining any real traction. State officials are generally reluctant to change the status quo without compelling evidence or significant public pressure.

The Delray Beach City Commission's resolution asked the FWC to create a no-wake zone between Atlantic Avenue and George Bush Boulevard. The measure said Intracoastal property owners were suffering "degradation of their sea walls and landscaping" because of boaters' excessive speed. State officials have not yet formally considered the city's request.

Briny Breezes Council President Sue Thaler told Town Manager William Thrasher to reach out to neighboring communities and enlist their backing for the town's resolution and lower speeds.

"The more support, the better," Thaler said. "Hopefully, this will go somewhere." ★



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## Gulf Stream

# Plan presented to widen streets, fix roadway ponds

By Steve Plunkett

Sections of the town's narrowest roads could be widened at least 2 feet to combat water ponding on the pavement and ruts from vehicles that go off the asphalt.

The widening project, estimated to cost \$238,386, could be finished by next winter. The proposal is posted on the town's website, [www.gulf-stream.org](http://www.gulf-stream.org), for townfolk to review.

"I think it's something that the core [area] residents should evaluate and consider," Mayor Scott Morgan said. "It's not terribly expensive; it addresses the issues that have been raised every single day as long as I've been in this town. And I don't think it would set back the future road improvements."

Consulting engineer Baxter & Woodman Inc. presented photos at the May 8 Town Commission meeting

documenting what are routine sights in Gulf Stream's core area: rainwater backing up and completely covering parts of roadways, water ponding several inches deep at dysfunctional drains and deep ruts created by multiple cars and trucks.

The engineering firm recommends adding 1 foot of pavement to both lanes of Polo Drive from south of Palm Way to Old School Road, on Old School Road from Polo to Wright Way, on Banyan Road from Polo to Gulfstream Road, and on Lakeview Drive east of Gulfstream. That would make Polo Drive's lanes 10 feet wide and the lanes of other roads up to a minimum 9 feet wide.

The two blocks of Lakeview west of Gulfstream Road will get 2 additional feet of asphalt in each lane, while the east side of Gulfstream will become 3 feet wider from Lakeview to Golfview Drive.

The town is in the second year of its 10-year capital improvement plan to replace water mains and rebuild streets. Planning for the reconstruction of Polo, Gulfstream and other roads in the core area is scheduled for fiscal 2021, with the work coming in fiscal 2022.

This year's capital improvement work focuses on the water main along the northern section of State Road A1A. Also in May, town commissioners awarded a \$1.9 million contract to Wellington-based low bidder Foster Marine Contractors Inc. for that work.

**In other business:**

• Town Manager Greg Dunham told commissioners that AT&T has stopped putting its fiber optic underground and wants more than \$1 million to finish the work. Its existing contract was for \$420,000.

"This is coming at the very tail end [of

the project] — almost a blackmail-like attempt," Morgan said.

Dunham said he would meet with Danny Brannon, the town's main consultant on the underground utilities project, and the lawyer in Tallahassee who negotiated the contract with AT&T in 2017, to determine whether the higher cost is justified. FPL and Comcast were able to adapt to unexpected changes in the project without adjusting their fees, Morgan said.

• The eyesore house at 2775 Avenue Au Soleil was sold after the town reduced its lien to \$125,000 and lifted its demand that the existing building be razed. But buyer Chet Snavely, who is also president of the Place Au Soleil Homeowners Association, plans to demolish the home anyway and "leave it as a lot," Commissioner Donna White said. ★

## Delray Beach

# Commissioner Boylston agrees to fine to settle ethics violation case

By Jane Smith

Delray Beach Vice Mayor Ryan Boylston has agreed to pay \$2,000 for violating state ethics laws over votes taken when he was a board member of a taxpayer-funded agency.

At the June 5 state Commission on Ethics meeting, commissioners plan to review a stipulation of facts concerning two ethics violations when Boylston was a board member of the city's Downtown Development Authority. On April 10, he signed the stipulation, agreeing to the facts, to avoid a hearing.

Boylston was appointed in July 2011 to the DDA, which promotes downtown Delray Beach and taxes property owners in its 340-acre district.

The following year, 2012, he and others founded *The Pineapple Newspaper*, now known as the *Delray Newspaper*.

Boylston, whose DDA term ended in June 2017, insists he did not violate state ethics laws.

"I never voted to directly send advertising to my former newspaper," Boylston said in mid-May. "It was up to the DDA staff to decide where to spend their advertising dollars."

From 2014 through 2017, the DDA spent \$22,710 on ads in Boylston's newspaper.

When he announced he was running for city commissioner in October 2017, he stepped down as publisher of the *Delray Newspaper*. He sold his shares a few months later.

"I didn't fight it," he added. "The hearing was in Tallahassee and I would have had to hire an attorney to represent me. Then the COVID-19 lockdowns started and I was losing business."

Boylston runs a marketing company, now called 2Ton, to help businesses with branding, advertising, web design and

development, and photography and video production needs.

Martin Reeder, a media industry lawyer in West Palm Beach, had pointed out possible ethics violations by Boylston two years ago when he was running for a City Commission seat.

"We all want our public officials to abide by Florida ethics laws," Reeder said recently.

Chris Davey, a residential real estate consultant, filed the complaint because "the citizens of Delray Beach deserve elected officials who act in their interests. ... Ultimately, the \$2,000 fines are a slap on the wrist, but the test will be next March when Boylston is up for re-election."

Boylston became vice mayor at the commission's March 31 reorganization meeting.

Davey said he knows the Florida ethics laws from his stint on the city's Planning and Zoning Board and his current seat as chairman of the Board of Adjustments.

The state did not proceed on four other ethics complaints filed by Davey, who ran for a City Commission seat in March but lost.

The county Commission on Ethics said those alleged DDA violations occurred outside its

time limit to investigate.

However, that agency issued a "letter of instruction" to Boylston on Feb. 6 over a vote last year for his client Azure Development. That complaint also was filed by Davey.

The letter agrees that Boylston relied on advice from the city attorney, "which ultimately was incorrect," when the commissioner voted in May 2019 for an Azure project.

But the letter also told Boylston to take "reasonable precautions" on questions of voting conflicts in future situations.

They include asking the

person "appearing before the City Commission if he or she has a financial interest in a project."

Boylston sees the letter as basically "a suggestion on what

to do in the future."

Reeder, though, said, "It's not a get-out-of-jail-free card. The next time, more of the burden will be on him." ★



Boylston

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# BEACH

Continued from page 1

director in Palm Beach County, has urged commissioners to be cautious, saying in early May that reopening too soon or without proper protocols could cause a spike in cases.

At the same time, many laid-off or furloughed workers desperately needed to return to work, and businesses faced the prospect of shuttering for good.

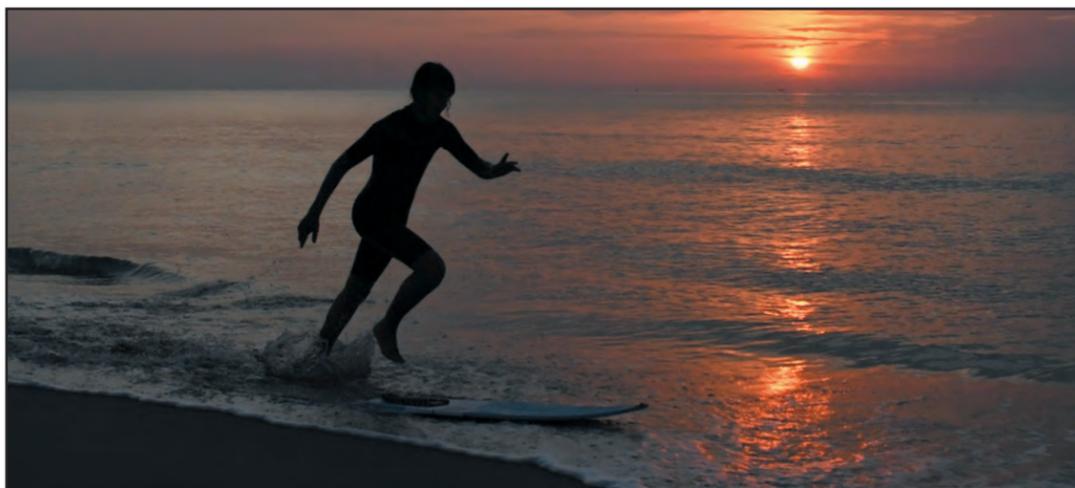
And county residents going stir-crazy in their homes badly wanted a return to something like a normal life. Beaches occupied a special place in their hearts, and by May many were no longer willing to be kept away from them.

James Stonehouse of Delray Beach does distance swimming, surfing, kayaking and snorkeling.

These activities reduce the stress of a health condition and the demands of caring for his 90-year-old mother. His beach activities are "very therapeutic," he said.

"I have been beside myself that I haven't been able to get to the beach," he said. "People pursuing health-sustaining activities should be allowed to pursue them," especially those he practices that "align with social distancing."

Chris Currie of Ocean Ridge said he is an "ardent user of the beach" with activities including scuba diving, swimming and sailing. He has let town



Tim McKinney Jr., an eighth-grader from Ocean Ridge, greets sunrise at Ocean Ridge Hammock Park on May 18. Tim received the skim board for his birthday earlier in the month and was able to use it for the first time when beaches reopened. Jerry Lower/The Coastal Star



A family visits the municipal beach in Delray Beach on May 18. Lifeguards patrolled the beach for unsafe activity while police officers made sure beach visitors did not violate any of the rules posted on signs all along A1A and at beach accesses. Rachel S. O'Hara/The Coastal Star

commissioners and DeSantis know that he wanted beaches opened and has broadcast his feelings on social media.

DeSantis' order closing beaches was "total overkill," he said.

"I also believe there is absolutely no scientific basis whatsoever (for the closure), nor is there any rational basis for it. All my research says

there is probably no more conducive environment to social distancing than the beach," he said. "There is no environment more hostile to COVID-19."

Currie had intended to file a lawsuit over beach closures but backed off when he learned that county commissioners were about to reopen them.

"I can assure you, if they are ever stupid enough to do

this again, they will be hit with litigation in the first 10 minutes," he said.

Palm Beach County could have legally prevented residents of other counties from using its beaches, County Attorney Denise Nieman said. But she recommended against doing that because many of the beaches have received grants for beach restoration and other

improvements. The grant agreements include clauses that prohibit restrictions on who can use the beaches, she said.

While county residents who want beaches reopened have not been shy about making their feelings known to city and town council members and county commissioners, there is also strong opposition.

## County faces quandary

County Administrator Verdenia Baker told commissioners on May 8 that people surveyed were split on the subject.

One-third wanted full beach reopening provided groups on the beach would be limited to no more than 10, one-third wanted partial opening with restrictions such as closing bathrooms and not allowing sunbathing, and the rest did not want beaches to open out of concerns about virus spread.

Lake Worth Beach Commissioner Omari Hardy argued forcefully at the meeting against reopening beaches because the number of coronavirus cases in the county had not declined for 14 consecutive days, a metric that would indicate the contagion is under control.

"I think this is ill-advised and I think this is happening too soon," he said.

"I agree with you," said County Commissioner Melissa McKinlay.

County Commissioner Gregg Weiss said that the

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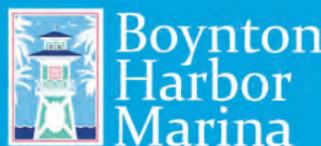
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county should delay a reopening decision until officials have data showing whether the reopening of parks, golf courses and other recreation facilities has led to an increase in coronavirus cases. Similarly, the county has no data yet on the impact of limited reopening of restaurants and retail businesses.

Asked in a May 13 interview about why the commission did not address reopening beaches sooner, Weiss said it was trying to balance reopening businesses to alleviate the loss of jobs and other economic hardships caused by COVID-19, the desire of residents to have parks and beaches open and the health and safety of residents.

"You have this very difficult balance the board is trying to address," he said.

Videos and photos of people crowding on Jacksonville and Naples beaches worried him. "At the end of the day, will people coming to our beaches do the same thing? I don't know," he said.

But his main focus was finding out if the lifting of restrictions in Palm Beach County would spark an increase in infections. That won't be known for about two or three weeks afterward.

He wants the county to have a plan to reverse course and impose shutdowns quickly if the disease rate increases. Without that, "our reaction could be too slow," he said.

Weinroth, who represents southeast Palm Beach County, is a strong proponent of opening beaches.

The commission's delay in considering the opening was a result of the photos taken in Jacksonville and Naples, he said in a May 13 interview. "It makes people concerned."

But he hoped that those disturbing images would fade from memory and that residents can be trusted to socially distance and not gather in groups on the beach.

"I really feel we need to do this with a light hand," Weinroth said of beach regulation. "If residents use the beach appropriately, there won't be a problem. We want people to be out in the sun."

"If something doesn't go right and we have to shut it down, I will have no problem reversing the decision."

County commissioners opened public and private beaches before Broward and Miami-Dade counties took similar action. As of May 19, those counties had not announced when their beaches would open. Broward County Mayor Dale V.C. Holness said it would not happen until at least May 26, the Tuesday after Memorial Day weekend.

The fact that the three counties did not act in concert concerned Ocean Ridge Town Manager Tracey Stevens.

"The thing we are worried about the most is if Broward and Miami-Dade don't open beaches, we will get an influx of people to the beach," she said on May 13.

She agrees with the

### Rules for the beach

As of May 18, all public, municipal and private beaches, including all beach parks, are authorized to reopen from sunrise to sunset. Beach-goers shall follow CDC guidelines by limiting gatherings to no more than 10 people and distancing themselves from other parties by 6 feet. Beach concessions (including but not limited to chair, umbrella and cabana services) may operate following CDC guidelines related to social distancing and sanitation.

**Lantana Municipal Beach:** lifeguard, parking (\$1.50/hour, residents with sticker free), Dune Deck Café open 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. (open 7 a.m. weekends)

**Ocean Inlet Park (county):** lifeguard, free parking, fishing

**Hammock Park (county):** no lifeguard, free parking

**Boynton Beach Oceanfront Park:** open sunrise to 9 p.m., lifeguards 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., parking \$5 weekdays and \$10 weekends and holidays, pavilions and playground equipment closed, Turtle Café open 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

**Gulfstream Park (county):** lifeguard, free parking

**Delray Beach (municipal beach and Atlantic Dunes Park):** open 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.; lifeguards; beach activity is limited to walking, jogging and swimming; no surfing, sunbathing, volleyball, group activities, congregating, chairs, tents, umbrellas or cabana rentals allowed; pavilion and restrooms closed; parking meters (\$1.50/hour, 4-hour limit) along A1A, free parking (60 spaces) at Atlantic Dunes, free resident parking (82 spaces) at Anchor Park, no beach parking permitted in beach area neighborhoods

**Boca Raton (Spanish River Park, Red Reef Park, South Beach Park and Pavilion):** open sunrise to sunset but parking lots, restrooms, playgrounds and picnic pavilions remain closed; activities are not restricted but swim at your own risk; no lifeguards; parking meters on Palmetto Park Road and Spanish River Boulevard

**South Inlet Park (county):** closed

—Steve Plunkett

assessment of lifeguards that they cannot enforce social distancing and limit crowd size by themselves. But police officers in the town, which has no lifeguards of its own, are limited in what they can do.

"Our concerns are that it is going to be really hard to enforce something when we don't have a huge police force," she said.

Even so, she did not intend to place greater restrictions on beach use than the county has. If every city and town has different restrictions, "it makes it too confusing and too hard to enforce," she said.

Beaches present a special challenge, she said. While a restaurant or business has a clear capacity that makes it easier to regulate how many people can be inside, "there is no real capacity to a beach," she said. "You can have thousands of people flocking to an area all at once."

### Doctors still urge caution

Like the county health chief Alonso, other physicians urged caution on reopening.

"I completely understand how everyone is feeling about being cooped up at home ... but the other side is to caution everybody we are still in the middle of this pandemic," said Dr. Terry Adirim, a professor and senior associate dean for clinical affairs at Florida Atlantic University. "A lot of us feel we are early in the pandemic."

"Anything we do to reopen we have to do carefully," she said. "We are not going to be able to go back to where we were before the pandemic until we have a vaccine."

She advised a deliberate approach that allows for some openings, following by a waiting

period of several weeks to see whether they have caused an increase in virus cases. If not, additional openings would be permitted.

Adirim realizes the pressure on county officials to take steps to rescue the devastated economy.

But the county needs a "really good, coherent strategy" for opening. That includes more testing, contact tracing and developing plans for quarantining people exposed to those sickened by COVID-19, she said.

The number of cases will continue to rise until herd immunity is achieved, said Dr. Bill Benda, an emergency room physician and associate professor of emergency medicine at FAU. But the rate of increase must be slowed so that hospitals are not overwhelmed, he said.

Benda agrees with Adirim that it is critical to have a significant increase in diagnostic and antibody testing.

Reopening is difficult because not enough is known about the best way to do that. It is also complicated by the fact that some people won't give up partying and don't practice social distancing, he said.

"We haven't made a sacrifice since the draft in the Vietnam War," he said. "This is the first time in a long time we have been asked to make a sacrifice, and a significant proportion don't want to do it."

Benda, a surfer who loves the ocean, has seen many people sneak onto the closed beaches when they could easily exercise elsewhere.

"The reason to open up now is for people to feed their children," he said. "It is not to walk on the beach. Quit whining about the beach." ★

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## Along the Coast



Thirteen-year-old Kenzi Mendel rides on the back of a golf cart with her mother, Amani. Kenzi celebrated her birthday by motoring around her neighborhood in Ocean Ridge and accepting gifts and posters from dozens of neighbors and friends, like Sharon DeCardenas (right). Jerry Lower/The Coastal Star



Graduates from Saint John Paul II High School were honored by posters lined up in the front yard of the school in Boca Raton. Photo provided

# Signs of changing times during coronavirus outbreak

Birthday celebrations, graduations, hair appointments — few things in everyday life look as they did before COVID-19 arrived



A member of the National Guard instructs drivers on protocol at the COVID-19 testing site at the South County Civic Center in Delray Beach on April 7. Testing is done only by appointment for residents over age 16 who show symptoms. Tim Stepien/The Coastal Star



People in the citizen-driven South Florida Tri-County Car Caravan traveled throughout the area to encourage local and state officials to lift restrictions that eventually stood in place for about six weeks before they began to be phased out. Here the caravan makes its way along Atlantic Avenue in Delray Beach on April 19. Tim Stepien/The Coastal Star



Linda Loch, owner of Briny Beauty Salon, puts curlers in the hair of a longtime client. Loch wears a mask to help protect her customers. Jerry Lower/The Coastal Star

# Along the Coast

## Virus makes hurricane shelter planning even more vital

By Rich Pollack

Should a hurricane threaten this year, residents could have to choose between leaving their homes to avoid water and wind or remaining home to avoid contracting a deadly and highly contagious virus.

The decision, emergency managers say, is an easy one.

“Don’t not evacuate because of the coronavirus,” says Bill Johnson, director of Palm Beach County’s Emergency Management division.

Throughout Palm Beach County, emergency managers and law enforcement officials are brainstorming ideas on how to ensure residents stay safe should a hurricane threaten while the coronavirus remains a health concern.

The topic has been surfacing in daily meetings, where discussions include issues such as how to manage shelters during a pandemic as well as how to keep first responders safe.

“This hurricane season will be unique,” said Highland Beach Police Chief Craig Hartmann. “It’s not just the threat of a storm, it’s also the threat of a virus we can catch from one another.”

One topic of special concern to coastal residents is how to manage evacuations and how to ensure people fleeing a storm have safe places to go.

“Countywide, emergency management teams are working to assure we are capable of handling COVID-19 and evacuations at the same time,” said Ocean Ridge Police Chief Hal Hutchins.

However, the clear message is that the virus threat should not stand in the way of leaving home if you’re told to go.

“The risk to your safety is less if you evacuate than if you stay,” Hutchins said.

With hurricane season’s official beginning on June 1, Johnson and others say now is the time for people who live in evacuation zones to start making plans for where they

will go should they be asked to leave their homes.

As always, the recommendation is to find shelter nearby rather than far away. At the same time, people should also search for ways to minimize the risk of contracting COVID-19.

“Is there a way you could shelter with family and friends and still maintain a safe distance?” says Chris Bell, Delray Beach’s new emergency manager.

Johnson says residents should have a Plan B in case the relatives or friends they expect to stay with start feeling ill.

Those who plan to evacuate to a hotel might also want to have a backup plan because hotel rooms could be harder to find — especially if they are used as shelters.

“Potentially there could be fewer hotel rooms available,” says Bell, who served as the

director of preparedness for the state of Vermont. “If your plan was a hotel, think of a family you can go to as a backup.”

Statewide and locally, emergency managers are also exploring options to ensure that people who have no other place to go can shelter together safely.

In addition to possibly using hotel rooms, alternatives could include setting up special COVID-19 shelters or requiring those using community shelters to wear masks and stay a specified distance apart.

Hutchins said managers are also looking at ways to ensure that people with transportation needs are able to get to shelters if needed.

Johnson says that no matter where you go if you have to evacuate, the social distancing rules in place now would still apply.

Those same rules would apply to first responders who

are often called upon to stay together at a central location during a storm.

Bell says a lot of the practices in place for emergency workers — temperature checks when they enter a building and the wearing of masks even inside — will be employed during a storm emergency.

While evacuations in coastal areas would be likely should a hurricane threaten, Johnson

says those evacuations may not be as widespread as they have been in the past.

The county, he said, has been working with the National Hurricane Center on modeling of storm surge to determine degree of threat to certain coastal areas and to help further tailor evacuation zones. That could lead to ordering evacuations on a case-by-case basis. ★



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**MASKS**

Continued from page 1

Cancer Institute in Boca Raton and the Delray Medical Center.

They've been sent to fire departments in Indiana and the Keys, a homeless shelter in New York, hospitals in Georgia and Oregon, families and friends in Colorado, Connecticut and Arizona.

"We're all quilters, so we have lots of scraps and fabric stashes," explained Marla Guzzardo, president of the Briny Breezes Hobby Club.

Using patterns they found online, the women began sewing both masks and head coverings in early March, working together in their clubhouse until safe-distancing guidelines shut it down. Then they took the club's nine sewing machines home and worked alone.

"I drove around in my golf cart collecting the masks," Guzzardo said. "We're quarantined, so we've been sewing fools."

By May, the women had sewn more than 2,000 masks and head coverings.

Club member Christina Adams, a registered nurse, sent a mask to her friend Tricia Marinella, who's been screening employees and patients at Lakeside Medical Center in Belle Glade since her regular job as a school nurse at Park Vista High School vanished when the county's schools closed.

"Lakeside saw the masks and thought they were really cool, so I reached out to Christina and they sent us about 20 masks and 20 head coverings," Marinella says.

Then Adams sent more to a nurse she knows at a hospital in Tifton, Georgia.

Gabrielle Taylor, another nurse and club member, brought 80 masks to her colleagues at the VA Medical Center.

Guzzardo sent 40 to the Tavernier Police Department in the Keys.

Like a benign and loving virus, the masks were spread far



Stella Kolb created at least a dozen masks from this Lilly Pulitzer dress. **Tim Stepien/The Coastal Star**



The masks are our ticket out of the house many thanks and my new hip is great.

Sunny and Steve Otto shared this photo of their masks from the Ocean Ridge Garden Club. **Photo provided**



Rosemary Mouring is spearheading the making of face masks in Lantana. It's the latest Casuarina Woman's Club project. **Mary Thurwachter/The Coastal Star**



A worker gives a thumbs up for the mask he received from the Boca Raton Garden Club. **Photo provided**



Linda Allen worked on Briny Breezes' mask project with the town's Hobby Club. **Photo provided**

and wide by word of mouth.

In Ocean Ridge, Mayor Kristine de Haseth was given the Briny Breezes pattern and a couple of masks by Christina Adams. The mayor called Stella Kolb, a member of the Ocean Ridge Garden Club and an experienced seamstress. Together they turned the club's attention from gardening to sewing.

All they needed were fabric and ties.

"I was doing something in my granddaughter's bedroom and I saw a headband and it hit me," Kolb recalled.

She and de Haseth hit the Dollar Stores, buying up elastic headbands, five for a buck. Some were hot pink and fluorescent, with fake rhinestones. But they would do.

Next, Kolb stood in line at the JoAnn Fabric store in Boynton Beach for an hour or more while shoppers were admitted 10 at a time.

"They limited the patterns and amounts, so I went three times and bought some of this and some that," she said. "I must have bought 50 to 55 yards."

Now, with de Haseth organizing the project on her computer and Kolb offering sewing lessons, the garden club members set to work.

Some sewed, some made financial donations toward the materials.

"I let the ladies sew whatever they're comfortable with," Kolb

said. "Some used patterns, some improvised. Some made masks for their children."

Packed in zip-lock bags with instructions, the first masks went to the town's police officers and Town Hall staff. Officer Debra Boyle distributed masks to the elderly and infirm residents she checks on regularly. Then they were passed to club members and their families and so on to residents of Crown Colony, Wellington Arms and other 55-plus condo communities.

"We've distributed over 400 masks," Kolb said, "but we're still making them because we have the fabric and elastic."

JoAnn Fabric in Boynton Beach is also where de Haseth once took sewing lessons from Christine Burtch and Rosemary Mouring. Burtch is the store's education coordinator and Mouring one of the sewing teachers.

They are also the president and past president of the Casuarina Woman's Club in Lantana.

"Just the two of us are doing it," Mouring said. "We don't have many members, but we work together. When she's not working, she comes here to my house and we sew."

At JoAnn, Burtch put together kits containing enough material to make five masks and handed them out to some of those patient customers waiting in line. The idea was for

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## Use of Cloth Face Coverings to Help Slow the Spread of COVID-19

### How to Wear Cloth Face Coverings

- Cloth face coverings should—
- fit snugly but comfortably against the side of the face
  - be secured with ties or ear loops
  - include multiple layers of fabric
  - allow for breathing without restriction
  - be able to be laundered and machine dried without damage or change to shape



### CDC on Homemade Cloth Face Coverings

CDC recommends wearing cloth face coverings in public settings where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain (e.g., grocery stores and pharmacies), especially in areas of significant community-based transmission.

CDC also advises the use of simple cloth face coverings to slow the spread of the virus and help people who may have the virus and do not know it from transmitting it to others. Cloth face coverings fashioned from household items or made at home from common materials at low cost can be used as an additional, voluntary public health measure.

Cloth face coverings should not be placed on young children under age 2, anyone who has trouble breathing, or is unconscious, incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the cloth face covering without assistance.

The cloth face coverings recommended are not surgical masks or N-95 respirators. Those are critical supplies that must continue to be reserved for healthcare workers and other medical first responders, as recommended by current CDC guidance.

### Should cloth face coverings be washed or otherwise cleaned regularly? How regularly?

Yes. They should be routinely washed depending on the frequency of use.

### How does one safely sterilize/clean a cloth face covering?

A washing machine should suffice in properly washing a cloth face covering.

### How does one safely remove a used cloth face covering?

Individuals should be careful not to touch their eyes, nose, and mouth when removing their cloth face covering and wash hands immediately after removing.



[cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus)

JoAnn's customers to make the masks and bring them back as donations to local hospitals and health care providers.

"The majority were not brought back," Burtch said.

But working together, the women had sewn 102 masks by May, including some of green material for the Sheriff's Department.

And they're still turning them out.

"Since I'm not teaching, it's good to be doing something," Mouring said. "I'm bored to death."

On March 23, members of the Boca Raton Garden Club got the message by email.

Calling all seamstresses! Mary Kaub, president-elect, had seen the need and knew the club could help.

"Holiday House is our biggest craft sale of the year, and we had all this leftover material," she said.

When Bianca Boone got the message, she knew she was just what the project needed.

As a teenager growing up in Brazil, she'd learned to sew

patterns from a neighbor who gave lessons. But then her career intervened. She came to Boca Raton and worked as an engineer at IBM, then retired. Two years ago, she joined the garden club.

"I never thought I'd be in the garden club sewing, but I'm loving it," she said. "Working at home, I get into a production line. I work about three hours a day. I don't work that long, but you get more and more efficient. I think I've sewn about 400 now."

On Wednesdays and Thursdays from 10 to 11 a.m., the women, about 21 of them, drop off their masks at the club and pick up the fabrics to make more.

"Our seamstresses find a pattern that works best for them and they turn those in," Kaub said. "We're not picky. I'm quarantined, so I sew at night, and I can make about a dozen a day."

So far they've donated about 1,200 masks, to the Lynn Cancer Institute and Boca Raton Fire Department, as well as hospitals as far away as Oregon

and New York.

"We're using cotton materials," Kaub said. "All cotton, and we wash them to make sure they go out clean."

The basic patterns and rules for mask-making don't vary.

Christine Burtch at JoAnn Fabric recommends a 6-by-10 inch rectangle of 100% quilter's cotton, sewn in two layers.

Some mask makers leave the top open to create a pocket in which a paper towel or coffee filter can be slipped to enhance the protection. And some use different colors for the front and back so wearers can tell which side they've put over the mouth.

Health care workers wear the donated masks over their medical-grade N95 masks to extend the life of the professional protective gear, not as a substitute.

For all the women wielding their sewing machines in the war on COVID-19, function always comes first. But that doesn't mean they can't accommodate a touch of style, too, and a smile.

"I wanted a Lilly Pulitzer mask," Stella Kolb of the Ocean Ridge Garden Club said. "All pastel pinks and greens and blues. So I wound up taking a Lilly dress I hadn't worn in 10 years, cut it up, and I even sewed the buttons on because they had her name on them. I got about 12 or 13 masks out of it, for me and my friends."

"I'm a Lilly," she explained. "There's a lot of Lillys along here." ★

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South Palm Beach Town Councilman



# Along the Coast



Pedestrians in Highland Beach demonstrate good personal protection and social distancing. Although the man on the right can see oncoming traffic and gives the couple on the left plenty of room, police say it's safer for walkers to stay off road shoulders or bike lanes. **Tim Stepien/ The Coastal Star**

## A good rule of foot: Step aside but not onto road shoulder

By Rich Pollack

Drive along State Road A1A in southern Palm Beach County and you'll likely see quite a

few more pedestrians than you normally might were it not for the coronavirus pandemic.

You likely also will see people practicing social distancing by

walking along the shoulder of the road, between the white line and the swale.

That, say some in law enforcement, is a bad idea —

and in some places it's also against the law.

"Please don't walk in the roadway because we don't want you to get hit by a car,"

said Ocean Ridge Police Chief Hal Hutchins. "If a sidewalk is provided, stay on the sidewalk."

Hutchins said he and his officers saw a huge increase in the number of pedestrians on the sidewalk along A1A during the shutdown, in part because more people worked from home and because gyms, beaches and other exercise areas were closed.

That was also the case in most other coastal communities with walkways, including Highland Beach.

With so many people outside, it can be difficult to keep the recommended 6-foot separation.

But Hutchins says people can do it with common sense and common courtesy — and without having to step on the shoulder of the road.

He says people can step into a driveway or onto the grass if they see pedestrians approaching and want to keep 6 feet away.

"You should step aside if you have the ability to do so," he said.

He also recommends wearing a mask if you're walking along a heavily used path.

"We're asking people to wear a face covering so they don't have to walk in the roadway," he said of Ocean Ridge.

In fact, he said, state law requires pedestrians to walk on a sidewalk if one is available.

While the goal is to ensure the safety of pedestrians, keeping walkers off the road also can help with the safety of bicyclists.

Bicyclist John Shoemaker, who is a Highland Beach town commissioner, said that when pedestrians walk on shoulders, which essentially serve as bike lanes, they pose a hazard for people on bikes.

"If pedestrians spill into the bike lane, then bicyclists have to go out into the roadway," he said.

For his part, Hutchins believes people can be safer if they follow two simple instructions.

"Use common sense, and follow the state statutes," he said. ★

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Along the Coast

# Care facilities ask for compassion, help amid struggles with virus

By Charles Elmore

Even as Florida moves to reopen many businesses, COVID-19 deaths of residents at 18 long-term care facilities in or near Boynton Beach, Delray Beach and Boca Raton add to a mounting statewide toll that frustrates hopes to relax visitor restrictions at centers that care for older and medically vulnerable people.

By May 18, deaths among residents and staff at long-term care facilities around the state passed 900, state records show. That represented more than 40% of all virus-related fatalities Florida has identified. New cases of infection continue to emerge.

Stopping short of lifting a ban on most visitors, Gov. Ron DeSantis expressed concerns that isolation from loved ones comes with its own psychological and emotional costs.

"We've now been two months where visitors have not been allowed at these facilities," DeSantis said May 13. "My view has been that I want to get to 'yes' on that. I just want to be able to know that we have procedures in place that

if someone goes to visit their mother, that two weeks later we are not going to have 50 infections roil a nursing home or a long-term care facility."

State rules effective May 18 allowed gyms, museums, restaurants and retailers to reopen or expand capacity.

Officials have been grappling with what steps to take next with long-term care facilities.

Dr. Deborah Birx, the coordinator of the White House coronavirus task force, recommended to governors on a May 11 call that all residents and staff at long-term care facilities be tested as soon as possible.

DeSantis said his office's March 14 executive order banning visitors to the centers helped slow the rate of the virus' spread compared to that in many other states. He noted that teams of Florida National Guard medics have tested 32,000 residents and staff of long-term care facilities.

Senior advocates said the testing has not gone far enough to protect residents facing the highest risks in the pandemic, in a state with nearly 200,000 beds in nursing homes and assisted-living facilities.

"While there are encouraging signs across the state that mitigation measures have slowed the growth of the virus, residents and staff of elder-care facilities remain at serious risk," AARP State Director Jeff Johnson said in a statement.

He called it "clear that the virus is getting into these facilities through contractors and staff. Only widespread, repeated testing will work. By testing only a few locations on a few occasions, we're leaving too much to chance."

One industry executive urged people to contact Congress to advocate for federal funding to meet critical needs such as protective gear and testing. He called for thousands of letters.

"It is clear we have made significant investments to help protect the safety and well-being of our residents and team members," Chris Winkle, CEO of Sunrise Senior Living, said in a May 12 letter posted on the website of Stratford Court in Boca Raton. "But when it comes to federal funding to support this critical work, unlike the airlines, hospitality and other industries, assisted living has been left out of the conversation. And, the incredible efforts of our heroes, the team members on the front line serving our seniors, are

going unnoticed."

Records posted by the Florida Department of Health show Stratford Court with seven deaths of residents as of May 15, one more than a week earlier.

Eight resident deaths were reported at Boulevard Rehabilitation Center in Boynton Beach as of May 15, compared to six a week earlier, records show. The center's website says it serves residents in short-term as well as longer stays.

Boulevard is "doing everything possible to limit COVID-19's impact at our center," a spokeswoman said. "Our professional staff are doing heroic work through this crisis, and we are adhering to recommended protocols and guidelines from local, state and federal public health agencies and medical experts."

Ten residents and 10 staff members tested positive for the virus at Avante at Boca Raton Inc., and four residents transferred, records posted May 15 show. That compares to two positive residents who transferred and three staff who were known to have the virus as of April 27. One resident died, according to state records.

Other facilities with virus-related deaths the state reported by May 15 included

Regents Park Nursing and Rehabilitation Center in Boca Raton (7 deaths), Hamlin Place of Boynton Beach (6), Manorcare Health Services in Boynton Beach (6), Heartland Health Care and Rehabilitation Center of Boca Raton (5), Sonata Boynton Beach (4), Lake View Care Center at Delray (3), and Willowbrooke Court at St. Andrews Estates in Boca (2).

State records showed one resident's death each at Brighton Gardens of Boca Raton, Brookdale West Boynton Beach, Five Star Premier Residences of Boca Raton, Harbour's Edge in Delray Beach, Heartland Health Care Center in Boynton Beach, Parkside Inn in Boynton Beach, The Meridian at Boca Raton, and Ventura Health and Rehabilitation Center in Boynton Beach.

In all, Palm Beach County saw 96 deaths by May 18 among residents and staff at long-term care facilities, ranking third in the state behind Miami-Dade and Broward counties, according to the Florida Department of Health.

The state agency reported 901 deaths at such facilities statewide, accounting for about 45% of Florida's overall COVID-19 death toll of 1,997.★

## Delray Beach cancels fireworks; Boynton opts for postponement

By Jane Smith

Fourth of July celebrations with fireworks, music and vendors will not take place this year in Delray Beach and Boynton Beach, their leaders decided May 19.

"None of us are excited about canceling it," said Sam Metott, Delray Beach Parks and Recreation director.

The fireworks and barge would have cost an estimated \$70,000, he said.

Delray Beach commissioners asked for a smaller scale event that would not draw such a large crowd. City staff will prepare suggestions for discussion at the June 2 commission meeting.

Boynton Beach commissioners decided to postpone the fireworks display, with staffers to return with ideas on July 15. The fireworks cost \$62,000, City Manager Lori LaVerriere told commissioners, with a five-year contract giving flexibility

on when they may be used.

Lantana will shoot off fireworks on July 4, but it will close Bicentennial Park to prevent crowds from gathering.

Cities nationwide have been advised by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention not to hold events with large crowds, to limit the spread of the novel coronavirus.

CDC guidelines also call for people to keep a social distance of 6 feet, to wear face masks when they are closer, and to sanitize surfaces.

The current site of Boynton Beach's fireworks at Intracoastal Park was jammed with 6,000 attendees in 2019, LaVerriere said.

Boynton Beach had planned to celebrate its centennial on July 4. In addition to the fireworks, the city wanted to set up a temporary postal branch on site for residents to write and send postcards to friends and families who live out of town. ★



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## Dining

## Restaurateurs adapting to new guidelines for reopening

By Jan Norris

For most restaurants, the start of the state's reopening is at least some relief from what Luke Therien calls "the most difficult" time he's faced as a restaurateur.

His family has owned Boynton Beach's Banana Boat for 41 years, and Prime Catch for 16.

Hurricanes, construction and other setbacks don't compare to the loss of business that COVID-19 and the state's subsequent shutdown have caused the hospitality industry, he said.

"Nobody's seen anything like it," he said. "But we'll get through it."

Now they're gradually coming back after the governor started lifting closures. With Phase 2 implemented after a week of Phase 1 soft openings, most restaurants are reopened, including favorites such as John G's and Johnnie Brown's.

Guidelines effective May 18 called for reducing capacity for indoor seating to 50%, and outdoors, table seating 6 feet apart. Bars remained closed.

Restaurateurs have different approaches to comply with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention sanitation rules and stipulations for occupancy. However, none can predict what the new business model will look like completely.

Most have reconfigured dining room seating, spacing out tables, and dedicating workers to clean and sanitize spaces in between guests' arrivals. Todd Herbst of the Big Time Restaurant Group, owner of Elisabetta's, Louie Bossi's and Rocco's Tacos in Delray Beach and Boca Raton, says through it all, they've taken it one day at a time.

The restaurants moved out tables and roped some off. Bar areas are off limits to patrons except to walk up and order a drink to take to a seat elsewhere, or else servers can bring the drinks to diners. The social-distancing rule of 6 feet applies throughout.

"No one is allowed to stand or sit at the bar," Herbst said.

The outdoor seating can make up for it: There is no limit to outdoor capacity as long as it's spaced according to guidelines. "We're lucky in some regards. Louie Bossi's in Boca has a large exterior, and Lisabetta's has two floors of outdoor space," Herbst said. "Rocco's downtown Delray has some. That's still not a hell of a lot of seats."

Vaughan Dugan, co-owner of Kapow! and The Dubliner in Boca Raton's Mizner Park, is excited about reopening.

"The City Council has been great working with us, and they voted to close the street. We've got a tent coming with tables so we can set them six feet apart.

"We had to think outside the box. I think the creativity we're seeing as the restaurants face the



**ABOVE:** Customers expecting to pay for meals at Cafe Frankie's in Boynton Beach watch Dena Balka insist the food is free. She and other employees handed out dozens of meals for a few hours on May 6 after one of the regular patrons gifted them with enough money to 'feed the needy.'

**LEFT:** Ren Kuikahi and Pam Edwards enjoy breakfast at Caffe Luna Rosa in Delray Beach on May 12. The restaurant employed social distancing with more space than usual between tables and most patrons sitting outdoors. **Photos by Jerry Lower/ The Coastal Star**

challenge is exciting."

Dugan points to Death or Glory in Delray Beach. It is using blow-up dolls as seat placeholders to maintain the 6-foot separation inside the restaurant.

He saw another restaurant that solved the bar situation by pushing high-top tables for two up against the bar. "Technically, they're at the bar, but at a table." The tables prevent patrons from gathering at the bar.

Loyal bar customers at Kapow! are confused, Dugan said. "They come in to drink and we have to tell them they have to take it to a table. They're a little lost — they don't know what to do."

His first week open at Kapow! was down only slightly from business during season, he said. "But it's too soon to comment. We did all right despite having only three tables in the restaurant. We're small inside anyway."

He's partnering with other chefs and restaurants, helping them out. For a pop-up in The Dubliner, the staff is using Troy's BBQ from Boynton Beach to put barbecue ribs on the menu.

As for safety compliance, staffers wear masks and sanitizing "holsters" that have spray and hand sanitizer; menus are disposable paper that are tossed after every use.

"We just had a staff meeting to teach them how we'll be

doing things: how to change gloves properly, sanitize tables and wash hands.

"But we explained why we're doing it more than anything. It's for the safety of our guests and our staff," Dugan said.

Jason Sobel, operations manager for Casa D'Angelo in Boca Raton and Angelo Elia Pizza, Bar and Tapas in Delray Beach, said the company is going beyond guidelines, using new technology to keep diners safe.

The company purchased UV wands to sanitize tables, and installed hand-sanitizing stations through the restaurants and at doors. "There will be temperature checks of staff as well," he said.

They seat at every other table rather than remove tables.

"The extra tables will act as barriers, and it's nicer to have a lot of tables in the restaurant," Sobel said.

For now the two restaurants set tables on demand, taking only customers with reservations. Diners will no longer see tableware such as salt and pepper and other dispensers that would be reused. "Everything is going to be brought out, and cleaned in between usage," Sobel said.

At Rose's Daughter and Brulé in Delray Beach, owner Suzanne Perrotto has bought air-scrubbing machines.

"They are amazing. You can tell the difference in the air

immediately," she said. Several of her staffers have asthma and can't wear masks, so she's using the machines, sanitation stations and a revamped dish station that has sanitizer at every stop. Each restaurant also has plenty of outdoor seating.

She's schooled her staffers in sanitation and told them that reopening is all about creating jobs, not making money. "We're a business, of course, and we want to make money, but we want people to have jobs, too. To get back to work. That's the most important thing right now."

Therien is watching it all unfold, too. He opened Banana Boat during Phase 1, but Prime Catch remains closed until the end of May. It has to do with parking lot construction and not the virus.

"There's no place to park," he said. "It's literally impossible."

Diners would have to park too far away and get through a construction zone to make it to the waterfront restaurant.

"If the parking lot had been done, we'd have opened. Over half of our seating there is outside.

"Our staff is ready, and anxious. Since we reopened Banana Boat, we haven't lost any staff."

Benny's on the Beach management brought back its staff of 90 members. Benny's partner Max Lipton said they could be needed soon, since the city of Lake Worth Beach

has worked with Benny's to reconfigure more seating space outdoors, both on the east and west ends. Benny's sits on the entrance to Lake Worth Pier.

It turned the bar area into table seating since no bar patrons can congregate there.

Benny's is open for breakfast and is one of the few around with outdoor seating waterfront.

"We are hoping and praying we're one of the first beacons of hope for everybody," Lipton said. "We're anticipating we might get a pretty decent surge of business. We want everybody to be safe and comfortable but we want to do as much business as possible."

Over at Driftwood in Boynton Beach, Jimmy Everett said reopening to diners coming in to eat was another adjustment after he did so much take-out.

"There were longer wait times than we wanted, trying to get the food out for take-out and to the tables," he said. "But everyone was just so glad to be out, they were respectful and understanding."

Take-out will still be part of the new model, he said. Customers have come to expect it. "We make adjustments daily. We're able to sustain this for the time being," Everett said.

Now he's seating guests in every other booth and has added outdoor tables.

"I'm not going to be putting in partitions between booths or anything like that," he said.

"You can't kick someone out of the restaurant if they cough. We definitely plan on having signs and letting people know if anything they do is making others uncomfortable, they'll be asked to leave.

"But I'm nervous about that, too. It's a concern. You don't want to open your doors if we have to be kicking people out if they're disrespectful."

All in all, Everett said, beyond the guidelines set forth, it's all new territory for restaurants. "There's not a right or wrong way, we're just adapting and doing the best we can based on new information."

He says he's somewhat worried it's too soon to reopen, despite attempts to keep non-essential traffic out of the restaurant and sanitizing beyond specifications.

He thinks opening too soon, then facing another shutdown could be worse than the initial closures. "It's very important that it is responsible to reopen, and this doesn't happen again."

Herbst is optimistic things will rebound in time. How much time, he doesn't know.

"We know we will get through it. The country's been through a lot — wars, depressions — the world has been through it all. It's just a time frame. How long before we get to the other side, who knows? I like to quote Churchill: 'When you're going through hell, keep going.'

"The quicker, the better." ★



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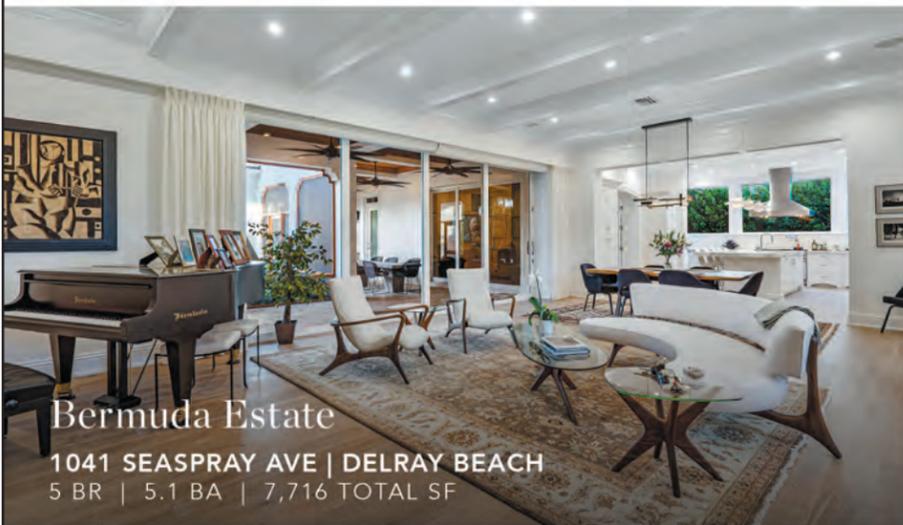
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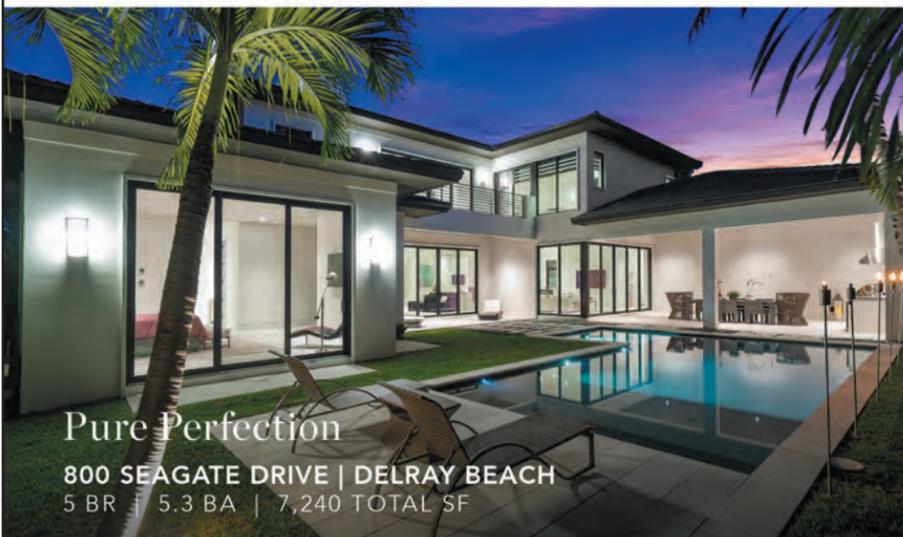
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## Municipal Meetings

These listings take into account the next edition of *The Coastal Star*, scheduled for delivery the weekend of July 4.

**5/26 & 6/23 - Manalapan** - Manalapan Town Hall, 600 S Ocean Blvd. 10 am. Agenda: manalapan.org

**5/27, 6/9 & 23 - Boca Raton** - Boca Raton City Hall, 201 W Palmetto Park Rd. 6 pm. Agenda: myboca.us

**6/1 - Ocean Ridge** - Ocean Ridge Town Hall, 6450 N Ocean Blvd. 6 pm. Agenda: oceanridgeflorida.com

**6/2 & 16 - Boynton Beach** - Boynton Beach City Hall, 100 E Boynton Beach Blvd. 5:30 pm. Agenda: boynton-beach.org

**6/2 & 16 - Delray Beach** - Delray Beach City Hall, 100 NW 1st Ave. 4 pm. Agenda: delraybeachfl.gov

**6/2 & 16 - Highland Beach** - Highland Beach Town Hall, 3614 S Ocean Blvd. 1:30 pm. Agenda: highlandbeach.us

**6/8 & 22 - Lantana** - Lantana Town Hall, 500 Greynolds Cir. 7 pm. Agenda: lantana.org

**6/9 - South Palm Beach** - South Palm Beach Town Hall, 3577 S Ocean Blvd. 4 pm. Agenda: southpalmbeach.com

**6/12 - Gulf Stream** - Gulf Stream Town Hall, 100 Sea Rd. 9 am. Agenda: gulf-stream.org

**6/25 - Briny Breezes** - Briny Breezes Town Hall, 4802 N Ocean Blvd. 4 pm. Agenda: townofbrinybreezes-fl.com

**NOTE:** Many meetings are being held via teleconferencing. Please check websites for information on participation.

## Kinetic art installation

Town Square, Boynton Beach — May 1



Mike Rodgers from EES Design, fabricator of 'Reflections' by renowned kinetic artist Ralfonso, helps install Town Square's gateway feature. The 21 bird-like wings on three columns of the sculpture will intersect via the wind and be colorfully lit at night. The display represents Boynton Beach's diversity and unity. **Tim Stepien/The Coastal Star**

## Lantana

# Library on track for renovation, modernization

By Mary Thurwachter

Plans to make better use of space and add a meeting room and outdoor reading garden to the town library won the approval of the Lantana Town Council on May 11.

The proposal, promoted by the Library Foundation and its chairman, Robert Barfknecht, boasts ADA-compliant restrooms, a centralized circulation desk, special spaces for children and teens and a

community center for adult activities.

The lead architect for the project, Sam Ferreri of PGAL of Boca Raton, said the 4,000-square-foot library is headquartered in a former bank building with bookshelves breaking up the space. The bank's old covered drive-thru isn't being used, he said, but is a perfect location for a meeting room addition and is in close proximity to restrooms. So the meeting

room can be used even when the library isn't open, it will have a separate entrance.

Four parking spaces will be added to the current 14 in the north parking lot, and 25 more spaces are available on the Third Street lot. A few on-street parking spaces are available on Third Street and Ocean Avenue. The library's main entrance will be from the north parking lot.

"The challenge with libraries is to have flexible space," said

Ferreri, who has designed libraries both large and small. "You're very lucky to have a building, the bank building, with good bones. It's very open and very flexible. I think there's a lot of opportunity here and I'm very excited to be part of this."

Barfknecht said that among all the architects with whom the foundation worked, six plans were considered. "The one you're seeing tonight is the one that's got us all very excited," he said. "It solves so many problems and it gives us an additional 33% more space for library users. It's also very children-centric."

Cost of the project is \$748,636, but the town has already put aside \$400,000 for the library from Palm Beach County's 1-cent sales tax distribution. The Library Foundation paid for the design fees and studies and will donate \$50,000 for an outdoor reading garden on the south side of the meeting room.

Council members agreed to take the balance needed to complete the project — about \$300,000 — from undesignated reserves.

While the renovation plans were well-received and eventually approved, the council delayed a decision until it had a chance to hear from local developer Michael Mauro, who pitched some alternative plans for the library at the same May 11 meeting.

Mauro, who wants to build a 10- to 12-story hotel (the town's height limit is five stories) on and around the former bowling alley property next to library, is interested in purchasing the current library or exchanging it for another parcel to construct a new building, or building a new library near Town Hall. He said appraisals for the current library ranged from \$730,000 to \$750,000.

Mayor Dave Stewart wondered if Mauro could totally finance the construction of a new library on Greynolds Circle, near Town Hall. Mauro said he would have to consult with his partners about that.

Vice Mayor Lynn Moorhouse said he favored the Library Foundation's proposal. He said it could be complete in about a year, while building an entirely new library would take much longer.

The foundation's plan also drew overwhelming support from residents, many of whom either spoke during the meeting or sent letters.

The library has been at 205 W. Ocean Ave. since the early 1990s after the Carteret Savings & Loan failed. Before that, the library, initially run by the Lantana Women's Club, was housed in the former bridge-tender's house on Ocean Avenue since 1947.

Next year Lantana will celebrate its 100th birthday and Barfknecht said it would be a perfect time to mark the occasion with a renovated modern library.

**In other business** during April and May, the town:

- Agreed to put on a Fourth of July fireworks show on the Intracoastal Waterway off the shores of Bicentennial Park. However, because of the pandemic, no events are planned in the park on that day.

- Set 5:30 p.m. June 8 as the date for the first budget workshop at Town Hall.

- Awarded a \$114,762 contract to CH Global Construction to build new public restrooms at Bicentennial Park.

- Approved a \$57,350 contract with Baxter Restoration of Boca Raton for the biomediation and rehabilitation of the marine safety building at the beach. ★

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## 10 Questions

## MEET YOUR NEIGHBOR: Robert Barfknecht

It was no surprise some years back when Hypoluxo Island resident Robert Barfknecht, a voracious reader, became a dues-paying member of the Lantana Library Foundation.

Then, about 10 years ago, he became even more.

"I made the mistake of giving them too much money one year and they immediately invited me to become a member of the foundation's board of directors," Barfknecht recalled with a laugh. "I accepted delightfully. I like giving back to the communities where I've lived and prospered."

Sanford "Sandy" Beach was the foundation director at the time "and he was very, very passionate about the library," Barfknecht said. "Later Sandy left, and I was got elected chairman of the foundation."

Located for the past 25 years in an old bank building on Ocean Avenue just west of the railroad tracks, the library is not in the county system but is maintained and supported by the town of Lantana.

"Sid Patchett, the director for so many years, worked hard to make it different, through the quality of the literature that was to be found there," Barfknecht said.

Patchett died last year and Barfknecht oversaw the hiring of his replacement, Kristine Kreidler.

But now he and his board have a much larger assignment.

The 1-cent sales tax increase levied by Palm Beach County a few years ago has allowed Lantana to improve some public utilities and, according to Barfknecht, much of the money for a significant upgrade in the library is in this year's budget.

The foundation interviewed four architectural firms and hired PGAL of Boca Raton, which has designed more than 30 libraries. Former Greenacres Mayor Sam Ferrari is the lead architect.

"What we have in that plan are some wonderful spaces for children, special places for teens, a teen creation lab, and also a community center for adult activities. That's something that's missing here," Barfknecht said. "It's going to enrich our community and bring us forward for the next decades."

The plan was approved by the Town Council at its May 11 meeting. Barfknecht was praised for his dedication to the effort.

As it happens, the meeting coincided with Barfknecht's 82nd birthday, "and I can't imagine a better birthday present. Our community needs it and will prosper with it."

— Brian Biggane

**Q:** Where did you grow up and go to school? How do you think that has influenced you?

**A:** I grew up in the city of Detroit when it was the industrial center of the world. I went to school and university



Robert Barfknecht, chairman of the Lantana Library Foundation, is as much a part of the library as is the ponytail palm outside. Tim Stepien/The Coastal Star

there, earning a B.S. in mechanical engineering and an M.S. in engineering mechanics at Wayne State University.

It was a great place to work in my chosen profession as there were producers of every kind of product and their support industries. I worked for a consulting engineering firm started by several of my professors at the university and gained incredible experience across many industries as a young project engineer.

**Q:** What professional accomplishments are you most proud of?

**A:** I developed an early pneumatically powered robot that was quite successful. I also obtained my license as a registered professional engineer. I maintain that license in Michigan even today.

After the Detroit riots in 1967, with the burning of large parts of the city, my wife and I began planning our departure. My experience in Detroit convinced me that I could find useful employment anywhere in the world. So, Louise and I decided to go to my mother's beautiful country of Italy to learn the language and perhaps learn to cook like my grandmother did. Louise suggested that we go to Italy via the Orient.

In August 1969, I resigned my position, we sold our stuff, packed two backpacks and flew west to California, Hawaii and Japan to begin our five-month trip to Florence, Italy, where we had reserved spots in a good language school. Louise published a memoir

about all this called *Leaving Detroit*, which is available on Amazon and at the Lantana and Manalapan libraries.

We had saved enough money to last at least a year while I learned enough Italian to find professional employment. It took longer than I thought. But after a year in the wonderful city of Florence we had made enough friends to find small jobs to augment our savings.

I worked as a carpenter and as a house painter for an American countess who owned a grand villa. These were skills that my father had taught me and that I had used to work my way through college. As we got better with the language we both found work as translators.

**Q:** Have you had mentors in your life? Individuals who have inspired your life decisions?

**A:** In Italy, while working to upgrade the former villa stables to a grand apartment, I was introduced to the new renter, an American named Bob Collier, who had arrived to take over an Italian plastics company. We hit it off. After building him some closets and painting the place to his satisfaction, I gave him my bill and enclosed my résumé. I asked him to call me if he ever needed a good engineer.

Two weeks later he called, and that began what became a wonderful 20-year career with Mobil Corp. I was hired first as a consultant to help them purchase three Italian plastic manufacturing plants in northern Italy. Then they hired me to be engineering manager, operations manager and ultimately general manager of

various plastics manufacturing businesses in Europe and the United States. This marvelous man became my mentor and helped me launch a great new career.

**Q:** What advice do you have for a young person seeking a career today?

**A:** Get the best technical education you can. This will give you independence. With a great technical education, you can go where you wish and find a good occupation and a good life.

**Q:** How did you choose to make your home in Lantana on Hypoluxo Island?

**A:** During our early years in Italy we returned on a visit to Detroit to find my old neighborhood very depressed and my widowed mother looking for change. Mom had a close cousin who lived in Lantana and we suggested she visit and check out the town. She loved it and bought a condo at the new Croton Harbor, one block away from her cousin.

We visited in 1974 and were smitten by the tropical wonders. On every visit we would barbecue and picnic at the Lantana beach pavilion, which was open to the public in those days. We snorkeled, spear-fished and played lots of pinochle.

We bought our condo apartment across the street from my mother's place in 1988. We used it as a getaway whenever I could get some time off. I vowed that someday when I retired, we would find a home on Hypoluxo Island. We moved to the island in 2000.

In 1991, I was offered the opportunity to become president and CEO of a wonderful company in Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin, called EDI. We left our home in Tuscany to come to Wisconsin for my new career. We had softened the bitterly cold winters of northern Wisconsin with frequent visits to our condo in Lantana but looked forward to retirement in the tropics.

**Q:** What is your favorite part about living on Hypoluxo?

**A:** We are as happy today as we were when we bought it 20 years ago, maybe even more so. We have found good friends here, very interesting people who have worked hard at their professions and who appreciate the tranquility and beauty of this place.

Now in the time of the COVID-19 pandemic, this is as good a place to shelter as I can imagine. We are walking on the island, swimming in the pool, painting watercolors in the garden (me) and writing a memoir of food and friends in Italy (Louise). We don't watch television but read tons of books. Louise got us both involved with the Lantana library some 15 years ago.

**Q:** What book are you reading now?

**A:** I have just started Hilary Mantel's third book of the Wolf Hall trilogy, called *The Mirror & the Light*. On the reading table are started but not yet finished, *The Anarchy* by William Dalrymple, about the British East India Company, and *Disunited Nations* by geopolitical strategist Peter Zeihan.

**Q:** What music do you listen to when you want to relax? When you want to be inspired?

**A:** We have instituted opera night every Friday during the pandemic. We will prepare a special dinner and follow it with an opera film. This started when our last opera of the Palm Beach Opera season, *Eugene Onegin*, was canceled due to the virus. I bought a copy of an old (1958) Russian film of the opera and we started with a 7:30 curtain time that Friday evening. This was so much fun that we started doing our own Friday night at the opera.

**Q:** If your life story were to be made into a movie, who would play you?

**A:** James Dean.

**Q:** Is there something people don't know about you but should?

**A:** I have a show of my watercolor paintings hanging in the Manalapan Library and I have been honored with commissions for paintings that hang both in the library and in the new Manalapan Council Chambers.

## Obituaries

### Donald Clayman

By Dan Moffett

SOUTH PALM BEACH — Donald Clayman guided South Palm Beach through one of the most difficult periods in its history with an upbeat attitude and a common-sense approach, delivered with a Boston accent.



When he was appointed to the job of mayor in 2010, the town's budget was in crisis because of the national recession and its image tarnished because of a scandal involving his predecessor.

But the retired podiatrist kept his focus and optimism. When he left office in 2015, the Town Council called him in to receive an award for his service. He gave a gracious thank-you to officials and residents, then said he would walk out the door.

"I want to leave when everyone is still applauding," Mr. Clayman said.

The applause swelled as he left the chambers.

Mr. Clayman died May 7 in Tewksbury, Massachusetts, after a short illness. He was 84. Natalie Shulman Clayman, his wife of 59 years, had died in 2016.

"For Mayor Clayman,

community service was his passion," said Yude Alvarez, the town clerk who served alongside him. "Mayor Clayman had the ability to bring people together to drive positive change. He made the world a better place and will be sorely missed."

Born in Boston, Mr. Clayman loved youth hockey, which he coached, and Red Sox baseball, which he would discuss with anyone willing to listen. He was a proud member of the Kiwanis Club, Florida League of Cities and the Palm Beach County Medical Society.

Mr. Clayman served two years as president of the Palm Beach Harbour Club and sat on the condo board. He was president of the Ocean Lodge B'nai Brith in Winthrop, Massachusetts.

"He was a very active man with great energy, and he was never on the sidelines," said Ellen Salth, who served with him on the condo board. "He threw his whole heart into everything he did."

Salth said Mr. Clayman volunteered his medical services to help poor communities in South Florida. He also drew on his expertise to hold flu clinics and an H1N1 virus prevention program in the town.

"He had a warm smile and a firm handshake," said

Elvadianne Culbertson, a former council member. "That's the kind of thing you want to remember."

Mr. Clayman earned his doctor of podiatry degree at Kent State University in Ohio. He raised his family in Winthrop, where he resided for 40 years.

He is survived by his children, Bryan Clayman and his wife, Debbie, of Stoughton, Massachusetts; Cynthia McKeon and her husband, Tony, of Salem, New Hampshire; and Alycia Avery and her longtime partner, Jeff Ouellette, of Hudson, New Hampshire; five grandchildren, Bradly, Jayme, Alexa, Dylan and Zachary; his brother, Burton Clayman of Destin; his sister, Marcia Drieker of Florida; as well as a great-grandchild expected this fall.

Bonnie Fischer handed Mr. Clayman his only election loss in 2015 after a hard-fought campaign for mayor.

"I ran into him after the election and he told me he was going back north to live in New Hampshire and be near family," Fischer recalls. "He told me he was glad I'd won. 'Everything worked out for the best,' he said. That was important to me. We kept our good relationship. He left town on a high note."

### Lanie 'Adaline' Hall Gray

OCEAN RIDGE — Lanie "Adaline" Hall Gray of Ocean Ridge and formerly of Kinston, North Carolina, died May 7. She was 91.



Born to Frank and Lanie Hall on Sept. 7, 1928, in Lenoir County, North Carolina, the young Ms. Hall attended Contentnea School and Dover High School, graduating valedictorian of her class. She worked at Marston's Drug Store before starting her career as a telephone operator at the Carolina Telephone Co., where she worked for 33 years.

Family was the joy of Mrs. Gray's life and she treasured the time spent with her children, their spouses, her seven grandchildren and 15 great-grandchildren. She was thrilled as well to spend time with her beloved sisters and their families.

Mrs. Gray was a longtime and devoted member of First Free Will Baptist Church and Westside Free Will Baptist

Church until moving to Florida in 1999, where she attended Bibletown Church, Lakeview Baptist and most recently, First Baptist Church of Hypoluxo. Mrs. Gray dedicated her life to the Lord's work, whether it was teaching Sunday school, directing church plays, visiting her beloved Cragmont Camp or speaking in churches about her love of missions, including her trips to Mexico and the Philippines.

Always a witness through word and deed, Mrs. Gray led many to find the Lord through her lifelong example of Christ's selfless love. Her home and heart were always open to everyone and she was loved by all who knew her.

Mrs. Gray is preceded in death by her parents, her husband, George Edward "Pete" Gray, her brother Elwood Hall and her sister Jean Phillips.

Mrs. Gray is survived by her sisters, Helen (Leland) Potter, Alice (Bruce) Sloan and Kay (Carl) Hinz. Additional survivors are her son George Edward "Eddie" Gray Jr. and his wife, Debbie Gray, of Kinston,

North Carolina; her daughter Marsha Gray Hill and her husband, Gregg Hill, of Ocean Ridge; grandchildren Gregg (Stephanie) Hill of Winter Park; Lauren (Chip) Kelso of Atlanta; Brittany (Neil) Carter of Atlanta; Gray (Courtney) Hill of Maitland; Drew (Jenny) Hill of Winter Park; Dara (John) English of Greenville, North Carolina; and George Edward "Trey" Gray III (Gwen Lapas, fiancée) of Kinston. Her great-grandchildren are Hill Kelso, Sawyer Kelso, Loudon Hill, Lanie Kelso, Meta Hill, Britt Kelso, Holden Hill, Charlotte Hill, Penn Carter, Hewitt Hill, Jack English, Betsy Hill, Gray Carter, Anna Gray Hill and Wells Carter. She also leaves behind many dear friends and relatives.

The family is eternally grateful for "Adaline's angels," Maria, Regina and Hilda, and the amazing love and care they provided.

Final arrangements are pending, with details to be provided at a later date.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Cragmont Assembly in Adaline Gray's name, Cragmont Assembly, 1233 N. Fork Road, Black Mountain, NC 28711.

Arrangements are by Edwards Funeral Home & Cremations of Kinston. Online condolences may be expressed at [www.edwardsfhc.com](http://www.edwardsfhc.com).

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## Business Spotlight

# The unusual becomes usual for businesses during pandemic

In days to come, what will “business as usual” look like? Here’s how our chambers of commerce see it.

Stephanie Immelman, CEO of the **Greater Delray Beach Chamber of Commerce**, says the chamber and its members are “pivoting” in various ways in reaction to the coronavirus.

“We are going to continue providing online content, such as webinars and forums,” she says, while mentioning other local businesses looking at new ways to operate.

“We have worked closely with the Business Assistance Task Force, made up of the city, CRA, DDA and chamber, and we worked with about 25 local business leaders from all industries to garner their input for best practices for the phased reopenings,” Immelman said.

**SEP Communications**, a printing company, is selling personal protection equipment online to help employees of essential businesses stay safe; **Signarama** is providing customers with plexiglass shields to help with distancing and health safety as businesses reopen, and **Studio B2**, a photography service in Delray, is working with clients to improve their online presence via search engine optimization.

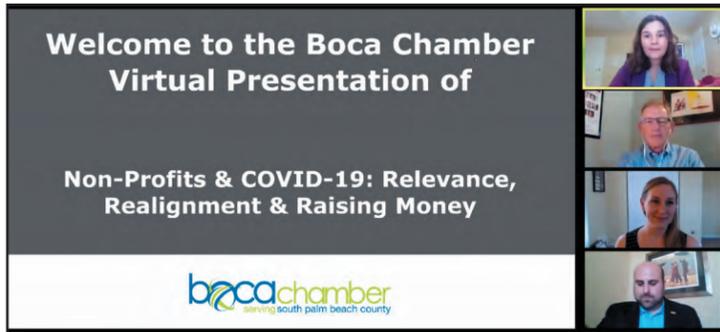
“Our goal was to be the primary source of relevant information for our membership and our community during this time,” Immelman says.

The chamber has continued with its *Delray Morning Live* Facebook show with Amanda Perna and Ryan Boylston at 8:30 a.m. Wednesdays. It’s been sending out daily email blasts with city news and tips for members. It has redesigned [DelrayBeach.com](http://DelrayBeach.com), initiated weekly lunch-and-learn webinars on Tuesdays at 12:30 p.m. and continued online meetings with the Government Affairs First Friday Forum.

“Not only do we have a lot of participation online, many others watch later — so we are reaching a bigger audience,” Immelman says. “We will continue with all these initiatives, even when we are able to meet in person, because it has extended our reach and our audience.”

**The Delray Beach Downtown Development Authority** suggests that people check out [downtowndelraybeach.com/emergency411](http://downtowndelraybeach.com/emergency411) for up-to-date information. It includes safety measures, ways to support small businesses, and lists of restaurants and other businesses open during the phased process.

Executive Director Laura Simon notes that “many have adjusted their operating style to navigate the new



Online tools allow organizations like the Boca Raton Chamber to provide training seminars with no health risk to attendees. **Photo provided**

normal. They have ramped up or launched a social media presence. Restaurants have added curbside takeout and increased delivery options. The fitness studios are doing online classes and have found that they are reaching a wider audience.”

Businesses are finding that such practices can drive sales, create interest from outside Delray Beach and enhance their marketing efforts, so they plan to continue along these avenues, Simon said. What this crisis has also provided is time for them to stop, re-evaluate and adjust their business models, which in turn will aid them in the future.

Monthly First Friday art walks, for example, have gone online, and a couple of the hotels are offering specials to first responders.

Gulf Stream resident Carrie Delafield’s three stores, **Periwinkle, Morley and Coco & Company**, started a “Send A Little Sunshine” promotion in which they put together a surprise package of items for shoppers to send to someone to brighten their day.

Although the **Boca Chamber** is heavily involved with a Moving Business Forward initiative on how to reopen businesses and nonprofits safely, CEO Troy McLellan acknowledges that by a chamber’s very nature, it is about members connecting in person for workshops, meetings and so on.

“However, the current atmosphere has given us the opportunity to think about how to communicate,” he says. “We’ve cranked out so many virtual meetings, which the coronavirus made necessary, because in-person meetings necessitate protocols regarding social distancing” and disinfecting the venues afterward.

“I plan to bring my team back to our office when we can, but we are going to look at our structures as well as our remote-working policies.”

As businesses reopen, “they have the top priorities of keeping their employees and customers safe,” McLellan says.

“I believe that the amount of activity they will see will be driven by consumer confidence and it will be up to the businesses to instill that

confidence in their customers. They are doing a great job with complying with guidelines and that’s been good to see.”

**The Lantana Chamber of Commerce**, which usually has in-house group activities and weekly meetings, has instituted a twice-a-month Zoom get-together and business card exchange, says the chamber’s president, David Arm.

He says that he’s seeing brick-and-mortar businesses being hit harder than legal, insurance and accounting firms that are conducting business without meeting face-to-face with their clients.

“The insurance business seems to be doing quite well,” he says. “The restaurants were obviously severely restricted, and most were surviving by offering takeout and delivery services.”

Now restaurants and retail businesses have reopened on a limited basis, “but many are still doing specials and take-outs,” Arm says of restaurants. “And in Lantana, they can apply for outdoor seating permits, for free.”

Other than that, is he seeing businesses pivot? “Not really so much,” he says. “Most people are considering this situation as a temporary phenomenon that could have permanent implications. This will eventually go away.”

“But, realistically, I think this whole experience is going to be a work in progress for some time. We don’t know how the customers and clients are going to react. Are they going to be gun-shy? And so, I think it’s a matter of businesses adapting, and once they open up, they will change their game plans and the way they do business on an ongoing basis.”

### In other local business news:

Delivery Dudes has gone the extra mile with its launch of **Dudes Bodega**, which rolled out in Boca Raton, Delray Beach and Boynton Beach.

A solution to help residents who need essential supplies but can’t or shouldn’t leave their homes, Dudes Bodega offers pickup and delivery from anywhere for a flat fee of \$5.

Delivery Dudes, based in Delray Beach, has also secured



Members of the Lang Cares team, including Scott Agran in the foreground, made sure that local feeding programs could stay on target. **Photo provided**

health care professionals to train team members on how to conduct health and temperature checks before every shift at all Delivery Dudes hubs.

Customers can visit [DeliveryDudes.com](http://DeliveryDudes.com), use the app, or call 561-900-7060 to place an order.

**Lang Realty** agents spent the last week in April delivering meals to first responders, donating money and food to area food banks and sponsoring 250 meals for people in need.

Lang Realty’s corporate office presented a \$1,000 check to **The Soup Kitchen** of Boynton Beach, and its Boca

Raton sales office delivered several boxes of dried and canned goods to **Boca Helping Hands**.

Lang also sponsored the hot meals service at **Trinity Lutheran Church** in Delray Beach, the charity partner for the Socially Distanced Supper Club.

Send business news to Christine Davis at [cdavis9797@gmail.com](mailto:cdavis9797@gmail.com).



— to La Cigale, from Coastal Star friends...

## Welcome to La Cigale

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You will be again be greeted by your host, **Francis Touboul, a native of Marseilles**. You may be served by one of our staff from Corsica or another from Lyon or yet another from the Basque region all of whom would be delighted to make your experience more enjoyable by sharing tidbits of their native cities. Touboul relishes the elegant surroundings, inside and out, yet insists guests get the freshest and tastiest meal possible. “We want to highlight the main dish but not overpower it with too many ingredients.”

**Bring Delray’s finest mediterranean cuisine straight to your door! Free Delivery Service within a five-mile radius of the restaurant.**

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# Home, Health, Harmony

May/June 2020

The Coastal  Star



# Hallowed ground

By Deborah S. Hartz-Seeley

Our garden columnist unearths the evolution of the National Cemetery from an overgrown wetland to a worthy shrine for the military — including her husband

On Memorial Day, we honor our fallen military members with parades, speeches and plenty of pomp and circumstance. But this year, the onslaught of the novel coronavirus has changed just about everything.

That's why we are lucky that we have a shrine to honor our veterans year-round, day or night, rain or shine and, yes, even during a pandemic.

It's the 335-acre South Florida National Cemetery, one of the busiest, and, I think, loveliest in the state.

"This cemetery is designed to be a lasting

See CEMETERY on page H6



ABOVE: The 335-acre South Florida National Cemetery has impeccably maintained burial grounds nestled within pine flatwoods and surrounded by cypress domes that enable it to exude a sense of calm.

LEFT: Amy Pena, grounds forewoman at the cemetery, checks that the headstones are properly maintained and aligned.

Photos by Tim Stepien/  
The Coastal Star

## Inside

### Virtual world

Telemedicine may be the wave of the future, and church attendance is up, at least online. Pages H15, H17



### On the Water

Boating and fishing have reopened, but with restrictions. Page H18



### Aging with purpose

99-year-old Boca veteran stages rally with family to help the earth. Page H8

### Paws Up for Pets

Act now to prepare pets for more time without you. Page H12

Philanthropy Note - Page H2  
Celebrations - Page H4  
Calendars - Online  
at [www.thecoastalstar.com](http://www.thecoastalstar.com)

Philanthropy Notes

Keynote speaker shares abuse experience at luncheon

More than 400 members of the community gathered in late February for the Ferd & Gladys Alpert Jewish Family Service of Palm Beach County's No Excuse for Abuse Luncheon, where they enjoyed boutique shopping from local vendors.

Keynote speaker was Linor Abargil, a lawyer and former Miss Israel and Miss



Abargil

World who is a survivor of sexual violence and now advocates for other victims. Abargil's story was retold in

an Emmy Award-nominated documentary.

The nonprofit's Domestic Abuse Program assists in identifying abuse, creating personalized safety plans for victims and their children and providing direction to local and national resources.

In other news, the Ferd & Gladys Alpert Jewish Family Service of Palm Beach County is offering financial assistance for Jewish college students through the Thelma & Isador S. Segall College Scholarship Fund and the Jewish Educational Loan Fund.

The Segall fund will award scholarships up to \$5,000, and the loan fund will provide interest-free allotments for

college, graduate school and vocational programs. For information on eligibility requirements and to apply, visit [www.alpertjfs.org/scholarships-loans/](http://www.alpertjfs.org/scholarships-loans/) and [www.jelf.org](http://www.jelf.org). For questions, call 561-684-1991.

Gift puts Marleen Forkas' name on FAU theater

Florida Atlantic University's Dorothy F. Schmidt College



Forkas

of Arts and Letters has received a \$1.125 million gift from benefactor Marleen Forkas to name the

Marleen Forkas Studio One Theatre.

The theater serves as a training facility for production and performance students as well as a venue for public events.

"The arts bring beauty and expression to the world," Forkas said. "My hope is that the Marleen Forkas Studio One Theatre will continue to be a place for students and the community to immerse themselves in the essence of theater and the arts and that they will carry that experience with them for the rest of their lives."

College Dean Michael Horswell added, "It is vital that we have state-of-the-art

facilities and equipment for our students to be well-prepared for future careers. This gift clearly shows Marleen's love of the arts and especially of our students whose lives she continues to enrich through her generosity and her continued presence at our performances."

Pre-COVID-19 gala raises funds for at-risk children

As the coronavirus cripples the economy and jeopardizes aid to at-risk children, Boca West Children's Foundation is providing \$800,000 to its 25 partner charities.

The foundation already has granted \$315,500 to 11 local nonprofits that care for thousands of youths each day; it will distribute the remaining funds soon.

"In this trying time, Boca West Children's Foundation now, more than ever, is embracing our granted charities and the at-risk children they serve," said Arthur Adler, founder and chairman.

One of the difficulties the current crisis creates for these charities is they are being forced to cancel fundraising events planned to raise everyday-needed funds to care for kids."

The money was raised during the 10th Anniversary Gala attended by 900 guests and featuring entertainment by stand-up comedian Jay Leno.

Community Foundation helps to combat dire times

Through money raised for its COVID-19 Response Fund and grants directed from Donor-Advised Funds, the Community Foundation for Palm Beach and Martin Counties will make a \$2.3 million local impact.

As of early May, a total of \$700,000 had been granted to local nonprofits on the front lines of the global pandemic.

"Community foundations are uniquely well-positioned to identify, activate and strategically connect people in the greatest need to lifesaving resources in these challenging times," said Brad Hurlburt, the foundation's president and CEO. "We are strengthening our trusted partnerships with multiple nonprofit agencies to quickly and proactively help the most vulnerable in our community with immediate basic needs such as payments for utilities, child care and rent."

The foundation's staff is working to quickly deploy grants to organizations providing food, housing assistance and access to health care. For information, call 561-659-6800 or visit [www.yourcommunityfoundation.org](http://www.yourcommunityfoundation.org).

High-impact grants to be awarded May 28

The 10 finalists selected by Impact 100 Palm Beach County are another step closer to receiving one of five \$100,000 high-impact grants.

The grants are designed to fund transformational community programs in southern Palm Beach County. The organization will announce the winners May 28.

"Each of the finalist programs have the potential to positively change different aspects of our community in an impactful way," organization President Kathy Adkins said. "During this time of great uncertainty, it's gratifying to know these grants will help improve and strengthen our community."

The 10 finalists are Boca Helping Hands, Coastal Conservation Association, CityHouse, Community Greening Corporation, Compass, Florida Atlantic University Foundation, GIVT, Junior Achievement of the Palm Beaches & Treasure Coast, Roots and Wings, and Spady Cultural Heritage Museum.

Help for homebound, hungry amid coronavirus

The Addison is donating 700 hot meals weekly to Boca Helping Hands to help manage the needs of the nonprofit's homebound and other hungry clients during the pandemic.

Volunteer drivers from the venue are making deliveries to 30 homebound residents three times a week. The balance of the meals are offered to people who rely on Boca Helping Hands for food.

"Since the COVID-19 crisis began, we have been preparing packaged hot meals for pickup each day," Executive Director Greg Hazle said. "The need has doubled. In addition, we're now giving out 300 pantry bags a day, up from 160."

Another feeding program allows clients who are able to drive to Boca Helping Hands to be handed hot meals through their car windows. Hours are 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Mondays through Saturdays along with 4:30 to 6 p.m. Thursdays.

In the interest of protecting the health of not only clients but also employees and volunteers, the food center will be closed until further notice. All job training, classes, mentoring sessions and in-person interviews are temporarily suspended.

For more information, call 561-417-0913, ext. 202 or visit [www.bocahelpinghands.org](http://www.bocahelpinghands.org).



Send news and notes to Amy Woods at [flamywoods@bellsouth.net](mailto:flamywoods@bellsouth.net).

Ocean Ridge Garden Club stands with our coastal community during this time.

Ocean Ridge Garden Club is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. The mission of the club is to further the education of the members and the public in the fields of gardening, horticulture, floral design, garden-related art, civic outreach, environmental awareness, conservation of natural resources and civic beautification, while instilling the love of gardening and respect to protect our natural environs.



The Ocean is Our Garden

Help the Literacy Coalition of Palm Beach County

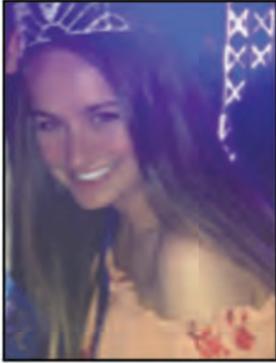
Donate today. Your tax-deductible donation will help provide literacy services to adults, children and families who are working to achieve a better life by improving their literacy skills.

Support Literacy Coalition of Palm Beach County 3651 Quantum Blvd., Boynton Beach, FL 33426 561-279-9103 [literacyabc.com](http://literacyabc.com)



Photo by B. Winans, a proud Literacy Coalition PBC supporter

# Congratulations Class of 2020 Graduates



**Lily Grace Schleifer**  
American Heritage School Graduate  
Accepted to Auburn, Clemson,  
Appalachian State, UCF, FAU  
and FGCU

Our Lily,  
Live each day to the fullest! Eat dessert  
with every meal! Surround yourself with  
happiness and kittens always!  
Love you,  
Trenti, Emmy, Mommy, Daddy & our zoo



**Jack Alexander Davis**  
American Heritage School Graduate  
Attending Florida Gulf Coast  
University this Fall

*Jack's quote: "Tremendous!"*  
  
Congratulations!  
Love, Mom, Dad, Max, Yaya and Pop Pop  
and the cats



**Quinn Lowry**  
American Heritage School Graduate  
Attending University of Central  
Florida this Fall

We are so proud of you and all you have  
accomplished. The best is yet to come... and  
the adventure begins now! Go Knights!

With all our love and support,  
your family



**Kate Lowry**  
American Heritage School Graduate  
Attending Florida State  
University this Fall

You are extraordinary and gifted at all you  
do. You are going to crush it at Florida State!  
Go Noles!

With all our love and support, your family



**Hunter Gregg**  
American Heritage School Graduate  
Attending University of Central  
Florida this Fall

*Hunters Quote: "My favorite memory at  
high school was meeting people  
from so many different cultures."*

Congratulations  
from the entire Family!



**Brandon Michael Maier**  
American Heritage School Graduate  
Studying Mechanical Engineering  
at the University of Central  
Florida this Fall

Congratulations Brandon!  
We're so proud of your accomplishments and  
look forward to your future. Aim high, dream  
big, and remember to have fun and enjoy the  
journey! We love you!  
Mom, Dad, Kendall, Nona and Papa



**Logan Charles Nixon**  
American Heritage School Graduate  
Attending University of Central  
Florida this Fall

*Logan's Quote: "Everything negative, pressure,  
challenges, is all an opportunity for me to rise."*  
- Kobe Bryant

We're extremely proud of your hard work  
& achievements! Congratulations on your  
acceptance as a Top 10 Knight at UCF!  
Love... Mom, Dad, Brooke & Aidan



**Grayson Kim Westine**  
Atlantic High School  
International Baccalaureate Graduate  
Attending University of Central  
Florida Biology major this Fall

We are so proud of all you  
have achieved and the beautiful  
young woman you have become.  
You brighten the lives of all around you.

We love you!  
Mom, Dad, John and Marin



**Gianna Marie Edwards**  
Boca Raton Community High  
School Graduate  
Attending Florida State University  
this Fall

We are excited for you to begin this next  
exciting chapter of your life.  
Always remember.. "Little girls with dreams  
become women with vision."  
We love you, Mom and Dad



**Richard "Ricky" Roehm**  
Boca Raton Community High  
School Graduate  
Attending University of Florida  
this Fall

Congratulations Ricky! We are so proud  
of you and everything you have accom-  
plished and the man you have become!  
We love you!  
Love Mom, Dad, Samantha and Chrissy



**Noah V. ViVenzo**  
Cardinal Gibbons High  
School Graduate  
Attending Florida Gulf Coast  
University this Fall

So proud of you! Love Mom



**Giorgina Ritota**  
G-Star School of the Arts Graduate  
Attending FAU Boca Campus this Fall  
Congratulations Giorgina.

It has been a fast 4 years and we now look  
forward to watching you navigate this next  
chapter in your life and what the  
future holds for you.

Love Mum, Dad, Brianna, Ivan and Vanessa  
xoxoxoxo

## A great big shout out to local seniors from Palm Beach Travel and some of our closest friends

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- From the YALE FAMILY

## Celebrations

### Editor's note

These photographs were taken before wearing face masks and practicing social distancing became part of our everyday life during the coronavirus pandemic.

### Corporate Partners Business Speaker Series

Kravis Center, West Palm Beach — Feb. 13



George Elmore took the spotlight at the second installment of the Kravis Center's speaker series, moderated by Kravis board Chairman Jeffrey Stoops. Elmore, founder and president of paving contractor Hardrives, talked about his successes and career milestones. He also praised the Kravis Center and its impact on the area. 'It would be tremendously different if the Kravis Center wasn't in West Palm Beach,' he said. 'I don't think we would have had CityPlace, now Rosemary Square, or the Palm Beach County Convention Center. It brought a lot here and continues to raise the bar for arts and culture as well.'

**ABOVE:** Stoops, Elmore and Mark Levy. **Photo provided by CAPEHART**

### Autism Speaks Walk

Meyer Amphitheatre, West Palm Beach — March 1

The world's largest autism fundraising event celebrated a local version along the downtown waterfront to support the mission of Autism Speaks. The sensory-friendly and family-friendly event attracted more than 3,000 participants. 'Knowing you have the support of the Autism Speaks community will help families navigate their journey and help them not feel alone,' said walk Co-Chairwoman Marla Garchik, who received the nonprofit's inaugural Wright Legacy Award. **RIGHT:** Co-Chairwomen Lisa Harrison and Garchik. **Photo provided**



### Founder Members Dinner

Kravis Center, West Palm Beach — Feb. 19

Nearly 250 of the performing arts center's major donors attended a special evening in their honor. It featured a cocktail reception, a three-course dinner and a performance by Michael Feinstein. 'Thank you for your continued support during our Kravis 2020 capital campaign,' CEO Judith Mitchell said. 'There is no doubt the Kravis Center is a unique cultural and economic landmark recognized worldwide as a source of the finest entertainment for all Palm Beach County residents and tourists.' Mitchell welcomed new founder members James and Laurie Bay, Robert and Meg Biscup, Peter and Stephanie Lamelas, David Moscow, Donna Kesselman Raggio, Lynda Rothstein and Leonard and Beth Wilf. **INSET:** Stephanie and Peter Lamelas. **Photo provided by CAPEHART**



### Love of Literacy Luncheon

Kravis Center, West Palm Beach — March 12



Proceeds totaled nearly \$200,000 from the 29th annual Literacy Coalition of Palm Beach County fundraiser. The money will go toward child, adult and family literacy programs. Jean Kwok, a best-selling author who wrote 'Searching for Sylvie Lee,' was the headliner. 'We could not have asked for a more inspiring speaker,' said Kristin Calder, the nonprofit's CEO. 'Jean's moving story of her personal journey from impoverished child of immigrants to best-selling author reminded us all that books and reading truly have the power to transform lives.' **ABOVE:** (l-r) Committee members Dr. Regine Bataille, Seran Glanfield, Karen Rogers, Sabine Dantus, Bettina Young, Bernadette O'Grady, Kwok, Debra Ghostine, Stephanie Kahlert and Laura Silver. **Photo provided**

### Literary Society series

The Colony Hotel, Palm Beach — March 5



MorseLife had its final gathering of the season with best-selling author Andrew Gross, a Palm Beach resident. Gross detailed his life as a writer and how he did not initially set out to become one; instead, he started off as a businessman, with several failed ventures. For 12 years, MorseLife has brought presentations from authors like Gross to audiences while introducing the programs and services it provides to seniors living in the community. **ABOVE:** Amy and Neil Katz. **Photo provided by CAPEHART**

**Photo provided by CAPEHART**

### Anniversary Gala

The Breakers, Palm Beach — March 8



Il Circolo, the Italian Cultural Society, rang in its 44th annual affair with a theme of Celebrazione delle Donne. The sold-out dinner dance featured music from Gino DeMarco's band, concert pianists Sergio and Barbara Salani, tenor Carlos De Antonis and Italian pop singer Alessandro Coli. The party began with a Tuscan cocktail hour followed by dinner. Sally Valenti was honored for 35 years of service. **ABOVE:** Valenti (center), with Chairs Antonella Brancaccio and Chris Salamone. **Photo provided**

### Luncheon and Fashion Show

Arturo's Ristorante, Boca Raton — Feb. 29



The women of the Highland Beach chapter of UNICO National put on their second fashion fete with more than 120 guests, who enjoyed a perfectly prepared meal and delightful designs from Mario Pucci Boca. Models ages 3 to 9 strutted the runway, showing off children's clothing from Once Upon a Time in Delray Beach. Proceeds from the event will fund the music therapy program at the Palm Beach Children's Hospital in West Palm Beach. **ABOVE:** (l-r) Committee members Terry Weiss and Gail Guy; the hospital's Lisa Baron and Liz Lung; Bree Gordon, director of Creative Arts Therapies of the Palm Beaches; Chairwoman Susan Gengo; and committee member Madeline LoRe. **Photo provided**

## Celebrations

### Be Great Dinner

Quail Ridge Country Club, Boynton Beach — March 10



The Boys & Girls Club of Delray Beach celebrated its eighth annual event by honoring dentist and philanthropist Dr. Craig Spodak and Youth of the Year Widnie Marcelin while raising more than \$100,000. Guests enjoyed a cocktail hour and a meal featuring a special performance by youth violinists. Dr. Spodak received the Forrest and Frances Lattner Community Impact Award for his years of support. The evening wrapped up with a live auction that raised more than \$20,000. **ABOVE:** Widnie, 17, and Dr. Spodak. *Photos provided by Tim Stepien Photography*

### Grand Tasting

Boca Raton Resort & Club — March 7



The 18th annual Boca Bacchanal attracted 1,400-plus attendees and raised more than \$275,000 for the Boca Raton Historical Society & Museum. In all, four events celebrated the best in food and wine: Bacchus Beckons, Bubbles & Burgers, a series of vintner dinners and the Grand Tasting. ‘We are honored to be supported and embraced by so many residents and visitors,’ museum Executive Director Mary Csar said. ‘We are also proud that our events keep getting better each year. As one of the oldest and most popular food and wine festivals in South Florida, it is very gratifying that the Boca Bacchanal remains the gold standard for introducing people of all ages to outstanding restaurants, talented chefs and noteworthy wineries.’ **ABOVE:** (l-r) Al and Joni Goldberg with Thom and Joyce DeVita. *Photo provided by Michele Sandberg*

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**Boca Raton, FL** – An IRA expert has prepared a **free report** that reveals many little-known tax savings strategies that many IRA holders with at least \$50,000 invested in an IRA can utilize. “Using these strategies could save many IRA holders thousands of dollars in taxes on their IRA account over their lifetime,” explained Fred Sundin, local financial advisor and IRA expert. Sundin has prepared a free report that will be distributed to IRA holders while supplies last. When asked who should order this free report, Sundin answered, “Any IRA holder with at least \$50,000 invested in their IRA account(s) would likely benefit the most from the information that’s contained in this report.”

To get your copy of this report simply call **(800) 966-5148** toll free, for a 24-hour, free recorded message. Recording your name and email address after the tone or visiting us @ [https://www.sundinfinancial.com/ira\\_mistakes\\_ip](https://www.sundinfinancial.com/ira_mistakes_ip) will ensure that your copy of this free report will be rushed to you.

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**CEMETERY**

Continued from page H1

tribute to our veterans so that not only current family members but generations to come can visit and reflect on their loved ones and the services they provided to their country,” says Kevin Ridgeway, who was the assistant director of the cemetery until recently, when he became director of the Hampton National Cemetery in Virginia.

With mitigated wetlands and carefully maintained cypress domes buffering manicured burial fields set within pine flatwoods, the cemetery exudes a sense of calm and respect for not only our country’s warriors but also nature.

I know that’s true because on June 10, 2019, I buried my husband, a Korean War veteran, in this hallowed ground. And since then, I’ve visited it often to find peace and comfort in this very South Florida setting.

But it wasn’t always this way.

The cemetery was inspired by need when early in the century, the Department of Veterans Affairs identified more than 420,000 veterans living within a 75-mile radius of the Palm Beach County area.

“It is critical for our veterans to have a cemetery in close proximity to where they live,” says Michael Kröll, CEO and president of Miller Legg, the civil engineering and landscape



Stands of native plants, including these cabbage palms, separate the burial fields at South Florida National Cemetery. Photos by Tim Stepien/The Coastal Star

architecture firm that was charged with designing the cemetery.

Up until then, the closest facility was in Bushnell, about a 3½-hour drive north.

In 2002, the VA purchased a 300-acre parcel along U.S. 441 in Lake Worth (the cemetery later grew to 335 acres with the purchase of an adjacent nursery).

Then the search was on for the people who could bring to it “the level of design required of a cemetery of shrine status,” explains Kröll.

He believes his firm was selected because it had created many other Florida cemeteries and had expertise in working with Florida’s ecosystems. “We prefer leaving the land in its more natural state rather than doing a very formal planting that you see in many national cemeteries,” he says.

On his first visit to the location, Kröll found established Florida habitats, but he also remembers fighting his way through a bramble of blackberries on his way to wetlands.

The natural areas also had been covered by large swaths of invasives, including melaleuca, Old World climbing fern and Brazilian pepper that shaded out and strangled native species, says Katharine Murray, president of Environment Quality Inc., the Tequesta company hired to oversee and preserve the wetlands.

Nathan Williams, southeastern district agronomist for the VA National Cemetery Administration, recalls an early visit by saying, “There were a lot of

wetland areas and a lot of trees including some cabbage palms, some scrub oaks and quite a few pine trees. But then there was sand and a whole lot of underbrush.”

This being South Florida, one of the first orders of business was to start the permitting process to protect the wetlands, a process that involved multiple agencies and could take up to three years.

Next, Kröll and his team went to work on a master plan.

More CEMETERY on page H7

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This was not an easy project as there was pressure from local veterans and state politicians to “get the place open.”

The first veteran was interred on April 7, 2007, in what was considered to be the cemetery’s “fast track” element. It was set on 8 acres buffered from traffic by naturally occurring pine trees and dense understory, according to Ridgeway.

Just after it opened, my husband and I visited. What I remember from that first visit was sweating uncomfortably as the sun beat down on unshaded white marble headstones lined up starkly in white sand, making the place glaring and hot.

A parking lot, fashioned from construction rock, housed a trailer that served as the administrative headquarters where we picked up a pamphlet explaining the veteran’s right to be buried here, as well as a spouse or dependent child.

By the time we left, I told my husband there was no way that, when the time came, I was leaving either him or myself at this cemetery. But my husband had different ideas.

From that day, he had faith that the VA would create a fitting memorial for military members who chose to make this their final resting place.

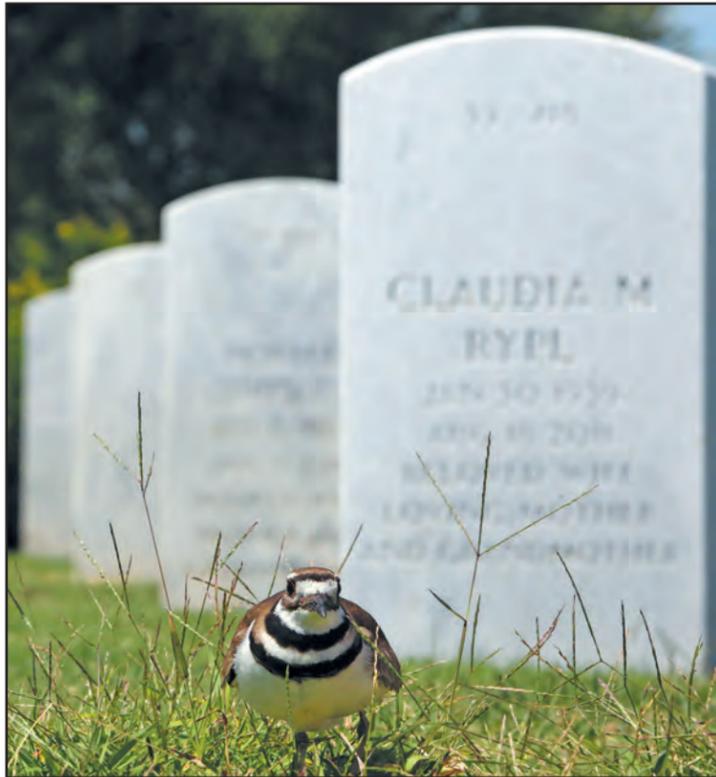
And unbeknownst to me, who didn’t return to the cemetery for another 11 years, that’s exactly what happened.

During the first phase of development, which covered 185 acres and was completed in 2010, Kroll and his team continued to remove invasives, adding wax myrtles, sabal palms, slash pines and other native foliage to the natural areas that were left as buffers between the burial fields.

And they continued to excavate what is today a central lake that’s also used for irrigation. Here too they used the fill to raise the existing pine flatlands, making them suitable for additional grave sites.

“In our designs, we appreciate the contrast between natural landscapes and manmade landscapes,” says Kroll. “Here you see a very dynamic contrast between areas of highly maintained marble headstones and, behind them, lush forests of pine trees or oak trees with understory plants. The contrast between these two habitats’ textures are fantastic.”

Kroll also added unobtrusive administrative and maintenance buildings; loop roads; columbariums and burial plots to hold cremated remains; and a memorial walk



A killdeer stands in front of a grave at South Florida National Cemetery. The birds build nests among the gravestones.

his staff preserved and created habitat that welcomed nature’s other inhabitants, including largemouth bass, butterflies, snakes, alligators, woodpeckers and even a pair of bald eagles spotted in the back of the property.

With all this completed, it was time for my husband and me to return to the South Florida National Cemetery to take another look. We did so in early 2019, when we knew his health was retreating and finding a burial place was heavy on our minds.

Here, instead of blazing sun and blinding marble, we discovered birds singing in the lush tree-filled buffer areas, sabal palms clearly outlined against blue sky, a cool breeze wafting across the manmade lake ringed with purple blooms of pickerel weed, and tiny lizards playing hide-and-seek among the gravestones.

People regularly were coming and going as they quietly and reverently visited their loved ones’ graves, giving what could be a very deserted

and regimented place a pleasant sense of activity. There was plenty of thriving habitat for everyone and everything.

It took only that one visit to convince me that the South Florida National Cemetery is a unique place. And I agreed to commit my husband and myself to its perpetual care.

With time marching on, the cemetery is readying itself for a \$31 million Phase Two that is slated to begin this summer and include the northwest quadrant of the property.

It will add a new entry gate and sign, as well as a public assembly area with garrison-size flag on an 80-foot pole, memorial walkway, memorial wall and committal shelter as well as columbariums and burial fields for about 20,000 interments.

With Memorial Day approaching, I am grateful for the care and respect this cemetery and its staff show our veterans and their loved ones, even when the world is turned upside down. ★

as well as committal shelters. It is in the shade of these shelters that, just before a burial, taps is played and an American flag

officially folded and presented to family members as they honor their deceased loved one. Through all this, Kroll and

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Boca Raton



Arthur Metzger is surrounded by family and friends on a parade through Mizner Park ahead of his 99th birthday. The march, which urged residents and politicians to make the planet better, was Feb. 29, before the coronavirus halted such gatherings. Photos by Jerry Lower/The Coastal Star

# WWII veteran marks 99th birthday with call to protect future generations

By Margie Plunkett

A small group armed with signs such as “Think About the Grandchildren” marched through Mizner Park in late February, singing and chanting to bring attention to how we should leave the world for those who follow. A 99-year-old World War II veteran led the rally, which coincided with his birthday March 3.

Arthur Metzger, in a wheelchair powered by his son, was joined by his family and friends, all supporters of his wish to urge politicians and residents to do what’s right for coming generations.

“We had little ones from 2 years old to 99 — Arthur — singing these songs and carrying the banners,” said Metzger’s wife, Carole Weller.

After all was said and done, Metzger said he hoped the event, with about 50 participants, made an impact “on some of the politicians who were on the borderline.”

The rally was sparked by a family discussion in Metzger’s

living room of the environment and other pressing issues that ended in a challenge by Weller to her husband: “What are you going to do about it?”

“He said he was going to get a sign and walk with it,” Weller recalled. “Every one of us perked up and said, ‘What? What do you mean?’ He said, ‘I think we should do something.’”

“He was genuinely worried about the world that we brought our children and grandchildren into,” Weller said, adding that they have a blended family of seven children, 11 grandchildren and six great-grandchildren. “It doesn’t matter the cause — they all needed addressing.”

Weller said that looking at Metzger’s past helps explain his wish to make a better world.

He was born in a small town outside Nuremberg, Germany, to a well-to-do family who fled the Nazis in 1936, arriving in New York City practically penniless. Metzger was 15. He finished high school in America, began working and then enlisted in the Army.

When officials there found out he wasn’t a U.S. citizen, they naturalized him.

He took part in the landing at Normandy, France, during WWII and went on to fight in France and Germany until the war ended.

“He was a big hero,” Weller said.

Metzger recalled that during his four-year Army stint, he was promoted to lieutenant by the end of the war and was decorated for his service. His decorations and citations included the World War II victory medal, American African Middle Eastern ribbon with two battle stars and the bronze star.

When Metzger returned to the United States, he became a pioneer in the plastics industry, building a global company called Amco Plastics International in New York. With his background as self-made — knowing what it was like to be practically homeless and penniless — he became a very charitable man, Weller



Arthur Metzger kisses his great-granddaughter Ciena Parisi after the march.

said. He was involved with a long list of issues, including his children’s education, Jewish causes and politics nationally and locally.

Metzger stopped actively working at his company nine or 10 years ago, remaining as chairman of the board for another five years. The company was run by his son, Gary, until about five years ago, when it was sold.

“Arthur was playing tennis, golf and bridge until he was 92,” Weller said, but failing

eyesight, Parkinson’s disease and other ailments caught up with him.

Nothing stopped him from leading the rally, however, and trying to make a difference.

“Our hope was that people along the way would see the signs and think, ‘What are they talking about?’” Weller said.

“Maybe it would dawn on them that we should be thinking about our future and what we should do about it. That was the whole idea. We felt it was successful.” ★

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**ABOVE:** *Self-Portrait* by Lois Dodd. 1989, oil on masonite. (Gift of Rebecca Mitchell and Ben Harris.)

**RIGHT:** *Self-Portrait with Rita* by Thomas Hart Benton. 1924, oil on canvas.

Photos provided by the National Portrait Gallery



## Seeing EYE TO I

### Boca Museum of Art gives artists' self-portraits a virtual showcase

By Sandra Schulman  
ArtsPaper Art Writer

Artists make art in a search for self.

*Eye to I: Self-Portraits* from the National Portrait Gallery, a stunning show at the Boca Museum of Art, now being exhibited through June 14 via online and digital programs, brings solo works together of major artists of the 20th and 21st centuries and dating from 1901 to 2015. There are treasures large and small here; the sheer delight of seeing the artist's aesthetic applied to their own visage is revelatory.

The exhibit was created to commemorate the National Portrait Gallery's 50th anniversary. The premiere in Boca Raton of this traveling exhibition is different from the Smithsonian Museum show previously on view in Washington, as all of the works on paper are new and were chosen especially for the national tour, as are several of the paintings.

Self-portraits include work from Native American artist Fritz Scholder, whose powerful large painting *Self-Portrait with Grey Cat* (2003) was the last self-portrait he made before his passing in 2005, painted when he was battling complications brought on by diabetes.

The black background and dark, moody canvas has Scholder boldly facing the viewer sitting back in a chair as he leans on his cane. His eyes are covered by tinted sunglasses as they are in most of his portraits. The tubes from his

oxygen tank are visibly snaking from his nose to the shadowy floor, which can be seen as a reference to the "shadow of death." His ghostly cat looks on as his sketchbook sits forlornly on the ground.

Roger Shimomura has one of the largest works, *Shimomura Crossing the Delaware*, which takes up the whole of the entry wall. The artist and his family were imprisoned during World War II at an internment camp, face to face with the anti-Japanese sentiment at the time. His response is to replace George Washington with himself and have the soldiers be Samurai warriors — a role reversal played out in his wildest art history dreams.

Thomas Hart Benton, known for his sweeping WPA-era murals, is in his more intimate *Self-Portrait with Rita* assuming a movie star-like pose seaside with the fetching Rita, who holds a violet flower. Benton was known to admire dashing actor Douglas Fairbanks and is perhaps seeing himself in his image here.

A rare drawing from rocker Patti Smith is intense in its dedication and mystery. *All the Things He Gave Me*, from 1974, is dedicated to Allen Lanier of Blue Oyster Cult, who was Smith's boyfriend at the time. She holds a figurine of a camel, wearing a color and striped blocked shirt. Around her neck is a cross, while an odd creased hat is pulled down low over her eyes. Her penetrating blue eyes pierce the viewer with a hard

See **PORTRAITS** on page H11

## Theater

### Skye's the limit for this talented Jupiter teen

By Jan Engoren  
Contributing Writer

For Skye Alyssa Friedman, there's no downtime, even in this moment of COVID-19.

These days, the Jupiter resident is busy finishing her home-school classes, logging in to video classes on Zoom, interviewing with prospective colleges, reading plays, taking online dance classes and filming audition tapes.

But perhaps that's nothing new for the red-haired 18-year-old who's been single-minded in her pursuit of acting since age 5.

Friedman has studied acting, dance and voice at the Maltz Jupiter Theatre Goldner Conservatory of Performing Arts, Paris Ballet & Dance, and the Craig Wich Voice Studios. She debuted on Broadway

at the age of 11 in the musical *Annie* in 2013 ("a dream come true") and has appeared in professional productions of *The Audience*, *Billy Elliot*, *The Music Man*, and *The Sound of Music* at the Maltz, as well as COPA student productions of *The Diary of Anne Frank*, *West Side Story*, *Cats*, and *Anything Goes*.

She's a member of Actors' Equity, and her TV credits include Nickelodeon's *I Am Frankie*, Food Network's *Cupcake Wars*, and assorted commercials.

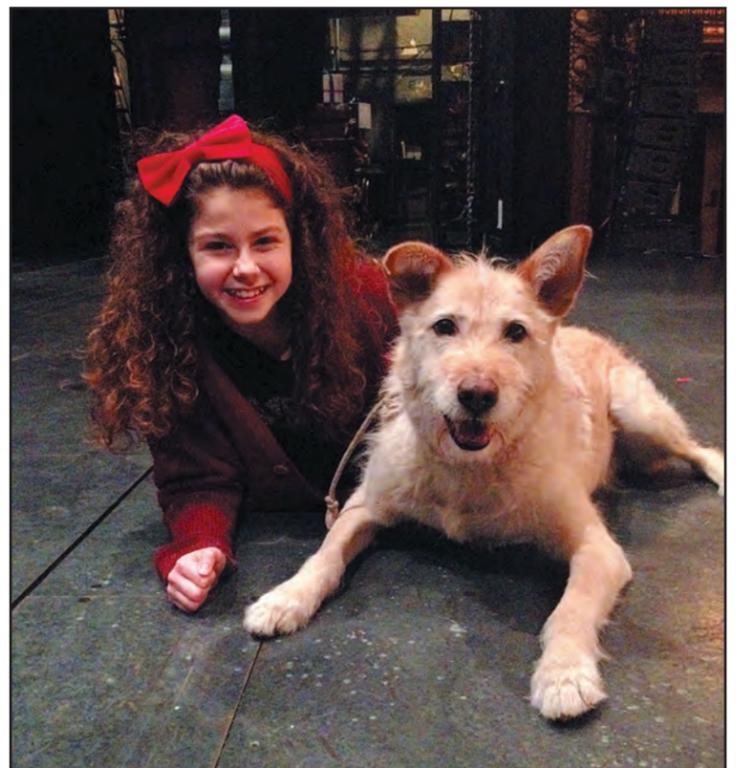
Now she has another honor to add to her impressive CV: She is the 2020 Jack Zink Memorial Student Scholarship winner from Palm Beach County. The \$3,000 scholarship, named for the late Jack Zink, a voice in South Florida entertainment coverage for three decades,

is awarded to graduating high school seniors who have achieved a minimum 2.5 GPA and will enroll in college to pursue a degree in theater or journalism.

The selection is based on talent, experience and demonstrated commitment to the theater. Other recipients of the 2020 Jack Zink Memorial Student Scholarship include Jeremy Fuentes of Broward County and Amaris Rios from Miami-Dade County.

"I'm so excited and grateful for this opportunity and to the Carbonell committee," Friedman says from her home. She is a member of the Maltz Youth Touring Company, a Broward Center for the Performing Arts Teen

See **FRIEDMAN** on page H11



Skye Alyssa Friedman starred as Annie in the 2013 Broadway production. Photo courtesy Skye Alyssa Friedman

## Books

## Woody Allen's memoir: Not nothing, but not a lot of something, either

By Hap Erstein  
ArtsPaper Writer

*Apropos of Nothing*, by Woody Allen. Arcade Publishing, 392 pages. \$30.

It seems unlikely that the employees of Hachette Book Group who walked out in protest of that company's effort to publish Woody Allen's new memoir, *Apropos of Nothing*, actually read the manuscript before taking umbrage that the firm would be associated with such an innocuous, albeit entertaining, tome.

Cries of censorship could be heard beyond the insular publishing world when Hachette abruptly halted its association with Allen's autobiography/defense against long-since litigated and exonerated accusations of child molestation. In any event, Arcade Publishing, an imprint of Skyhorse, quickly picked up the option and has released *Apropos*, though whether as a First Amendment rights crusade or a genuine effort to turn a profit remains unclear.

If the publisher's motive was the latter, perhaps it too had not read the book, for Allen details in his off-handed, stream-of-consciousness, apropos-of-nothing way how many movie distributors have been involved with his near annual film

## Woody Allen. Apropos of Nothing. Autobiography.

output, only to learn how small his fan base really is. Still — if like myself — you consider yourself to be among his cult following, there is plenty in these pages to find alternately fascinating and disappointing, just like so many of his movies.

It begins with a breezy, joke-laden look — “examination” would be too strong a word — at his middle-class Brooklyn childhood. Allen recalls his hatred of school, his surprisingly athletic youth, his obsessive pursuit of magic as an avocation, the long hours spent in the local movie theater, his eventual discovery of that wonderland known as Manhattan and his frustrating pursuit of a love life or “as one might have called it, Theater of the Absurd.”

I usually skim over a

subject's early years in a memoir, eager to get to little-known details of his or her adult accomplishments that are the reason for the book's existence. But that would be a mistake in *Apropos of Nothing*, for the section on the early days of young Allan Stewart Konigsberg absolutely reads like his stand-up routines, while his later discussion of his films is frustratingly shallow.

Granted that he concedes he has no interest in analyzing his movie output or in looking back on any of them once they are wrapped and in the can. Still, he takes the advice of one of his idols, Brooklyn Dodgers pitcher Satchel Paige (“Don't look back. Something may be gaining on you”), way too seriously.

But why else would he write a memoir — except for his lengthy and repetitive account of his long-time girlfriend Mia Farrow, her efforts to turn her children against Allen and, most important, to pursue various legal actions against him, accusing him of sexually molesting her 7-year-old daughter, Dylan?

About 200 pages in, *Apropos of Nothing* takes an abrupt, darker tone as Allen relitigates the accusations against him, investigated by the Child Sexual Abuse Clinic at Yale-New Haven Hospital and New York State Child Welfare. Both

investigations cleared Allen of any wrongdoing, the charges being “a total fabrication from start to finish,” in his words.

But with another of Farrow's children, Ronan (né Satchel, fatherhood in doubt between Allen and Frank Sinatra), continuing the accusations in the court of public opinion and pressing the point that led to the Hachette manuscript dump, Allen has suffered a contract dispute with Amazon, the producer of his latest film, *A Rainy Day in New York*, which has kept it from being released in the United States.



Allen

Various stars of his films have denounced him in a media pile-on, though according to Allen, in the case of Timothée Chalamet, he was advised to do so to help his chances of winning an Oscar for *Call Me by Your Name*. And deepest wound of all, Allen and his wife, Soon-Yi, tried to donate to Hillary Clinton's presidential campaign, but she refused to accept the check.

The book is dedicated to Soon-Yi, yet even there Allen cannot resist a punch line. (“I had her eating out of my hand and then I noticed my arm was missing.”) By his account, theirs is a conventionally happy marriage of 20-plus years, and no, he feels the need to emphasize, he was never her father, adopted or otherwise. Nor, he insists, does he have an unnatural obsession with younger women, despite the fact that he is 35 years older than his wife and despite the evidence in his films.

Of course, it took Allen quite a while to reach marital bliss with Soon-Yi, and *Apropos of Nothing* gives us a guided tour of his other marriages and former relationships. There's his first wife, Harlene, of a typically too-early union, whom he discards for the tempestuous (read “crazy”) Louise Lasser, featured in several of his earliest films. Their marriage lasted almost four years and according to Allen, they have remained friends since.

The same goes for Diane Keaton, who came into Allen's life when she auditioned for his Broadway play, *Play It Again, Sam*, and then worked together on seven of his films, most of

which (*Annie Hall*, *Manhattan*, *Interiors*, etc.) occurred after their romantic life was over.

He acknowledges, perhaps for the first time, an affair with college-age Stacey Nelkin, whose bit part in *Annie Hall* landed on the cutting room floor, but who inspired the character played by Mariel Hemingway in *Manhattan*. Yet he keeps insisting — with a straight face — that there is nothing to his interest in substantially younger women.

If your interest in Allen's memoirs is insights into his films, you will be mightily disappointed. He dismisses his first effort, *Casino Royale*, as “one of the worst, dumbest wastes of celluloid in film history,” without much elaboration. He calls his first drama, *Interiors*, a “failed” attempt, and as to the Chekhovian *September*, he says: “It was Chekhov all right — Moe Chekhov the plumber.”

Late in the book, Allen seems to lose his attention span and ticks off his movies with one-line opinions. *Crimes and Misdemeanors*, one of his finest in my view, he considers a bad mash-up of comedy and drama and is particularly hard on the comic half. He likens it to “a bite from the tsetse fly. It caused slumber.”

As for *Blue Jasmine*, his attempt to be Tennessee Williams, he says, “Nice try, but no cigar.” If many of his assessments seem too harsh, others are far too positive. For instance, he calls his second attempt at evoking Williams, *Wonder Wheel*, with Kate Winslet, “my best yet,” with no further explanation. Huh?

Come to think of it, a shoddy cut-and-paste job is a pretty good description of *Apropos of Nothing*. The second half feels like he pulled notes out of his desk drawer — a filing system he has owned up to for his movie ideas — and then hastily added those notes to the book. Still, if this is the autobiography we are going to get from Allen, his fans will understandably devour it for the new morsels it provides.

Allen has made nearly 50 films, yet his prime regret in life is that he never made a great one. Again a too-harsh assessment, though it would be hard to disagree with his thought that “all my films could profit by a do-over.” And the same could be said of his memoir.

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**PORTRAITS**

Continued from page 9

stare, daring them to doubt her love.

Other portraits include a moody Elaine de Kooning, a serious, sketchy Alexander Calder, a blocky Louise Nevelson, and Robert Rauschenberg embedded in a narrative collage with a parachute strapped to his back.

“These artists looked inward in ways we can connect with in our modern time. They created a lasting mirror effect for future audiences that most of them could not have foreseen,” said Irvin Lippman, executive director of the Boca Raton Museum of Art, in a prepared statement. “These artists steered self-portraiture away from the traditional poses of the past into new realms of self-reflection. Their self-depictions cut across time through multiple pathways of creating art that ring true today.”

The show was organized by the chief curator of the National Portrait Gallery at the Smithsonian, Dr. Brandon Brame Fortune, and features



*Self-Portrait* by Elaine de Kooning. 1946, oil on masonite. National Portrait Gallery photo

a richly illustrated companion volume with 150 insightful entries on key self-portraits in the museum's collection.

*Eye to I* is presented concurrently with the exhibition *Edward Steichen: In Exaltation of Flowers*. The seven large Art Nouveau panels — 10 feet tall each — take up a full room and were painted by Steichen from 1911 to 1914 for the Park Avenue townhouse of Eugene Meyer and his wife, Agnes, but were never installed. After a number of owners, including the Museum

**On View**

*Eye to I* is available for viewing online through June 14.

**Go to:** [www.facebook.com/bocamuseum/](http://www.facebook.com/bocamuseum/) or [www.instagram.com/bocamuseum/?hl=en](http://www.instagram.com/bocamuseum/?hl=en)  
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of Modern Art, they ended up in the collection of Art Bridges.

The murals are inspired in part by Maurice Maeterlinck's book, *The Intelligence of Flowers*, and depict Isadora Duncan, Mercedes de Cordoba, Katharine Rhoades, Marion Beckett and others, along with their floral counterparts.

“While the museum is temporarily closed, we will continue to give back to the community,” Lippman said in the statement. “These artists in *Eye to I* looked inward in ways we can connect with in our modern time.”

In addition to the virtual exhibits through Facebook and Instagram, innovative online initiatives have been created, especially for families who have children at home from school.

**FRIEDMAN**

Continued from page 9

Ambassador and a Kretzer Kid.

Kathi Kretzer, president of the Kretzer Music Foundation, first met Friedman and her mom, Liz, in 2015.

“At only 15, Skye already exhibited great talent, not only with her singing, but with her stage presence and charming personality,” remembers Kretzer.

As a Kretzer Kid, Friedman performed concerts with other talented youths in nursing homes, assisted living facilities and children's hospitals.

“Skye always lights up the room wherever she performs and brings a spark that very few performers can deliver,” says Kretzer. “She is a joy to watch and passionate about her craft. She will undoubtedly go far in the entertainment world.”

Still undecided as to which college she will attend, Friedman has applied to the BFA programs in more than 20 schools across the country, including NYU, USC, Pace, Penn State, CCM, Ithaca College and SUNY Purchase.

At this juncture, says she is leaning toward New York, where she will be able to pursue both theater and on-camera roles.

An Anglophile since preschool, when she starred as Mary Poppins in her preschool's production of the musical, Friedman grew up watching Shirley Temple movies, a big influence, and admiring Robin Williams for his “uniqueness and fearlessness.”

Highlights of her career include her appearance in *Annie* on Broadway in 2013 and two of her favorite roles, playing Anne Frank in *The Diary of Anne Frank* at the Maltz Youth Artists' Chair in 2017 — a role she found both challenging and fulfilling — and a role in the



Skye Alyssa Friedman proudly shows off her 'I Voted' sticker. The 18-year-old is still contemplating where she will attend college, but is leaning toward New York City. Photo courtesy Skye Alyssa Friedman

Maltz's *The Audience* in 2016.

Julie Rowe, director of education at the Maltz Jupiter Theatre, has worked with Friedman since 2009 in a variety of productions, including *The Sound of Music*, *Billy Elliot* and *The Audience*.

“Skye is incredibly dedicated and focused on her craft,” says Rowe. “She's very diligent and eager to learn. She jumps right in and strives to give a genuine authenticity to her roles.”

“In addition to her talent, Skye is academically smart, kind and passionate about art and making a difference. She's a lot of fun and has the work ethic of a true professional.”

“I'm confident she will contribute to the art form of performance for many years to come,” Rowe says. “Whether she'll be on stage or on TV, Skye will carve her own unique path as Skye.”

Friedman credits her parents, Liz and Glenn Friedman, and says they never pushed her but always supported her endeavors. In her free time, she loves to read plays and go ziplining with her dad at Treetop Trek at the Brevard Zoo.

Where does Friedman see herself in 10 years?

“I'd love to be living in New York City and starring in an original Broadway play, creating a character from scratch and shooting a TV show during the day — the best of both worlds,” says Friedman.

“You have to dream big,” she says. “Arts and acting are important, powerful forces which allow us to make a difference in the world.”

“I'm excited to be a part of this community and to have the good fortune to spend my life doing what I love.”

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## Paws Up for Pets

# How to ease pets back into spending time alone

There is no argument that our pets love us tremendously and unconditionally. But after more than two months stuck spending 24/7 with us in our homes, dogs and cats may be running out of patience with us and clamoring for some me-time.

They may express this by acting out. Just like us, our pets are adjusting to this new norm created by the global COVID-19 pandemic.

Your calm dog may now unleash a bark barrage every time an Amazon delivery person puts a package on your porch. He may feel the need to be extra vigilant because you are homebound.

Your usually affectionate cat may now let out a hiss or dash away when you approach to pet him for the 10th time of the day. In his feline way, he is saying, please let me enjoy an uninterrupted nap.

Changes are noticeable even in the homes of pet behavior experts.

“My dog, Maverick, is thoroughly enjoying the increased opportunities to beg for food and clean up the floor as we are eating most meals at home,” says Lisa Radosta, DVM, DACVB, a board-certified veterinary behaviorist who runs the

Florida Veterinary Behavior Services in West Palm Beach and is the co-author of a best-selling book, *From Fearful to Fear Free: A Positive Program to Free Your Dog from Anxiety, Fears and Phobias*. “I think that he will miss this most when we all go back to work and school.”

And what about her cat, Chewie?

“Our kitty was very attached before, but now he has become our shadow,” says Radosta. “We are trying to make sure that he is very enriched and spends some time away from us each day because we are concerned that he will have a bit of separation anxiety when we go back to work.”

Lack of mental and physical stimulation can prompt some pets to become hyperactive, engage in inappropriate chewing (like on your coffee table legs), paw your leg for attention, engage in marathon barking or meowing, surf kitchen counters and other unwanted behaviors.

Solution: You need to find the “joy factor” in your pet. That idea motivated Radosta and her team to launch an online learning program called Dog Nerds. It is available to anyone in Palm Beach County and beyond who seeks help to keep dogs feeling happy and secure.

You can get your paws on her free e-book, *Stuck at Home with a Bored Dog*, at <https://therealdognerds.com/site/>. Here is a sampling of the 27 tips she shares to bring out the best in your dog:

1. End mealtime boredom by scattering his dog food in your yard or hide piles in your home for your dog to find to bring out his inner hunter. On occasion, go bowl-free at mealtime for your cat and have him hunt for his kibble pieces in a closed room like a bathroom.

2. Try different walking routes so your dog can experience novel sights, sounds and smells.

3. Relax your dog (and cat) by playing specific relaxing music, such as classical, reggae or soft rock. Music can also mask environmental sounds that cause some dogs to stress bark, such as a ringing doorbell.

4. Redirect your gotta-dig dog away from your garden or sofa pillows by making or buying a snuffle mat. These mats work a dog’s brain and tap his strong sense of smell as he searches through the mat for hidden food or treats. Here’s a link if you want to create your own snuffle mat: <https://iheartdogs.com/diy-let-your-dog-dig-for-food-and-treats-in-this-entertaining-mat/>.

As we take steps to resume our work and travel schedules interrupted by COVID-19, use this time to help your pets make this transition for their sense of security — and to reduce their feelings of separation anxiety or frustration.

Radosta offers a win-win plan for you and your pets.

“Now is the time to prepare for what is coming,” she says. “For our dogs and cats, that is about independence and enrichment. We want to make sure that they have things to do which do not involve the pet parent so that they are not completely reliant on the pet parent for happiness.”

Start now by putting your dog in his crate or carrier or closed spare room for about 15 to 60 minutes a day with a favorite stuffed food toy. Or



Dogs will need to rediscover alone time once home isolation ends for their owners. Photo provided

take a walk without him.

“Try to shoot for some independence for your dog,” Radosta says. “We want your dogs to know that you are still leaving sometimes, and they will be OK.”

Cats also need time away from us each day. I have resisted the temptation to wake up my orange tabbies, Casey and Rusty, when they are cuddling together on the couch.

“They have been lying on our laps 24/7 for more than six weeks now,” Radosta says. “Get to shopping online for toys that will occupy your cat. Catit (<https://usa.catit.com>) makes some great toys. Save the boxes and packing material for your kitty. These can provide them with hours of fun.”

I recently adopted a stray small dog during this pandemic and named her Emma. As much as I love spending 24/7

with her, I have followed Radosta’s savvy advice. As I write this column in our backyard office, Emma — and the rest of my furry Brady Bunch — are napping in the main house.

And I now limit tossing tennis balls to Kona, my terrier mix, to two or three times a day.

Everyone, including pets, needs and deserves some me-time. Emma, Kona, Casey and Rusty definitely.

Arden Moore, founder of [fourleggedlife.com](http://fourleggedlife.com), is an animal behavior expert and host of the

*Oh Behave!* show on [petliferadio.com](http://petliferadio.com). Learn more at [www.ardenmoore.com](http://www.ardenmoore.com).



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## Health Notes

# Elective surgeries, other procedures return with safeguards in place

**T**enet Palm Beach Health Network's Palm Beach hospitals resumed elective care on May 4, as the state lifted the relevant executive order related to the coronavirus. "Many patients have postponed medical care or are in need of treating new symptoms. Our health system is ready to safely provide this care to our community again," says Tenet Palm Beach Health Network CEO Maggie Gill. "The Palm Beach Health Network is committed to the universal protection and safety of our patients, physicians and staff."

"We have rigorous infection prevention protocols in place, and they are working. We have well-trained and experienced staff. We have clear pathways to care for COVID-19 patients separately from those with other illnesses. We have also invested in rapid testing capabilities and personal protective equipment."

**Delray Medical Center** is a part of Tenet Palm Beach Health Network.

**Baptist Health South Florida** began to reopen its facilities on May 6 for elective surgeries, endoscopies and interventional procedures. Enhanced protective measures, including mandatory face masks, social distancing guidelines, and entranceway screenings, will continue to be utilized.

Baptist Health also notes that patients should call their doctor's offices for the status of appointments that were canceled because of the pandemic. Regularly scheduled appointments with Baptist Health Medical Group physicians are going as planned, though visitor restrictions are in place.

"We want people in our communities to know that Baptist Health has taken all the necessary precautionary actions to keep our patients, staff and visitors safe and healthy," said Anexis Lopez, R.N., manager of infection control at Doctors Hospital, part of Baptist Health South Florida. "The steps we have taken are consistent with guidelines from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Baptist Health is also working closely with local and state public health officials."

**Boca Raton Regional Hospital** and **Bethesda East** are part of Baptist Health South Florida.

In mid-April, the Food and Drug Administration granted emergency use authorization for Baptist Hospital of Miami Molecular Diagnostic Laboratory at **Miami Cancer Institute** to perform a new COVID-19 swab test in-house, which was developed at the Miami Cancer Institute. This testing allows Miami Cancer Institute to perform a number



**ABOVE:** Two lab technicians suit up to begin testing samples for COVID-19 on the campus of Miami Cancer Institute.

**RIGHT:** Henry Phipps, 5, working at home, was one of the students from A.D. Henderson School who helped make 3D face shields and other supplies for several hospitals. **Photos provided**

of tests twice a day and receive results within 24 hours. The lab is able to perform 40-80 tests per day, with capacity for more in the near future.

In early April, a team from **Florida Atlantic University's College of Engineering and Computer Science and Institute for Sensing and Embedded Network Systems** rapidly produced protective face shields in response to a request from Baptist Health South Florida.

Making the inexpensive, disposable face shield requires only clear polyester plastic, elastic fabric bands, and a laser cutter, and it's simple and quick. Baptist Health South Florida requested an initial order of 4,000 face shields, which the FAU team completed, and Baptist ordered 4,000 more.

Another innovative solution, this one by Florida Atlantic University's **Cane Institute for Advanced Technologies** at A.D. Henderson University School and FAU High School: Through April, students ranging from ages 5 to 18, along with two faculty members, worked to create more than 1,200

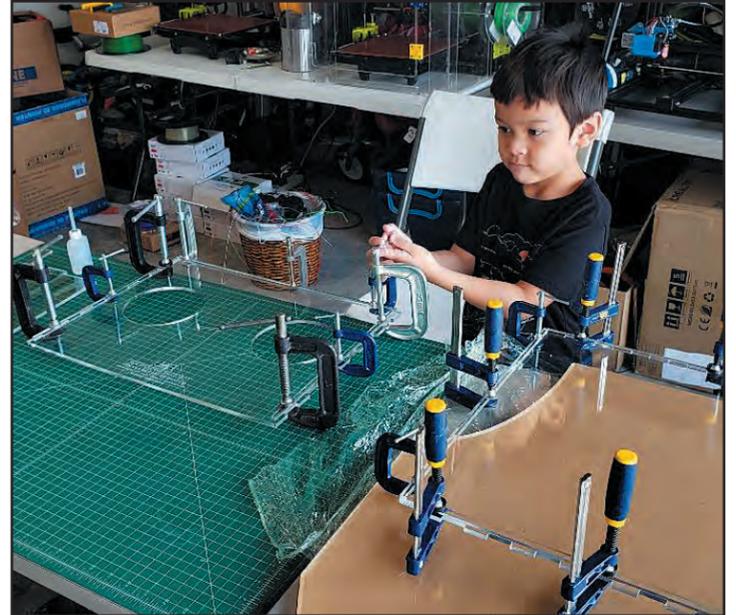
3D printed face shields, 36 intubation chambers and 2,000 ear savers for several hospitals in Palm Beach County.

The intubation chambers, a unique form of PPE for hospitals, provide an extra layer of protection for doctors and nurses when they are intubating patients who need to be put on respirators.

Allan Phipps, district science coordinator at Henderson School and FAU High, was contacted by Giovana Jaen, an FAU High grad in her third year as a student at Schmidt College of Medicine, about doing this for a local hospital.

Phipps relocated the school's 3D printing equipment to his garage and began coordinating the institute's efforts, as well as manufacturing face shields and intubation chambers with his children, who attend Henderson School. Phipps and James Nance, a middle school science teacher, host social distancing drive-thrus in front of the school where students can drop off 3D printed face shields and ear savers they created at home.

Karethy Edwards, a professor and associate dean of academic programs,



and Karen Chambers, an assistant professor, both in **Florida Atlantic University's Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing**, are spearheading programs to provide PPE and health care services for homeless people and low-income individuals who live in a northwest neighborhood in West Palm Beach. On April 28, in collaboration with the Northwest Community Health Alliance board, Chambers and about 10 faculty and staff members distributed more than 400 face masks to residents in this community. An additional 150 face masks were to be distributed early May.

On April 29, the **HCA East Florida Hospitals** of Palm Beach County announced its participation in a national study to determine if plasma from convalescent or recovered COVID-19 patients may benefit people hospitalized with severe or life-threatening cases.

As part of the effort, **JFK Medical Center** and **Palms West Hospital** are seeking eligible volunteers to donate plasma. Those who have tested positive for COVID-19 and have since tested negative can help

by donating plasma through OneBlood ([www.oneblood.org/lp/covid-19-convalescent-plasma.shtml](http://www.oneblood.org/lp/covid-19-convalescent-plasma.shtml)) or the American Red Cross ([www.redcrossblood.org/donate-blood/dlp/plasma-donations-from-recovered-covid-19-patients.html](http://www.redcrossblood.org/donate-blood/dlp/plasma-donations-from-recovered-covid-19-patients.html)). For information, call HCA's dedicated COVID-19 Plasma Phone Line at 833-582-1971 or visit [hcahealthcare.com](http://hcahealthcare.com).

A team at **Jupiter Scripps Research** has found that an effective COVID-19 vaccine need not incorporate the entire spike protein that gives the novel coronavirus its crown-like appearance, according to an April 28 news release.

Rather, a vaccine containing one-sixth of the entire spike, just the tip, is sufficient to elicit an immune response in rodent models, and may be safer. This suggests that mass production of a potentially safer, less costly COVID-19 vaccine can be accomplished on a timeline shortened by several months.

The findings were published prior to peer review on the preprint site BioRxiv at [www.biorxiv.org/content/10.1101/2020.04.10.036418v1](http://www.biorxiv.org/content/10.1101/2020.04.10.036418v1).

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## Along the Coast



### A grateful community gives thanks to first responders, other heroes

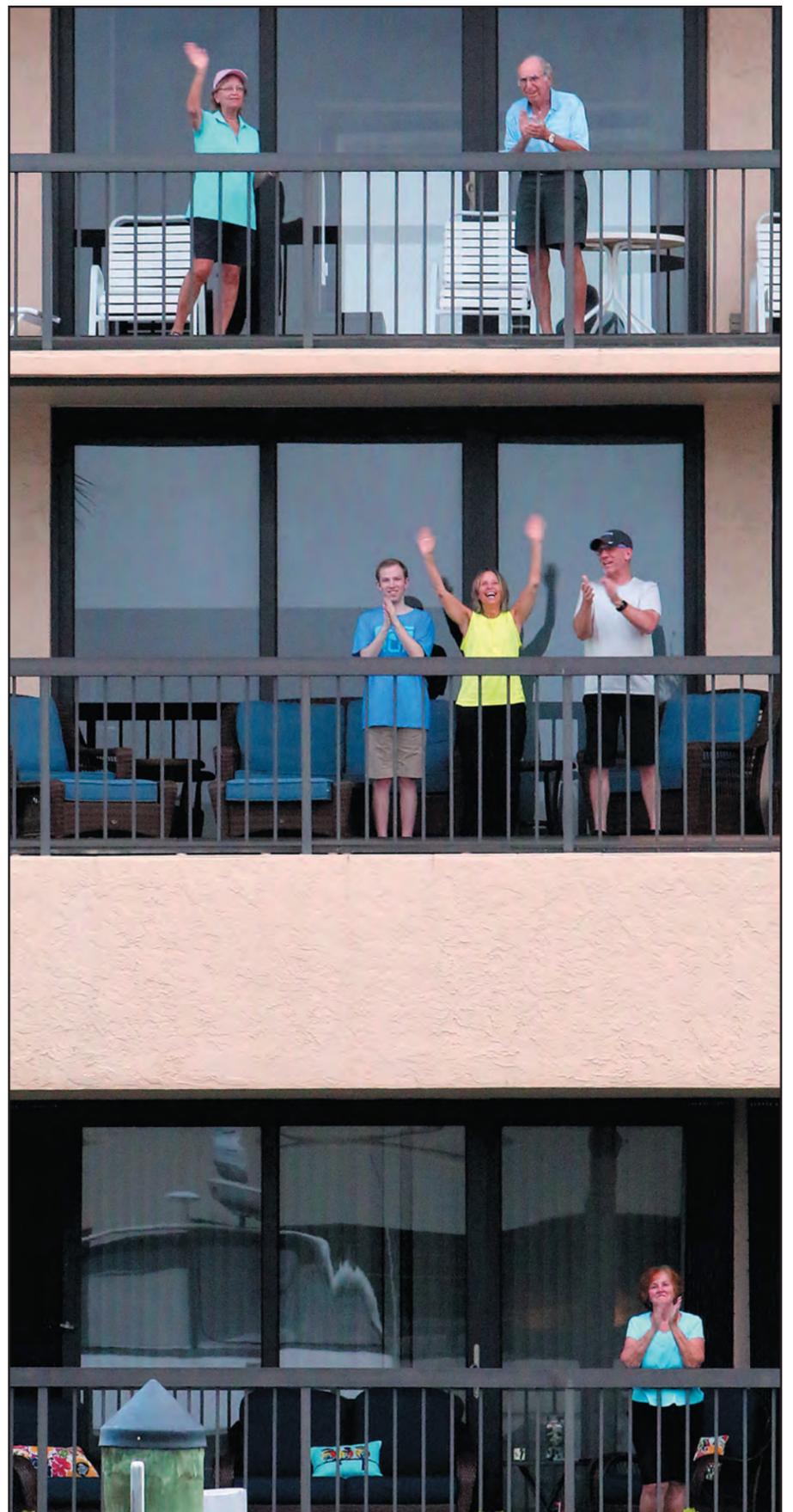


Throughout south Palm Beach County, residents and businesses are showing support for hospital workers and first responders on the front lines battling the coronavirus.

**TOP:** Sandi Savia, EMS liaison at Boca Raton Regional Hospital, blows a kiss through her mask to Boca Raton Fire Rescue crew members as they and more than 20 other first-responder vehicles parade past the Emergency Room entrance on April 17 as a show of support for hospital workers. **Jerry Lower/The Coastal Star**

**ABOVE:** Delray Medical Center staff enjoyed complimentary ice cream in the hospital parking lot courtesy of Abbey Delray, Abbey Delray South and Harbour's Edge, which partnered with Maypo's Ice Cream truck in an effort to thank health care workers on May 2. Members of the hospital pharmacy staff pose for a selfie: (l-r) Graciela Almazan, Lourdes Black, Lisa Stephani, and Antonia Pasvantis, the assistant pharmacy director. The gesture is part of the communities' Heroes in Health Care campaign, aimed at showing appreciation for the dedication and sacrifice of health care professionals during the pandemic. **Tim Stepien/The Coastal Star**

**RIGHT:** At 7 p.m. April 17, residents of the Boca Highland Beach Club & Marina in Highland Beach stood on their balconies to applaud first responders and health care workers for their work during the coronavirus outbreak. Pictured top to bottom (l-r): Irma and Seymour Andrus; Matthew Tyroler, 20, Richard Tyroler and Amy Tyroler; and Debbie Romanyk. **Tim Stepien/The Coastal Star**



Health & Harmony

# Telemedicine likely to last beyond pandemic, experts say

As COVID-19 began its aggressive spread and stay-at-home orders followed, cellphones went from being necessary, sometimes intrusive devices to becoming virtual lifelines. Friends and family members took to voice and video to pierce isolation and diminish anxiety — checking in, catching up and lifting spirits.

Doctors and mental health professionals quickly joined that virtual support network. Insurance providers like Florida Blue and Aetna offered telephone and video health care visits as a benefit prior to the pandemic. But with the coronavirus public health emergency declaration on Jan. 31, Medicare moved to expand its coverage of telehealth services for the duration of the emergency. Other insurance companies and health care providers followed suit.

Now, even as elective surgeries have resumed and access to medical offices is widening, telemedicine may well be part of the new normal.

That would suit Sara Greene just fine. While her doctors' offices were closed, the Boca Raton woman said she had several productive telehealth visits, including one with her dermatologist to discuss a rash.

"It was basically, OK, here's my issue," Greene said. "She said, 'Turn the camera around and let me take a look at it.' Then she goes, 'All right, what have you got in your medicine cabinet?' OK, let's go look. So, we went to the medicine cabinet and she saw what creams and stuff I had, and she said: 'OK, use that one.' It was that simple."

For Greene, coordinator for the Department of Biomedical Science at the Charles E. Schmidt College of Medicine at FAU, telehealth's time saving is part of its appeal.

"I absolutely would continue

to use it. For someone who works full time like me, to take an hour and a half off to go to a doctor's appointment that's going to take me five minutes, is a pain in the neck," she said.

FAU Medicine's primary care practice stepped into telehealth — diagnosing and treating nonemergency conditions — for the first time in March, said Dr. Leonard Berkowitz, lead physician. The practice maintained office visits only for patients with conditions that would be difficult to manage with virtual care, he said.



**Berkowitz**

"I think what we've learned from this experience is that there are definite advantages to telemedicine. For someone who might have transportation issues, they're able to be seen right from their own home. Also, for someone who might have a medical condition where they may not want to be exposed to other patients sitting in a waiting room," he said.

"We've really covered a lot of the common areas that we treat in primary care: diabetes and hypertension management, rashes and skin conditions, sore throats, respiratory infections, and strains and sprains. We've also been dealing with mental health issues as well, like anxiety and depression. It's been a very stressful time for a lot of patients."

Ocean Ridge psychotherapist Mya Breman



**Breman**

welcomes the telehealth coverage expansion for just that reason. She sees, and hears, the anger, fear, anxiety and grief the pandemic is generating and wants people to find the support they need.

"I don't think people are reaching out the way they do in normal times. And that's a

shame because now, more than ever, they should be reaching out," she said.

"What you need is someone to talk this out with. And I think a best friend who knows how to listen is fine. But they have their issues, too. So, I think a practitioner, a professional, is now even more essential because you need someone who's really going to listen, be rational, be on your side and really respond to your individual needs. You know ... someone who is there for you 100%."

But, as people meet up on Zoom or reach out by phone, Breman offered a meaningful way we can offer support.

"I think the main thing is to validate each other's feelings because we're all in this together. And it's normal that we're all feeling these things, whether it's gee, I'm really happy to get off the Ferris wheel, or, oh, I'm so miserable. So, find people that can validate you and say you're not crazy; it's very normal to feel whatever it is that you're feeling."

Breman began offering telephone psychotherapy sessions many years ago, to serve clients who live across the country and around the world. She has since added video sessions but leaves the choice to the client.

"Telehealth really is very effective," she said. "If you trust your therapist, there's not much difference between telehealth and face-to-face, in person."

"Obviously, telemedicine was here before the COVID-19 pandemic," Berkowitz said. "But I think doctors are curious to see what role it will have afterwards. I would not be surprised if it's a part of doctors' practices moving forward. What part of it remains to be seen."

*Joyce Reingold writes about health and healthy living. Send column ideas to joyce.reingold@yahoo.com.*



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### Easter sunrise Delray Beach public beach — April 12



**ABOVE:** Delray Beach residents Jennifer Magi, Sue Magi and Jimmy Magi stop along A1A to watch the Easter sunrise. Easter Sunday usually draws hundreds of people on A1A just south of Atlantic Avenue for a nondenominational service, but not during the coronavirus pandemic. The Magi family has attended the Easter service for over 30 years. **LEFT:** Delray Beach residents Jim Reynolds and Sue Beil photograph the sunrise. **Photos by Tim Stepien/ The Coastal Star**

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## Finding Faith

# Virtual services prove valuable but not preferable

How about some good news? People are showing up at virtual church and temple in increasing numbers. While there are few (if any) places practicing public worship in Palm Beach County, many more people are seeking out a virtual spiritual connection.

When “coronavirus” was just a whisper, Rabbi Shmuel Biston, co-director of Chabad of East Delray Beach, closed the doors of his newly opened facility on First Avenue “almost immediately.” But Biston, an Apple watch-wearing millennial, made a seamless transition to virtual worship, which was easier for groups that already had a strong online presence through Facebook or YouTube.

Others scrambled. St. Joseph’s Episcopal in Boynton Beach amassed every tool it could find, Father Marty Zlatic says. “We started a church Facebook page, we instituted a YouTube channel for the church, and we bought a subscription to Zoom. We’re investigating the cost of installing a permanent video broadcasting system so we can more easily offer livestreaming of our services even after the quarantine is over.”

Father Brian Horgan at St. Lucy Catholic Church in Highland Beach celebrates Mass every day, but he’s leaving the streaming to others. “So many others are doing it, and we don’t want to send out something that’s not as effective,” he says. He keeps in touch with the congregation through daily emails and he answers his cellphone. “We want the parish to know they’re not forgotten.”

Still, reopening is the goal. Paul J. Kane, rector at St. Paul’s Episcopal in Delray, says, “I can’t imagine online becoming the normal means of worship. The church is a community. Being together in prayer, fellowship and service is at the heart of who we are. So, in that sense, I don’t think online church can ever become the norm. But this pandemic has certainly demonstrated the importance of the church having a strong, accessible presence on the internet.”

The quantity and content are changing too, local clergy said, along with its audience.

Zlatic says, “Since the day the quarantine started, we started posting a worship experience of some sort every day on our social media pages to give the congregation a touch from the church. It’s been a ray of hope to our congregation, especially those who are quarantined alone.”

Rabbi Ruvi New of Chabad of East Boca Raton says he’s seen a significant spike in participation in the daily prayers he offers, with as many as 1,000 viewers showing up from around the world.

“I’m inspired and humbled by it,” he says. “We’re embracing this disruption of life as we knew it. It’s about how we utilize the opportunities and make the most of it that matters.”

Kane says daily emails to parishioners (“spreading God’s love, not the virus”) have “become a sort of lifeline in the midst of a lot of loneliness and isolation.”

For a successful reopening, everyone agrees the key is to act responsibly and safely with new protocols in place.

Bishop Gerald M. Barbarito of the Catholic Diocese of Palm Beach spoke to his flock and acknowledged that all want to reopen as soon as possible, but everyone must respect social distancing and follow policies in a “careful and thoughtful way.”

Horgan says that St. Lucy’s will follow the diocese’s lead. The church has taped off pews to enforce social distancing and removed all the books and hymnals. It is working on safe ways to offer the sign of peace, formerly a handshake or embrace, and Holy Communion.

“People need human touch,” Horgan says. “Our people are so willing to make changes, which is a tremendous blessing, but it’s been extremely hard. I can’t be a priest without people. But I’m optimistic about the future.”

Biston says, “We have to be cautious. We have a lot of seniors so even when it’s safe, we’ll keep attendance in check and take it one day at a time.”

No one is sure how places of worship will decide who comes. Reservations only? Maybe a lottery? Kane says that St. Paul’s will follow the Episcopal Diocese of Southeast Florida, which plans to take a phased approach to reopening.

“The next phase,” Kane says, “will likely involve having



**ABOVE:** Recovered COVID-19 patient Alan Levy, right, with his wife, Lynne, and son Joshua Levy cheer from the balcony of their home in Royal Palm Yacht and Country Club during the Lag BaOmer parade on the May 12 holiday.



**LEFT:** Jeff Wasserman, front, and Jeff Bilfeld show support for Levy, a fellow Chabad of East Boca member. The Chabad celebrated the holiday by saluting health care heroes. The parade through Boca Raton ended with a ceremony featuring video footage of the team at Boca Regional Hospital, where Levy spent more than a month.

**Photos by Tim Stepien/ The Coastal Star**

congregants wear PPEs, sitting at least 6 feet apart and not receiving Communion from the common cup.”

The biggest factor in determining what worship will look like six months from now will be the development of a vaccine, Biston says. But whether we’re asked to wear masks, check our temperatures at the door, provide proof of vaccination or other mandates, Biston says, “We’re humans. We adapt. We forge on.”

New says he expects a new appreciation for relationships and a lot of excitement around the communal nature of worship.

“That feeling of pooled energy, a greater sense of connection from sharing space,” are what we’re missing, he says. He expects people to be almost giddy. Right now, the feelings aren’t so positive.

But New says not to lose faith.

“My message is to relieve

yourself of the burden of worry. God’s divine orchestrations cannot be understood by man. We are on the cusp of a better, brighter world,” New says.

*Janis Fontaine writes about people of faith, their congregations, causes and events. Contact her at [janisfontaine@outlook.com](mailto:janisfontaine@outlook.com).*



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# On the Water



This view of Lake Boca Raton on April 19 gives a small sense of the crowds that usually attend the annual Boca Bash on the state-controlled lake. **BELOW:** But a week later, FWC and Boca officers found no bash to police. Boaters heeded advice from an organizer and the city and stayed away. **Photos by Tim Stepien/The Coastal Star**

## Boating and fishing reopen, but with restrictions

**F**ishing, diving and boating along the coast of Palm Beach County was tightly restricted for five weeks after Palm Beach County officials closed boat ramps and marinas March 22 to mitigate the spread of the coronavirus.

The reason: Many boaters ignored social-distancing guidelines by using their vessels to gather for shoulder-to-shoulder parties at popular raft-up spots such as Lake Boca and the Peanut Island sandbar.

County officials opened marinas and boat ramps April 29 — but with restrictions on boat occupancy and boater behavior.

As of early May, the public health restrictions for recreational boaters included:

- A prohibition on any marine recreational activity that does not comply with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines related to the spread of COVID-19.
- No anchoring of two or more boats within 50 feet of each other.
- No activity that results in a gathering of more than 10 people.
- No beaching, landing or anchoring on open shorelines or sandbars.
- Capacity limits for non-commercial boats. Boats 25 feet or smaller, for instance, are allowed to carry up to four adults, plus two youths age 17 or younger, a maximum of six people.

Other restrictions apply to charter fishing boats, dive boats and other for-hire boats in Palm Beach County.

Charter operators have been told to mark seating locations to maintain a minimum of 6 feet between customers.

Fish-cleaning tables are limited to one person at a time.

The captain, crew and patrons of for-hire boats are to wear protective gear such as face masks and gloves,



Joel Cortes, the assistant public works director of Lantana, paints directions on the pavement at the public marina south of Ocean Avenue at the Intracoastal Waterway early on April 29. Pier anglers are required to keep at least 10 feet apart, and only one person at a time can be at the fish-cleaning station. **Jerry Lower/The Coastal Star**

according to the county's emergency order.

Dive tanks are to be filled by appointment only and picked up curbside, according to guidelines in the county's Emergency Order No. 5, signed April 27.

Personal watercraft are limited to one person per vessel — or one adult and one child who is an immediate family

member.

Canoes, kayaks and paddleboards are limited to one person unless two people can occupy them and still maintain 6 feet of separation.

At boat ramps, one boat should launch per boat ramp bay at a time to minimize contact with others.

On fishing piers, a distance of 10 feet between anglers must

be maintained. Tackle shops and fuel docks are allowed to operate if they follow CDC guidelines.

For details, visit [discover.pbcgov.org](http://discover.pbcgov.org). Click on "updates" and look for Emergency Order No. 5.

As of early May, group fishing boats (head boats) such as the Lady K in Lantana were operating with restrictions.

The Lady K's parent company, Bar Jack Fishing, limits trips to 10 anglers to maintain a 6-foot separation between anglers. The ticket price increased to \$60 per person from \$45. Face masks are encouraged, and anglers are encouraged to bring their own fishing gear.

The Living on Island Time head boat based at Palm Beach Yacht Center in Hypoluxo and the Sea Mist III based at Boynton Harbor Marina were offering fishing trips with the same restrictions: 10 people maximum at a cost of \$60 each. Reservations are suggested.

### Scuba diver killed off Palm Beach

A Melbourne diver died after being pulled under the boat and trapped March 29 off Palm Beach.

According to a preliminary report by the Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission, Mollie Ghiz-Flynn, 37, was diving from the Southern Comfort dive boat about 1.5 miles south of Palm Beach Inlet. She was pulled under the boat and "trapped by the propeller" while the captain was picking up divers.

Other divers freed Ghiz-Flynn from the propellers, pulled her on board and administered CPR. Firefighters met the boat at Riviera Beach Marina, where they pronounced her dead. The FWC is investigating.

### Event updates

**June 13:** Saltwater Slam fishing tournament for kingfish, dolphin, wahoo, tuna and cobia. Early entry fee \$401.25 through May 29. Call 954-725-4010 or visit [www.bluewatermovements.com](http://www.bluewatermovements.com). Check Bluewater Movements Facebook page for updates on captain's meeting and weigh-in.

**July 11:** Big Dog & Fat Cat KDW Shootout fishing tournament is planned, based at Sailfish Marina in Palm Beach Shores. Captain's meeting July 10 at Sailfish Marina. Entry fee \$200 per boat through July 6 or \$250 thereafter. Details at [www.bigdogfatcat.org](http://www.bigdogfatcat.org).

**Postponed:** No date had been set (as of early May) for the 26th annual Lantana Fishing Derby. For updates, call 561-585-8664 or visit [www.lantanafishingderby.com](http://www.lantanafishingderby.com).

**Postponed:** The Boca Raton-based nonprofit Marine Education Initiative (formerly Fishing for Families in Need) postponed its Cruise for a Cause fundraiser, originally set for April 4. The new date is Nov. 7. Tickets can be used on the new event date or refunded. For details, go to [www.marineinitiative.org](http://www.marineinitiative.org).

**Canceled:** X-Generation Anglers for Soldiers KDW fishing tournament, originally set for May 23. Organizers plan to hold the tournament Memorial Day weekend in 2021. Call 561-577-0706.

**Canceled:** This year's Palm Beach County KDW Classic fishing tournament originally

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**Stunning swordfish**  
Juno Beach — March 23



Jessika Harvey and Rush Rashidi show the 103-inch broadbill swordfish they boated March 23 after a 24-hour fight. They hooked the swordfish off Palm Beach County on the evening of March 22 and drifted north in the current. The fight ended off Vero Beach. Estimated weight: 400 pounds. **Willie Howard/The Coastal Star**



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set for May 30. The next KDW Classic is set for June 5, 2021. Call 561-832-6780 or visit [www.kdwclassic.com](http://www.kdwclassic.com).

**Canceled:** This year's Crossing for Cystic Fibrosis, the annual Father's Day fundraising paddle from Bimini to Lake Worth Beach. The next crossing is set for June 19, 2021. Details: [www.crossingforcysticfibrosis.com](http://www.crossingforcysticfibrosis.com).

**Canceled:** Palm Beach International Boat Show. A virtual boat show was scheduled for May 14.

**Tip of the month**

NOAA Fisheries and *Salt Water Sportsman* magazine have organized a fishing photo

contest intended to showcase Americans' passion for saltwater fishing.

Recreational anglers should submit a photo and the story related to their favorite catches.

Prizes include an expense-paid fishing trip to the Florida Keys.

Enter on Instagram at #NOAAsFavoriteCatch or go to [www.saltwatersportsman.com/naaphotocontest](http://www.saltwatersportsman.com/naaphotocontest).



Willie Howard is a freelance writer and licensed boat captain. Reach him at [tiowillie@bellsouth.net](mailto:tiowillie@bellsouth.net).



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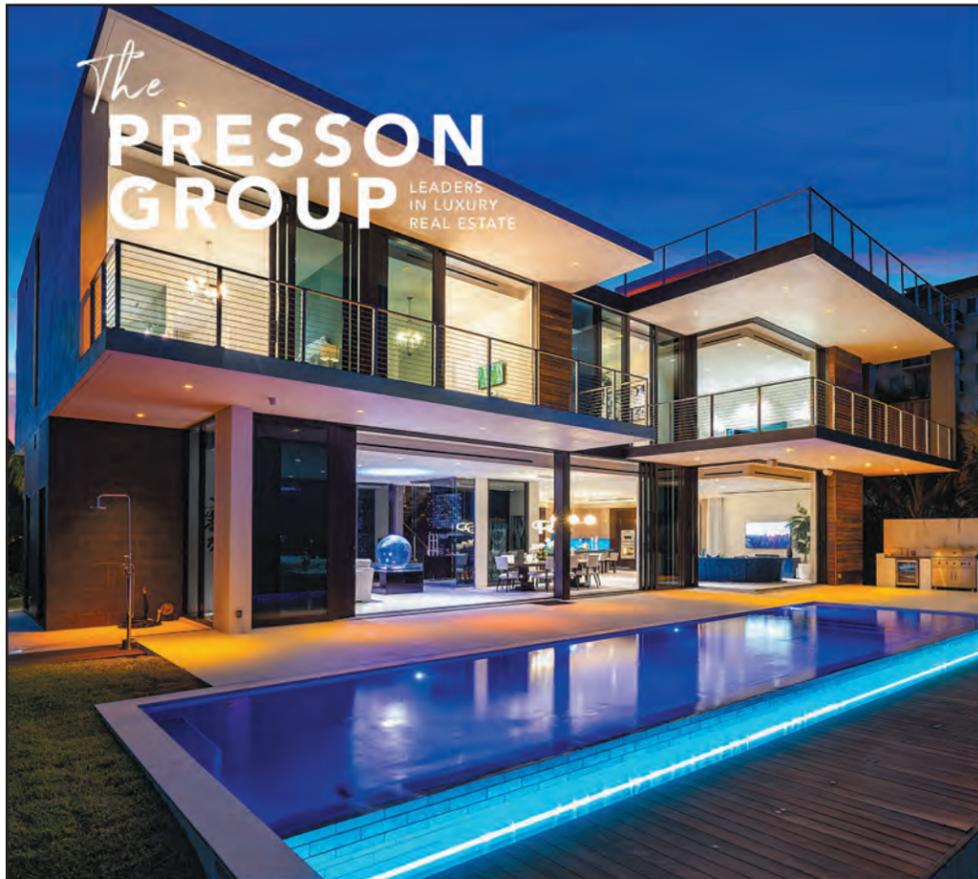
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