



Two days after a 77-year-old driver plowed into a group of eight bicyclists, hundreds gathered at the site along State Road A1A in Gulf Stream in a show of support and to voice concerns about the road's dangers. **Tim Stepien/The Coastal Star**

Crash deepens cries for safer A1A

SUV rams pack of cyclists; biking community rallies on behalf of the injured

By Anne Geggis

With his 25 years in law enforcement, 11 of them on State Road A1A, no other bicycle crash scene that Gulf Stream Police Chief Richard Jones has ever come across matched what he saw in the predawn light of Jan. 4.

Minutes earlier a southbound SUV driven by a 77-year-old Lantana woman had crossed the center line and knocked into a pack of northbound cyclists like a bowling ball knocking down pins.

Jones was coming from the north but had to get to the south end of the crash to block traffic.

"That's when I noticed parts of the



Jordana Lyra, her arm in sling, speaks with another of the injured cyclists at the rally. **Tim Stepien/The Coastal Star**

bicycles and the car, bicycle headlamps, tail lamps, and everything just scattered all over," he said. "And obviously I saw people."

He caught sight of an off-duty lifeguard working on one of the victims and Jones, a

South Palm pleads with state for crosswalks; FDOT to detail A1A plans for Highland Beach residents. **Page 33**

trained paramedic, jumped out to help.

The situation was dire.

The way he was breathing, Jones said, "I can tell you he was not sustaining life sufficiently."

Five cycles of chest-pumping and breathing ensued, he said.

"The two of us did CPR until we were able to obtain a pulse for the individual and then shortly after that, fire rescue took over," Jones said.

Six cyclists in the pack of eight were taken to the hospital from the chaotic scene, with the revived cyclist transported by Palm Beach County's Trauma Hawk

See **A1A** on page 32

Highland Beach

Town offers family a deal to oppose park

Enticements to develop Milani land aim to scuttle county's plan

By Rich Pollack

Highland Beach town leaders have offered the Milani family several favorable land-use adjustments in exchange for their vocal opposition to development of a beachfront park on land they sold to the county specifically for a park.

In their continuing efforts to persuade Palm Beach County commissioners to halt development of the 5.6-acre Milani Park at the south end of Highland Beach, town leaders sent Lucia Milani a multi-pronged proposal that would make it easier for her family to develop adjacent property in exchange for the family publicly speaking out against the plan.

"If you're naming a park after someone and you now say you no longer want the park, that has credibility," said Highland Beach Town Manager Marshall Labadie.

Labadie said the Milani family and the town have yet to come to agreement on all of the

See **PARK** on page 20

Boca Raton

'Just happy to have Morgan back'

By Mary Hladky and Steve Plunkett

Four-year-old Jack Gray of Boca Raton peered into Gumbo Limbo Nature Center's almost 9-foot-deep aquarium as Morgan the sea turtle lolled about the bottom.

Suddenly, she paddled toward the surface right in front of Jack.

"Yay," he shouted. "She said, Hi."

The nature center was teeming with visitors three days after city officials announced Jan. 10 that Morgan had returned from a prolonged stay at the Loggerhead Marinelife Center in Juno Beach.

In March, the Florida Fish and Wildlife

Conservation Commission had ordered that Morgan and another of the center's resident sea turtles, Cane, be relocated after the city fired the center's sea turtle rehabilitation coordinator and assistant coordinator.

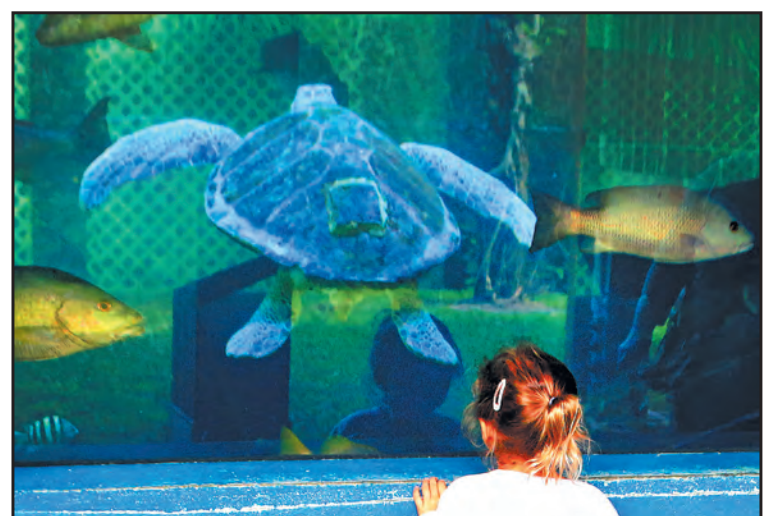
Many had not heard about Morgan's return and were happy to learn she was back.

"I think it is great," said Jack's 6-year-old sister, Ruby.

Gary Gladstein of Boca Raton visited the center with his son and grandson, Thomas, 12.

"We hadn't seen turtles here in a while," Gary said. "We love turtles."

See **TURTLE** on page 30



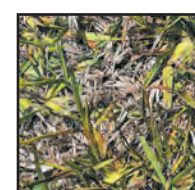
Amelia Pollitt, 5, watches Morgan, a green sea turtle who was returned last month to Gumbo Limbo Nature Center after a stay at a Juno Beach facility. **Tim Stepien/The Coastal Star**

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Election profiles for Boca Raton
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A scourge for lawns
Virus is killing a type of St. Augustine grass
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The Coastal Star is a monthly newspaper with two editions serving Hypoluxo Island, South Palm Beach, Manalapan, Ocean Ridge, Briny Breezes, Gulf Stream and coastal Delray Beach; Highland Beach and coastal Boca Raton.

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Coastal Star



Lowell Van Vechten is surrounded by family photos and a portrait of her late husband, Jay, at home in Boca Raton. Jay Van Vechten died in 2020 at age 75. **Tim Stepien/The Coastal Star**

Editor's Note

An open welcome to new leaders on dais

Welcome! It's exciting to see so many fresh faces on the dais at Town Hall. Thanks to each of you for stepping up to serve the community.

Term limits, personal conflicts and Florida's financial disclosure law (known as Form 6) opened the door for many of you to assume new roles as town commissioners. And once March election votes are tallied, even more may join the newcomer ranks. In a few municipalities, the end result is (or will be) an almost entirely new slate of elected and/or appointed officials.

This can be challenging. Each election year, I make a point of sitting in during one of municipal attorney Keith Davis' "how things work" introduction to the role of — and limits on — commission members. It refreshes my knowledge of how local government works and what access the public has to information generated by that legislative body.

I often find the requirements of the state are much broader than most local officials expect. Budgets, charters and comprehensive plans require policy-makers to follow strict guidelines when updating or making changes.

Each municipality is required to have an attorney, a manager and a clerk to help

guide commissioners through the process of creating policy and away from legal dangers. These hired positions are critical to the functioning of local government. A large part of their role is to assure members of the public (including journalists) have access to records and communications.

For those without government experience, the trickiest rules to follow are often Florida's Government-in-the-Sunshine laws on open meetings and public records.

Although these laws may seem confusing at first, they have a simple aim: Decisions should be made in public, without prejudice or favor.

And it's good to keep in mind that most of these rules are in place because previous officials broke the law — and the residents' trust.

So welcome aboard. As your neighborhood newspaper, we'll see you at town meetings, talk with you when clarification is needed, challenge you when rules are sidestepped and hopefully share with readers your fresh views on how to make life along the shore safer and more desirable for everyone.

—
Mary Kate Leming,
Executive Editor



Voter registration and vote-by-mail deadlines

To participate in the March 19 Presidential Preference Primary and local elections, residents must be registered to vote by Feb. 20. You can register online at RegistertoVoteFlorida.gov. Application forms are also available at any Palm Beach County Supervisor of Elections Office or to download from the supervisor's website, VotePalmBeach.gov. You can contact the office at 561-656-6200. Voters have until 5 p.m. March 7 to request from the supervisor's office — either in person, online or by phone — that a vote-by-mail ballot be mailed to them.

Founder of Beach Bash reveals how tragic accident inspired day of joy

By Ron Hayes

According to the website of the American Disabilities Foundation, Lowell Van Vechten is its co-founder and honorary chairwoman.

This is true. "But really I'm the keeper of the history," she adds. By history, she means a tragic accident that has been reborn as an annual day of joy.

On March 2, thousands will gather in Boca Raton's Spanish River Park for the 15th annual Boating & Beach Bash for People with Disabilities.

They will enjoy boat rides on the Intracoastal Waterway, bathing in the Atlantic Ocean, health screenings, therapy workshops, wheelchair yoga, live music, dance parties, therapy pets, giveaways and barbecue lunch.

It's all free and all are welcome — family, friends and people with disabilities, whether their disabilities are visible or invisible.

"One of the great successes of the Bash is that everyone is made to feel equal," Van Vechten says. "There's nothing more healing than to be celebrated and surrounded by people like yourself so you know you're not alone."

Lowell Van Vechten's husband, Jay, was alone in a San Diego hotel room that night in 2001. A successful New York public relations executive in town on business, he slipped on the wet bathroom floor in the dark, fell backward over the tub and shattered five vertebrae. Then he fell forward and shattered both knees. The splayed legs required two hip replacements.

The couple's old life was gone, but a new one was born.

"Jay's personal motto was,

If You Go

What: The 15th annual Boating & Beach Bash for People with Disabilities — the nation's largest, free, one-day event for people with disabilities

When: 10 a.m.-3 p.m. March 2

Where: Spanish River Park, 3001 N. Ocean Blvd., Boca Raton

Information: www.AmericanDisabilitiesFoundation.org. To volunteer, call 561-899-7400.

"Don't postpone joy," Van Vechten says.

After his accident, Jay and Lowell Van Vechten of Boca Raton dedicated their lives to bringing joy to the community he'd suddenly joined in that dark hotel bathroom.

Jay served on Boca Raton's since-disbanded board for people with disabilities, and when his vision for the city's annual picnic for the disabled grew bigger than the city could handle, the Van Vechtens took over. The Beach Bash debuted in 2009, they founded the American Disabilities Foundation in 2012, and since Jay's death in 2020, his widow has committed herself to perpetuating their annual day of joy.

Her familiarity with tragedy and commitment to others did not begin with her husband's fall.

In 1960, her oldest brother was diagnosed with bipolar disorder and institutionalized.

In 1998, her middle brother, a Vietnam vet who had been treating his PTSD with heroin, took an over-the-counter medication for the flu, lapsed into a coma and died three days later. He was 48.

She shares this family heartache on the ADF website, in an essay titled, "Why Do I Care So Much About People with Disabilities?"

Growing up on Long Island, she volunteered as a candy striper at Southampton Hospital.

"I put together stacks of bandages," she recalls with a laugh.

As a high school student at Sacred Heart Academy in Menlo Park, California, in the late 1960s, she volunteered at a Stanford University program for children with developmental disabilities and learned skills she preaches today.

"You ask before touching," she tells volunteers. "You don't speak in harsh tones, and if someone is using a wheelchair, you lower yourself to their eye level."

In the 1980s, while Van Vechten was a marketing director at *Mademoiselle* magazine in Manhattan and AIDS patients were fighting for both their lives and insurance coverage, she volunteered at the Gay Men's Health Crisis.

"I shuffled papers," she says modestly. "A lot of people don't understand insurance."

Now she is one of about 150 volunteers who will work in six shifts, organizing 40 exhibitors in 25 active zones throughout Spanish River Park, so about 5,000 disabled guests and others can share a day of community and barbecue.

"I always used to say, if you have an annual party, you'd make new friends over time and eventually it grows to be almost a family of people with whom you celebrate, whatever the occasion happens to be," Lowell Van Vechten says, "and that's what the Bash is."

"It's a free day of joy." ★

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Letters to the Editor

Former Boca Raton conservationist laments Gumbo Limbo saga

As the former marine conservationist for the city of Boca Raton from 1995 to 2021, I have watched the developments at Gumbo Limbo Nature Center and the actions of the nonprofit Gumbo Limbo Coastal Stewards.

The Coastal Stewards have been in existence for about three years at Gumbo Limbo. What have they done with your hard-earned donation money in those few years?

The Coastal Stewards allowed the Gumbo Limbo Sea Turtle Rehabilitation Facility to close, with no indication of its return. There would have been no interruption in the facility's operation if the Coastal Stewards had offered the city-employed permit holder and her staff the same jobs.

Recently, the Gumbo Limbo Coastal Stewards dropped "Gumbo Limbo" from their

name, seemingly severing their allegiance to Gumbo Limbo. Now, they claim to have been educating the public for the last 40 years, even though Gordon Gilbert, a Palm Beach County schoolteacher, and the Palm Beach County School District ran the educational programs. The city and the Greater Boca Raton Beach and Park District continue to fund education staff, with little or no support from the Coastal Stewards.

More recently, I saw a post on the Coastal Stewards Facebook page about the return of Morgan, a disabled sea turtle that resided at Gumbo Limbo for years. The morning after the Coastal Stewards allowed the sea turtle rehabilitation program to shut down, Morgan was sent to a facility that could care for her.

The recent return of Morgan was due entirely to

the experience and dedication of the city's existing sea turtle conservation coordinator, who played a pivotal role in ensuring Morgan's well-being. It is questionable if the Coastal Stewards are paying anything for the support of Morgan.

A recent check of the Coastal Stewards' website indicates that they are now expanding their purview to marine mammals and manatees in addition to sea turtles, although they have done nothing with sea turtles since March 2023 at Gumbo Limbo. I find this interesting, as city staff are trained to handle marine mammal and manatee strandings. Why would Coastal Stewards try to duplicate this effort with their own staff?

From what I can tell from tax forms, the Coastal Stewards are paying more for salaries while donations decline. It took the Coastal Stewards less

than three years to defund the original Friends of Gumbo Limbo nonprofit, the Sea Turtle Rehabilitation Facility and educational programs. It's time for the city of Boca Raton to break any ties with the Coastal Stewards, as they no longer represent the interests of Gumbo Limbo and the city of Boca Raton.

If you're fortunate enough

to donate money to a cause, I advise avoiding Coastal Stewards. The money appears to go toward paying salaries for Coastal Stewards staff and not benefiting Gumbo Limbo Nature Center.

*Dr. Kirt Rusenko
former marine conservationist,
city of Boca Raton*

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Why March election is crucial to Ocean Ridge

I write to express my concern about the ongoing debate in Ocean Ridge regarding the local election scheduled for March 19. Some residents argue that forgoing the election would save the town money, but I believe it's crucial to consider the broader implications.

Recent events, such as the rapid replacement of two commissioners in a brief meeting, raise questions about resident representation. The method of selection, with unanimous decisions within 10 minutes, leaves room for skepticism. Out of seven residents interested in candidacy, the appointment of two without a comprehensive election diminishes community involvement.

The heart of the matter lies in our right as residents to choose our local leaders. If we bypass the March election, we risk allowing a small group to dictate our town's representation without broader input. Democracy thrives on active participation, engaging with candidates, discussing town issues and making informed choices.

I firmly believe that the price of holding a local election is a small one compared to the invaluable right of residents to actively shape our community's future. Let us preserve the essence of democracy in Ocean Ridge by ensuring that our voices are heard in the upcoming election.

*Dr. Victor Martel
Ocean Ridge*



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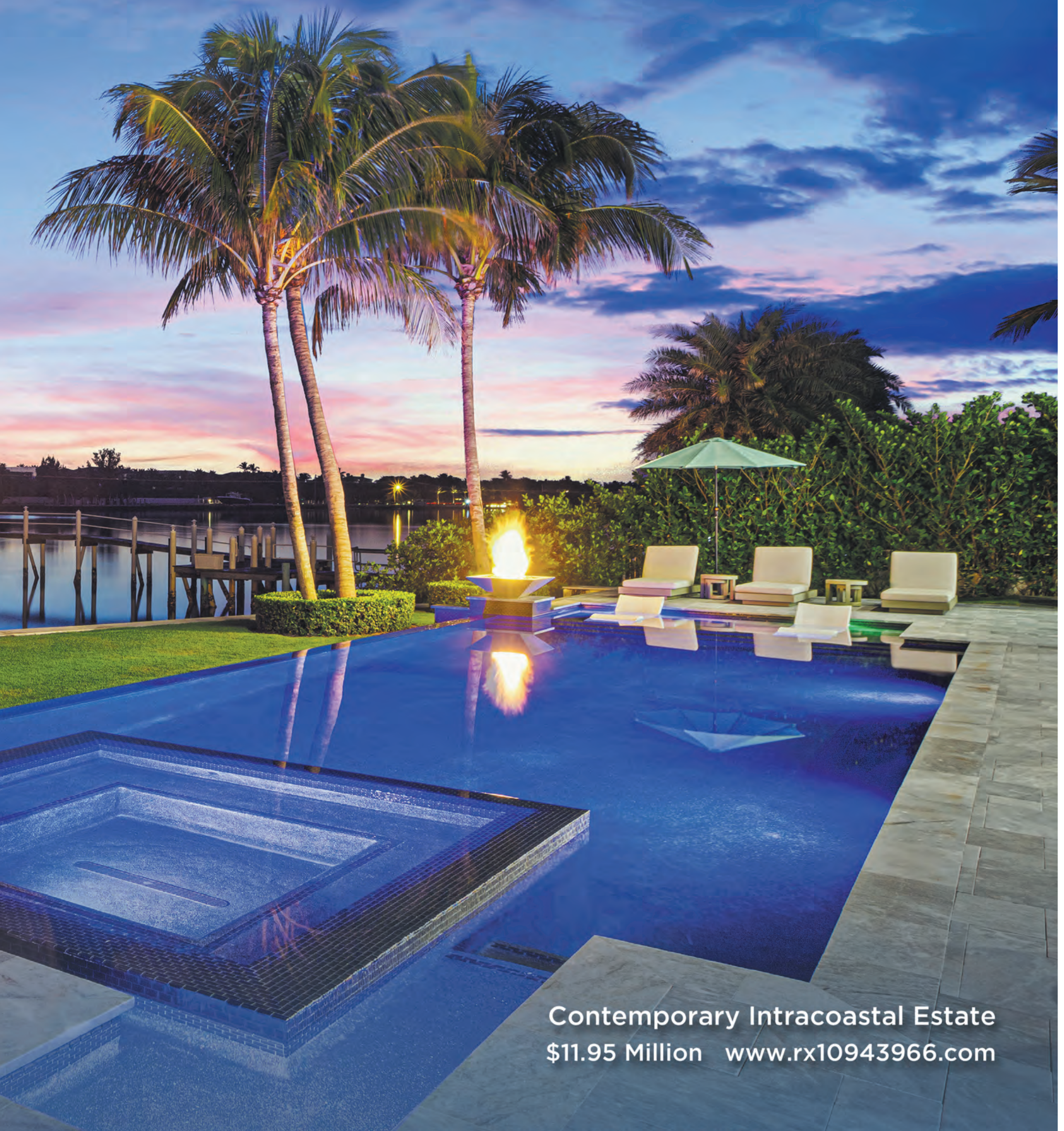
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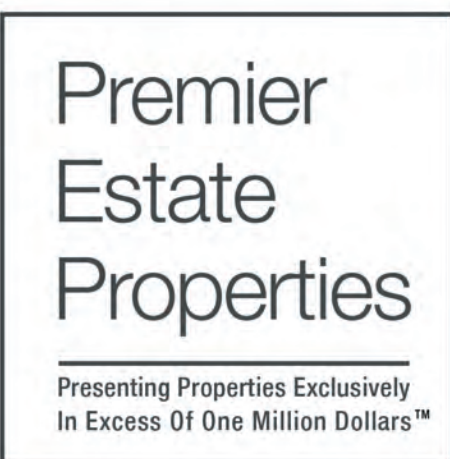
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Ocean Ridge

Turtle Beach challenges beach sign ordinance before special magistrate

By Anne Geggis

A special magistrate is expected to rule Feb. 20 on whether Ocean Ridge's new beach sign ordinance is too vague for enforcement due to the beach's shifting sands.

Also at issue: Does a sign printed on both sides amount to two signs or just one?

Public anger over "No Trespassing" signs erected on the beach by the Turtle Beach of Ocean Ridge Condominium Association led town commissioners in September to adopt regulations limiting beach signage. The new ordinance specifies how large the signs can be (they can't exceed 18 inches by 18 inches), how they can be placed, and that they face "either to the east or to the west."

Even with that specificity, Turtle Beach and the town still aren't seeing eye to eye, with the town saying the association's new signs are not in compliance.

A 90-minute hearing on the case Jan. 9 in front of a special magistrate did not produce an outcome. Special Magistrate Amity Barnard asked both the town attorney and the Turtle Beach representative to draft memos of no more than three pages to make their arguments on the state of Turtle Beach's compliance with the ordinance.

The town says that two-sided signs, like the two now in place at Turtle Beach, amount to four signs, violating the two-sign limit. The association disagrees. And, the town says, the placement was not as described in the ordinance approved in September.

The ordinance says that signs are not allowed to be placed on the beach seaward of the toe of the frontal dune, which is the first natural or manmade mound or bluff of sand located "landward of the beach" that has significant vegetation, height, continuity or configuration that offers protective value.

"The signs as of today are still double-sided and they still are at an approximate amount of feet from the frontal toe," said Officer Aaron Choban of the Ocean Ridge police.

But the association says that

there's no telling exactly where seaward of the front toe is from day to day.

Turtle Beach association President Mark Feinstein said he had numerous "pleasant" conversations with town officials and thought an agreement had been reached. The dune goes in and out — it's not linear, he said.

"After I got the notice of violation, I was actually shocked and surprised," said Feinstein, who is a lawyer and also had one representing him at the hearing. "... I certainly think that the ordinance is, at best, vague."

The special magistrate could levy a fine up to \$250 a day after a finding if the property is not brought into compliance. If the violation is found to be irreparable or irreversible, the special magistrate could impose a fine up to \$5,000. ★

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Ocean Ridge

Blown construction deadline means property owner owes town \$50,000

By Anne Geggis



A construction trailer and portable toilet are still visible at the site on Jan. 28. Staff photo

When 2024 dawned and an Ocean Ridge home under construction for the past eight years still wasn't finished, its owners were on the hook to pay the town \$50,000 in addition to the taxes owed on the land.

Failing to meet a Dec. 31 deadline to wrap up the planned construction, Oceandell Holdings LLC, which owns the oceanfront property at 6273 N. Ocean Blvd., was required to make a payment in lieu of taxes by the end of January, according to an amendment to the construction extension agreement dated Jan. 10.

Revised plans submitted to the town in June called for the property owners to apply and obtain a temporary certificate of occupancy by Dec. 31. Failing that, the town was owed \$50,000

to help make up for the taxes it would have collected if the project had been completed in 2023, the agreement says.

Town Commissioner Carolyn Cassidy estimates the protracted construction timeline has meant the town has not been able to collect \$1 million in taxes since 2017, considering the difference between taxing vacant land and taxing the same land with a house on it year after year.

Cassidy is also one of the neighbors to the project.

"We're all just tired of the construction — lots of trucks parked illegally — and it

appeared to be abandoned for a while," she said.

The latest construction manager seems to have improved things for now, though, she added.

The principal listed as a contact for Oceandell through the state Division of Corporations could not be reached for comment; nor could Andrew Rivkin — who representatives have identified as the owner of the property and who was the Oceandell signatory on the agreement with the town.

Town Clerk Kelly Avery said as of Jan. 29, the payment had not been made.

If the construction drags on past March 15, the owner shall pay the town \$5,000 a day for each day that construction continues for "liquidated damages," according to the agreement signed by the town attorney, clerk and manager. The daily damage assessment would accrue until May 1, potentially a maximum of \$235,000 in fines.

That's a one-month extension from the deadline commissioners approved in September. They had called for the \$5,000-a-day penalty to start if construction was not completed by Feb. 15, and capped those fines at \$150,000.

The owner recognizes the work "has continued for an extensive period of time and has negatively impacted the neighbors and the town," the agreement says. "The owner further recognizes that time is of the essence under this agreement and if the March 15 construction deadline ... is not satisfied by the owner, the neighbors and the town will continue to be negatively impacted and suffer financial loss."

When asked, Town Attorney Christy Goddeau did not offer an explanation for the one-month extension, but said that the commission would be updated on the property at February's meeting.

The project has become known as "the parking garage house" because its front was, at first, allowed to be built without windows. The Palm Beach County Property Appraiser's website shows that the 1.13-acre property has been taxed solely for the land value starting in 2017, with the total market value of the land at \$9.2 million.

The first building permit for the site was issued in May 2015.

"We're just trying to do our best to expedite completion ... have it be a completed home instead of a construction site," Cassidy said. ★

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Ocean Ridge

New commission appointees to serve until March election

By Anne Geggis

The Ocean Ridge Town Commission has five seats, but January's meeting brought to 10 the number of commissioners who have sat on the dais in the past year.

Ainar Aijala Jr. and David Hutchins were sworn into office to replace Commissioners Philip Besler and Ken Kaleel, who turned in their resignations effective Dec. 30.

Kaleel said he was resigning rather than comply with a new state law that requires those serving on local elected commissions and councils to file a detailed disclosure of personal assets, effective Jan. 1. Besler was hanging it up for personal reasons, he said.

Aijala and Hutchins swore to faithfully execute all the duties of town commissioner to applause from the crowd at the Jan. 8 meeting. Their

appointments are good only until the March 19 election, when voters will decide who fills three commission openings — including their seats — that are on the ballot. Both Aijala and Hutchins have qualified to run in that election.

Hutchins, a town resident since 1990, said he hopes to put his eight years of experience serving on the Planning and Zoning Commission to work in this new role. He is optimistic about the town's direction but sees some areas that could use improvement.

"Repairing and replacing existing, worn infrastructure is a priority always, but living within our means has to be part of the equation," he texted about why he stepped forward to serve.

Aijala, who hails from Michigan, said serving on an elected board fulfills a longtime interest in public service that

he couldn't pursue beyond nonprofit roles because of his position at Deloitte, the largest professional services firm in the world. There, he was CEO of its global consulting practice.

The town is on the right track, and he intends to use his professional experience in strategic planning to help it operate even more efficiently, he said after he was sworn in.

"Ocean Ridge is a very special place," he said.

The past year has been rife with the town's leaders coming and going, however.

The two exiting commissioners, Besler and Kaleel, were appointed to replace two other commissioners who resigned in 2023, Martin Wiescholek and Kristine de Haseth. In addition to that, Commissioner Carolyn Cassidy became a new face on the dais last April, after finishing ahead of then-Mayor

Susan Hurlburt, who came in last in a three-way race for two commission seats.

Wiescholek, the other winner in the March 2023 election, resigned at the same April meeting at which he was sworn in for a second, three-year term. His resignation came minutes after the commissioners agreed in a split vote to hire Town Manager Lynne Ladner on a full-time basis. Two hours later, at the same meeting, de Haseth resigned, saying she wanted to spend more time with her family.

So, Mayor Geoff Pugh and Vice Mayor Steve Coz are the only holdovers from before the last election.

Aijala and Hutchins were selected for commission appointments out of eight applicants.

The town's charter calls for vacancies to be filled at

the next election instead of having an appointee fill out the remainder of an unexpired term — something that's done in other communities such as Manalapan and Gulf Stream. The seat originally held by de Haseth was up for election this year anyway, but the seat once held by Wiescholek wasn't supposed to be up for election for another two years.

Aijala, Hutchins, Pugh and political newcomer Nick Arsali will compete for a pair of three-year terms on the commission and another two-year term.

Pugh acknowledged at the Jan. 8 meeting that he might lose as the commission agreed on a workshop date for training on the new system for town business on April 8 — after the next election. ★

Ocean Ridge News

Minimum flood elevations likely to be repealed — Preliminary FEMA maps adopted in 2019 are likely to be stricken from the town's ordinances so the rules revert to the 2017 FEMA maps.

The state preempted local governments from using preliminary FEMA maps for any rules for permitting, so the 2019 maps have been left on the town's books, with no enforcement, while final approval of the 2019 maps remains in limbo.

Town attorney Christy Goddeau said repealing the minimum elevation ordinance for the high-risk zone would be the clearest course for keeping the town out of litigation.

"So that there's never any argument that we could enforce it," she said, before the commission agreed to proceed with repealing the ordinance regarding minimum elevations in certain parts of town.

Town history gets fifth printing — Details on the origins of Ocean Ridge shall not be lost to time — Commissioner Carolyn Cassidy funded a fifth printing of the late Commissioner Gail Adams Aaskov's telling of it. And now the 80-page booklet, "The History of Ocean Ridge," is available for \$1 at Town Hall.

Ocean Ridge, we learn, got its start as Boynton Beach, carved out of Boynton, by a special act of the Legislature in 1931 after a dispute over beach properties.

Problem was, the name was often confused with "Daytona Beach" — to the point mail intended for Daytona came south. So, six years after the town's founding, an emergency meeting was called to consider a new name. Marion White Bird suggested "Ocean Ridge" and won a \$100 prize, "a sizable amount of money at that time," Aaskov writes.

— Anne Geggis

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- ✓ Balanced end of year budget



Preserved Delray Beach's History

- ✓ Negotiated the deal to save historic Carver High School
- ✓ Negotiated Historic Designation of Doc's All American restaurant
- ✓ Funded relocation and restoration of Historic Wellbrock House
- ✓ Saved, restored and re-purposed Delray Beach's Historic Train Station
- ✓ Championed Atlantic Avenue Historic District
- ✓ Completely reworked Sundy Village project to gain Historic Preservation Board approval



Safer Streets and Neighborhoods

- ✓ Fully funded police and fire departments for optimum staffing levels
- ✓ Funded construction of new Police and Fire Stations to better serve Delray
- ✓ New technology, including cameras and license plate readers to keep us safe

Improved Infrastructure

- ✓ Funded and started the design/build of a new state of the art water treatment plant
- ✓ Built almost a dozen new playgrounds
- ✓ Opened completely redesigned and improved City Marina
- ✓ Breaking ground on NEW 54,000 sq/ft Community Center (2024)
- ✓ Oversaw record amount of infrastructure improvement projects



More Affordable & Workforce Housing

- ✓ Represented Delray Beach on the City, County & State Affordable Housing Advisory Committee
- ✓ Secured more workforce housing units at no cost to tax payers than any commission in Delray Beach history
- ✓ Delray's municipal beach was one of only two beaches in the country to achieve the prestigious Blue Flag status
- ✓ Increased home improvement funds by more than 300% while overseeing state leading affordable housing city policy reform
- ✓ Built more affordable homes than any commission in Delray Beach's history



A Better Environment

- ✓ Planted OVER 5,000 trees as part of the city's 10,000-tree goal
- ✓ Supported one of the state's strongest tree ordinances
- ✓ Delray's municipal beach was one of only two beaches in the country to achieve the prestigious Blue Flag status
- ✓ Passed a Green Building ordinance



In addition, Ryan is the first commissioner to:

- ✓ Sit 6 years on the DDA, CRA and Commission
- ✓ Honored with an Inspirational Leader Award (during Covid)
- ✓ Shadow every department head in the city
- ✓ Clock-in full days working entry level jobs in multiple departments such as park maintenance and utilities



Managing Growth Smartly

- ✓ NO height or density waivers approved
- ✓ Decreased the amount of approved large scale projects by more than 50% compared to prior commission
- ✓ Reduced the density of Atlantic Crossing and secured the Veterans Park improvement agreement
- ✓ Upheld decision to reduce height on Atlantic Avenue from 4 to 3 stories
- ✓ Sponsored and led conversation to decrease residential heightmassing and curb use of modern deco architecture



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The Choice for Mayor is Clear - **Ryan Boylston**

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Gulf Stream

Dying grass around Town Hall to be replaced as virus spreads

By Steve Plunkett

Town Hall's lawn is dying, a victim of the sugarcane mosaic virus, which can be transferred from one lot to another on the wheels of a landscaper's mower.

"It's a menace," said Anthony Beltran, Gulf Stream's public works director. "If your grass is moist when they cut the grass, it sticks to that mower. And if they don't blow it off really well and then treat the mower with some sort of a water-alcohol solution and let it dry, it'll transfer from that yard to the next yard."

The disease can also be spread from shoes that have walked on infected lawns.

Town staff contacted some lawn management companies

to get informal bids for fixing Town Hall's grass, only to find that it would cost \$5,000 to \$10,000 more than the \$15,000 threshold that calls for Town Commission approval.

Almost 13,000 square feet of sod needs to be replaced, Town Manager Greg Dunham told commissioners at their Jan. 12 meeting.

The virus, which is spread by aphids and is also known as lethal viral necrosis, kills only the popular Floratam variety of St. Augustine grass. Two other varieties, Palmetto and CitraBlue, can harbor the virus but are not killed by it and are used as replacements, Beltran said.

The treatment, he said, "is

to remove all the Floratam that's been infected, treat the ground, which they saturate, wait a couple of days then lay the sod, and then treat it with a herbicide."

"You can't kill it," Beltran said. "There's nothing that's going to kill it, nothing. There's no type of pesticide, herbicide, anything that's going to kill the virus. It's a virus. ... And the only way of eliminating it is by removing what they're used to growing in and expanding in, which is Floratam grass."

Mayor Scott Morgan worried that the virus might be transmitted to The Little Club next door, but Beltran said the golf course has Zoysia grass, which is immune to the disease.

Commissioner Joan Orthwein was also concerned.

"Is this something that the residents should know about? Because who cuts this grass cuts a lot of people in town," she said.

"Every time I've seen them cut here, they do blow off their equipment," said Beltran. "Question is, do they do it everywhere else they go? I don't know. I'm not with them."

Commissioners voted to let Dunham spend up to \$25,000 to replace Town Hall's affected sod and decided Morgan should include a warning in his annual mayor's letter to residents.

Commissioners also approved on second reading an ordinance adding further protections to the town's beloved Australian

pinetrees.

"This is in response to some work on A1A that damaged the root structure of a number of Australian pines," Assistant Town Attorney Trey Nazzaro said, speaking of a construction project.

Anyone doing work within 25 feet of the trees will have to follow industry standards provided by the town's arborist to get a building permit.

"We have to protect the Australian pines. They're historic, we preserve them and we have to have something in place to assist the town as it enforces renovations done near the Australian pines to protect their health," Morgan said. ★

Along the Coast

Deadly disease taking a bite out of St. Augustine lawns

By John Hughes

If you are among the many coastal residents whose lawns sprout St. Augustine grass, you might have painfully learned that it's not easy being green in Palm Beach County.

Lethal viral necrosis, a disease first found here about a decade ago, has earned its ugly name, turning verdant lawns dingy, then dead.

Horticulture experts who are on the hunt for a remedy say that any lawn where St. Augustine grass has rooted is vulnerable to LVN.

"Parts of southern Palm Beach County are heavily impacted," says John Roberts, Palm Beach County Cooperative Extension agent. He says the county is "ground zero" because here is where the disease first appeared, although it has recently been found in

other counties.

Roberts was one of the speakers appearing in a Miami-Dade and Palm Beach County extension webinar in December that devoted two full hours to concerns about LVN.

St. Augustine grass was the most common grazing fodder when Palm Beach County was home to large cattle pastures, which are mostly gone now. LVN is a legacy of that era.

Is your lawn St. Augustine grass? One way to find out is to examine the leaf blades. St. Augustine is distinguished by broader leaves up to ¾ inch wide and forming what has been called a boat shape.

There are several varieties of St. Augustine grass. At least two — Palmetto and CitraBlue — have shown resistance to LVN. But Floratam, to which LVN is fatal, is the most prevalent of the cultivars in Palm Beach County.

How do you stop LVN? You don't. LVN is spread through contact when infected sap gets spread — from mower blades, from soles of shoes. ... Essentially, any object or particle that can carry an LVN germ is your lawn's enemy. Sort of the horticultural world's COVID-19, minus the social distancing.

The prognosis for LVN is as bleak as its name. An infected lawn will be dead in about three to five years, Roberts says.

Has LVN infected your lawn? If there's a discolored spot in the lawn, take a worm's eye view and look for any anomalous yellowing in the leaf grains. In particular, Roberts says to look for a "mosaic-type" pattern of broken yellow lines.

If you don't trust your eyes, see the report at the University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, available



A lawn with St. Augustine grass shows brown patches that have succumbed to lethal viral necrosis. The grass can be distinguished by its wide, boat-shaped leaves. **Photo provided**

here: www.edis.ifas.ufl.edu/publication/PP313.

Concerned lawn owners might also send grass samples to the Rapid Turf Diagnostic Service at the University of Florida (\$75 per sample).

"A lot of people get emotionally tied up to their lawns," Roberts says. "They like coming here, oftentimes from other parts of the country, and having a nice green lawn all throughout the year. It's very distressing to come in and see

that it's brown and only going to get increasingly brown. ..."

Sometimes landscapers are scapegoats for that distress — caught between LVN and clients who simply want the grass to be greener on their side.

"We're caught in the middle a lot of the time," says Tyler Reiter, director of Florida Image Landscaping, who is believed to be the first to identify LVN in Palm Beach County. "Often, it's unfair. People point fingers. They think landscapers transfer it. Well, landscapers might transfer it, but they don't mean to. It's like COVID. Nobody's trying to transmit COVID. ..."

Reiter says roughly 30% of his clients are coastal, from Hypoluxo Island to Gulf Stream and Highland Beach.

"I do see a lot of LVN throughout Delray and Boca — however, none that are my customers," he says.

A couple of years ago Reiter moved into the West Lake community — designed to have about 4,500 homes. He found LVN in his neighborhood and thinks that eventually every lawn will need to be resodded with an LVN-resistant species. Currently, lawn owners could expect to pay about \$2 per square foot.

"Homeowners associations are superspreaders," Reiter says.

He is often called in as a consultant when the grass starts to fade.

"I talk about LVN every week," Reiter says. "I empathize with people." ★



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Boca Raton

Downtown ideas: Residents like greenery, small business, not high-density housing

By Mary Hladky

How can downtown Boca Raton become more enticing and vibrant, and what should be part of a new plan for a city government campus?

When the city's Community Advisory Panel asked residents to offer their input at a Jan. 18 "community conversation," they packed the Downtown Library meeting room.

"I'm thrilled to see such a turnout," said Linda Marenus, advisory panel chair.

The panel's board will meet on Feb. 7 to create a presentation on residents' ideas that will go to the City Council to help guide its decision-making on how to improve the downtown and the adjacent government campus, she said.

Council members attending the session were equally pleased that so many residents attended.

"This is more than I expected," said City Council member Fran Nachlas. "I am happy so many people are participating in this discussion."

"The success here is that the community is engaged in their own future," said City Council member and Community Redevelopment Agency Chair Marc Wigder.

The meeting follows a City Council decision last fall to revive long dormant plans to improve the government campus on 30 city-owned acres north of West Palmetto Park Road between Dixie Highway and Crawford Boulevard where City Hall, the Police Department, a community center and the Downtown Library now stand.

While the library is relatively new, the other buildings are old and deteriorating.

A consultant submitted two options for a new government hub in 2019, but the projected \$200 million cost stunned

council members, who said they wanted to find ways to trim the cost. The start of the coronavirus pandemic in 2020 brought the project to a halt.

But the opening of the Brightline station east of the Downtown Library in December 2022 has spurred city officials to revive the idea of a government campus re-do.

They anticipate that the station will prompt redevelopment of the area, presenting an opportunity to use public-private partnerships to do so that potentially could generate funding to defray the cost of a revamped government campus.

A proposed cultural arts complex in Mizner Park, now slated to open in 2028, also is expected to spur redevelopment and interest in the downtown.

Residents were free to offer any suggestion, but to spark ideas, the panel offered lists of possibilities. Residents could affix green or red stickers to the suggestions they liked or disliked.

They were nearly evenly split on adding mixed-use development, but turned an adamant thumbs down on apartment complexes and affordable housing. They also were against a sports arena and convention center.

The addition of public art drew some support, but most residents offered no opinion.

They wanted more tree canopy, native landscaping and a community garden, but opposed electric vehicle charging stations.

Coffee shops, mom-and-pop stores and restaurants got positive nods, but the addition of major retailers and commercial office space were almost universally opposed.

A downtown shuttle service, shared use paths for walking and biking and bike paths

with protected lanes got their approval.

The recreation/sports category drew strong resident reaction. A skate park received overwhelming support as users of the existing Tim Huxhold Skate Park near City Hall voiced their opinion loud and clear that a skate park should be part of any planning.

Green space, walking trails, tennis courts and playgrounds won support, but residents split on pickleball courts.

They also wanted a farmer's market, live music and food truck events.

After affixing the stickers, residents divided into groups to talk with each other about their priorities and then shared them with all attendees.

Although opinions were not uniform, some areas of consensus emerged.

Residents want green space and more trees to improve the ambiance of downtown, better walkability and more and better bike paths. They also want more locally owned and operated retail stores and restaurants that give residents a reason to come downtown.

They don't want high density or high-rises.

Brightline also was on their minds.

City officials plan to hire consultants to plan a pedestrian bridge that Brightline passengers would use to get to and from the train station and downtown. Several groups strongly endorsed the bridge, but one dissented without explaining why.

Officials are looking for ways to boost the city's economy by enticing passengers to get off the train and visit stores, restaurants and cultural attractions.

One group suggested restaurant discounts for train passengers. Another idea was having the city partner with Brightline to offer day passes that would reduce the cost of visiting museums and special events in the downtown.

Residents will have additional opportunities to weigh in as planning proceeds. ★



ABOVE: The first idea for the temporary safety barricades. RIGHT: The planters are viewed as an improvement until the square's renovation begins in about three years. Renderings provided by the City of Boca Raton



Planters to grace barricades planned at Sanborn Square

One month after city staffers outlined how they intend to improve the safety and appearance of Sanborn Square, Boca Raton City Council members have tweaked the plan.

Staff had recommended removing the unsightly temporary barricades along Federal Highway that were installed about two years ago to prevent drivers — by accident or intentionally — from jumping the curb and injuring people using the popular downtown square.

They would be replaced by concrete Jersey barricades that, rather than lining the street, would be staggered in ways that soften their appearance. They also could be painted or covered with murals.

But Council member Yvette Drucker strongly objected, saying she did not like the look of Jersey barricades even if they were painted.

So Assistant City Manager Chrissy Gibson proposed a change. Relatively low-cost Jersey barricades would still be used, but 25 concrete planter boxes would be added to enhance the aesthetics, she told the council on Jan. 8. The project would cost \$78,000, and the barriers and planters could be obtained in three to four months.

Drucker was less than thrilled, saying the combination is a better option but falls short of what other cities are doing.

But since this is a temporary fix, "I can live with it," she said.

The city plans a \$4 million renovation of the square that will begin in about three years.

Deputy Mayor Monica Mayotte was more supportive. "This looks much better, much more pleasing," she said. The three other council members also supported the combination.

— Mary Hladky

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Boca Raton

Four seeking two seats on City Council

Two seats are up for election on March 19. The winners will serve three-year terms. The seats are elected by voters citywide.

Seat C



Yvette Drucker
(Incumbent)

Personal: 48; bachelor's degree in international relations from Florida International

University; city resident for 17 years; divorced; two children.

Professional: Did advocacy work for nonprofits; 13 years in human resources for ADP TotalSource, a certified professional employer organization that helps companies manage their human resources, benefits, compliance and payroll.

Political experience: City Council member (2021-present).

Important issues: Concerned with transportation, mobility and connectivity in terms of moving residents efficiently throughout the city via automobiles, trains, bicycles and on foot; interested in monitoring changes happening in City Hall with the incoming city manager; wants fiscal responsibility; concerned with assuring upward mobility for lower-income families; wants to continue being responsive to the needs of the city in terms of affordable housing.

Quote: "I love my job. I love my community. I've lived here a long time. I truly love being a public servant and when I'm reelected, I will continue to focus on all my priorities and move our city forward."



Bernard Korn

Personal: 69; bachelor's degree in business and finance from Brooklyn College; city resident for 23 years; separated; two children.

Professional: Served as a law enforcement officer in the 1980s. Licensed real estate broker and instructor; chairman of Undiscovered Properties, a real estate and financial services franchise company, and Travel Lines Express, a travel agency and hospitality franchise firm.

Political experience: None.

Important issues: Concerned with "corruption" in city government; advocates for accountability, transparency and honesty in local government; wants political finance reform; wants strict term limits for all council members, including the mayor. Criticizes the current mayor for serving four consecutive terms on the council. Major supporter of Florida Senate Bill 774 on financial disclosure, which he says will play a critical role in future Boca elections.

Quote: "We must stop corruption in Boca Raton. Boca Raton City Council members are greatly influenced by special interest groups, lobbyists and political action committees. Dark money prevails in our great city. Contributions equal bribes. Endorsements equal favors. I am running for Council Seat C without any outside financial contributions, with only the help of a press secretary, a few advisers and many volunteers that support me. I am going to inspire a new generation of politicians, not only here in the city of Boca Raton, but throughout the United States."

Seat D



Andy Thomson

Personal: 41; bachelor's degree in electrical engineering from Georgia Tech, law degree from University of Miami;

city resident for 10 years; married; five children.

Professional: Business litigation lawyer with Baritz and Colman; an adjunct professor at Florida Atlantic University teaching political science, local and state government.

Political experience: City Council member (2018-2022).

Important issues: Public safety; keeping economy "on the move"; making sure the city has strong leadership in its upper management; wants to see the city continue to innovate and remain responsive to voters.

Quote: "I want to make sure our community stays safe, that our economy continues to grow and that we keep the city innovating so that we remain pioneers when it comes to technology and advancing in science."

Candidate forum set for Feb. 8

The Federation of Boca Raton Homeowner Associations will hold its candidates' forum at 6:30 p.m. Feb. 8 at the Boca Raton Community Center, 150 Crawford Blvd.



Brian Stenberg

Personal: 54; bachelor's degree in public relations from University of Florida; city resident for 26 years; married; four children.

Professional: Served as a partner since 2005 in Greenfield Properties, which develops and oversees property management of — and leasing for — medical office buildings. He is also a Florida-licensed real estate broker.

Political experience: None.

Important issues: Concerned with development and redevelopment and the traffic congestion that comes with them; wants to see "respectful growth" in the city; would like to see protected bike lanes and walkways implemented throughout the city.

Quote: "I was recently appointed to the Boca Raton Housing Authority and the Palm Beach County Planning Commission, which I believe helps give me some background to better serve Boca Raton. There are steps we have to be taking and plans we have to be making now to move us forward in terms of achieving what I call respectful growth. I want to be a voice of reason for residents and for businesses in the city. I don't plan to just sit back and let it happen. I want to be here for everybody for the betterment of the city."

Candidate profiles were compiled via telephone interviews. Candidates were asked to supply personal information regarding their age, education, marital status and number of years residing in their municipalities. They were also asked to provide a brief history of their professional life and experience, if any, in holding public office. Finally, they were asked about their positions on issues facing their communities and to provide an overarching quote detailing the reasons they believe they should be elected (or reelected), along with a current photograph.

Candidate profiles compiled by Steven J. Smith

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Delray Beach

City to adjust eye-popping water bills after vendor's meters break down

By Anne Geggis

A technical glitch that set off sticker shock for hundreds of Delray Beach water customers prompted the City Commission to move to forgive bills out of whack with those customers' average water usage.

City staff said the glitch — some resulting in bills thousands of dollars more than water customers' normal bills — was due to a technical problem on a vendor's part that will take three months to fully repair.

About 2% of the city's 20,000 water customers — 488 accounts — received erroneous bills in November and December, according to city staff. It's because the city's automatic meter reader has stopped working on about 30% of the water accounts throughout the city, staff explained.

"It's been recently determined that a number of the encoders had actually malfunctioned," City Manager Terrence Moore said at the Jan. 4 commission meeting.

If the meter couldn't be manually read, the glitch prompted estimates for some water customers' water usage, he explained.

"That's resulted in some customers, not the majority, but some customers having to experience higher-than-expected bills," Moore said.

Mayor Shelly Petrolia said she's gotten an earful from city residents, including one who received a \$5,700 water bill.

"I'm a little upset because I'm the one who gets blamed for this and I have absolutely no knowledge of it," Petrolia said, noting that water billing problems have occurred in the past.

Staff is available to talk

to any customers who have concerns that they were overbilled, Moore said. The City Commission unanimously agreed that affected customers will be billed based on the average usage for the past 12 months.

Resident Evelyn Dobson said that she was one of those people who got a \$1,000 water bill, quite a bit more than her usual bill of \$100 to \$120.

"I was royally upset," Dobson said, before praising the commission's decision to average out recent, higher-than-normal bills.

The glitch was because radio devices in each meter that transmit the information from individual meters to the city have increasingly started to fail, city staff said. And, luckily, it happened within the 10-year warranty with the city vendor, Badger Meter. Talks with the Milwaukee company have

started. And repairs are in the offing.

"So this was just a fluke on behalf of Badger and there's nothing we can really do to prevent this sort of thing?" Commissioner Rob Long asked.

Commissioner Rob Long asked. Moore responded that the initial focus is to get the repairs squared away.

An answer as to the total amount billed in error was not available from city staff.

But Petrolia said she thinks the problem is more than just a technical glitch — and that more erroneous utility billing would be brought to the city's attention sooner rather than later.

"There's no responsibility and no accountability," she said, recalling that the same problem emerged in 2020, when there were reports of \$100,000 water bills.

At the Jan. 16 commission meeting, Petrolia proposed

moving the utility billing out of the city Finance Department's purview and back to the Water Utilities Department, where it was before. But none of her colleagues offered support for the idea. ★

Delray Beach News

Bright hues on the way

— North Federal Highway is getting more colorful: The first mural to go up along that thoroughfare received approval from the City Commission.

Four sides of the old gas station at 302 NE Sixth Avenue will be enlivened with the Cubist-inspired art of Craig McInnis of West Palm Beach as the station is transformed into the Subculture Coffee shop.

But it didn't happen before some controversy.

The Downtown Development Authority had mixed the design, while the Public Art Advisory Board had approved it.

Restaurateur Rodney Mayo, who's opening the coffee shop, said he's unapologetic about eschewing pineapples and flamingos for this mural.

"I personally hate it when people say they don't like a piece of art," Mayo said. "It's not for you to like — it's a piece of art."

Mayor Shelly Petrolia was concerned mainly about how it appeared the painting started before the approvals came in.

The proposal passed 3-2, with Petrolia and Vice Mayor Ryan Boylston voting "no."

Gauff, city win — The U.S. Open victory of Delray Beach's hometown tennis prodigy Coco Gauff means that the city is scoring a \$60,000 refurbishment of the Pompey Park tennis courts.

Gauff, 19, who was born in Atlanta but grew up mainly in Delray Beach, picked the park to benefit from a grant that the U.S. Tennis Association distributes to the winner's choice.

Pompey Park, 1101 NW Second St., is also where the famed Williams sisters trained.

The grant will pay for court resurfacing, new chain link fencing, new awnings and a general sprucing up.

Planning and Zoning Board chairwoman dies

— Julen Blankenship's service to the city was saluted from the dais at the commission's Jan. 16 meeting. She had served on the Planning and Zoning Board for five years and been reappointed in November.

"It's a tremendous loss to our city and our community," Commissioner Rob Long said, recalling how she always came "super-prepared."

Commissioner Adam Frankel said that Blankenship, who was in her 50s, had received a cancer diagnosis in December.

"Delray is definitely a better place because of Julen," he said.

— Anne Geggis



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PARK

Continued from page 1

terms.

The town's effort came in advance of a planned public meeting about the proposed park with Palm Beach County Commissioner Marci Woodward set for Feb. 1.

Included in the proposal would be an extension of a 30-year-old settlement between the town and the family that expires in 2025 and essentially grandfathers in land use improvements on two parcels owned by the family. A five-year extension on Milani property east of State Road A1A would enable construction of three homes on the parcel that under current code is only permitted to include one single-family home.

The proposal includes a three-year extension of the settlement agreement on the west side of A1A, with two one-year additional extensions. The town is also offering to allow the family to build townhouses on that property that would exceed the height limit set under the settlement agreement but is acceptable under current height limits. Those proposed land use adjustments have been previously requested by the Milani family.

Also included in the proposed agreement is a zoning change the town would offer on the property, now zoned for public use, should the county agree to sell the property back to the Milani family if it abandons plans to build the park.

Public input meeting

County Commissioner Marci Woodward is hosting a community meeting at 6 p.m. Feb. 1 at the Highland Beach Library to address the proposed development of Milani Park. Overflow parking at St. Lucy Catholic Church. Follow the issue at thecoastalstar.com

What that zoning change would be and what it would allow have been sticking points in the discussions, town leaders have said.

The town would also transfer the Cam D. Milani naming rights from the park to the old fire station, which will be used as a public meeting facility once construction of the new fire station is complete.

In exchange for the land use changes, the Milanis would be required to attend public meetings and voice opposition to the development of the park, put their opposition in writing and put together a good faith offer to the county for purchase of the park property based on appraised value.

The family sold the property to the county more than 30 years ago for \$4 million.

"I think this is a real good start," Town Commissioner Don Peters said. "We have to build up trust with Mrs. Milani."

In a recent email to *The Coastal Star*, she said she preferred not to comment on "ongoing public processes." ★

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Highland Beach

Referendum seeks to raise how much town can spend before requiring voter approval

By Rich Pollack

For more than a decade, Highland Beach town leaders have been searching for a way to increase the cap that requires voter approval to spend more than \$350,000 on any one project — a provision incorporated in the town charter in 1991.

In 2012, commissioners passed an ordinance raising the cap to \$1 million only to discover — after a critical Palm Beach County inspector general report — that any change in the limit needed voter approval.

Then two years ago, voters shot down a proposal that would have raised the cap based on a percentage of the town's total budget, after strong opposition from an influential group of residents.

Now town leaders — who say residents will benefit once the financial handcuffs are removed — are hoping the third time will be the charm.

"It will give us a more direct and efficient path to tackle small capital projects," Town Manager Marshall Labadie said.

Voters will have a chance to raise the spending limit to what town leaders say is manageable when they go to the polls March

19 to vote on three referendum issues.

Town leaders say they are optimistic all three questions — raising the cap, approving \$3.5 million to line sewer pipes, and letting the supervisor of elections oversee the town's election canvassing board rather than requiring commissioners to be on it — will get the green light.

"It appears voters are willing to give full consideration to the referendum issues," Labadie said.

To make changes to the spending limit more palatable to voters, town leaders propose a cap of \$900,000 per project, with adjustments for inflation each year beginning next year.

The \$900,000, says Vice Mayor David Stern, equals what the \$350,000 limit set more than 32 years ago would equate to in today's dollars.

"This just makes sense," he said. "It's very clean, it's very clear and it's very much needed."

Stern has said in the past that one of the reasons the last effort to increase the cap failed was that it was difficult for voters to understand.

Jack Halpern, who leads the vocal Committee to Save

Highland Beach, the political action committee that opposed the idea in 2022, says his group supports raising the spending limit this time because it's simple and makes sense. The group is also in favor of the two other referendum issues.

"The spending cap has needed to be raised for years," he said. "It's ridiculous."

Labadie said the \$350,000 cap, one of the few spending limits on local elected officials in Florida, makes it challenging for Highland Beach to get things done.

With the town starting its own fire department, increasing the spending limit takes on a bit more importance because of the high cost of replacing equipment and apparatus, he said.

Labadie said inflation is also driving the need to increase the spending cap.

"Items that were previously under \$350,000 now exceed \$350,000," he said.

Labadie said that increasing the cap will take away some of the concerns that come with presenting important spending issues to voters.

"There's a real risk to day-to-day operations of systems if you have a referendum and don't get voter approval," he said. ★



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Delray Beach

CRA moves toward putting four more police officers downtown

By Anne Geggis

In response to Delray Beach residents' complaints about how the downtown vibe is disrupting their lives, a proposal is advancing to add four new police officers to the area's current team of 10.

The City Commission, meeting Jan. 23 as the Delray Beach Community Redevelopment Agency, appeared mostly in agreement when discussing the addition of \$640,000 to the agency's budget to put more police downtown. The actual vote will come at the next CRA meeting, scheduled for Feb. 27, said Commissioner Adam Frankel, the CRA chairman.

It would be the first expansion of downtown police personnel in 10 years, Frankel said. That dates back nearly to a time when he said the city was still known as "Dull-Ray."

"If you look at 10 years ago versus today, there's a big difference in the number of people who live downtown, come downtown," Frankel said.

But Arlen Dominek, a downtown resident who led a parade of neighbors complaining about club and street noise at a Jan. 18 City Commission meeting, doesn't think there's much of a mandate from city leadership to quiet the hubbub that's disrupting the peace and enjoyment of their homes.

While some residents think the added police might help with disturbances attributed to panhandlers and others on the streets, Dominek doesn't expect the new personnel will address the traffic issues he and his neighbors find most vexing.

"There's someone who zips down the avenue at 12:45" every night, said Dominek, who came to the city as an IT worker for a

health care software company in 1997. "This has been an ongoing pet peeve of mine for a very long time. I don't think the City Commission has any real conviction to see that its noise ordinance is enforced."

Claudia Willis, a resident of the downtown's Marina Historic District for 40 years, says the vaunted "vibe" of the area is giving her a headache.

"Particularly bothersome are the motorcycles that gun it and the cars that seem to be drag racing on Federal Highway at night," she said.

She said she really doesn't want to see taxpayers' money going to fix the problem, though, and is unconvinced that more police will make a difference.

Frankel said noise is just one facet he sees improving with more police dedicated to downtown. He recalled an evening in October spent dining at an outdoor table. Within

the space of 30 minutes, he said a stranger aggressively approached him demanding money, another passer-by took

the drink from his restaurant table and he witnessed what he believed was a drug deal in progress. ★

Briny Breezes

Former mayoral applicant picked to serve as alderman

By Steve Plunkett

The Town Council filled its fifth seat on Jan. 25, turning to a resident who tried but failed to qualify to run for mayor.

The council chose Keith Black, the only person to send in a letter of interest in serving as an alderman, to fill the seat vacated by almost 12-year veteran Sue Thaler at the end of December. Black is the council's third recent addition, with Mayor Ted R. Gross and Alderman Jeff Duncan being



Black



Duncan

appointed in December.

Council members hesitated in making Black's appointment because Black was not in attendance — even though they had appointed Duncan in absentia at the previous meeting. Town Attorney Keith Davis assured them they could go ahead.

"Unlike most raffles, you don't have to be present to win," Davis said. "He does have to be here to be sworn in."

Duncan, already appointed, took his oath of office at the January meeting.

Black had planned to run for the mayor's position but complained at the December council meeting that the county supervisor of elections rejected five of the 23 signatures he had collected to support his candidacy. Mayoral candidates in Briny Breezes must have 20 signatures.

To show that Black had not been singled out, Alderwoman Kathy Gross held up the petition she signed supporting her husband's run. Her signature also was rejected.

"So I want you to know it's not" the town clerk's fault. "It is through the supervisor of elections that this happened. There was no underlying anything going on. I just wanted to let you know that," she said.

Ted Gross took an opportunity at the January meeting to deliver his first speech as mayor.

He focused on the power of home rule and recalled that before the state Legislature granted it to municipalities, "if we wanted to do something, like we wanted to put up a stop sign for instance ... we would have to get state permission."

He also displayed a pie chart showing that almost half of Florida's 411 towns and cities have fewer than 5,000 residents, Briny Breezes included.

"We can be influential," Gross said.

An instance of that came up at the meeting. Davis told the council that Briny Breezes back in October was the first municipality in the state to pass a resolution opposing the Form 6 requirement mandating elected town officials make a



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PALM BEACH HEALTH NETWORK

Gulf Stream

Greene given Lyons' commission seat; Lyons replaces him on planning board

By Steve Plunkett

Town commissioners took less than three minutes to fill an empty seat on their own dais and two domino-like vacancies on the Architectural Review and Planning Board.

For the Town Commission spot, which Paul Lyons Jr. vacated in December, Mayor Scott Morgan looked to the ARPB "as we typically do," he said at the commission's Jan. 12 meeting.

Morgan said the three most experienced ARPB members declined



Greene

his invitations, and Michael Greene, the newest, agreed.

Commissioners endorsed Morgan's recommendation, and he moved swiftly to fill the new ARPB vacancy — with Lyons.

Lyons joined the advisory panel for its Jan. 25 meeting, reuniting with former Commissioner Thom Smith, who resigned from the commission in November and was appointed to the

ARPB in December.

Several times in the past year commissioners have sent back to the ARPB site plans that the panel had approved, complaining that the proposed homes had too much "massing" for the parcel or did not fit in with the given neighborhood.

They also tasked the board with suggesting ways to amend the town's design manual to solve the massing issue. Smith and Lyons both chaired the planning board before becoming commissioners, as did Morgan.

Lyons' appointment caused a wrinkle in filling the last seat, for an alternate ARPB member. Lyons' daughter, Olivia, was next in line of those who had submitted letters of interest.

"But I've spoken to her, and because of Mr. Lyons' being appointed, she has stepped back," Morgan said.

Morgan said Lyons will stay on the ARPB to help resolve the massing issue and then will resign, making room for his daughter to be appointed.

Next to be considered was Brian Coulter, who lives on the Intracoastal

Waterway around the corner from Commissioner Joan Orthwein.

"I think he'll do a great job. (He's) into the real estate world, too," Orthwein said.

Coulter was a managing partner at one of the largest mixed-use development firms in the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area for more than 35 years. He attended his first planning

board meeting as an alternate member on Jan. 25.

Greene and his wife, Betsy, live on the west side of North Ocean Boulevard and have three adult children. He moved his investment firm, AE Industrial Partners LP, to Boca Raton in 2014. He joined the ARPB as an alternate member in July 2022 and became a full board member in November. ★



Gulf Stream Police Chief Richard Jones is the new president of the Palm Beach County Association of Chiefs of Police. Circuit Judge James Martz, a former police officer and prosecutor, presided over Jones' swearing-in on Jan. 18 in West Palm Beach. Beside Jones (center) are (l-r) Capt. John Haseley, Town Manager Greg Dunham, Martz and Mayor Scott Morgan. Photo provided

Continued from page 22

more detailed disclosure of their personal wealth. The resolution also authorized Town Manager Bill Thrasher to spend up to \$5,000 to challenge the new state requirement.

Davis advised the council that the influential Miami-based law firm Weiss Serota was preparing a lawsuit seeking a judge's declaration that the requirement is unconstitutional and invalid.

"I can't tell you if it's going to be a winner or a loser. I don't know," Davis said.

The law firm wants its clients to pay \$10,000 each to be part of the lawsuit, he said. So far most of the plaintiffs are cities and towns in Broward and Miami-Dade counties. Briny officials asked Davis to bring a Weiss Serota lawyer to their February meeting. They hope they can get a reduced legal fee if they participate.

Elected officials had to resign by Dec. 31 to avoid making their net worth, income and other personal financial details public.

Thrasher has said Form 6 prompted Thaler and previous Mayor Gene Adams and Council President Christina Adams to resign their seats. ★

Briny News

No word on grant status

While Town Manager Bill Thrasher made no report at the Town Council's Jan. 25 meeting about the town's application for a \$14 million grant to improve its sea walls and drainage system, that didn't bother former Alderwoman Sue Thaler.

"It was well explained clearly at the last meeting that we haven't gotten the grant and we haven't not gotten the grant," said Thaler, who attended the meeting as a member of the public. "As far as I know, we're still in contention for this grant." — Steve Plunkett

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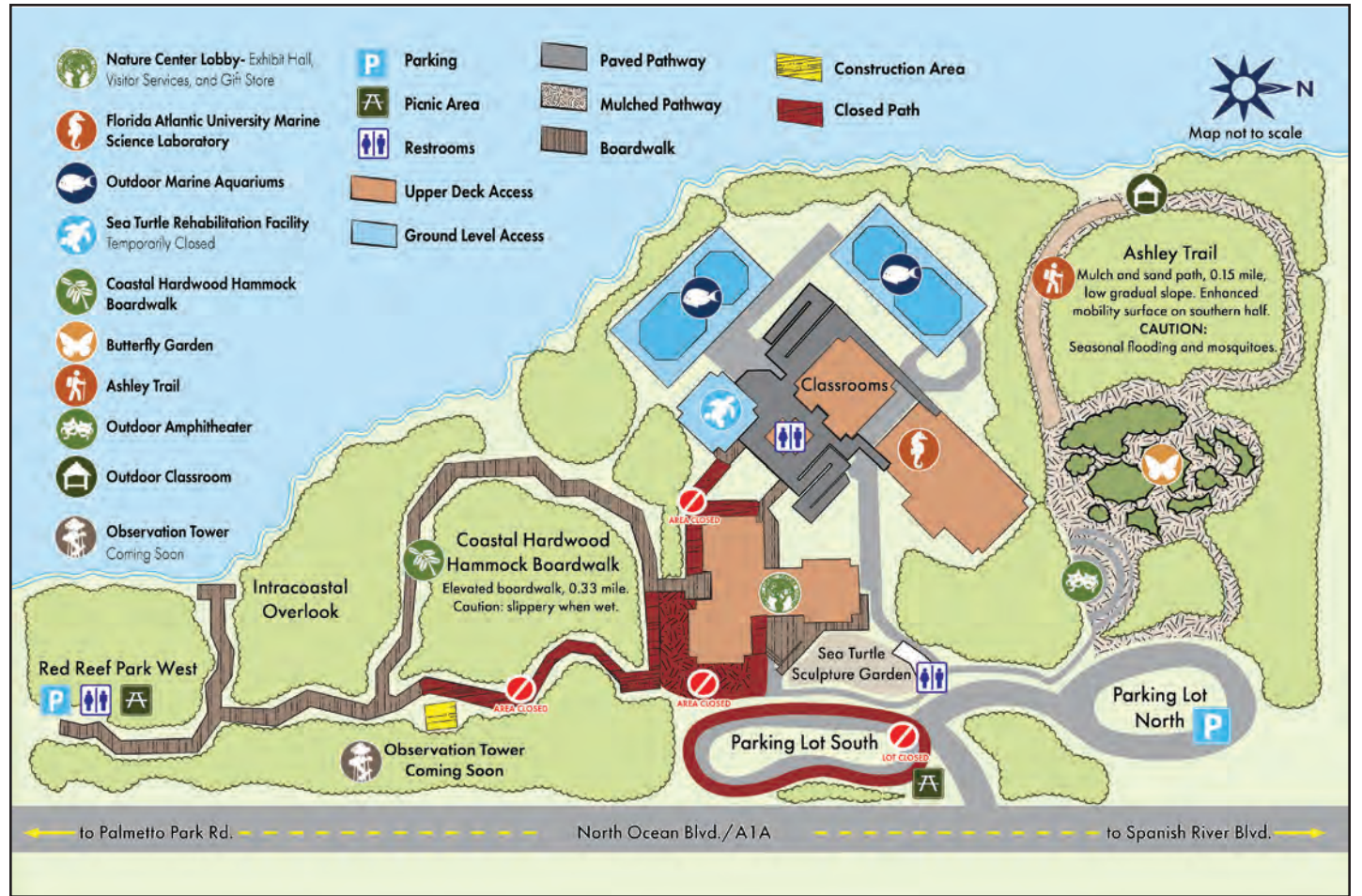
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MARCH


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Boca Raton

Parking limited at Gumbo Limbo

The parking lot in front of the Gumbo Limbo Nature Center is closed until the spring while three ADA-compliant parking spaces are created and a ramp between them and the center is built. 'This is a big construction project with many moving parts,' Nature Center Manager Leanne Welch said. The work includes adjusting the slope of the parking lot and creating crosswalks. The center's front and side doors are being replaced with wider, accessible doors, and both restrooms will be completely renovated. A trailer restroom is available outside. Some parking spaces at Red Reef West, just south of the center, have been designated as 'Reserved for Gumbo Limbo.' At the same time, work continues on rebuilding the 40-foot-tall observation tower and its new multilevel access ramp. 'We are hopeful that we can celebrate the completion of all of the projects at the same time in the spring,' Welch said. **Graphic provided**







JANUARY 24 - May 17





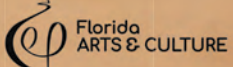


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For information, visit BocaHistory.org



Beach and Park District about to pass half-century mark

The Greater Boca Raton Beach and Park District will turn 50 years old in March and is busy making plans to celebrate.

On April 11 district commissioners will have a meet-and-greet session at Sugar Sand Park.

"We'll display some of the old drawings and some of the old photos and things like we have inside some of the cases at Sugar Sand," Briann Harms, the district's executive director, said at the board's Jan. 15 meeting.

Other ideas include a park cleanup barbecue and even a trivia contest.

"There's a lot of history in the district. ... Some people like trivia — I do. So, it will be fun to learn about our community and about the history of our parks along the way," Harms said.

At their Jan. 2 meeting, commissioners reelected Erin Wright to chair the district, Robert Rollins to be vice chair and Craig Ehrnst to be secretary-treasurer.

They also voted to pay \$1,806 a month for January, February and March to keep the restrooms clean at the Glades Road soccer fields they rent from Florida Atlantic University, up from \$1,492 a month last year, a 21% increase.

—Steve Plunkett

Boca Raton



The historic Singing Pines building that housed the former Boca Raton Children's Museum will be moved along with two other old homes. 2018 file photo

New city building to displace old homes of former museum

By Mary Hladky

Three buildings that have long housed the Boca Raton Children's Museum near City Hall will be relocated to make way for a new structure to house the city's building department.

The museum, which offered educational programs to children and was operated for many years by the Junior League of Boca Raton, closed at the start of the coronavirus pandemic and never reopened. It is located on city-owned land at 498 Crawford Blvd.

City officials have been looking for a place to move the historically significant buildings, but ran into obstacles when objections were raised to placing them in Hughes Park or Sugar Sand Park.

Now, officials have settled on moving the Singing Pines and Rickards houses to city-owned Meadows Park at 1300 NW Eighth St. The less significant cottage building, known as the Rickett House, will go to the city cemetery for use by staff.

As of January, no date had been set to move the historic buildings or to begin construction of the new city building, said city spokeswoman Anne Marie Connolly.

The department currently is housed immediately north of the Police Department at 200 NW Second Ave. Other city offices also are in that building.

The Meadows Park location is acceptable to community residents and the Boca Raton Historical Society, said Susan Gillis, the society's curator.

"As long as they are saved, we are happy," she said.

The city is still deciding how the Singing Pines and Rickards houses will be used, but does not intend to operate a children's museum, Connolly said.

The Singing Pines house, built in 1913 or 1914 at 301 SW First Ave., is the most historically significant building because it is the second-oldest home in the city that still exists, Gillis said. It was built by William Myrick on property purchased from Henry Flagler's Model Land Co.

The Rickards house, built in the 1890s, looks like the original that once was located on Palmetto Park Road. But it was completely rebuilt and so has less historical importance, she said. It was built by the city's first settler, Thomas Moore Rickards, who made his first expedition to Florida in 1876. ★

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Lantana

Grants to jump-start sea wall work at Bicentennial Park

By Mary Thurwachter

Lantana officials aren’t certain of the age of the sea wall at Bicentennial Park, but they do know the last time repairs were made there was at least 20 years ago, and a restoration is due.

To that end, the Town Council, at its meetings on Jan. 8 and 22, accepted grants from Florida’s Department of Environmental Protection to get the sea wall hardening project underway.

While officials don’t know exactly how much the project will cost, they expect it will be a multimillion-dollar endeavor.

“We won’t really know the extent of this until we get into it,” said Eddie Crockett, public services director. “We have applied for as many grants as possible” — two to date. “There will be some overlap because the sea wall extends from the property next to the fishing tour company over to the complex west of Bicentennial Park.”

One of the DEP grants is for \$200,000, with the town putting up a matching \$200,000. The second one has the state and town each contributing \$900,000.

The latter grant covers rehabilitating the entire 2,100 feet of sea wall directly adjacent

to high-density, multi-family housing, commercial structures and a major roadway. The other grant covers only the Bicentennial Park portion of the sea wall.

In both cases, the town will pay its share from available reserves.

Before any work can begin, an engineering study will need to be done. On Jan. 22, the council voted to pay its engineering company, Baxter & Woodman, Inc., \$131,934 to tackle that job.

Crockett said water has frequently breached the sea wall. “The primary concern is the walkway, which has been undermined,” he said. “The repairs will likely entail a rebuild of the walkway and extending the height of the sea wall.”

Possible reasons for the damage, he said, “are sea level rise and coastal impact.”

The council also accepted a grant agreement with the state DEP for improvements to Maddock Park on West Drew Street, which is home to the town’s dog park. In this case, the \$150,000 project will be paid for with \$112,500 from the state and \$37,500 from the town’s reserves. ★

Lantana News

Stormwater utility fee considered — Because the Town Council is considering a non-property tax assessment for stormwater utility fees, council members voted on Jan. 8 to adopt a resolution making county officials aware of their plan.

“The only thing recommended for adoption is to make the property appraiser and tax collector officially aware of our intent,” Town Manager Brian Raducci said. “No related fees are being considered at this time.”

In his report for December, Raducci wrote that the town will soon issue a request for qualifications for a contractor to review the current and future operating and capital costs to deliver stormwater services.

The contractor would then determine how to allocate that cost to determine a potential stormwater utility fee for the council’s consideration later this year, to be included in the next budget.

Future of Kmart property — The council has scheduled a special workshop for 5:30 p.m. Feb. 13 in the council chambers to discuss conceptual plans for the former Kmart property at 1001 S. Dixie Highway.

An earlier proposal from another developer was denied by the council in August 2022.

Last July, Integra Investments paid \$14.85 million for the strip mall where Kmart was located, with plans to turn a portion of the property into affordable housing.

New truck for the Police Department — Police Chief Sean Scheller says the newly purchased 2024 Toyota Tundra Crew Max SR5 came with a \$49,059 price tag. “We’re using extra ARPA money,” he explained to the Town Council, referring to the American Rescue Plan Act. “We have to use it or lose it.” The vehicle came from Alan Jay Fleet Sales in Sebring.

— Mary Thurwachter



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10 Questions

MEET YOUR NEIGHBOR: Annika Kielland

Annika Kielland's job history runs the gamut, from waitress and bartender to Home Shopping Network saleswoman to transformational teacher, healer and guide. But no role has been more intriguing than the three or four times a year she leads groups on spiritual adventures to places like India, Bali and, every October, to the Mount Everest base camp in Nepal.

"It's where everyone gets tested," said Kielland, 52, who is about to mark 10 years as a resident of Hypoluxo Island. "It's 18,000 feet, and you get headaches just getting there."

The adventure consists of flying to Katmandu, connecting to the Everest region, then hiking nine days with stops to adjust to the rise in elevation. Sometimes adventurers remain to take on the ascent to the 29,031-foot summit, the highest point on Earth. Others take a helicopter or walk back. It takes about three days to hike down.

"It's mind-blowing," Kielland said. "It takes a huge toll on the body. It really depletes you of energy. Some people choose to fly back in a helicopter, but the mountain isn't done with you. You see the Himalayas from a different perspective, and you see life from a different perspective on the way down."

"So, if you just want to have a mad adventure, I'm your woman."

— Brian Biggane

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

A: I was born in Sweden to a Norwegian family and on my first birthday we crossed the North Sea to Oslo. My dad was a merchant engineer. I went to school in England, traveled for two years and then went to University of Manchester. It's a gritty, hardworking town, but there was a lot of art there.

I'm an absolute Viking; I've traveled to over 48 countries. I have no fear and I love exploring. I grew up in the Lake District in the north of England with a lot of parks, which gave me a love of nature and the mountains, just being outside as much as possible.

I studied communication, literature, social studies, psychology, film studies, American studies, drama, sociology. Every year you could pick nine things. My major was media studies, film and television, and I also did film study, which led to me having



Annika Kielland with her whippet, Bodhi, at home on Hypoluxo Island. She was first attracted to the house's outside, 'which is like a Balinese tropical jungle.' Tim Stepien/The Coastal Star

a production company for 20 years.

Q: What professions have you worked in? What professional accomplishments are you most proud of?

A: I've had every job under the sun: waitress, bartender, aerobics teacher, nightclub bouncer, cattle herder. When I came to America I produced music videos with a TV production company, and I'm still writer, producer and director for Loudmouth TV. That was health and wellness products for retail, and I also sell fitness stuff on Home Shopping Network. They like the accent and I know what I'm talking about.

Now I see myself as a transformational teacher, healer and guide. So, that's deep, deep spiritual work, helping people reconnect with themselves. I do healing work with energy healing, certify people, and teach yoga and meditation. I also make jewelry and have a nonprofit, so that's nine different jobs. I do whatever I

feel like doing in the moment.

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

A: The biggest thing is do something that brings you joy. If you're going to work, do something that sparks you up. So do a ton of work experience, get mentors in the field you want. And be humble, admit when you don't know what you're doing. But it's important to do something that lights you up. That keeps the flame going.

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

A: I saw the outside of the house, which is like a Balinese tropical jungle, and felt I'd never be inside here. The island is a hidden gem: It's quiet, it's peaceful, people are super friendly. This is my 10th year here. I was in Highland Beach for a while, doing sea turtle conservation, but this is my sanctuary. I came to Florida because of the ocean and the gold thing in the sky that never

shines in England. I started in Miami, then Deerfield Beach, Highland Beach, Delray Beach and now here.

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

A: Walking to the beach every day, two miles round trip, and the people I meet who are absolute characters. I say hello to everybody, the ladies, the Jehovah's Witnesses, and seeing the lifeguards and people who clean the beach. The guys fishing off the bridge, Nancy at Publix. I wave to everybody, which is very English, and they all wave back. I say good morning and it's really a community. A real little oasis.

Q: What book are you reading now?

A: I'm reading two at once. One is *American Veda*, by Philip Goldberg. It's about how Eastern mysticism came to the West, and was spread by Emerson, Thoreau, Walt Whitman and even the Beatles in the '60s. It came from the trades in the East in the late 1800s. It's where we know meditation, karma, yoga,

all these things have become part of our culture.

Also *Stolen Focus*, by Johann Hari. It's about how we're unable to concentrate now because of electronics. How Google and the like have changed us, made it harder to focus, and it's really important for kids. That helps with how I'm working with people, throwing you back into yourself as opposed to looking into the magic rectangle.

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

A: My range is like my bloody jobs. Classical music, Tibetan yoga music if I'm reading or studying. Pink Floyd because I grew up with it and my brother passed it on. Reggae makes you feel like sunshine; when I was in Miami, I produced a lot of reggae videos. I teach to Pink Floyd and always put on *Dark Side of the Moon*.

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

A: My mother, Anne, for kindness and sense of humor. She's really open-hearted and is absolutely out of her mind in a funny way. When I went to Nepal she watched the dogs and the neighbors said she went to every open house, thinking it was a neighborly gathering. Also my female friends mentor me. I studied with a man, Kute Blackson, a transformational coach from England, who I trained with when I went to Bali. But everybody you meet has a message for you. Just talk to people, you never know what's going to happen.

Q: If your life story were a movie, who would play you?

A: It has to be someone who isn't afraid to ride motorbikes and jump out of airplanes, like a female James Bond. Cate Blanchett is good. She's complex, does every different role.

Q: Is there something people don't know about you, but might like to?

A: I drove 18,000 miles in nine months solo with the two dogs after the pandemic. Visited every national park and ended up living on a houseboat in Sausalito for six weeks, which is my other happy place. I hope to go back this summer to write; I'm writing four books. But when I got home my house had flooded the day before, so I wasn't supposed to leave.

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Boynton Beach

Plans for Magnuson House restaurant deemed 'in default'

By Tao Woolfe

Boynton Beach city commissioners sitting as the Community Redevelopment Agency's governing board pulled the plug last month on a creative proposal that would have transformed the historic Magnuson House into a restaurant.

"This is really hard, really difficult to discuss," said Commissioner Aimee Kelley, one of three commissioners on the dais at the CRA's Jan. 18 board meeting. "We were really excited and wanted to see it happen."

She was speaking of the proposal of restaurateur Anthony Barber, who owns Troy's Barbeque restaurants in Boynton Beach and West Palm Beach.

Barber had hoped to turn the Oscar Magnuson House, 211 E. Ocean Ave., into a 3,000-square-foot, full-service American-style restaurant consisting of the historic home and five shipping containers that would have been moved onto the property.

The project seemed to be going well until November, when Barber told the CRA board that he and his partner, Rodney Mayo, were having trouble securing the necessary funds to make it happen.

The CRA board gave Barber and Mayo a 30-day extension to get the site plan application submitted, but when the board met on Jan. 11, the members said they had not heard from Barber — by phone, email, or in person — since the November meeting.

Commissioners unanimously agreed, 3-0, to place Barber's proposal "in default."

The board did give Barber one statutorily provided last chance to get his financing and paperwork together by the CRA's Feb. 13 meeting or forfeit the deal.

"We had a very detailed discussion in November," Vice Mayor Thomas Turkin said. "The purchaser had said, 'Hold my feet to the fire,' so that's what we're doing."

In June 2023, the CRA granted the partners a six-month extension to submit a site plan application. Barber said at the time he had submitted two site plans to the city, but they were rejected for being incomplete. At the November meeting, Barber told the CRA board that he might have to ask the city to remove the property's historic designation — and its attendant restrictions — to make the project more

Continued on page 29

VOTE TUESDAY, MARCH 19th

AINAR AIJALA

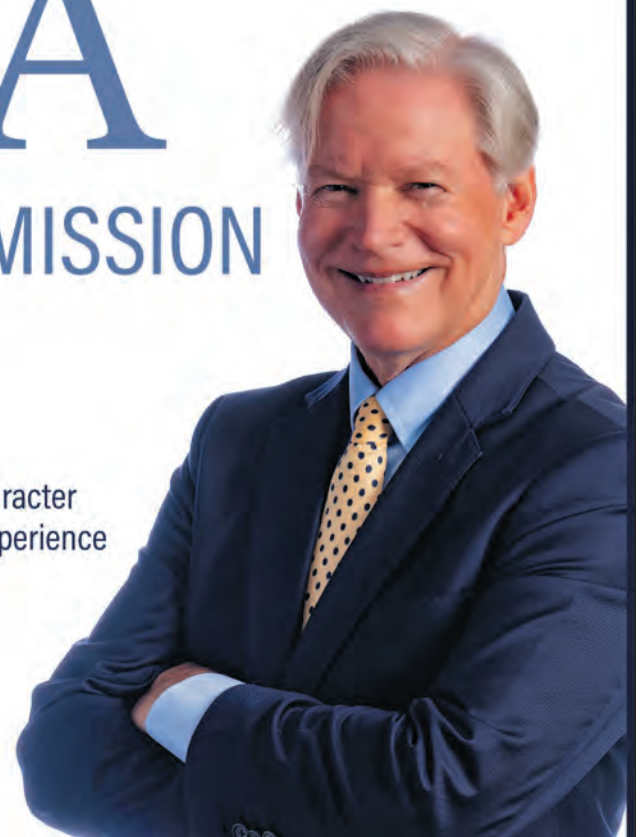
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Obituaries

Robert Kellogg

By Jane Musgrave

SOUTH PALM BEACH — When Robert Kellogg was hired as manager of South Palm Beach in 2019, Mayor



Bonnie Fischer said she got more than a wise administrator. She got a comedy sidekick.

During normally staid meetings, the two would banter back and forth. “What would you do if I did that?” she remembered asking Kellogg when he was defending an elderly condominium owner who faced code enforcement charges. “I’d throw the book at you,” Mr. Kellogg shot back.

“It was so light. It was very fun,” said Fischer. “I’ve never been like that with anyone in my life. Neither one of us knew where it came from.”

Mr. Kellogg — who was raised near Akron, Ohio, and spent his career administering small towns in Ohio and coastal Florida — died Jan. 12 in a hospital near his hometown. He was 70.

Jacqueline Kellogg said her husband

of 37 years had succumbed to COPD and emphysema, brought on by a lifetime of smoking.

True to his wishes, his family and friends wore Ohio State University shirts and hats to his funeral. “He wanted it to be a celebration of his life, not for people to come to mourn,” his wife said. Though a graduate of Kent State, he was buried in an OSU jersey and his casket was draped in scarlet and gray, the colors of his beloved Buckeyes.

During the 17 years he worked in Florida, which included prior stops in Sewall’s Point and Hillsboro Beach, he would travel back to Ohio on weekends for Buckeye home games.

An avid traveler, he and his wife visited all 50 states and many countries in Europe. On his 70th birthday, he took his wife, three children and their families on a cruise to Mexico. Even with his time running out, he continued making travel plans, Jacqueline Kellogg said. Shortly before his death, he suggested to his two sons that they all go to this year’s Super Bowl.

His work in South Palm Beach was

initially consumed by the coronavirus pandemic. During the initial phase, he established a testing site in the Town Hall parking lot and helped shepherd the town of 1,400 residents through the crisis.

He also laid the groundwork for a new Town Hall, Fischer said. When he left in May, he asked her to invite him to the grand opening of the building that is still in the planning stages. “It saddens me that he wouldn’t see it accomplished,” she said.

Although committed to his job in South Palm Beach, he never lived there. He commuted to work from his home in Palm City. He also had a long-distance marriage. His wife remained in Ohio, where she worked as an executive with Columbia Gas, and they traveled to be together on weekends.

“It was different, but it worked for us,” she said.

Town employees lauded Mr. Kellogg for both his work ethic and his sense of humor. “He was kind, intelligent and funny, which made him the perfect sounding board,” one wrote in an online

tribute. “He always knew the right thing to say.”

Jacqueline Kellogg said her husband was drawn to small towns. “He liked to be close to the people of the town and the employees,” she said.

When Mr. Kellogg decided to step down, he initially offered to stay through November, Fischer said. In retrospect, she said, she’s glad he didn’t. He got extra time to spend with his family and to travel. “At least he had some semblance of retirement.”

In addition to his wife, Mr. Kellogg is survived by three children, Kory (Susan) Kellogg of Plano, Texas; Kelli (Jeremy) Welch of Haslet, Texas; and Carter Kellogg of Palm City, who is named after Jimmy Carter, his father’s favorite president. He is also survived by three grandchildren, two great-grandchildren, a sister and a brother. He was preceded in death by a sister.

A moment of silence was observed in Mr. Kellogg’s honor at the town’s Jan. 16 council meeting.

Gerson Fabe

By Ron Hayes

LANTANA — When Gerson Fabe arrived at The Carlisle Palm Beach in 2014, he brought all the things an elderly gentleman entering an assisted living facility in Lantana would bring.



But he brought hundreds of poems, too.

And when he died at 102 on Jan. 20, he left hundreds more behind, along with all the friends who had looked forward to a poem a day for

nearly 10 years.

“Any poem that deals in some way with age everybody loves, because they see themselves as the poem unfurls,” he told *The Coastal Star* in a 2017 profile.

*My stamina and I
Are no longer speaking.
My left knee joint
Is loudly creaking
But I’m glad to be here.*

— *The Lament of Old Age*,
by Gerson Fabe

“My father started writing poetry regularly in 1996, after the death of his wife, Joan,” Mr. Fabe’s daughter, Sondra, said. “She was the love of his life.”

At The Carlisle, Mr. Fabe began sharing his daily poems, leaving copies in the dining room at breakfast. Eventually, residents asked for them, and a small breakfast group formed, five or six friends sharing a table.

“People would give him boxes of paper to print the poems on,” said Bobbi Horwich, who came to The Carlisle three years ago and soon joined Mr. Fabe’s breakfast club. “There was nobody like Gerson, his poetry, his sweetness. I can’t imagine anybody here that didn’t like him or wasn’t touched by one of his poems. They ranged from humor to love and how important friendship was. I don’t know who can fill that empty chair.”

Gerson Fabe was born in Cincinnati on Sept. 28, 1921. He studied mechanical engineering at the University of Cincinnati, but left during World War II to serve as a test pilot. Among the first

fliers to test planes after they had been repaired, he took pride in never having had to ditch a plane during his six years in the U.S. Air Force. After the war, he sold insurance for Connecticut Mutual, where his sales unit led the company for 15 consecutive years.

Lantana Mayor Karen Lythgoe met Mr. Fabe in 2021, when she read a proclamation to the Town Council marking his 100th birthday. They became friends, and she attended his 101st and 102nd birthday parties.

This past Christmas Eve, she was invited to The Carlisle for happy hour.

“I was led to the back room where the breakfast club had a private dining room reserved, and I was invited to stay for dinner.

“Gerson was just out of the hospital. An aide wheeled him in, and he started to eat, when a violinist who had been in the lobby when I arrived came in and asked, ‘What would you like to hear?’ He said Sinatra. ‘Which one?’ *My Way*. And Gerson sang *My Way* the whole time. He knew every word.”

He was, after all, a man who loved words.

*Memories flit in and out of a fog
That grows denser as we age.
The moment in which they reveal themselves*

Is as swift as just turning a page.

— *Through the Fog*,
by Gerson Fabe

“I loved him, but I also respected and admired him,” his daughter said. “He wanted what he wanted when he wanted it. He wanted to die in his own home, in his own bed, in his own time, and he did.”

On Friday afternoon, Jan. 26, The Carlisle held a small memorial for him.

In addition to Sondra Fabe, of West Palm Beach, Mr. Fabe is survived by two stepsons, Larry Berlin of Baltimore and Mark Berlin of Jacksonville; a step-grandson, Geoffrey; and a step-granddaughter, Samantha.

Forest Hills Memorial Park in Palm City is in charge of arrangements.

Continued from page 28

acceptable to lenders. He said costs had been escalating and banks were generally less optimistic about funding new developments.

“The cost is not the cost we originally projected,” Barber said in November. “We have owner financing of \$800,000, but the [construction] cost now is looking like \$1.2 million.”

Making matters worse, Barber said, the cost of borrowing money has escalated.

Barber wanted to renovate the two-story Magnuson House, built in 1919, for inside dining. The shipping containers would be used for the kitchen area, walk-in food storage, restrooms, an artisan bar, and a rotisserie grilling area.

The CRA bought the property for \$850,000 in 2007, intending to use it for CRA office space, but sold it for \$255,000 in 2016 to a restaurant developer after its

plans changed.

The CRA took back the property two years later when the restaurant project fell through after the developer realized how expensive it would be to bring the house up to code for a commercial operation.

Barber’s plan seemed more economically feasible. Although he would have to spend hundreds of thousands of dollars to restore the house, he theoretically would have been able to avoid more costly commercial upgrades by placing the kitchen and other operations in stand-alone shipping containers — a first in Boynton Beach.

Barber offered to pay the city \$240,000 for the property, but that was offset by his intent to seek \$50,000 in a CRA commercial improvement grant and another \$200,000 in tax incentives.

Rather than make the

deal more complicated, commissioners suggested just conveying the property to Barber with deed restrictions — including that it always be a restaurant — and a requirement for specific design features requested by the city.

The house was built around 1919, according to the city historic preservation records.

Hurricane Alley lease extended for a year

The CRA board granted a one-year extension on the lease of the building at 529 E. Ocean Ave. to allow the popular Hurricane Alley restaurant to continue doing business.

A new home is planned for Hurricane Alley adjacent to The Pierce, a proposed mixed-use development that has been sidelined by a lawsuit over the CRA’s street abandonments for the project. ★

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Morgan has partial paralysis in her rear flippers and can't survive in the wild. She is back in Gumbo Limbo's Shipwreck Aquarium. Photo provided by Gumbo Limbo

TURTLE

Continued from page 1

Thomas said that he has a strong interest in marine life and will be attending the Carolina Ocean Odyssey summer camp on Topsail Island, North Carolina, whose many activities include exploring the marine environment and learning about protecting the oceans.

"I like helping," he said.

City officials announced Morgan's return from the Loggerhead Marinelife Center on Jan. 10. But the FWC has not made a decision on the return of Cane, who was also moved to another facility.

David Anderson, the city's sea turtle conservation coordinator, said Boca Raton is not planning any welcome-home activities for the latest addition to its Shipwreck Aquarium.

"We are just happy to have Morgan back and we are busy caring for her and making sure she is healthy and readjusted to her old home — and that she is," he said.

FWC spokeswoman Lisa Thompson had little news about Cane, who was taken to the Florida Oceanographic Coastal Center in Stuart.

"No decisions have been made about additional turtles at this time, though Gumbo Limbo has indicated they would potentially like to have a second turtle again. Further discussion might not occur until February," Thompson said.

The removal of Morgan and Cane along with seven sea turtle patients from Gumbo Limbo last year was prompted by the city's terminations,

which came as part of a transfer of the care of the turtles from the city to the nonprofit Coastal Stewards. The group, formerly known as the Friends of Gumbo Limbo, has since hired a veterinarian and a rescue and rehabilitation coordinator and applied for an FWC permit to resume giving turtles medical care.

Gumbo Limbo's turtle rehabilitation area is still empty. The Coastal Stewards moved its offices in mid-January from a building on Federal Highway in Boca Raton to another on State Road A1A north of Briny Breezes. The FWC is still reviewing the nonprofit's application for a permit.

Morgan came to Gumbo Limbo after being rescued in 2014. A sub-adult green turtle, she was hit by a boat and her injuries caused her to be partially paralyzed in her rear flippers. As a result, the 119-pound turtle cannot be released into the wild.

The nature center is open Tuesday-Sunday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., and Monday from noon to 4 p.m.

The facility's nature trails are open every day from 7 a.m. to sunset. Admission is free, although visitors can make donations.

Parking at Gumbo Limbo is currently a challenge with three spaces in the small lot being made ADA-compliant.

Also, construction of a new observation tower and ADA-compliant access ramp has blocked part of the nature center's boardwalk. The tower is scheduled to open this spring. ★



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Gulf Stream

School closes deal on preschool, also keeps 300-student limit for 3 more years

By Steve Plunkett

Halfway through the school year, the private Gulf Stream School would get an A for starting a new preschool but a C-minus or lower on its communication skills with town commissioners.

Patrick Donovan, president of the school's board of trustees, gave commissioners an update on Jan. 12 of the school's progress since he announced in September that it was buying the Early Childhood Academy in mainland Delray Beach.

"I am pleased to report that the first half of the year has been a resounding success for the school," Donovan said.

The Gulf Stream School obtained the necessary license and assumed operations of the preschool on Dec. 13, he said. County property records show the school paid the now-shuttered St. Joseph's Episcopal School \$3 million in October for its preschool at 2515 N. Swinton Ave.

Donovan said the school has also launched a "highly successful" in-house lunch program on its main campus and shaved its average pickup time for parents dropping off and retrieving their children from 20 minutes down to 14.

And he expects the line of cars outside to drop once the school starts running a bus between the Gulf Stream and Delray beach campuses in the morning and afternoon.

"We feel this would be a great service for the Lake Ida-based families. Just an easy drop-off there; they'll come over. We'd be able to probably reduce the car line by 20, 30 cars maybe," Donovan said. "A lot of those families come over individually with one child. Putting them on this bus I think will make it a lot easier for them."

To ease the traffic even more, Mayor Scott Morgan and Town Manager Greg Dunham had news of their own — they've been talking with the town's consulting engineers to widen Gulfstream Road between Lakeview Drive and at least Old School Road from its

current 18-foot width to 20 feet wide.

Dunham said that would make it a little easier for southbound cars to navigate past the line. The work would be part of the town's Capital Improvement Project, which is scheduled to begin in the Core District in March or April.

"That sounds great," Donovan said. "And if you need us to change our traffic pattern during some of that construction we'd love to work with you on that."

Dispute on enrollment cap

Then came time for the town commissioners to consider Donovan's other goal in attending the meeting: endorsing the development agreement between the school and the town that has let the school enroll 300 students, up from a longtime 250 limit.

Morgan was willing to extend the pact until 2027.

"I think a three-year review on the development agreement would be a wise idea," he said.

Donovan was not pleased and noted that he would probably not be president of the board in three years and that there might be new commissioners by then. He was hoping to have the 300-student limit become permanent and the issue to be resolved.

The school already has agreed to report to the town each October how many students are enrolled, he said.

"We're going to interject a lot of new parties to this and I believe it adds a little bit of disruption that I would like to avoid for the next president and the next commission," he said.

But Morgan told him he would not have been at the meeting if the mayor had not inadvertently discovered that

parents had already received a document from the school detailing its new plans.

Commissioner Joan Orthwein supported building a better relationship.

"Unless the mayor had reached out to you, nobody would ever come back with your plan so I think that is my problem, right?" she said. "Because you said you were going to come back. That's how we left it with you, the commission, and I just think nobody ever came back."

In the end commissioners approved extending the agreement for the three years.

Before the meeting began, new Commissioner Robert Canfield took his oath of office.

Donovan said the Early Childhood Academy, renamed the Gulf Stream School Delray Beach Academy, will cater to children between 1 and 3 years old and offer a full-time preschool program from 7:45 a.m. to 4 p.m. The 4-year-olds will remain on the Gulf Stream campus.

The Gulf Stream School had 293 students in 2022-2023 despite enrollment being capped at 250. This year its enrollment is 294.

Commissioners amended the agreement in January 2023 to raise the cap to 300 children after Dr. Gray Smith, the head of school, told them having more students gives the school a "modest" budget surplus instead of a deficit.

Commissioners were going to vote later on making the higher limit permanent but after hearing in September about the Delray Beach preschool purchase decided to wait at least 90 days so Donovan and Smith could develop and share with them more specific plans. ★



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Video shot from a bike captured the moment of impact.

A1A

Continued from page 1

air ambulance, while a seventh cyclist suffered minor cuts. The driver of the subcompact Kia Soul SUV was also taken to the hospital. The cyclists were part of Galera do Pedal — Portuguese for Pedal Guys — with about 300 members from West Palm Beach to Fort Lauderdale, mostly of Brazilian heritage.

Caught on video

The moment that triggered it all was captured on a camera clipped onto one of the bikes.

As real-life video footage goes, it doesn't get more dramatic than that 90-second clip.

The cyclists are seen pedaling along, two by two on the road, with no time to get out of the way when the SUV came hurtling toward them, seemingly out of nowhere.

It happened on a stretch of A1A alongside the Gulf Stream Golf Club course, where there are only a few inches of crumbling shoulder pavement outside of the travel lanes.

The patient on whom Jones performed CPR was the last to remain hospitalized. He was at Delray Medical Center as of Jan. 30, according to fellow bicycle club members; his wife, the mother of three young children, was also among the victims and had been placed in an induced coma following the crash. She has since been released from the hospital.

Another cyclist was released Jan. 28, club members said. He endured a dislocated shoulder, broken femur, shattered pelvis, cuts requiring 20 stitches and a blood clot on his brain. As of Jan. 30, there was no publicly released report from the Florida Highway Patrol about why the collision occurred or the filing of any charges.

A call for safer roads

Even though nobody died as 11 others did in bike crashes on Palm Beach County roads in 2023, the sheer number of casualties along a road that attracts sightseers from all over the world brought new visibility to the tight space shared by motorists, cyclists, runners and walkers along A1A and other area roads.

Cyclists and area leaders alike are hoping that the attention from the crash can create new momentum for a cause that has run into dead ends before: Make A1A safer for cyclists, motorists and pedestrians alike.

"We're out there and we have every right to the road," Dr. Michael Kasper told the Delray Beach City Commission on Jan. 16, calling himself "one of those



While the driver rests in her smashed SUV, Gulf Stream police and Delray Beach paramedics attend to the injured bicyclists at the crash scene along State Road A1A in Gulf Stream. Photo provided by Gulf Stream Police Department



Palm Beach County's Trauma Hawk air ambulance landed at Gulf Stream Golf Club to evacuate one of the injured bicyclists. Photo provided by Delray Beach Fire Rescue

crazy cyclists you hear your constituents talking about."

Jones sees pressure between motorists and cyclists growing as cycling becomes more and more popular. He said there's a need for more education on both sides, although he's cited more cyclists than motorists for road rule infractions.

"The whole process from start to finish — driver education and testing, information campaigns — needs more emphasis on sharing-the-road responsibilities," Jones said.

More than education, though, cyclists are pressing for changes to the road to make it safer for them. Previous attempts — particularly along the 2-mile stretch of Gulf Stream — have failed.

Towns have resisted state efforts to widen the road or add bicycle lanes, citing the unwanted, potential intrusion the lanes would present to private property and — in Gulf Stream — the cherished Australian pines that line the road and enjoy protected status.

Still, the accident galvanized the creation of the Florida Share the Road Coalition. Its stated goal is to make A1A safer while preserving the road's beauty.

Coalition members went to commission meetings in Gulf Stream and Delray Beach in January to make their case. They say they've also met one-on-one with candidates

or law enforcement in those municipalities as well as in Boca Raton and Hillsboro Beach. Next, they are angling for meetings with state Department of Transportation officials.

Cyclists unite

Even before the day of the crash ended, Delray Beach Mayor Shelly Petrolia promised to fast-track the A1A improvements that are part of a \$100 million plan to make Delray roads safer for pedestrians and cyclists.

"That's an area that we should focus on as one of the places that we can make safer," she said. "... The bike traffic isn't going anywhere."

The Saturday following the crash, more than 400 cyclists gathered at the site, showing just how correct Petrolia was. Many of them said they could see themselves in that crash.

"I've come close to being hit — it seems like motorists have a disassociation with cyclists as human beings," said Robert Segall, 32, a Delray Beach lawyer who belongs to the Alpha Cycling Club.

Some of them felt compelled to come out in solidarity with the fallen cyclists after witnessing or hearing of the crash's aftermath.

"We were terrified — it was the most horrific scene I've ever seen," said Jeanine Seeger, 45, of Boynton Beach.

Motorist inattention and



Gulf Stream Mayor Scott Morgan speaks with (l-r) Felipe Costa, president of Galera do Pedal club, and cyclists Cameron Oster and Jeremy Pritchett. Tim Stepien/The Coastal Star

outright hostility point to an urgent need, she said.

"We've been trying for years to get safer roads," Seeger said.

Drivers should not view cyclists as just nuisances, said Ross Dubin of Boynton Beach, 53, who has been riding up and down A1A for 15 years.

"When you hit us, most of the time, we die — we are human," he said. "We pay taxes. We have children."

Leaders respond

From the dais Jan. 16, Delray Beach Commissioner Rob Long, citing the "utterly terrifying" video shot on a stretch of road that he has often pedaled along, said the time has come to address the hazardous conditions. He said he's not ready to give up on trying to make bike lanes along A1A.

"I think that there are real efforts that we can make through lobbying and advocacy and maybe it's pressuring the Department of Transportation or the town of Gulf Stream," Long said. "This has gone on too long."

To the north of Delray Beach, though, resistance to widening A1A is strong.

Cyclists came to the Jan. 12 Gulf Stream Town Commission meeting a week after the crash. It was at the very same meeting that the town approved rules further protecting the Australian pines that form a canopy over Gulf Stream's

stretch of A1A.

"Since last year, I've been riding my bike for 10,000 miles which is more than I drive my car," said Jeremy Pritchett, 51, of Deerfield Beach, who started a 100-member club, NrChild Cycling Club. "There are few places that compare to the place you call home. Please help us make it safer."

Mayor Scott Morgan, however, told the group that the idea of widening the road is a nonstarter. And the town wouldn't have anything to say about it either because the state has authority over A1A. However, past proposals by the state to widen the road have met with opposition from the town.

Cameron Oster, 37, of Boca Raton and 3R Cycling Experience, which hosts cycling events, also spoke at the Gulf Stream meeting. He asked for bicycling sharrows — symbols on the pavement that indicate to motorists that they should expect to share the road.

Morgan also has more education in mind.

"We really need to promote single-file cycling through the town of Gulf Stream," he said.

Pritchett said he tried to end the meeting on a positive note but believes that Gulf Stream officials are misinformed about the rules of the road.

"It's going to take a while to help people understand what's really going on," Pritchett said.★

South Palm Beach

After fatal crash, town appeals to FDOT for pedestrian crosswalks

By Brian Biggane

After a pedestrian was killed by a hit-and-run driver on State Road A1A last November, South Palm Beach Mayor Bonnie Fischer worked to have a representative of the Florida Department of Transportation come to Town Hall to address residents' safety concerns.

Those efforts came to fruition Jan. 29, when Jonathan Overton, the traffic engineer for the five-county South Florida FDOT district based in Fort Lauderdale, spent 90 minutes answering questions from a near-capacity crowd of about 80.

Nearly 20 residents voiced their concerns, the vast majority of whom asking Overton what needs to be done to establish one

or more crosswalks in the town which, while only five-eighths of a mile long, is the most densely populated along the A1A corridor south of Palm Beach.

Overton didn't offer any quick solutions, pointing out that while there is an asphalt walkway running along much of the west side of the road, there is nothing similar on the east side.

"I don't want to lead someone to a dead end," he said. "There needs to be connectivity."

James Donatelli, a resident of the Palm Beach Harbour Club, proposed as many as four to six crosswalks, including from his condo on the west side to the Barclay on the east side.

The Barclay is the former home of Hatixhe Laiqi, 73, who lost her life while attempting to

cross A1A at dusk on Nov. 10.

"A pedestrian was killed here ... largely because she was invisible," Donatelli said. "The lighting is terrible and we don't have crosswalks. (Putting one there) would serve over 300 residents of the two buildings."

Barclay resident Alan Stern said he had contacted an FDOT official who works under Overton, who wrote him that crosswalk placements "are based upon a strategic plan and would require an engineering study to determine need."

Overton said a study would cost "a couple of thousand dollars" and needs to be paid for by the condos or the town.

As the questions continued, Overton often referred to the problem created by the absence

of a sidewalk on the road's east side. He said he drove up and down A1A several times prior to arriving at Town Hall and saw an elderly couple struggling to walk through the grass.

One suggestion that drew applause was cutting the speed limit from 35 mph to 25 or even 15 mph. The Town Council could approve such a change, but Overton was wary and FDOT would have the final say.

"If I posted an unreasonably slow speed limit some people would say 'I'll stay at that,' but others would be tearing their hair out, and pass on the right or the shoulder or cross the yellow line."

One problem the town has faced for years is a lack of beach access. Some properties on

the west side of A1A pay those on the east side to use their easements, but there is no public access north of Lantana Beach.

Residents on the east side also cross to use the west side walkway. There were several complaints that the walkway is in poor condition, and Overton promised to address those with his maintenance people.

Vice Mayor Bill LeRoy has been adamant that a solution must be found and suggested an ad hoc committee be formed to address the situation. Several residents agreed to serve on it.

"I was thrilled with the turnout, thrilled with the comments," LeRoy said afterward. "We have to solve this, because it's not going to go away. It's going to get worse." ★

Highland Beach

State to host open house in March on details of A1A repaving plan

By Rich Pollack

Highland Beach residents will have a chance to learn more about this summer's \$8.8 million State Road A1A resurfacing project through the town during a public meeting and open house next month hosted by the Florida Department of Transportation.

State officials will be at the Highland Beach Library on March 7, hosting a virtual meeting from 5 to 6 p.m. and an in-person meeting from 6 to 7 p.m. to preview plans for the resurfacing, restoration and rehabilitation project that is expected to last more than a year and cause major traffic disruptions.

Town Manager Marshall Labadie said that while meetings with state officials held last year focused on the design — which will include drainage improvements and a 5-foot bicycle lane on each side of the road — the upcoming meeting will focus on how the design work will be implemented.

Residents can question representatives from the FDOT, the project management team and the contractor who will provide answers on a one-on-one basis following presentations. The state calls the sessions the State Road A1A/South Ocean Boulevard Resurfacing Project Virtual Public Meeting and In-Person Construction Open House.

"It's highly recommended for residents to attend either the free online virtual public meeting or the in-person construction open house for this project," said Melissa Readling, the project's spokesperson. "This will give them a better understanding of the project details and any anticipated impacts."

During the meetings, the presenters will provide details about the number of lanes that can be closed, along with approved detours and days of the week and hours during which lane closures will be permitted. Town leaders acknowledge that the project will be disruptive to residents and people using A1A, but say the result will be improved conditions.

"At the end of the day, A1A is going to be a better road in Highland Beach, but we're going to have to walk over a lot of glass to get there," Labadie said.

In addition to road resurfacing work that will lead to periodic lane closures, work will be done on swales to help with drainage along the highway. That work should not impede traffic, engineers have said.

Hoping to minimize traffic on a 3.3-mile stretch of A1A — which will be repaved in all of Highland Beach and a small section of Delray Beach — the FDOT will place signs on the west side of both the Linton Boulevard and Spanish River bridges warning motorists to expect construction-related delays. Engineers hope the signs will discourage motorists from using A1A if alternative roads are an option.

In Labadie's monthly message to the community, he said that input is valued and asked residents to mark their calendars so concerns and suggestions can be heard.

Those who cannot attend will be able to view a recording of the virtual public meeting afterward at www.d4fdot.com.


State officials say they will soon provide information on how residents can participate in the virtual meeting. ★

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South Palm Beach

Ohio company chosen for new Town Hall project aims to build 'a crown jewel'

By Brian Biggane

After four architectural firms made their proposals for a new Town Hall at a Jan. 16 special meeting of the South Palm Beach Town Council, and after the scoresheets of the council's four members were tallied, Town Clerk Yude Davenport announced an unexpected result: a tie.

Cincinnati-based Moonlight Architecture and CPZ Architects, which has multiple offices in South Florida, amassed an identical number of votes, prompting a brief discussion among the council to determine a winner.

Moonlight was ultimately the choice.

"It was a very hard decision because CPZ is very professional," Mayor Bonnie Fischer said. "It was very close but I scored Moonlight higher."

The tipping point may have been Moonlight's affiliation with Fort Lauderdale-based Erik Scheuermann, who owns Archetype Homes, has an extensive history of working with structural insulated panels, and has appeared before the council multiple times.

The council decided some time ago the new Town Hall and community center would be constructed with SIPs, which are expected to be both better able to withstand extreme climate and less expensive than more traditional building materials.

"Erik is a very unique, innovative person and has a lot of experience with SIPs," Fischer said.

Council member Monte Berendes gave CPZ a slight edge in his vote, but opened the discussion by saying his only concern with Moonlight was that it was based in Ohio, and concluded that was minor. He said he was impressed by the presentation from Moonlight President Andy Roehl.

"He can do the job, that's the important thing," Berendes said of Roehl, 45. "He has a wealth of experience. I'm 99% sure SIPs is the way to go."

Roehl is a board member of the Structural Insulated Panels Association, serves on its Education and Development Committee both nationally and internationally, and is licensed in 31 states.

"I'm the go-to guy with the association; when a project comes up regarding SIPs I'm usually the first call," he said.

A variety of materials, including wood and concrete, can be used to fill the panels. While other bidders designated a specific material they would use, Scheuermann said that because of the coastal climate, he wouldn't state a preference until the process is further along.

"We use a combination of one or the other; we just utilize what we need to solve the problem," he said.

Roehl also promised significant energy savings as compared to the current structure, which was built in three phases between 1976 and 1993.

"These buildings are fighting the Florida summer, so what we would do is lock it out. ... If we added solar panels we could get to zero energy. Net zero has been a goal of mine for years now. It's the right thing to do," Roehl said.

"When we say it's green," Scheuermann added, "over the life of the panels it saves the town a lot of green."

While Roehl has used SIP designs in fire stations and libraries, he said the unique nature of the Town Hall was sure to generate national publicity.

At the SIPA national convention scheduled later in January, Roehl planned to talk "a lot about this building and expect it to get a lot of support."

"If you want to put the town on the map, we could put the town on the map with the project," Roehl said. "It's good stewardship of the funds of the people who are paying into it. Make them proud of what they have; make it a crown jewel. This is the opportunity to do that."

That concept got Berendes excited.

"I like the idea of our building being a beacon, of everyone else looking at it," he said. "I want people to say, 'Damn, these people did it right.' We're a tiny little town but let's be something special."

Asked about a time frame for the project, Roehl said 8 to 12 weeks to formulate a design, then another month to obtain construction permits. The panels will be built off-site and the town must negotiate contracts with the various subcontractors before work can begin.

Construction "is quicker with the SIPs," Roehl said, "but if conditions are perfect, you could be in the building in eight months from the start of construction."

The council tabled a motion to interview for an owner's rep position and Scheuermann said he feels he could serve in that capacity to save the town money.

If the town is unable to work out a contract with Moonlight, the council agreed it would move on to negotiate with CPZ. But Roehl said he doubts it would come to that.

"I have every reason to believe we'll be moving forward and I'm excited to get going," he said. ★

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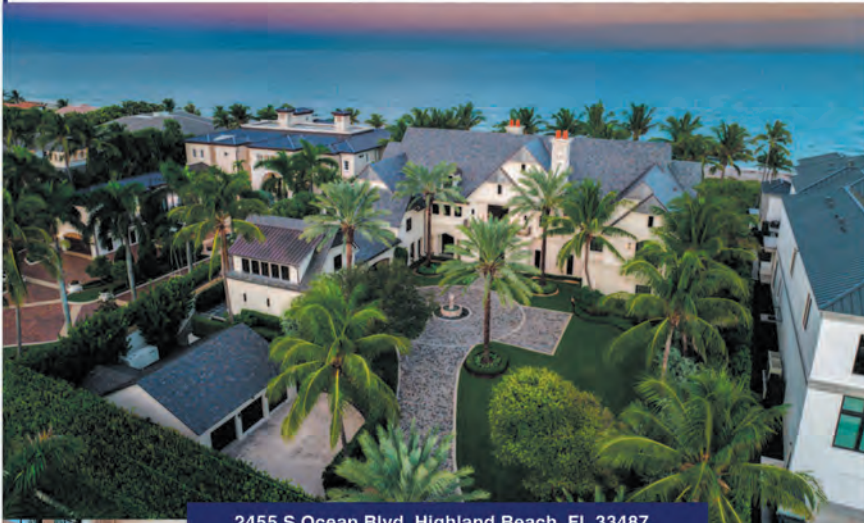
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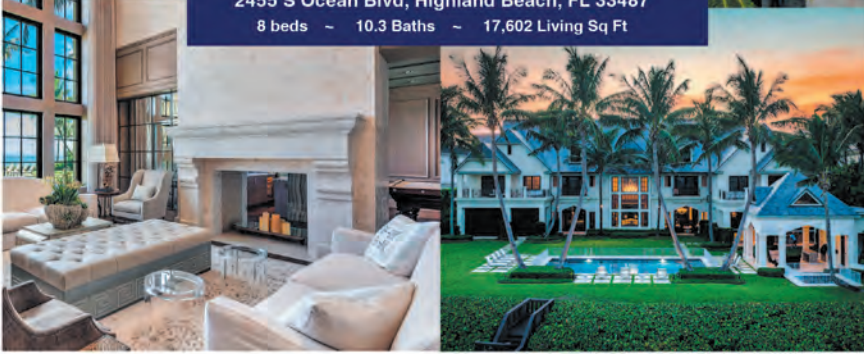
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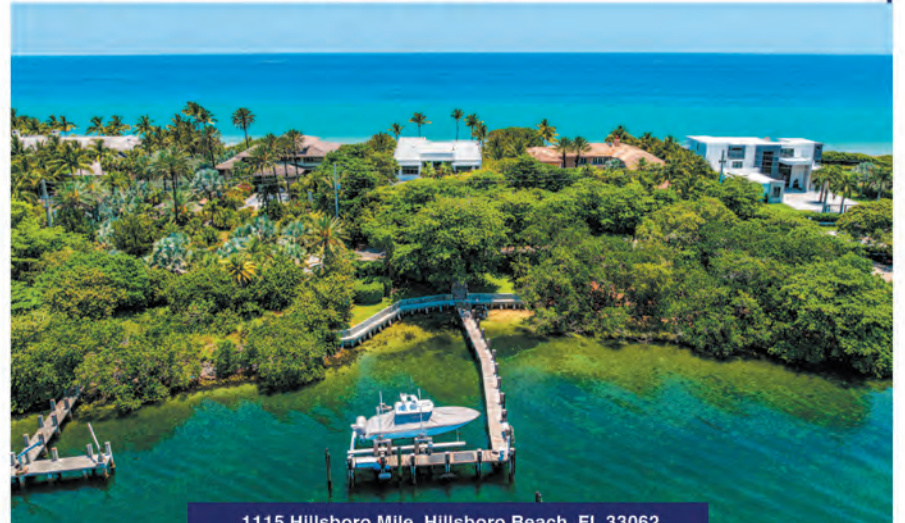


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Boynton Beach

Little League Park's future producing a major league dispute

By John Hughes and Tao Woolfe

East Boynton Beach Little League has filed a lawsuit against the city of Boynton Beach alleging that a proposed renovation of Little League Park would interfere with league activities and disrupt the 2024 baseball season, which is already underway.

"Boynton Beach (City) should be enjoined from its planned shutdown of the available fields during this 2024 season which EBBLL youth players need in order for the program to successfully operate," says the lawsuit filed Jan. 18 in Palm Beach County Circuit Court.

Further, the league says it would suffer "irreparable harm" if the city goes through with its plans to partner with two sports-development organizations — Athletic Angels Foundation and Primetime Sports Group.

The plan of Primetime and Athletic Angels has been to turn Little League Park into a state-of-the-art sports complex, complete with indoor training facilities, artificial turf, accommodations for baseball players with disabilities and a make-over of concession areas and bathrooms.

"It's going to make Boynton Beach the epicenter of youth and youth sports," City Manager Daniel Dugger said last winter.

This winter, though, the park has become a point of contention in the baseball community.

East Boynton Beach Little League alleges that the city's agreement with Athletic Angels and Primetime would give those businesses undue control of

Little League Park, where Little League baseball in Boynton Beach was first played in 1957. It was home to the 2003 United States National Little League champions.

"We appreciate the devotion that East Boynton Beach Little League has to its players and families, and as a city, we are as dedicated to maintaining and improving the park for our residents," Dugger said in a written statement. "It's unfortunate that there is pending litigation involved that prevents us from commenting in further detail."

Boynton Beach Recreation and Parks Director Kacy Young said city agreements with Athletic Angels and Primetime Sports "are continuing to move forward as planned."

Permits submitted by Athletic Angels have been approved and renovation is "scheduled to start (early February), maybe sooner," Young said in an email.

The city is reviewing Primetime plans for the indoor facility, which the City Commission would have to approve, Young said.

The league alleges that the city did not give it a chance to "advise ... on the grave impact that shutting down Field 1 during the EBBLL's entire program would have on the program."

Field access is not the league's only complaint.

The suit also accuses Primetime President Phil Terrano of "terrorizing the EBBLL community" as disputes between Terrano and league members erupted after the city granted Primetime Sports a comprehensive agreement for a ground

lease and training facility in November 2022.

Project plans were amended when a similar contract was issued to Athletic Angels in April 2023, putting the current season in jeopardy of being disrupted by the renovations, the lawsuit alleges.

This lawsuit is not the first time bad blood between the league and the developer has sparked litigation.

Terrano sued members of the league in August for slander and libel relating to comments some members made on social media after his plans became known, including several that called him a "criminal."

Then, last October, according to the latest lawsuit, the EBBLL board of directors met to "terminate Philip Terrano's involvement with EBBLL and his ability to attend EBBLL events."

Last December, Gavin C. McLean, an attorney representing the league, met with the Boynton Beach city attorney to ask the city to rein in Terrano.

The city, though, said that regardless of Terrano's standing with the league, he, like any other citizen, has a right to be in public spaces, which would include the park's parking lot and common areas.

Little League Baseball has a zero-tolerance policy for the kind of behavior EBBLL says Terrano is exhibiting. According to McLean, EBBLL fears losing its Little League charter if such behavior continues.

In his own lawsuit, Terrano alleges that he has been the victim of an assault on his reputation at the hands of EBBLL. His determination in fulfilling this

project, he says, has always been inspired by his own life-shaping experiences gained when he played on the very fields from which he is now accused of wrongdoing.

He says that he doesn't see any hope that he and league members will get along in the future, "not after what they have done to my reputation."

Despite the major league distance between the opposing parties and personalities, they cite the same mantra about what drives their actions: concern for the youngsters in the program.

Terrano said he is disheartened that so much ill will has been generated by an organization that is supposed to be focused on youth athletics.

"This is hurting the kids and that's not right," he said.

On the other side, league attorney McLean said: "What I don't want to get lost here is that the main focus should be on the kids. We're talking kids here. This isn't the place for this."

Another point of contention about the ball fields: At City Commission meetings over the last several months, residents have said that the land beneath Little League Park should be repurposed as city cemetery space.

For at least the past 20 years, residents who have family members buried in Boynton Beach Memorial Park cemetery — which is adjacent to the baseball fields — have lobbied the commission to drop plans for developing the ballfields. They also want the ballpark to give way to an expansion of the city's burial ground. ★

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Business Spotlight

Benny's adds color to drinks menu with Bon Jovi's Hampton Water Rosé

Lee Lipton, owner of Benny's on the Beach restaurant on the pier in Lake Worth Beach, recently announced his partnership with rock musician **Jon Bon Jovi's** Hampton Water Rosé.

The announcement came after a recent visit to the restaurant by Jon Bon Jovi and his son, Jesse Bongiovi, co-founder of Hampton Water Rosé.

The two, with Lipton, sampled the restaurant's Captain's Platter and ahi tuna tostada, finishing with a slice of Benny's famous Key lime pie.

Jon Bon Jovi, a longtime fan of the seaside eatery, acknowledged that Hampton Water Rosé complements Benny's coastal atmosphere and cuisine, and he solidified his connection to the restaurant.

Wine Enthusiast describes the wine this way: "Lovely top notes of peony and baby's breath grace the bouquet of this rosé, with supporting notes of ripe melon, white cherry and strawberry at the core. The palate is medium in weight but well balanced, with a sweet orange flavor and bright acidic thread that keeps the momentum moving from the fruit-fueled palate to the vibrant, refreshing finish."

Now, with Hampton Water

Rosé the only rosé available on Benny's menu, locals and visitors alike can enjoy it along with the restaurant's ocean views, tasty dishes and Key lime pie.

"We're excited to elevate the dining experience for our guests with such a distinguished and acclaimed wine," Lipton said.

Pebb Capital secured a \$173 million construction loan from Monroe Capital and J.P. Morgan for Sundy Village on 7 acres at the corner of Atlantic Avenue and Swinton Avenue, at 22 W. Atlantic Ave., Delray Beach.

The \$240 million mixed-use development broke ground early in 2023, with delivery anticipated for summer 2024.

Among the expected tenants are the Barcelona Wine Bar, Vertical Bridge communications, Double Knot restaurant, and chef and restaurateur Michael Schulson's Schulson Collective.

Joe Freitas and John Criddle of CBRE oversee Sundy Village office leasing with Sara Wolfe of Vertical Real Estate handling the retail leasing.

James and Kimberly Caccavo flipped their estate on a half-acre with 178 feet of waterfront at 71 Curlew Road, Manalapan, for \$13.9 million in



Lee Lipton, Jesse Bongiovi and Jon Bon Jovi (l-r) met at Benny's on the Beach before announcing their partnership. Photo provided

December.

They bought the property in November 2022 for \$10.5 million. The buyer is Drwelruc, a Delaware limited company.

Nicholas Malinosky and **Michael O'Connor**, agents with Douglas Elliman, represented both sides. James Caccavo is the founder and managing general partner of the California-based Steelpoint Capital Partners, a private equity firm. Kimberly Caccavo founded Face Your Grace, a motivational e-learning

platform.

In January 2022, five big-ticket real estate sales were listed in this column. Last January, three big-ticket sales closed. This year, there's one. What's happening? Is the local luxury real estate market cooling off?

Not really, says **Jonathan Miller**, the president and CEO of New York City-based **Miller Samuel Real Estate Appraisers** and the author of a series of market reports covering

more than 50 U.S. markets for Douglas Elliman Real Estate.

"The intensity of the sales has diminished," he said. "The Fed's policy pivot these past two years has played somewhat of a role, but there's still a fair amount of sales and at bigger numbers" in price.

His records show eight sales of properties more than \$50 million in 2023 for Florida, with most of them in Palm Beach and a few in Miami. In 2022, there were 13 in Florida, dominated by sales in Palm Beach, Manalapan and Boca Raton.

"The point is, after peaking in 2021 during the pandemic era housing boom, it still continues through 2023 as we were exiting the pandemic era surge, and as mortgage rates rose at their steepest ascent in four decades," Miller said.

Concierge Property Solutions was named the exclusive property management company for Royal Palm Residences, a nine-story three-tower condominium at 475 E. Royal Palm Road, Boca Raton.

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engagement,” said Tricia Schmidt, director of operations for Concierge Property Solutions.

The management team of the Boynton Beach Professionals leads group presented **Eleanor Balash**, a mortgage professional at **Premier Mortgage Associates**, with its quarterly recognition award.

“Eleanor strives to be a trusted business adviser to her clients,” said **John Campanola**, chairman of the group and an agent with New York Life. “She has been tirelessly working to promote the group and all of its members.”

The **Lowe’s Foundation** recently presented **Palm Beach State College** with a \$1 million grant to support the college’s skilled trades training program. It also announced new nonprofit partners: Goodwill, Local Initiatives Support Corporation, and National Center for Construction Education and Research. Additionally, Lowe’s is partnering with Klein Tools to outfit the college’s training labs with HVAC and electrical tools and equipment.

The **Institute for Regional Conservation**, a Delray Beach nonprofit, held six ecological restoration events at **Red Reef Park** in Boca Raton this past

summer. With help from more than 100 volunteers, beach dune and coastal strand habitats within the park were restored.

Because of funds and support provided by the city of Boca Raton, more than 500 plants representing 40 native coastal species were installed in areas where volunteers removed nonnative invasive species.

The Institute for Regional Conservation will hold eight more volunteer events at Red Reef and South Beach parks beginning in early February. To volunteer, contact Liz Dutra at ldutra@regionalconservation.org.

Jalesa Worthen was promoted to the position of chief operating officer of the Achievement Centers for



Worthen

Children & Families in Delray Beach. Previously, she served as the center’s director of early learning programs, and prior to that, she was the education supervisor at Lutheran Services Head Start.

The **Boynton Beach Community Redevelopment Agency** board decided to postpone interviews with applicants for the CRA

director’s job, due to a shortened Jan. 18 meeting. Interim CRA Director Timothy Tack said some 64 people had responded to the city’s job posting.

The City Commission, which serves as the CRA board, is expected to help winnow the responses and select a few candidates to interview at the agency’s February meeting.

The commission fired Thuy Shutt from the job on Oct. 10 for largely unspecified reasons.

The League of Women Voters of Palm Beach County will host speakers Dr. **Brent Schillinger**, **Renata Bozzetto**, Ph.D., and **Kate Renchin** at its Hot Topics luncheon from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Feb. 21. The event is a roundtable on health care, immigration and voter rights.

Schillinger is co-chair of the league’s health care committee, past president of the Palm Beach County Medical Society, and currently chairs its opioid health care response initiative. He will focus on the status of health care in Florida.

Bozzetto, deputy director of the Florida Immigrant Coalition, will discuss immigration and democracy.

Renchin, co-chair of the Palm Beach County Voting Rights Coalition and the Palm Beach County Election Program, will discuss the coalition’s work to inform

people about pending legislation and litigation and the efforts to recruit nonpartisan poll monitors.

The luncheon will be at the Airport Hilton, 150 Australian Ave., West Palm Beach. The registration fee is \$35, and attendees must register by Feb. 14. Visit <https://lwvpbc.org/>

event/february-hot-topic-2024/

Tao Woolfe contributed to this column.



Send business news to Christine Davis at cdavis9797@gmail.com.



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Unique Opportunity | 5 Winthrop Lane | Boynton Beach | \$1,199,000 | Rare opportunity to purchase this charming beach cottage in the surf pocket. 2 bedrooms and 1 bath. **Web# RX-10884284**



Around Town

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February 2024

The Coastal  Star

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El Camino brings Mexican fare to Boca Raton. Page AT8



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On the Water
Keep your fish *and* lunch on the high seas. Page AT25



House of the Month
Stunning views from penthouse condo. Page AT31

Ahoy! Cruising is back, with more luxury



ABOVE: The Silver Ray from Silversea Cruises launches this summer with dining options that match the destinations. BELOW: Le Commandant Charcot from Ponant cruises is equipped to churn through ice in the polar regions. Photos provided



New ships cater to passenger demand for best of all worlds

By Tao Woolfe and John Hughes

If you've been yearning to get back out on the seven seas, you're in good company. People have shaken off the coronavirus blues and are cruising again in record numbers, according to travel industry reports.

The post-pandemic customer has evolved, however, and is especially interested in high-end, "mindful" cruises, as one company puts it. "Luxury cruises are the quickest growing segment of the cruise industry," said Jeff Dash,

See **CRUISING** on page AT10

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Saturday - 2/3 - KOP Mentoring Network's Black Excellence Under the Stars at the 100 block of Northwest Fifth Avenue, Delray Beach. Honor five African-Americans who have excelled in their respective disciplines during an outdoor street party with food and live music. 6:30-9:30 pm. \$50-\$100. 561-665-0151 or kopmn.org.

Wednesday - 2/7 - Jewish Federation of South Palm Beach County's Lion of Judah Luncheon at B'nai Torah Congregation, 6261 S.W. 18th St., Boca Raton. Join keynote speaker and award-winning author Dara Horn and Israeli musician Gad Elbaz for an empowering luncheon that celebrates women who annually contribute \$5,000-plus to the federation. 10:45 am. \$125 couvert. 561-852-6061 or jewishboca.org/lionluncheon.

Thursday - 2/8 - Jewish Federation of South Palm Beach County's Jacobson Jewish Community Foundation Professional Advisory Committee's Irving Eckhardt Mitzvah Society at Farmer's Table, 1901 N. Military Trail, Boca Raton. Honor Jerry Wolf as a professional who has been instrumental in leading clients to make planned gifts. 6-9 pm. \$90-\$100 couvert. 561-852-3114

or jewishboca.org/mitzvahsociety.

Tuesday-Thursday - 2/13-2/15 - Wayside House's Spring Boutique & Trunk Show at Aloft Delray Beach, 202 S.E. Fifth Ave. Shop among dozens of vendors from throughout the United States at the organization's premiere fundraiser supporting addiction-treatment services for women. 5-7 pm Feb. 13, 9 am-5 pm Feb. 14, 9 am-4 pm Feb. 15. \$125 Feb. 13, \$5 Feb. 14 and 15. 561-278-0055 or waysidehouse.net.

Tuesday - 2/13 - Ruth & Norman Rales Jewish Family Services' Reflections of Hope Luncheon at Boca West Country Club, 20583 Boca West Drive, Boca Raton. Hear a keynote speech from actress Ashley Judd at a benefit for behavioral-health services and substance-abuse programs. 11 am-2 pm. \$180. 561-852-5013 or ralesjfs.org.

Wednesday - 2/14 - Boys & Girls Club of Delray Beach's Heart to Heart Dinner at The Little Club, 100 Little Club Road, Delray Beach. Shop jewelry, chocolates and orchids on the sweetest day of the year and sit down to a delicious meal with a live auction. 6 pm. \$250. 561-676-5472 or bgcpbc.org.

Friday - 2/16 - Greater Boca Raton Chamber of Commerce's Diamond Awards Luncheon at Boca Raton Marriott at Boca Center, 5150 Town Center Circle. Honor women who have achieved success in their professional career and continue to make a difference in the

community. 11:30 am-1:30 pm. \$100. 561-395-4433 or bocaratonchamber.com.

Friday - 2/16 - American Association of Caregiving Youth's Hearts & "Soles" at Royal Palm Yacht & Country Club, 2425 W. Maya Palm Drive, Boca Raton. Walk a day in the life of a caregiving youth during an extraordinary evening of decadence, dining and dancing to benefit the nonprofit's mission of ensuring support services for children with adult responsibilities. 6-11 pm. \$300. 561-391-7401 or aacy.org.

Monday - 2/19 - Florida Atlantic University's Culture, Arts and Society Today (C.A.S.T.) Party at Boca Raton Marriott at Boca Center, 5150 Town Center Circle. Be entertained by FAU graduate and Broadway and television star Marc Kudisch, who will headline the fourth-annual fundraiser for student scholarships at the Dorothy F. Schmidt College of Arts and Letters. 6-9 pm. \$300. 561-297-2337 or fauf.fau.edu/events/castparty.

Thursday - 2/29 - Jewish Adoption and Foster Care Options' South Palm Beach/North Broward Chapter's Hollywood: The Golden Age, Featuring the Iconic Life of Elizabeth Taylor at St. Andrews Country Club, 17557 Claridge Oval West, Boca Raton. Dress up for a day of shopping, lunch and a presentation by violet eyes expert René Silvin. 10 am boutique, 11:30 am program. \$150. 954-368-1879 or jafco.org.

Heart to Heart Dinner
The Little Club, Gulf Stream



Feb. 14: The Valentine's Day event will offer the opportunity to shop for jewelry, chocolates and orchids and to sit down to a delicious meal with a live auction, all to benefit the Boys and Girls Club of Delray Beach. Time is 6 p.m. Cost is \$250. Call 561-676-5472 or visit bgcpbc.org. ABOVE: (l-r) Co-Chairwomen Susan Ambrecht, Susan Mullin and Sacha McGraw. Photo provided

MARCH

Friday - 3/1 - Faulk Center for Counseling's Blast from the Past Fundraising Breakfast and Doug Shannon's Juke Box Bingo at Broken Sound Club, 2401 Willow Springs Drive, Boca Raton. Get ready for a delicious

morning meal, unforgettable music and a chance to win amazing prizes while supporting mental health. 9 am. \$75. 561-483-5300 or faulkcenterforcounseling.org.

Friday - 3/1 - National Jewish Health's The 2024 New Directions Luncheon at Boca West Country Club, 20583 Boca West Drive, Boca Raton. Help raise money for the leading respiratory hospital in the nation and hear from Marci Shimoff, co-author of *Chicken Soup for the Woman's Soul*. 11 am-1:30 pm. \$150. 561-477-5400 or nationaljewish.org.

Saturday - 3/2 - American Disabilities Foundation's Boating & Beach Bash for People with Disabilities at Spanish River Park, 3001 N. Ocean Blvd., Boca Raton. Watch participants engage in animal-therapy sessions and other beach activities while enjoying games, giveaways, lunch and live entertainment at an event that is the nation's largest for children and adults with special needs. 10 am-3 pm. Free. 561-899-7400 or boatingbeachbash.com.

Saturday - 3/2 - Sandoway Discovery Center's Muscle on the Beach at Old School Square, 51 N. Swinton Ave., Delray Beach. Get excited about a car show featuring more than 100 American hotrods and trucks from decades past as well as a silent auction all benefiting the nonprofit's hands-on learning experiences that focus on Florida's fragile ecosystems. 10 am-3 pm. Free. 561-274-7263 or sandoway.org.

Saturday - 3/2 - George Snow Scholarship Fund's The "Rhinstone Cowboy" Ball: Boots & Bling at Boca West Country Club, 20583 Boca West Drive, Boca Raton. Help deserving students achieve their dream of attending college while enjoying casino games, live music, alligator wrestling, line dancing and more. 6-11 pm. \$325. 561-347-6799 or scholarship.org.

Wednesday - 3/6 - YMCA of South Palm Beach County's Inspiration Breakfast at Peter Blum Family YMCA of Boca Raton, 6631 Palmetto Circle South. Hear from Emmy Award-nominated sports broadcaster Erin Andrews, the keynote speaker, while raising funds for programs aimed at youths, families and seniors. 7:30-10 am. \$300. 561-237-0944 or ymcaspbc.org/inspirationbreakfast.

Tuesday - 3/12 - Achievement Centers for Children & Families' Delray Beach Home Tour in the Palm Trail neighborhood. Explore extraordinary residences, enjoy a catered luncheon and take advantage of trolley service or golf cart transportation along the route. 10 am-4 pm. \$125. 561-276-0520 or achievementcentersfl.org/delray-home-tour.

Sunday - 3/17 - LIFE's "Lady in Red" Gala at The Breakers, One S. County Road, Palm Beach. Celebrate with global music superstar Paul Anka and comedian legend Jay Leno at the 30th-annual affair that benefits disabled veterans through American Humane's "Pups4Patriots" program and local children through Palm Beach County Food Bank's "Lois' Food4Kids" program. 6 pm. \$1,500. 561-582-8083 or life-edu.org.

Tuesday - 3/26 - National Society of Arts and Letters' Florida Chapter's Star Maker Awards at Royal Palm Yacht & Country Club, 2425 W. Maya Drive, Boca Raton. Honor Lifetime Achievement Award winner Yaacov Heller at an event that benefits the nonprofit's scholarships, competitions and mentoring programs for local performing and visual artists. 6 pm. \$350 before Feb. 14, \$375 after Feb. 14. 561-945-0999 or nsallflorida.org.



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Tuesday, April 30, 2024

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RSVP required by April 22, 2024 at www.eventbrite.com

Pay It Forward

Broadway star returns to alma mater for C.A.S.T. party

By Amy Woods

A three-time Tony Award nominee for roles in *Thoroughly Modern Millie*, *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang* and *9 to 5*, Marc Kudisch also has film / television credits (*Mindhunter* on Netflix and *Billions* on Showtime) and opera credits (*A Little Night Music* and *Pirates of Penzance*).

Kudisch's fame and success began after he attended Florida Atlantic University's Dorothy



Kudisch

anniversary of its being renamed this month.

"We try to make the C.A.S.T. party a lot of fun," said Michael Horswell, the college's dean, referring to the Feb. 19 Culture, Arts and Society Today party. "We have great entertainment, and this year, we have the headliner."

Kudisch was in the theater department's class of 1988 — its first — five years prior to

If You Go

What: Florida Atlantic University's Culture, Arts and Society Today (C.A.S.T.) party

When: 6 to 9 p.m. Feb. 19

Where: Boca Raton Marriott at Boca Center, 5150 Town Center Circle

Cost: \$300

Information: 561-297-2337 or fauf.fau.edu/2023cast

the transformational gift by Charles E. Schmidt and the Schmidt Family Foundation that renamed the college.

"It is more of a friend-raiser — getting the word out about the college and all of our majors and our 13 departments," Horswell said of the three-hour event that will take place at the Boca Raton Marriott at Boca Center. "We think it's extremely important for students to continue that tradition of well-rounded exposure to the humanities — to the liberal arts, if you will."

The benefit for student scholarships will feature cocktails, gourmet food and live numbers with Kudisch. Other entertainment includes

the FAU Jazz Band, visual-arts popups and dancing to the music department's commercial band. The goal is to raise \$100,000.

"That allows us to fund the most meritorious students — the standouts who are doing well but still have financial need and the students in need," Horswell said.

Another highlight of the C.A.S.T. party is its three honorees:

• Philanthropist Myrna



Gordon Skurnick

that funded the expansion of the college's studio theater into BrandStar Studios at FAU.

Gordon Skurnick, who has contributed tirelessly to the arts in South Florida.

• BrandStar, a corporate benefactor

• Charles E. Schmidt and the Schmidt Family Foundation.

"My mother would have been proud to recognize this milestone," said Dick Schmidt, son of Charles E. and Dorothy F. Schmidt. "She knew the importance of the arts and education, and she made it her mission to make both more widely available." ★

Let's make summer plans!

I'm working with my freshman, sophomore, and junior students to brainstorm projects and activities that demonstrate their interests outside of the classroom. How can I help your student discover their passions while also bolstering their college resume?

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Philanthropy Notes

VIP reception for Empty Bowls in Delray Beach raises awareness

Palm Beach County Food Bank supporters got an early seat at the table when the organization cooked up the excitement at its VIP reception for the eighth annual Empty Bowls Delray Beach.

The VIP reception included a beautiful display of handcrafted bowls by local artists as well as a silent auction, live music, cocktails and hors d'oeuvres.

"The holidays can be a tough time for many, and that does not exclude local neighbors here in Palm Beach County," CEO Jamie Kendall said. "There are 132,000 food-insecure residents in our county, and we typically find that those who are dealing with hunger are also experiencing chronic illness or other catalysts for loss of income."

The 2023 Empty Bowls Delray Beach took place at Trinity Lutheran in December,

with John and Diane Brewer serving as event chairs and Stephanie Dodge serving as honorary chairwoman.

For more information, call 561-670-2518 or visit www.pbcfoodbank.org.



Joel and Beverly Altman

Altman's make \$2.5 million gift to Boca Raton Regional

Corporate leaders Joel Altman and Beverly Raphael-Altman's \$2.5 million gift to "Keeping the Promise — the Campaign for Boca Raton Regional Hospital" will be recognized with the naming of the East Courtyard on campus.

The gift is in memory of

Sydney Altman, Joel Altman's father and the first president of the hospital foundation board.

"We are so thankful for the Altman's demonstration of generosity toward our billion-dollar campus transformation," CEO Lincoln Mendez said. "This is another extraordinary gift to Keeping the Promise, and it continues to underscore the belief and trust in our vision and the urgency people in our community feel about the future of health care here."

Raphael-Altman said, "We have a wonderful insight into the plans and vision of Boca Raton Regional Hospital and believe they have the health and well-being of everyone in this community in mind as they forge their way into the future. We're proud to be part of this effort."

For more information, call 561-955-4142 or visit <https://donate.brrh.com>.

Philanthropy Tank, school district team up

The nonprofit committed to empowering young change-makers announced a new collaboration, approved by the Palm Beach County School District board, that paves the way for establishing Philanthropy Tank clubs in high schools across the county.

The measure will create platforms for local students to address pressing community issues. The Changemakers program challenges youths to implement sustainable solutions to identified problems. Philanthropist investors fund the initiatives and mentor students as they launch the efforts.

"If any of you have not had the opportunity to go when they are judging, it's a fabulous experience," board Chairwoman Karen Brill said. "I invite everybody to go and

see these amazing projects." For more information, call 561-910-3893 or visit www.philanthropytank.org.

Cuban scholar receives 'America 250' award

The España Chapter of the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution honored Martha Gutiérrez-Steinkamp with the esteemed America 250 award.

The chapter, in alignment with patriotic activities organized for the celebration of the 250th anniversary of the United States, recognized Gutiérrez-Steinkamp for her efforts in fostering a connection with Spain. She is a Cuban-born scholar and a Smithsonian fellow.

"We were proud to host this DAR event to highlight Martha's accomplishments toward a greater understanding of Spain's role in the American Revolution," said Mary Csar, executive director of the Boca Raton Historical Society. "She is so deserving of the DAR's America 250 award."

For information about the España Chapter, visit darspain.org. For information about America 250, visit dar.org/national-society/america-250. For information about the Boca Raton Historical Society, call 561-395-6766 or visit www.bocahistory.org.

Speaker series to conclude with interior designer

Impact 100 Palm Beach County's latest speaker series concludes Feb. 20 with a presentation by interior designer Ashley Whittaker.

Whittaker grew up in South County and attended Gulf Stream School.

"Our Impact Talks series reflects our commitment to uniting women and fostering

positive change in our community," Co-President Jeannine Morris said, noting that Whittaker will discuss

the inspiration behind her designs. "The journeys our esteemed speakers will share are a testament to the profound difference individuals can make when they are dedicated to creating meaningful impact."

The free event runs from 4:30 to 6 p.m. at the Boca Raton Innovation Campus Presentation Hall.

For more information, call 561-336-4623 or visit impact100pbc.org.



Send news and notes to Amy Woods at flamywoods@bellsouth.net.

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Celebrations

Cocktails for the Club

St. Andrews Club, Boynton Beach — Dec. 5



The Boys & Girls Clubs of Palm Beach County rang in a record-breaking fifth annual affair to benefit its Delray Beach location. More than \$268,000 was raised thanks to the help of Co-Chairwomen Jennifer Coulter, Whitney Garner and Virginia Kinsey. Proceeds will go directly to the club and its bus that transports members from school. 'It is heartwarming to see the Gulf Stream community come together to celebrate the amazing work of the Boys & Girls Club of Delray Beach and to make so many generous donations,' Kinsey said. 'We know the difference this organization makes in the community, and we are so proud to support it.' **TOP:** (l-r) Garner, Kinsey and Coulter. **LEFT:** AJ and Francesca Lewis. **RIGHT:** Sponsors Missy Walsh and Jorquette Smith. **Photos provided by Tracey Benson Photography**

Annual Giving Campaign

Florida Atlantic University, Boca Raton — Nov. 30



The YMCA of South Palm Beach County had its victory celebration to wrap up the yearly fundraising effort and proudly shared with donors and volunteers in attendance that it had raised a record-breaking \$1,076,571. 'This campaign was a massive success,' said Linda Gunn Paton, chairwoman of the 2023 effort. 'We had a motivated crew of donors, staff, volunteers, members, ambassadors and philanthropic partners involved this year who were committed to sharing the impactful work the Y does in our community. I believe we accomplished that through this campaign.' **ABOVE:** (l-r) Paton, Pam Arrieta, Sandra DeJesus, Jackie Reeves, Casey Wilbanks, Michael Sorg, Elke Bojes, Kelley Marcellus, Nicole Grimes, Phil Piedt, Heather Dupree and Michael Nathanson. **Photo provided**

Thanksgiving Box Brigade

Boca Helping Hands — Nov. 18 and 19



Boca Helping Hands distributed turkeys and Thanksgiving food boxes to South County clients at its five drive-through locations, in east Boca Raton, west Boca Raton, Delray Beach, Boynton Beach and Lake Worth. In all, the organization provided meals for nearly 14,000 in need. 'We are so grateful to the community each year for their food drives and Thanksgiving box donations,' BHH Executive Director Greg Hazle said. 'Their generosity means that people who would not otherwise be able to sit down for a holiday meal can enjoy one with their family.' **ABOVE:** Kara Janzen and Anita Kriensky. **Photo provided**

'Wisdom, Wizards & Wine'

Boca Raton Museum of Art — Dec. 5



The Delray Beach-based nonprofit Roots and Wings raised more than \$50,000 at its inaugural event before a sellout crowd. The fundraiser's festivities included dinner, a wine presentation, wizard-themed centerpieces, a 'Wisdom Hunt' scavenger game and a live auction. The money will support Project UpLift, a tutoring program for students in Title 1 elementary schools. 'I want to sincerely thank all those who helped make this special inaugural event possible, including the sponsors, those who donated auction items and all those who came out to support the event,' founder Ted Hoskinson said. 'The \$50,000 raised will go toward our Project UpLift literacy program and will provide more than 100 local students the opportunity to learn to read.' **ABOVE:** (l-r) Pamela Weinroth, Jan Savarick, Daniel Hartwell and Pamela Polani. **Photo provided by Emiliano Brooks**

Tree Lighting Celebration

Sailfish Club of Florida, Palm Beach — Dec. 5

Adopt-A-Family of the Palm Beaches' festive annual ceremony raised \$900,000 to assist in the fight against homelessness. The event began with the tradition of a serenade by The Kings Academy Choir. Once inside, guests were transported to a holiday wonderland as they perused the silent auction and, later, heard from a previous Adopt-A-Family of the Palm Beaches client who shared how the organization led her and her family to a place of stability and security. 'We are continuously grateful for the individuals, families and organizations that enable us to help our neighbors,' CEO Matt Constantine said. 'This event has been around for nearly as long as our agency and raises critical funds to support those faced with homelessness right here in our community.' **ABOVE:** Xiomi Murray and Jennifer Nawrocki. **Photo provided**



Celebrations

Wee Dream Ball

Boca West Country Club, Boca Raton — Dec. 1



The Fuller Center's signature gala was filled with magic and wonder brought to life by attendees, speakers and honorees. First to take the stage was Simone Spiegel, board president and event chairwoman. Spiegel introduced Ellyn Okrent, CEO of the organization, who reminded guests about the challenges in child-care services and education everyone is facing. Honoree Dr. Tina Westine shared a personal experience: 'My mother was able to thrive and succeed as a successful businesswoman because of the support she received from the Fuller Center. The Fuller Center planted the seed of hope in me and my family that inspired us to pursue the American dream.' **ABOVE:** (l-r) Tom Mersch, Dr. Patricia Anastasio and Simone and Sam Spiegel. **RIGHT:** Drs. Tina and John Westine. **Photos provided**



Florida Federation of Garden Clubs Arbor Day

Ocean Ridge and Boynton Beach — Jan. 19

Ocean Ridge Garden Club members (l-r) Julia Walker, Sallie Howell with her dog Fishbone, Elisa Garcia, Britt Flanagan, Susan Holtz, Deborah Land, Cheryl MacGuidwin and Carolyn Cassidy celebrated Arbor Day by overseeing the planting of a native marlberry and porterweed at the northwest corner of Woolbright Road and A1A. The planting was done by Indian Trails Native Nursery and celebrated Florida Federation of Garden Clubs' 100th anniversary as many garden clubs throughout the state planted trees and other flora on Jan. 19. The Ocean Ridge Garden Club gave away native Simpson's stoppers and bay trees to participants. **Tim Stepien/The Coastal Star**



At the Boynton Hills neighborhood garden, Mark Cassini (l-r), Linda Anderson, Alannah Irwin, Nancy Lemcke, Bonnie Paton, Christine Johnson and Steven Grant gathered to plant a Lignum vitae, or Tree of Life. **Photo provided**



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Dining

Restaurants open in Boca, Boynton for lovers of Mexican fare

El Camino, the popular Mexican chain that began in downtown Delray Beach, has expanded to Boca Raton. The Modern Restaurant Group's fourth, and largest, location opened in December.

Known for authentic, from-scratch foods such as its tortillas, El Camino brings its fare to Restaurant Row in Midtown, 5377 Town Center Road. The 10,000-square-foot indoor/outdoor space is now the flagship of the chain.

Asked about expansion plans, the vice president of Modern Restaurant's operations, Francis Lake, said, "We've always been looking at new markets to bring El Camino to, including Tampa, Orlando and Key West at the moment."

He explained the popularity at the restaurant, calling it a "cult favorite" brand. "We aren't a food truck or street food-offering concept."

Everything on the food and drink menus is chef-driven, Lake said, using all fresh ingredients — the restaurant has no freezers for food. Twenty-five sauces are made in-house daily.

Billed as Mexican soul food, the menu in Boca Raton includes new items, such as red snapper ceviche Veracruz using manzano chiles, pickled cambay onions, capers and organic green olives; a chopped salad made with chayote squash, jicama, red cabbage and spiced pepita seeds; and a cochinita pibil taco with habanero salsa.

Foods are sourced locally when possible, and some organic is offered.

New cocktails here include several margaritas — a mango lassi, blueberry, hibiscus guava and an avocado 'rita.

Another new house-made



Libations at the new El Camino in Boca Raton include old favorites as well as several new concoctions, including an assortment of margaritas. **Photo provided**

drink is a banana tequila. The bananas marinate in reposado tequila, then are combined with a banana peel Demerara sugar. A michelada has a house-made mix featuring Maggi seasoning and a smoky house-made salt using Tajin, smoked sea salt and ground chipotle peppers.

Design of the new restaurant follows those of Delray, West Palm Beach and Fort Lauderdale with broad murals by Miami urban street artist Ruben Ubiera.

Two live trees anchor patio seating, with banquettes underneath. The indoor/outdoor bar wraps around the building and features a corner outside fireplace. Tables come in varying configurations.

As with the others, the Boca restaurant is open late night.

El Camino, 5377 Town Center Road, No. 100, Boca Raton. 561-980-7700; elcaminobocaraton.com. Open daily, 11 a.m. to 2 a.m.

Also new to the area is a "San Diego-inspired" Mexican eatery, **A'Lu Mexican Cuisine**

in Boynton Beach. Described as "Tex-Mex without the Tex" and "elevated Mexican," the menu includes short rib empanada; ceviche; and tacos such as birria (made as traditional with goat meat) and lengua (beef tongue), along with more familiar barbacoa (braised beef brisket) and smoked chicken.

Snapper Veracruz, smoked short rib mole, and a unique corn lasagna with roasted poblano gravy are on the entree menu, alongside the waffle made of street corn, chicharron, chorizo and sour orange pickled vegetables.

An extensive drink menu of handcrafted cocktails, a tequila and mescal list, and beers and wines complement the food.

A'Lu Mexican Cuisine, 1080 Gateway Blvd., Boynton Beach. 561-810-4572; alupalmbeach.com. Open daily, 11 a.m. to 10 p.m.

Other Mexican favorites

Looking for more Mexican restaurants? Other favorites in the area include:

Rocco's Tacos and Tequila Bar, 110 E. Atlantic Ave., Delray Beach. A small chain originating in West Palm Beach. Extensive tequila list.

Casa Linda, 701 N. Congress Ave., Boynton Beach. A blend of Mexican, Latin and Spanish cuisine. A longtime fixture in the area.

Tacos al Carbon, 4469 S. Congress Ave., Lake Worth Beach. A spin-off of the location at 4420 Lake Worth Road and a late-night go-to for people craving tacos. No frills — a few sides and drinks.

Cafe Tecun, 7 N. L St., Lake Worth Beach. A hidden gem with very fresh Mexican, Caribbean, South American and Latin fare in a nondescript setting.

Mi Casita Mexican Restaurant, 499 NE Spanish River Blvd., Boca Raton. This boasts an extensive menu that includes numerous vegetarian choices.

Morikami's Taste of Asia festival is this month

The first big food event



Enjoy sushi and other Asia-inspired dishes under the stars at Taste of Asia on Feb. 17 at the Morikami. **Photo provided**

of the season is the Taste of Asia, 6:30 to 11 p.m. Feb. 17 at the Morikami Museum and Japanese Gardens.

Numerous chefs and performers will celebrate Japan's culture and cuisine at this inaugural dine-around in the gardens surrounding the museum.

Guests will be given cuisine passports to use while sampling Asian-inspired dishes from South Florida restaurateurs, and sipping fine wines, sake and whiskey.

Restaurants and drink providers include: Coco Sushi Lounge and Bar; Cornell Cafe at Morikami; Gaijin Taiyaki; Ito En; Kapow Noodle Bar; Ken Rose Catering; Lemongrass Asian Bistro; Niigata Sake Selections; Nobu Miami; Palm Beach Meats; Phat Boy Sushi, Kitchen and Bar; Ramen Lab Eatery; Sushi Yasu Tanaka; Sushi by Bou; The Sea Kitchen; Yakitori Sushi House; and Winebow.

A number of luxury items and experiences, including a Goodyear blimp ride, are on the block for a live auction that benefits the museum's programs and exhibitions as well as a planned expansion.

Tickets are \$200 per person. For more information and to purchase tickets, go to morikami.org/taste-of-asia.

Morikami Museum and Japanese Gardens, 4000 Morikami Park Road, Delray Beach. 561-495-0233.

Where to take your sweetie out on Valentine's Day

Braving the restaurant scene for Valentine's Day? We bow to you.

(Major tip: Make reservations before you get to the end of this article if you want to eat out on Feb. 14.)

A few places have noted specials:

Something unique is the lunch special at the **Morikami Museum's Cornell Cafe**. For \$14, get lunch for two: mimosas, egg rolls or veggie spring rolls, shrimp dumplings or veggie dumplings, and California or veggie rolls. Stroll the relaxing gardens afterward.

Museum admission is required to dine here.

Le Colonial in Delray Beach is offering a special three-course dinner, with choices for appetizers and entrees at \$115. A sexy atmosphere is a plus.

Elisabetta's in Delray Beach is offering a featured menu item, cacio e pepe — a spaghetti dish to share a la *Lady and the Tramp*. Elisabetta's "brother" restaurant, Louie Bossi's in Boca Raton, will feature tagliarini al limone, another special pasta dish with lemon, mascarpone, pistachios and basil.

At **City Oyster** in Delray Beach, chef Jordan Stille prepares a lobster risotto. The special (\$68) comes with a half bottle of Piper-Heidsieck Champagne.

A chocolate fondue dessert bar will top off the evening at the **Atlantic Grille**, inside the Seagate Hotel in Delray Beach. Specials include lobster bisque, a gin and beet salmon crudo, fettuccini carbonara, and wagyu surf and turf.

In brief

Unexpected restaurant closures marked the beginning of the year. **Del Fuego**, a restaurant many believe is in a jinxed location on the east side of the Intracoastal in Delray Beach, closed in mid-January after only a six-month run. High rent vs. empty seats may have been the real downfall of the Mexican restaurant. ...

Also closed: **Burger Fi** on the beach in Delray Beach. The chain underwent rapid expansion before 2020, as well as gobbling another chain, Anthony's Coal Fired Pizza. Other Burger Fi's have closed as well. ...

Still closed, and awaiting a new tenant, possibly: the **Delray Market** food hall. After debuting in the middle of the pandemic as the state's largest food hall, the massive space struggled to gain a viable footing amid the fierce downtown competition for diners.



Jan Norris is a food writer who can be reached at nativefla@gmail.com

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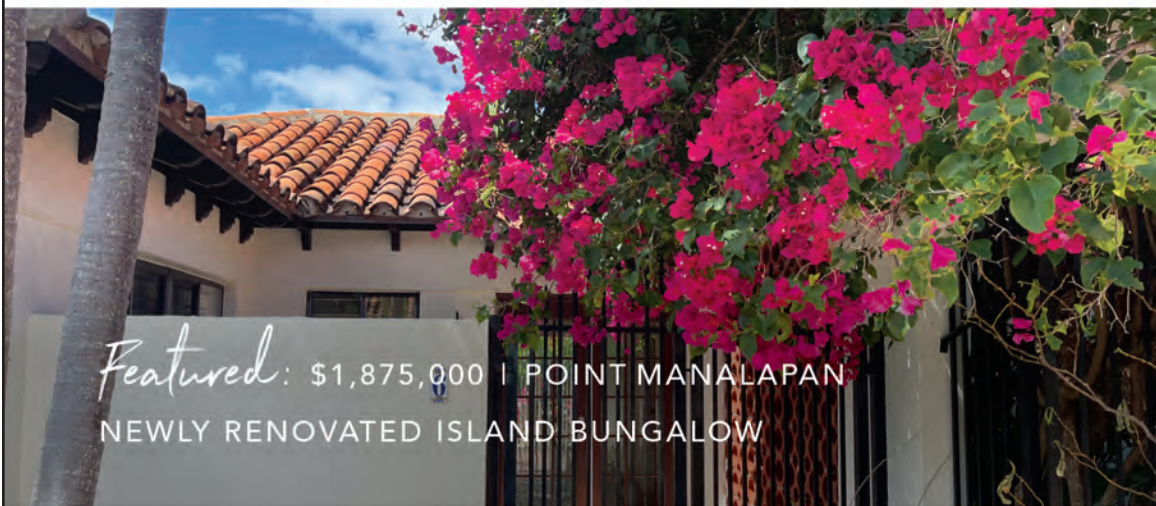
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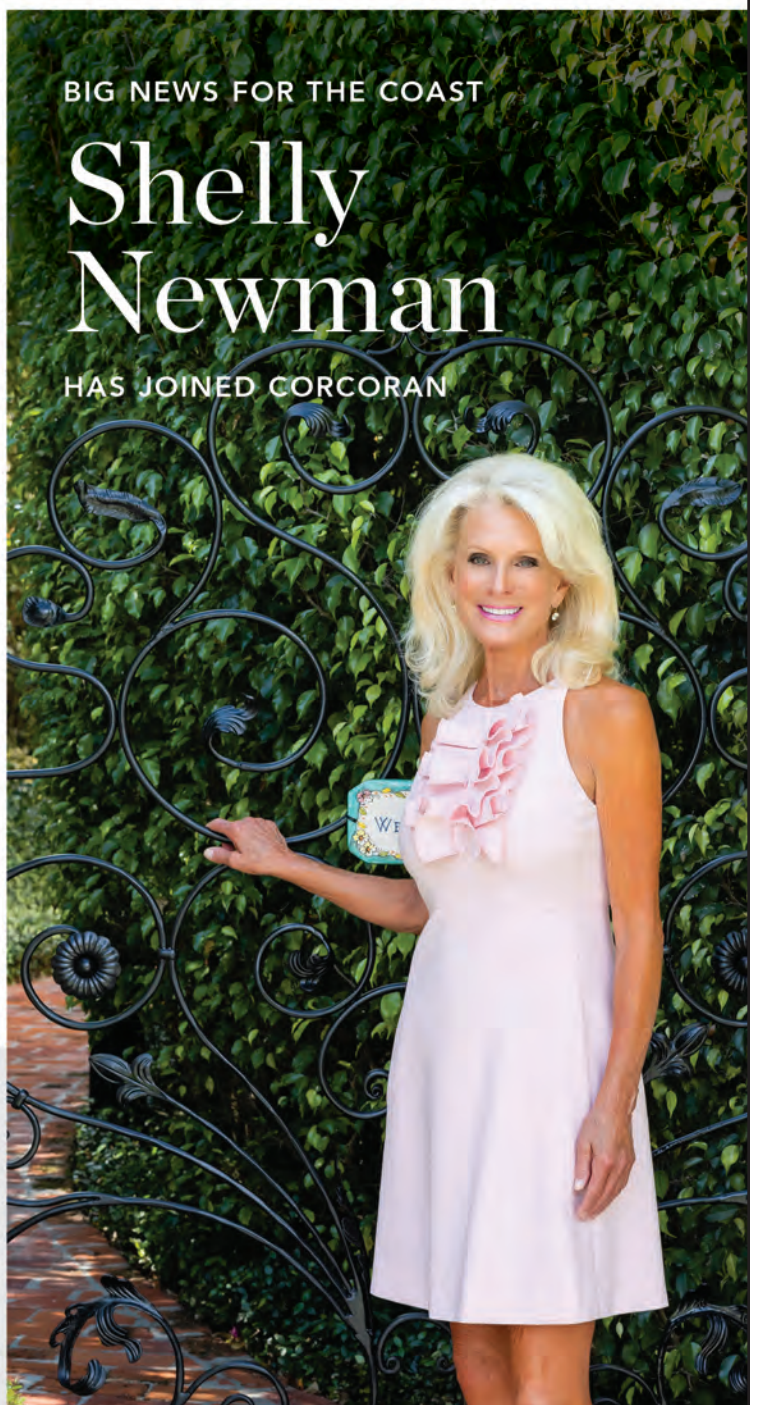
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CRUISING

from page AT1

CEO of Dash Travel and Cruises in Delray Beach, which specializes in cruises and has been in South Florida for 40 years.

Travelers want to go to ports of call that add an extra layer of interest to the trip — such as historic or environmental significance, Dash says.

The Antarctic, for example, is a newly popular destination.

Le Commandant Charcot, a luxury cruise ship from Ponant, aims to attract high-end adventurers who want to learn about the planet. The cruise line lays claim to having the most advanced ice-breaking technology on the ocean, in addition to scientists and researchers onboard collecting data and sharing their findings.

Dash describes Ponant as a small, interesting French luxury line that focuses on smaller audiences and specialty destinations such as the polar regions. Le Commandant Charcot has room for 200 passengers.

The limited number means that guests maintain their privacy and enjoy the feeling of being on a private yacht — able to call at iconic ports as well as secret harbors, accessible only to smaller ships.

People want to see the Antarctic because “it’s on their bucket list,” Dash said.

The travel industry suffered mightily during the pandemic and subsequent COVID outbreaks — such as last winter’s surge — but is making up for lost time and money, Dash said.

The market, which peaked in 2019 at 29.7 million customers and went down to 20.4 million customers in 2022, roared back to life in 2023 with 31.5 million customers, he said. “The expectation is that the market will go to 37 million customers in five years,” Dash said.

For 2024, at least 14 new luxury ships are under construction by many of the traditional sailing companies, such as Cunard, Seabourn, MSC, Regent and Viking.

A few ships are being produced by completely new cruise lines. Among them are small ultra-luxury ships such as the Explora I — built by a relatively new cruise line, Explora Journeys. Launched in 2023, the Explora I accommodates fewer than 1,000 guests and weighs 64,000 tons. The Explora II is due to be finished and launched with a tour of the Mediterranean later this year.

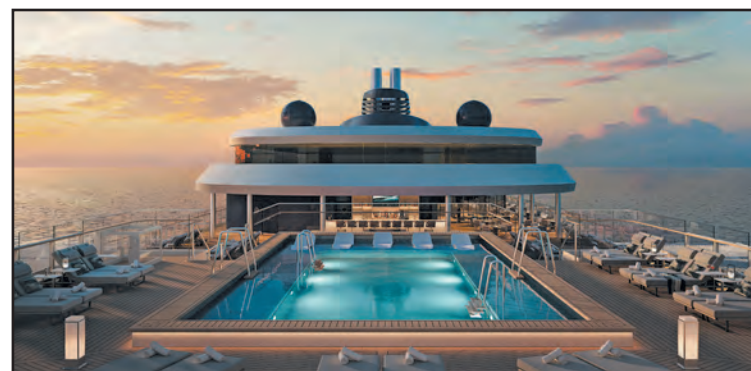
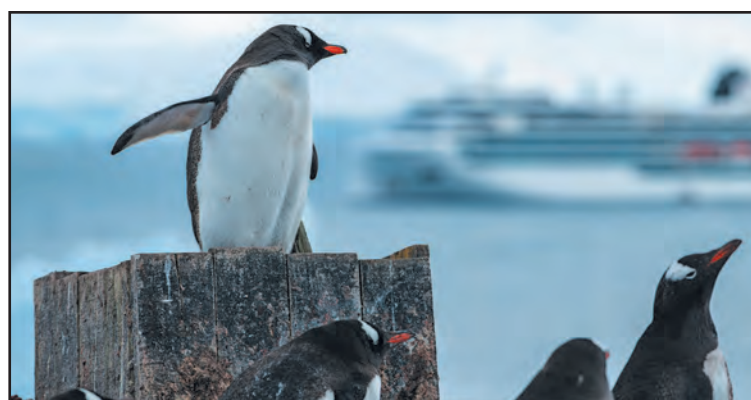
The traditional global routes are always available, but many of today’s travelers want an experience deeper than overeating and overdrinking for a week.

“Many of the luxury and expedition cruises now have specialists on board to offer lectures,” Dash said.

Viking is among them, offering resident historians and guest lecturers to shed light on



ABOVE: Spa area with pools on the Viking Saturn. **BELOW:** The Antarctic, with its charming penguins, is a popular Viking cruise destination. **BOTTOM:** The Ilma by Ritz-Carlton, to launch this fall, has a stunning pool area. **Photos provided**



a destination’s history, art and architecture. Guests have access to an extensive library as well.

Dash has seen a lot of advance booking and says most of the space on his 2024 cruises is sold out.

Here are some details about the luxury ships that have joined their respective fleets, and those that will grace the seas later this year:

Ilma

Last October, Ritz-Carlton launched the Evrima and entered the cruising industry with the same promise of elegance for which its luxury hotels are known. This year it is expected to double its fleet with its second superyacht, the Ilma.

Late to the cruising business, Ritz-Carlton is something of a trendsetter ship-wise. Luxury hoteliers Four Seasons and Aman are also planning to launch ships in 2025.

Prices for the Ilma’s inaugural voyage, to and from Athens in September, start at around \$7,400. Amenities include an attached marina that allows guests to be *in* the water while also *on* the water.

All 224 suites have private balconies, butler service and 24-hour in-suite dining. The ship has boutiques, fitness studios, spas and bars.

Guests can also learn about

destinations from experts and immerse themselves in local culture as shared with artists and musicians at ports of call. ritzcarltonyachtcollection.com

Silver Ray

When it launches this summer, the Silver Ray (Silversea Cruises) is expected to further demonstrate that the luxury cruise business is back in the black. The Silver Ray is the sister ship of the Silver Nova, which launched last year and was lauded as a luxury-cruise game changer for its asymmetrical deck design and its “S.A.L.T.” dining experiences.

The name is an acronym for Sea and Land Taste — a program that matches menus with destinations and emphasizes the cuisine of a region.

At a starting price of \$6,150, the Silver Ray promises the same “Nova class” experience: 728 guests plus 544 crew sharing the 801-foot vessel. silversea.com

Explora II

Last year, Explora Journeys (an outgrowth of the MSC shipping conglomerate) became the newest line hoping to exploit the nascent luxury sea-travel niche. Like others offering exclusive

service on the seas, Explora Journeys eschews the word “cruise,” preferring instead “an ocean journey.”

This summer the company plans to launch Explora II: 813 feet, 922 passengers, and a guest-to-staff ratio of 1.25 to 1. Basic fares start at around \$4,000.

As with others in its class, the Explora II experience promises to include ethical ecological practices. For example, the ship will not stock any single-use plastic, and its green technology includes the potential for using alternative energy sources — part of the parent company’s goal to have zero emissions by 2050. explorajourneys.com

Viking Saturn

Last year’s rookie of the luxury-expedition vessels, the Saturn is almost identical to its sisters in the popular Viking fleet. And, in keeping with the sense of exploration for which the line is named, the Saturn will take 925 guests (considered a small crowd by the industry) on Europe’s most enchanting rivers to places travelers want to see but few reach via waterway.

The 745-foot Saturn is decked out in indulgence, with a side of cultural and culinary enrichment served with a glass of one of the ship’s champagnes.

From the single Owner’s Suite that has a private sauna to one of the 465 all-balcony suites, the ship has five price ranges starting at about \$2,800.

The Saturn is another of the line’s stars that feature signature Scandinavian designs. vikingcruises.com

Le Commandant Charcot

The words “luxury” and “Arctic” are rarely combined in sentences. But here’s one: Ponant features expeditions to the Arctic (and Antarctic) aboard a luxury ship that can churn through sea ice.

Yes, an icebreaker. Not the breath mint; in Ponant’s case,

Le Commandant Charcot.

Ponant describes its fleet as offering “luxury cruises for the discerning traveler.”

If your discerning ways are somewhere between the polar regions, the line’s other ships sail to more traditional cruise destinations.

But it’s Le Commandant Charcot that plows its way into polar cruising history as the first of its kind to use hydroelectric power; it uses recycled energy from its engines to heat the outdoor pool, deck benches and a “snow room.”

The ship is also a workplace: Voyages include research scientists, and sometimes the ship stops just to let them do their work.

Le Commandant Charcot (named for a French explorer) is an exclusive experience at a cost of about \$46,500 per person. us.ponant.com

Regent Grandeur

The Regent, Jeff Dash’s favorite luxury line, “has the best food, the best experiences, the best everything,” he says. “The dining experience is great, and the staff is fantastic, the shore excursions offer great variety — something for everyone.”

The Grandeur is a new addition to Regent Seven Seas Cruises. It boasts sprawling suites, multiple dining options and spacious social areas.

The ship set sail for its inaugural season in November, and is scheduled to make 17 voyages to the Caribbean, the Mediterranean, and transatlantic crossings.

The Grandeur is 735 feet long and can accommodate 750 guests and 550 crew members. It has 10 decks, 373 suites, weighs 55,500 tons, and is 102 feet wide.

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The ArtsPaper

www.palmbeachartspaper.com

Music

Jazz vocalist Monheit happy to still be scating in her 40s

By Bill Meredith
ArtsPaper Music Writer

For Long Island-born jazz vocalist Jane Monheit, music is — and practically always has been — a family affair.

“I think it’s great when music and family can combine,” she says by phone from her home in Los Angeles in late December. “It’s always been great for me.”



Monheit Born in Oakdale, N.Y., to musical parents who nurtured her love for vocalists, jazz and Broadway musicals, Monheit studied piano and woodwinds, sang in choirs and participated in community theater. Higher education at the Manhattan School of Music would further

the familial theme.

That’s where she met Rick Montalbano Jr., who’s since become both her husband and primary drummer. The couple married in 2002. His father, Rick Montalbano, is a noted New York pianist and educator who also got involved as an arranger and adviser to his daughter-in-law.

Monheit and Montalbano Jr. have a 15-year-old son, Jack, which is why one of his parents will miss Monheit’s debut at the Arts Garage in Delray Beach on Feb. 4.

“Unfortunately, I won’t be on that show,” Montalbano Jr. says. “I have to stay back in L.A. with the kiddo. She’ll have a great band of her New York City guys with her, though.”

Longtime pianist, arranger and friend Michael Kanan was the

See **MONHEIT** on AT16

Art



Johann Bonilla, Suzanne Snider, Santiago Martinez and museum curator Jaime Izaguirre at the Museo de Arte in San Salvador, El Salvador. Photo provided

Gallery owners publish major book on Central American art

By Jan Engoren
Contributing Writer

It was the love of Central American art that brought co-authors Suzanne Brooks Snider and Mark Morgan Ford, of Ford Fine Art in Delray Beach, together more than a decade ago.

A labor of love and passion project for the two, Snider and Ford spent eight years writing and researching their new book, *Central American Modernism/Modernismo en Centroamérica*.

A coffee table-sized, 7-pound tome, consisting of more than 300 pages in English and Spanish and organized by country, the book focuses on the art of that region, which they say has been overlooked by the international art world.

“We hope this book brings attention to the art and artists in

this part of the world, which have been historically discounted and underrepresented,” Snider says.

“The time has come to give Central American modernist art and the artists who created these works the respect they deserve. And we hope that writing this book will give them the exposure that is long overdue,” she says.

Noting that there were very few and reliable books on the art of individual Central American countries and none covering the region as a whole, the two set out to write the history of modernism in Central America.

“The significance of Central American artists, their recent entry into the art market and recognition among collectors and institutions will be greatly enhanced by the information

See **MODERNISTS** on AT12

Theater



60 years later,
‘Fiddler on the Roof’
still draws audiences

Bruce Sabath as Tevye in *Fiddler on the Roof* at the Wick. Photo by Amy Pasquantonio

Raising the Roof

By Hap Erstein
ArtsPaper Theater Writer

In the early 1960s, when the creators of *Fiddler on the Roof* were developing a musical about Tevye the dairyman and his rebellious daughters in 1905 Russia, they assumed it would have limited appeal.

To their surprise, *Fiddler* was embraced by theatergoers far beyond the Jewish community, becoming at one point the longest-running show in Broadway history and an international hit in scores of nations, languages and cultures. Frequently revived and produced in regional theaters, the show is now said to be playing somewhere every single day.

Boca Raton’s Wick Theatre is the latest local venue to transport audiences to the humble village of Anatevka.

Directing the show (music by Jerry Bock, lyrics by Sheldon Harnick) is Norb Joerder, who estimates he has been involved with nine productions of the show, beginning when he was an 18-year-old Catholic boy playing the title fiddler. Over the years, he has directed such stars as Theodore Bikel, Chaim Topol and Robert Merrill playing Tevye, to varying degrees of success. “People come to see the star, of course, but it doesn’t always make the show better,” Joerder concludes.

Every time he does the show, it becomes

a crash course in Jewish traditions for him, Joerder says. “I still don’t know everything. We’re bringing in a rabbi to tell us the correct way to do the wedding. What’s funny is every time I bring in a different rabbi, they tell me different things. They’ve never been consistent.”

The Wick’s Tevye is Bruce Sabath, who has played the role often from an early age. “I did ‘Fiddler’ in summer camp, I did scenes from ‘Fiddler’ in middle school, I did ‘Fiddler’ in high school, I played Tevye in college,” he says.

This will be his third professional production of the show, having recently appeared in the Joel Grey-directed off-Broadway version in Yiddish. There he played butcher Lazar Wolf, but also stood by as Tevye, going on in the leading role some 30 times.

“It is definitely one of the greatest musicals ever written. It always has something new to say in every moment in history, unfortunately,” says Sabath, who sees parallels between the people of Anatevka and the Jews in Israel now. “It’s really interesting, because ‘Fiddler’ is a snapshot of one moment when, once again, the Jews were forced out of yet another place. It will definitely speak to audiences today.”

Sabath has been on this stage before, appearing 15 years ago in the Caldwell Theatre’s *Frost/Nixon*. “I may be the only

See **FIDDLER** on AT14

MODERNISTS

Continued from page 11

included in this publication,” says art historian Carol Damian in the foreword to the book.

“The book elevates artistic and creative production in Central America above earlier notions that there was an absence of serious intent and intellectualism and an emphasis on the folkloric and regional,” she says.

Modern art of Central America has similarities to that of Mexico and South America, but possesses distinctive qualities that set it apart.

Snider and Ford set out to identify important modern artists from each country and secured original documentation, interviewed historians, museum directors and gallery owners and obtained permission to photograph and reproduce many of the artworks in the book.

They discovered that most influential Central American modernists shared a common denominator. They left home



Director Jose Jorge Salgado and Suzanne Snider at the Galeria Nacional de Arte in Tegucigalpa, Honduras. Photo provided

to study abroad — in Europe or North America — were exposed to new ideas and schools of art and brought those ideas with them when they returned home.

The book is part of a larger project, in which Ford and Snider are working to create a sculpture garden, Paradise Palms and Sculpture Garden, and future museum to house Central American modernist art on 40 acres in west Delray Beach.

Twenty-five acres have been landscaped and include a bamboo forest, a Zen garden, a child’s playground, a Chinese teahouse, the Garden of Eden, a mountain rock garden and a number of sculptures.

Starting in Guatemala, the book focuses on artists Rodolfo “Marco” Abularach, Roberto Cabrera and Carlos Mérida, best known for transliterating European modernist painting into Latin and Central American themes and motifs.

Mérida studied abroad in Paris where he met Mexican muralists Diego Rivera and Roberto Montenegro and well-known European avant-garde painters. He then spent time in New York and Mexico.

Returning home, he began to incorporate his indigenous heritage into the modernist techniques he had learned in Europe and for his 1915 show he married Cubism and abstraction to re-envision the sensibilities of native Maya art, a turning point that is now considered to be the advent of modernism in Guatemala.

One of these paintings is his playful *Dances of the Birds* (1938), from the *Dances of Mexico* series, depicting an ancient religious ceremony celebrating the quetzal bird, or national bird of Guatemala, and the spirit guide of the ancient Mayas. Two brightly colored geometric human-like bird figures (with triangular heads,

or beaks) dance in front of two large red, white, blue and black-colored circular headdresses.

In neighboring El Salvador, the book highlights the works of Ernesto “San” Avilés, Carlos Cañas and Benjamin Cañas (no relation). Benjamin Cañas began his career as an architect before turning his focus to abstract and surreal art. After living in Guatemala, in 1969 he emigrated with his family to the U.S., where he was part of the design team for the Watergate shopping promenade in Washington, D.C., for which he won a design award.

It was during the 1970s that Cañas’s interest in mythology and ancient civilizations took hold. He painted angels, satyrs, dwarfs and nymphs in a magical realist style exploring themes of creation, civilization, destruction, evolution and rebirth.

The only woman modernist in the book, El Salvadoran artist Rosa Mena Valenzuela, known as the ambassador of expressionism in her home country, counts Jackson Pollock, Paul Klee, Marc Chagall and Pablo Picasso as influences. Growing up in a musical house, Valenzuela credits that early exposure to music as a catalyst to her art, which she came to later in life.

“I think that without a musical ear, I wouldn’t have been able to achieve a feeling for color,” she said.

Her expressionist style has been described as spontaneous, and she herself called it “a new style in rapid and dizzying lines

that make the figures move.”

This rapid-fire style is evident in the 1970 portrait she painted, *Retrato de Valero Lecha*, of her mentor and teacher, Spanish painter Valero Lecha. Known also for her abstract collages, Valenzuela incorporates scraps of fabric, paper, cardboard, industrial paint, aluminum and cement.

In Costa Rica, where Snider once ran a surf shop on Tamarindo Beach, she and Ford turn their lens on to Francisco “Paco” Amighetti, Manuel de la Cruz González and Francisco “Paco” Zuñiga, considered to be Central America’s most important sculptor and one of the world’s premier modernists.

Known for his subjects of indigenous and native women, Zuñiga depicted the women in everyday activities.

His 1965 watercolor and ink titled *Conversación* depicts two women dressed in white peasant skirts sitting cross-legged and side-by-side on the street, chatting and (presumably) selling earthenware pottery.

With their love of Central American art and artists, the authors hope to elevate the profile of the contributions these artists have made.

“We are proud of this book,” Ford writes. “It is something that has not existed before. We are hopeful it will stimulate more research and bring more attention to this underrepresented body of work.”

For more information, visit centralamericanmodernism.com.



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Arts Brief

Boca Raton Museum of Art's executive director to retire

Inca gold. Massive movie backdrops. Glass jaguar heads.

These are some of the astonishing artworks that have been shown under the stellar direction of Boca Raton Museum of Art's Irv Lippman, who announced recently that he will retire in 2025.

He has built a powerful legacy, transforming the museum literally inside and out into a world-class institution. Lippman will continue to lead the museum for the next 12 months, culminating in the museum's 75th anniversary and take highly anticipated opening of the exhibition *Baroque Spain*.

That exhibition will feature paintings by renowned artists such as El Greco, Velázquez, and Murillo from the Hispanic Society of America collection in New York.

The event will coincide with Boca Raton's centenary, making it a celebration and a good time to bow out.

Under Lippman's leadership since 2014, the museum has made significant changes to its physical presence. He opened the Ohnell Sculpture Garden and removed the west colonnade of the Mizner Park Amphitheater. This created a 360-degree promenade around the museum, with remarkable new art commissions such as a 32-foot-high

wall mural, *Worpswede-changing daytime sky*, by the late Fluxus artist Geoffrey Hendricks, which now greets passers-by on Federal Highway.

"Leading the Boca Raton Museum of Art has been a capstone to a career that began in the National Gallery of Art education department in 1975," Lippman said in a prepared statement. "Over the past 50 years, it has been my pleasure to contribute to the vital cultural resource that museums represent."

Lippman earned his BFA from the University of Denver. Following a yearlong tour of Europe, he earned an MA in art history from the University of Texas at Austin. His museum career began in the Education Department at the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C. (1975-1983). He held positions as the public affairs manager and assistant director of the Amon Carter Museum of American Art in Fort Worth, Texas (1984-1994).

In 1994, he became executive director of the Columbus (Ohio) Museum of Art. In 2003, he was appointed executive director of the Museum of Art, Fort Lauderdale, retiring in 2012. However, in 2014 he came out of retirement for a short-term, interim position in Boca Raton, which has continued for 10 years. Lippman has been a member of the Association of Art Museum Directors since 1995.

The Board of Trustees has initiated a collaboration with an executive search firm to search for the next director.

MONHEIT

Continued from page 11

only trio member Monheit could confirm in late December as she continued the search for a bassist and drummer.

"Because of the price of airline tickets, many of us now have multiple bands around the country and around the world," Monheit says. "I now have an East Coast trio, a West Coast trio, and a European trio."

One of Monheit's releases, the 2016 album *Songbook Sessions: Ella Fitzgerald* (on her own Emerald City Records), showcases the primary source for her impeccable scat-singing, vocal phrasing, and breath control. Yet Monheit offers up some additional surprises among her major influences.

"For scatting especially, Ella was my foundation," says Monheit. "But I really love a lot of other scatters, especially from that era, which I'm really attached to — like Sarah Vaughan, Carmen McRae, and Joe Williams. But I learned from a lot of singers in a lot of other genres as well; singers who are great deliverers of lyrics, like Bonnie Raitt and Joni Mitchell. And some of them are more from the musical theater world. Like one of my heroes, Bernadette Peters."

If You Go

Jane Monheit performs with her quartet at the Arts Garage, 94 NE Second Ave., Delray Beach

When: 7 p.m. Feb. 4

Tickets: \$55-\$60

Info: 561-450-6357, artsgarage.org

It may be Monheit's love for Broadway musicals that has most informed a career in which she's best-known for interpreting the Great American Songbook. And when her feet were held to the fire early on, her theater and stage experience paid off. As a 20-year-old senior at Manhattan School of Music, Monheit finished second at the prestigious 1998 version of the Thelonious Monk Competition, now known as the Hancock Competition.

"The great Teri Thornton won," Monheit says. "It was an unusual year. They'd taken away any age limitations, so she was in her early 60s then while I was 20."

Having started her recording career shortly thereafter with the 2000 debut *Never Never Land*, Monheit has since released a dozen more albums; earned multiple Grammy Award nominations; written English lyrics for

Brazilian composer Ivan Lins, and taught lessons and master classes through her website while performing at prestigious international venues. She started recording her next release in January.

"I don't have a title for it yet, but it's going to be a very high-energy album," Monheit says. "We're hoping for a late spring release. For the Arts Garage, I'll do what I usually do when I'm in between projects. I'll put together a list of tunes that I know people will want to hear, plus add some in that I really want to play, including some Brazilian music. But they'll practically all be standards. The Great American Songbook is my life."

It's a life that Monheit now appears very comfortable within — much more so than early in her career, when the media often focused more on her looks than her talent.

"I dealt with a lot of that early in my career," she says, "and felt like I had to just continue to prove myself. It's so nice not to have to do that anymore. Rick is on the road with me whenever our son is out of school. ... In a few years, he'll be in college and Rick and I will be on the road together all the time."

"I love being in my 40s. It's so great to be 46!"



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Theater Review

This 'Fiddler' works its magic by sticking to familiar notes

By Hap Erstein

Wherever the late Jerome Robbins is, he should be smiling down on the Wick Theatre.

The Boca Raton stage company has mounted that perennial favorite, *Fiddler on the Roof*, and, as the program acknowledges, Norb Joerder has reproduced Robbins' original direction and Robert Abdo has reproduced his original choreography.

Many have tried to improve on Robbins' deft, heartfelt work for the 1964 Broadway show, but to my knowledge none has succeeded. So what the Wick production lacks in originality, it more than makes up in authenticity and theatricality.

Based on Sholem Aleichem's folk tales of Tevye the dairyman, his five rebellious daughters and the Jewish community of Anatevka, Russia, circa 1905, *Fiddler* is one of the great



The wedding scene from *Fiddler on the Roof*, now playing at the Wick Theatre. Photo by Amy Pasquantonio

musicals of Broadway's so-called golden age.

It is hard to fathom from today's perspective, but before *Fiddler*, commercial musicals with Jewish themes or characters were exceedingly rare. Composer Jerry Bock and lyricist Sheldon Harnick felt certain they were writing this

show for a limited audience.

Now, 60 years later, we greet their score as old friends, with hits such as "Matchmaker, Matchmaker," "To Life" and "Sunrise, Sunset."

Leading the Wick cast is Bruce Sabbath, whose approach to Tevye is naturalistic, in contrast to the usual larger-

If You Go

Fiddler on the Roof runs through Feb. 11 at the Wick Theatre, 7901 N. Federal Highway, Boca Raton. Tickets: \$79-\$109 Info: 561-995-2333, thewick.org

than-life portrayals. It is an interesting performance choice, which makes the show more of an ensemble piece rather than a star vehicle, strengthening the musical's theme of community. Book writer Joseph Stein gave Tevye many a Borscht Belt punchline, but Sabbath downplays such broad comic tendencies effectively.

Sabbath was an original cast member — and occasional Tevye fill-in — in the recent off-Broadway *Fiddler on the Roof* in Yiddish. Here we get glimpses of that performance as he delivers

a few lines in dialect in his bravura rendition of "If I Were a Rich Man" and the moving "Chava" sequence.

With Tevye not towering over the production, that allows Patti Gardner as his wife, Golde, to become more prominent. She mines the character's exasperation with expert timing, yet makes her discovery of enduring affection for Tevye ("Do You Love Me?") quite touching.

The spine of the show's narrative is how Tevye's three eldest daughters challenge the established traditions of betrothment. Torie D'Alessandro, Mallory Newbrough and Caila Katz breathe fresh life into their emotional journey, pairing with Michael Scott Ross, Alex Martinez and Cameron Edris respectively.

Ann M. Bruskiwicz's costumes stick close to the original designs and some of Kacey D. Koploff's stage-wide projections evoke the flavor of Marc Chagall.

In South Florida, we seem never to be far from a revival of *Fiddler*, but nor does there appear to be a lack of audience for the show. So as long as you are not looking for a new take on the material, the Wick production should certainly satisfy your *Fiddler* craving.

FIDDLER

Continued from page 11

person who ever played Tevye and Richard Nixon," he says with puckish pride.

Playing his long-suffering wife, Golde, is South Florida veteran actress Patti Gardner, who remarkably has never been in a production of *Fiddler*.

"I don't remember ever auditioning for 'Fiddler' before," she says. "When this came up, I campaigned, I begged. I said, 'I'll do anything, not necessarily Golde. Anything.' 'Fiddler' touches me in a way that no other musical does."

As to why audiences keep coming back to see *Fiddler*, over and over, Gardner says, "It's universal. There's not a person that can't relate to this. It's about family and it's about change. Things that matter to us all. It's such a human story."

Sabbath adds, "It's the fear of change, wanting things to stay the same. Wanting the best for your children, but being scared for them at the same time. The whole family thing is definitely central to it. (It is about) long-standing traditions coming smack in the face of a rapidly changing world."

To explain why theatergoers should come see *Fiddler on the Roof*, probably not for the first time, director Joerder resorts to double negatives. "No one will not be entertained," he feels certain. "You cannot not relate to what is happening on that stage."

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Sarah Charlesworth, *Trial by Fire*, 1992-93, cibachrome with lacquered wood frame. © The Estate of Sarah Charlesworth. Courtesy Paula Cooper Gallery, New York

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Left: Alphonse Mucha, *Monaco, Monte-Carlo*, 1897. Color lithograph on paper mounted on linen. Dhawan Collection. Image courtesy of Landau Traveling Exhibitions, Los Angeles, CA.

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Music

Smokeboss Militia carves out original path amid plethora of tribute bands

By Bill Meredith
ArtsPaper Music Writer

Bands that blend a wide variety of influences into a unique style often can't be categorized in the moment.

Locally, a group called the Smokeboss Militia formed two years ago to defy categorization — yet with a very different stylistic blend. Jupiter-based lead singer, acoustic guitarist and songwriter Andy Mensing recorded three albums and toured the U.S. and Europe with San Diego punk band Rat City Riot during the 2000s and 2010s. But the Smokeboss Militia, named after Mensing's signature hot sauce, rocks while decidedly not being punk.

His girlfriend, Lucia Hare-Leahy, sings telekinetic harmonies with Mensing — but that doesn't make their act a pop or vocal group. Nor does the fact that she doubles on banjo and mandolin make it bluegrass, folk or country. A third band member, John Ace, plays violin and mandolin, yet that doesn't make the Smokeboss Militia an Irish or Celtic ensemble.

Realistically, as proven with a cast of local and West Coast guests invited by Mensing for the Smokeboss Militia's 2023 debut recording *Rise Again* (Smokeboss Trusted Records), the band is a rootsy amalgamation of all the above. Those three will be backed by the Tony Tyler Band for a Clematis By Night performance in downtown West Palm Beach on Feb. 22.

"I met Lucia at an open mic night at the Brewhouse Gallery in Lake Park," Mensing says, "so the music and relationship started about the same time."

"No, the music came first," Hare-Leahy says, as Mensing correctively nods in agreement. "But I was a bit shocked when Andy asked me to play a song with him. Everyone else that night was doing '60s cover tunes, but he was relatively new in town and brought such a different form of musical energy."

The basic tracks on *Rise Again* were recorded in Hare-Leahy's Lake Worth Beach living room by Palm Beach Gardens sound engineer Guy Gualtieri, who enhances remote rooms sonically and then captures performances with his traveling studio equipment. Overdubs were then added at his home project studio, along with the tracks captured by the out-of-towners and mixed in by Gualtieri, a Berklee College of Music grad.

Mensing's heady compositions are largely autobiographical and often about previous relationships, matrimonial and otherwise. "No Girlfriend" is a self-explanatory Led Zeppelin-esque rocker, while the leadoff



Lucia Hare-Leahy and Andy Mensing of the Smokeboss Militia. Photo provided

single "Danglin'" is a rootsy pop number about a romance on the cliff. The second single, "I'm Out," features a serpentine, Little Feat-like funk rhythm; "Crush" is a soulful ballad recalling Lenny Kravitz, and "Misunderstood" an accelerated alt-country rave-up with the universally relatable vocal chorus of "I am not misunderstanding, I am just misunderstood."

A native New Yorker from Manhattan, Mensing has influences ranging from East Coast (New York City post-punk alternative metal band Helmet) to West Coast (Long Beach, Calif., funk/Latin/rock act War) and beyond. As a lyricist and songwriter, his versatility also recalls the broad career span of British vocal icon Elvis Costello, who's veered from his famed 1980s New Wave group The Attractions into several other genres since.

On Mensing's loping "Trusted," California-based electric guitarist Ritchie Orduno's vintage Santana-like solos punctuate the introspective lyrics. Other friends from Mensing's San Diego days, keyboardists Peter Levin and Roger Rivas, add embellishments on piano and Hammond organ throughout the disc's 12 tracks.

Ace, a seasonal South Florida resident who captains his sailboat to Virginia annually in the fall, adds an undercurrent on violin throughout *Rise Again*. Ditto Hare-Leahy's banjo, with occasional mandolin additions by both.

Born in Argentina, raised in Venezuela and England and still sporting a British accent, Hare-Leahy (often identified by her nickname "Shash") is a relative musical newcomer compared to Mensing. She also plays in the all-acoustic act Gypsy String Revival.

"I was influenced by the spaghetti western films Clint Eastwood starred in," she says, "even though there was no banjo in the soundtracks. I'd started playing guitar in a trio that never ended up recording or performing live, but I thought it might be more interesting to play banjo, an instrument I'd always loved. I took lessons online, and then

If You Go

The Smokeboss Militia performs at Clematis By Night, 100 N. Clematis St., West Palm Beach
When: 6-9 p.m. Feb. 22
Admission: Free
Info: 561-822-1515, clematisstreet.org

this opportunity came calling."

The band's occasional cover tunes during live shows mirror the wide stylistic swath of Mensing's originals — ranging from the roots and country of Steve Earle and Kenny Rogers to the soul and hip-hop of Seal and Cee Lo Green. But with substantial day jobs in legal videography (Mensing) and interior design (Hare-Leahy), the originals-focused couple need not rely on the tribute-act gigs that dominate these days.

The only ingredients they're missing are a rhythm section and soloist for their following booking — a March 30 slot at the third all-day, multi-act 561 Music Festival presented by podcast hosts (and Killbillies band members) Ben Childs and Hector Diaz at Mathews Brewing Company in Lake Worth Beach.

"We just need to find musicians who are both local and who are into this material," Mensing says. "We'll definitely play songs from the record at Clematis By Night, along with some covers, since it's a three-hour show."

"But the 561 Music Fest will be a shorter set, and probably all originals," adds Hare-Leahy.

The couple literally and figuratively finishes each other's sentences as both conversationalists and vocalists.

But in case of a romantic breakup, will the Smokeboss Militia lean more toward Fleetwood Mac or Heart territory? The former carried on for decades with the same personnel after such partnerships ended; the latter cast off musicians as romances flamed out.

"We should've consulted our lawyers," Mensing says with a laugh, "because we haven't written that part of the contract yet."

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Book Review

Florida 'Cracker' gives reptiles a heart in 'Gator Country'

Gator Country, by Rebecca Renner, Flatiron Books, 276 pp., \$29.99.

By Sharon Geltner
Contributing Writer

Gator Country opens with an authentic Florida adventure.

A 7-year-old Central Florida girl explores a swamp by herself. Rebecca Renner's dad tells her: "When it starts getting dark, come back." Family dinner

could be alligator meat, breaded in cornmeal, fried in peanut oil.

Orlando resident Renner writes: "I hadn't quite grasped the majesty and danger of the natural world that surrounded me. Down at Spruce Creek, I crossed a muddy stream on a fallen palm log. A foot below me, the water was black, dyed like tea by oak leaves. I was set on reaching a sandy peninsula, half hidden by saw palms, that jutted out into the creek proper. Stepping down at the end of the log, I slipped. When I tried to catch my balance, my other foot landed in the water, and I sank up to my thigh. ...

"Then a reflection, like a ray of light on the polished gems I collected, drew my eye to the peninsula. Now in full view, I saw that the small stretch of sandy beach was already occupied by a half-ton alligator. The creature had a hide like an old tire and eyes like fossilized amber."

I dare you to stop reading!

Gator Country, the "tale of a wildlife officer who disguised himself as a poacher to protect the swamp and the American alligator," is filled with stunning evocations of nature, packed with details about Lake Okeechobee, Big Cypress National Preserve, Everglades

National Park and the dirt roads and tiny settlements in between.

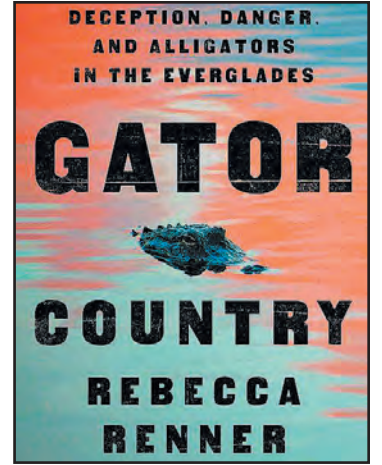
Renner tracks down Jeff Babauta, who got off the grid after arresting many poachers in his elaborate sting, Operation Alligator Thief. This Manatee County wildlife officer and game warden with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission became an undercover poacher, and then disappeared for his own safety. Renner persuaded Babauta to reveal how he did it.

One recent estimate says there are 1 million gators in the state, with 30,000 in a single lake. So, why care that some eggs (\$60 per when Babauta was investigating) will hatch and the creatures will be harvested and made into handbags?

Because if alligators disappear, which almost happened in the 1950s, the entire ecosystem goes haywire, Renner warns. (There are echoes of Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* in *Gator Country*.)

Renner, a seven-plus-generation Floridian, proudly comes from "a long line of Crackers, the local name for Florida cattlemen and Floridians, descendants of the first Spanish colonists to arrive in St. Augustine in 1565."

She quit teaching 11th-grade



English in Deltona to write full-time. "In a matter of three years, I went from churning out clickbait for content mills to writing for the *National Geographic* and the *New York Times*."

Gator Country is at its best when Renner stays out of the picture and allows her subjects to reveal themselves, without personal comments or redundant remarks about their character, integrity and choices.

Today, Renner is working on two books, a literary one about an art forger, the other a true crime story with dolphins.

"I'm putting it out there about the dolphins if anyone has a tip!" Renner said.

I hope someone does; if Renner could make reptiles heartwarming, think what she will do for dolphins.

Sharon Geltner is the author of *Charity Bashed*, available on Amazon.



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Arts Calendar

Editor's note: Events listed through March 1, 2024, were current as of Jan. 26. Check with the presenting agency for any changes. Ticket prices are single sales unless otherwise specified.

ART

Ann Norton Sculpture Gardens: Through May 1: *The Divine Feminine: Contemporary Women Sculptors*. \$15, \$10 seniors 253 Barcelona Road, West Palm Beach. 10 am-4 pm W-Sun. 561-832-5328. Info@ansg.org.

Boca Raton Museum of Art: Through June 2: *Félix de la Concha*; through May 19: *Dorothea Grace Lemeh: Cycles*; through May 12: *Smoke and Mirrors: Magical Thinking in Contemporary Art*. \$16; \$12 seniors. 501 Plaza Real, Boca Raton. 11 am-6 pm W, F, Sat, Sun. 11 am-8 pm Th. 561-392-2500, bocamuseum.org.

Flagler Museum: Through April 14: *Alphonse Mucha: Master of Art Nouveau*. \$26; \$13 ages 6-12. 1 Whitehall Way, Palm Beach. 10 am-5 pm M-Sat, noon-5 pm Sun. 561-655-2833, www.flaglermuseum.us

Lighthouse ArtCenter: Through Feb. 24: *Wild Hearts*. \$5 non-members. 9 am-5 pm M-Th; 9 am-4 pm F; 10 am-4 pm Sat. 561-746-3101, lighthousearts.org.

Morikami Museum and Japanese Gardens: Through April 7: *Stories on the Planet: Jewelry by Maeda Asagi*. \$15; \$13 seniors; \$9 children; free for members, ages 5 and under. 4000 Morikami Park Road, Delray Beach. 10 am-5 pm T-Sun. 561-495-0233, morikami.org.

Norton Museum of Art: Through Feb. 18: *Artists in Motion: Impressionist and Modern Masterpieces from the Pearlman Collection*. Through Feb. 4: *Symbolic Messages in Chinese Animal Paintings*. Through March 10: *Presence: The Photography Collection of Judy Glickman Lauder*. Through July 7: *Nora Maité Nieves: Clouds in the Expanded Field*. \$18 adults; \$15 seniors; \$5 students; free for ages 12 and under, 1450 S. Dixie Highway, West Palm Beach. 10 am-5 pm, M, T, Th, Sat; 10 am-10 pm F; 11 am-5 pm Sun. 561-832-5196, www.norton.org

Society of the Four Arts: Through April 28 in the Hulitar Sculpture Garden: *Flora Imaginaria: The Flower in Contemporary Photography*. \$10. 100 Four Arts Plaza, Palm Beach. 10 am-5 pm daily. 561-655-7226, fourarts.org.

CLASSICAL MUSIC

Sunday, Feb. 4
Calidore String Quartet: This excellent young New York-based foursome offers quartets by Mendelssohn (No. 4) and Britten (No. 2), as well as Britten's arrangement of a chaconne by Henry Purcell. 3 p.m., Society of the Four Arts, 102 Four Arts Plaza, Palm Beach. \$40. 561-655-2766 or fourarts.org.

Monday, Feb. 5
Palm Beach Symphony: Pianist Santiago Rodriguez joins Gerard Schwarz and the orchestra for the Piano Concerto of Edward Grieg. 7:30 pm, Kravis Center, West Palm Beach. \$25-\$95. kravis.org, palmbeachsymphony.org or 561-832-7469.

Tuesday, Feb. 6
Ulysses Quartet: This young group opens the Flagler's Tuesday night music series with quartets by Mendelssohn, Beethoven and Germaine Tailleferre. 7:30 p.m., Flagler Museum, 1 Whitehall Way, Palm Beach. \$75, which includes post-concert Champagne reception. 561-655-2833 or flaglermuseum.us.

Wednesday, Feb. 7
Academy of St. Martin in the Fields Wind Ensemble: A wind quartet from the London-based orchestra is joined by pianist Caroline Palmer for music by Poulenc, Mozart, Francaix, Glinka and Molbe. 7:30 p.m., Society of the Four Arts. \$40. 561-655-2766 or fourarts.org

Friday, Feb. 9
Metropolitan Opera Lindemann Artists: Four members of the New York opera company's young artist program and pianist Juan Jose Lazaro perform a selection of arias. 7 p.m., Society of the Four Arts. \$40. 561-655-2766 or fourarts.org

Sunday, Feb. 11
Schumann Quartet: The German quartet made up of three brothers — Mark, Erik and Ken Schumann — with violist Veit Hertenstein perform quartets by Mozart (No. 18) and Janacek (No. 1) and the first of Beethoven's late string quartets, No. 12 in E-flat (Op.127). 3 p.m., Society of the Four Arts. \$40. 561-655-2766 or fourarts.org

Tuesday, Feb. 13
Elissa Lee Koljonen: The fine American violinist is accompanied by pianist Sheng-Yuan Kuan of Lynn University for a program including Grieg's Sonata No. 3, Bach's Chaconne, Ravel's *Tzigane*. 7:30 p.m., Flagler Museum. \$75. 561-

655-2833 or flaglermuseum.us.
 Wednesday, Feb. 14
Tesla Quartet: This excellent American quartet comes to the Classical Café series with Haydn's popular *Joke* Quartet, the *Cypresses* cycle of Dvořák, and the String Quartet No. 3 of Polish composer Grazyna Bacewicz. 2 p.m. Duncan Theatre, Palm Beach State College, 4200 Congress Ave., Lake Worth Beach. \$35. palmbeachstate.edu or 561-868-3309.

Saturday, Feb. 17-Sunday, Feb. 18
Detroit Symphony Orchestra: The great American orchestra settles in for two performances at the Kravis Center. 7:30 pm Saturday, 2 pm Sunday. \$35 and up. kravis.org or 561-832-7469.

Tuesday, Feb. 20
Beo String Quartet: The Pittsburgh-based quartet presents arrangements of selections from Bach's *Art of the Fugue*, Haydn's Quartet No. 41 (Op. 33, No. 5) and the String Quartet No. 15 (in A minor, Op. 132) of Beethoven. 7:30 p.m., Flagler Museum. \$75. 561-655-2833 or flaglermuseum.us.

Thursday, Feb. 22
Chamber Music Society of Palm Beach: Pianists Juho Pohjonen and Wu Qian join forces at one piano for an evening of four-hand music including Debussy's *Petite Suite*, Chaminade's *Six Pieces Romantiques*, two works by Mendelssohn, and a set of Dvořák's *Slavonic Dances*. 7 pm, Norton Museum of Art, 1450 S. Dixie Highway, Palm Beach. \$75. cmsgpb.org or 561-379-6773.

Sunday, Feb. 25
Seraphic Fire: The great Miami concert choir continues its Enlightenment Festival with music of Haydn. 4 pm, St. Gregory's Episcopal Church, 100 NE Mizner Blvd., Boca Raton. \$50. 305-285-9060 or seraphicfire.org.

Tuesday, Feb. 27
Aznavoorian Sisters: Pianist Marta Aznavoorian (Lincoln Trio) and her sister, cellist Ani (Camerata Pacifica), team for a program of sonatas by Brahms and Debussy, the *Suite Populaire Espagnole* of Falla, and four pieces by the Armenian priest and composer Komitas. 7:30 p.m., Flagler Museum. \$75. 561-655-2833

or flaglermuseum.us.
 Wednesday, Feb. 28
Verona Quartet: This young quartet is the ensemble in residence at Ohio's Oberlin Conservatory. 2 p.m. Duncan Theatre, Lake Worth Beach. \$35. palmbeachstate.edu or 561-868-3309.

DANCE

Friday, Feb. 2-Saturday, Feb. 3
Body Traffic: The Los Angeles modern dance company appears on the Duncan Theatre's popular Modern Dance Series. Performances at 8 pm each night at the theater on the campus of Palm Beach State College in Lake Worth Beach. \$45. Call 561-868-3309 or visit palmbeachstate.edu.

Saturday, Feb. 3-Sunday, Feb. 4
Miami City Ballet: The company presents Balanchine's *The Firebird* (Stravinsky), Ratmansky's *Concerto DSCH* (Shostakovich), and two world premieres by young choreographers Margarita Armas (music by Nina Simone and others) and Duante Verola (Paganini). 2 pm and 7 pm Saturday, 1 pm Sunday, at Kravis Center, West Palm Beach. \$35 and up. kravis.org, miamicityballet.org or 561-832-7469

Friday, Feb. 23-Saturday, Feb. 24
Grupo Corpo: The Brazilian modern dance company was founded in 1975 and grounds its works in the music and culture of Brazil. Performances at 8 pm each at Duncan Theatre. \$45. 561-868-3309 or palmbeachstate.edu.

JAZZ

Sunday, Feb. 4
Jane Monheit: 7 pm, Arts Garage, 94 NE Second Ave., Delray Beach. \$55-\$60. 561-450-6357 or artsgarage.org.

Thursday, Feb. 15
Diana Krall: The Canadian pianist and singer brings one leg of her international tour to West Palm Beach. 8 pm, Kravis Center, West Palm Beach. \$35 and up. kravis.org or 561-832-7469.

Wednesday, Feb. 21
John Pizzarelli Trio: The guitarist and singer has emerged as a champion of the Great American Songbook 7:45 pm, Broward Center for the Performing Arts, 201 SW Fifth Ave., Fort Lauderdale. \$65. 954-462-0222 or browardcenter.org.

OPERA

Friday, March 1-Sunday, March 3
The Tales of Hoffmann: Jacques Offenbach's 1880 tale of a luckless poet's thwarted desires is the second production of the Palm Beach Opera season. 7:30 pm Friday and Saturday, 2 pm Sunday at the Kravis Center, West Palm Beach. \$25-\$250. kravis.org, pbopera.org or 561-832-7469

POPULAR MUSIC

Tuesday, Feb. 13-Wednesday, Feb. 14
Rod Stewart: Sir Roderick leaves his Palm Beach estate to head down to south Broward for two concerts. 8 pm both shows at Seminole Hard Rock and Casino, 1 Seminole Way, Hollywood. \$65-\$335. ticketmaster.com

Saturday, Feb. 24
Stevie Nicks: The former Fleetwood Mac signer-songwriter built a huge solo career with her romantic, emotional songs. 8 pm at Hard Rock. \$280-\$2,950. ticketmaster.com

THEATER

Opens Feb. 2
Grumpy Old Men: Through Feb. 25 at the Delray Beach Playhouse, 950 NW 9th St. \$44. 561-272-1281 delraybeachplayhouse.com.

The Cancellation of Lauren Fein: A world premiere play by Christopher Demos-Brown about a professor who gets involved in a cancel-culture incident. Through Feb. 18 at Palm Beach Dramaworks, 201 S. Clematis St., West Palm Beach. \$69 and up. 561-514-4042 or palmbeachdramaworks.org.

Through Feb. 4
Oklahoma! At the Lake Worth Playhouse, 713 Lake Ave., Lake Worth Beach. \$38. 561-586-6410 or www.lakeworthplayhouse.org.

Through Feb. 11
Fiddler on the Roof: At Wick Theatre, 7901 N. Federal Highway, Boca Raton. \$109. 561-995-2233 or thewick.org.

Opens Feb. 11
Plaza Suite: Through Feb. 25 at the Maltz Jupiter Theatre, 1001 E. Indiantown Road, Jupiter. 561-575-2233 or jupitertheatre.org.

Opens Feb. 29
Carousel: Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein II's classic 1945 musical, through March 24 at the Wick Theatre. \$109. 561-995-2233 or thewick.org.

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 BY NEIL SIMON

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Finding Faith

Police chaplains volunteer time to help public as well as officers

When tragedy or terror strikes in Delray Beach, after the police and fire rescue crews roll out, they call the police chaplain on duty. Father Bernie Pecaro supervises the clergy who respond.

The job of police chaplains is twofold: They support the public on what is often the worst time of their lives, and they serve the first responders directly by counseling them and providing comfort to their families.

“We’re there for all of them,” Father Bernie said, wherever they are needed. Their calming presence is welcomed.

The Rev. Bernard J. Pecaro, as he’s formally known, is associate rector of St. Paul’s Episcopal Church and chief chaplain for the Delray Beach Police Department.

He supervises six chaplains (including one rabbi) and is trying to recruit more.

Right now, the team doesn’t have a Catholic member, not that it matters. Chaplains minister to all people of all faiths. A chaplain is on call 24/7, Father Bernie said, and if the first on-call person can’t come, the second person goes. But a chaplain always shows up.

Like many chaplains, Father Bernie first served as a military chaplain. He received his commission into the Navy, Chaplain Corps, Reserve, in 1987, and he ministered to the Sea Services of the Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard until his retirement in 2014.

In 1996, Father Bernie helped establish the chaplain’s role at St. Paul’s, reaching out to serve police and fire rescue personnel.

He moved to Pompano Beach as rector of the Parish of St. Martin in 1998, returned to St. Paul’s as associate rector in 2021 and has been working for the chaplaincy since.

Chaplains are volunteers, usually from a local church, synagogue or mosque. They are called to this type of ministry — where they may face intense, violent, hate-filled and often heartbreaking situations daily.

Chaplains are usually trained to handle these volatile situations, and their strong faith helps them. Police officers are grateful for their support in making death notifications, visiting hospitals and offering support at debriefings after traumatic events.

And the officers need it. Most of us are exposed to “police-specific traumatic events” once or twice in our lifetimes (never if we’re lucky), whereas they are part of the job for police. These traumas include seeing homicide victims and traffic fatalities, being first on scene with victims of rape and assault, and rescuing abused children, which officers say is the hardest thing to see and is especially difficult for women.

A study in the International Journal of Emergency Mental Health published by the National Library of Medicine reported that 60% of male and 46.4% of female police officers witnessed or were involved in five or more different traumatic events in the past year.

Sometimes these officers suffer a post-traumatic stress disorder unique to first responders and military members: cumulative PTSD.

“Cumulative PTSD can be even more dangerous than PTSD caused from a single traumatic event, largely because cumulative PTSD is more likely to go unnoticed and untreated,”

according to a story published on “In Public Safety,” American Military University’s blog.

“We receive all faiths and those with no faith at all,” Father Bernie said. “We listen with an active ear” — the best thing anyone can do. People without a sympathetic release valve have a tougher time. Most officers don’t want to bring their work home to their families. That’s one reason suicides among police officers are high and life expectancies are low.

First H.E.L.P. (Honor, Educate, Lead, Prevent) has been compiling a list of U.S. corrections and federal officers of all duty status lost to suicide since 2016. In 2019, First H.E.L.P. began collecting suicide data on all first responders, including firefighters, emergency medical personnel, and 911 telecommunicators.

According to First H.E.L.P. figures, suicides were down in 2023 by about 25%, from 216 deaths in 2022 to 162 in 2023. The worst year for law enforcement was 2019 with 255 deaths by suicide. Police chaplains are on the lookout for signs of chronic and acute stress.

“We encourage them to let it out in healthy ways,” Father Bernie said.

But PTSD is tricky, and sometimes it takes time to show up. The stoicism that seems ingrained in police officers can hide their emotions from the people with whom they should be sharing feelings. “They keep the negative stuff in,” Father Bernie said. “But eventually, you can see it coming out.”

Father Bernie says he’s seeing more volatile behavior than ever before. “I’m experiencing more anger, frustration and fear from the community,” he said.

Almost 7 in 10 pastors surveyed believe a growing sense of fear exists within their congregations about the future of the nation and the world, according to Lifeway Research.

That makes the chaplaincy ever more important because a chaplain’s presence on scene can improve the outcome.

The usual call-out is for a death, Father Bernie said. It’s one of the hardest. He remembers a call to see the family of a Haitian boy who had drowned in a pool. “The mother was inconsolable,” he said.

There’s no formula for dealing with that kind of grief, no panacea, no magic words, he said. “You just have to rely on your faith.”

Janis Fontaine writes about people of faith, their congregations, causes and community events. Contact her at fontaine423@outlook.com.



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Religion Notes

Lawyer to offer perspective about Jerusalem and disputed territories

“Jerusalem and the Disputed Territories: Definitive Sovereignty in International Law” is the topic of Dr. Jacques P. Gauthier’s lecture at 11 a.m. Feb. 18 in the Friedberg Auditorium at FAU’s Osher Lifelong Learning Institute, 777 Glades Road, Boca Raton.



Gauthier

Gauthier is a Canadian lawyer and international law expert who may be the foremost authority on the San Remo conference,

which laid the legal infrastructure for the Jewish state in 1920.

The description of the lecture says, “The answers to the question of Israel’s entitlements in respect to the City of Jerusalem and the disputed territories under international law depend on certain prior legally binding decisions which are reflected in international legal instruments.”

Find out about the political arguments devoid of legal merit and the false narratives surrounding this issue. Improve your understanding of international law and the territorial sovereignty entitlements of Israel.

This event is hosted by the Gross Family Center for the Study of Antisemitism and the Holocaust. Register at <https://grossfamilycenter.org/event-schedule>.

Talks to focus on history of U.S. presidency, Israel

The Larkin Symposium on the American Presidency at FAU presents “The U.S. Presidency,

the Holocaust and the State of Israel,” on Feb. 21-22 at FAU’s Lifelong Learning Institute.

The symposium opens with the keynote lecture “Retrospective Blame: FDR, the Jews, and the Holocaust,” by famed election predictor Allan Lichtman on Feb. 21 at 4 p.m.

On day 2 of the symposium, which lasts from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., “The U.S. Presidency, Jewish Refugees, and the Holocaust” is the topic of the lecture from 9-11:30 a.m. From 1-3 p.m., “The U.S. Presidency and the State of Israel” is discussed, including Truman and the founding of Israel.

For more information, go to www.fau.edu/artsandletters/larkin/symposiums. Get tickets at www.fauvents.com or 561-297-6124.

Concerts and services

The St. Olaf Choir performs at the Episcopal Church of Bethesda-by-the-Sea at 7 p.m. Feb. 6 as part of its 2024 national tour. Conducted by Anton Armstrong and consisting of 75 mixed voices, the choir is considered one of the premier a cappella ensembles. The church is at 141 S. County Road, Palm Beach. Tickets: \$45 adults, \$10 students at stolaf.edu/tickets/choir or 800-363-5487.

Music at St. Paul’s has a full schedule in the next month beginning on Feb. 7 at 7:30 p.m., when the Delray String Quartet performs “Postcards From Vienna” featuring quartets by Mozart and Brahms. The concert takes place in the round at St. Paul’s Episcopal Church, 188 S. Swinton Ave., Delray Beach. Tickets are \$50 and \$60



The Delray String Quartet will perform on Feb. 7 and Feb. 25 at St. Paul’s. Photo provided

and reservations are required at 561-278-6003 or <https://musicstpauls.org>.

The **Delray String Quartet** performs again at 3 p.m. Feb. 25 for a program called “All About That Bass,” which showcases guest artist Juan Carlos Peña. It includes String Quartet No. 3 (Popcorn) by Heitor Villa-Lobos and String Quartet in G-major, Op. 77 by Antonin Dvorak.

Music at St. Paul’s at 3 p.m. March 3 features **Bailey Michelle Collins**, the bronze medal winner at the 2023-24 Nina Simone Piano Competition. Collins is known for her “thoughtful interpretations and rich sound” and her “lyrical touch and keen sense of rhythm.”

A donation of \$25 for adults and \$15 for students is requested for each of the Sunday concerts.

The ArgenTenors, four Argentinian cantors, perform a medley of “Jewish Music and Beyond” at 1 p.m. Feb. 11 in Beifield Auditorium at the Levis JCC Sandler Center, 21050 95th Avenue S., in Boca Raton. Enjoy a performance combining harmony, culture and spiritual

connection with songs performed in Hebrew, Yiddish, Aramaic and Ladino. Tickets: \$20-\$50 at <https://levisjcc.org/events> or 561-558-2520.

Soul to Soul performs at 7:30 p.m. Feb. 14 at B’nai Torah Congregation, 6261 SW 18th St., Boca Raton. The second concert of the season combines centuries of the musical traditions of Ashkenazi Jews and African Americans. Created by the National Yiddish Theatre Folksbiene, the lyrics and music are designed to deepen connections and celebrate differences. A virtual option is offered. Tickets start at \$30 for members and \$40 for guests at www.btcboca.org/cs.

A Kol HaNeshama Service in the Round is planned from 6-7:30 p.m. Feb. 23 at Temple Beth El’s Schaefer Family Campus, 333 SW Fourth Ave., Boca Raton. This Welcome Shabbat begins with the congregation sitting in the round in the chapel and uses niggunim (wordless melodies) to deepen the connection and welcome Shabbat with a

peaceful mind and an open heart. All are welcomed. www.tbcboca.org or 561-391-8900.

Special events

Rummage Sale! First Presbyterian Church of Delray Beach is hosting its annual Step-Above Rummage Sale from 10 a.m.-1 p.m. Feb. 8-10. Find treasures at bargain prices. All proceeds support the ministry and missions of the church. First Presbyterian is at 33 Gleason St. <https://firstdelray.com> or 561-276-6338.

Shredding Day! Cason United Methodist Church is holding another Shred-a-Thon from 9 a.m.-noon Feb. 17. The Red Shredder team accepts most papers and folders, but no boxes, cardboard, X-rays, food, newspaper, glass, magazines, plastic, dark-colored folders, metal objects or equipment. It’s \$5 per bankers-size box or \$10 for a bag. Cash is preferred. Credit cards require a \$25 minimum. For more information, call Tricia at 561-788-2822.

— Janis Fontaine

Religion Calendar

Note: Events are current as of 1/24. Please check with organizers for any changes.

FEBRUARY 3

Saturday - 2/3 - C-Kids Shabbat Program at Boca Beach Chabad, 120 NE 1st Ave. Every Sat 10:45-11:45 am. 561-394-9770; bocabeachchabad.org

FEBRUARY 4-10

Sunday - 2/4 - Zoom Bible Study at Ascension Catholic Church, 7250 N Federal Hwy, Boca Raton. Every Sun 7 pm. Free. Zoom link: communications#accboca.net; 561-997-5486; ascensionboca.org

Monday - 2/5 - Women’s Bible Study via Zoom at First Presbyterian Church of Delray Beach, 33 Gleason St. Every M 10 am. Free. 561-276-6338; firstdelray.com

Tuesday - 2/6 - Tuesday Morning Prayer Service at Unity of Delray Beach Church, 101 NW 22nd St. Every T 10 am. Free. 561-276-5796; unityofdelraybeach.org

Wednesday - 2/7 - Men’s Spirituality Hour via Zoom at St. Gregory’s Episcopal Church, 100 NE Mizner Blvd, Boca Raton. Every W 8 am. Free. For link: 561-395-8285; stgregorysepiscopal.org

2/7 - Wednesday Evening Meditation Service at Unity of Delray Beach Church Sanctuary, 101 NW 22nd St. Led by Rev. Laurie Durgan. Every W 6:30 pm. Free; love offering. 561-276-5796; unityofdelraybeach.org

Thursday - 2/8 - Thursday Morning Telephone Prosperity Coffee presented by Unity of Delray Beach Church, 101 NW 22nd St. Led by Charlene Wilkinson. Phone meeting (605-475-6006, passcode 3031030). Free. 561-276-5796; unityofdelraybeach.org

2/8 - Men’s Fellowship at First Presbyterian Church of Delray Beach, 33 Gleason St. Every Th 8:30 am. Free. 561-276-6338; firstdelray.com

2/8 - Women’s Bible Study at St. Gregory’s Episcopal Church, 100 NE Mizner Blvd, Boca Raton. Every Th 1 pm. Free. 561-395-8285; stgregorysepiscopal.org

Friday - 2/9 - Bible Study w/Dave Kirk at Advent Boca Raton Fellowship Hall, 300 E Yamato Rd. Every F 10-11:30 am. 561-395-3632; adventboca.org

2/9 - Legion of Mary at St. Vincent Ferrer Family Life Center, 840 George Bush Blvd,

Delray Beach. Every F 5:30 pm. Free. 561-276-6892; stvincentferrer.com

2/9 - Virtual Shabbat Service at Temple Sinai of Palm Beach County, 2475 W Atlantic Ave, Delray Beach. Every F 7:30 pm. Free. 561-276-6161; templesinaipbc.org

FEBRUARY 22-MARCH 2

Thursday - 2/22 - Celebrating the Siyum - Completion Ceremony of the Jerome Chazen Legacy Torah and IDF Tribute Torch and Gala Dinner presented by Boca Beach Chabad at Boca Raton Museum of Art, 501 Plaza Real. 5 pm. \$180. Registration: 561-394-9770; bocabeachchabad.org

Friday - 3/1 - Adoration & Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament at St. Mark Chapel, 643 NE 4th Ave, Boynton Beach. 1st F 9 am-3 pm. Free. 561-734-9330; stmarkboynton.com

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Random acts of kindness help givers as well as receivers

Kindness is the language which the deaf can hear and the blind can see.

— Mark Twain

We've all seen them — bumper stickers encouraging us to "commit random acts of kindness." In fact, Feb. 17 is the official Random Acts of Kindness Day, a designation begun in the 1980s in the San Francisco Bay area by the nonprofit Random Acts of Kindness Foundation.

A random act of kindness is doing something nice for someone else, without that person asking and without your expecting something in return.

"Kindness is the key to well-being," says Karin Gellen, executive director of Kindness Matters 365, a nonprofit based in Boca Raton. "Kindness starts with kindness toward yourself, which then translates towards kindness to others and eventually leads to a kinder world."

Founded by Boca Raton resident Laura Reiss in 2008, KM365 works in the school system to equip kids and teens with knowledge and skills for their social and emotional well-being.

Science has shown benefits to being kind. Kindness increases the love hormone, energy levels, pleasure, serotonin and even your lifespan, while decreasing

pain, stress, anxiety, depression and blood pressure.

Positive effects of kindness are experienced in the brain, improving mood and making both the doer and the receiver inclined to "pay it forward." This means one good deed begets another.

Gellen



As Gellen knows, kindness is teachable and studies show people can build up their compassion "muscle" and respond to others' suffering with care and desire to help.

Some kinds of wonderful

Clara Girardi, 58, of Boynton Beach, helped feed up to 1,000 people a day for two weeks after Hurricane Ian in 2022, and went to Louisiana in 2017 after a hurricane there, working 12-hour days opening shelters and distributing supplies.

She has been a full-time volunteer with the Red Cross for 20 years and volunteers on Southwest Airlines' animal transportation team.

More than once Girardi has come to a stranger's aid on Interstate 95 after witnessing an accident — and in 2022 she helped the driver of an oil tanker that crashed and burst into flames on I-95 in Delray Beach, making sure everyone

was safely out of the truck.

"I do it for selfish reasons," she says. "It makes me feel good when I see the smiles on their faces. It brings me joy."

Retired Boynton Beach stockbroker Joe Donadio, 69, was on the receiving end of kindness after fainting and falling off his bicycle last March. Rushed to Delray Medical Center, he needed six stitches to his head. He later learned three cars had stopped to offer assistance and one woman wrapped a blanket around his head to stanch the bleeding.

He posted on Nextdoor, but was never able to find and thank the Good Samaritans who stopped.

Christine Roberts, 66, the former assistant public works director for the city of Boynton Beach, practices small, daily acts of kindness: posting positive messages on her Facebook page, complimenting a stranger in the grocery store or giving boxes of toiletries to homeless people. She once raised \$15,000 with her church to help a family in need.

She brought diabetes testing kits to work to test employees who were reluctant to visit a doctor.

One of the most gratifying moments came when an employee brought her a large bouquet of flowers as a thank-you for "being an angel and saving his life."

"Kindness has rewarded me,"



Clara Girardi of Boynton Beach is a longtime volunteer: 'I do it for selfish reasons. ... It brings me joy.' Photo provided

Roberts says. "I try to spread it wherever I go."

'Learn how to feel good'

For Gellen, it's not only the personal random acts of kindness that matter, but engaging the larger community.

"It's a synchronicity between gratitude, kindness and compassion," she says. "They all work together."

At a personal level, Gellen says through her work teaching kindness to children and teens, she learned to become more self-aware and to practice self-care, which improved her own level of happiness.

"I learned to relate to people in a more authentic way," she says. "This led to greater understanding, stronger

communication and feeling more fulfilled.

"Through my work teaching kindness with KM365, I have experienced personal growth and unity with my community, and that feels really good," she says.

Her best advice? "Learn how to feel good, feel your best and spread kindness," says Gellen. "Learn how to shine your light."

Visit kindnessmatters365.org.

Jan Engoren writes about health and healthy living. Send column ideas to jengoren@hotmail.com.



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Health Notes

FAU, brain health center join in effort to prevent Alzheimer's

The Research Park at Florida Atlantic University and Florida Atlantic University's Schmidt College of Medicine are partnering with Thema Brain Health, a cognitive brain health center at the Research Park, with the goal of preventing Alzheimer's disease and other related dementias.

Thema Brain Health aims to empower patients to take control of their brain health and it provides information on taking early remedial action. Also, it is likely that Thema Brain Health will become a training site for the university's medical students and resident physicians.



Stoess-Allen



McCaffrey

Orthodontists open new practice in Delray Beach

Drs. **Janet Stoess-Allen** and **Kevin McCaffrey** have partnered to establish Delray Orthodontics, 10 SE First Ave., Suite D, Delray Beach. They are ranked as Diamond Plus Invisalign providers, and their practice uses cutting-edge technology. They aim to create

a comfortable and efficient patient experience. They invite patients affected by the recent closure of Smile Direct Club to join them to continue their orthodontic treatment.

JFK Hospital opens doors for volunteer activities

After a long hiatus, volunteers are welcomed back to HCA Florida JFK Hospital.

Volunteers contribute by assisting in the lobby, taking on administrative tasks, providing companionship to patients and offering emotional support to families. Schedules are flexible.

Volunteers must be 15 or

older, complete an application and background check, and attend an orientation. To learn more, call the hospital's volunteer services manager, Christie Lee Geltz, at 561-548-1357 or email Christielee.Geltz@hcahealthcare.com

Alzheimer's drug trial put on hold by FDA

InMune Bio's phase-two clinical trial for the Alzheimer's disease drug XPro is on hold after the U.S. Food and Drug Administration requested additional information about its long-term potency. In a statement, Boca Raton-based InMune Bio

reported that it will provide clarification to the FDA before the end of the year to resolve questions.

"The hold will not impact our progress in completing the Phase II AD study on schedule," CEO R.J. Tesi said in the statement. The clinical trial is still open in Australia, Canada, the United Kingdom, Poland, France and Spain and is expected to launch in additional European Union countries.

Send health news to Christine Davis at cdavis9797@gmail.com.

Health Calendar

Note: Events are current as of 1/24. Please check with organizers for any changes.

FEBRUARY 3

Saturday - 2/3 - Morning Beach Yoga at The Seagate Beach Club, 401 S Ocean Blvd, Delray Beach. Every Sat 8-9 am. \$20/person. Tickets: 561-330-3775; eventbrite.com/e/sunrise-beach-yoga-tickets-336433921917

2/3 - Yoga Class at South Palm Beach Town Hall, 3577 S Ocean Blvd. Every Sat 9 am. \$5/class. 561-588-8889; southpalmbeach.com

2/3 - Judo Class at Boca Raton Community Center, 150 Crawford Blvd. Warm-up exercises, instruction, practice, tournament training. W 6:30-8:30 pm mixed ages/ranks; Sat 10 am-noon all groups. Per month \$21.50/resident; \$27/non-resident. 561-393-7807; myboca.us

2/3 - AA Meeting at Unity of Delray Beach, 101 NW 22nd St. Every Sat 5:30 pm. Free. 561-276-5796; unityofdelraybeach.org

FEBRUARY 4-10

Sunday - 2/4 - Coco Connections Market at Old School Square, 51 N Swinton Ave, Delray Beach. Monthly wellness market: 30 local vendors, health/wellness professionals w/ various healing modalities; live music; 2 free yoga, meditation or fitness classes per event. Held again 3/3 9 am-3 pm. Free. 561-870-4090; thecocoyogi.com/market

2/4 - CODA (Codependents Anonymous) Meeting at Unity of Delray Beach, 101 NW 22nd St. Every Sun 6 pm. Free. 561-276-5796; unityofdelraybeach.org

Monday - 2/5 - Adult Zumba Class at Boca Raton Community Center, 150 Crawford Blvd. Every M 7-8 pm. \$6/1 class. 561-393-7807; myboca.us

Tuesday - 2/6 - Tai Chi Class at Boca Raton Community Center, 150 Crawford Blvd. Beginner through advanced. Age 16+. Every T 6-8 pm. \$8-\$10/class. 561-393-7807; myboca.us

2/6 - AI-Anon 12-Step Study at Unity of Delray Beach, 101 NW 22nd St. Every T 7 pm.

Free. 561-276-5796; unityofdelraybeach.org
Wednesday - 2/7 - Tai Chi Class at South Palm Beach Town Hall, 3577 S Ocean Blvd. Every W 9 am. \$5/class. 561-588-8889; southpalmbeach.com

2/7 - Stretch & Strengthening Mindfulness Class at South Palm Beach Town Hall, 3577 S Ocean Blvd. Every W/F 10:30 am. \$5/class. 561-588-8889; southpalmbeach.com

2/7 - Wellness Wednesday: Yoga with April at Cornell Art Museum at Old School Square, 51 N Swinton Ave, Delray Beach. Every W 11 am-noon. \$5/class. Registration: 561-654-2220; delrayoldschoolsquare.com/events

2/7 - Enhancing Psychological Fitness: Build "Muscle" to Cope with Life's Challenges w/ Dr. Davele Bursor at Delray Beach Public Library, 100 W Atlantic Ave. Part of the Lifelong Learning Institute. Every W through 2/28 2-3:30 pm. \$75. Registration: 561-266-0194; delraylibrary.org

2/7 - LGBTQ AA Meeting at Unity of Delray Beach Church, 101 NW 22nd St. Every W 7 pm. Free. 561-276-5796; unityofdelraybeach.org

Thursday - 2/8 - Yoga Class at J. Turner Moore Memorial Library, 1330 Lands End Rd,

Manalapan. Vinyasa Flow Every Th. Yoga: 10-11 am; Yin Practice: 11 am-noon. \$10/resident or library member; \$15/non-resident - cash only. 561-383-2541; manalapan.org

FEBRUARY 11-17

Sunday - 2/11 - Yoga at the Museum at Boca Raton Museum of Art, 501 Plaza Real. 9:30-11 am. \$15/member; \$30/non-member. 561-392-2500; bocamuseum.org

Monday - 2/12 - Brown Bag Series: Staying Vertical: How to Reduce Falls and Modify Your Environment for Leisure, Beauty and Safety W/ Tammy K. Simmons, RN, CDP, LNC at Boynton Beach City Library, 100 E Ocean Ave. Adults. Noon. Free. Registration: 561-742-6390; boyntonlibrary.org

2/12 - Decreasing Your Risk for Dementia: What We've Known and What We Know Now - An Update w/ Lisa Wiese at Florida Atlantic University Lifelong Learning Classroom, 777 Glades Rd, Boca Raton. 12:30-2 pm. \$60/annual membership; \$40/member; \$50/non-member & one-time guest pass at door. 561-297-3185; olliboca.fau.edu

FEBRUARY 18-24

Wednesday - 2/21 - Scripps Research Front-Row Lecture Series: How Experiences Shape the Developing Brain and Impact Neurological Diseases w/ Hollis Cline, Ph.D. 1-hour virtual lecture. 7 pm. Free. Register for link: frontrow.scripps.edu
Saturday - 2/24 - Strike A Pose: Full Moon Yoga at The Seagate Beach Club, 401 S Ocean Blvd, Delray Beach. 6-7 pm. \$20/person. Tickets: 561-330-3775; eventbrite.com/e/full-moon-yoga-tickets-328825194007?aff=ebdssbdes_tsearch

FEBRUARY 25-MARCH 2

Monday - 2/26 - Brown Bag Series: Healthy Brain at Boynton Beach City Library, 100 E Ocean Ave. Adults. Noon. Free. Registration: 561-742-6390; boyntonlibrary.org
Thursday - 2/29 - Yoga Under the Stars at Boca Raton Museum of Art, 501 Plaza Real. 6-7:30 pm. \$20/member; \$40/non-member. 561-392-2500; bocamuseum.org

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On the Water

Tips for boaters to avoid going green around the gills

Offshore fishing in Palm Beach County can be terrific following winter cold fronts. But those same fronts that have everything from snapper to sailfish biting also make for rough seas that can ruin an angler's day.

Getting seasick is a common affliction when the strong winds that accompany cold fronts create big waves. Experts don't know exactly what causes seasickness or how to cure it. The only certainty is that everybody, at some time, in some way — whether it's a headache, queasiness or gut-wrenching vomiting — gets seasick.

Fortunately, there are plenty of remedies for seasickness that range from medications to common sense.

Most people believe seasickness has to do with the inner ear and its mechanisms for maintaining balance. Basically, as a boat rocks and rolls on the water, a boater's eyes perceive all kinds of movement. The brain tells the inner ear that the body is moving. The inner ear tries to compensate for that perceived motion. And the boater becomes seasick.

That explains a couple of general seasickness advisories — don't go inside a boat's cabin when you're feeling sick, and try to keep your eyes focused on the shoreline. Sitting in a cabin, you sense that everything in the cabin is moving. Remaining outside, you see only waves and the unchanging horizon.

Sailors, divers and anglers can take several precautions before traveling. Among them are getting a good night's sleep before a trip and not drinking alcohol.



This time of year can bring windy and wavy conditions that can cause seasickness in people who are prone to the malady. Photo provided

Drugs combat seasickness by interfering with the signals received by the inner ear. Most anti-seasickness drugs were developed for other purposes, such as nausea from chemotherapy.

The most common side effects of anti-seasickness drugs are drowsiness, occasional dizziness and dryness of the mouth.

A prescription scopolamine patch, which is placed on the skin behind the ear, reduces the activity of inner-ear

nerves that can cause the nausea and vomiting of seasickness (as well as anesthesia and surgery).

The downside is it can make a boater fall asleep, which actually is not a bad way to deal with rough seas. If you can sleep with or without the use of drugs when you feel sick, you usually won't suffer the worst effects of seasickness.

Over-the-counter products such as Dramamine and Bonine can make you tired, but not as sleepy. The key with those medications is to take them well

in advance of your trip when you know that the waves are going to be big.

Charter fishing captains, especially those who fish in tournaments when seas could be as rough as 5 to 8 feet, advise their anglers to take a pill the night before the tournament and the morning before getting on the boat. They say their clients rarely get seasick.

As one captain explained, taking a seasickness pill for the first time is like smoking a cigarette for the first time. Your body needs time to get used to it. And if you wait until you feel seasick to take a pill, it's usually too late.

Other products that can work, and without side effects, are bands that press on an acupressure point in the wrist or deliver an electronic pulse to the pressure point.

Seasickness can also be psychological. A drift boat captain said he's seen anglers talk themselves into getting seasick because they couldn't stop worrying about it, even when conditions weren't that bad.

My favorite example was a seasick-prone sailor who was on a boat in choppy seas and felt great. His amazed friends asked him his secret, and he said it was the patch behind his ear. Someone looked behind his ear but did not see a patch and told him so. When the sailor put his hand behind his ear and didn't feel anything, he promptly threw up.



Outdoors writer Steve Waters can be reached at steve33324@aol.com.

Outdoors Calendar

Note: Events are current as of 1/24. Please check with organizers for any changes.

FEBRUARY 3

Saturday - 2/3 - Sand Sifters Beach Clean Up at Oceanfront Park, 6415 N Ocean Blvd, Ocean Ridge. Meet at south pavilion, lower parking lot. Bring water, hat, sunscreen. Bags, gloves, grabbers provided. 8-10:30 am. Free. jefflev02@gmail.com

2/3 - Intracoastal Adventures: Kayaking at Gumbo Limbo Nature Center, 1801 N Ocean Blvd, Boca Raton. Includes short talk about South Florida's unique animals/ecosystems. Age 7-adult; each child under 12 must be accompanied by one adult. Held again 2/18 9-10:30 am. \$20/resident & member; \$25/non-member. Registration: 561-544-8605; gumbolimbo.org

2/3 - Outdoor Marine Aquarium Feedings at Gumbo Limbo Nature Center, 1801 N Ocean Blvd, Boca Raton. All ages; child must be accompanied by an adult. Daily 12:30 pm. Free. 561-544-8605; gumbolimbo.org

FEBRUARY 4-10

Sunday - 2/4 - Intracoastal Adventures: Intro to Canoeing at Gumbo Limbo Nature Center, 1801 N Ocean Blvd, Boca Raton. Learn about our native & migratory birds from an experienced birder. Age 12-adult; child under 18 must be accompanied by an adult. 10-11:30 am. \$20/member; \$25/non-member. Advance reservation required: 561-544-8605; gumbolimbo.org

Tuesday - 2/6 - Golden Hour Guided Tours at Gumbo Limbo Nature Center, 1801 N Ocean Blvd, Boca Raton. Ages 7-adult; child under 18 must be accompanied by an adult. Held again 5:45-7:15 pm 2/16 & 20. 5:30-7 pm. \$10/resident & member; \$13/non-resident. Registration: 561-544-8605; gumbolimbo.org

Wednesday - 2/7 - EcoWatch Lecture Series: Beach Renourishment and Sea Turtle Success w/ Emma Pawlik & Allison Ragle at Gumbo Limbo Nature Center, 1801 N Ocean Blvd, Boca Raton. Age 13 & up; child under age 18 must be accompanied by an adult. 6:30-8 pm. Free. 561-544-8605; gumbolimbo.org

Friday - 2/9 - Beach Treasures at Gumbo Limbo Nature Center, 1801 N Ocean Blvd, Boca

Raton. Learn about seashells, the animals that make them. Caravan to Red Reef Park, 1400 N State Rd A1A, to search for ocean treasures. All ages; child must be accompanied by an adult. Held again 2/22 2-3:30 pm. Free. Reservations: 561-544-8605; gumbolimbo.org

Saturday - 2/10 - Coast Guard Auxiliary Boat America: A Boating Safety Course at Spanish River Park HQ Building, USCG Auxiliary Classroom, 3939 N Ocean Blvd, Boca Raton. Boating terminology, boat handling, navigation rules, federal & Florida regulations, more. Course provides knowledge needed to obtain a boating certificate; possible insurance discount. 9 am-5 pm. \$35/adult; \$5/teen. 561-391-3600; peauxboca@gmail.com

FEBRUARY 11-17

Saturday - 2/17 - Intracoastal Adventures: Advanced Canoeing at Gumbo Limbo Nature Center, 1801 N Ocean Blvd, Boca Raton. Short talks about South Florida's unique animals/ecosystems. For experienced paddlers age 12-adult; child under 18 must be accompanied by an adult. 9:30-11 am. \$20/member; \$25/non-member. Registration required: 561-544-8605; gumbolimbo.org

Thursday - 2/22 - Early Birding w/Al at Gumbo Limbo Nature Center, 1801 N Ocean Blvd, Boca Raton. Learn about native & migratory birds; walk the boardwalk in search of warblers, gnatcatchers, woodpeckers, other avian species. Binoculars recommended. Meet on nature center front porch. Age 10+; child must be accompanied by an adult. 8:30-10 am. Free. 561-544-8605; gumbolimbo.org

Saturday - 2/24 - Sea Angels Beach Cleanup at Ocean Inlet Park, 6990 N Ocean Blvd, Ocean Ridge. Last Sat 8-9:30 am. Pre-registration: 561-369-5501; seangels.org

FEBRUARY 25-MARCH 2

Wednesday - 2/28 - EcoWatch Lecture Series: Octopus Research: Behavior, Bacteria, and Beyond w/ Chelsea Bennice, aka "Octogirl" at Gumbo Limbo Nature Center, 1801 N Ocean Blvd, Boca Raton. Age 13 & up; child under age 18 must be accompanied by an adult. 6:30-8 pm. Free. 561-544-8605; gumbolimbo.org

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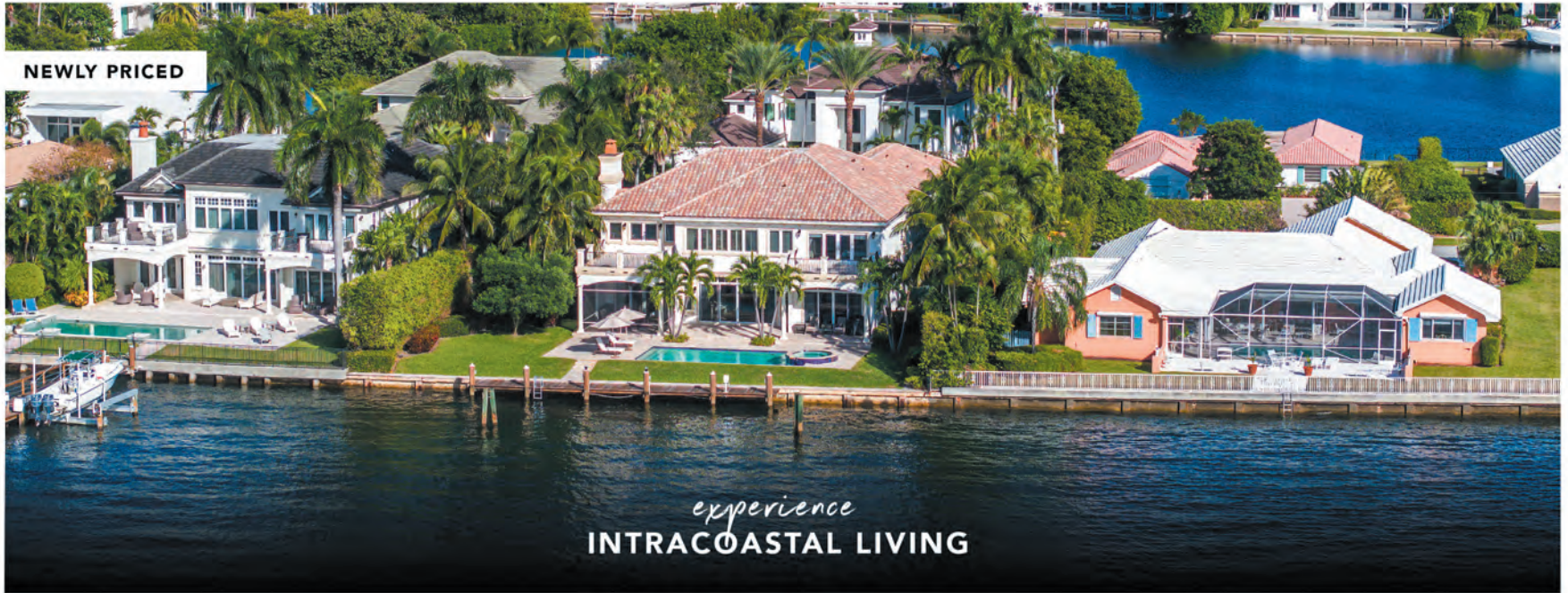
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2/17 - Artist at Work: Jen Fisher - Perspective Painting at Boca Raton Museum of Art, 501 Plaza Real. 3-4 pm. \$5/member; \$10/non-member. 561-392-2500; bocamuseum.org
2/17 - Story Central: A Visit with Oney Judge at Boca Raton Public Library, 400 NW 2nd Ave. Adults. 4-5:30 pm. Free. 561-393-7906; bocalibrary.org
2/17 - An Evening of Compassion and Camaraderie at Hurricane Grill, 1880 N Congress Ave, Boynton Beach. A portion of the proceeds benefit Awesome Greyhound Adoptions for Their Hounds & Heroes program. Drink specials, raffle prizes. 4-7 pm. Free. 561-413-5909; facebook.com/componplace
2/17 - Blues Legend John Primer at Arts Garage, 94 NE 2nd Ave, Delray Beach. 8 pm. \$45-\$50. 561-450-6357; artsgarage.org

FEBRUARY 18-24

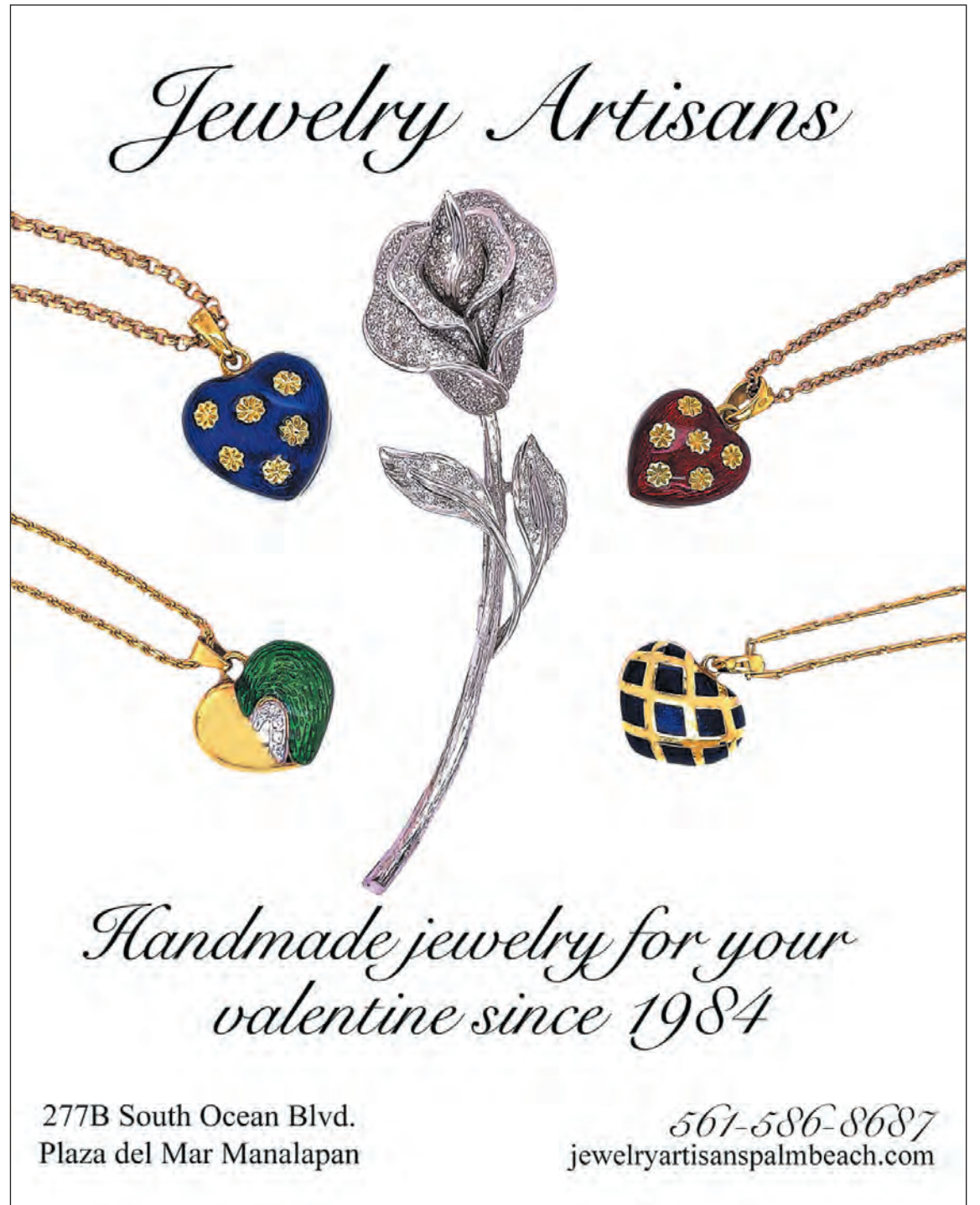
Sunday - 2/18 - Exhibit Artists Reception: Assorted at Artist's Eye Gallery Boutique, 604 Lucerne Ave, Lake Worth. Runs through 3/16. 1-3 pm. Free. 561-586-8666; lwartleague.org
2/18 - 15th Annual Horses and Hounds at 11399 Piping Plover Rd, Lake Worth Beach. Featuring Westminster-style Dog Show, Silent Auction, Blessing of the Animals and Miniature Horses. Benefits Tri-County Animal Rescue. 2:30-5 pm. Free. 561-482-8110; tricountyanimalrescue.com
2/18 - Boynton Beach Gold Coast Band: Chicken Soup & Licorice Sticks at Boynton Beach High School, 4975 Park Ridge Blvd, Boynton Beach. 3 pm. \$10. Goldcoastband.org
2/18 - Artist Talk: Dorothea Grace Lemeh at Boca Raton Museum of Art, 501 Plaza Real. 3-4 pm. \$8/member; \$18/non-member. 561-392-2500; bocamuseum.org
2/18 - Story Central Storytelling Slam at Boca Raton Public Library, 400 NW 2nd Ave. Adults. 4-5:30 pm. Free. 561-393-7906; bocalibrary.org
2/18 - The Historically Black College Improv Comedy Show: Starring The Intelligent Fools at Arts Garage, 94 NE 2nd Ave, Delray Beach. 7 pm. \$30. 561-450-6357; artsgarage.org
Monday - 2/19 - Law and Order: Cops, Courts and Corrections w/ Eric Williams at Florida Atlantic University Friedberg Auditorium, 777 Glades Rd, Boca Raton. Every M through 3/11 10-11:30 am. \$60/annual membership; \$60/member; \$80/non-member; \$30/one-time guest pass at door. 561-297-3185; olliboca.fau.edu
2/19 - Hidden Secrets in Famous Artworks w/ Wes Ervin at Florida Atlantic University Friedberg Auditorium, 777 Glades Rd, Boca Raton. 12:30-2 pm. \$60/annual membership; \$30/member; \$35/non-member & one-time guest pass at door. 561-297-3185; olliboca.fau.edu
2/19 - Tony Bennett: The Man and His Music w/ Harvey Granat at Florida Atlantic University Friedberg Auditorium, 777 Glades Rd, Boca Raton. 4-5:30 pm. \$60/annual membership; \$30/member; \$35/non-member & one-time guest pass at door. 561-297-3185; olliboca.fau.edu
2/19 - 4TH Annual Cultural, Arts & Society Today (C.A.S.T.) Party with Marc Kudisch at Boca Raton Marriott, 5150 Town Center Circle, Boca Raton. 6-9 pm. \$300. 561-297-2337; fauf.fau.edu/2024cast
2/19 - Art and the Moving Image: The Cinema of Artists' Lives w/ Shelly Isaacs at Florida Atlantic University Friedberg Auditorium, 777 Glades Rd, Boca Raton. Every M through 3/11 7-9:30 pm. \$60/annual membership; \$60/member; \$80/non-member; \$30 at door. 561-297-3185; olliboca.fau.edu
2/19 - Poetry Open Mic Night at Arts Garage, 94 NE 2nd Ave, Delray Beach. 3rd M 8-10 pm. \$10. 561-450-6357; artsgarage.org
Tuesday - 2/20 - Workshop: Embroidered Watercolor Painting at Arts Warehouse, 313 NE 3rd St, Delray Beach. 10:30 am-3:30 pm. \$100. 561-330-9614; artswarehouse.org
2/20 - Book Talks - Non-Fiction/ Biographies: Black Artists in America by Ernestine Lovelle Jenkins at Boca Raton Public Library, 400 NW 2nd Ave. Adults. 2-3 pm. Registration: 561-393-7906; bocalibrary.org
2/20 - Impact Talks Speaker Series: Ashley Whittaker at BRIC Presentation Hall, 5000 T-Rex Ave, Boca Raton. Third of a three-part series featuring leading women who have built impressive careers while prioritizing the importance of commitment to their community. 4:30-6 pm. Free. 561-336-4623; impact100pbc.org
2/20 - Crafting for Fun & Small Business: Next Level Cross Stitch - Counted at Boca Raton Public Library, 400 NW 2nd Ave. Adults. 5:30-7 pm. Free. Registration: 561-393-7906; bocalibrary.org
2/20 - FAU Astronomical Observatory public viewing at Florida Atlantic University Science & Engineering Building 4th floor, 777 Glades Rd, Boca Raton. 1st F & 3rd T 8 pm. Free. Schedule subject to change; check website: 561-

297-7827; cecos.fau.edu/observatory
2/20-22 - From Broadway With Love at The Delray Beach Playhouse, 950 NW 9th St. M-W: 2 pm; M/T 7:30 pm. \$45-\$55. 561-272-1281; delraybeachplayhouse.com
Wednesday - 2/21 - Book Buzz Adult Book Club at Boynton Beach City Library, 100 E Ocean Ave. Adults. 10:30 am-noon. Free. Registration: 561-742-6390; boyntonlibrary.org
2/21 - Book Discussion: The Glatstein Chronicles by Jacob Glatstein part of Stories of Exile Reading Group at Delray Beach Public Library, 100 W Atlantic Ave. 1 pm. Free. Registration: 561-266-0194; delraylibrary.org
2/21 - Microsoft Excel Intermediate Class at Delray Beach Public Library, 100 W Atlantic Ave. Adults. 2 pm. Free. Registration: 561-266-0194; delraylibrary.org
2/21 - Keynote Address - Retrospective Blame: FDR, the Jews, and the Holocaust - Allan Lichtman, American University at Florida Atlantic University Friedberg Auditorium, 777 Glades Rd, Boca Raton. 4-5 pm. \$60/annual membership; \$35/member, non-member & one-time guest pass at door. 561-297-3185; olliboca.fau.edu
2/21 - The U.S. Presidency, the Holocaust, and the State of Israel VIP Package at Florida Atlantic University Friedberg Auditorium, 777 Glades Rd, Boca Raton. 4-6 pm. \$60/annual membership; \$120/member; \$140/non-member. RSVP by 2/19: 561-297-3185; olliboca.fau.edu
2/21 - Crafting in the Library: UV Resin Necklace Pendants at Boynton Beach City Library, 100 E Ocean Ave. Adults. 5-7 pm. Free. Registration: 561-742-6390; boyntonlibrary.org
2/21 - Open Read for Writers at Delray Beach Public Library, 100 W Atlantic Ave. Adults. 6-7 pm. Free. Registration: 561-266-0196; delraylibrary.org
2/21 - Art Happy Hour: DIY Tote Bags at Arts Warehouse, 313 NE 3rd St, Delray Beach. 6:30-8 pm. \$22. 561-330-9614; artswarehouse.org
2/21-22 - FAU Opera Theatre at Florida Atlantic University Theatre, 777 Glades Rd, Boca Raton. 7 pm. \$10/general public; Free/faculty, staff & children under 13. 561-297-6124; fauevents.com
2/21-22 - The U.S. Presidency, the Holocaust, and the State of Israel at Florida Atlantic University Friedberg Auditorium, 777 Glades Rd, Boca Raton. W: 4 & 6 pm; Th: 9 am & 1 pm. \$35/general public per event; Free/faculty & staff. 561-297-6124; fauevents.com
Thursday - 2/22 - Panel Program: The U.S. Presidency, Jewish Refugees, and the Holocaust at Florida Atlantic University Friedberg Auditorium, 777 Glades Rd, Boca Raton. 9-11:30 am. \$60/annual membership; \$35/member, non-member & one-time guest pass at door. 561-297-3185; olliboca.fau.edu
2/22 - Introducing Artificial Intelligence Class at Delray Beach Public Library, 100 W Atlantic Ave. Adults. 10 am. Free. Registration: 561-266-0194; delraylibrary.org
2/22 - Panel Program: The U.S. Presidency and the State of Israel at Florida Atlantic University Friedberg Auditorium, 777 Glades Rd, Boca Raton. 1-3 pm. \$60/annual membership; \$35/member, non-member & one-time guest pass at door. 561-297-3185; olliboca.fau.edu
2/22 - Beginning Sewing Program at Boynton Beach City Library, 100 E Ocean Ave. Learn basics of hand sewing & machine sewing.

Adults. 5-7 pm. Free. Registration: 561-742-6390; boyntonlibrary.org
2/22 - Hip Hop History w/ Dr. Marquese McFerguson Boca Raton Public Library, 400 NW 2nd Ave. Part of the Thursday Night Speaker Series. Adults. 6 pm. Free. Registration: 561-393-7906; bocalibrary.org
2/22 - Friends Virtual Book Club: Last Train to Paradise by Les Standiford presented by Boca Raton Public Library, 400 NW 2nd Ave. Adults. 6:30-7:30 pm. Free. Email for zoom link: DTLbookclub@bocalibraryfriends.org; 561-393-7968; bocalibrary.org
2/22 - 16th Annual Dr. Eric H. Shaw Concerto and Aria Excellence Concert at Florida Atlantic University Theatre, 777 Glades Rd, Boca Raton. 7 pm. \$10/general public; Free/faculty, staff & children under 13. 561-297-6124; fauevents.com

2/22-23 - Workshop: Color Theory Basics 2-Day at Arts Warehouse, 313 NE 3rd St, Delray Beach. 2-5 pm. \$90. 561-330-9614; artswarehouse.org
Friday - 2/23 - FAU Concert Band Festival 2024 at Florida Atlantic University Theatre, 777 Glades Rd, Boca Raton. 7 pm. Free. 561-297-6124; fauevents.com
2/23 - Amanda McBroom - Crimes of the Heart at Arts Garage, 94 NE 2nd Ave, Delray Beach. 8 pm. \$45-\$50. 561-450-6357; artsgarage.org
Saturday - 2/24 - 32nd Annual South Florida Political and Historical Collectibles Show at Lake Worth Christian School, 7592 High Ridge Rd, Boynton Beach. 9 am-3 pm. \$5/adults; free/children 12 & under. 561-707-3090
2/24 - Workshop: Intro to Creativity with Lee Krasner at Arts Warehouse, 313 NE 3rd

St, Delray Beach. Age 16+. 10:30 am-12:30 pm. \$55. 561-330-9614; artswarehouse.org
2/24 - CPR/AED/1st Aid Certification Class at Sims Center, 225 NW 12th Ave, Boynton Beach. Age 18+. 1-5 pm. \$60/resident; \$75/non-resident. Registration: 561-742-6640; boynton-beach.org
2/24 - Home: A Journey Through Time, Space, and Memory part of Stories of Exile Series at Delray Beach Public Library, 100 W Atlantic Ave. 1 pm. Free. Registration: 561-266-0194; delraylibrary.org
2/24 - Culture Talks: Ghislain d'Humieres at Cultural Council for Palm Beach County, 601 Lake Ave, Lake Worth Beach. 2-3:30 pm. Free. 561-471-2901; palmbeachculture.com
2/24 - Rock the Plaza at Ocean Plaza, 640 E Ocean Ave, Boynton Beach. Live music, activities, food offerings from restaurants



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in the plaza. 6-9 pm. Free. 561-600-9097; boymntonbeachcra.com
2/24 - Comedy Night with Mark Riccadonna at Sol Theatre, 3333 N Federal Hwy, Boca Raton. 6 & 8:30 pm. \$30-\$35. comiccure.com/boca-raton
2/24 - Workshop: Sumi Ink for All Levels at Arts Warehouse, 313 NE 3rd St, Delray Beach. 6-8 pm. \$40. 561-330-9614; artwarehouse.org
2/24 - Chris Cain at Arts Garage, 94 NE 2nd Ave, Delray Beach. 8 pm. \$40-\$45. 561-450-6357; artsgarage.org
2/24-25 - 4th Annual Downtown Delray Beach Craft Festival at Old School Square, 51 N Swinton Ave. 10 am-5 pm. Free. 561-746-6615; artfestival.com
2/24-25 - Outdoor Tent & Table Show at Artist's Eye Gallery & Boutique, 604 Lucerne Ave, Lake Worth Beach. 10 am-5 pm. Free. 561-586-8666; lwartleague.org
2/24-25 - Lake Worth Beach Street Painting Festival at Lake & Lucerne Avenues, Downtown Lake Worth Beach. Sat: 10 am-9 pm; Sun: 10 am-7 pm. spf.lakeworthbeachfl.gov

FEBRUARY 25-MARCH 2

Sunday - 2/25 - Fantasy, Science Fiction, and Hoffmann's State of Mind at Delray Beach Public Library, 100 W Atlantic Ave. Part of the Opera Forum Lecture Series with Palm Beach Opera. Adults. 2 pm. Free. Registration: 561-266-0194; delraylibrary.org
2/25 - Delray String Quartet part of Music at St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 188 S Swinton Ave, Delray Beach. 3 pm. \$20/person; free/age 18 & under. 561-276-4541; musicstpauls.org
2/25 - Friends of the Uffizi Lectures: Art is an Endangered Species: Italian Edition w/Dr. Margaret Ann Zaho at Boca Raton Museum of Art, 501 Plaza Real. Speaker Dr. Emily Fenichel. 3-4 pm. \$18/non-member. 561-392-2500; bocamuseum.org
2/25 - Concert - Enlightenment Festival: A Visit with Haydn at St. Gregory's Episcopal Church, 100 NE Mizner Blvd, Boca Raton. 4 pm. \$53. 305-285-9060; seraphicfire.org
2/25 - Gospel in the Park at Catherine Strong Splash Park, 1500 SW 6th St, Delray Beach. Featuring Florida local gospel groups. 5-8 pm. Free. 561-243-7194; delraybeachfl.gov
2/25 - Steve Forbert Duo at Arts Garage, 94 NE 2nd Ave, Delray Beach. 7 pm. \$45-\$50. 561-450-6357; artsgarage.org
2/25-3/17 - Boca International Jewish

Film Festival - Locations: Cinemark Palace 20, Movies of Delray, Movies of Lake Worth and the Wick Theater. Runs through 3/17. Individual tickets \$12; film passes \$59-\$199. Check website for schedule/tickets. jflimboca2024.eventive.org/welcome
Monday - 2/26 - Claude Monet, the Key Figure in the Impressionist Movement with Dr. Armando Droulers at Boca Raton Museum of Art, 501 Plaza Real. Part of the 3-part Lecture & Luncheon series. Lecture 11 am; luncheon noon. \$125/member; \$150/non-member. 561-392-2500; bocamuseum.org
2/26 - What is Free Will? w/ Samuel Director at Florida Atlantic University Lifelong Learning Classroom, 777 Glades Rd, Boca Raton. 12:30-2 pm. \$60/annual membership; \$50/member; \$65/non-member & one-time guest pass at door. 561-297-3185; olliboca.fau.edu
2/26 - Come and Meet Those Dancing Feet: The Personalities that Shaped American Tap w/ Sheryl Flatow at Florida Atlantic University Friedberg Auditorium, 777 Glades Rd, Boca Raton. Every M through 3/18 12:30-2 pm. \$60/annual membership; \$60/member; \$80/non-member; \$30/one-time guest pass at door. 561-297-3185; olliboca.fau.edu
2/26 - South to America: A Journey Below the Mason Dixon Line by Imani Perry part of Afternoon Book Group at Delray Beach Public Library, 100 W Atlantic Ave. 1 pm. Free. 561-266-0196; delraylibrary.org
2/26 - Investing for Retirement Success w/ Michael Silver at Florida Atlantic University Lifelong Learning Classroom, 777 Glades Rd, Boca Raton. 3-4:30 pm. \$60/annual membership; \$40/member; \$50/non-member & one-time guest pass at door. 561-297-3185; olliboca.fau.edu
2/26 - Jews in Venice: Places to Remember w/Ilaria Serra at Florida Atlantic University Friedberg Auditorium, 777 Glades Rd, Boca Raton. 3-4:30 pm. \$60/annual membership; \$30/member; \$35/non-member & one-time guest pass at door. 561-297-3185; olliboca.fau.edu
2/26 - The Power of Pivot Tables at Boynton Beach City Library, 100 E Ocean Ave. Adults. 5-5:30 pm. Free. Registration: 561-742-6390; boyntonlibrary.org
2/26 - Monday Movies - Feature Film: Daughters of the Dust at Boca Raton Public Library, 400 NW 2nd Ave. Adults. 5:30-8 pm. Registration: 561-393-7906; bocalibrary.org

Tuesday - 2/27 - Book Talks - Staff Picks: Hawaii's Story by Hawaii's Queen by Lili'uokalani and Captive Paradise by James L. Haley at Boca Raton Public Library, 400 NW 2nd Ave. Adults. 2-3 pm. Registration: 561-393-7906; bocalibrary.org
2/27 - Frame Your Story at Boca Raton Public Library, 400 NW 2nd Ave. Adults. 2-4 pm. Free. Registration: 561-393-7906; bocalibrary.org
Wednesday - 2/28 - Cutting the Cable Cord at Boynton Beach City Library, 100 E Ocean Ave. Adults. 10-11:30 am. Free. Registration: 561-742-6390; boyntonlibrary.org
2/28 - Elder Abuse: The Hidden Crime Facing Older Adults w/Anita Blowers at Florida Atlantic University Lifelong Learning Classroom, 777 Glades Rd, Boca Raton. 12:30-2 pm. \$60/annual membership; \$40/member; \$50/non-member & one-time guest pass at door. 561-297-3185; olliboca.fau.edu
2/28 - Microsoft Excel Advanced Class at Delray Beach Public Library, 100 W Atlantic Ave. Adults. 2 pm. Free. Registration: 561-266-0194; delraylibrary.org
2/28 - Stringbean and the Banjo w/Taylor Hagoood at Florida Atlantic University Friedberg Auditorium, 777 Glades Rd, Boca Raton. 4-5:30 pm. \$60/annual membership; \$35/member; \$40/non-member & one-time guest pass at door. 561-297-3185; olliboca.fau.edu
2/28 - Crafting in the Library at Boynton Beach City Library, 100 E Ocean Ave. Adults. 5-7 pm. Free. Registration: 561-742-6390; boyntonlibrary.org
2/28 - Open Figure Studio w/Model: Long Pose at Arts Warehouse, 313 NE 3rd St, Delray Beach. Age 18+. 6-8 pm. \$15. 561-330-9614; artwarehouse.org
2/28 - Mystery Writing: It Starts With a Crime ... presented by the South Florida Chapter of the Women's National Book Association at Delray Beach Public Library, 100 W Atlantic Ave. 6 pm. Free. Registration: 561-266-0194; delraylibrary.org
2/28 - Art & Jazz on the Avenue on West Atlantic Ave, Delray Beach. Live music, art, culture, dancing, dining in the street. 6-9:30 pm. Free. 561-243-1077; downtowndelraybeach.com/artandjazz
2/28 - The Disaster Movie Come to Life: Is Armageddon Upon Us? w/ Brian Shaer at Florida Atlantic University Friedberg Auditorium, 777 Glades Rd, Boca Raton. 7-8:30 pm. \$60/annual membership; \$30/member;

\$35/non-member & one-time guest pass at door. 561-297-3185; olliboca.fau.edu
Thursday - 2/29 - Making Music w/ Garageband Class at Delray Beach Public Library, 100 W Atlantic Ave. 10 am. Free. Registration: 561-266-0196; delraylibrary.org
2/29 - The Wacky World of Gilbert & Sullivan w/Art Kress at Florida Atlantic University Friedberg Auditorium, 777 Glades Rd, Boca Raton. 10-11:30 am. \$60/annual membership; \$30/member; \$35/non-member & one-time guest pass at door. 561-297-3185; olliboca.fau.edu
2/29 - The Catskill Mountains: Where Comedy Went to School w/Joseph Dorinson at Florida Atlantic University Friedberg Auditorium, 777 Glades Rd, Boca Raton. 12:30-2 pm. \$60/annual membership; \$30/member; \$35/non-member & one-time guest pass at door. 561-297-3185; olliboca.fau.edu
2/29 - Sewing: Intermediate Projects at Boynton Beach City Library, 100 E Ocean Ave. Requires previously completed beginner's class. Adults. 5-7 pm. Free. Registration: 561-742-6390; boyntonlibrary.org
2/29 - Free Twilight Concert: Rock of Abba - Abba Tribute at Old School Square Amphitheater, 51 N Swinton Ave, Delray Beach. 6-9 pm. Free. 561-243-1077; delrayoldschoolsquare.com/events
2/29 - Outdoor Movie: Summer of Soul at Delray Beach Historical Society, 3 NE 1st St. 6 pm. \$8/person; free/members. Registration: 561-274-9578; delraybeachhistory.org
2/29 - Top 40 Hits of the 70s and Beyond at Duncan Theatre/Palm Beach State College, 4200 Congress Ave., Lake Worth Beach. Michael Cavanaugh performs songs by Billy Joel and Elton John as part of the theater's Mix Tape Series. 8 pm. \$45. 561-868-3309; duncantheatre.org
Friday - 3/1 - First Friday @ 5 Concert: Tasty Vibrations at Centennial Park & Amphitheater, 120 E Ocean Ave. Featuring food trucks, artisan market, children's activities and music. 5-9 pm. Free. 561-742-6024; boynton-beach.org
3/1 - Comedy Night with Kira Soltanovich at Sol Theatre, 3333 N Federal Hwy, Boca Raton. 6 & 8:30 pm. \$30-\$40. comiccure.com/boca-raton
3/1 - Irena Kofman & Friends at Florida Atlantic University Theatre, 777 Glades Rd, Boca Raton. 7 pm. \$20/general public; \$10/alumni;

free/faculty, staff & child under 13. 561-297-6124; fauevents.com
3/1 - Festival of the Arts Boca: Henry Mancini at 100 at Mizner Park Amphitheater, 590 Plaza Real, Boca Raton. 7:30 pm. Tickets \$30-\$115. 561-571-5270; festivalboca.org
3/1 - Orlando Baxter: The Art of Laughter at Arts Garage, 94 NE 2nd Ave, Delray Beach. 8 pm. \$35. 561-450-6357; artsgarage.org
3/1-2 - Tim Meadows, Matt Walsh & Friends present Chicago Improv at The Studio at Mizner Park, 201 Plaza Real, Boca Raton. 7 pm & 9:30 pm. Tickets start at \$30. 561-203-3742; thestudioatmiznerpark.com
3/1-3 - The Edwards Twins at The Delray Beach Playhouse, 950 NW 9th St. 3 pm. \$75. 561-272-1281; delraybeachplayhouse.com
3/1-3 - Clue at Lake Worth Playhouse, 713 Lake Ave. Runs through 3/10. F/Sat 8 pm; Sat/Sun 2 pm. \$46/opening night; \$38/show; \$64-\$114/dinner & show. 561-586-6410; lakeworthplayhouse.org
Saturday - 3/2 - The Community Spirit Race at FAU Stadium, 777 Glades Rd, Boca Raton. Benefits Spirit of Giving. 5K run/walk, 1 mile run/walk and virtual 5k. 6:30-11 am. Registration starts at \$25. 561-385-0144; spiritrace.org
3/2 - 15th Annual Boating & Beach Bash for People w/Disabilities at Spanish River Park, 3001 N Ocean Blvd, Boca Raton. Largest free fun-day event in America for children & adults w/special needs. Boat rides on the Intracoastal Waterway, beach access, sporting events, music, food, dance parties, games, more. 10 am-3 pm. Free. 561-715-2622; boatingbeachbash.com
3/2 - Muscle on the Beach Car Show at Old School Square, 51 N Swinton Ave, Delray Beach. Benefits Sandoway Discovery Center. 10 am-3 pm. \$125/exhibitor; free/spectators. 561-243-1077; delrayoldschoolsquare.com/events
3/2 - Festival of the Arts Boca: Jaws with Live Orchestra at Mizner Park Amphitheater, 590 Plaza Real, Boca Raton. 7:30 pm. \$20-\$115. 561-571-5270; festivalboca.org
3/2 - Lady Gaga Tribute with Bad Romance at The Studio at Mizner Park, 201 Plaza Real, Boca Raton. 7:30 pm. \$25-\$35. 561-203-3742; thestudioatmiznerpark.com
3/2 - Copeland Davis by Special Request at Arts Garage, 94 NE 2nd Ave, Delray Beach. 8 pm. \$45-\$50. 561-450-6357; artsgarage.org



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House of the Month



LEFT: The owner's suite has a private relaxation room along with sweeping ocean views. **RIGHT:** The chef's kitchen offers custom cabinetry, Taj Mahal quartzite countertops, state-of-the-art appliances, an induction cooktop, a large island and a custom pantry.



The great room has floor-to-ceiling windows and doors that seamlessly open to a wrap-around balcony, which extends from the unparalleled ocean views to the sunsets over the Intracoastal Waterway.

Stunning views from this penthouse

This oceanfront penthouse is in the Palm Beach Hampton, a premier concierge building offering a 24/7 gatehouse, door attendant, on-site manager, fitness center, pool and tennis courts. It offers a single-family home living experience with more than 5,615 total square feet within its three bedrooms and four and one-half baths. The penthouse was completely renovated by Bluedoor Building and incorporates an array of natural materials and textures.

The interior includes two generously sized guest suites, each featuring a private balcony. The master suite features a tub, dual sinks, a private water closet and a custom-designed walk-in closet. Additionally, a den with a full bath offers extra sleeping quarters if required.

The great room/dining room has custom-designed millwork with a wet bar, wine storage, and refrigeration, all of which combine to create a stimulating atmosphere for entertaining. The home's specialized bespoke features include pre-wiring for motorized drapes, custom millwork, white oak floors throughout, and Toto and Riobel plumbing fixtures. A private poolside cabana and two garage parking spaces are other amenities.

Offered at \$10,400,000.

Contact Candace Friis at 561-573-9966 or candace.friis@corcoran.com; or Phil Friis at 561-706-1922 or phil.friis@corcoran.com



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